

## **An Epoch-Making Event for the Seas of East Asia**

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA -- “An epoch-making event.” This is how Hon. Hayao Hora, Vice-Minister for Transport and International Affairs of Japan described the adoption of the Putrajaya Declaration of Regional Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia during a ministerial forum held on 12 December 2003. The Declaration’s adoption now paves the way for a strategic regional approach in developing and managing coastal and marine resources in the region.

Ministers of 12 East Asian countries adopted the Declaration during the Ministerial Forum on the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia, a forum where East Asia’s top-level policymakers discussed the state of the region’s environment and natural resources, the sustainable development of coasts and oceans, and agreed on a common framework of actions for the East Asian Seas known as the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA).

Through the Declaration, the twelve countries – Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, P.R. China, D.P.R. Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, R.O. Korea, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam -- adopted the SDS-SEA, and firmly pledged to commit to regional cooperation and collaboration. A document initiated and prepared by PEMSEA, in consultation with 12 participating Governments and other stakeholders of the Seas of East Asia, the SDS-SEA provides a common platform for regional cooperation and as a framework for policy and programme development and implementation, at the national and local level (see related article). The SDS-SEA also provides flexibility in that it will be implemented on a voluntary basis, where deemed appropriate by each of the twelve countries in the region. The Declaration and the SDS-SEA is significant in that it represent the first regional implementation of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) in East Asia.

“I know of no other region of the world with a similar roadmap for regional implementation of the World Summit targets toward sustainable development,” this according to Dr. Alfred Duda, Global Environment Facility, Senior Adviser on International Waters. Dr. Duda also congratulated the region’s stakeholders on the Declaration’s adoption. “By adopting the sustainable development strategy, you are taking regional cooperation to a new level in addressing the coastal and marine concerns that are common to your economies, your people and your sustainable future.”

The Ministerial Forum on the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia, was part of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003, held on 8-12 December at the Putrajaya Marriott Hotel. The Congress was co-organized by PEMSEA and Department of Environment Malaysia.

Ministers who signed the declaration include Hon. Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Ahmad bin Haji Jumat, Minister of Development of Brunei Darussalam; Hon. Dr. Mok Mareth, Minister for the Environment of Cambodia; Hon. Wang Shuguang, Administrator for the State Oceanic Administration of P.R. China; Hon. Chae Tu Young, Deputy Minister for Land and Maritime Transportation of D.P.R. Korea; Hon. Aboejoewono Aboeprajitno, Special Assistant to the Minister of Environment for Global and Environment Affairs of Indonesia; Hon. Hayao Hora, Vice Minister for Transport and International Affairs of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of Japan; Hon. Dato' Seri Law Hieng Ding, Minister of Science, Technology and the Environment of Malaysia; Hon. Elisea G. Gozun, Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines; Hon. Chang, Seung-Woo, Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the R.O. Korea; Hon. Loh Ah Tuan, Director-General, Environmental Protection Division and Acting CEO of the National Environment Agency of Singapore; Hon. Nikorn Chamnong, Deputy Minister of Transport of Thailand; and Hon. Dr. Pham Khoi Nguyen, Senior Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Vietnam.

## **A New Hope for the Seas of East Asia**

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA -- The East Asian Seas Congress 2003 in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 8-12 December 2003 carried a new hope for the seas of the East Asian region in the form of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA).

The SDS-SEA is a package of applicable principles, action programs, agreements and instruments for achieving sustainable development for the Seas of East Asia. It represents implementation approaches for the integrated management and sustainable use of the environment and resources by:

- Creating regional partnerships among government agencies, non-government organizations, private sector and other stakeholders;
- Enabling concerned organizations operating in the region at all levels to promote synergistic and cumulative impacts of their efforts and expertise for the benefits of the countries involved and other stakeholders;
- Providing the countries and other stakeholders with a set of guidelines, references and examples for assisting in their development of strategies, policies and implementation plans in order to address specific national, local and sectoral needs;
- Offering a set of operational approaches and measures for sustainable coastal and marine development that have been proven suitable and effective in the region;
- Facilitating the sharing and transfer of experiences, knowledge, technology and techniques, as well as mutual assistance among countries;
- Facilitating the flow of support and assistance from interested financing institutions and donor agencies, and the creation of self-sustained financing mechanisms and investment opportunities for sustainable coastal and marine development.

The SDS-SEA is a product of a long and comprehensive consultation and approval process that has stimulated debates and built up general consensus and partnerships among various policy makers, natural resource and environment managers, the academe, private sector, civil society, international agencies, intergovernmental financial institutions and all those who care for the coastal and marine environment and believe in sustainable development.

