



**Northwest
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Pollution Monitoring Regional
Activity Centre (POMRAC)

The Sixteenth NOWPAP POMRAC Focal Points Meeting (FPM)
Beijing, China, 30-31 October 2019

**REPORT OF THE NOWPAP REGIONAL COORDINATING UNIT (RCU) ON
THE PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE NORTHWEST PACIFIC ACTION PLAN**

This document was submitted by the representative of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU), as the report on the implementation of NOWPAP activities carried out after the Fifteenth POMRAC Focal Points Meeting.

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1. This report on the implementation of NOWPAP activities covers the period since the 15th POMRAC Focal Points Meeting (FPM) held on 4-5 July 2018 in Vladivostok, the Russian Federation until 1 October 2019.
2. More details of POMRAC activities will be presented by the POMRAC Director under separate agenda item. The brief information on activities of all NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers is given below, highlighting both achievements and challenges.

1. CEARAC- Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center

3. [The regional report on pilot assessment of impacts of major threats \(eutrophication, indigenous species and habitat alteration\) on marine biodiversity](#) was prepared by the Secretariat of Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center (CEARAC). After review by CEARAC Focal Points, the report was circulated among Northwest Pacific Action Plan National Focal Points for comments in June 2017. The final report was published in 2017. The second regional report ["Assessment of major pressures on marine biodiversity in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region"](#) uses a Driver-Pressures-State-Impacts-Responses framework to assess impacts on marine biodiversity in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) region. It was published in 2018. Together with other relevant NOWPAP reports on the status of marine biodiversity, they provide important information for the development of a Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Action Plan on Marine Biodiversity (RAP BIO).
4. CEARAC organized an Expert Meeting on Eutrophication Assessment in the NOWPAP Region on 22 March 2019 in Vladivostok, the Russia Federation, to review the progress of the ongoing activities on eutrophication assessment and discuss how to update information of the map of potential eutrophic zones in the NOWPAP region, available at <https://map.nowpap3.go.jp/maps/view>. The meeting participants also discussed possible contribution from this group to the indicator development of Index of Coastal Eutrophication listed as a sub-indicator of Sustainable Development Goal 14.1.1. The meeting agreed on the following recommendations: (i) to organize one more Expert Meeting on the assessment of eutrophication in collaboration with the experts group on ecological quality objectives (EcoQOs) of the Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center (POMRAC); (ii) encourage CEARAC to further develop the NOWPAP Eutrophication Assessment Tool with new ocean color sensors by inter calibration of sensors and cross validation with in situ Chl-a; (iii) suggest to CEARAC and POMRAC to unify terminology between related to nutrient and chlorophyll-a concentrations referring to the NOWPAP Common Procedure for eutrophication assessment.
5. The 22nd NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) (Toyama, Japan, December 2017) approved three special projects of the Center, including (i) development of a Medium-Term Strategy of CEARAC for marine biodiversity; (ii) development of a roadmap for NOWPAP Regional Action Plan for Marine Biodiversity (RAP BIO); and (iii) development of a tool for mapping seagrass distribution in the NOWPAP region.
6. At the 16th CEARAC Focal Points Meeting (Toyama, May 2018), six potential topics were selected for future activities on the marine biodiversity conservation: (i) assessment of marine biodiversity; (ii) assessment of harmful invasive species; (iii) specific migration species; (iv) conservation of biological habitat (tidal flat, salt marsh, seagrass bed); (v) plankton species; and (vi) e-DNA.
7. The 17th CEARAC Focal Points Meeting (Toyama, 9-10 September 2019) approved in principle the draft of CEARAC Medium-Term strategy, which had been prepared by CEARAC

Secretariat based on the submitted feasibility assessment reports. The details of future work plan will be discussed at the workshop to be held in late 2019.

8. An international consultant has been nominated to lead the development of a roadmap of RAP BIO. In addition, four national experts have been also nominated to support this activity. A dedicated workshop will be organised back-to-back with another meeting, i.e. on the CEARAC Medium-Term strategy in late 2019.
9. Focusing on the importance of seagrass beds as essential habitat for marine coastal species, CEARAC has worked on mapping seagrass distribution in selected sea areas in the NOWPAP region for the past biennia. A [Feasibility study towards assessment of seagrass distribution in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region](#) was published in 2018. In order to understand its distribution accurately and at a larger scale, CEARAC has been developing a tool for mapping the seagrass distribution using cloud-based technology. It is essential to use a tool applicable in all member states. Also, the developed tool should be easily used to support by public (e.g. providing on-site information of seagrass). Therefore, CEARAC has worked on developing a cloud-based tool for mapping seagrass using the Google Earth Engine (GEE) in cooperation with the Remote Sensing Technology Center of Japan (RESTEC). Since Google Earth Engine is not applicable in China, the Center has been considering building a similar tool based on a different cloud-based technology, such as Amazon Web Service (AWS).
10. In 2018/2019 CEARAC continued building partnerships and exchanging information with other NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers and relevant regional and global partners, including the North-East Asian Sub-regional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans, Google Earth and others.

2. DINRAC - Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center

11. The Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center (DINRAC) continues to maintain the following databases (available at the [Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center website](#)): (i) major environmental data, (ii) Northwest Pacific Action Plan coastal and marine environmental Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing applications, (iii) marine litter, (iv) coastal and marine nature reserves, (v) NOWPAP publications, and (vi) NOWPAP database of institutions and experts. DINRAC continues to provide administrative and financial support to selected activities of POMRAC.
12. The 22nd NOWPAP IGM (Toyama, 21-23 December 2017) approved three project proposals submitted by the Center including those on (i) sea reclamation state and management, (ii) human marine activity objects, and (iii) the 3rd phase of collecting information about endangered/threatened species in NOWPAP region.
13. The 17th DINRAC Focal Points Meeting was held on 22-23 August 2019 in Dalian, China. The meeting reviewed the progress made since the 16th DINRAC FPs Meeting. The meeting requested DINRAC to speed up the implementation of the project on sea reclamation state and management. The meeting recognised the progress of the Northwest Pacific Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter.
14. Also, the meeting agreed to submit the following proposals to the 24th NOWPAP IGM for approval: (i) Annual Summary of Major Marine Environmental Data Available in Member States, (ii) Collection of Data and Information on Endangered Species Filed in the Red Lists of NOWPAP Member States (3rd Stage 2020-2021), (iii) Expert meeting/ brainstorming workshop for future directions of DINRAC.

