



Northwest Pacific Action Plan

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Northwest Pacific Action Plan
Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center

The Eighteenth NOWPAP POMRAC Focal Points Meeting
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On-line meeting

Proposal on the finalization of SOMER-3

Background.

Regular assessment of the environmental status and trends within the NOWPAP region was one of the key components in the original list of activities highlighted at the NOWPAP establishment in 1994. First “State of the Marine Environment Report for the NOWPAP region” (SOMER) has been compiled by POMRAC in close cooperation with other RACs and published in 2007. The main goal of that report was to give a holistic description, analysis and overview of marine environmental problems of the NOWPAP sea area.

In accordance with decision of 16th NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting, one of the NOWPAP POMRAC activities for 2012-2013 biennium was preparation of the second “State of the Marine Environment Report for the NOWPAP region” (SOMER-2). The specific goals of SOMER-2 included: 1) Assessment of the state of the marine environment in the NOWPAP area, with special attention to recent changes in the environmental conditions and the impacts of human activities on the marine and coastal environment; 2) Identifying current regional concerns and emerging issues which present major challenges; 3) Presentation of actions and measures to help decision makers to address these challenges at the national and regional level. SOMER-2 was prepared with valuable help and direct participation of all RACs and has been published in 2014.

Based on the findings of SOMER-2, the following list of five Ecological Quality Objectives (EcoQOs) was suggested, discussed and reflected in NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023:

- Biological and habitat diversity are not changed significantly due to anthropogenic pressure;
- Alien species are at levels that do not adversely alter the ecosystems;
- Eutrophication adverse effects (such as loss of biodiversity, ecosystem degradation, harmful algal blooms, and oxygen deficiency in bottom waters) are absent;
- Contaminants cause no significant impact on coastal and marine ecosystems and human health;
- Marine litter does not adversely affect coastal and marine environments.

According to the NOWPAP MTS for 2018-2023, one of the major goals of NOWPAP continues to be providing the NOWPAP Member States with integrated periodic assessments of the state of the marine and coastal environment (SOMER-3). General responsibility of POMRAC for the SOMER 3 preparation was reflected in the MTS. At the same time, comprehensive and holistic nature of SOMER-3 implies that all RACs have to be involved in this activity.

16th POMRAC FPM in 2019 has suggested and 24th NOWPAP IGM in 2020 has approved the preparation of SOMER-3 in the work plan of POMRAC. Experts have been nominated, structure of the SOMER-3 has been elaborated by correspondence, discussed and adopted in general during

virtual workshop in April 2021 (Annex 1). Due to impossibility to spend money allocated to POMRAC in PGI FEBRAS for the payment to the persons abroad, contracts for experts from China, Korea and Russia were arranged through the UNEP HQ with kind support of RCU. Even with all efforts of RCU contracting process was delayed, and experts had not received contracts until October 2021. Nevertheless, nominated experts have submitted drafts of first part of SOMER-3 (Chapter 1) reflecting the national visions of NOWPAP countries on the environmental problems in coastal and marine areas.

Goal

The prime goal of this project is to finalize the preparation of SOMER 3. Specific objectives are he follows:

- To prepare second part of SOMER-3 reflecting the NOWPAP visions on the major ecological problems within region (Chapter 2)
- To analyze the ways of aligning NOWPAP activities with implementation of SDG14 (Chapter 3)
- To overview the use of EBM, ICZM and MSP practices in the NOWPAP region for the achievements of SDG14 targets (Chapter 4).

Main tasks

1. Chapter 2 should reflect mainly the NOWPAP visions on the major ecological problems within region, and therefore will have 5 subchapters aligned with 5 Ecological Quality Objectives connected with groups of major ecological problems outlined at the NOWPAP RACs activities earlier.
2. Subchapters of Chapter 2 are supposed to be based on the published outcomes and achievements of NOWPAP RACs, and therefore RACs will be invited to provide extended summaries of their outcomes to the relevant subchapters, and to take part in the preparation of subchapters.
3. Chapter 3 should describe the relationship of NOWPAP activities and outcomes with arrangement of the execution and achievements of SDG14 targets in the region. POMRAC believes International consultant will be needed for this job.
4. Chapter 4 is closely related to the Chapter 3, because SDG14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development" could be implemented and reached through the ecosystem based management (EBM) with integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), and marine spatial planning (MSP) as the components. The international expert could analyze the positive examples, if any, in SDG14 targets achieving and the role of EBM, ICZM and MSP in this process.

