

**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

Third Steering Committee Meeting
North-East Asian Marine Protected Areas Network

23 April 2021
Virtual meeting

Discussion Note for the Third NEAMPAN Steering Committee Meeting

Note by the Secretariat

Contents

I. Background.....	2
II. Updates on the Activities of NEAMPAN.....	2
III. Follow-up of SOM-24 and Proposed Activities of 2021 and Beyond	3
IV. Issues for Consideration	6

Annex I. Preliminary interest expressed by the participants at the 2016 NEAMPAN workshop

Annex II. Challenges and key species of NEAMPAN sites

Annex III. NEAMPAN brochure

I. Background

1. The 24th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-24) of NEASPEC guided the secretariat to further strengthen capacity building activities of NEAMPAN through experience sharing, with a focus on such as effective management of MPAs, socio-economic management of MPAs and eco-tourism. The Meeting also recognized the need to expand the NEAMPAN sites covering diverse geographic and ecological conditions so that the NEAMPAN would be able to further facilitate information sharing and expand its activities with innovative projects. The Meeting also recommended the secretariat to utilize online instruments, for instance, by developing an online application platform to join the network, utilizing NEASPEC websites and social media for awareness raising and experience sharing, and organizing virtual events.

2. The SOM-24 adopted the NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which sets the goal of NEAMPAN to develop it to be fully functional for strengthening partnerships among target MPAs and stakeholders and enhancing capacity to achieve, inter alia, the SDG 14 and relevant goals associated with marine and coastal biodiversity in a holistic manner. In this connection, the Strategic Plan identifies the following activities.

- Facilitate the exchange of knowledge, information, experiences and good practices with regard to strengthen MPA management effectiveness.
- Facilitate cooperation on the protection of endangered and rare migratory marine species.
- Cooperate with existing partnerships to maximize the synergy with various initiatives at the national, (sub-)regional and global level in capacity-building and technical assistance in support of on-the-ground implementation priorities.
- Enhance interactive communication among policymakers, the scientific community and local stakeholders to promote ecosystem approach for MPA management.

3. In this connection, this discussion note provides key points of discussion and consideration for the NEAMPAN Steering Committee to identify the NEAMPAN activities in 2021 and beyond, and operationalize the Strategic Plan.

II. Updates on the Activities of NEAMPAN

4. **The studies on “Strengthening the subregional cooperation through knowledge sharing on sustainable management of marine protected areas”:** The Secretariat and national experts have been finalizing the studies on selected MPAs of NEAMPAN, which examined the management plans and the framework for assessing the status of the MPAs and how the assessment of the status is reflected in the management plans and measures. The studies show that all MPAs have structured management plans defining the activities to be undertaken by the MPA management offices. In some MPAs which allow a certain degree of human activities in the area, their MPA management plans have some distinct scope to engage local communities. Assessment of socio-economic aspects impacting the MPAs is explored as well. While NEAMPAN sites see the impact of human activities on the protected areas to varying extent, collection and assessment of relevant socio-economic data

are usually not under the purview of the MPA management offices. The final report of the studies will be available in May/June 2021.

5. **Informal Steering Committee Meeting:** An informal Steering Committee meeting was held on 24 June 2020 to solicit the views on future direction and activities of the NEAMPAN, to be reflected in the discussion on the NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2021-2025 at the SOM-24 of NEASPEC in October 2020. While various initiatives were undertaken at the national level to build capacity for managing MPAs, the Steering Committee members shared the views that international exchanges of experiences (thus subregional workshops) are still valuable contribution to exposing the MPA managers to cross-national sharing of experiences.

6. **NEAMPAN brochure:** As an outreaching and dissemination material, the secretariat prepared NEAMPAN brochure with a brief description of each MPA, to enhance a sense of community among MPAs of NEAMPAN. The draft was shared with the Steering Committee members for their feedback in early February 2021, and the brochure has been finalized for dissemination (Annex III).

III. Follow-up of SOM-24 and Proposed Activities of 2021 and Beyond

NEAMPAN Workshop

7. The plan to organize a NEAMPAN workshop has been postponed several times over the years due to various constraints, including the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the secretariat has put on hold the plans to organize a NEAMPAN workshop in 2020, since the physical workshop appeared critical, especially for effective communication among participants who are directly engaged in management of MPAs. With the inability to organize physical meetings during the prolonged period of the pandemic, online meetings with multiple simultaneous translations have now become a more productive option for holding meetings for wider groups of national stakeholders.

