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***Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends  
in the  
South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand***

**The First Sub-Committee of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee  
*Bangkok, Thailand, 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> February 2006***

**TRAINING PROGRAMME DEVELOPED BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE  
OF THE REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**



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## 1. BACKGROUND

The overall goal of the UNEP/GEF project entitled “Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand” is defined in the project document as:

*17. The overall goals of this project are: to create an environment at the regional level, in which collaboration and partnership in addressing environmental problems of the South China Sea, between all stakeholders, and at all levels is fostered and encouraged; and to enhance the capacity of the participating governments to integrate environmental considerations into national development planning.*

Funds from the GEF grant were originally allocated to a variety of activities designed to build capacity and effect the training required to achieve the medium term objective of “elaborating and agreeing at the intergovernmental level the Strategic Action Programme encompassing specific targeted and costed actions for the longer-term, to address the priority issues and concerns”. Several forms of training and capacity building were envisaged in the original project and can be grouped into three broad categories:

- Support for Young Scientists working in the demonstration sites;
- Study Tours to demonstration sites;
- Training courses and workshops.

By decision of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) funds have been allocated and expended in support of in-service training of young individuals from the focal ministries in the management and operation of a complex regional project, through secondment to the Project Co-ordinating Unit. Individuals from: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam have been seconded by, their governments to work in the Project Co-ordinating Unit (PCU), in order to become familiar with the operation and management of the project and the rules of procedure and operational protocols of the United Nations System. This programme has been remarked upon and commended in both the Mid-term Evaluation and the Specially Managed Project Review completed in 2004.

In 2004, the PCU prepared a discussion document entitled “Regional Co-ordination, Dissemination of Experiences, and Personnel Exchange between Sites”. This document was considered and refined at the level of the Regional Working Groups and RSTC before being considered and approved by the Project Steering Committee and provides operational level details for the exchange programme. Subsequent to the approval of these procedures the Focal Points responsible for the Demonstration Sites were to have produced details of what opportunities for training existed at each site, and what the training needs were at each site.

Training needs and opportunities at the demonstration sites were commented upon only in a few of the demonstration site proposal documents. This limited information was deemed insufficient for use in the development of an actual training programme for the project, and in this connection, the Sixth Meetings of the Regional Working Groups discussed training needs and opportunities specific to the demonstration sites. In addition questionnaires were completed in each of the meetings, designed to assess the extent to which capacity had already been built in the Specialised Executing Agencies, the extent of networking achieved in the preparatory phase and the requirements for further capacity building during the operational phase of the project.

The needs and opportunities identified by the Working Groups for each of the sites/components varied greatly in terms of the areas of training, the modes of training, duration and frequency of training, and the numbers of participants.

At the Sixth Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC), a small working group comprised of the National Technical Focal Points from Viet Nam and the Philippines, and the two expert members Dr. Ong Jin-Eong and Dr. Anond Snidvongs, was formed to discuss an approach to developing the proposal for a training programme in the context of the South China Sea Project.

The view of the small working group was that there was such a diverse range of requests and identified needs for training that it would not be practical for the project to develop a training programme that attempted to meet all needs and that certainly such a programme could not be developed during that meeting.

In recognition of the complexity of the task of preparing a training programme for the project, a small sub-committee of the RSTC (comprising Mrs. Wahyu Indraningsih, Dr. Gil Jacinto, Dr. Suvaluck Satumanatpan, and Dr Ong Jin-Eong) was formed to prepare a proposal. It was agreed that the group would prepare a preliminary programme that could be circulated to the members of the RSTC by the end of February 2006 and that members of the RSTC would have one month within which to comment on the proposal before it was distributed to the regional working groups and other network members. The following sections reflect the discussions and recommendations of the sub-committee, that met in the PCU office in Bangkok from 6-10<sup>th</sup> February 2006.

