

Activity plan for marine protected areas in 2024

A. Work plan for knowledge sharing and capacity-building

Approach and modality: Focus on sharing information and knowledge through a NEAMPAN workshop. The event can be jointly organized with (sub) national, regional or global agencies to maximize synergy with various stakeholders and facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices of MPAs.

Key Activities

- **A.1: Organization of a NEAMPAN workshop (Q1/Q2, 2024).**

As an activity postponed from 2023, the Secretariat plans to organize an in-person NEAMPAN workshop in China to share national and MPA-level practices among NEAMPAN MPAs and member countries, to address climate change impacts on MPAs and discuss ocean-based actions opportunities for collaboration through the NEAMPAN. The budget for this activity was USD30,000 as approved at SOM-25 and remained for use in 2024. The Secretariat has not foreseen the need for an increased budget.

B. Work plan for research studies

Approach and modality: Focus on expanding understanding and knowledge on climate change impacts on marine protected areas and the role of MPAs/MPA networks to tackle such impacts in North-East Asia. These studies can be utilized to organize a subregional/national workshop(s) in the following years.

Key Activities

- **B.1: Publication of the Study on “Challenges and impacts of climate change on MPAs and relevant ocean-based solutions in the Republic of Korea”** including case studies of three NEAMPAN sites (Q2, 2024). As a continuation of the planned study in 2023, the Secretariat aims to finalize the study by June 2024 . The budget for the activity was USD 15,000 as approved by SOM-25 and remained for use in 2024. The Secretariat has not foreseen the need for an increased budget.

- **B.2: A Study on Ocean-Based Climate Actions of NEAMPAN Sites in China (Q3 2024 – Q1 2025)**

The Secretariat plans to continue research studies on the impacts and challenges of climate change on NEAMPAN sites and the existing or potential ocean-based climate actions by MPAs in response to the challenges. Following the tailored study on the three NEAMPAN sites in the Republic of Korea, a similar study focusing on the NEAMPAN sites in China will be conducted. (Approximate budget: \$25,000)

C. Work plan for NEAMPAN Expansion

Approach and modality: Focus on expanding NEAMPAN sites in a strategic and dynamic manner, with phased actions plans and approaches. In an early stage of NEAMPAN development to leverage partnerships and optimize its impact, member States have the full discretion to nominate MPAs with minimal criteria, as appropriate, and with no cap on the number of nominations by 2025. At a later stage, NEAMPAN may consider a twinning approach among MPAs and a more stringent set of criteria to enhance its ecological connectivity and management effectiveness.

Key Activities

- **C.1: Operationalization of NEAMPAN Sites Expansion (Q1-Q4 2024)**

The Secretariat plans to operationalize the NEAMPAN expansion in line with the Proposed Approach and Criteria for NEAMPAN Sites Expansion (Annex II to the agenda item 6c), should it be approved by member States at SOM-26.

- **C.2: Discussions on the potential development of a NEAMPAN Strategic Framework and Action Plan (Q1-Q4, 2024)**

The Secretariat plans to organize meetings with the Steering Committee members on a quarterly basis, aiming to explore the potential development of a NEAMPAN Strategic Framework and Action Plan. As indicated in the Proposed Approach and Criteria for NEAMPAN Sites Expansion, this strategic framework and action plan could reaffirm the overarching goal of NEAMPAN, further developing specific objectives aligned with ESCAP's regional strategies and priorities. It would detail the prioritization of NEAMPAN themes with phased action plans for each theme.