8. Information and experience sharing on MPA management are a key scope of NEAMPAN activities. Given the considerations highlighted above, the options for key themes and modality of the 2021 workshop are proposed for further consultation with the Steering Committee members.

9. **Overall objective:** The proposed workshop is expected to serve as a catalyst for a more active exchange of information and provide a channel to connect with a pool of expertise on MPA management. Various capacity building and network initiatives are undertaken at national and international levels. Thus, the workshop is expected to add to the national level initiatives through exposure to experiences and expertise in the neighbouring countries.

10. **Proposed key topics of the workshop:** The proposed topics of the workshop take account of the suggestion at SOM-24 and studies under the Russia-funded project as well as preliminary feedback from the participants of the past NEAMPAN workshop (Annex I and II), while open for further suggestions and feedback by the SC members.

- *Experience and lessons learned in tourism management (including eco-tourisms) in MPAs:* The topic has been suggested as an area of interest during the SOM-24. Eco-tourism and sustainable tourism management were also highlighted as areas of interest by the participants of the past NEAMPAN workshop (Annex I).
- *Assessing and managing human impact on MPAs:* The NEAMPAN studies touch upon the challenges faced by MPAs in addressing anthropocentric impacts. The needs to incorporate socio-economic aspects in MPA management are pointed out in the study.
- *Engaging stakeholders in MPA management:* Engaging stakeholders is critical, particularly in the MPAs and neighbouring areas where human activities (e.g., tourism, fisheries, residential use, illegal activities, etc.) take place. MPAs in NEAMPAN have varying responsibilities and experiences in engaging stakeholders and local communities, which may be beneficial for other MPAs.

11. The secretariat requests the SC members to share feedback/inputs on the proposed plan of the workshop (Table 1). Based on the inputs, the secretariat will further develop the workshop plan for implementation.

Table 1. The proposed framework of NEAMPAN workshop 2021

Proposed framework	Description
Modality	Virtual workshop, tentatively in July 2021
Possible topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience and lessons learned in tourism management (including eco-tourisms) in MPAs • Assessing and managing human impact on MPAs • Engaging stakeholders in MPA management
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEAMPAN site managers • NEAMPAN SC members • National government officials engaged in MPA policies • Experts on the identified topic • Regional institutions / networks related to MPAs (e.g., NOWPAP¹, PEMPSEA², EAAFP³) in North-East Asia and other regions • Local stakeholders and NGOs
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simultaneous interpretation to increase the interest and participation of MPA managers and local stakeholders.
Scope of the workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations by the respective NEAMPAN MPAs on their experiences • Presentations by the SC members / relevant national government officials on supporting framework/ other MPA networks (optional) • Presentations / lectures by experts • Q& A and open discussion

¹ NOWPAP: Northwest of Pacific Action Plan

² PEMPSEA: Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia

³ EAAFP: East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP).

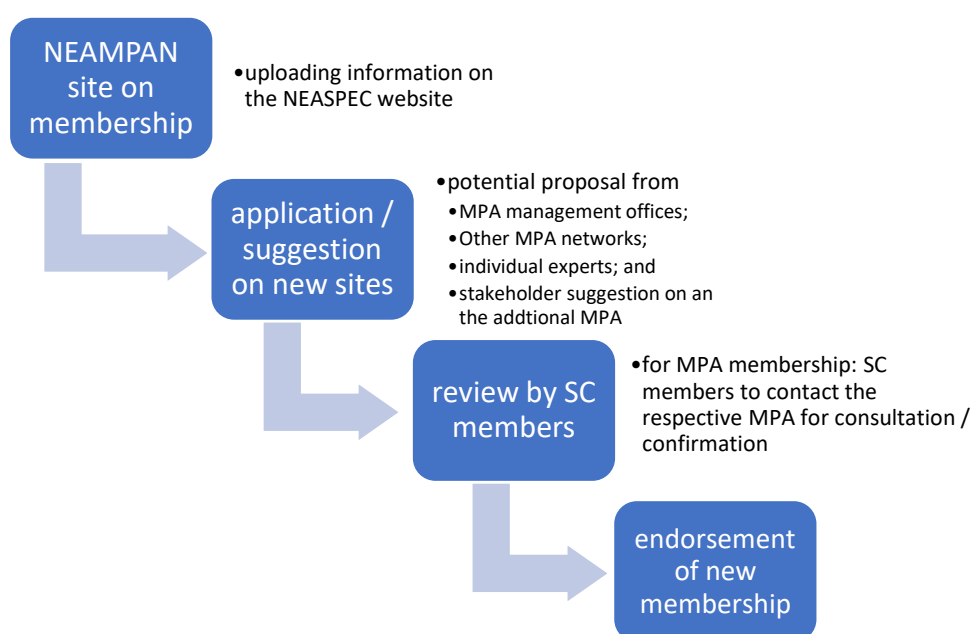
Linkage with national level programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SC members' inputs are requested.
---------------------------------------	---