15. In 2014 and 2015, scientists confirmed that 69 species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list are observed in the Northwest Pacific region. They expanded the research to 143 species in 2016 and 2017. The study found that most of the surveyed endangered species in the region are animals, and only two being plants. Among the animal species, 61 chordata (animals with a backbone), and six invertebrates were listed as endangered species. Among them, two species were ranked as critically endangered by IUCN, namely the spoon-billed sandpiper and the sea-run Taimen. Among the remaining 67 species, 44 were ranked as vulnerable and 23 as endangered.
16. In 2018 and 2019, a total of 1,196 species listed in the Japanese red list were evaluated by national experts from China, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. In order to better understand the situation with endangered species, as well as to promote information sharing, and contribute to biodiversity conservation in the region, participants in the 17th Focal Points Meeting of DINRAC agreed to advance the study in the upcoming eight years. In 2020–2021, China will lead the project.

3. MERRAC - Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center

17. The Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Centre (MERRAC) has been promoting regional co-operation on the marine pollution prevention and response among the NOWPAP Members with the assistance from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). MERRAC updates the following regularly: (i) information on Focal points, (ii) information on oil and hazardous and noxious substances (HNS) spills, (iii) as well as the Information System, which includes lists of oil spill response equipment in the region, lists of relevant institutions and experts, and national performance standards and/or regulations on the application of non-mechanical methods.
18. The 22nd NOWPAP IGM approved the Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center work plan and budget for 2018-2019 biennium, including three new specific projects: (i) 'Guidelines on the assessment of oil spill response capability for the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region', (ii) 'The use of unmanned aircraft in marine pollution response in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region', and (iii) 'Minimum response requirements for oil and hazardous and noxious substances spills, which may arise from the offshore units at the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region'. Implementation time: 2018-2019. MERRAC has worked on the regional report on floating marine litter as well.
19. The 7th NOWPAP DELTA Exercise, which aimed to develop the capability of oil spill response among the NOWPAP Members, and to facilitate the implementation of the NOWPAP Regional Contingency Plan in the NOWPAP region, was conducted in Maizuru city, Japan, on 2-5 October 2018 led by Japan and Russia. It was proposed that the 8th NOWPAP DELTA Exercise to be conducted back-to-back with the 23rd MERRAC FPM in June 2020 and will be led by Korea and China.
20. The 20th NOWPAP BRAVO Exercise aimed at the strengthening of the regional cooperation on marine pollution response under the NOWPAP Regional Contingency Plan was conducted on 25 July 2019 led by China.
21. A joint 22nd MERRAC FPM and 14th Competent National Authorities Meeting was organized on 28-30 August 2019 in Seoul, Korea. The meeting reviewed the progress of the routine work and the special projects. The special projects will be finalized by the end of 2019. The meeting agreed to submit the following project proposals to the 24th NOWPAP IGM: 1) Assessment of the implementation of International Convention on Oil Pollution

Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC Convention) and OPRC-HNS Protocol in the NOWPAP region; 2) Identification of regional cooperation activities for the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) under NOWPAP MERRAC framework (e.g. oil-waste discharge from ship, fuel-oil quality, etc.); 3) Response options for condensate spill in context of update of NOWPAP MERRAC Regional Report on HNS Preparedness and Response, 2012; 4) Proposal of MERRAC strategic plan for better implementation of regional cooperation on marine pollution preparedness and response (by the organization of expert groups on specific issues such as oil finger-print, oil spill modelling, emergency salvages, etc.)

22. A brainstorming workshop of experts related to oil and hazardous and noxious substances spills response and preparedness was held on 27 August 2019 to identify regional capacity gaps, addressing requirements of relevant IMO conventions and guidelines on sea-based pollution in NOWPAP region.
23. The 2019 MERRAC Expert Meeting will be held on 18-19 December 2019 in Tokyo. Private sector representatives will be invited to the meeting exchange information and knowledge on oil spill response.

4. POMRAC - Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center

24. The 15th Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center (POMRAC) Focal Points Meeting was held on 4-5 July 2018 in Vladivostok, Russia. The meeting noted the progress and agreed to: (i) further implement the development of regional NOWPAP Ecological Quality Objectives (EcoQOs) targets aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators (Phase 1) and assess trends in rivers and direct inputs of contaminants into the marine and coastal environment of NOWPAP Region during the last decade. The meeting also requested POMRAC secretariat to share the progress on 'Microplastics abundance in river runoff and coastal waters of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region with a case study in the Russian part of Northwest Pacific Action Plan sea area' with NOWPAP Focal Points on Marine Litter, as well as to prepare a workshop on microplastics.
25. POMRAC organized an expert meeting in March 2019 to discuss ways of assessing the health of the Sea shared by the four countries in order to support regional progress towards ocean-related SDGs. The meeting discussed six most applicable indicators related to the monitoring of marine ecological quality in the region and agreed on the targets for the four of them, aligned with environmental Sustainable Development Goals. It was also suggested the following five focus areas, notably: Jiaozhou Bay in China, Toyama Bay and/or Hakata Bay in Japan, Masan Bay in Republic of Korea and Russia's Amursky Bay to be selected for testing of the targets related to nutrient, chlorophyll-a and contaminant concentration levels in water and sediments, as well as marine litter. The meeting agreed on the following targets for monitoring the quality of the marine and coastal environment: (i) Nutrient concentrations in the water column within the designated area do not exceed baseline values or national standards (ii) Chlorophyll-a concentrations do not exceed baseline values; (iii) Contaminant concentrations in water and surface sediments do not exceed existing national standards over a five-year period; (iv) A decreasing trend in the amount of marine litter washed ashore over a five-year period. Marine scientists from the four countries will test these targets by observing actual monitoring data in designated areas in 2020–2021.

