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PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
INTERSESSIONAL REGIONAL  
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF THE GEF/UNDP/PEMSEA ON  
THE ATSEA-2 PROJECT

Virtual Zoom Meeting  
18 August 2020



**ATSEA-2/WP/2020/01**  
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**OF THE GEF/UNDP/PEMSEA ON THE ATSEA-2 PROJECT**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Intersessional Regional Steering Committee (RSC) Meeting of the GEF/UNDP/PEMSEA Project on Implementation of Arafura and Timor Seas Regional and National Strategic Programs: Second Phase of the Arafura-Timor Seas Ecosystem Action Program (ATSEA-2) was conducted virtually via zoom video conference call on August 18, 2020, from 9:00 AM to 12:30NN (Jakarta time).

Representatives from Australia, Indonesia, and Timor-Leste participated in the Meeting. Representatives from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Country Offices of Indonesia, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea, and the UNDP Regional Hub Bangkok and PEMSEA were also present in the Meeting. The ATSEA-2 Regional Project Management Unit (RPMU) served as Secretariat for the Meeting.

The Intersessional Meeting made the following key decisions and recommendations:

- Possible budget adjustments in view of COVID-19 be coordinated directly by ATSEA-2 NCU Indonesia with UNDP Indonesia and present any substantive changes on the national work plan during the 2<sup>nd</sup> RSC Meeting in November 2020.
- Country Partners, UNDP Country Offices, PEMSEA, and ATSEA-2 team leverage presence in various national, regional and international fora to conduct sharing sessions to promote awareness and recognition of ATS initiatives, lessons learned, and best practices.
- Closer coordination between and among RPMU and NCUs be undertaken to align the design and implementation of related activities at both country and regional level, as well as to identify areas of possible collaboration and facilitate knowledge sharing.
- Indonesia requested to reduce the Kolepon Island MPA coverage from 550,000ha to 350,000ha based on the survey and analysis conducted by MMAF in 2018. This request will be tabled during the Regional Steering Committee meeting in 2021. It is to coincide with the Project Mid-Term Review since any proposed modification on the Project Document indicators or targets would require a separate review and reporting to GEF.
- Country Partners and UNDP Country Offices in ATS countries support the promotion and dissemination of ATSEA-2 information and news updates by subscribing to ATSEA-2's information or knowledge platforms, as well as actively contribute articles for the quarterly newsletter.
- RPMU keep partners updated and set up a clearing mechanism or share a list of key contacts who are leading the ongoing regional thematic assessments (governance mechanism, MPA, marine pollution, sustainable fisheries and IUUF, and climate change), enabling focal country partners to provide appropriate advice and support to such activities, including, but not limited to ensuring coordination with relevant government ministries outside of ATSEA-2 focal agencies
- UNDP BRH organizes a meeting with UNDP Indonesia, UNDP Papua New Guinea, PEMSEA, and PNG National Fisheries Agency to discuss the most viable option for ATSEA-2 project implementation in PNG, and submit a formal request of endorsement to RSC upon completion of required processes.
- In view of the uncertainties and risks posed by COVID-19, the most viable scenario at this point is to conduct the SPF and RSC 2020 virtually. To facilitate smooth arrangements, RPMU will monitor the developments and coordinate with the RSC members on the Meeting preparations.

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**PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE INTERSESSIONAL REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE (RSC) MEETING OF THE  
GEF/UNDP/PEMSEA PROJECT ON ARAFURA-TIMOR SEAS ECOSYSTEM ACTION  
PROGRAM PHASE 2 (ATSEA-2)**

Virtual Meeting  
August 18, 2020

**INTRODUCTION**

- i. The Intersessional RSC Meeting of the GEF/UNDP/PEMSEA Arafura-Timor Seas (ATSEA) Project Phase 2 was conducted virtually through a zoom video conference call on August 18, 2020.
- ii. Representatives from three project country partners participated in the Meeting, namely: Australia, Indonesia, and Timor-Leste. The representative of Papua New Guinea was unable to participate because of online connection difficulties.
- iii. Representatives from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Country Offices of Indonesia, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea, and the UNDP Regional Hub Bangkok also participated on behalf of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the UNDP. Representatives from PEMSEA were present as the executing agency of the project's regional and Papua New Guinea components.
- iv. The ATSEA-2 Regional Project Management Unit (RPMU) served as Secretariat for the Meeting.
- v. The full list of participants is given in Annex 1.

