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REVIEW OF PROGRAMME PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

(Item 5(c) of the provisional agenda)

Strengthening Subregional Cooperation on Marine Protected Areas

Note by the Secretariat

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I. BACKGROUND

1. The 18th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-18) in November 2013 launched the North-East Asia Marine Protected Areas Network (NEAMPAN) to strengthen subregional cooperation on the marine environment. The Terms of Reference (TOR) of NEAMPAN adopted in SOM-18 spell out the objectives, geographical scope, target marine protected areas (MPAs), network membership, activity areas, organizational structure, programme operation, budget and roles of member States. The Steering Committee, which was established accordingly, provides policy and operational guidance for NEAMPAN and is suggested to hold biennial meetings to plan network activities and review ongoing activities as well as network operation.
2. The 1st Steering Committee meeting held in March 2014 in Incheon, Republic of Korea (ROK) further clarified national approaches to MPA, strategic direction of the Network, target MPAs, network membership, as well as organizational and managerial structures. The Meeting also agreed on the TOR of the Steering Committee, which was endorsed by SOM-19 in 2014. In addition to policy and operational guidance, and planning and monitoring on NEAMPAN activities, the Steering Committee also makes recommendations on new programmes and budgetary matters to SOM for consideration.
3. The 2nd Steering Committee meeting was held back-to-back with the 1st NEAMPAN workshop in June 2016 at the Suncheon Wetland Protected Area, ROK, one of the target MPAs. The 1st NEAMPAN Workshop brought together Steering Committee members, managers of 8 NEAMPAN sites, as well as experts from international organizations and non-governmental organizations. The Workshop facilitated (1) sharing experiences of MPA management; (2) sharing experiences in partnership and networking among MPAs; and (3) exchanging views on common concerns and interests of the NEAMPAN members. Discussions included key protected species each NEAMPAN site, challenges of insufficient funding, interests in eco-tourism including balancing with the conservation and socio-economic needs, and most importantly, areas of potential collaborative activities.
4. The 2nd Steering Committee meeting mainly discussed the arrangement of the Advisory Committee and network activities, as well as the project proposal by the Russian Federation which was originally submitted to SOM-19 and re-submitted to SOM-20 after revision to focus on the identified target MPAs and activities. The Committee's suggestion and views were incorporated in the revised proposal, and SOM-21 endorsed the project on "*Strengthening the subregional cooperation through knowledge sharing on sustainable management of MPAs*" for the implementation. The Meeting also welcomed the confirmation by the Russian Federation on allocating US\$120,000 to the project.
5. The NEAMPAN activities indicate that many of MPA managers face the challenge of balancing conservation and socio-economic activities to support local communities and sustain operation of MPA management activities. Effective management of MPA requires a good

understanding of the status of MPAs, both from biological/ecological as well as socio-economic perspective. It is particularly true for NEAMPAN sites in which various human activities take place around the coast. Thus, equally important as collection and accumulation of data on the ecological/environmental status of MPA are (i) monitoring the impact of and on human activities, (ii) assessment and evaluation of monitored data, and (iii) reflection of the evaluation results into the management process.

6. Given that NEAMPAN sites are a selection of relatively well-managed and monitored MPAs in North-East Asia, their monitoring and management experiences serve as laboratories for balancing conservation and socio-economic objectives. Studies on those experiences will thus serve as beneficial knowledge products for effective management of MPAs in the NEASPEC region.

7. Currently, member States have nominated a total of 11 sites as NEAMPAN member sites, including six sites from China, one from Japan, two from the Republic of Korea, and two from the Russian Federation as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. NEAMPAN Sites



	MPA site	Conservation status	Relevant international reference (year of designation)
1	(China) Beilun Estuary National Marine Nature Reserve	Marine Nature Reserve (MNR)	Ramsar site (2008)
2	(China) Shankou Mangrove National Marine Nature Reserve	Marine Nature Reserve (MNR)	UNESCO-MAB (2000) Ramsar site (2002) IUCN category V
3	(China) Sanya Coral Reef National Nature Reserve	Marine Nature Reserve (MNR)	IUCN Category V
4	(China) National Nature Reserve of Dazhou Island	Marine Nature Reserve (MNR)	IUCN Category V