5. Coordination of Regional Activity Center activities

26. In line with NOWPAP IGM decisions, NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) continued its efforts on coordinating activities of the four Regional Activity Centers (RACs) through regular bilateral meetings, meetings with RAC representatives during Focal Points Meetings, teleconferences and *ad-hoc* meetings (in addition to regular e-mail communications).
27. A Joint NOWPAP RCU and RACs meeting was organized on 1-2 April 2019 in Busan, Korea. The meeting discussed the development of a joint NOWPAP Programme of Work (PoW) 2020-2021, NOWPAP common approach to data and information sharing, principles and priorities for joint work between RCU and RACs and between RACs themselves, as well as the NOWPAP Communication Strategy and Outreach.
28. Guidance in, when requested, and documents for organizing RAC FPs meeting were provided. Comments on and inputs to the documents and meeting reports were provided by RCU.
29. Assistance was provided to RACs regularly in preparing and finalizing expenditure and progress reports before submission to UN Environment Headquarters. When requested, RCU also provided assistance with ongoing projects, including identifying appropriate experts.
30. Information on global and regional meetings, training opportunities and other information of interest were shared with Regional Activity Centers. The NOWPAP website was regularly updated to provide additional information about meetings and partnerships of interest to Regional Activity Centers as well as highlight Regional Activity Centers achievements.
31. The Regional Coordinating Unit was looking at each opportunity to support joint work through channeling relevant information, connecting experts and engaging them in relevant meetings and activities. Coordination of and guidance in the development of RAP MALI activities were provided, and the roadmap for RAP BIO.
32. With the adoption of NOWPAP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2023, the demand for further integration of RACs activities have been rising exponentially. During the reporting period the number of activities that require closer cooperation between Regional Activity Centers has significantly increased.
33. For example, ongoing consultations are supported on further development of RAP BIO, development of indicators for NOWPAP EQOs, implementation of marine litter related activities as a part of RAP MALI, and forthcoming work on integrated coastal management (has not yet started). Almost all major activities of NOWPAP MTS require closer cooperation among Regional Activity Centers.

6. Other NOWPAP activities

34. In addition to the specific projects carried out by NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers, several activities were implemented and coordinated by RCU as described in the following sections.

6.1 Northwest Pacific Action Plan Special Projects

35. Upon request of the Member States at the 22nd NOWPAP IGM, RCU received 4 project proposals for further development. RCU was requested at the meeting, together with the

lead project agency, Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, to develop a proposal of the project “Monitoring and Assessment Methods for Microplastics Pollution” with the total budget for project preparation not exceeding US\$50,000. On June 3rd, 2018, leading microplastics experts from NOWPAP member states convened at the Expert Meeting of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan special project: “Monitoring and Assessment Methods for Microplastics pollution” organized by RCU to brainstorm on the key issues and priorities for further development of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Special Project ‘Monitoring and assessment methods for microplastics pollution’ which will be implemented during 2019-2022. It was agreed that the Special Project to use existing microplastics monitoring criteria in NOWPAP countries and to later develop a harmonized regional approach for microplastics pollution monitoring. Existing eco-toxicological studies of the impact of microplastics on the environment will be used as part of a harmonized regional approach to microplastics ecological risk assessment. Monitoring of microplastics pollution would be carried out in selected sites in the NOWPAP region and a plan prepared for a regional programme for microplastics assessment and monitoring. The contract with the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences to develop a project was drafted and is expected to be signed in Q4 2019. The Second Experts Meeting on this project was held in Dalian, China, on 27 September 2019. The meeting requested the proposal writing team to submit a revised proposal by the end of November 2019.

36. The Regional Coordinating Unit initiated consultations with the proponent of the project “Identification of key indicator species and ecosystems of biodiversity change in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region” - National Scientific Centre of Marine Biology, Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The proposal was approved by the 23rd IGM. The Regional Coordinating Unit has been waiting for the nomination of experts by some of the Member States.

6.2 Building partnerships

37. Partnership building and the development of joint initiatives and activities is one of the major tasks of the Regional Coordinating Unit supported by Regional Activity Centers. During the reporting period with emphasis on the development of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit engaged in consultations with various Northwest Pacific Action Plan partners both traditional and new.
38. **United Nations Environment Programme / Regional Seas:** Northwest Pacific Action Plan is one of the eighteen Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans coordinated by the dedicated Regional Seas Programme Unit of the United Nations Environment Programme. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan through its Regional Coordinating Unit is an active participant of this partnership. During the reporting period, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan provided various inputs to the Regional Seas programme documents and events, including inputs for the UN Secretary-General report on Oceans and the Law of the Sea for the Seventy-fourth session of the UN Assembly, inputs for the Design Guide of Regional Marine Litter Action Plan, inputs to GEO-6 global report, inputs to United Nations Environment Programme Oceans Strategy, inputs for GESAMP 2019 annual meeting, regular updates on Northwest Pacific Action Plan activities to the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and other ad-hoc requests. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan was invited to the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) to share its experiences on addressing marine environmental protection through institutional strengthening.
39. **Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) of the United Nations Environment Programme:** The Regional Coordinating Unit has developed a project proposal to enhance the Northwest Pacific Regional

Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter and negotiated a contract for the Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center.