**1.0 OPENING MESSAGES**

- 1.1 On behalf of the host country for ATSEA-2's virtual Intersessional Meeting, a welcome message from the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) of Indonesia was delivered by Mr. Tri Agung Prasetyo, Head of Bureau for Public Relations and Foreign Cooperation, MMAF. Recognizing the different challenges facing the coastal and marine environment of the Arafura and Timor Seas (ATS), Mr. Prasetyo highlighted the importance of the ATSEA-2 project and the collaborative platform that it provides. ATSEA-2 aims to tackle several significant environmental issues and promote biodiversity protection, coastal and marine ecosystem conservation; while improving livelihoods and sustainable development in the region. In line with this, he urged the RSC members to make full use of the Intersessional Meeting by sharing views and experiences that would help in addressing the different constraints facing the region and the ATSEA-2 project implementation, including the impacts of COVID-19, and to identify possible solutions to overcome challenges jointly.

- 1.2 Prof. Sjarief Widjaja, Chairman of Agency for Marine and Fisheries Research and Human Resources, MMAF, delivered the opening remarks. Highlighting the long-standing commitment of ATS countries to protect the marine resources in the region, Prof. Widjaja recalled the Ministerial Declaration adopted in 2014 by ATS countries and their strong support on the continuity of the ATSEA-2 project from its first phase to the current stage. He expressed hope that through the ATSEA-2 project, the objectives of the Strategic Action Program (SAP) developed during Phase-I would be realized through the implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs). Prof. Widjaja also underscored the challenges and implications of COVID-19 on the fisheries and marine sector, particularly in logistics mobilization in the ATS region. In line with this, the ATSEA-2 project is considered as one of the crucial undertakings to help improve the performance of the marine sector and to contribute in keeping the wheels of the country's economy and governance turning. Despite the delays encountered by Indonesia in implementing the ATSEA-2 project due to the pandemic, he assured the Meeting of their steadfast commitment to keep the project running while observing safety measures. In closing, Prof. Widjaja wished that the Meeting would also be able to identify a more adaptive strategy to the current situation.
- 1.3 The full Opening Speeches are provided in Annex 2.

## **2.0 ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS AND ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA**

- 2.1 Dr. Duto Nugroho, Senior Research Scientist, Fishery Research Center, MMAF, Indonesia, and Dr. Jose Padilla, Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP Regional Hub Bangkok, served as Meeting Chair and Co-Chair, respectively.
- 2.2 The heads of delegation of Australia, Indonesia, and Timor-Leste, as well as key representatives from UNDP Country Offices of Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, Bangkok Regional Hub (BRH), and PEMSEA provided short introductory remarks.
- 2.3 Dr. Handoko Adi Susanto, ATSEA-2 Regional Project Manager, presented the meeting objectives and agenda.
- 2.4 The Meeting adopted the agenda with the addition of an update on the status of discussions relating to Papua New Guinea's project implementing arrangements under Agenda 4.0.
- 2.5 The Intersessional RSC Meeting Agenda is provided in Annex 3.

## **3.0 OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS OVERVIEW ([Link to PPT](#))**

- 3.1 Dr. Susanto presented a summary report on the status of the overall project implementation, covering both technical and financial delivery, as well as the key

challenges encountered by the project with a corresponding set of management responses.

- 3.2 In terms of technical delivery, Dr. Susanto informed the Meeting that implementation of project activities for Component 1 (Regional, National and Local Governance) is generally on track with minor issues pertaining to the need to accelerate further coordination on identification and establishment of Stakeholder Partnership Forum (SPF) members at the national level. Component 2 (Improving Large Marine Ecosystem Carrying Capacity) and Component 3 (Knowledge Management) is on track with most initial outputs or studies targeted for delivery by November.
- 3.3 As for financial delivery, the combined financial expenditure at the regional and country-level for the first and second quarters was off track because of the cancellation of several on-site travels or activities and in-person meetings due to COVID-19 restrictions. It was also emphasized that no disbursements had been made at this time under the Papua New Guinea (PNG) component, given the pending agreement on the project implementing arrangements.
- 3.4 Dr. Susanto also provided an overview of the risk assessment and planning undertaken by the RPMU together with the National Coordinating Units (NCUs) to minimize the impacts of COVID-19 on project implementation and to identify alternative strategies. He further outlined some of the emerging opportunities for the ATSEA-2 project in light of COVID-19.

### **Discussion Highlights**

- 3.5 Dr. Andrew Chek, Assistant Director, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE), Australia, commended the project for delivering some progress despite the challenges posed by COVID-19.
- 3.6 Ms. Aimee Gonzales, Executive Director of PEMSEA, corrected the timeline of the signing of the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between UNDP Indonesia and PEMSEA, which happened at the end of July 2019. Moreover, Papua New Guinea National Fisheries Authority signed the Project Document in mid-July 2019 with an agreement to start the national component during the second quarter of 2020. (*Secretariat note on PPT correction: The PPT on Overall Project Progress was updated to reflect the correction raised by PEMSEA.*)
- 3.7 Mr. Iwan Kurniawan, Programme Manager of NRM Cluster, UNDP Indonesia, noted the efforts undertaken both at the regional and national components to implement the approved Annual Work Plan for 2020. He emphasized that while outputs are still limited, it is encouraging to see that the project is still on track based on cumulative results, thus making fair use of GEF resources in enhancing the management of ATS biodiversity resources. He further commended the efforts undertaken both in Indonesia and Timor-Leste to address small-scale fisheries livelihood challenges.
- 3.8 Dr. Padilla congratulated the project for a good start, highlighting the conduct of various Kick-Off meetings to facilitate the regional studies and assessments on key

issue areas in the ATS region. He also emphasized that 26% of financial delivery, particularly in the case of Indonesia, is good progress.

