

1. This report on the implementation of NOWPAP activities covers the period since the 16<sup>th</sup> CEARAC Focal Points Meeting (FPM) held on 10-11 May 2018 in Toyama, Japan until 9 August 2019.
2. More details of CEARAC activities will be presented by the CEARAC 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. After review by Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center 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 region. It was published in 2018. Together with other relevant Northwest Pacific Action Plan 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.
4. Using the developed manual for seagrass and seaweed mapping with satellite images, the Center has tested its applicability in selected sea areas in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region in the 2014-2015 biennium. The Center has conducted a feasibility study towards assessment of seagrass distribution in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region in the 2016-2017 biennium. The first international workshop on the assessment of seagrass distribution in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region was organized on 3 August 2017 in Himi, Toyama Prefecture and was attended by researchers in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region and beyond, including representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme Collaborating Center GRID-Arendal. [Feasibility study towards assessment of seagrass distribution in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region](#) is completed and will be published in 2018.
5. The Center organized an Expert Meeting on Eutrophication Assessment in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Region on 22 March 2019 in Vladivostok, the Russia Federation to reviewed the progress of on-going activities on eutrophication assessment and discussed 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 an indicator development of Index of Coastal Eutrophication listed as a sub-indicator of Sustainable Development Goal 14.1.1. The meeting participants agreed on the following recommendations: (i) organize another Expert Meeting on eutrophication assessment collaborating with the experts group of Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center on ecological quality objectives (EcoQOs). (ii) Encourage the Center 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 the Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center and the Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center to unify terminology between related to nutrient concentration and chlorophyll-a concentration referring to the NOWPAP Common Procedure for eutrophication assessment.

6. The 16th Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center Focal Points Meeting was held on 10-11 May 2018 in Toyama, Japan. The meeting approved (with some modifications) the work plan and budget for activities for the 2018-2019 biennium, including development of a Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center Medium-term strategy for marine biodiversity and a roadmap for Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Action Plan for Marine Biodiversity. The meeting agreed that the Secretariat of the Center will undertake consultations on the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Action Plan for Marine Biodiversity roadmap at the Regional Activity Centers Focal Points meetings in 2018; consultations have been conducted successfully and resulted in the revised roadmap proposal.
7. In 2018/2019 the Center continued building partnerships and exchanging information with other Northwest Pacific Action Plan 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**

8. The Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center continues to maintain the following databases (available at the [Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center website](#)): on major environmental data, on Northwest Pacific Action Plan coastal and marine environmental Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing applications, on marine litter, on coastal and marine nature reserves, Northwest Pacific Action Plan publications, and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan database of institutions and experts. The Center continues providing administrative and financial support for selected Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center activities.
9. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Northwest Pacific Action Plan Intergovernmental Meeting (Toyama, 21-23 December 2017) approved three project proposals submitted by the Center including that on sea reclamation state and management, on human marine activity objects, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of collecting information about endangered/threatened species in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region.
10. The 16<sup>th</sup> Northwest Pacific Action Plan Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center Focal Points Meeting was held on 30-31 May 2018 in Beijing, China. The meeting reviewed the progress made since the 15th Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center Focal Points Meeting, discussed and agreed on the implementation plan and budget for projects in the 2018-2019 biennium. The meeting also discussed the future arrangements for the Northwest Pacific Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter and the implementation of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Mid-Term Strategy 2018-2023.
11. Results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of endangered/threatened species in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region reported at the meeting showed that more endangered species are living in Northwest Pacific Action Plan member countries than those listed in the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. About 150 species living in at least one of the member countries were evaluated as endangered in the IUCN Red List. The Center assessment found the distribution range of these species to be wider than the area reported by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. As many as 10 species, consisting of 6 bony fishes, 3 birds and 1 sea turtle, ranked as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, were confirmed to be living in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region. The rank of hawksbill sea turtle was raised from

endangered to critically endangered during the second and latest phase of the Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center assessment. Twenty-seven species were found to be endangered and 104 ranked as vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. These include a variety of groups such as whales, birds, sea-turtles, rays, sharks, corals, sea cucumbers and sea grasses. Some invertebrate groups in the region are still to be evaluated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