	Marine Ecosystems		
5	(China) Nanji Islands National Marine Nature Reserve	Marine Nature Reserve (MNR)	UNESCO-MAB (1998) EAAFP Network site
6	(China) Changyi National Marine Ecology Special Protected Area	Marine Special Protected Area (MSPA)	
7	(ROK) Muan wetland Protected Area	Coastal wetland protected area	Ramsar site (2008)
8	(ROK) Suncheon Bay wetland Protected Area	Coastal wetland protected area	Ramsar site (2006) IUCN Category V
9	(Russia) Far-Eastern State Marine Biosphere Reserve	State nature reserve	UNESCO-MAB (2003)
10	(Russia) Sikhote-Alin State Natural Biosphere Reserve	State nature reserve	UNESCO-MAB (1978) UNESCO World Heritage Site (2001)
11	(Japan) Shiretoko National Park	National park	UNESCO World Heritage Site (2005)
<p>Reference Ramsar site: The Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance http://archive.ramsar.org/cd/a/en/ramsar-documents-list/main/ramsar/1-31-218_4000_0 UNESCO-MAB: UNESCO Man and Biosphere programme, biosphere reserve sites http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/ IUCN Category V: Protected Landscape/Seascape https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/about/protected-areas-categories/category-v-protected-landscapes/seascape</p>			

II. RECENT NEAMPAN ACTIVITIES

8. *International Seminar on Marine Protected Areas in YSLME and North-East Asia:* NEAMPAN Secretariat and the Project Management Office of the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (YSLME) Phase II Project jointly organized “International Seminar on Marine Protected Areas in YSLME and North-East Asia” in on 14 July 2017, in Gangwha County, ROK, co-hosted by the County and Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM).

9. The Seminar had presentations by experts and interactions among participants including various stakeholders in local authorities and communities, and facilitated experience sharing of North-East Asia in establishing MPAs. Presentations highlighted issues around the designation and management of MPAs in the ROK as well in China and Japan, such as the experiences in establishing MPAs network in the Yellow Sea; China’s efforts to strengthen MPA network and raise awareness on cooperative actions of the government and the society; and stakeholder participation in MPA management in Japan.

10. As Ganghwa county was exploring to designate part of the island as a tidal flat eco-park, Ganghwa county highly appreciated NEASPEC and YSLME's support for their initiative through the Seminar to raise interest and awareness on MPAs and indicated their interest to take part in NEAMPAN in the future. (see Annex I for the report of the seminar)

11. This International Seminar also showcases the complementarity of the two programmes as NEAMPAN aims at strengthening subregional cooperation on marine environment, in particular, through person-to-person network of those involved in MPA management, while YSLME MPA Network (YSMPAN) was established as one of the priority initiatives under the YSLME Biodiversity Conservation Plan with a focus on biological network of MPAs. The Secretariat has maintained close communication with the YSLME Project Office to explore further collaboration opportunities and enhance the effectiveness and efficiencies of the two programmes.

12. *NEAMPAN Project on “Strengthening the subregional cooperation through knowledge sharing on sustainable management of marine protected areas”*: Following up to the endorsement by SOM-21 in 2017, the Project commenced in 2018, with formal approval by the Government of the Russian Federation and internal clearance by the ESCAP administration on the release of funds for the project activities.

13. As a main NEAMPAN activity for next two years, the project will focus on the review of assessment and monitoring system of selected NEAMPAN sites and their links to management strategies/plans. It will involve carrying out research and analysis, expert group meetings, site visits and knowledge sharing workshop, and disseminating studies and recommendations. The project also aims to support the goals of NEAMPAN as well as the Strategic Plan of NEASPEC 2016-2020 adopted at SOM-20, which spells out the NEASPEC programmatic areas and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), including Marine Protected Areas and SDG Goal 14 (Life below water).

14. During the period from the commencement to the time of reporting in 2018, the NEAMPAN secretariat developed an outline (Annex II) and the Terms of Reference of the studies. The studies include review of modalities to assess environmental and socio-economic status of MPA and its connection to the management plans and strategies. After the review of the NEAMPAN sites, in-depth case study will be conducted on one or two sites from each country’s MPA. Through formal and informal consultation with Steering Committee members, relevant government officers and experts, the Secretariat identified experts in China, Japan, the ROK and the Russian Federation who could be engaged in conducting in-depth studies on the designated sites.

15. An Expert Group Meeting on monitoring and assessment of MPAs is also scheduled to be held tentatively in December 2018 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, (i) to ensure coherence among the country studies and review the drafts being prepared under the project and (ii) to identify MPAs for in-depth case studies.

