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NEAMPAN Workshop on Advancing Marine Protected Areas for Climate Action, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development

11-12 November 2024
First Institute of Oceanography
Qingdao, China

Concept Note

Background

Marine and coastal ecosystems face unprecedented threats from the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. These challenges not only endanger the ecological integrity of marine environments but also the livelihoods and well-being of coastal communities. The urgency for coordinated and comprehensive action is underscored by recent global agreements. They include the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF, 2022), which aims to protect 30% of land, waters and seas by 2030 (Target 3), and the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan (2022), which reinforces commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and scale up climate adaptation efforts, particularly in vulnerable coastal areas. Regionally, ESCAP Resolution 79/2 (2023) calls for accelerated ocean-based action to combat climate change, aiming for enhanced regional cooperation to protect marine biodiversity and implement sustainable blue economy initiatives. All of them underscore the need for prompt and comprehensive measures at the global, regional, national and local levels.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are recognized as a critical area-based management tool in addressing these challenges. MPAs contribute to climate action by enhancing the resilience of marine ecosystems and protecting vital habitats such as blue carbon ecosystems like mangroves, seagrass meadows and salt marshes, which act as carbon sinks. They also safeguard biodiversity, supporting ecosystem services crucial for both adaptation and mitigation. By conserving these blue carbon habitats, MPAs help buffer coastal communities against climate impacts, such as sea-level rise and extreme weather events, while also contributing to global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, MPAs face challenges such as

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underfunding, governance gaps, insufficient protection levels, and difficulties in integrating local communities and stakeholders in management processes, which limit their overall effectiveness.

The North-East Asian Marine Protected Areas Network (NEAMPAN), with its 12 MPA sites across China, Japan, Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, plays a crucial role in advancing subregional cooperation to implement ocean-based solutions. NEAMPAN is well-positioned to contribute to global and regional frameworks, particularly in support of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 13 (Climate Action) and 14 (Life Below Water) as well as ESCAP's Ocean-Based Climate Action (OBCA), with a special focus on protecting and enhancing blue carbon ecosystems.

Recent discussions within NEAMPAN, including the first MPA Talk in March 2024, underscored the need to expand NEAMPAN's role. These discussions highlighted several challenges, opportunities and strategic priorities. Building on this momentum, this workshop aims to bring together key stakeholders to first review efforts at the regional, national and local levels to address the climate crisis in Marine Protected Areas, in connection to biodiversity and sustainable development, and then discuss actionable strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of MPAs and strengthening NEAMPAN's role.

Objectives

- Review efforts at the regional, national and local levels to address the climate crisis in Marine Protected Areas, in connection to biodiversity and sustainable development
- Share best practices and challenges in the management of Marine Protected Areas in the North-East Asia
- Discuss actionable strategies, during the dedicated "MPA Talk" for enhancing the effectiveness of MPAs and strengthening NEAMPAN's role

Overview

- **Organizers:** NEASPEC/NEAMPAN and First Institute of Oceanography (FIO), China

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- **Target audience:** NEAMPAN Steering Committee, NEAMPAN site managers, MPA local practitioners, international organizations, academia and research institutes, civil societies and youth
- **Date:** 11-12 November 2024
- **Venue:** First Institute Oceanography, Qingdao, China
- **Meeting modality:** in-person
- **Language:** English

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Tentative programme

11 November 2024	
09:00–09:30	Registration
09:30-10:00	Opening
10:00-10:20	Break
10:20-12:00	Session 1. Marine protected areas in the climate crisis: National policy responses
12:00-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:10	Session 2. Managing marine protected areas in the climate crisis: Challenges, best practices and solutions
15:10-15:40	Break
15:40-17:20	Session 3. Aligning NEAMPAN with global and regional frameworks for Ocean-Based Climate Action
17:20-17:30	Closing
18:00-19:30	Dinner
12 November 2024	
09:00-12:00	<p>MPA Talk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the first MPA talk • Open discussion based on discussion notes and guiding questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Key agenda will include, but not limited to, NEAMPAN site expansion, NEAMPAN strategies, enhanced collaboration and partnerships, etc.
12:00-13:30	Lunch
13:30-17:30	<p>Site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qingdao Marine Park