40. **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC):** A Capacity Building for Marine Debris Prevention and Management in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Region workshop was organized on 19-22 June 2018 by the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, Republic of Korea and the Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan was invited as a key speaker to this event and contributed to draft Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Marine Debris Management Guidelines prepared at the meeting. The latter includes a range of recommendations ranging from policies to reduce plastic consumption through a mix of regulations and incentives targeting producers and consumers, support for research and innovation, financing and increased private sector role to making marine debris a priority for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation region leaders and developing an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Region Marine Debris Strategy and Action Plan.
41. **Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection:** Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection is a global advisory body that advises the United Nations system on scientific aspects of marine environmental protection. At present, it is jointly sponsored by nine UN organizations. The Working Group 40 (Sources, fate and effects of micro-plastics in the marine environment– a global assessment) produced a set of guidelines and protocols in the form of a practical technical manual addressing global need for more clarification and harmonization of sampling and analysis of marine plastics and microplastics and to promote more effective monitoring and assessment, especially on a regional scale. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan has sponsored an expert from the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region who served as one of the authors of the Manual. Inputs were provided to a draft Manual in August 2018. The Manual was published as a report and the first ever global effort to streamline the use of methodologies for marine plastics and microplastics.
42. **North Pacific Marine Science Organization:** The North Pacific Marine Science Organization and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan has a long history of cooperative efforts. In 2015 the joint Study Group on Scientific Cooperation in the North Pacific Ocean developed a joint framework to guide and implement joint science and monitoring activities between the North Pacific Marine Science Organization and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan for the period until 2019. The framework prioritized Harmful Algal Blooms and Marine Pollution as the two themes of focus for joint activities over the next few years. Three other topics - Non-Indigenous Species, Ecosystem Status Reporting, and Biodiversity - were ranked as second-tier priorities and were followed by Eutrophication and Hypoxia as third tier priorities. Collaborative work on climate change adaptation/resilience of socio-ecological systems is an area, where the Northwest Pacific Action Plan lacks expertise and will explore partnering with the North Pacific Marine Science Organization through co-sponsoring relevant events and meetings and bringing the knowledge back to the Northwest Pacific Action Plan. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan have co-convened one of the sessions, namely: Session 7: Environmental indicators of plastic pollution in the North Pacific, at the annual meeting PICES-2019 in Victoria, BC, Canada in October 2019.
43. **The 2nd Phase of Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Project:** The Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem project entitled "Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem: Restoring Ecosystem Goods and Services and Consolidation of a Long-Term Regional Environmental Governance Framework" builds upon four years of regional cooperation for the sustainable use of the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem put in place by China and the Republic of Korea, supported by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Yellow Sea Partnership, and the Global Environment Facility. The initial project completed a regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and finalized a regional Strategic Action Programme (SAP). On 12-14 March 2019, the Northwest Pacific

Action Plan attended the 3rd Meetings of the Management, Science and Technical Panel and Interim Commission Council of the Yellow Sea Project held in Qingdao, China. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan agreed on further cooperate to address marine litter in the Yellow Sea through a Clean Beach City Alliance project. On 4-5 June 2019, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan was invited to the Second Meeting of Regional Working Group on Pollution Reduction which was organized by the Yellow Sea Project and highlighted the importance of controlling marine litter from its sources. On 15-19 July 2019, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan attended the Science Conference of the Yellow Sea Project in Qingdao, China. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan introduced their work on biodiversity, eutrophication and marine litter in the conference.

44. **Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting:** Initiated by the Environmental Ministers of the three countries (Japan, P.R. China and R. Korea), who organized their first joint meeting, including a Northwest Pacific Action Plan workshop on marine litter, in September 2015 in Yantai, P.R. China, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan and Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting hold joint workshops annually. The 2018 joint Northwest Pacific Action Plan-Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting (TEMM) marine litter management workshop was held in Busan, Korea on 4-6 June 2018 to mark and celebrate the 2018 World Environment Day. Similarly, in 2019, the joint Northwest Pacific Action Plan-Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting marine litter management workshop was held in Dalian, China on 24-25 September 2019.
45. **Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA):** Serving as a non-country member to the Partnership Council, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan contributes to the implementation of a Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (2015). The Northwest Pacific Action Plan organized a side event “Two decades of cooperation in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan: Charting way forward for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals” during the East Asian Seas Congress 2018 which was held on 27-30 November 2018 in the Philippines. The session reviewed the over two decades of regional cooperation it has promoted and concluded that the Action Plan plays a key role in the regional implementation of ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals. Marine science experts, representatives of other ocean organizations and Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Activity Centers attended the session. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan was also represented in the Ocean Talk and Sea Exchange discussion during East Asian Seas Congress 2018, and highlighted the importance of Regional Action Plans on Marine Litter for better intraregional coordination of policy and information exchange on this growing threat to the world’s oceans.
46. **Our Sea of East Asia Network :** Our Sea of East Asia Network is a non-profit organization established in 2009. It’s main focus is in research, education, policy development and international cooperation to protect the marine environment from marine litter. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan exchanged views with Our Sea of East Asia Network on analyzing policies and identifying gaps to address marine litter in the Northwest Pacific region in July 2019 in Tongyeong, Republic of Korea.
47. **Other related activities:** The Northwest Pacific Action Plan attended a regional work to brainstorm approaches for achieving the objectives of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The meeting, organized by the IOC-WESTPAC, was to raise awareness about the Decade, identify knowledge gaps and science questions, develop an understanding of existing and potential scientific initiatives, programmes, partnerships and resources, and elaborate issues on capacity-building, information sharing and communications.
48. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan participated in the regional briefing on environment conservation and cooperation on the Korean Peninsula in Seoul on 17 May 2019 to explore

ways to promote cross-border conservation in the Korean Peninsula, building on green initiatives launched after the historic 2018 Korean leaders' summit. The meeting was organized by the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, the Hanns Seidel Foundation Korea and the Ramsar Convention Regional Center.

49. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan attended the Meeting of the Communities of Ocean Action "From Commitments to Action: Implementing SDG14", which was organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs on 30-31 May 2019 in Incheon, Republic of Korea. International and regional environmental organizations, governments and academia identified the best practices and experiences, gaps and obstacles in the delivery the voluntary commitments to the 2017 United Nations Ocean Conference. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan exchanged views with the participants in the conference on how to further collect data on marine litter, build databases on ocean resources, and engage civil society to achieve the voluntary commitments.
50. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan attended the 18–19 February 2019 International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) XXV Scientific Conference, organized by the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and hosted by the Government of Japan. The meeting reviewed scientific preparedness and needs for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030). NOWPAP highlighted the contribution of the over four-decade-old UN Environment Regional Seas Programme to the sustainable management of the marine and coastal environment, a key goal of the 2030 Agenda.
51. At an event to mark the 20th anniversary of Japan's Northwest Pacific Region Environmental Cooperation Center (NPEC), the Northwest Pacific Action Plan voiced its commitment to strengthen its 20-year partnership with the Center to help steer regional implementation of ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan's Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023.

6.3. Raising public awareness

52. In accordance with the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Public Awareness Strategy, the following actions were taken by Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit and Regional Activity Centers:
53. News and information have been posted on the Northwest Pacific Action Plan homepage since 2006. The new Northwest Pacific Action Plan website, which is a child site of the United Nations Environment Programme, was launched in December 2018. Regional Activity Center homepages have been mostly updated.
54. An electronic Newsletter (Northwest Pacific Action Plan Quarterly) was distributed regularly by the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit to member states and partners.
55. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan maintains an online presence on Facebook (facebook.com/nowpap.unep).
56. Information about Northwest Pacific Action Plan activities is regularly provided to the United Nations Environment Programme Headquarters, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

57. Regional Activity Centers and the Regional Coordinating Unit staff also contributed articles to newsletters and delivered lectures/presentations at a local level. The Regional Coordinating Unit continues taking part at events and strengthening practical cooperation with Northwest Pacific Action Plan hosting cities: Toyama and Busan.
58. While attending a few global and regional meetings, Regional Activity Centers and Regional Coordinating Unit staff members contributed to increasing Northwest Pacific Action Plan visibility and attracting public attention to marine environment conservation by introducing Northwest Pacific Action Plan activities

6.4 Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter

59. The 2019 Northwest Pacific Action Plan International Coastal Cleanup campaign and marine litter management workshop (organized together with Marine Litter Focal Points of Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting) were successfully held in Dalian, China on 24-25 September 2019. The participants shared information on how to improve waste management to reduce marine litter into the oceans. Following the workshop, the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Focal Points Meeting reviewed the reports of NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit and Regional Activity Centers, discussed the work plan and budget for 2020-2021. The second expert group meeting for the development of Northwest Pacific Action Plan Special Project on micro-plastics monitoring and assessment was organized on 27 September 2019 in Dalian. About 110 local volunteers together with Northwest Pacific Action Plan officials took part in the International Coastal Clean-up Campaign on Bangchui Beach in Dalian. A total of 76 kg of litter, including rubber, fishing rods, nets and Styrofoam boxes were collected.
60. The Northwest Pacific Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter was transferred from the Northwest Pacific Region Environmental Cooperation Center to the Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center in early 2018.
61. The Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center has continuously updated the marine litter database with monitoring results provided by the Northwest Pacific Region Environmental Cooperation Center, Japan and the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, R. Korea as well as International Coastal Cleanup results from P.R. China and the Russian Federation. All national marine litter monitoring data and related information, including the data from the State Oceanic Administration of P.R. China, are available at the Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center website (<http://dinrac.nowpap.org>).
62. The Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center has finalized the project on floating marine litter distribution and impacts in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region; [two reports](#) "Understanding of Floating Marine Litter Distribution and Impacts in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region" and "Review and Analysis of Floating Marine Litter Prediction Models in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region" were published in 2018.
63. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan has co-sponsored the participation of an expert for the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection Working Group 40 (Sources, fate and effects of micro-plastics in the marine environment) that produced a manual addressing sampling and analysis protocols on marine plastics and microplastics and provide inputs and comments to the draft manual.

6.5. Resource mobilization efforts

64. Northwest Pacific Action Plan member states continue to provide generous support to Northwest Pacific Action Plan operations through Northwest Pacific Action Plan dedicated trust funds to support personnel costs of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit in Japan and R. Korea and personnel costs and operations of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center. Furthermore, dedicated funding is provided by member states to various projects and activities implemented by Regional Activity Centers. Starting from 2017, reports of the United Nations Environment Programme Executive Director provide information about the mobilized external resources.

Table 1. Financial resources mobilized by the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit in 2019¹

Amount (US\$)	Funding source	Purpose of funding
1,500	Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Phase II Project	Travel costs for CEARAC to YSLME Science Conference, Qingdao, China, July 2019
3,000	Norwegian Centre for Oil Spill Preparedness and Marine Environment	Travel costs for DINRAC to Norwegian Conference on prevention and cleanup of marine litter in October 2019
20,000	Ministry of Ecology and Environment and Dalian Metropolitan Government of P.R. China	Costs of logistics for 2019 joint Northwest Pacific Action Plan-Tripartite Environmental Ministers Marine Litter Management Workshop, 2019 Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Meeting and Northwest Pacific Action Plan International Coastal Cleanup Campaign
42,000	Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN)	"International Workshop on Key Indicator Species and Habitats for Marine Biodiversity Change in East Asia"
66,500	TOTAL	

Table 2. Financial resources mobilized by the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Activity Centers in 2019

Amount (US\$)	Funding source	Purpose of funding
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Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center

¹ Table does not include financial contributions of the Government of Japan and Government of R. Korea to support personnel costs of Regional Coordinating Unit offices in Toyama and Busan, respectively.