16. *NEAMPAN Workshop and the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting*: Following up on the offer of the Government of China at SOM-21 to host NEAMPAN meeting in China, the Secretariat planned to organize a NEAMPAN workshop and the 3rd steering Committee Meeting. The proposed workshop aimed to focus on sharing experiences and challenges in managing human

activities in MPAs. While the workshop was initially scheduled to be held in June 2018 in China, it was postponed to a later date to ensure the smooth transition and close engagement with a new counterpart institution which was rearranged with the major restructuring of the Government of China. New date and the venue of the meetings are being discussed in consultation with the designated counterpart in China.

III. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

17. NEAMPAN Steering Committee is experiencing high turnover of some members which creates a communication gap between the members and the Secretariat. While it is beyond their control as it reflects the managerial decision of the respective offices of the government, the Meeting may wish to request the member states to take the continuity and familiarity to NEASPEC focal points/NEAMPAN Steering Committee members into consideration when replacing the Steering Committee members.

18. NEAMPAN is undertaking its first NEAMPAN project since its establishment. In this context, the Meeting may wish to request Member States to consider proposing and hosting a workshop to facilitate the exchange of experiences on evaluation methodologies and management planning of NEAMPAN site to disseminate findings from the project.

19. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea formally became the 170th Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention and designated the Mundok Migratory Bird Reserve and the Rason Migratory Bird Reserve as its first two “Ramsar Sites” in 2018; and joined East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) with Kumya Wetland Reserve and Mundok Wetland Reserve listed as Flyway Network Site (FNS) in 2018 as well. Taking this opportunity, the Meeting may wish to encourage DPRK to participate in NEAMPAN activities, by nominating Steering Committee member, nominating MPA sites, and/or participating in the NEAMPAN workshops.

20. The Meeting may wish to invite member States to propose NEAMPAN activities which are in line with the activity scope of the Network, as contained in the Terms of Reference, and to provide financial/in-kind contributions to activities.

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ANNEX I

International Seminar on Marine Protected Areas in YSLME and North-East Asia

for effective and equitable management of MPAs to achieve SDG 14 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Ganghwa Tidal Flat Center, Ganghwa County, Republic of Korea

14 July 2017

Organization

The secretariats of *North-East Asia MPA Network (NEAMPAN)* and the *Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (YSLME)* jointly organized **International Seminar on Marine Protected Areas in YSLME and North-East Asia**, which was co-hosted by Ganghwa County, Incheon, Republic of Korea and Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM), Republic of Korea.

The Seminar was held in Ganghwa Tidal Flat Center in Ganghwa County. Participants to the seminar consisted of participants at the inception workshop of the UNDP/GFE YSLME Phase II Project, marine scientists, as well as local authorities and local stakeholders in Ganghwa Island including Governor of Ganghwa County. There were also representatives from UNDP, UNOPS, government officials from State Oceanic Administration of China, Bureau of Fisheries and Fisheries Law Enforcement from Ministry of Agriculture of China, Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of Republic of Korea, marine scientists from renowned institutes and universities from China and Republic of Korea, East Asian and Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), Conservation International (CI), and other NGOs working for coastal and marine biodiversity conservation in the region. More than 50 representatives including local authorities and local stakeholders participated in the meeting.

Mr. Sang Bog LEE, Governor of Ganghwa County and Mr. Jae Sang YOON, Chairman, Ganghwa County Council delivered a welcoming speech. Mr. Jing Yong CHOI, Executive Director of Marine Conservation, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM) also delivered an opening speech on behalf of all the organizers including ESCAP (as NEAMPAN secretariat) and YSLME.

Presentations

“Designation and Management of MPAs in KOREA” by **Ms. Su-Jeong LEE**, Manager, KOEM: Ms. Lee highlighted the current status of tidal flats in the Republic of Korea and its ecological and economic importance, and outlined the designation and process and management of marine protected areas. She also briefed the participants on the strategies and targets to ensure integrated management of MPAs.

“Efforts of China to strengthen the MPA network and ways to increase awareness and cooperative actions of governments and society” by **Mr. Zhaohui ZHANG**, Deputy Director, First Institute of Oceanography, State Oceanic Administration (China): Mr. Zhang provided an overview of three types of MPAs (marine nature reserves, special marine protected areas, and aquatic germplasm resources conservation zones)

in China and China's efforts to strengthen MPA network including the designation of six MPAs in NEAMPAN, as well as how the MPA's development is linked with the 13th five-year plan. He also highlighted various efforts to increase awareness on MPA and cooperative actions of governments and the society through regulation, public awareness, community co-management, training, etc.