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

12. Several Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center activities are continuing during the reporting period, including the development of a Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center information system based on Web Global Information System, and the development of an information sharing platform on oil and HNS spills in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region. Other ongoing activities include the establishment of an oil sample exchange procedure for transboundary marine pollution, and review and analysis of existing prediction models for floating marine litter. A new format for databases on oil and Harmful and Noxious Substances experts and equipment will be used routinely by the Center Secretariat (with periodic updates when necessary). The new online pollution reporting system is being tested.
13. During the reporting period the Center published two important reports: [“Oiled wildlife response in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region”](#) and [“Review and Analysis of Floating Marine Litter Prediction Models in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region”](#) providing important information and recommendations for member states to respond to oil emergencies impacting marine life and understand marine litter dispersal in the region, respectively.
14. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting approved the Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center work plan and budget for 2018-2019 biennium, including three new specific projects on ‘Guidelines on the assessment of oil spill response capability for the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region’, ‘The use of unmanned aircraft in marine pollution response in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region’ and ‘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’. During 2018-2019, the Center is planning to work on the regional report on floating marine litter. It will organize the first brainstorming workshop with experts related to oil and hazardous and noxious substances spills response and preparedness to identify regional capacity gaps, addressing requirements of relevant International Maritime Organization conventions and guidelines on sea-based pollution in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region in August 2019 in Seoul, Korea.
15. The 21st Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center Focal Points Meeting and 13<sup>th</sup> Competent National Authorities Meeting was organized on 17-20 July 2018 in Incheon, Korea.
16. The January 2018 sinking of the oil tanker ‘Sanchi’, loaded with 136,000 tons of condensate (160 nautical miles off Shanghai) was the world’s largest marine pollution incident since the March 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill off the coast of Alaska, USA. Reviewing the response to the Sanchi spill at the meeting, the four Northwest Pacific Action Plan Member States emphasized the importance of the real-time information exchange on the spill between themselves and with the Northwest Pacific Action Plan and

with the Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center. This included regular updates on the location of the spill, the condition of the tanker and the status of ongoing and planned response measures. A total of 254 updates were exchanged through the online Reporting System developed by the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Oil and Hazardous and Noxious Substances Spill Contingency Plan hosted by the Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Center. This was the first time the online Reporting System, tested regularly in Regional Contingency Plan communications exercises was used in a real incident. The timely information and support provided by the Japanese and Korean coast guard authorities to China facilitated response to the spill.

#### **4. POMRAC-Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center**

17. The 15th Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center Focal Points Meeting was held on 4-5 July 2018 in Vladivostok, Russia. The meeting noted progress and agreed to: further implement the development of regional Northwest Pacific Action Plan Ecological Quality Objectives targets aligned with Sustainable Development Goals indicators (Phase 1) and assess trends in rivers and direct inputs of contaminants into the marine and coastal environment of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan region during the last decade. The meeting also requested the Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center 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 Northwest Pacific Action Plan Marine Litter Focal Points, as well as to prepare a workshop on microplastics.
18. The Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Centre (POMRAC) organized an expert meeting in March 2019 to discuss ways of assessing the health of the seas shared by the four countries in order to support regional progress towards ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals. The meeting discussed six most applicable indicators related to monitoring marine ecological quality in the region and agreed on the targets for the four of them, aligned with environmental Sustainable Development Goals. They also suggested Jiaozhou Bay in China, Toyama Bay and/or Hakata Bay in Japan, Masan Bay in Republic of Korea and Russia's Amursky Bay as designated areas for testing of the targets related to nutrient, chlorophyll 'a' and contaminant concentration levels in water and sediments, and 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**

19. In line with Northwest Pacific Action Plan Intergovernmental Meeting decisions, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit continued its efforts on coordinating Regional Activity Center activities through regular bilateral meetings with Regional Activity Centers, meetings with Regional Activity Center representatives during Focal Points Meetings, teleconferences and ad-hoc meetings (in addition to e-mail communications).

