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

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**Third Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel  
for the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project**

*Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, 20-22 November 2006*

**Proposal for SAP Consultation Meeting and  
other SAP/NYSAP-related Activities**

**1 Information about Strategic Action Programme (SAP)**

Following successful preparation of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), the next major step of the project implementation is the preparation of the regional Strategic Action Programme (SAP).

**What is SAP?** A SAP is a negotiated policy document which should identify policy, legal and institutional reforms and investments needed to address the priority transboundary problems. Endorsed at the highest level, it establishes clear priorities for action to resolve the priority transboundary problems which were identified in the TDA. The preparation of a SAP is a co-operative process among the countries of the region.

The TDA identifies the priority problems, the underlying sectoral causes, and the root causes of the problems. The SAP outlines the actions needed to resolve the priority problems and must be agreed before technical assistance, capacity-building, or investment projects can be developed.

The SAP sets out specific actions for each country that can be adopted nationally (through National Action Programmes, or NAPS; NYSAP for this project, denoting National Yellow Sea Action Plan) but harmonised with the other concerned countries.

**What is the major procedure of SAP?** The theoretical framework is shown in Figure 1.

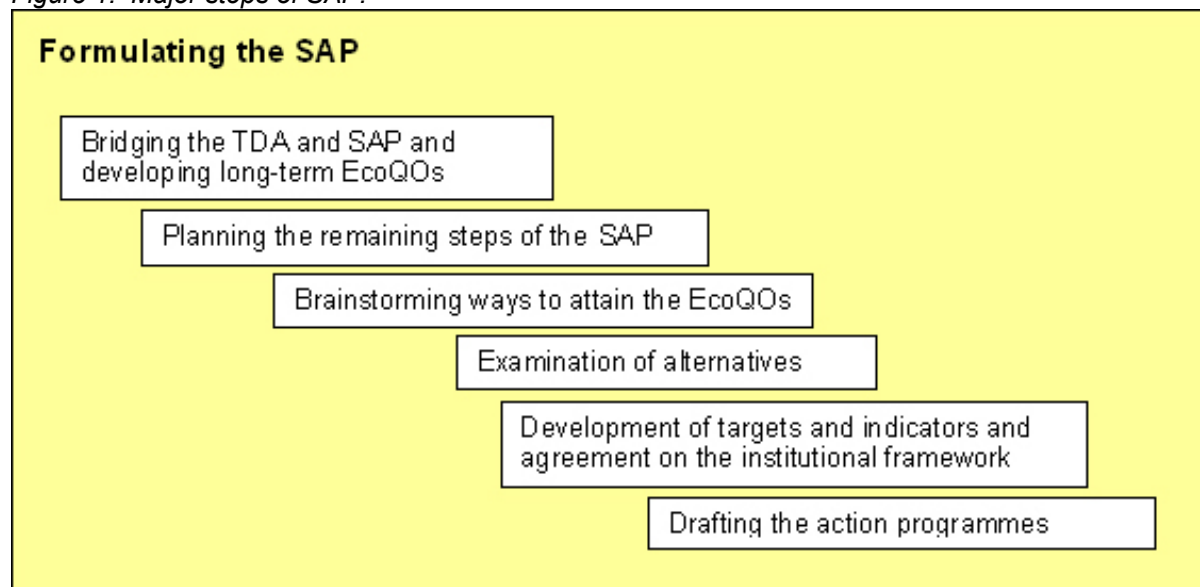
**(i) Bridging the TDA and SAP and developing long-term EcoQOs**

This is a crucial step, coming between the TDA and the SAP parts of the process, and provides the bridge between the two pictures. It links how the region is now with what it is hoped to be in the future. The Ecosystem Quality Objectives (EcoQOs) are statements of the ‘vision’ of how the stakeholders would like to see the state of the ecosystem of the Yellow Sea in the future.