“Experiences of MPA management in Japan” by **Mr. Mitsutaku MAKINO**, Head, Fisheries Policy Group, National Research Institute of Fisheries Science (Japan): Mr. Makino highlighted how MPAs are defined in Japan and provided examples of MPAs in Japan where various stakeholders including local fishermen are involved in planning and management of MPAs. In particular, Shiretoko is a unique example as it was designated as World Natural Heritage area whereas local fishermen self-regulate the fishing activities to protect key fish stock. Researchers provide supports through scientific advices and stock assessment.

“Efficient conservation and sustainable use of Ramsar Sites in Suncheon City” by **Mr. Wonduk KIM**, Suncheon (Republic of Korea): Suncheon Bay transformed from a site where dumping and dredging taking place to a wetland reserve, with initiative of citizens and social groups to protect the area. Now Suncheon Bay is designated as Wetland Protected Area and Ramsar site where 2 million tourists visit every year. Mr. Kim highlighted how Suncheon Bay has been managed through cooperation among citizens, government and academia, removing facilities which are damaging to the ecology, restoring ecology of the wetland and creating favourable environment for migratory birds including hooded crane.

“International cooperation for a shared biodiversity resource: Migratory waterbirds and their intertidal habitats in the Yellow Sea” by **Ms. Minseon KIM**, Programme Officer, EAAFP Secretariat: East Asian-Australasian Flyway represents the highest number of IUCN threatened birds' species and of declining species of birds. Yellow Sea is a migratory bottleneck and the protecting tidal flat, particularly in Ganghwa, is critical for securing stopover sites of migratory birds. Ms. Kim also briefed on how East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) contributes in this respect.

“How to conserve MPA sites and strengthen MPA networking to ensure a healthy ocean --- lessons learned from CI's Seascape achievements” by **Ms. Jing WANG**, Marine program manager, Conservation International (China): Ms. Wang outlined the experience of Conservation International in MPA management and network in coral triangle (Seascape project). She also introduced Ocean Health Index which provides assessments of ocean's health according to the 10 goals associated with the wide range of services the ocean provides, such as food provision, carbon storage, tourism, biodiversity, etc.

“Experience in establishment of MPA network in the Yellow Sea and ways forward” by **Mr. Jeong-Ho NAM**, Research Fellow, Korea Maritime Institute (Republic of Korea): Mr. Nam reflected on the past development to form Yellow Sea network of Marine Protected Area and outlined the expected benefits of MPA network as well as different types of MPA networks (social, ecological, management-based networks, for example). He highlighted steps that can be taken into the MPA network of Yellow Sea forward.

Two presenters introduced the unique features of the sites in Suncheon where participants of the seminar visited as part of the field visit.

“Temptation, Between Costal Garden and Marine” by **Ms. Young-Rang KWON**, ArtDiCom, Ganghwa (Republic of Korea): Ms. Kwon presented how she designed and implemented her project to create a garden in tidal flat in Suncheon to make the site more attractive to the visitors than pervious time, taking account of the environmental conditions of the site.

“Black-faced Spoonbill, Gangwha” by **Mr. Yong Hoon JEONG**, Gangwha Birdwatching Club (Republic of Korea): Mr. Jeong explained the increasing number of black-faced spoonbill sighted and the critical importance of Gangwha tidal flat for migratory birds as a nesting site.

Sharing experiences

Through the presentations described above and interactions among participants, the Seminar shared experiences of North-East Asia in establishing MPAs with various stakeholders in local authorities and communities. As Ganghwa island is planning to designate part of the island as a tidal flat eco-park, Ganghwa county highly appreciated ENEA and YSLME's support for their efforts to designate the area as a new MPA (eco-park) and indicated their interest to partake in MPA networking.

Seminar website: <http://www.neaspec.org/article/international-seminar-marine-protected-areas-yslme-and-north-east-asia>

ANNEX II

Outline of the North-East Asia Marine Protected Areas Network (NEAMPAN) Studies

Strengthening the subregional cooperation through knowledge sharing on sustainable management of marine protected areas

1.1 Background

Marine Protected Areas of the North-East Asia subregion significantly vary in size, biodiversity, management authority, etc. while they share similar objectives such as contribution to biodiversity and conservation, non-consumptive economic benefits such as tourism.