12. The SC members are also requested to advise the secretariat on the potential linkages/overlap with ongoing initiatives and capacity building activities at the national level which could be held with support from NEAMPAN. With regard to the national-level activities, the SC members may facilitate consultations among their target MPAs on the areas of collaboration under NEAMPAN, and communicate with the secretariat to prepare activities in line with the NEASPEC Strategic Plan. The secretariat will be also ready to join and mobilize support from other members if required for national workshops.

Nomination Procedure of NEAMPAN Target Sites

13. The secretariat has received enquires about the nomination procedure of NEAMPAN target sites. The first meeting of the Steering Committee in 2014 decided that target MPAs will be nominated by respective governments through Steering Committee members. When selecting MPAs, Steering Committee members can refer to national priorities, NEAMPAN's thematic areas, key sites identified by EAAFP and MPAs of other networks. A profile of each selected MPA will be provided by Steering Committee members, containing information on: area, geographic location, biodiversity, areas of concern, institutional arrangement, managerial issues, purposes and reasons of nominating the particular MPA, etc.

14. In view of the above, the secretariat will post this procedudural information on the NEASPEC website and connect prospective MPAs to coordinate with SC members to review and endorse the applications. The diagram below shows a suggested framework for calling for new members to the NEAMPAN activities.



IV. Issues for Consideration

15. The Meeting may wish to recommend NEAMPAN activities in 2021 and beyond for the Secretariat to initiate the timely preparation of the 2021 NEAMPAN workshop and implementation of the NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2021-2025. In this regard, SC members may share their views on the activities and topics proposed in section III.

.....

Annex I

Preliminary interest expressed by the participants at the 2016 NEAMPAN workshop

Interested to know	Interested to share	Wish list
<p>[TOURISM]</p> <p>* China: Eco-tourism * Russia: Tourism infrastructure and the way it is organized</p>	<p>* Japan: Sustainable tourism * ROK: Success story of eco-tour guide programme</p>	
<p>[MANAGEMENT]</p> <p>* China: Co-management with neighbor community * Japan: Promotion of integrated coastal management (Sea-land interaction) * Russia: Territory patrolling</p>	<p>* China: Eco-aquaculture in MPA * Japan: (1) Integrated management from the perspective of ecosystem approach; (2) Solving the conflicts among stakeholders using scientific information</p>	
<p>[RESEARCH]</p> <p>* Japan: How to evaluate and increase the value of ecosystem services of MPA * ROK: Scientific monitoring programme * Russia: Nature characteristic and rare species</p>	<p>* ROK: (1) Marine spatial planning within urban planning; (2) Increasing biodiversity * Russia: (1) Ecological monitoring and scientific researches; (2) Climate change</p>	<p>* Russia: Joint research on movement of the south species to the north</p>
<p>[EDUCATION/TRAINING PROGRAMME]</p> <p>* ROK: (1) Support local income, stakeholder training know-how; (2) Marketing strategy * Russia: Details of application for international funding</p>	<p>* China: (1) Student education; (2) Public awareness (China) * ROK: Citizen monitoring programme</p>	<p>* China: (1) Training/ study visit; (2) Participation in regional training programme (China) * ROK: Site visit and education programme for stakeholder group * Japan: (1) Co-organizing the summer school with PICES on coastal management; (2) Co-organizing the training programme with EAAFP * Russia: Study visit</p>
<p>[WORKSHOP]</p>		<p>* Japan: Workshop for developing integrated management plan under participatory system</p>

