



Highlights of Progress of NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers (RACs)

DINRAC

15th NOWPAP DINRAC Focal Points Meeting Held in Beijing in May 2017

The 15th NOWPAP Data and Information Network Regional Activity Center (DINRAC) Focal Point Meeting was organized by the NOWPAP DINRAC Secretariat from 25-26 May 2017 in Beijing, China. Mr. Kaifeng SUN, the representative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of China (MEP) opened the meeting and highlighted that DINRAC shall discuss how to use the up-to-date technology to promote the data sharing, to enhance the visualization of data, and to improve the quality and effectiveness of data. He stated that the strengthened cooperation of NOWPAP member states will help to implement UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, to improve the marine environment as well as to benefit people of the NOWPAP region.

The meeting reviewed the progress of the NOWPAP and DINRAC activities, and adopted the Progress Report on Annual Summary of Major Marine Environmental Data Available in NOWPAP Member States, and the Progress Report on the Collection of Data and Information on Species Filed in the Red Lists of NOWPAP Member States (2nd Stage). The participants have also reviewed the progress of the development of DINRAC website, the update of existing databases, and the compilation on marine environmental standards.

Moreover, the participants discussed DINRAC's Workplan and Budget for 2018-2019 Biennium, and proposals including that on Sea Reclamation State and Management.

In the strategy session, the participants discussed what fields DINRAC could take the lead or participate in. They have also discussed the challenges DINRAC facing and possible approaches.





Highlights of Progress of NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers (RACs)

MERRAC

20th MERRAC Focal Point Meeting and the 12th Competent National Authorities Meeting held in Seoul in April 2017

The 20th NOWPAP Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Centre (MERRAC) Focal Point Meeting (FPM) and the 12th Competent National Authorities Meeting were held in Seoul Korea from 10 to 13 April 2017. Some 31 participants including MERRAC Focal Points, the NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Oil Spill Response Limited (OSRL), the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA), the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF) and other NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers (RACs) attended the meetings.

The meeting reviewed the progress on MERRAC routine tasks and agreed to continue collecting and updating relevant information on Focal Points, information system on oil spill response equipment, institution and experts and oil and HNS spill incidents. Regarding the MERRAC Specific Projects, the meeting reviewed on the on-going specific projects and agreed to implement three other projects, which were submitted by member states as new MERRAC specific projects for the next biennium. The 7th NOWPAP DELTA exercise (Joint Oil Spill Exercise) was decided to be organized by Japan and co-organized by Russia in the year of 2019. The 19th and 20th NOWPAP BRAVO exercises (Communication Exercise) will be implemented by Korea (in 2017) and China (in 2018) respectively on a rotational basis. The meeting has also discussed the draft NOWPAP Mid-term Strategy (MTS) 2018-2023 and new MERRAC future activities under the new NOWPAP MTS framework, and decided to submit two proposed workplans and budget to the next NOWPAP intergovernmental meeting (IGM).

The meetings further strengthened the regional cooperation on oil and HNS spill preparedness and response in the NOWPAP region. The meeting report is now available at the MERRAC website (<http://merrac.nowpap.org>).





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MERRAC

MERRAC Joins Regional Co-operation with HELCOM for Oil Spill Preparedness and Response



Dr. Jeong-Hwan OH, MERRAC Senior Consultant, participated in the 1st Inter-regional Workshop on Risk Assessment Methods for Pollution Prevention and Response and the 23rd Meeting of the Response Working Group organized by HELCOM on 13 – 16 June 2017 in Helsinki, Finland. The workshop took the first step for the HELCOM led OpenRisk project for 2017-2018, shared lessons learned on regional pollution preparedness and response risk assessments and discussed drafts and provided guidance for the open source toolbox for risk assessments for regional and national use.

At the meetings, MERRAC presented the latest regional co-operation activities in marine pollution preparedness and response within NOWPAP framework and the outcomes of a MERRAC led project, Risk Assessment of Oil Spill Incident: Likelihood Analysis.. In the NOWPAP region, a risk assessment on oil spill is essential to effective and prompt preparedness for and response to marine pollution due to the heavy maritime traffic and the increase of the marine transportation. MERRAC will continue to cooperate with HELCOM in the future to share knowledge and best practices in addressing marine pollution.