## **Conclusion**

- 3.9 Cognizant of the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 outbreak since March 2020, the Intersessional RSC Meeting noted and commended the project on its excellent progress to date, as well as the alternative strategies and solutions put in place to keep the project agile.

## **4.0 KEY PROGRESS AT THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMPONENTS**

### **INDONESIA ([Link to PPT](#))**

- 4.1 On behalf of the National Project Director of ATSEA-2 Indonesia, Dr. Wijopriono, Senior Scientist, Center for Fishery Research, BRSDKMP, MMAF, reported the progress, challenges, and next steps for the Indonesian component of the project.
- 4.2 Under Component 1, essential support was given to strengthen fisheries management in Fisheries Management Area (FMA) 718 in the Arafura Sea and to reconnect with members of the Arafura and Timor Seas Expert Forum (ATSEF). In the coming months, Indonesia will initiate the establishment of a national SPF and the National Inter-Ministerial Committee (NIMC). Activities under Component 1 are generally on track with minor issues.
- 4.3 Under Component 2, the development of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) Plan is ongoing for red snapper fisheries, while desk study is still in progress for shrimp and barramundi. Marine pollution surveillance task force has been established in East Nusa Tenggara, and an arrangement has been made with RPMU to carry out a national pollution assessment. Guidance for biophysical monitoring and monitoring plans are in place to strengthen the management of Southeast Aru MPA. At the same time, the draft letter from Papua Province is already available to support the Kolepon Island MPA gazettement. Component 2 of the project is generally on track.
- 4.4 In terms of financial progress, financial delivery is still off track with 26% disbursement in Quarter 2. However, it is expected that the highest spending will be acquired in Quarter 3 with 85%. If everything will proceed as planned, ATSEA-2 NCU Indonesia is expected to deliver 98% of its 2020 budget by the end of the year.

## **Discussion Highlights**

- 4.5 In line with the request to promote sharing sessions in the ATS countries, Dr. Susanto informed the Meeting that the RPMU has already conducted and participated in some knowledge-sharing events and committed to facilitating the further strengthening of information sharing and promotion of ATS initiatives.



- 4.6 Given the proximity of East Nusa Tenggara of Indonesia to Timor-Leste, Mr. Horacio Guterres from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) of Timor-Leste requested Indonesia to share their experiences in the establishment of a Marine Pollution Surveillance Task Force in the area, as well as knowledge or information on marine pollution management.
- 4.7 Mr. Dwi Ariyoga Gautama, ATSEA-2 Indonesia National Project Coordinator, agreed that future collaboration with Timor-Leste would be mutually beneficial given the similar issues that they face related to the oil spill. Mr. Gautama further indicated that the local government in East Nusa Tenggara has already committed to developing a Task Force, and the target is to have this legalized at the provincial level within the year. Indonesia also highlighted the ongoing marine pollution assessment under the regional and Indonesian component, and the separate assessment being undertaken in Timor-Leste.
- 4.8 Dr. Padilla underscored that as one project, coordination between the countries and the RPMU is crucial, particularly to ensure alignment of related initiatives at the national and regional level (i.e., marine pollution management).
- 4.9 With regard to possible budget adjustment in Indonesia's work plan for 2020, Dr. Padilla indicated that ATSEA-2 NCU Indonesia might consult and communicate directly with UNDP Indonesia. It was, however, emphasized that any substantive change on the approved work plan and budget for 2020 will have to be reported at the RSC Meeting in November.
- 4.10 Concerning project targets, UNDP Indonesia informed the RSC that based on the survey and analysis conducted by MMAF in 2018<sup>1</sup>, MMAF would like to propose a reduction on the target coverage of Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Kolepon Island from 550,000ha to approximately 350,000ha, for consideration by the RSC. Based on the analysis, only the northern part of Kolepon Islands waters is suitable for protected areas. Dr. Padilla explained that requests for substantive adjustments in the project target would require a separate review and reporting to GEF. Indonesia was advised to submit their request with supporting justification at the RSC Meeting in 2021.

## Recommendations

The Intersessional RSC Meeting recommended that:

- 4.11 ATSEA-2 NCU Indonesia coordinates directly with UNDP Indonesia on budget adjustment, taking into consideration the need to modify some activities in view of COVID-19, and present any substantive changes on the national work plan during the 2<sup>nd</sup> RSC Meeting in November.