## **2. RATIONALE FOR SELECTION OF TRAINING NEEDS**

In arriving at the selection of training needs (a total of 91 requests for training were identified during the Regional Working Group meetings for the habitat sub-components alone), the sub-committee essentially considered:

- The most common needs (from the questionnaire responses),
- What each of the demonstration sites has to uniquely offer, and,
- The results of the causal chain analyses of each of the demonstration sites.

Based on the total number of requests or identified needs, the following priorities were apparent:

- Community-based management,
- Assessment and monitoring: resource/socio-economic,
- Fisheries and habitat management,
- Income generation and financing.

Only a few of the focal points could identify a unique feature of the demonstration sites to share with potential participants of the training courses.

The analysis of the results of the casual chain analyses of the demonstration sites very strongly supported the fact that a lack of effective management was the main root cause of environmental degradation. This was in line with the questionnaire responses where the principal need for training was management related.

## **3. TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

In order to respond to the identified priority training needs, various training modes and associated themes for each mode were subsequently identified as follows:

1. Training courses;
2. Study tours;
3. Staff exchanges; and,
4. Participation in conferences or workshops.

### **3.1 Training Courses**

Training courses will consist of the following:

1. Regional training courses;
2. Echo seminars/workshops conducted at the national or local level by participants of the regional training courses; and,
3. Specialized training courses at the regional or national level, depending on the demand expressed by participants at the end of each regional training course.

#### **3.1.1 Regional Training Courses**

Courses conducted at the regional level will last between 1 and 2 weeks, and will focus on six topics as shown in Table 1. Also shown are the possible course contents & duration, possible implementing agencies, and experts that may be tapped for the courses.

**Table 1 Regional training courses for the UNEP/GEF SCS project to be conducted in 2006-2007.**

Course	Contents	Tentative Duration	Possible Implementing Agency	Possible Experts
1. Management models & strategies for coral reef & seagrass ecosystems	Coral reefs/ seagrass resource assessment and monitoring; resource management models (e.g., marine parks, marine protected areas, fisheries <i>refugia</i> ); socio-economic aspects of coral reef/seagrass management (policies & guidelines, local and national legislation, economic valuation, socio-cultural assessment); habitat rehabilitation (transplantation, artificial seagrass); supplemental income generation and financing (e.g., invertebrate and seaweed culture, sea ranching, ecotourism development); and IEC initiatives (print, radio, TV)	2 weeks	UP-MSI (MERF)  Ramkhamhaeng Univ. Marine Biodiv Research Group	T Yeemin; P Alino; MD Fortes; Chou LM; S Satumanatpan; Kamarruddin
2. Mechanisms for sustainable production/use of mangroves and other wetlands	The Matang mangroves experience; guidelines for resources assessment & monitoring (including community-based biodiversity monitoring); carbon & nutrient sequestration; economic valuation of resources; sustainable production; incentive mechanisms; restoration techniques; silvofisheries; IEC initiatives (print, radio, & TV).	2 weeks	Thailand Environmental Institute USM - Center for Marine and Coastal Studies, Malaysia	Ong; Gong; Sanit; Hoang Tri;
3. Community-based resource management	ICM framework; constituency (partnership) building; environmental assessment in ICM; introduction to strategic planning; selected coastal management techniques; plan adoption; plan implementation; attributes of a coastal manager	2 weeks	Train Sea Coast-Philippines (PCAMRD-DOST) Silliman University (Phil) – A Alcala	Ridzwan; CHARM expert
4. Establishment of fisheries <i>refugia</i>	Linking <i>refugia</i> with MPA's; identifying suitable sites for fisheries <i>refugia</i> ; FAO-SEAFDEC Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	1 week	SEAFDEC (Thailand)	S Chullasorn; G Silvestre; Y Kato;
5. Economic valuation and sustainable financing	Valuation of marine resources and the socio-economic context; Economic framework; Valuation Methods; Policy Implications; Sustainable financing	1 week	CERE (Viet Nam) REECS (Phil)	T Kusumastanto; G Samonte; Hoang Tri
6. Project design, planning & financial management	Identifying issues and problems; logical framework; causal chain analysis; activities & components; work plan development; financial planning, budgeting, cost estimation; monitoring and evaluation	1 week	PCU through SCS Institute, China ?	J Pernetta