NOWPAP attends APEC workshop on marine litter

18 June 2017, Busan. NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) and NOWPAP Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center (POMRAC) presented NOWPAP's work on marine litter during the capacity building workshop for marine debris prevention and management in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) region. The workshop was organized by APEC, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM) and Korea's Ministry of Oceans and Fishers in Yeosu, Korea on 12th -18th June 2017. It was attended by the officials from Chile, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Speakers were invited from the UN Environment, China, Republic of Korea, the USA, and NOWPAP.

Dr. LIU Ning presented the achievements of NOWPAP and the progress of the NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. Mr. Nikolai KOZLOVSKII from POMRAC introduced marine litter management system in Russia, and POMRAC-led research on micro-plastics. The participants inquired the cooperation between NOWPAP and other regional organizations in marine environmental protection. As a part of the programme, in the afternoon of 16 June, participants visited KOEM's floating receptacles in the sea and waste oil collection facilities. The next APEC workshop on marine litter will be organized in Busan in 2018.



NOWPAP participation in Eco Life Act event in Toyama

Toyama, 18 June 2017. Annual event organized by the Toyama Prefectural Government focused on a theme on local actions for environment conservation "Eco Life Act" was held in the center of Toyama City, Japan.

NOWPAP Senior Coordinator was invited as a guest speaker and talked about the importance of sustainable development goals and local action along with the Governor of Toyama Prefecture, Mr. Ishii. Coordinator highlighted the importance of regional cooperation on marine litter in the framework of NOWPAP, including the work of the NOWPAP Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center (CEARAC). The exhibition panels at the venue introduced various activities of NOWPAP and its Regional Activity Centers. Outstanding achievements by Toyama individuals on various environment conservation activities were highlighted during the event as well as the awards ceremony was held to recognize environmental leaders and school kids who won the drawing competition. The month of June is designated as a month for the environment in Toyama Prefecture.



Global Ocean Conference ends with about 1400 voluntary and action-oriented commitments putting oceans in the center of sustainable development agenda

June 10th, 2017, New York. The 193 Member States of the United Nations unanimously agreed to accelerate action to stop and reverse environmental degradation of oceans at the largest ever gathering of states under the UN umbrella – the UN Ocean Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14, convened in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017.

Approximately 4,000 delegates attended the conference, including 16 Heads of State or Government, two deputy Prime Ministers, 86 Ministers, 16 Vice Ministers, and other government representatives; and participants from the UN system, other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional financial institutions, civil society, academic and research institutions, indigenous peoples and local communities, and the private sector.

The Ocean Conference, the first UN conference of its kind on the issue has raised global consciousness of ocean problems ranging from marine pollution to illegal and over fishing, from ocean acidification to lack of high seas governance. Among major conference outcomes are

- Formally adopted Our oceans, our future: Call for Action “to act decisively and urgently, convinced that our collective action will make a meaningful difference to our people, to our planet and to our prosperity”. In the Call for Action, countries agree to implement long-term strategies to reduce the use of plastics and microplastics, such as plastic bags and single use plastics. Countries also agreed to develop and implement effective adaptation and mitigation measures that address ocean and coastal acidification, sea-level rise and increase in ocean temperatures, and to target to the other harmful impacts of climate change on the ocean. The Call recognizes the importance of the Paris Agreement on climate change. The Call for Action also includes measures to protect coastal and blue carbon ecosystems, such as mangroves, tidal marshes, seagrass and coral reefs, and wider interconnected ecosystems, as well as enhancing sustainable fisheries management, including to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield. Countries are called upon to decisively prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- Report from the seven partnership dialogues that have focused on scaling up solutions, and the voluntary commitments to action;
- About 1400 voluntary and action-oriented commitments, addressing all the issues needed to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 14—Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. If fully implemented, these commitments add 4.4 per cent of marine areas to the existing number; many countries announced steps to reduce or eliminate various single use plastics, such as plastic shopping bags, many commitments focused on expanding scientific knowledge about the ocean and developing and sharing innovative technologies to address ocean challenges; some countries announced “no-take zones” for certain fishing and agreed establish systems that allow consumers to source sustainable fish; new commitments were also made to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and to curtail fishing subsidies that are working to deplete fish stocks.

