



**Northwest
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Action Plan**



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Intersessional Workshop of
the Northwest Pacific Action Plan
Seoul, the Republic of Korea
25-26 July 2005

Report of the Intersessional Workshop 2005

Introduction

1. The Action Plan for Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific (NOWPAP) was adopted at the First Intergovernmental Meeting (Seoul, Republic of Korea, 14 September 1994). Since then, the Intergovernmental Meeting has been held almost once a year.

2. The Ninth Intergovernmental Meeting (Busan, Republic of Korea, 2-4 November 2004) decided to convene an “Intersessional Workshop” in order to discuss new directions of work for the NOWPAP RACs and the RCU; the currently developed marine litter activity; and the sustainable contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund.

3. Following the offer of the Republic of Korea to host the NOWPAP Intersessional Workshop, the Workshop was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea on 25-26 July 2005.

4. This document is the record of the discussions and deliberations of the Intersessional Workshop.

5. The Intersessional Workshop 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. The directors of the 4 NOWPAP Regional Activity Centres participated in the Intersessional Workshop as observers. The full list of participants is attached as Annex I.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Intersessional Workshop

6. The Intersessional Workshop was opened at 09:15 a.m. on Monday, 25 July 2005 in Seoul, Republic of Korea by Mr. Boonam Shin, head of the delegation of the Republic of Korea. He extended a warm welcome to the participants and made his opening statement. Mr. Shin emphasized a good spirit of cooperation and political commitment of the Member States for the protection of the marine environment in the Northeast Asia Region. He also mentioned the need for enhancing the effectiveness of implementing NOWPAP activities by sharing the Member States wisdom and insight. In this regard, he expressed hope for a constructive discussion on the provisional agenda and productive outcome during the Intersessional Workshop. Mr. Shin invited

the representatives of the participating NOWPAP Member States to make their opening statements.

7. The representative of Japan expressed his government's thanks to the Republic of Korea to host the NOWPAP Intersessional Workshop and mentioned that this Workshop was an informal but would be critical to build up common understanding on the future work of NOWPAP.

8. The representative of People's Republic of China appreciated the hospitality of the hosting country and wished that this Workshop would contribute to the efficient operation of NOWPAP RCU.

9. The representative of the Russian Federation also thanked for the hosting country's hospitality and shared the importance of this Workshop in order to exchange opinions on the provisional agenda regarding the coming Intergovernmental Meeting in November 2005

10. After short introductory remarks of the heads of member state delegations, Dr. Alexander Tkalin, the NOWPAP Coordinator, introduced the background of the Intersessional Workshop and three provisional agenda issues proposed. He mentioned that since the NOWPAP RCU has been established this Workshop would be an important event to review and discuss the past and on-going NOWPAP activities as well as the plan and vision for the future.

Agenda item 2: Organisation of the Intersessional Workshop

Agenda item 2(a): Election of Officers:

11. Mr. Boonam Shin, the head of delegation of the Republic of Korea was elected the Chairman of the Intersessional Workshop. The following officials were also elected by acclamation:

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Yu Tong (People's Republic of China)

Vice-Chairman: Ms. Lubov Stepanova (Russian Federation)

Rapporteur: Mr. Koichi Ito (Japan)

Agenda item 2(b): Organisation of Work

12. Since the NOWPAP is an integral part of UNEP Regional Seas Programme, it was agreed that the UNEP Governing Council rules of procedures would be applied. It was also agreed that the Workshop would be conducted in English.

13. Dr. Alexander Tkalin introduced the timetable of the Workshop and the list of documents (UNEP/NOWPAP IS. 1/INF/1 and UNEP/NOWPAP IS. 1/INF/3, respectively). He reminded the participants that the Workshop has to prepare a draft report with recommendations for the submission to the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting to be held in Toyama, Japan in November 2005.

Agenda item 2(C): Adoption of Agenda

14. After considering the provisional agenda submitted by NOWPAP RCU (UNEP/NOWPAP IS. 1/1), the participants adopted the following agenda for the Workshop:

1. Opening of the Workshop
2. Organization of the meeting:
 - (a) Election of officers
 - (b) Organization of work
 - (c) Adoption of the Agenda
3. Consideration of future directions for the NOWPAP RACs and RCU
4. Establishment of Marine Litter Activity (MALITA) in the NOWPAP region
5. Discussion of sustainable contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund
6. Other matters
7. Adoption of the report and recommendations of the workshop
8. Closure of the workshop

Agenda item 3: Consideration of Future Directions for the NOWPAP RACs and RCU

15. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, the document "NOWPAP Evolution - New Directions for the NOWPAP RACs and RCU" (UNEP/NOWPAP IS.1/3) was introduced by Dr. Alexander Tkalin, NOWPAP Coordinator. He pointed out that the purpose of the discussion was to assess the

current situation with the existing four RACs and the newly established RCU and to identify directions of future work for NOWPAP RACs in order to ensure efficient implementation of the Action Plan. He also mentioned that changes in the structure and functions of some elements of the Action Plan are necessary after the 10 years history of NOWPAP.