It is recommended that the training course on the establishment of fisheries *refugia* be supported by an additional regional training course (and associated echo seminars/workshops) on the identification of larval fish of key commercial species in the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea. Discussions with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) highlight a lack of expertise in this field as a main barrier in developing the information base required to support the activity of establishing fisheries *refugia* in the region. This additional training course will be developed and delivered on a collaborative basis by SEAFDEC and the PCU. Outputs will include larval fish identification sheets/manuals for key commercial species, national level capacity for the processing of larval fish samples and the identification of larval fish, and a standardized methodology for fish early life history research in the region.

Course Participants: Participants in the regional training courses may include demonstration site managers and associated staff, community leaders at demonstration sites, staff of the Specialized Executing Agencies (SEA's), and members of the national committees (excluding the Chairs as they would already have had opportunities to learn and benefit from the project)<sup>1</sup>. No person may attend more than one regional training course.

Criteria for the choice of participants will include ability to speak and write English, participation at or familiarity with demonstration sites; ability and willingness to conduct echo seminars/workshops in their country after the regional training course, and commitment to submit regular blog<sup>2</sup> updates in the project website to facilitate sharing of experiences following the regional training course. The regional training course would typically have 3, at most 4, participants per country.

Implementing Agency/Group for Regional Training Courses: The regional training courses will be conducted by, a group or agency that will be identified or proposed by, the RSTC members, and subcontracted by the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU). The implementing entity could be an existing SEA, one associated with the regional project, or others, as appropriate.

The contracted agency/group for each regional training course is expected to provide the PCU with the following:

- The course syllabus;
- A description of the training structure and form;
- A list of experts (with their CV's) that would be used as facilitators/lecturers and the tasks/contributions of these individuals in the conduct of the course;
- Venue of the training;
- An estimate of training costs (e.g., in-country travel and lodging costs, supplies, consultant and staff fees), and;
- The schedule of the training.

In addition, the implementing group will be expected to compile lecture notes (e.g., Powerpoint presentations) and a list of references and handouts that will be given to the participants.

Role of PCU: Once the implementing entity, and a lead individual in the agency have been identified, the PCU will draft an appropriate Memorandum of Understanding detailing the roles and expectations of the agency and focal individual. The MoU will contain a work plan and budget in UNEP approved format. The costs associated with organizing and conducting the training course will be met from the project budget and the implementing entity shall take responsibility either directly or through a third party for organizing the travel of participants once these have been identified.

The PCU will take responsibility for soliciting nominations of participants and in consultation with the implementing entity shall identify the best qualified candidates and inform them of their selection.

### **3.1.2 Echo Seminars/Workshops**

Shortly after the regional training courses, participants will be expected to conduct "echo" seminars/workshops in their respective countries or demonstration sites. These echo training opportunities will provide local participants with abridged versions of the regional training courses and will be conducted in the local language, as appropriate. These seminars/workshops are envisaged to last 2 to 3 days and are expected to be conducted within a month of the return of the participants to their countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Except for the Project planning and financial management course where National Committee Chairs may attend.

<sup>2</sup> A shared on-line journal where people can post diary entries about their personal experiences.

The costs associated with the conduct of these echo seminars will be provided by the project through the focal points in the SEAs, government or host organisation, as appropriate. The disbursement of funds will be based on the acceptance of an operational budget and follow standard financial reporting procedures.

### 3.1.3 Specialized Training Courses

Specialized training courses will be priority topics/skills, which may be taken up during the regional training courses but where more elaboration may be needed for their use and application in the participating countries and demonstration sites. These courses will target practitioners and technical staff, and may be conducted at the regional or in-country level. Topics for these courses may include:

1. Seagrass monitoring/assessment;
2. Coral reef monitoring/assessment;
3. Culture of marine organisms for supplemental livelihood or habitat rehabilitation;
4. Economic valuation and sustainable financing;
5. Site level geographic information system (GIS); and,
6. Estimating carrying capacity of coastal environments using numerical models.