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The Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) contributed to the preparatory process by providing regional inputs reflected in the Partnership Dialogues Concept Papers. It also participated in the conference side events, and in consultation with its member states ensured that the NOWPAP successful lessons and examples were featured in the discussions. NOWPAP contributed or its activities were highlighted or mentioned at the several side events held during the conference:

- 3 R as the Basis for Moving Towards Zero Plastic Waste in Coastal and Marine Environment organized by the UNRCDD/ UN DESA Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan, UNEP-IETC (TBC); VITO, Belgium and Office of Green Industries South Australia;
- Oceans in the 2030 Agenda: The role of regional governance organized by the governments of Germany and Sweden, together with the United Nations Environment Programme and in cooperation with the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS), the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI), and TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability;
- Can we achieve SDG 14 without looking upstream? Starting at the source to save the sea by the Government of Sweden, co-presidents of The Ocean Conference, and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM).

The following NOWPAP initiatives contributing to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 were registered as “Voluntary Commitments”:

- Strengthening regional cooperation for the protection of the marine and coastal environment in the Northwest Pacific #OceanAction17490 and
- Marine environment protection through CEARAC (Special Monitoring & Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Centre) of NOWPAP(North-west Pacific Action Plan) #OceanAction17558
- Additional three Voluntary Commitments where submitted by member states or partners that include co-operation or joint activities with NOWPAP:
- Regional Seas Programme for ocean-related SDGs #OceanAction19228
- Marine litter management through TEMM (the Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting among China, Japan and Korea) #OceanAction17562, and
- Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (YSLME) #OceanAction19068.



June 5th, 2017. PRESS-RELEASE: Major Commitments of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Announced Ahead of the UN Ocean Conference



June 5th, 2017. Toyama, Japan/Busan, Republic of Korea: Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme puts forward voluntary commitment of the UN Ocean Conference to strengthen regional cooperation to achieve ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals.

The region covered by the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) is one of the most densely populated world's areas with a total population of about 300 million people, most of them living in the coastal areas. High rates of economic growth, increasing population and the growing demand for food and energy put a lot of pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems. Among major environmental pressures as identified by the NOWPAP specialists are fragmentation and loss of habitats caused by urban and tourism development, pollution, high risk of oil and hazardous and noxious substances spill incidents, eutrophication and loss of biodiversity and overfishing. Negative impacts of warming climate represent a significant compounding factor for various socio-ecological systems in the region.

The next phase of the NOWPAP evolution focuses on the achievement of ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030 in an integrated way by assessing status of the marine and coastal environment (SDGs 13 to 15, and 17), preventing and reducing land- and sea-based sources of pollution (SDGs 12 and 14), and supporting integrated coastal and river basin planning and management based on the ecosystem-based approach (SDGs 11, 13 to 15). Among few important expected deliverables during the next years are the adoption of the Northwest Pacific Ecological Quality Objectives and associated targets towards good environmental status, effective preparedness to oil and hazardous and noxious substances spills, the integrated assessment of the state of the marine environment and thematic regional studies on eutrophic and hypoxic areas and harmful algal blooms.

The “Strengthening regional cooperation for the protection of the marine and coastal environment in the Northwest Pacific” has been put forth as a voluntary commitment of the NOWPAP four member states at the United Nations Ocean Conference taking place at the UN Headquarters in New York from June 5th to 9th 2017.

June 5th, 2017. PRESS-RELEASE: Major Commitments of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan Announced Ahead of the UN Ocean Conference

NOWPAP related activities are also featured in the two other voluntary commitments submitted by the Government of Japan at the Ocean Conference: Marine litter management through TEMM (the Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting among China, Japan and Korea) and Marine environment protection through CEARAC (Special Monitoring & Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Centre) of NOWPAP (Northwest Pacific Action Plan).