16. According to the Chairman's suggestion, responsibilities of the two offices of NOWPAP RCU and a new direction for RACs' future activities were discussed separately.

17. The representative of the Republic of Korea mentioned that dividing the responsibilities between the two offices proposed by Dr. Alexander Tkalin should be reconsidered, given the operational reality in which the Toyama and Busan offices function as one unit within the scope of the NOWPAP goals and objectives and in which the position of the Coordinator is required to rotate between offices at an interval of every four years.

18. The representative of the Republic of Korea, in this regard, presented a proposal for joint operation of the RCU offices with a unitary decision-making and management system established under the leadership of the Coordinator. With respect to administrative operations, he suggested that the demarcation of responsibilities between the two offices be confined only to the responsibilities of the Scientific and Technical Officer and those of the Administrative Officer.

19. Dr. Tkalin, NOWPAP Coordinator, appreciated the Republic of Korea's proposal on the joint operation of the two offices, which mirrors the need for an efficient and systematic management of the RCU. The amended sheets for the new directions for RCU and RACs provided by the Republic of Korea and the secretariat, respectively, were circulated during the Workshop.

20. The representative of the People's Republic of China mentioned that it was the duty of the NOWPAP Coordinator who should adjust the responsibilities of the two offices. She suggested that the Coordinator need more time to establish and adjust the two offices' responsibilities and report his adjustment for discussion and consideration at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting.

21. The representative of the Russian Federation also suggested that this issue be further discussed and considered at the coming Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting.

22. The representative of Japan expressed that his government shared the overall view on the demarcation of responsibilities of the two offices of NOWPAP RCU with the Republic of Korea. He

stated that identification of the two offices' responsibilities was somewhat artificial and the important thing was to strengthen the NOWPAP RCU as a secretariat. However, he asked the NOWPAP Coordinator whether all responsibilities for administration, substantial work for each office and cross-cutting work could be integrated as a single unit regarding the functional division of the two offices. He also emphasized common understanding on the basic functional directions of the two offices of NOWPAP RCU with respect to efficiency of administrative work. He further pointed out that although the size of NOWPAP RCU was small, it is still one of UNEP offices and it should follow the UNEP practice.

23. He also stated that a new demarcation of the two offices proposed by the Republic of Korea required more time to consider and emphasized jointing activities of the two offices under the Coordinator's responsibilities.

24. The representative of the Republic of Korea pointed out some practical difficulties that might arise from the secretariat's proposal, in which the land-based activities are under the responsibility of the Toyama office while the Scientific Affairs Officer is assigned to work at the Busan office.

25. Dr. Alexander Tkalin, Coordinator of NOWPAP appreciated the Republic of Korea's concerns regarding practical difficulties of dividing responsibilities between the two offices. However, he emphasized that the two offices were working together as a single unit and reminded that the present proposal was based on the previously agreed documents through the Intergovernmental Meetings.

26. The representative of Japan responded that joint activities and/or separated activities were under the general responsibility of the NOWPAP Coordinator but in some cases, the professional officers would be responsible for unique and specific items under the overall responsibilities of the Coordinator.

27. The Chairman requested the secretariat of preparation of the revised description of responsibilities for the two offices of NOWPAP RCU based on the proposals made by the secretariat and the Republic of Korea to be further discussed at the coming Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting in November, 2005.

28. The Workshop agreed on this issue as attached as Recommendation 1.

29. The Chairman asked the RAC directors of their comments and suggestions on the proposed new directions for RACs.

30. The four RAC directors supported and welcomed the proposal made by the secretariat and briefly introduced their plans for the next biennium and beyond. They had also stressed the need of better coordination and synergy among RAC activities.

31. The representative of Japan asked the secretariat how to seek cooperation with other international organizations and told that when NOWPAP considered enhancing synergy with the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), objectives, scopes and achievements of such agreements must be fully taken into consideration.