Ideally, these specialized training courses will be handled by, the same individuals responsible for these topics during the regional training courses. Their mode of involvement will vary according to the number and complexity of the training course concerned and they may be engaged through institutional or individual arrangements, as appropriate.

### 3.2 Study Tours

Another training mode is the conduct of study tours. The themes and likely venues for this activity are shown below:

Theme	Venue
Role of coastal habitats in mitigating land-based pollutants	Thailand & Cambodia
Sustainable management of mangroves	Matang, Malaysia
Community-based resource management	Pangasinan and/or Dumaguete City, Philippines
Coral reefs & ecotourism	Palawan, Philippines

In general, participants in the study tours will be those involved in or contributing toward policy formulation, those involved in demonstration site activities or taking part in similar initiatives, and able to communicate in spoken and written English<sup>3</sup>. These would include local government officials, staff at demonstration sites, members of national committees under this project, national level coordination officials, and those involved in identified parallel sites to this project.

The study tours may be implemented by the same agencies/groups involved in the conduct of the regional training courses, and would generally last for one week each.

### 3.3 Staff Exchanges

A third mode of training opportunities would be through the exchange of staff and personnel between/among demonstration sites or project-affiliated staff in the participating countries. During the early stages of this project, this training mode was implemented through the in-service training of staff of national focal agencies of participating countries. Individuals from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam spent several months at the Project Coordinating Unit in Bangkok to learn various skills needed in running a regional project including project planning and financial management. This will be continued in this phase of the project with opportunities provided to additional staff at the national or demonstration site level.

<sup>3</sup> Although, depending on the need translators may be provided.



In addition, staff exchange may take the form of individuals at a demonstration site in one country going to a demonstration site in another country to learn specialized skills or methods that may be used in their locality. For example, one might wish to participate in the process at a demonstration site of mobilizing various sectors to enact a local ordinance to manage coastal habitats or resources. It seems obvious from the responses to date that both needs and opportunities might best be served by periods of time shorter than the six months originally envisaged.

#### **4. PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS**

A fourth mode of training would be through participation in conferences or workshops relevant to the needs of the project. Following the discussion at the Sixth Meeting of the RSTC in Batan, Indonesia last December, 2005 and the subsequent approval by the Project Steering Committee, it was decided that around 12 individuals would present papers and take part in the PEMSEA conference to be held in Hainan, China in December, 2006. Other workshops and conferences that may be relevant and for which support for participation may be provided could include the following:

- Integrated Environmental Impact Assessment at the City University of Hong Kong (June 2006)
- Coastal Zone Asia Pacific Conference in Indonesia (2006)
- 1st Asia-Pacific Coral Reef Symposium, Hong Kong (June 2006)
- Society of Wetland Scientists (Australia, July 2006)

Prospective participants will need to show the relevance and advantages of participation at these conferences and workshops to the goals of the project and/or needs at the demonstration sites.



Figure 1 Activity types for the UNEP/GEF Project Training Programme.