133,555	Ministry of Environment of Japan	Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center projects on seagrass mapping and eutrophication assessment
46,373	Ministry of Environment of Japan	Marine Environmental Protection of Northwest Pacific Region (website)
111,296	Toyama Prefecture	Organization of Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center Meetings, implementing Biodiversity activity, seagrass mapping and eutrophication assessment
9,274	Toyama Prefecture	Seagrass mapping project
46,373	Toyama Prefecture	Marine Environmental Protection of Northwest Pacific Region (website)
185,494	Toyama Prefecture	Salary of Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center staff

532,365 TOTAL

Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center

63,050	Ministry of Ecology and Environment of P.R. China	Support to Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center office (part of office rent and operations)
43,988	Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center, Ministry of Ecology and Environment of P.R. China	Support to Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center office (salary)

107,038 TOTAL

Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response

Regional Activity Center

219,104	Korea, Korea Coast Guard	Annual MERRAC secretariat staff salaries and other operational budget in 2019
unknown	- P.R. China, Maritime Safety Administration - Japan, Japan Coast Guard	Participation at the online POLREP system test exercise - 6 December 2019

	- Korea, Korea Coast Guard - Russia, Marine Rescue Service	
219,104	TOTAL	

65. The total number of external financial resources mobilized by all Northwest Pacific Action Plan entities in 2019 is estimated at twice the annual contributions by Member States to the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Trust Fund and is about **US\$925,007** (approximately same as mobilized in 2018 of US\$922,860) of which the Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center mobilized US\$532,365, the Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center – US\$107,038, the Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center – US\$219,104, and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit – US\$66,500. Most of the mobilized resources are coming from core support provided by Member States to Regional Activity Centers in the form of staff costs and office expenses.
66. Since 2016, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit begun an internship program for both offices. Interns are providing support in drafting documents and reports for Northwest Pacific Action Plan meetings and logistical support to Regional Coordinating Unit staff. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan internship program is on an ongoing basis and announced regularly on the UN recruitment portal, Inspira. Interns provide invaluable support under conditions of staff shortage.

7 Brief summary of discussions the 23rd NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM)

67. The 23rd NOWPAP Intergovernmental meeting was held on 9-11 October 2018 in Moscow, the Russian Federation. The meeting was attended by representatives of the NOWPAP Member States, namely the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers and the Regional Coordinating Unit also attended the meeting. A representative from the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Project Phase II (YSLME Phase II) participated in the meeting as observer. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) sent their statements to the meeting.
68. Mr. Denis Khramov, First Deputy Minister of the Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation welcomed the participants of the 23rd NOWPAP IGM. He highlighted that over the past twenty-five years, NOWPAP turned out to be an acting mechanism of international collaboration in the field of regional environmental protection, conservation of its ecological capacity, and pollution prevention of the marine environment in the Northwest Pacific Region. The well-established, clear and transparent organizational structure of NOWPAP provides the effectiveness of activities via its Regional Activity Centers. He noted that NOWPAP has played a very important role for the Northwest Pacific Region as various interests and intensive economic activity are interacting in the region. He stressed that the effective implementation of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030 and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14 is a top priority for the UNEP Regional Seas Programme's organizations today.
69. Mr. Atsushi Iwasaki, Head of Delegation of Japan, noted that conserving marine environment, in particular, the issue of marine litter and plastics has emerged rapidly as

one of the most pressing global issues at various fora in the past few years and highlighted the role of NOWPAP as a regional mechanism of cooperation for marine conservation in this context.

70. Mr. Xiangbin Pei, Head of Delegation of P.R. China, expressed his gratitude to the Government of the Russian Federation for hosting the meeting and highlighted the importance of NOWPAP mechanism for information exchange in the aftermath of Sanchi oil spill incident in 2018. He thanked Japan, Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and MERRAC for their support.
71. Mr. Tong-q Lee, Head of Delegation of R. Korea, delivered welcoming remarks and stressed that climate change, sustainable development and marine litter are all global challenges. He welcomed NOWPAP progress thus far and expressed hope that the mechanism would will make more progress in the upcoming decade.
72. Commenting the report of the Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme, Japan acknowledged that resolutions adopted at the last NOWPAP IGM were implemented smoothly and appreciated RCU's good work with limited staff. Japan expressed its concern about the surplus in the NOWPAP Trust Fund and requested RCU's continuous efforts to reduce the unspent balance and continue looking for quality projects that could be funded from the surplus. Furthermore, Japan noticed the erroneous allocation of funds between Toyama and Busan offices and urged UNEP and RCU to resolve the issue as quickly as practicable and avoid such problems in the future. Responding to Japan, Ms. Vanda ANDROMEDA, Finance and Budget Officer of UNEP, informed the meeting that the error is already corrected partially and will be fully corrected by the end of 2018.
73. R. Korea supported the adoption of the Executive Director report also stressing the importance of correcting funds allocation error in Japan's and R. Korea's Trust Funds for NOWPAP RCU personnel. R. Korea emphasized the importance of continuing and strengthening NOWPAP public outreach and communication activities and encouraged NOWPAP to engage more actively in public campaigns, especially for marine litter management and response to maritime incidents. R. Korea noted good regional cooperation in handling the aftermath of Sanchi oil incident. R. Korea recommended RCU to share with Member States mission reports and timely information about upcoming events, including on NOWPAP website.
74. Commenting on the report of CEARAC, Japan highlighted the importance of developing the roadmap for Regional Action Plan on Marine Biodiversity Conservation (RAP BIO) and emphasized the need for RCU and all RACs to work together to advance this important activity.
75. P.R. China commented that CEARAC report showed CEARAC has participated in various activities, but China did not receive advance information and recommended that RAC Secretariats and RCU should notify NOWPAP Focal Points in advance of their participation at relevant meetings. If presentations or working paper are submitted on behalf of NOWPAP, China would prefer that these products are being circulated in advance to give Member States a chance to provide comments and assistance when necessary.
76. R. Korea noted the good work of CEARAC and emphasized that marine biodiversity is a major part of the NOWPAP Medium-Term Strategy 2018- 2023 and RAP BIO would play an important role in the region. R. Korea supported comments from China on the need to provide advance information to NOWPAP Focal Points on the RACs upcoming meetings and presentations and stressed the importance of timely delivery of RACs technical reports.