32. Dr. Tkalin, NOWPAP Coordinator, explained that the current proposal was based on the UNEP proposal provided by UNEP at the Ninth Intergovernmental Meeting. He mentioned that the MEAs and other relevant projects and programmes would be contacted when specific new projects are established in NOWPAP (such as marine litter initiative for example). Specific projects would be of great help to build such a good relationship with other organizations and relevant authorities. Since the NOWPAP RCU was established, cooperation with other relevant organizations and programmes such as YSLME project and PEMSEA, among others, is being developed.

33. The representative of the Republic of Korea pointed out that the RACs' activities were vital for the future success of NOWPAP, and therefore noted that his government would like to see the newly proposed demarcation of RAC's activities by the secretariat integrated into the operations of NOWPAP. However, he expressed the government's concern that the secretariat's proposal lacks specific details and is exceedingly broad in scope, therefore posing the risk of reviving the difficulties already faced by some RACs in developing and implementing their respective activities. He requested secretariat's elaboration on what linkages were considered between each RAC and its proposed activities.

34. Dr. Tkalin, NOWPAP Coordinator, responded that there were the Terms of References for each RAC which might be modified when new directions for RACs are decided by the Intergovernmental Meeting. The results of the work by all four NOWPAP RACs will be reflected in the State of Marine Environment Report to be prepared in the next biennium.

35. The representative of the Russian Federation mentioned the need of new projects reflecting new priority of environmental issues. She also pointed out that it was time to summarize the previous activities of RACs and to rearrange the RACs responsibilities to better address the land-based activities and therefore coordinated RACs activities should be considered in the future.

36. The Chairman commented that any duplication of NOWPAP activities in terms of finance and human resources should be avoided.

37. The representative of Japan stressed that the need for identifying clear priority of each RAC activity and some kind of exercise for new tasks. He mentioned his government's experience on the Integrated Coastal and River Basin Management and suggested that CEARAC be the relevant RAC to conduct this task. He also pointed out that it was little premature to initiate a new project on the ballast water at the NOWPAP level. He further requested the secretariat to prepare new amended directions for RACs' activities taking into account the concerns and suggestions raised by the Member States.

38. The representative of the Republic of Korea stressed the importance of the newly developed projects such as MALITA and the land-based activities (LBA), and expressed Korea's particular interest in participating in the implementation of the LBA project. Reminding the meeting of his government's longtime interest in the LBA along with the accumulated knowledge and capacity in this area, he expressed the government's anticipation that MERRAC be designated as the relevant RAC to deal with these new activities. As such, he requested that the responsibilities of the RACs put forth by the secretariat be modified accordingly to reflect Korea's keen interest in these projects.

39. Dr. Tkalin, NOWPAP Coordinator emphasized that the key issue of this agenda is the evolution of NOWPAP seeking synergy and partnership with other organizations while avoiding duplication as much as practically possible.

40. Following a lively and productive discussion, the Workshop agreed on this issue in principle (Recommendation 1), subject to the approval by the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting (Toyama, Japan, November 2005) after taking into account the comments and suggestions provided by the Member States.

Agenda item 4: Establishment of the Marine Litter Activity in the NOWPAP region

41. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, Dr. Jeung Sook Park, NOWPAP Scientific Affairs Officer, introduced the document “Establishment of a Marine Litter Activity (MALITA) in the NOWPAP region” (UNEP/NOWPAP IS 1/4) with a brief legal background on the NOWPAP Marine Litter project. She pointed out that despite the existing global Conventions and Agreements and actions taken nationally and internationally, the situation with marine litter is continuously getting worse. She also summarized the overall content of the draft proposal on marine litter initiative in the NOWPAP region.

42. The representative of the Republic of Korea supported the draft proposal, recognizing the urgent need of this project. He stressed the needs to include NOWPAP in the UNEP-GEF programme as a pilot region with a view to making additional funds available for the project.

43. The representative of Japan also welcomed the new NOWPAP project on marine litter. He also mentioned his government’s concerns and efforts to prevent marine litter entering the marine and coastal environment. The Japanese government will provide this project with in-kind contribution including hosting a workshop on marine litter.

44. The representative of China shared the need of the NOWPAP MALITA project and supported the draft proposal in principle and asked more details about NOWPAP RACs’ roles in implementing this project.

45. The representative of the Russian Federation supported the draft proposal in principle but pointed out that the draft text would require additional review with respect to clear demarcation of responsibilities between RACs and concrete implementation of the project.

46. Mr. Jianguo Wang, DINRAC director also suggested further consideration on clear responsibilities of participating RACs for this project.

47. Representatives of Japan and the Republic of Korea requested the secretariat to seek external sources of funding for the new NOWPAP project on marine litter. They also mentioned that some deadlines might be adjusted later.