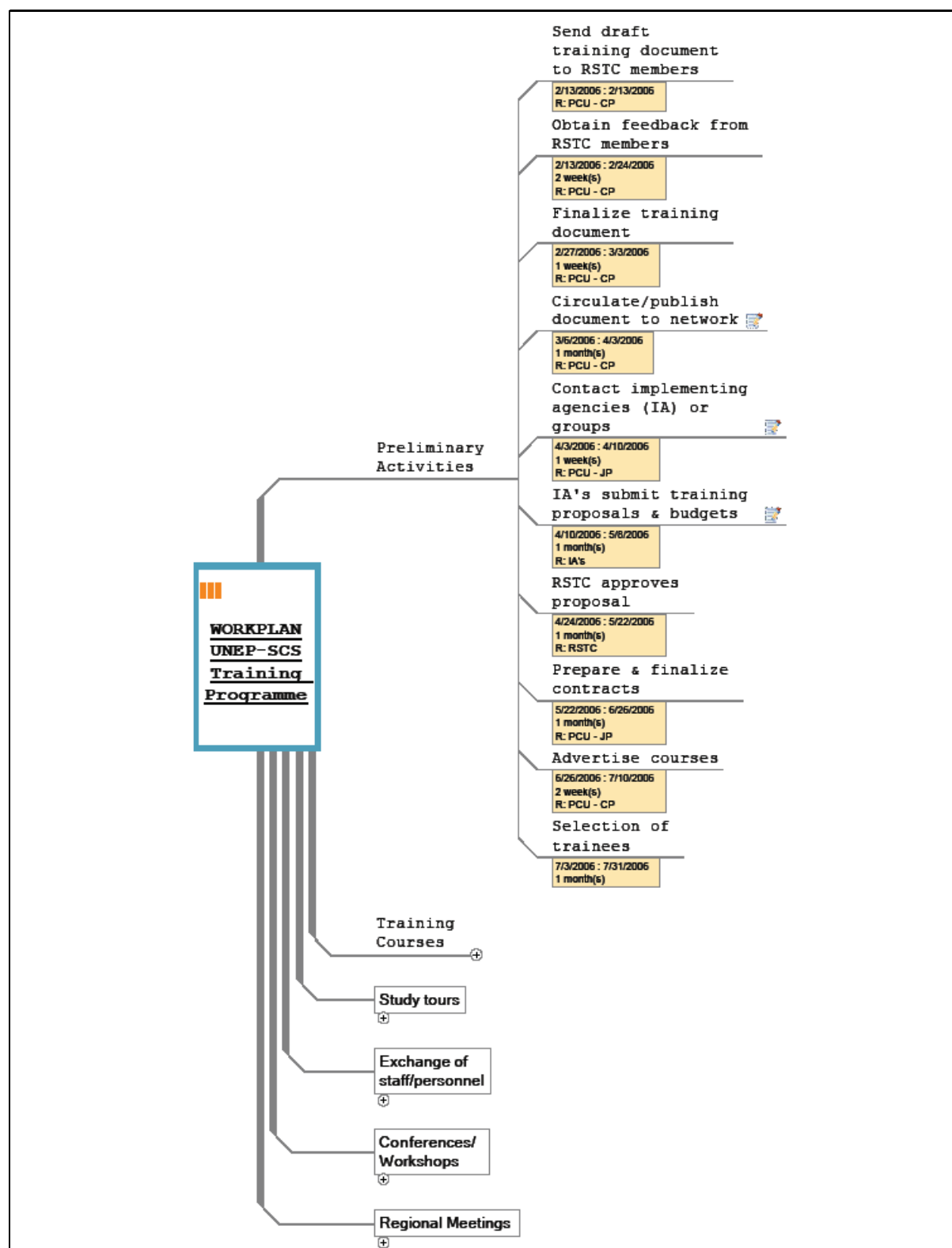