They are featured in the The Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments together commitments undertaken by Governments, UN and intergovernmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders toward the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Partnering for a Sustainable Ocean: The Role of Regional Ocean Governance in Implementing Sustainable Development Goal 14 to be launched in New York

The Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance (PROG) will launch its new report: Partnering for a Sustainable Ocean: The Role of Regional Ocean Governance in Implementing Sustainable Development Goal 14, on the occasion of the UN Ocean Conference on 5-9 June 2017 in New York. The report has analyzed different regional cooperation mechanisms, and discussed regional institutions and initiatives' contributions to the implementation of SDG 14. The report concluded that regional initiatives are a driver for the development of integrated approaches to achieve SDG 14 targets. It highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for ocean sustainability and the requirements of greater support to overcome gaps and institutional weaknesses.

The full report can be downloaded at [Partnering for a Sustainable Ocean – Report](#)

The Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance (PROG) was initiated in 2015, and is hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), Institute of Advanced Sustainability Studies e.V. (IASS), the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI), and TMG-Think Tank for Sustainability.

NOWPAP participated in Tree Planting Festival in Toyama, Japan

On May 28, 2017, Tree Planting Festival was held in Uozu City, Toyama, Japan, where Emperor and Empress of Japan attended the ceremony. More than 7,500 people attended this event, and NOWPAP held a booth to represent NOWPAP and its projects were introduced to the visitors. Activities on NOWPAP RAP MALI (The NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter) were especially highlighted, as the public awareness on marine litter issues has been growing recently. Some people showed strong interest in participation in local and regional beach cleanup, which will be scheduled for later this year at beaches in throughout Toyama.



NOWPAP at the Busan International Organizations Academy

May 24, 2017: Ms. Jihee Yi, NOWPAP Programme Management Assistant, following the invitation of the Busan Metropolitan City and Busan Foundation of International Cooperation, delivered lecture to students and recent graduates taking part in the Busan International Organizations Academy. Ms. Yi informed students about various activities of the United Nations Environment Programme and NOWPAP. During the interactive discussion that followed, Ms. Yi answered many questions from students, including about the UN core values, professional competencies being sought and various career tracks in the organization. NOWPAP is in the process of establishing continuing internship program in the Regional Coordinating Units in Toyama and Busan and this lecture was an important step to raise awareness and stimulate interest among recent graduates in Busan area in the NOWPAP internships.



The 18th meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea highlights the importance of UNEP's Regional Seas Programme promoting cooperation, sharing best practices and lessons learned, and building capacity in marine research and observation on the impacts of climate change at the regional level

19 May 2017: Participants at the eighteenth meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (Consultative Process or ICP-18) focused on two main segments: 'The effects of climate change on oceans, including environmental, social and economic implications;' and 'Cooperation and coordination in addressing the effects of climate change on oceans – current actions and opportunities for further enhancement.'

ICP-18 brought together representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academic institutions to examine this year's topic, 'The effects of climate change on oceans.' The meeting convened from 15-19 May 2017 at UN Headquarters in New York, the US, and resulted in a Co-Chairs' Summary of Discussions.

On the effects of climate change, Ko Barrett, Vice-Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, presented on findings from the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) and preparation for the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6). Key points from AR5 included: human influence on the climate system is clear; the more we disrupt our climate, the more we risk severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts; and we have the means to limit climate change and build a more prosperous sustainable future. Presentations further addressed, inter alia: ecosystem services and the work of the World Ocean Assessment; climate modeling and observation; and national responses to the effects of climate change on the ocean. During discussions, delegates raised issues relating to improving and strengthening climate and ocean research, knowledge sharing and transfer, climate modeling, scientific data and collaboration.

Panelists highlighted that data are a public good and called for a planet-wide collaboration to openly share and integrate available data.

On cooperation and coordination in addressing climate change's effects on oceans, panelists highlighted that data are a public good and called for a planet-wide collaboration to openly share and integrate available data into global databases for analysis and modeling to create on-demand information for decision makers. Others supported a shift from curiosity or meteorologically-oriented systems to a focus on societal needs, such as fisheries, regional priorities, real-time events and ecosystem assessment.

