



UNDP/GEF PROJECT ENTITLED “REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS IN THE YELLOW SEA LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM”

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**Second Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel
for the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project**
Kunming, China, 15-17 December 2005

Proposal on Data Sharing and Management

1 BACKGROUND

Marine and coastal environmental data is essential for understanding the status and changes of marine environment, which is very useful for various purposes including the prediction of weather and climate, the forecasting of the marine environment, the preservation of marine environment, the mitigation of human-induced changes in the marine and coastal environment, as well as for the advancement of scientific understandings.

At the first meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel of the UNEP/GEF Yellow Sea project, the members fully understood the importance of the data and information that should be collected, and/or generated under the project, and instructed the Project Management Office (PMO) to prepare a data policy paper to regulate the activities in collecting, sharing and managing the marine environment data within the framework of the project.

2 GENERAL DATA POLICY

The participating countries should be encouraged to provide timely, free and unrestricted access to relevant data and metadata that are essential for application to the preservation of the marine environment and organisms, beneficial to public use, assist with protection of the marine environment, the forecasting of weather, the operational forecasting of the marine environment, the monitoring and modelling of climate and sustainable development in the marine environment.

This general policy has been accepted by various international organisations dealing with marine environment and ocean observation. For instance, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Committee (IOC) of UNESCO, adopted resolution XXII-6 (Paris, 2003), namely the *IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy*, Clause 1, which states, “Member States shall provide timely, free and unrestricted access to all data, associated metadata generated and products generated under the auspices of IOC programmes.”

Considering the special conditions of the UNDP/GEF project, and keeping in mind the general policy that has been widely accepted internationally, this document presents special considerations of the different types of data and information. The document will be

submitted to the Second Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel for consideration and approval.

3. HISTORICAL DATA COLLECTED DURING THE PROJECT

The historical data and information collected under the auspices of the Project should be shared with all users in the participating countries. Necessary references and credits should be given to the data collectors and providers.

In case certain restrictions exist to access the data, and the data are provided to be used only for the Project, the respective government will be invited to consider removing the restrictions. Before the restrictions are removed, the users should respect the national policies, and to use the data and information according to the conditions requested.

4. DATA COLLECTED BY THE CO-OPERATIVE CRUISES

The marine environment data collected by the co-operative study cruises organised by the Project should be, in principle, equally shared among the participating countries.

In the case that restrictions to share data exist in the country of the research vessel, the concerned National Focal Point should discuss this issue with the relevant government agency(ies) to remove the restrictions.

In order to allow the scientists involved in the project activities to prepare their scientific reports, in particular using data collected during the cruises, the data will be available for users outside the project one year after the data are collected.

5 DATA MANAGEMENT

Data management is an important component of the project, which will not only provide useful tools for the implementation of project activities in the project components, but is also a project output.

It should be noted that there are many existing marine environmental data and information systems in the Yellow Sea region:

- The World Data Centre for oceanography operated by the International Council for Science (ICSU), in Tianjin, China, which has mirror sites in USA and Moscow, Russia;
- The Regional Oceanographic Data Centre for the Western Pacific Region, operated by the IOC/WESTPAC, in Tokyo, Japan;
- The Northeast Asian Regional Global Ocean Observing System (NEAR-GOOS), operated by IOC/WESTPAC in the participating countries, including China, Japan, South Korea and Russia;
- The National Oceanographic Data Centre of China, operated by the National Marine Data and Information Services, State Oceanic Administration (SOA), in Tianjin, China;
- The Korean Oceanographic Data Centre, operated by the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI), Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MOMAF), in Busan, Korea;

- The Regional Marine Environment Data and Information Network, operated by United Nations Environment Programme – Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP), and the Data and Information Network Regional Activity Centre (DINRAC) in Beijing, China.

Co-operation and co-ordination with these existing data systems will maximise the benefits of the project outputs to the participating countries.

As an initial step, the project decided to establish a GIS database and a meta database for the project. It was agreed in the First Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel that the GIS and meta databases should be established in the China-Korea Joint Ocean Research Centre. Mirror sites should be established in a Korean institution and the PMO for the easy use of the databases.

Following the establishment of the databases, the PMO will explore the possibilities to co-operate and co-ordinate with other data management and exchange systems in the region.