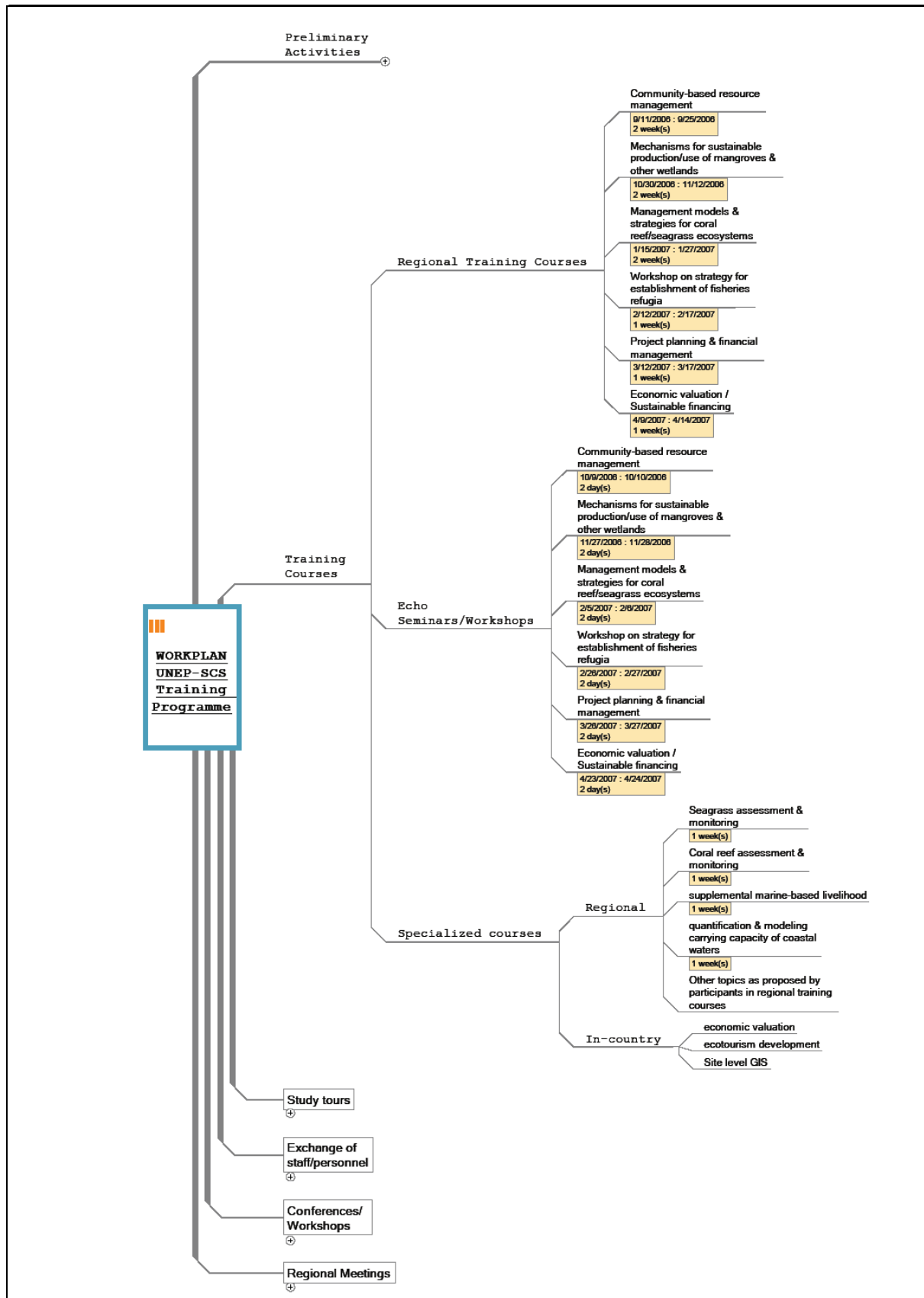