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<sup>1</sup> Loka PSPL Sorong. 2018. Identifikasi Potensi Calon Kawasan Konsercati Perairan di Pulau Kolepom, Kabupaten Merauke-Provinsi Papua. KKP. Sorong.

- 4.12 Country Partners, UNDP Country Offices, PEMSEA, and ATSEA-2 team leverage periodic sharing sessions at the national, regional, and international scale to promote awareness and recognition of ATS initiatives, lessons learned and best practices.
- 4.13 Closer coordination between and among RPMU and NCUs be undertaken to align the design and implementation of related activities at both the country and regional level (i.e., marine pollution assessment, etc.).
- 4.14 The request from Indonesia to reduce the target MPA coverage in Kolepon Island be tabled during the RSC meeting in 2021 to coincide with the Project Mid-Term Review since any proposed modification on the Project Document indicators or targets would require a separate review and reporting to GEF.

#### **TIMOR-LESTE ([Link to PPT](#))**

- 4.15 On behalf of Mr. Celestino da Cunha Baretto, National Project Director of ATSEA-2 Timor-Leste, Mr. Gerson Alves, Timor-Leste National Project Coordinator, delivered the country's project progress report.
- 4.16 Meetings have been conducted to initiate the establishment of the NIMC, identify national representation in the SPF, and introduce the project in five local government administrations. Activities under Component 1 are generally on track with minor issues.
- 4.17 For Component 2, data collection for marine pollution hotspot study is ongoing in Municipiu Viqueque, and consultations with the local government of the Manatuto Municipality to establish coordination and management mechanism for the ICM planning process in Barique Posto Administrativo have been carried out. Procurement processes to engage consultants are at various stages for the stock and value chain assessment for red snapper fisheries and development of EAFM plan; conduct of scoping study for the proposed new MPA, capacity building, and updating/strengthening of the management plan for the Nino Konis Santana National Park; and initiation of baseline and climate change vulnerability assessment and ICM planning in Barique/Natarbora. Component 2 of the project is generally on track with minor issues.
- 4.18 Financial delivery is off track, with 17% of budget allocation expended as of July 2020. Considering current and planned contracts and commitments (on MPA and ICM work), 90% of financial delivery is expected by the end of December 2020.
- 4.19 In addition to the use of online platforms and engagement of local counterparts to support international consultants, collaboration with Municipal Fisheries officers for data collection is helping mitigate impacts of travel and meeting restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NCU is also working closely with the Fisheries Inspection Unit under the Directorate General for Fisheries for data collection and conduct of MCS training.

## Discussion Highlights

- 4.20 UNDP Indonesia congratulated Timor-Leste for convening its NIMC as well as for engaging the local governments in the five project sites. To facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned, UNDP Indonesia requested Timor-Leste to share the results of its NIMC meeting as well as lessons gained from the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP).

## Recommendation

- 4.21 The Intersessional Meeting recommended that Timor-Leste share lessons learnt on NIMC establishment, engagement with local governments and implementation of the NAP through bilateral communication with other Country Partners who have yet or are still in the process of establishing their respective NIMCs.

## REGIONAL ([Link to PPT](#))

- 4.22 Dr. Susanto presented the mid-year regional progress report.
- 4.23 It was underscored that while some delays have been encountered, particularly from March to May due to limitations brought about by COVID-19, the regional component was able to catch up on target activities for Components 1 and 2. The activities were supported by international consultants on the conduct of regional profiling and assessments (i.e., governance mechanism, climate change, MPA, fisheries/IUUF, and marine pollution). Initial outputs or reports on these thematic studies will be presented at the RSC Meeting in November 2020, while submission of final outputs had to be extended for most activities until early 2021. Regular virtual discussions were put in place by the RPMU to monitor and facilitate coordination among the international consultants, RPMU, NCUs, and related agencies in partner countries. Data or information sharing was also enabled using digital file sharing and storage platforms. At the same time, activities for Component 3 related to the promotion and sharing of ATSEA-2 information was able to proceed as planned.
- 4.24 The adaptive strategies that were implemented have enabled the RPMU to proceed with project implementation, while still recognizing the need to realign some activities requiring actual field visits. Budget assessment and forecasting was undertaken to help address the low financial delivery from the first two quarters of the year.

## Discussion Highlights

- 4.25 The RPMU clarified that the ATSEA-2 website ([www.atsea-program.com](http://www.atsea-program.com)) has already been launched on June 26, 2020. Currently, the website is available only in English, and the project commitment is to translate the website into local languages of ATS countries to reach a wider audience and build more interest in ATSEA-2 initiatives in the project participating countries.