77. Commenting on the DINRAC report, Japan expressed its satisfaction with the progress of transferring and development of the Northwest Pacific Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter. The Regional Node should be the key information source on marine litter for governments and NGOs in the region. Japan also pointed out some facts in the part of 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 in the report. With regards to collection of data on Red List species, Japan continues leading this work providing useful information for marine biodiversity conservation in the region. Japan requested further cooperation from Member States to provide relevant data on Red List species to DINRAC.
78. P.R. China also expressed its satisfaction with the progress by DINRAC on data collection, website development, and construction of the Regional Node. However, it was noted that there is a continuing overlap on biodiversity activities between DINRAC and CEARAC that should be addressed. Furthermore, China emphasized that while DINRAC mandate remains in data and information management, this area advanced significantly since the establishment of NOWPAP and every RAC now has its own information and data resources. Member States should define better the scope of RAC's activities with respect to data and information management and called upon RCU to work together with DNRAC and other RACs towards this goal.
79. The Chairperson added that the revision of the original DINRAC Terms of Reference is one of the possible options to consider in the future. Japan agreed with these comments in general and also welcomed the opportunity to discuss the future direction of NOWPAP DINRAC activities. Responding to comments from Member States, RCU emphasized the increasing importance of collecting information and data on ocean-related SDGs where DINRAC could play an important role in the future. RCU proposed to discuss the future direction of DINRAC activities with the Government of P.R. China and NOWPAP DINRAC Secretariat followed by a consultation with other Member States to advance this discussion at the next NOWPAP IGM in 2019.
80. Commenting on the MERRAC report, Russia congratulated MERRAC on organizing a successful DELTA exercise held in Japan. R. Korea highlighted MERRAC success in ensuring effective information exchange among member states in the aftermath of Sanchi incident as an excellent model. The brainstorm workshop planned by MERRAC in 2019 would be an important opportunity to discuss the future directions of MERRAC to align its activities further with the priorities of the NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023.
81. During the discussion, Member States inquired what the added value for NOWPAP to involve in the process of SDG monitoring and reporting. Several Member States noted that the issue of SDG monitoring and reporting is complex and still work in progress; both at the global and at the national level. There was a consensus that while the discussion should continue in the framework of NOWPAP on these issues, establishing an Ad-hoc Working Group and start the process formally is pre-mature at this time. Relevant indicators for SDG 14 follow up (not monitoring) are already included in the proposed Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023 and could be a good step forward; further suggestions could be incorporated into the next NOWPAP biannual Programme of Work 2020-2021.
82. Summarizing the discussion, RCU underlined that Member States would continue seeing NOWPAP's role in the follow up to SDG 14 and suggested linking this work with NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023 Monitoring and Reporting Framework. Furthermore, there is a need for NOWPAP RCU and RACs to continue engaging in the global and regional processes leading to the development of relevant SDG 14 indicators. Member States requested RCU and RACs to continue providing them with the information about such engagements and results achieved by sharing respective mission reports.

83. The 23rd NOWPAP IGM adopted five resolutions as attached in the Annex 1. The approved Report is available online on the NOWPAP website.

**ANNEX 1: Resolutions of the 23rd NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting
Resolution 1**

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE 2018-2019 BIENNIUM

Acknowledging RACs and RCU efforts in implementing the NOWPAP 2018-2019 Programme of Work (PoW),

Recognizing the importance of joint efforts to protect the shared marine environment and manage sustainably its natural resources by engaging neighbouring countries in comprehensive and specific regional actions contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and targets,

Recognizing the need to initiate new activities, including NOWPAP Special Projects in line with the NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023,

The Twenty Third Intergovernmental Meeting,

19. Approves the Report of the UNEP Executive Director (UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/3), takes note of the NOWPAP implementation progress and the status of resources in the NOWPAP Trust Fund.
20. Approves report on the Status of Implementation of the NOWPAP Programme of Work in 2018-2019 (UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/7) and the reports of NOWPAP Regional Activity Centres – CEARAC, DINRAC, MERRAC, and POMRAC (UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/4/1-4).
21. Encourages NOWPAP RCU and RACs to continue their best efforts to mobilize additional financial resources for the implementation of the NOWPAP Programme of Work.
22. With a reference to the document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/13:
 - Requests NOWPAP RCU include additional functions in the staff work plans for 2018-2019 during the mid-term review in October 2018 as recommended in the document;
 - Approves in principle to allocate financial resources from the contribution from Japan for Toyama office of NOWPAP RCU for a post of Individual Contractor in charge of time bound tasks in the NOWPAP RCU for a limited period not exceeding 36 months without extension. Requests NOWPAP RCU to prepare Terms of Reference for the position within one month after the 23rd NOWPAP IGM and submit for comments and approval by Member States. After agreeing with the Government of Japan the position's budget envelope, requests RCU to undertake necessary contractual arrangements.
5. Requests NOWPAP RCU to provide regular (quarterly) updates to NOWPAP Focal Points on missions undertaken by RCU and RACs supporting implementation of the NOWPAP Programme of Work.
6. Requests NOWPAP RCU and RACs to make full use of focal points mechanism to achieve better communication and coordination while implementing the NOWPAP Programme of Work 2018-2019.
7. Encourages NOWPAP RCU and RACs to continue their best efforts to develop and maintain partnerships with related organizations, programmes and projects to further implementation of the biennial Programme of Work 2018-2019 and NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023.
8. Requests NOWPAP RCU and RAC Directors to enhance efforts in public communication and outreach aiming at the increased NOWPAP presence, relevance

and visibility in the region and beyond, including in all four languages of the region and report progress to the 24th NOWPAP IGM.