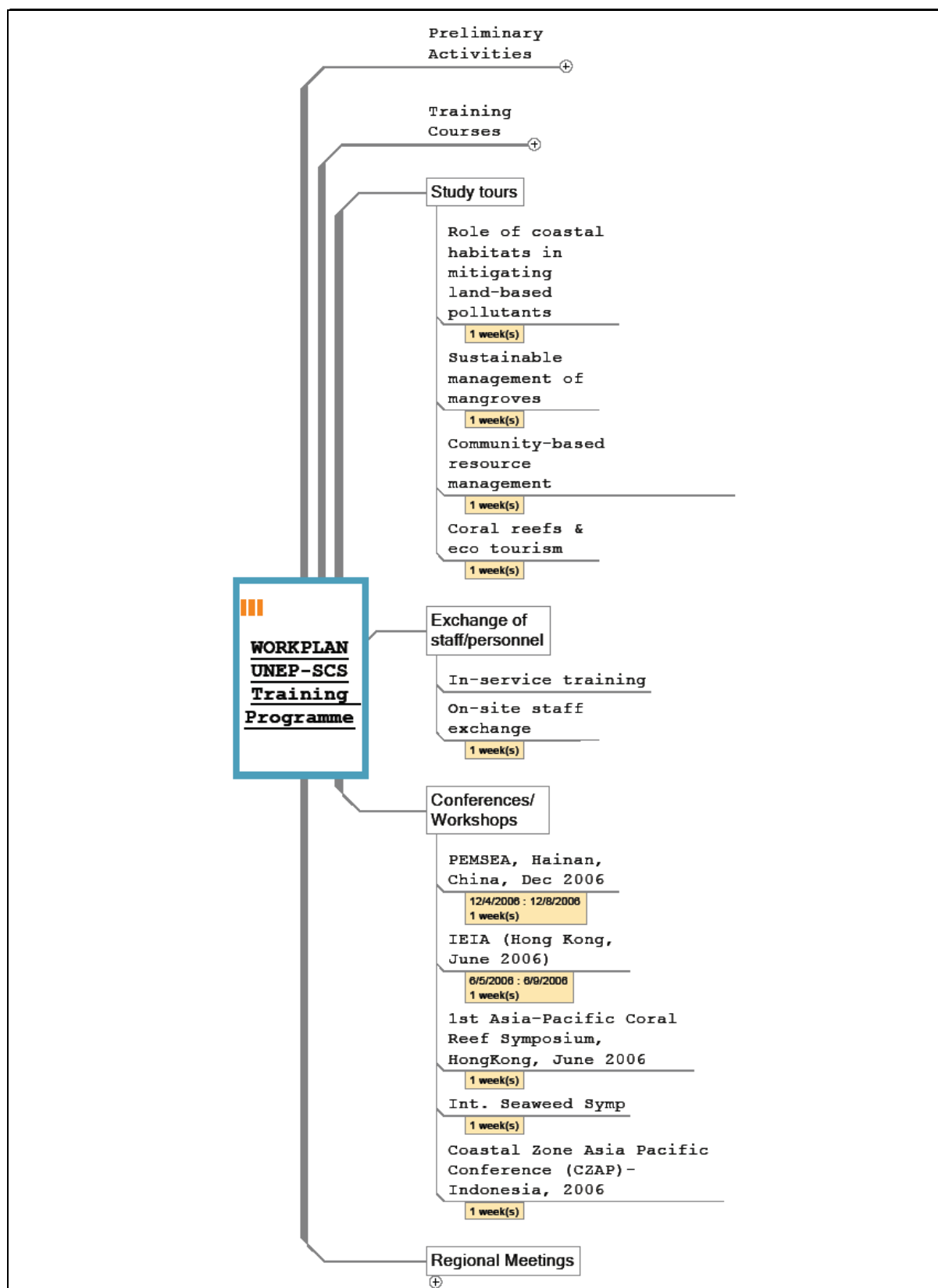