48. Following a lively and productive discussion, the Workshop agreed (Recommendation 2) that the draft proposal would be subject to the approval by the coming Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting (Toyama, Japan, November 2005) after taking into account the comments and suggestions raised by the Member States. NOWPAP RCU was requested to initiate the basic part of the proposal as soon as possible such as collecting and reviewing the existing data and information on marine litter available in the Member States in cooperation with RACs.

Agenda item 5: Sustainable Contributions to the Trust Fund

49. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Norio Baba, NOWPAP Administrative Officer, introduced the document "Proposal for Increased Contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund" (UNEP/NOWPAP IS 1/5). He explained that the current scale of contributions to the Trust Fund was tentatively decided at the Second Intergovernmental Meeting held in Tokyo, Japan on 20 November 1996 and had not been changed ever since. He also mentioned that at present, the yearly expenditures from the Trust Fund are about US\$ 550,000, while the income is only US\$ 315,000 which is possible by using the reserves accumulated in the Trust Fund during the years of 1997 to 2000 with little activities. The situation is not sustainable and could continue only for another 3 or 4 years.

50. The representative of the Republic of Korea stated that, while recognizing the need for an expansion of the Trust Fund, the recommended yearly contributions to the fund at the level of US\$1,000,000 seems unrealistic at the moment. In light of this, he proposed to increase the absolute scale of basic contributions from current 20% to 60% while raising the scale of additional contributions from 43% to 45% which reflects China's 2% increase commensurate with its recent economic growth. Based on this formula, the total annual contributions would be set at the level of US\$525,000. The new proposal put forth by the Republic of Korea was circulated during the Workshop to be discussed at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting in Toyama, Japan in November 2005.

51. The representative of Japan pointed out the nature of the financial contribution to NOWPAP is different from the UN Headquarters and stressed that the new scale of the contributions from the Member states should be based on the equal shares. He also stressed the need for reduce the expenditure in order to maintain sound financial basis of the organization.

52. The representative of the People's Republic of China suggested that the proposed scale of the contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund be further discussed at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting to be held in Toyama, Japan in November 2005.

53. The Chairman suggested that in order to get financial resources from the private sector it is necessary to develop specific projects within NOWPAP programmes.

54. The representative of the Russian Federation stated that appropriate Federal executive authorities would continue to study with the government the possibility to contribute at a sustainable level to the Trust Fund.

55. Following discussion, the Workshop agreed on Recommendation 3, subject to the approval by the coming Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting (Toyama, Japan, November 2005).

Agenda item 6: Other matters

56. The Chairman invited the Member States and RACs Director to raise and discuss any other issues relevant to the implementation of NOWPAP activities.

57. NOWPAP RCU suggested to update the regional overview prepared in 2000 on NOWPAP/2 project "Survey of National Environmental Legislation, Objectives, Strategies and Policies".

58. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Xiaodong Zhong, NOWPAP Deputy Coordinator, introduced the document "Current Status of the NOWPAP/2 project" (UNEP/NOWPAP IS. 1/INF/8). Mr. Zhong explained that the brief history overview was important for NOWPAP as it provides general information on the legal infrastructure of each Member State.

59. The representative of the Republic of Korea pointed out that the information about the NOWPAP/2 project was not provided in advance and that it was not appropriate to discuss this issue under the agenda item of other matters given the time necessary to reach agreement and requested the secretariat to respect the general practice of the meeting procedures in the future.

60. The People's Republic of China shared the Republic of Korea's intervention and concern.

61. Following the discussion, the Workshop agreed to update the Regional Overview on Survey of National Environmental Legislation, Objectives, Strategies and Policies” (Recommendation 4).

62. The representative of Japan announced that the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting would be held in Toyama, Japan on 24-25 November 2005.

Agenda item 7: Workshop Report and Recommendations

63. The representative of People’s Republic of China stressed that this Workshop is an informal meeting whereas the adoption of Report and Recommendations are somewhat formal procedures.

64. In response to the representative of People’s Republic of China, the Chairman explained that the purpose of this Workshop is to prepare Recommendations which would be discussed for the approval at the coming Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting.

65. There was discussion on the nature of the report of the Workshop and exchange of the Member States’ views and concerns.

66. The Intersessional Workshop discussed and adopted a draft report and recommendations for the consideration of the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting to be held in Toyama, Japan in November 2005.