Therefore the project should examine the ‘vision’ and each priority transboundary problem detailed in the TDA and ask the question, “What would be an acceptable environmental

status that would be a sign of a solution for this problem”? A statement describing the status will represent a long-term EcoQO.

Figure 1. Major steps of SAP.



#### (ii) **Planning the remaining steps of the SAP**

Many of the solutions proposed in the initial brainstorming meeting will require action at a national level. It is important to engage the National Inter-Ministry Committees (IMCs) in the process as early as possible. One way to do this is to organise national meetings that mirror the initial brainstorming. These should be organised by the national IMCs and include a suitable range of stakeholders and technical specialists.

Each country's National IMC should appoint a National Action Programme (NAP) Formulation Team who will eventually generate the draft NAP. These teams will ensure that all actions are firmly anchored on realistic national policy, and promote a sense of national ownership.

In addition, a **SAP formulation team** should be created. This will include representatives of the TDA experts and NAP Teams in order to ensure adequate synergy to address regional priorities. This is of course a technical team that will not make political decisions.

#### (iii) **Brainstorming ways to attain the EcoQOs**

The objective of the brainstorming activity is to work with stakeholder representatives and specialists to propose a number of practical options that make significant progress toward the EcoQOs.

A brainstorming meeting should be organised with participation of stakeholders and experts. Everyone is encouraged to be creative in their ideas. No attempt is made to limit the discussion to what seems reasonable or feasible. Because of this informality, it is not necessary to seek formal approval from the Steering committee for who should be invited.

#### (iv) **Examination of alternatives**

The high priority proposals emerging from the brainstorming now have to be evaluated for:

- their technical feasibility;
- their costs and environmental benefits; and
- their political and social acceptability.

**(v) Development of targets and indicators**

***Development of short-term targets and priority actions***

The technical and political consultation process described above should enable the SAP formulation team to determine how far the political process can be taken, in the short/medium term, towards the long-term EcoQOs.

By careful accountancy of the environmental and social benefits, a set of 1 to 10 year targets and priority actions can be set. In addition, the targets should be reflected in measurable process, stress reduction or environmental status indicators. These indicators should answer the question "What measurable progress should be observable at the end of a decade?" The short-term targets should be unambiguous and easy to communicate to the public.

***Agreement on the Institutional Framework***

The TDA, in particular the governance analysis has already examined national and regional institutional strengths and weaknesses. Proposals should be formulated on how the weaknesses should be corrected, through increasing the capacity of existing institutions or creating new ones.

For example, there may be a need to create a revised or new regional coordinating framework such as a commission for a river basin or large marine ecosystem. In parallel, there must be discussions on:

- the formulation of national policy;
- the need for legal and institutional reforms; and
- investment priority.

***Development of measurable M & E indicators for each target***

Monitoring and evaluation (M & E) indicators are long-term monitoring tools used to verify the implementation of the SAP. In order to achieve this, the SAP team should prepare a set of process, stress reduction and environmental status indicators based on the results of the TDA, but adapted according to the needs of the long-term EcoQOs and shorter term targets and priority actions.

Project monitoring and evaluation indicators for any subsequent GEF interventions should also be developed. There should be clear linkages between the indicators and the institutional capacity for monitoring them.

**(vi) Drafting the action programmes**

***Drafting the Strategic Action Programme (SAP)***

The SAP should be prepared on the basis of identified regional priorities and agreed Ecosystem Quality Objectives. The various SAP and NAP meetings conducted during the

SAP formulation process will have produced a great deal of material that will need to be integrated into one document.

The work of integration of the various materials of the SAP into a single document should be conducted under the supervision of the Project Manager and key members of the PMO and the SAP expert(s).

The SAP should be a concise jargon-free document with clear targets, quantifiable time-limited milestones and unambiguous assignment of responsibilities. It should embody:

- a statement of the priority problems;
- principles adopted for solving them;
- institutional arrangements;
- policy and legal reforms;
- joint planning and dispute settlement mechanisms;
- public participation;
- long term EcoQOs and short-term targets and priority actions;
- common measures to be taken; and
- monitoring and review arrangements and reporting.