This 110-page document was adopted at Ministerial Forum on the Sustainable Development of Seas of East Asia (12 December), which immediately followed the International Conference on the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia:

Towards a New Era of Regional Collaboration and Partnerships (8-11 December) at the Putrajaya Marriott Hotel.

Building on the work done at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Meeting of Ocean-Related Ministers (Seoul, 2002) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), the Ministerial Forum provided a venue where East Asia's top-level policymakers discussed the state of the region's environment and natural resources and agreed on a common vision of hope for the East Asian Seas.

## **Experts Examine Main Environmental Concerns for Seas of East Asia**

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA -- Over 400 experts from more than 30 countries met to review international and national efforts addressing key sectoral concerns on the Seas of East Asia and examined future areas for collaboration, during the International Conference on the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia: Towards A New Era of Regional Collaboration and Partnerships held from 8-9 December.

Four simultaneous workshops were held to provide insight into the four key regional concerns namely: maritime transport; land-based pollution; fisheries and aquaculture; and biodiversity. The International Conference was part of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003.

Among the findings of the workshops include:

- The use of integrated coastal management, enhanced public awareness and innovative financing mechanisms as the most effective means to address land-based pollution;
- The need for a coordination mechanism to be use by maritime administrators such as pollution preparedness and response, particularly sensitive areas, ballast water management, and a marine electronic highway for safer and efficient shipping and cleaner seas;
- The building of socially just fisheries systems, the reduction of fishing activities, and promotion of locally feasible alternative livelihoods to address fisheries and aquaculture concerns; and
- The importance of biodiversity conservation efforts going with economic incentives and mechanisms, and on the need for indicators to measure the impact of human activities on conserving and using biodiversity.

The conclusions and recommendations of the workshops were given to concerned ministers and officials of twelve PEMSEA participating countries to assess innovative and sustainable regional collaborative arrangements and financing mechanisms for the improvement and strengthening of regional coastal and ocean governance.

## **International Conference Explores Means to Achieving Sustainable Development**

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA -- The International Conference on the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia: Towards A New Era of Regional Collaboration and Partnerships brought together an estimated 400 experts from more than 30 countries to explore essential cross-sectoral processes and approaches to achieving sustainable development in the East Asian region. The International Conference was held from 8-10 December and was a part of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003.

Four simultaneous workshops were held on key topics that include: local governance and alliances; skills and expertise; finance, investment and corporate responsibility; and national coastal and ocean policies and regional collaborative arrangements.

The workshops held numerous paper presentations and saw active discussion among the participants. Among the recommendations produced by the workshops include the need to:

- Incorporate cross-sectoral national coastal and ocean policy into the national sustainable development strategy before 2005;
- Promote strong multi-stakeholder consultation and involvement in integrated coastal management (ICM);
- Provide for the participation and involvement of the youth and media;
- Improve communication in terms of language, media channels and reach;
- Adopt practical indicators of management success and produce an ICM indicators handbook;
- Promote fuller understanding of benefits and costs/risks of ICM;
- Support small and medium-sized environmental projects involving local governments and private investors;
- Promote partnership among partnership advocates;
- Undertake regular interactions among scientists, managers, political leaders, and community leaders; and
- Enter into regional and sub-regional collaborative arrangements, including regional conventions, to fully assert principles of the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Seas of East Asia.

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and sustainable regional collaborative arrangements and financing mechanisms for the improvement and strengthening of regional coastal and ocean governance.

## **New Tropical Coasts Issue Focuses on Regional Approaches to Sustainable Development**

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES -- PEMSEA has recently produced its latest issue of Tropical Coasts Magazine. With the title “The Regional Approach: Harnessing Intergovernmental Partnerships for Sustainable Development of the World’s Seas”, the latest issue sheds light on the advantages of regional cooperation as a necessity for sustainable development.

“This issue of Tropical Coasts examines some of the regional arrangements that have been adopted and the lessons learned, as well as the trends in regional cooperation relating to the environment, regional seas and their associated basins. The aim of this issue is to show some of the practicalities involved in operationalizing the ideals and modalities of regional arrangements” explains Stella Regina Bernad, Tropical Coasts Issue Editor.

The recent issue also features a special pull out section highlighting the legislation and other institutions of twelve East Asian countries, as part of their efforts in attaining sustainable development.

Tropical Coasts is a bi-annual publication of PEMSEA, Sida Marine Science Programme, the Coastal Management Center, and the United Nations Environment Programme-Global Programme of Action. It is geared towards stimulating an exchange of information sharing of experiences and ideas with respect to environmental protection and the management of coastal and marine areas.

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