## Recommendations

The Intersessional Meeting recommended that:

- 4.26 Country Partners actively participate in the RPMU-led regular virtual discussions in support of the ongoing thematic regional studies or assessments (i.e., governance mechanism, climate change, MPA, fisheries/IUUF, and marine pollution).
- 4.27 RPMU keep country partners updated on the status of ongoing thematic regional studies or assessments and facilitate needed country or local consultations through the NCUs.
- 4.28 Country Partners and UNDP Country Offices in ATS countries support the promotion and dissemination of ATSEA-2 information and news updates by subscribing to ATSEA-2's information or knowledge platforms, as well as actively contribute articles for the quarterly newsletter.

## **AUSTRALIA** ([Link to PPT](#))

- 4.29 Dr. Chek reminded the meeting that Australia is a non-beneficiary country of the ATSEA-2 project. Thus, there are no specific activities in the country as a result of the ATSEA-2 project. However, he highlighted several complements and possible collaborations, particularly at the regional level, including activities on IUU Fishing, threatened species, fisheries, MPA, pollution, and climate change. These are spread over a wide variety of areas and agencies within Australia's government.
- 4.30 Dr. Chek further informed the meeting that ATSEA-2's focal agency, the Department of Environment and Energy (DOEE), was recently merged with the Department of Agriculture, Water, and Environment (DAWE). In particular, they have been moved under DAWE's International and Market Access area, which opens up more opportunities, including fisheries.
- 4.31 In responding to COVID-19, most Australian Government agencies still have many staff working from home. International travel is restricted until January 2021 at the earliest, resulting in international collaboration done remotely.

## Discussion Highlights

- 4.32 Dr. Padilla noted the recent restructuring and merging of the DoEE with the larger DAWE and expressed hope that the organizational changes would present more opportunities for Australia to collaborate with the other three ATS countries.
- 4.33 Mr. Gautama informed the meeting that Indonesia is currently undertaking a bioeconomic assessment in the Arafura Sea focusing on shrimp fisheries, and requested for a possibility to collaborate with Australia, particularly on sharing of information on MSC certification for shrimp trawl in North Australia.

## **Recommendations**

The Intersessional Meeting recommended that:

- 4.34 RPMU set up a clearing mechanism or share a list of key contacts who are leading the ongoing regional thematic assessments on governance mechanism, MPA, marine pollution, sustainable fisheries and IUUF, and climate change. To enable focal country partners to provide appropriate advice and support to such activities. These activities including but are not limited to ensuring coordination with relevant government ministries outside of ATSEA-2 focal agencies.
- 4.35 Country partners and RPMU coordinate further with the Australian government, represented by Dr. Chek, to identify possible joint initiatives related to the ATS region.

## **STATUS OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

### **Discussion Highlights**

- 4.36 Dr. Padilla emphasized that this agenda intends to serve only as information to the RSC and to apprise the members on the status of ongoing discussions on the project implementation arrangements for Papua New Guinea (PNG). As PEMSEA currently serves as the executing agency of the PNG component, Dr. Padilla requested PEMSEA's Executive Director to provide a brief background on actions and discussions undertaken by PEMSEA with PNG concerning the project implementation arrangements in the country.
- 4.37 Ms. Gonzales informed the meeting that PNG, through the National Fisheries Agency (NFA), became a cooperating partner of the ATSEA-2 project upon signing of the Project Document in July 2019. During the 1<sup>st</sup> RSC Meeting held in November 2019, the NFA represented the PNG and submitted its 2019-2020 Work Plan, which was approved by the RSC. Prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> RSC Meeting, a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on the implementing arrangements was developed and provided to NFA, as well as draft TORs to facilitate the hiring of a National Project Coordinator and a Finance Assistant. PEMSEA has also scheduled several missions to PNG since 2019. However, none of them materialized. Through phone discussions, PEMSEA and Mr. Brian Kumasi of NFA were able to discuss some pertinent issues, including the possible establishment of a particular trust account for the project to facilitate transfer of funds to PNG, and the possible secondment from NFA to serve as National Project Coordinator. To date, these matters are still pending. Coordination and communication between PEMSEA and NFA became even more challenging since March in view of COVID-19. To identify viable options and enable the implementation of project activities in PNG, PEMSEA has also coordinated with UNDP BRH, as well as with UNDP PNG and UNDP Indonesia.
- 4.38 Dr. Padilla informed the meeting that based on his discussions with PEMSEA, there is an openness to the possibility of applying to PNG the same national implementing

mechanism adopted for the Indonesia and Timor-Leste component, of which UNDP PNG will serve as the implementing partner.

