

## **Development of a CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on marine biodiversity**

### **1. Background**

CEARAC started its marine biodiversity activities in 2010. The first activity is development of a coastal environmental assessment tool for marine biodiversity conservation with in-kind support by the Northwest Pacific Region Environmental Cooperation Center (NPEC). In the 2012-2013 biennium, CEARAC published “Monitoring and management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the NOWPAP region” in order to share information on definitions and monitoring and management actions of MPAs of respective NOWPAP member states. From 2014, CEARAC tried to develop a new assessment methodology for conservation of marine biodiversity, and in line with that, during the 2014-2015 biennium, CEARAC implemented pilot assessments of the impacts of major threats on marine biodiversity (eutrophication, invasive species and habitat alteration) in the NOWPAP region with the support of experts from each member state. In the 2016-2017 biennium, CEARAC assessed these major threats/pressures on marine biodiversity in the NOWPAP region.

However, not much outputs were produced in the past activities except for sharing existing information, mainly because of gaps on data availability among the member states. In such a situation, CEARAC FPs expressed the need of a clear vision of NOWPAP and/or CEARAC such as what NOWPAP/CEARAC’s definition of marine biodiversity conservation in this region and which issues NOWPAP/CEARAC should tackle with.

While CEARAC initiated its activities on marine biodiversity, NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy 2012-2017 (NOWPAP MTS) was developed in 2011, in which biodiversity conservation (including invasive alien species) was suggested as one of the major themes. Development of the Regional Action Plan on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Conservation is part of the actions proposed in the NOWPAP MTS; however, no practical actions have been taken by now. Actually, development of the regional action plan is again proposed in the draft of the next NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023.

Considering what CEARAC has done and what CEARAC continues to do in the coming biennia, we cannot wait for the development of the regional action plan by 2023. At least, CEARAC needs its own future vision on marine biodiversity as early as possible in order to develop practical and feasible workplans and implement them. Therefore, CEARAC proposes to spend the next two years discussing our vision and direction for marine biodiversity conservation with experts of the member states while considering global movement on marine biodiversity conservation, existing other RACs’ activities and the progress of the development of the NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023.

### **2. Objective**

Objective of this activity is to develop the CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on marine biodiversity (CEARAC MTS on MB). In order to develop the CEARAC MTS on MB, information on past and on-going activities on marine biodiversity conservation in global, regional (NOWPAP region) and national level will

be collected and reviewed. Through the review of existing activities, available data and national needs, CEARAC will choose what aspect of marine biodiversity CEARAC should/can focus on after 2020 and develop the CEARAC MTS on MB after 2020.

### **3. Tasks**

#### **3-1 Collection of relevant information on marine biodiversity**

Conservation of marine biodiversity includes following topics;

- Survey of marine organisms and development of a species list
- Development of Red List of threatened species and protection of them
- Development of a list of invasive species
- Conservation of habitats of marine species (Tidal flat, Seagrass/seaweed bed, Coral reef etc.)
- Management/establishment of Marine Protected Areas
- Understanding the impacts of pressures on marine biodiversity and identification of mitigations

Regarding these topics, information on which organization is involved and/or what kind of activities are implemented in terms of conservation of marine biodiversity will be collected by a contracted consultant. Moreover, needs of each NOWPAP member state will be investigated through the CBD national reports as well as the reports on national policy and systems, which were submitted in 2016-2017 biennium as part of the CEARAC activity on marine biodiversity.

Other NOWPAP RACs have also implemented activities on marine biodiversity, so CEARAC needs to consider their future directions carefully to avoid unnecessary overlaps and to find effective cooperation and collaboration with them.

Collected information will be summarized into the table (see Annex). Using the summary table, potential activities which CEARAC should/can implement in the future will be selected in accordance with the priority of the NOWPAP region.

#### **3-2 Review of collected information by marine biodiversity experts of the NOWPAP member states**

Experts who are involved to the development national strategy and/or policy on conservation of marine biodiversity will be nominated in each NOWPAP member state, and they will check and review the summary table, and revise and/or add information on it.

#### **3-3 Organization of a marine biodiversity workshop and a meeting for development of CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on marine biodiversity**

Marine biodiversity workshop will be held in order to share information on national needs on marine biodiversity conservation and identify foci in the NOWPAP region. It is expected that governmental officers and/or experts who involve in national policy and strategy will participate in this workshop. During the workshop, finalization of the summary table is expected.