4. Expected outcomes and future direction

The chapter 2 of SOMER-3 should reflect the regional NOWPAP visions on the region's major ecological problems. Therefore, it will have five subchapters aligned with five Ecological Quality Objectives (EcoQOs) related to the groups of major ecological problems outlined by the NOWPAP RACs activities earlier. Subchapters of chapter 2 are supposed to be based on the published outcomes and achievements of NOWPAP RACs. Therefore, RACs will be invited to provide extended summaries of their outcomes to the relevant issues and participate in the preparation review of subchapters.

Chapter 1 and 2 together will summarize the national and regional NOWPAP visions on the environmental problems of coastal and marine areas and should help to arrange future NOWPAP activities more efficiently, and to enhance possibility of the use of NOWPAP results by countries.

Chapter 3 will describe and analyze the linkages of NOWPAP activities and outcomes with arrangement of the execution and achievements of SDG14 targets in the region. The role of ecologically oriented mechanisms and processes: EBM, ICZM and MSP in the achieving of SDG 14 will be described in chapter 4 on the positive examples in the NOWPAP region.

Preparation of SOMER-3 as a whole has to be finished in 2022-2023 biennium and the report has to be published and disseminated after the review by NOWPAP RACs, RCU, NFPs.

SOMER 3: Regional Outlook from NOWPAP countries

Executive summary

Introduction

Part 1

Chapter 1. NOWPAP states vision of the most important marine environmental problems*

China (based on China Marine Ecological Environment Bulletin)

Japan (from Basic Ocean Plans and relevant Ministries legislation)

Korea (from Comprehensive Plans of Marine Environment)

Russia (from Strategy on ecological safety of Russia 2025 and National Project "Ecology")

Chapter 2. Current status and EcoQOs for the marine and coastal ecosystems within NOWPAP region

EcoQO 1: Biological and habitat diversity are not changed significantly due to anthropogenic pressure (CEARAC)

EcoQO 2: Alien species are at levels that do not adversely alter the ecosystems (DINRAC, POMRAC)

EcoQO 3: Eutrophication adverse effects (loss of BD, ecosystem degradation, HABs, oxygen deficiency) are absent (CEARAC, POMRAC)

EcoQO 4: Contaminants cause no significant impact on coastal and marine ecosystems and human health (MERRAC, POMRAC)

EcoQO 5: Marine litter does not adversely affect coastal and marine environments (DINRAC, POMRAC)

Part 2

Chapter 3. Aligning of the NOWPAP activities with implementation of SDGs in the region

(Intrn. Consultant)

Chapter 4. EBM, ICZM & MSP as a way for achieving of SDGs (Intrn. Consultant)

Conclusions

Schedule for the finalization of SOMER 3

Time		Actions	Main Body
2022	Q1-Q2	Discussion by correspondence of the content of chapters 2, 3, 4 of SOMER 3,	POMRAC
	Q2	On-line Workshop for the approval of the content of chapters 3 and 4. Nomination of international consultant for the preparation of chapters 3 and 4	POMRAC and FPs
	Q2-Q3	Finalization of the chapter 2 of SOMER-3	All RACs
	Q3-Q4	Finalization of first part of SOMER-3 (chapter 1 and 2) Preparation drafts of chapters 3, 4 of SOMER 3	POMRAC, international consultant
2023	Q1	Review and improvement of the different chapters of SOMER-3	POMRAC, FPs and RACs
	Q2-Q3	Compilation of SOMER-3, review by RACs, experts, NFPs	International consultant
	Q4	Printing, Presentation of SOMER-3 at the POMRAC FPM	POMRAC

Budget for the preparation of SOMER 3 for 2022-2023

Contract	Timing	Output	To be completed	Counterpart	Budget
On-line Workshop on SOMER-3 structure	2022 Q2	Structure and content of chapter 3, 4 of SOMER 3	2022 Q2	Experts, RACs, RCU and relevant organizations	4,000
Preparation of the chapter 2 of SOMER-3	2022 Q2-Q3	Different subchapters of chapter 2 SOMER-3	2022 Q3	CEARAC, DINRAC, MERRAC, POMRAC	5,000* 5,000* 5,000*
Preparation of the chapter 3,4 of SOMER-3	2022 Q3-Q4	Drafts of chapters 3, 4 of SOMER-3	2022 Q4	international consultant	15,000*
Compilation of SOMER 3	2023 Q1-Q2	Drafts SOMER-3	2023 Q2	international consultant	5,000*
Finalization and printing of SOMER 3	2023 Q3-Q4	Printed SOMER 3	2023 Q4	POMRAC, FPs, experts,	4,000
Total					48,000

*- through the ToRs with UNEP HQ under RCU supervision or directly through RCU