- 4.39 Dr. Andrew Rylance, Acting Head of Environment and Energy Portfolio, UNDP PNG, further clarified that at the moment, UNDP PNG is not an implementing partner but is providing support to help PEMSEA contact NFA. Dr. Rylance informed the meeting that UNDP PNG is currently handling several portfolios and that they would be able and willing to help implement the PNG component should that be pursued as an option.
- 4.40 Mr. Kurniawan expressed support to the ongoing discussions on possible implementation strategies in order to address and avoid further delays in the execution of project activities in PNG. UNDP Indonesia emphasized that a request to change the operating modality, with supporting justification, would have to emanate from PNG, with guidance from UNDP and discussed at the RSC. Possible implications of such change include re-signing of the Project Document. As the entire process would take time, UNDP Indonesia suggested for the national implementation modality to start in 2021, while PEMSEA and UNDP provide the necessary support to PNG in the remaining months of 2020.
- 4.41 In line with the option to move the PNG component into a sub-project under UNDP PNG, UNDP BRH consulted with UNDP Headquarters (HQ) on the required processes based on UNDP's Due Diligence Policy and Procedure. Ms. Daranee Tattakorn, Management Support Specialist of UNDP BRH, provided a summary of the process, covering four major steps: (1) Both UNDP Indonesia and PNG COs need to agree on the budget for the national component; (2) Approval from RSC to remove PNG national component from PEMSEA's portfolio, and set up a national implementing modality under UNDP PNG with agreed roles and responsibilities including M&E; (3) UNDP Indonesia facilitate the needed budget revision to be signed by all Project Document signatories; and (4) UNDP PNG prepare a separate project document following UNDP procedures. The detailed process and requirements will be included in further discussions to be conducted by UNDP BRH with NFA, UNDP PNG, UNDP Indonesia, and PEMSEA.
- 4.42 Dr. Padilla underscored that there is a lot of work to be done, which can only proceed if there is concurrence from NFA on the change in implementation arrangements. A formal endorsement of the new operating modality for PNG will be submitted to the RSC upon completion of all the necessary steps.

## **Agreement**

The Intersessional RSC Meeting agreed for/that:

- 4.43 UNDP BRH to organize a meeting with UNDP Indonesia, UNDP PNG, PEMSEA, and PNG NFA to discuss the most viable option for ATSEA-2 project implementation in PNG.
- 4.44 Upon completion of internal consultations, a formal endorsement of the agreed option and steps will be sought from the 2nd RSC Meeting in November.

## 5.0 PREPARATION FOR RSC AND SPF MEETING 2020 ([Link to PPT](#))

- 5.1 In line with the preparation for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Steering Committee Meeting (RSC) and the ATS SPF tentatively scheduled on November 9-13, 2020, in Dili, Timor-Leste, Dr. Susanto presented a proposed agenda and scenarios for the conduct of both events in light of the travel uncertainties and stricter protocols on face-to-face meetings due to COVID-19.
- 5.2 Three scenarios and corresponding arrangements were identified. The first scenario is to proceed with the face-to-face meetings in Dili as initially planned. The second scenario looks into the possibility of holding the Meeting in Indonesia and for Dili to host the 2021 SPF and RSC meetings. The last scenario is the conversion of SPF and RSC Meetings 2020 into virtual events.
- 5.3 A timetable on the preparation of key meeting requirements was also presented to facilitate smooth arrangements for both events, either virtually or face-to-face.

### Discussion Highlights

- 5.4 Dr. Wijopriono indicated that if RSC and SPF meetings will be conducted in person, Indonesia delegations prefer the second scenario where the meeting will be held in Bali to minimize risks due to international travel.
- 5.5 On behalf of Timor-Leste, Ms. Lazima Onta Bhatta, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP TL, informed the meeting that in terms of COVID-19 cases, Timor-Leste is in relatively good shape. However, Ms. Bhatta emphasized that Timor-Leste is still under the state of emergency and that the country's borders will remain closed until the end of September. The government of Timor-Leste will conduct further assessment of the situation in October. Apart from Timor-Leste, Ms. Bhatta also highlighted the need to consider the situation in other ATS countries. In view of the uncertainties due to COVID-19, Timor-Leste believes that the safest and most-likely scenario at this time is to pursue the conduct of SPF and RSC meetings 2020 virtually.
- 5.6 Concerning SPF participation, Dr. Susanto clarified that the RPMU will be coordinating with the NCUs in the identification of their respective national SPF members, taking into consideration the need to ensure representation of relevant stakeholders from the government, learning institutions, CSOs/NGOs, and the private sector in line with the different issue areas being addressed by the project.
- 5.7 Similar to Timor-Leste's perspective on the current situation, Dr. Chek agreed that Scenario 3 (virtual meetings) would be the most viable option at this time. Dr. Chek also supported the concept of conducting the SPF through segmented virtual seminars, as this may encourage more participation from various stakeholders as opposed to a regular face-to-face forum.
- 5.8 In view of the most likely scenario of converting the SPF and RSC into virtual meetings, there is a need for the RPMU to revisit and modify the proposed agenda, also taking into account the limitations of and necessary arrangements for online meetings.