It should include a series of annexes giving details such as monitoring and evaluation indicators, lists of stakeholders and contact points.

### ***Drafting the National Action Programmes (NAPs)***

Based on the regional SAP, each country involved in the TDA/SAP will need to develop a National Action Programme (NAP) or Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (IWRMP) / Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), as appropriate. The reason for this is that the underlying causes as well as the complex linkages between the sources of environmental degradation and threats mean that national actions must respond to the uniquely specific circumstances and priorities of each country.

Each country must select the approach that best suits geographic characteristics, political, institutional and regulatory frameworks, best available science and technology, current assessments, inventories and data. Furthermore, some countries will place the NAP higher in the political process than others, i.e. at a parliamentary level rather than ministerial. Therefore no two NAPs will have quite the same appearance, scope or focus.

#### **(vii) Ministerial adoption**

As a long-term strategic programme designed to change government, corporate and public behaviour, the SAP (and the associated NAPs) must be formally endorsed by relevant government authorities. This is to ensure that they are adequately incorporated into planning and budgetary processes at all levels: national, state, province, district, municipal.

Solid support from government authorities is a key to successful implementation of SAP activities and strategies, including pilot projects. Particularly because it addresses a cross-sectoral range of issues, the SAP must be brought into the mainstream of policy, legal and budget provisions, enforcement mechanisms, and technical and scientific frameworks.

#### **(viii) Conducting a Donors Conference**

The SAP planning process itself should be encouraging to the various parties engaged in the endorsement process. One of the most efficient mechanisms is to call a donors (or

partnership) conference, to allow bilateral and multilateral organisations to review the proposals and to engage in joint planning for future projects.

## **2 Consultation Meeting of Preparation of SAP**

It should be noted from the very beginning of the SAP preparation that the SAP should be:

- A policy document dealing with management issues of the Yellow Sea; and
- Approved by the participating governments.

In order to define appropriate procedures and steps to develop the SAP for the Yellow Sea, it is proposed to organise an expert's consultation meeting to discuss relevant issues.

### **2.1 Objectives**

The major objectives of the consultation are: (i) considering the political systems and decision making process in the participating countries, define a practically feasible procedure for preparing the SAP in the Yellow Sea; (ii) define major steps to develop National Strategic Action Plans; and (iii) identify major activities for preparing and approval of the SAP.

### **2.2 Major Issues of the Meeting**

The major issues of the meeting include:

- Defining regional ecosystem quality objectives (EcoQOs), i.e. the regional targets for the management measures/actions;
- Major elements to be included in the SAP, such as institutional re-arrangement, harmonisation of legislation, regional agreement, major prevention measures to conserve the Yellow Sea marine environment, etc.;
- Mechanism for the preparation of SAP, e.g. formulating group; brainstorming mechanism, etc.;
- Major considerations of the approval of SAP, for both regional and national SAPs

### **2.3 Meeting Format**

It would be more effective and productive if the expert's consultation be organised in an informal format, with all experts participating in the meeting on their own expert and personal basis. With approval of the PSC on this activity, participants should be identified by the National Project Co-ordinator in close consultation with the Project Manger. It should be noted that additional scientists from within and outside the region, other than those already involved in the project may be invited to participate in the consultation.

### **2.4 Venue**

The venue of the meeting will be selected after consultation with relevant experts. In order to start the entire work as early as possible, it is suggested the expert's consultation should be organised in early 2007.

## **3 Other Relevant Activities**

It would be helpful if the expert's consultation could consider some other relevant issues which are part of or closely relevant to SAP. These relevant activities could include:

- Consideration of regional co-operating mechanism;

- Governance of the implementation of SAP; and
- Sustainability of the current efforts in protection of marine environment in the Yellow Sea.