20. A Joint NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit and Regional Activity Centers meeting was organized on 1-2 March 2019 in Busan, Korea. The meeting discussed the development of a joint NOWPAP Programme of Work 2020-2021, NOWPAP common approach to data and information sharing, principles and priorities for joint work between Regional Coordinating Unit and Regional Activity Centers and between Regional Activity Centers themselves, and the NOWPAP Communication Strategy and Outreach.
21. Guidance, when requested, and documents were provided in organizing Regional Activity Center Focal Points Meetings. Comments on the documents and meeting reports were provided by the Regional Coordinating Unit.
22. Assistance was provided to Regional Activity Centers in preparing and finalizing expenditure and progress reports before submission to UN Environment Headquarters. When requested, the Regional Coordinating Unit provided assistance with ongoing projects, including identifying appropriate experts.
23. Information on global and regional meetings, training opportunities and other information of interest were shared with Regional Activity Centers. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan 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.
24. 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 and guidance were provided in the development of RAP MALI activities and the roadmap for the Regional Action Plan on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity.
25. With the adoption of Northwest Pacific Action Plan Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023, the demand for further integration of Regional Activity Centers activities is rising exponentially. During the reporting period the number of activities that require closer cooperation between Regional Activity Centers has already increased.
26. Among specific examples are ongoing consultations on further development of the Regional Action Plan on marine and coastal biodiversity, development of indicators for Northwest Pacific Action Plan Ecological Quality Objectives, implementation of marine litter related activities as a part of Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, and forthcoming work on integrated coastal management (not yet started). Almost all major activities of Northwest Pacific Action Plan Medium-term Strategy would require closer cooperation among Regional Activity Centers.

## **6. Other NOWPAP activities**

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

### **6.1 Northwest Pacific Action Plan Special Projects**

28. Upon request to Member States at the 22nd Northwest Pacific Action Plan Intergovernmental Meeting, Regional Coordinating Unit received 4 project proposals for further development. At the meeting it was requested that Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Unit together with the lead project agency, Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences develop the project proposal "Monitoring and

Assessment Methods for Microplastics Pollution” with the total budget for project preparation not exceeding US\$50,000. On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, leading microplastics experts from Northwest Pacific Action Plan member states convened at the Expert Meeting of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan special project: “Monitoring and Assessment Methods for Microplastics pollution” organized by Regional Coordinating Unit to agree 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 would use existing microplastics monitoring criteria in Northwest Pacific Action Plan countries and later develop a harmonized regional approach for microplastics pollution monitoring. Existing ecotoxicological studies of the impact of microplastics on the environment would 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 Northwest Pacific Action Plan 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 Q3 2019. The Second Experts Meeting on this project will be held in Dalian, China on 27 September 2019.

29. 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 23<sup>rd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting. The Regional Coordinating Unit has been waiting for the nomination of experts by some of the Member States.

## 6.2 Building partnerships

30. Partnership building and 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, placing 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.
31. **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 of the United Nations Environment Programme. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan through its Regional Coordinating Unit is an active participant of the partnership. During the reporting period, the Northwest Pacific Action Plan provided various inputs to the Regional Seas programme, 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.
32. **Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities 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.

33. **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC):** The 19-22 June 2018 Capacity Building for Marine Debris Prevention and Management in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Region workshop was organized 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 at the event and contributed to draft Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Marine Debris Management Guidelines prepared at the meeting. The latter includes a range of recommendations 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.
34. **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 the 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.
35. **North Pacific Marine Science Organization:** The North Pacific Marine Science Organization and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan have 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 immediate 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 followed by Eutrophication and Hypoxia as third tier priorities. Collaborative work on climate change adaptation/resilience of socio-ecological systems is one 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 will co-convene Session 7: Environmental indicators of plastic pollution in the North Pacific at PICES-2019 in Victoria, BC, Canada in October 2019.
36. **The 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 and finalized a regional Strategic Action Programme. 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, which was held in Qingdao, China. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan agreed on further cooperation 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.