## Recommendations

The Intersessional Meeting recommended that:

- 5.9 In view of the uncertainties and risks posed by COVID-19, the most viable scenario at this point is to conduct the SPF and RSC 2020 virtually.
- 5.10 RPMU monitor the developments and keep the RSC members informed on the arrangements, including the final dates, for the SPF and RSC meetings.
- 5.11 RPMU revisit the proposed agenda for RSC and SPF, taking into consideration discussions on appropriate and practical virtual meeting arrangements from the meeting.
- 5.12 Country Partners and UNDP COs identify and confirm members of the delegation in advance, and prepare necessary documents/presentations following the adopted timeline for meeting preparations. (Meeting Preparation Timeline is found in Annex 4).

## 6.0 OTHER BUSINESS

- 6.1 The ATSEA-2 Regional Biodiversity Specialist, Ms. Casandra Tania, provided further explanation related to the information material shared by the RPMU highlighting ATSEA-2's contribution or synergies with key international treaties and agreements related to sustainable ocean development. ([Link to infographic 1](#) and [2](#))
- 6.2 The infographic is RPMU's first attempt to identify and highlight the linkages of ATSEA-2 project objectives and targets with key international conventions and commitments in support of sustainable oceans (i.e., UNCLOS, SDGs, and CBD's Aichi Biodiversity Targets). The infographic will serve as one of ATSEA-2's knowledge products and will be further updated in the coming years to reflect actual outputs or outcomes from the ATSEA-2 project activities.

## 7.0 CLOSING OF THE MEETING

- 7.1 Representatives from Country Partners, UNDP BRH and COs, and PEMSEA congratulated the RPMU for the successful organization of the virtual Intersessional RSC meeting. They looked forward to further collaboration in line with the agreed actions of the meeting.
- 7.2 On behalf of MMAF Indonesia and as Meeting Chair, Dr. Nugroho expressed his sincere gratitude to all the participants for their active participation and inputs during the meeting.
- 7.3 The Chair declared the Meeting closed on August 18, 2020, at 12:30NN (Jakarta time).



**ANNEX 1**  
**List of Participants**

**INTERSESSIONAL RSC MEETING OF THE GEF/UNDP/PEMSEA  
ATSEA-2 PROJECT**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**COUNTRIES**

**AUSTRALIA**

Dr. Andrew Chek  
Assistant Director  
Government of Australia - Department of  
Agriculture, Water, and Environment  
+61 262741108  
[andrew.chek@awe.gov.au](mailto:andrew.chek@awe.gov.au)

**INDONESIA**

Prof. Sjarief Widjaja  
Chairman of the Agency for Marine and  
Fisheries Research and Human Resource,  
Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries  
(MMAF)  
+62 81317642345  
[sjariefwidjaja0763@gmail.com](mailto:sjariefwidjaja0763@gmail.com)

Mr. Agung Tri Prasetyo  
Head of Bureau for Public Relations and  
Foreign Cooperation, MMAF  
[multilateralmmaf@gmail.com](mailto:multilateralmmaf@gmail.com)

Ms. Tri Handanari  
Deputy Director of Capture Fisheries  
Research  
Center for Fisheries Research, MMAF  
+62 82125150083  
[trian.brkp@gmail.com](mailto:trian.brkp@gmail.com)

Ms. Niken Winarsih  
Head of Marine Fisheries Research  
Center for Fisheries Research, MMAF  
+62 81286806910  
[nikensutardjo@yahoo.com](mailto:nikensutardjo@yahoo.com)

Dr. Duto Nugroho  
Researcher  
Center for Fisheries Research, MMAF  
+62 81310352149  
[dutonugroho@gmail.com](mailto:dutonugroho@gmail.com)

Dr. Wijopriono  
Researcher  
Center for Fisheries Research, MMAF  
+62 85692082521  
[wijopriono@gmail.com](mailto:wijopriono@gmail.com)

Ms. Anindita Laksmiwati  
Head of Subsection of United Nations  
Cooperation  
Bureau for Public Relations and Foreign  
Cooperation, MMAF  
[a.laksmiwati@gmail.com](mailto:a.laksmiwati@gmail.com)

Mr. Dwi Prasetyo  
Staff  
Center for Fisheries Research, MMAF  
+62 82123054887  
[prasetyoiwd@gmail.com](mailto:prasetyoiwd@gmail.com)

Ms. Nurul Indraswari  
Staff  
Bureau for Public Relations and Foreign  
Cooperation, MMAF  
+62 81279028598  
[indraswari.nurul@rockermail.com](mailto:indraswari.nurul@rockermail.com)

Mr. Agung Purnomo  
Cooperation Officer  
Fisheries Research and Human Resource,  
MMAF  
+62 81338538507  
[agungpurnomo8@gmail.com](mailto:agungpurnomo8@gmail.com)

Mr. Andreas Mahardika  
Analyst  
Bureau for Public Relations and Foreign  
Cooperation, MMAF  
+62 85648881666 [andreasmdl@gmail.com](mailto:andreasmdl@gmail.com)