A meeting for development of CEARAC MTS on MB will be held back-to-back with the marine

biodiversity workshop to develop the outline of CEARAC MTS on MB. The workshop and meeting will be held in spring 2019.

#### 3-4 Development of CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on Marine Biodiversity

CEARAC Secretariat will prepare a draft of CEARAC MTS on MB which includes themes/topics which CEARAC focuses on and the course of actions CEARAC' future marine biodiversity activities will take after 2020, based on the outputs of 3-1 to 3-3 above.

The draft CEARAC MTS on MB will be reviewed by CEARAC FPs during the 17<sup>th</sup> CEARAC FPM to be held in September 2019. Then, the CEARAC MTS on MB will be refined and submitted to the 24<sup>th</sup> NOWPAP IGM which will be held in later 2019.

#### 4. Expected outcomes

This activity aims to create the future vision for CEARAC marine biodiversity activities through collecting and reviewing information on marine biodiversity conservation not only by NOWPAP but also by other international organizations. CEARAC future vision, an essential part of CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on marine biodiversity (CEARAC MTS on MB) after 2020, will contribute to the NOWPAP Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Action Plan which is proposed as one activity in the NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023.

The vision will be created taking into consideration global movement, needs of each NOWPAP member state and the current situation of the NOWPAP region, and the future CEARAC marine biodiversity activities, which are to be implemented based on CEARAC MTS on MB, will contribute to conservation of marine biodiversity in the NOWPAP region more effectively.

#### 5. Budget

Activities	Budget (US\$)
Collection of information on marine biodiversity	10,000
Review of collected information	3,000 (1,000 x 3 member states except for Japan)
Organization of Marine biodiversity workshop and Meeting on development of CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on Marine Biodiversity	15,000
Development of the draft CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on Marine Biodiversity	2,000
Total	30,000

**6. Schedule**

Timing		Actions	Main body
2017	December	The 22 <sup>nd</sup> NOWPAP IGM - Approval of the workplan and budget for the 2018-2019 biennium	NOWPAP National FPs
2018	Spring	The 16 <sup>th</sup> CEARAC FPM - Review and approval of workplan	CEARAC FPs and CEARAC Secretariat
	Q2-Q4	Collection of information on marine biodiversity	Consultant and CEARAC Secretariat
2019	Q1	Review of collected information	Expert or governmental officer of each member state
	April	Organization of Marine Biodiversity Workshop & Meeting on development of CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on Marine Biodiversity	Expert and governmental officer of each member state and CEARAC Secretariat
	Q3	Review of the draft CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on Marine Biodiversity	CEARAC FPs
	September	The 17 <sup>th</sup> CEARAC FPM - Approval of the CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on Marine Biodiversity - Approval of workplan for the 2020-2021 biennium	CEARAC FP and CEARAC Secretariat
	Winter	The 24 <sup>th</sup> NOWPAP IGM - Approval of the CEARAC Medium-term Strategy on Marine Biodiversity - Approval of workplan for the 2020-2021 biennium	NOWPAP National FPs

Annex Table Collection format of information on marine biodiversity (EXAMPLE)

Marine Biodiversity									
Theme	Biological information								
	Species diversity	Endangered species		Invasive species			Habitat		
Topics	List of marine species	Red list		List of NIS	Caused by Ballast water	Caused by aquaculture	Coral reef	Tidal flat	Seagrass/seaweed
Implementing organizations	OBIS	IUCN	Member states	IUCN	IMO		WESTPAC PICES		WESTPAC
Activities	Distribution map								
Actions in the NOWPAP		DINRAC		DINRAC					CEARAC
National needs	High or middle or low	High or middle or low		High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low
Priority for CEARAC marine biodiversity based on the possibility	High or middle or low	High or middle or low		High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low

	Marine Biodiversity							
Theme	Management for biodiversity conservation			Reduce pressure on marine biodiversity			Ecosystem services	
Topics	MPA		EBSA		Eutrophication	Habitat alteration	NIS	Climate change
Implementing organizations	CBD	Member states	CBD	Member states	UN HELCOM			UN
Activities	Aichi Target 11				WOA Holistic assessment			WOA
Actions in the NOWPAP	DINRAC CEARAC				CEARAC			
National needs	High or middle or low		High or middle or low		High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low
Priority for CEARAC marine biodiversity based on the possibility	High or middle or low		High or middle or low		High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low	High or middle or low