Annex II

Challenges and key species of NEAMPAN sites⁴

<p>[Key protected species]</p> <p>Key species are used as a symbol of conservation in the respective areas in for raising awareness, making it as part of attraction for eco-tourism, monitoring of species (e.g., keimafuri in Shiretoko).</p>	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * tamarisk in Changyi National Marine Ecology Special Protected Area * coral reef in Sanya Coral Reef National Nature Reserve * swiftlet in National Nature Reserve of Dazhou Island Marine Ecosystems * Dugong, platalea minor, and mangrove forest in Shankou Mangrove Nature Reserve
	Japan	* keimafuri (spectacled guillemot), seabirds in Shiretoko National Park
	Republic of Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Far eastern curlew, octopus, sand crab in Muan Wetland Protected Area * Hooded crane and red-clawed crabs in Suncheon Bay
	Russian Federation	* Chinese egrets and black-faced spoonbill in Far Eastern Marine Biosphere Reserve (FEMBR)
<p>[Funding]</p> <p>Challenge of insufficient funding was highlighted by several MPAs.</p>	China	* Changyi, Sanya and Dazhou (Changyi National Marine Ecology SPA receives funding for management from (1) central marine fee, (2) marine ecological restoration project and (3) local government's investment)
	Japan	* Shiretoko: Stakeholders collaborate to sell handmade handbooks to raise funds for protection and research of seabirds
	Russian Federation	* FEMBR
<p>[Tourism management]</p> <p>Many MPAs engaged in ecological tourism.</p>	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Dazhou: issues on Illegal tourists * Nanji: Moderate development of tourism generated income for local communities while fishery and aquaculture is controlled to contain the human activities in the area. As a result, aquaculture and tourism income have grown with moderate increase in average income of local residents, while population in fishery has significantly declined and the risk of poaching reduced. * Shankou: ecotourism operation (e.g., boat tour) and food retailing help develop alternative livelihood for local mangrove residents.
	Republic of Korea	* Suncheon: Management of car parking system and alternative transport are introduced to discourage visitors' private vehicles.
<p>[Fishing/poaching]</p>	China	* Dazhou: Overfishing around the protected area
	Russian Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Sikhote-Alin: Poaching as a major challenge in protected areas where population density is low and unemployment rate is high * FEMBR: rangers are responsible for catching poachers but have limited funds, while poachers have modern high-speed boats, diving equipment, communication and navigation devices. Thus catching poachers (boats) are difficult.
<p>[Threats to marine life/ecosystem]</p>	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Dazhou: Swiftlet as they are considered as rare medicine * Nanji: Environmental challenges are caused by pollution, red tide, and typhoon. In view of sustainable management of resources, ecological restoration project is undertaken for restoration of seaweed beds, and prevention of wastewater discharge.

⁴ The table shows the summary of discussion in the NEAMPAN workshop 2016.

		<p>* Beilun: Need for protection and restoration of mangrove wetland ecosystem, seagrass beds, coastal area, etc.</p> <p>* Sanya: growing concern on effect of climate change on the ocean</p>
[Public participation]	China	<p>* Nanji: public participation through education of marine biodiversity protection</p> <p>* Beilun and Shankou: public awareness and close communication with neighbouring communities</p> <p>* Shankou: Engaging public in the management of the reserve is more effective in some cases when it is incorporated into traditional system of the local communities. For instance, forming network of clan chiefs of local villages has been effective modality of public participation. Also for awareness raising, publicity activities are combined with traditional festival, such as tree planting, essay writing, etc.</p>
	Republic of Korea	<p>* Suncheon: the network of civil-society, administration (authority for Suncheon Bay conservation) and specialists (academics) involves in management of Suncheon Bay. Also citizens led conservation and mobilization of political support, such as against dumping of wastes and dredging project in 1990s.</p>
[Environmental education and scientific research]	China	<p>* Beilun: supports in environmental education and scientific research activities</p>
	Russian Federation	<p>* FEMBR and Sihkote-Alin: support in environmental education and scientific research activities</p> <p>* FEMBR: many birds are marked with rings to identify their origin.</p> <p>* Sihkote-Alin: Long-term scientific investigation conducted in the reserve includes such topics as climate change; vegetation transformations; plant and animal phenology; dynamics of rare species populations; freshwater fauna and bio indication; and marine ecosystems.</p>
[Social/Ecological network]	China	<p>* Nanji: proposed a blueprint of Zhejiang-Fujian Coastal Islands MPAs Network, based on the species distribution</p>
	Japan	<p>* Shiretoko and Sihkote-Alin: sharing information with similar national parks</p> <p>(Those two sites visited each other to exchange information including ecological system and tourism, given that they are both world natural heritage.)</p>
	Russian Federation	