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC-UNESCO) indicated that it is proposing a decade of ocean science for sustainable development from 2021-2030 to support 'The Future We Want.' During discussions, panelists and delegates highlighted, inter alia: the issue of cooperation among international agencies such as the IOC, the regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), and UN Environment's (UNEP) Regional Seas programme; the potential for sharing best practices and lessons learned under the Regional Seas programme; and the importance of building capacity in marine research and observation at the regional level.

The 18th meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea highlights the importance of UNEP's Regional Seas Programme promoting cooperation, sharing best practices and lessons learned, and building capacity in marine research and observation on the impacts of climate change at the regional level

The Co-Chairs' Summary provides an overview of ICP-18 discussions for each of the agenda items and highlights the general exchange of views and panel discussions, including text on the importance of implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change and meeting the commitments under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to address ocean issues. The Summary underlines the importance of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) with an emphasis placed on implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and entry into force of the Doha Amendment. The summary also includes text on addressing climate change and oceans under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, the SAMOA Pathway, the Aichi Targets and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), among other areas.

On issues that could benefit from attention in the future work of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on oceans and the law of the sea, the text reflects discussions on ways to address the links between climate change and oceans, including through the High-Level Political Forum and the SDGs.

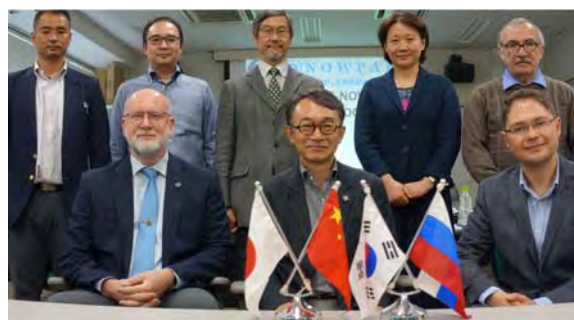


NOWPAP and the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) discussed future steps and priorities to strengthen co-operation

May 10th 2017, Toyama: Toyama NOWPAP-PICES Science Dialogue was held on May 10th 2017 following the invitation of the Advisory Panel for a Circulation Research in East Asian Marginal Seas (AP-CREAMS) of PICES. The dialogue was attended by the PICES Science Board Chair, Prof. Hiroaki Saito, NOWPAP Senior Coordinator, Lev Neretin, Drs. Takafumi Yoshida and Genki Terauchi from the NOWPAP CEARAC and members of the PICES AP-CREAMS (Photo below). The Dialogue is expected to become a regular consultation meeting between the two organizations addressing current and future priorities for the institutional collaboration. The discussions were based on the “PICES-NOWPAP Framework for Scientific Cooperation in the North Pacific Ocean” (2015) proposed by a specially established joint PICES-NOWPAP Study Group on Scientific Cooperation in the North Pacific Ocean. Participants re-affirmed the importance of seven priorities identified in the Framework document in light of the approved PICES Strategic Plan (2016) and draft NOWPAP Medium-term strategy 2018-2023 and emphasized significant complementarity between the goals of the two institutions.

Dr. Takafumi Yoshida of CEARAC attended the meeting of the AP-CREAMS on May 11 and 12, 2017 as an observer. With regards to joint activities with the NOWPAP, AP-CREAMS considered favorably having the ex-officio NOWPAP membership and agreed on developing proposal for a joint training course for young scientists in 2018 following in the successful example of the 26th Training Course of the International Hydrological Programme “Coastal vulnerability and freshwater discharge” organized with the NOWPAP co-sponsorship by Nagoya University in December 2016.