Agenda items 8: Closure of the Workshop

67. The Chairman invited the representatives of the Member States to make their closing statements.

68. The representative of the People’s Republic of China appreciated the Chairman’s stewardship shown during the Workshop and the NOWPAP Coordinator’s coordination.

69. Representatives of Japan and the Russian Federation expressed their appreciation of hospitality of the Republic of Korea as a hosting country of this Workshop as well as the successful workshop with fruitful conclusions.

70. The NOWPAP Coordinator also expressed his thanks to the hosting government of this Workshop and stressed to step forward NOWPAP activities such as Integrated Coastal Management.

71. The Chairman expressed his appreciation of vivid and active discussion on the agenda and mentioned that RACs and RCU were integrated parts of NOWPAP and the secretariat needs some time to build up its capacity which is also met the purpose of this workshop in terms of financial and institutional arrangement of NOWPAP. He further wished that the coming Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting would be successful with respect to cooperation of the Member States sharing the NOWPAP region to protect and preserve the marine environment.

72. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairman declared the Workshop closed at 01:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 26 July 2005.

Annex I

Provisional List of Participants

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Annex II

RECOMMENDATION 1

NEW DIRECTIONS OF NOWPAP RCU AND RACs

The NOWPAP Intersessional Workshop

1. Taking into account the proposal on new directions of the NOWPAP RCU and RACs presented by the secretariat (UNEP/NOWPAP IS. 1/3),
2. Recognizing the need of reviewing demarcation of responsibilities of the two NOWPAP RCU offices of Toyama and Busan and the four RACs for better implementation of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan adopted in 1994,
3. Recommends the proposal provided by the secretariat, and modified by the Republic of Korea, as a basis for the discussion at the 10th NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting.
4. Requests the secretariat to prepare more detailed demarcation of responsibilities of the two offices of NOWPAP RCU, as a single unit, for further discussion at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting in Toyama, Japan, on 24-25 November 2005, taking into account the comments and concerns raised by NOWPAP Member States.
5. Requests the secretariat to provide more detailed description of the four RACs' future activities, in consultation with Member States and each RAC, for further discussion at the Tenth Intergovernmental meeting, reflecting the comments and suggestions made by NOWPAP member states.

RECOMMENDATION 2**MARINE LITTER INITIATIVE IN THE NOWPAP REGION**The NOWPAP Intersessional Workshop

1. Taking into account the proposal on the Sustainable Management of Marine Litter in the NOWPAP Region presented by the secretariat (UNEP/NOWPAP IS. 1/4) with appreciation,
2. Being aware of the urgent need to develop and initiate a new project on marine litter in the region,
3. Recommends that NOWPAP RCU will develop and implement the Marine Litter project in close cooperation with the four RACs and newly nominated marine litter national focal points of the Member States.
4. Requests the secretariat to present the current draft proposal for discussion at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting in Toyama, Japan on 24-25 November 2005 with more detailed description of the four RACs' responsibilities as well as a workplan to be implemented, taking into account the comments and concerns raised by NOWPAP Member States.

RECOMMENDATION 3**SUSTAINABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NOWPAP TRUST FUND**The NOWPAP Intersessional Workshop

1. Taking into account the proposal presented by the secretariat on the increased contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund (UNEP/NOWPAP IS. 1/5),
2. Recognizing the need of reviewing the current contributions to and the target amount of the NOWPAP Trust Fund to secure the sustainable implementation of NOWPAP activities,
3. Reaffirming the need to meet the target amount of US\$ 500,000 to the NOWPAP Trust Fund, as agreed upon at the 2nd Intergovernmental Meeting,
4. Requests the secretariat to provide more information about other Regional Seas Programmes' financial arrangements and distribute possible scenarios of the Trust Fund contributions to the Member States for further discussion at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting in Toyama, Japan on 24-25 November 2005, considering comments and concerns raised by the Member States.
5. Requests also the secretariat to prepare resource mobilization strategy, including private sector, and circulate it prior to the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting.
6. Also requests the secretariat, with the understanding by the Members, to make further efforts to maintain the expenditures of NOWPAP at a reasonable level.

RECOMMENDATION 4

REVIEW OF THE NOWPAP/2 PROJECT

The NOWPAP Intersessional Workshop

1. Taking into account the presentation on the current status of the NOWPAP/2 project made by the secretariat,
2. Requests the secretariat to circulate the draft document of the NOWPAP/2 project and requests Member States to make efforts to provide their comments and updated information at their earliest convenience in order to review the updated document at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting,
3. Recommends also to consider editing and publishing of this overview by DINRAC at the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting in Toyama, Japan on 24-25 November 2005.