While conservation is a key objective of MPA by definition, many MPAs face lack of resources and thus face challenges of balancing conservation and economic activities to support local communities and management of MPAs. Many of the MPAs engage in research and monitoring of the health of their MPAs, with various scope and framework. Some large MPAs have structured indicators for monitoring the status of the MPAs and impacts of activities within their MPAs according to their management plans or mandates. For some smaller MPAs, often the environmental status and activities outside the MPAs have more significant impacts on the MPAs.

Many of the MPAs in NEAMPAN undertake monitoring of their sites although with various scope and degree of scientific monitoring. Almost by definition, human activities in MPAs are more strictly controlled than non-MPA sites, and MPA monitoring has place-based focus and possibly accumulated long-term data sets of the sites. In this context, MPAs can also serve as sentinel sites to monitor climate change¹. In this context, assessment and monitoring of MPAs provides critical tool for effective management of MPAs as well as important indicator of climate change.

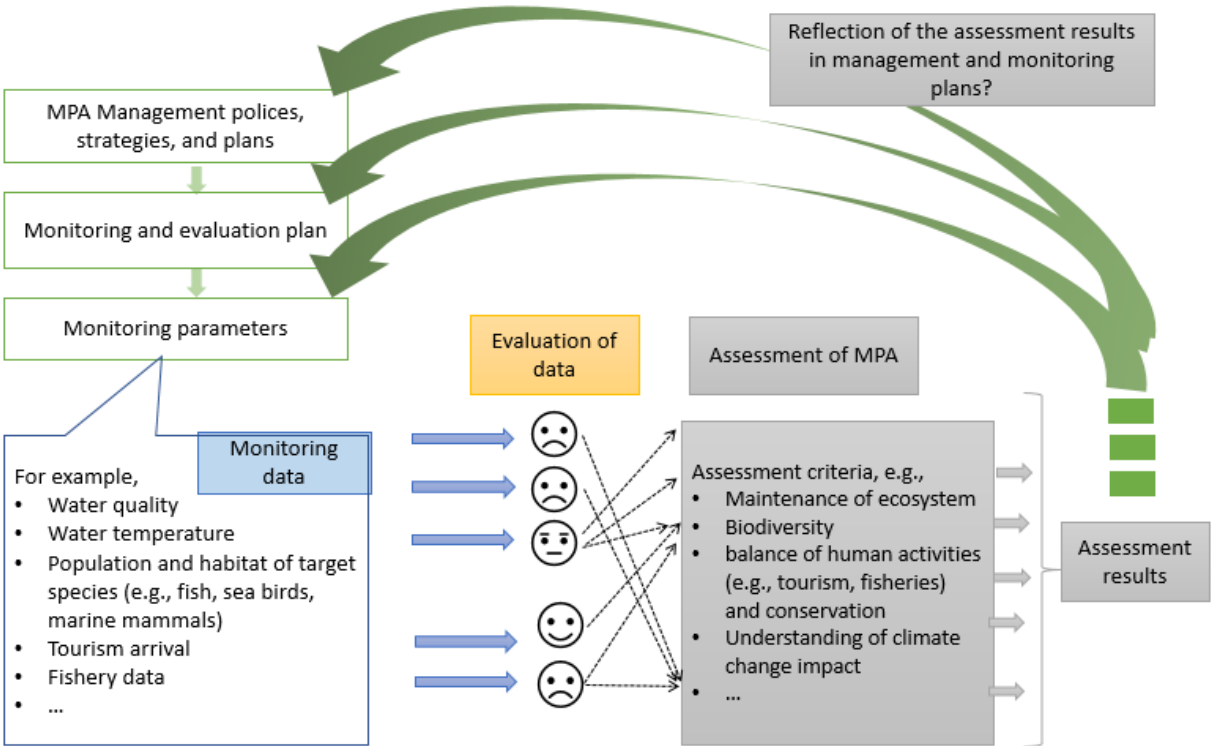
The proposed study is a key component (item 1 below) of the NEAMPAN project “Strengthening the subregional cooperation through knowledge sharing on sustainable management of MPAs”. The project aims to promote exchange of experiences in monitoring and assessment of the status of MPAs and sustainable management of marine resources, to collectively improve knowledge and practices in NEAMPAN sites. The consultant is expected to participate in the other component of the project as an expert, wherever applicable.