Among specific projects of joint interest between the two institutions for the NOWPAP are State of the Marine Environment Report for the NOWPAP region (SOMER-3, 2018-2020), assessments of emerging issues (e.g., microplastics), and how to address climate change impacts and build resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems (the issues being addressed by the PICES Human Dimension Committee). In order to have a continuous dialogue and impact, NOWPAP is encouraged to seek ex-officio membership status in relevant PICES groups, committees and advisory panels (at present Dr. Takafumi Yoshida of NOWPAP CEARAC is ex-officio member of the Section on Ecology of Harmful Algal Blooms of PICES and Dr. Vladimir Shulkin of NOWPAP POMRAC represents NOWPAP at the PICES Working Group 31: Emerging Topics in Marine Pollution). In turn, NOWPAP would welcome regular participation of PICES representatives in the meetings of NOWPAP Regional Activity Centers and Intergovernmental Meetings as Observers. NOWPAP will continue exploring further opportunities to participate with PICES in joint publications, workshops, and training activities for young scientists. The important area of mutual interest is enhanced collaboration on public outreach and awareness about the regional and global environment and development issues and progress achieved by the two institutions. The next round of consultations between NOWPAP and PICES is expected during the PICES 2017 Annual Meeting in September 2017 where NOWPAP plans to support two thematic sessions followed by the 22nd NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting in December 2017.



NOWPAP joins the brainstorming on assessing strategies and approaches to address marine litter and micro-plastics in Nairobi, Kenya

On 27-31 March 2017, Dr. LIU Ning presented NOWPAP's work on marine litter at the Workshop on Marine Litter and Microplastics: Measuring Effectiveness and Identifying Gaps within International and Regional Policy Frameworks organized by the UN Environment in Nairobi, Kenya. Dr. Liu introduced the NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, and the progress achieved by the NOWPAP member states and Regional Activity Centers addressing the issue of marine litter. He also briefed meeting participants about the approaches of waste management in the NOWPAP region, and how Regional Seas Program could cooperate with chemicals and waste related Conventions to address plastic waste issue.

The workshop was organized by the Ecosystems Division of the UN Environment, and attended by Secretariats of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, International Maritime Organization, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, University of Wollongong, Istanbul Bilgi University, and the UN Environment. Participants discussed the effectiveness, gaps and opportunities of relevant international, regional, sub-regional and national frameworks addressing marine litter, and explored emerging governance and strategy options. Participants also discussed sources/sectors and geographical areas that are not covered or included in any existing instruments and that are essential to consider in the future governance frameworks.

The workshop was part of the assessment of the effectiveness of governance strategies and approaches to combat marine plastic litter and microplastics. The recommendations will be presented to the Third United Nations Environment Assembly in December 2017.



NOWPAP explores cooperation with the IOC-WESTPAC in Qingdao, China

On 21-23 April 2017, Dr. LIU Ning introduced the progress of NOWPAP and explored the possibility of cooperation with countries in the Western Pacific region at the 11th Intergovernmental Session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC-XI) in Qingdao, China. The meeting brought together governmental officials and academia from the East, South and Southeast Asia, the USA, and the Russian Federation to discuss how to improve science-policy interface, enhance international cooperation on marine science, observations and service, and to improve capacities to address challenges to sustainable development in the Western Pacific and its adjacent regions.

The meeting reviewed IOC-WESTPAC strategic directions, the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at national level and contribution of the IOC and WESTPAC. The meeting has also evaluated related regional programmes, projects and working groups for the period of May 2015 to April 2017. IOC-WESTPAC activities address ocean processes and climate in the Indo-Pacific, marine biodiversity conservation, healthy ecosystems, seafood security and safety, enhanced knowledge of emerging ocean science issue, capacity development for marine science, and observations and services.

In the session on research on micro-plastics, Dr. LIU briefed participants about the UNEP's #CleanSeas campaign, the UN Environment study on marine litter responding to recommendations of the Second United Nations Environment Assembly, and the progress of research on micro-plastics made by the NOWPAP's Pollution Monitoring Activity Center. Meeting participants invited NOWPAP to share UN Environment's documents on marine litter and cooperate with IOC-WESTPAC on the research of micro-plastics that is expected to be considered under the upcoming NOWPAP Mid-Term Strategy for 2018-2023.