9. Hold the 24th NOWPAP IGM in Beijing, People's Republic of China in 2019.

Resolution 2**SUSTAINABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NOWPAP TRUST FUND AND
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

Recognizing with satisfaction the full replenishment and continuing and stable contributions to NOWPAP Trust Fund by Member States,

The Twenty Third Intergovernmental Meeting,

5. Agrees to the contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund in 2019 as presented in Table 1.
6. Requests NOWPAP RCU together with RACs undertake efforts to reach full expenditure rate of the approved budget for the 2018-19 biennium by the end of 2019.

Table 1. Scale of contributions to NOWPAP Trust Fund for 2019

	Annual contribution (US\$)
People's Republic of China	125,000
Japan	125,000
Republic of Korea	125,000
Russian Federation	125,000
Total	500,000

Resolution 3**THE NOWPAP MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY 2018-2023**

Recognizing the importance of the NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023 for aligning NOWPAP activities with national and regional priorities and the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 14,

The Twenty Third Intergovernmental Meeting,

- a. Adopts public version of the NOWPAP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2023 as provided in the document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/6 Ver.1 and requests NOWPAP RCU to publish and disseminate the Strategy widely among relevant national, regional and global fora.
- b. Approves Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for NOWPAP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2023 in principle as provided in the document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/5. Requests NOWPAP RCU to submit the Framework document for two-month comments period by RACs following the 23rd IGM, then to NOWPAP Member States for two-months comments and prepare for adoption by the 24th NOWPAP IGM.
- c. Encourages NOWPAP RACs and RCU to enhance further regional cooperation and coordination for follow up on Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14) in the Northwest Pacific region, including but not limited to providing relevant inputs to global and regional processes for the development of SDG 14 indicators. Requests NOWPAP RCU to report annual progress on the follow up on SDG 14 related to NOWPAP MTS.
- d. Takes note of the merit of the proposal on conducting external institutional assessment of the NOWPAP's "business model" as provided in the document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/11 as means to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14.

Resolution 4**REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER**

Acknowledging the negative impacts of marine litter, including microplastics on the coastal and marine environment in the NOWPAP region,

Acknowledging also the efforts of NOWPAP Member States to address marine litter problem and to prevent harm to the coastal and marine environment,

Taking into account that the implementation of the NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) adopted in 2008 is in line with national and regional priorities identified by the NOWPAP Member States,

Taking note that most of RAP MALI activities are expected to be implemented at the national and local level, in cooperation with local governments and relevant authorities as well as private sector, research institutions, NGOs and the general public,

Complimenting NOWPAP RCU for its efforts working with UNEP GPA office and other relevant organizations and initiatives to expand activities addressing marine litter, including microplastics and its sources,

The Twenty Third Intergovernmental Meeting,

1. Approves Terms of Reference of NOWPAP RAP MALI Focal Points Meeting as provided in the document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/9 Rev.1.
2. Requests NOWPAP RACs and RCU to implement the work plan in close consultation with UNEP GPA office and other relevant international organizations, projects, and programmes.
3. Encourages NOWPAP Member States to carry out further activities to prevent, monitor and remove marine litter at national and local levels.

Resolution 5 NOWPAP SPECIAL PROJECTS

Acknowledging the importance of securing larger-scale and sustained impact of the NOWPAP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2023 through closer integration of the Medium-Term Strategy objectives into national or regional strategies and plans using partnerships,

Acknowledging also the importance of external resource mobilization to complement and enhance the impact of NOWPAP RAC activities, particularly in areas with insufficient expertise,

Having considered progress achieved and lessons learned in the development of NOWPAP Special Projects and new project proposal submitted by the Russian Federation Member States as presented in the document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/10,

The Twenty Third Intergovernmental Meeting,

1. Taking notes with concern delay in submitting NOWPAP Special Project proposal "Monitoring and Assessment Methods for Microplastics Pollution" for the decision by the 23rd NOWPAP IGM and encourages NOWPAP RCU together with the lead national agency and project partners to accelerate project preparation and submit the project for approval by the 24th NOWPAP IGM.
2. Requests NOWPAP RCU in consultation with RACs and together with the lead national agency to develop project proposal submitted by the Russian Federation "Identification of key indicator species and ecosystems of biodiversity change in the NOWPAP region" (as presented in Annex 1 of the document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. 23/10) with the total budget for project preparation not exceeding US\$45,000 for consideration by the 24th NOWPAP IGM.
3. Requests NOWPAP RCU to develop draft Guidelines for preparing NOWPAP Special Projects and submit for consideration by the 24th NOWPAP IGM.
4. Requests NOWPAP RCU to coordinate mobilization of financial resources for the approved Special Projects with the lead national agency, relevant external partners and RACs.
5. Encourages Member States to identify and propose new NOWPAP Special Projects supporting the implementation of the NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023 and NOWPAP RCU to keep track record of the submitted proposals for consideration by the 24th NOWPAP IGM.