37. **Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting:** The Environmental Ministers of the three countries (Japan, P.R. China and R. Korea) organized their first joint meeting including a Northwest Pacific Action Plan workshop on marine litter in September 2015 in Yantai, P.R. China. Since then, Northwest Pacific Action Plan and Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting hold joint workshops annually. The 2018 joint Northwest Pacific Action Plan-Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting marine litter management workshop was held in Busan, Korea on 4-6 June 2018 to coincide with the 2018 World Environment Day. The participants shared information on addressing challenges of abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear in fisheries and aquaculture. At the workshop, policy makers and experts from the four Northwest Pacific Action Plan countries reported on the progress of marine litter management, particularly with respect to lost fishing gear.
38. Partner organizations (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection, the 2nd Phase of Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Project, and the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat), and non-governmental organizations from member states presented the results of their efforts tackling marine litter issues, including microplastics. Following the discussion between the Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting and Northwest Pacific Action Plan focal points on marine litter during the marine litter management workshop in Busan, two institutions agreed to continue the practice of holding joint marine litter workshops, with the next workshop to be organized in Dalian, P.R. China on 24-27 September 2019.
39. **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 a participant 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, particularly from plastic pollution.
40. **Our Sea of East Asia Network :** Our Sea of East Asia Network is a non-profit organization established in 2009 dedicated to 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.

41. **Other related activities:** 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.
42. 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.
43. 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.
44. 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

45. 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:
46. 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.
47. 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.

48. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan maintains an online presence on Facebook ([facebook.com/nowpap.unep](https://facebook.com/nowpap.unep)).
49. Information about Northwest Pacific Action Plan activities is regularly provided to the United Nations Environment Programme Headquarters, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.
50. 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.
51. 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**

52. The 2018 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 Busan, Korea on 4-6 June 2018. The participants shared information on addressing challenges of abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear in fisheries and aquaculture. Following the workshop, the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Focal Points Meeting reviewed and agreed on the revised Terms of Reference for the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Focal Points Meeting, discussed maintenance and further development of the NW Pacific Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter. An expert group meeting for the development of Northwest Pacific Action Plan Special Project on microplastics monitoring and assessment was organized on 3 June 2018 in Busan. The Northwest Pacific Action Plan-Asia Pacific Marine Litter Network Joint Non-Governmental Organizations Forum on Marine Litter Prevention in the Asian region was held on the afternoon of 5 June 2018. About 70 local people together with Northwest Pacific Action Plan officials and civil society groups took part in the International Coastal Clean-up Campaign on Haeundae Beach in Busan, a beach which attracts a large number of tourists. A total of 51 kg of litter, including fishing rods, nets and styrofoam boxes were collected. The two-hour event also featured talks by experts and school teachers on marine litter. Special training was organized on how to collect and measure microplastic particles.
53. 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.
54. 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>).
55. 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.

56. 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

57. 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 2019<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Amount (US\$)</b>	<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Purpose of funding</b>
1,500	Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Phase II Project	Travel costs for CEARAC to YSLME Science Conference, Qingdao, China, July 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
<b>21,500</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	

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

<b>Amount (US\$)</b>	<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Purpose of funding</b>
----------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------

<sup>1</sup> 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.

**Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment  
Regional Activity Center**

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	Participation at the online POLREP system test exercise - 6 December 2019

	- Japan, Japan Coast Guard - Korea, Korea Coast Guard - Russia, Marine Rescue Service	
<b>219,104</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	

58. The total number of mobilized external financial resources 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\$880,007** (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\$21,500. 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.
59. 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 23<sup>rd</sup> NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM)**

60. The 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.
61. Mr. Denis Khramov, First Deputy Minister of the Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation welcomed the participants of the 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

62. 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.
63. 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.
64. 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.
65. 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.
66. 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.
67. 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.
68. 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.
69. 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.

70. 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.
71. 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.
72. 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.
73. 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.
74. 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.
75. 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.

76. The 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup> NOWPAP IGM.

9. Hold the 24<sup>th</sup> 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**

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

### 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 23<sup>rd</sup> IGM, then to NOWPAP Member States for two-months comments and prepare for adoption by the 24<sup>th</sup> 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 being 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup> NOWPAP IGM.
3. Requests NOWPAP RCU to develop draft Guidelines for preparing NOWPAP Special Projects and submit for consideration by the 24<sup>th</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup> NOWPAP IGM.