NOWPAP Introduces its activities to Korean governmental officials

On 26 April 2017, Dr. LIU Ning, Programme Officer of NOWPAP, with the assistance of Ms. Jihee Yi, presented NOWPAP' achievements and work on marine litter to 23 officials from Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of Republic of Korea. Dr. Liu highlighted NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and the challenges on microplastics. The training was organized by the Oceans and Fisheries Human Resources Development Institute of Korean in Busan. The participants inquired the operating mechanisms of NOWPAP and current research and approaches to address plastics.



Dr. LIU Ning appointed as member of the “Busan International Organizations Advisory Committee”

On 26 April 2017, Dr. LIU Ning, Program Officer of NOWPAP met with Busan Mayor Suh Byung-Soo in the City Hall of Busan. He was appointed as a member of the “Busan International Organizations Advisory Committee”. In the ceremony on the appointment, Dr. LIU stressed that NOWPAP is a part of UN Environment Regional Sea Program, and is keen to work with Busan Metropolitan City Government to organize international conferences, raise awareness, and cooperate with academic institutes and universities on environmental protection. The Mayor welcomed the suggestions and expressed his wishes to work with international organizations closely to promote international cooperation and communications. ASEAN Korean Centre, International Organization for Migration, Global Green Growth Institute, APEC Climate Change Center, World Food Programme, UNICEF, and some other international organizations have also attended the appointment ceremony.



The relevance of the regional dimension in the implementation of the G7 Action Plan on Marine Litter

April 21st, 2017: Following the invitation of the G7 Presidency of Italy and the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan, Mr. Lev Neretin, NOWPAP Senior Coordinator, attended the G7 Workshop on Marine Litter “Mainstreaming the work of the Regional Sea Programmes towards the better implementation of the G7 Action Plan and the achievement of the global commitments on marine litter” held on April 20-21st 2017 in Rome, Italy. Participants at the workshop representing G7 countries, Regional Seas Programmes, international organizations and representatives from business and NGO communities, discussed the ways how to enhance contributions from Regional Seas programmes towards the implementation of the G7 Action Plan to combat marine litter. NOWPAP contributed to the discussion and presented achievements, best practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.

Participants emphasized the importance of using existing platforms and tools for cooperation that would reduce duplication and take advantage of progress made (e.g. the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) and the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans. Due to regional differences, the Regional Seas programmes present various institutional, regulatory and operational mechanisms to combat marine litter issues, however, they all have to effectively interact with the processes, initiatives and actors at the global (e. g. GPA and its partnerships and campaigns), regional and national levels to ensure coherence, complementarities and measurable impact. The important role of aligning specific regional and national priorities on marine litter with global strategic goals (e. g., the relevant Sustainable Development Goals) was emphasized. Delegates agreed on the workshop document “The Way Forward” listing various priorities for action that would inform deliberations by the G7 Environment Ministers meeting in June 2017 on the next steps in the implementation of the G-7 Action Plan on Marine Litter.



Massive Open Online Course on Marine Litter

Marine litter is a global problem that affects every ocean of the world. Litter is an environmental, human health and socio-economic problem that is a symptom of a highly disposable society. With worldwide growth in the amount of solid litter thrown away every day and slow rates of degradation, the amount of litter present in the marine environment is increasing. This Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) seeks to inspire students to take action and leadership in the arena of marine litter through stimulating interaction with all stakeholder groups. The MOOC has been built on the highly successful first marine litter MOOC that was organized in 2015 and consisted of two week leadership track and eight week expert track. The Marine Litter MOOC 2.0 will start on May 22, 2017 and you can enroll here.

<https://www.marinelittermooc.org/learn/marine-litter-mooc-may-2017>



Future missions / events in the 3rd quarter of 2017

- International Conference “Role of the Tehran Convention for environmental protection of the Caspian Sea and achievement of SDGs”, 10-11 August, Astrakhan, Russia
- The Fifteenth NOWPAP CEARAC Focal Point Meeting (FPM), 29-30 August, Toyama, Japan
- 2017 Joint NOWPAP-Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting (TEMM) Workshop on Marine Litter Management and the 2017 NOWPAP International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) campaign, 19-20 September, Toyama, Japan
- PICES Annual Meeting, 22 September – 2 October, Vladivostok, Russia