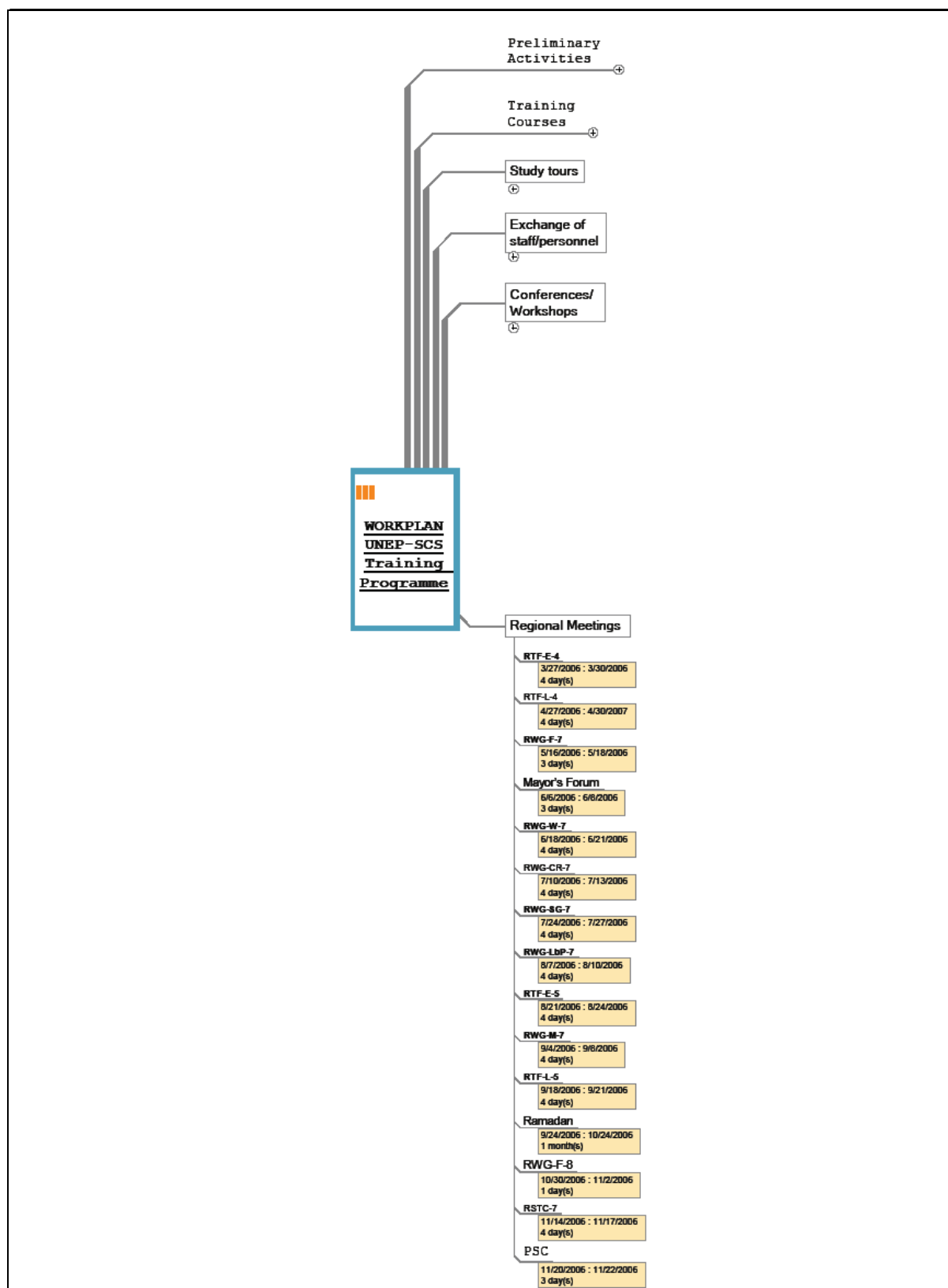
Figure 2 Overview of preliminary activities for the UNEP/GEF Project Training Programme.



**Figure 3** Overview of proposed regional training courses, echo seminars/workshops, and specialized course for the UNEP/GEF Project Training Programme.



**Figure 4** Overview of proposed study tours, exchange of personnel, and conferences and workshops for the UNEP/GEF Project Training Programme.



**Figure 5** Schedule of regional meetings for the UNEP/GEF Project during 2006.

**Table 2** Proposed timetable for the completion of key training programme tasks during 2006 and 2007.

Task Name	2006												2007					
	1st Quarter			2nd Quarter			3rd Quarter			4th Quarter			1st Quarter			2nd Quarter		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
<b>Preliminary Activities</b>																		
<b>Training Courses</b>																		
<b>Echo Seminars/Workshops</b>																		

Table 2 (cont.)

[illegible]



**Proposed timetable for the completion of key training programme tasks during 2006 and 2007.**

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