1.2 Planned activities of the project

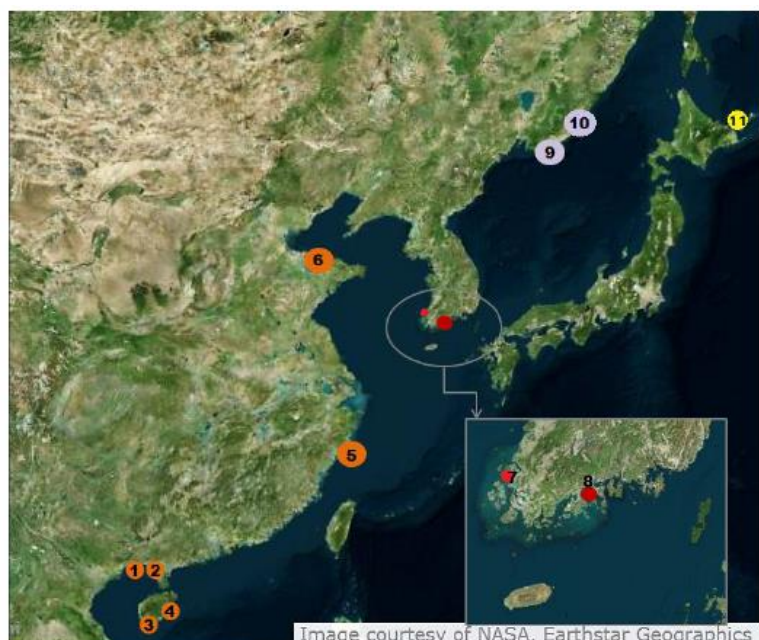
- 1 Research and analysis (see Figure 1):
 - a. Literature review of the management plans and strategies of selected NEAMPAN sites

- b. Review and analysis of methodologies applied in the respective MPAs for
 - i. monitoring and assessment of the current state of MPA
 - ii. assessment of environment and socio-economic pressures
 - iii. sustainable management of marine resources
 - c. Case studies of monitoring and assessment results and corresponding measures in the selected MPAs
- 2 Expert group meeting to review studies on management plans and strategies (1.a above) and methodologies (1.b above)
 - 3 Expert group meeting to review case studies (1.c above) and to develop recommendations on strategies and plans (based on the research and information sharing) on (i) monitoring and assessment of environmental and socio-economic pressures on NEAMPAN sites (ii) identifying local and global environmental impact on species of the target MPAs
 - 4 Site visits and knowledge sharing workshop
 - 5 Dissemination of studies and recommendations

Figure 1. Schematic diagram of the MPA management strategies, monitoring and assessments



1.3 List of NEAMPAN sites



China	
1	Beilun Estuary National Marine Nature Reserve
2	Shankou Mangrove National Marine Nature Reserve
3	Sanya Coral Reef National Nature Reserve
4	National Nature Reserve of Dazhou Island Marine Ecosystems
5	Nanji Islands National Marine Nature Reserve
6	Changyi National Marine Ecology Special Protected Area
Republic of Korea	
7	Muan wetland Protected Area
8	Suncheon Bay wetland Protected Area
Russian Federation	
9	Far-Eastern State Marine Biosphere Reserve
10	Sikhote-Alin State Natural Biosphere Reserve
Japan	
11	Shiretoko National Park

1.4 Outline of the study

Proposed outline of the study, as well as the schematic diagram to illustrate the scope of the study, is attached below. Outline should be further developed in consultation with the NEAMPAN secretariat and other consultants who are undertaking the studies for NEAMPAN sites in other countries.

1.5 Proposed outline of the study

- 1 Review of management plans / strategies of the selected NEAMPAN site**
 - 1.1 *Basic information of the target MPA*
 - 1.2 *Background of strategic / management plan of the target MPA*
 - 1.3 *Objective of MPA management plan*
 - 1.4 *Key contents of the management plans*

- 2 Monitoring and assessment of designated MPAs**
 - 2.1 *Monitoring parameters*
 - 2.1.1 Areas addressed by the monitoring parameters: biological, socio-economic, environmental
 - 2.1.2 Monitoring bodies and collection of data
 - 2.2 *Assessment of data*
 - 2.2.1 Assessment criteria and responsibilities: How and who evaluate the monitored data

2.2.2 Assessment against goals and indicators: How the evaluation / assessment is made against goals / indicators identified (if any) in the strategic / management plan

2.3 *Links between monitoring/assessment results and management*

2.3.1 Use of monitoring data: How it used for assessment, how monitoring results are followed up or reflected in the future plans / strategies

2.3.2 Institutional aspects: Parties involved in the management of MPAs (implementation of plans, monitoring the implementation, etc.)

3 Feedback of assessment results to management plans and practices

4 Case studies – monitoring and assessment results and corresponding measures in the selected MPA