Ms. Anezka Wee  
Intern  
Bureau for Public Relations and Foreign  
Cooperation, MMAF  
+62 8111999510  
[anezkawee26@gmail.com](mailto:anezkawee26@gmail.com)

## **TIMOR-LESTE**

Mr. Celestino da Cunha Baretto  
National Project Director of ATSEA-2 Timor-Leste  
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Timor-Leste  
+670 77879337

Mr. Horacio Amaral dos Santos  
Guterres  
Director Nacional Aquaculture  
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries  
Timor Leste  
+670 77546399

## **PARTNERS**

### **UNDP**

Dr. Jose Erez Padilla  
Regional Technical Advisor  
Water and Oceans  
UNDP-Global Environmental Finance  
Bureau for Policy and Programme  
Support  
UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub  
[jose.padilla@undp.org](mailto:jose.padilla@undp.org)

Ms. Daranee Tattakorn  
Management Support Specialist  
UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub  
[daranee.tattakorn@undp.org](mailto:daranee.tattakorn@undp.org)

Ms. Nittaya Saengow  
Program Associate  
UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub  
+66 817123244  
[nittaya.saengow@undp.org](mailto:nittaya.saengow@undp.org)

Mr. Agus Prabowo  
Head of Environment Unit  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 811883572  
[agus.prabowo@undp.org](mailto:agus.prabowo@undp.org)

Mr. Iwan Kurniawan  
Technical Officer/Programme Manager  
for NRM Cluster  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 8129008050

[iwan.kurniawan@undp.org](mailto:iwan.kurniawan@undp.org)

Mr. Meika Hendri  
Programme Finance Associate  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 8129427172  
[meika.hendri@undp.org](mailto:meika.hendri@undp.org)

Mr. Muhammad Yayat Afianto  
M & E Environment Unit  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 811107080  
[muhhammad.afianto@undp.org](mailto:muhhammad.afianto@undp.org)

Dr. Andrew Rylance  
Acting Head of Environment and Energy  
Portfolio  
UNDP Papua New Guinea  
[andrew.rylance@undp.org](mailto:andrew.rylance@undp.org)

Ms. Lazima Onta Bhatta  
Deputy Resident Representative  
UNDP Timor-Leste  
[lazima.ontabhatta@undp.org](mailto:lazima.ontabhatta@undp.org)  
+670 78306003

### **PEMSEA**

Ms. Aimee Gonzales  
Executive Director  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+63 9775964  
[agonzales@pemsea.org](mailto:agonzales@pemsea.org)

Ms. Mary Anne Dela Peña  
Finance Officer  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+63 29175200288  
[madelapena@pemsea.org](mailto:madelapena@pemsea.org)

## **PROJECT TEAM**

### **NCU INDONESIA**

Mr. Dwi Ariyoga Gautama  
National Project Coordinator  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 8112331213  
[dwi.gautama@undp.org](mailto:dwi.gautama@undp.org)

Mr. Iqbal Herwata  
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning  
Specialist  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 82146041246  
[mochammad.putra@undp.org](mailto:mochammad.putra@undp.org)

Mr. Johanis Valentino Fofied  
Field Facilitator for Merauke District  
UNDP Indonesia  
+ 62 82144940674  
[johanis.fofied@undp.org](mailto:johanis.fofied@undp.org)

Mr. Hasbi  
Field Facilitator for Aru District  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 8111144807  
[hasbi@undp.org](mailto:hasbi@undp.org)

Ms. Lestari Handayani  
Project Assistant  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 82341876656  
[lestari.handayani@undp.org](mailto:lestari.handayani@undp.org)

Ms. Nathazha Bostanova Eunike Sipasulta  
Junior Project Clerk  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 81283832060  
[nathazha.sipasulta@undp.org](mailto:nathazha.sipasulta@undp.org)

#### **NCU TIMOR-LESTE**

Mr. Gerson Alves  
National Project Coordinator  
UNDP Timor-Leste  
+670 77319966  
[gerson.alves@undp.org](mailto:gerson.alves@undp.org)

Mr. Almerindo Oliverira Da Silva  
Field Coordinator  
UNDP Timor-Leste  
[almerindo.dasilva@undp.org](mailto:almerindo.dasilva@undp.org)  
+670 7845 5865

Ms. Ines Da Costa Pereira  
Admin/Finance Associate  
UNDP Timor-Leste  
+670 7836 6854  
[ines.pereira@undp.org](mailto:ines.pereira@undp.org)

#### **RPMU / SECRETARIAT**

Mr. Handoko Adi Susanto  
Regional Project Manager  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+62 8121163960  
[hasusanto@pemsea.org](mailto:hasusanto@pemsea.org)

Ms. Kathrine Rose G. Aguilung  
M & E Consultant  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+ 63 29178040658  
[krsgallardo@gmail.com](mailto:krsgallardo@gmail.com)

Ms. Cristine Ingrid S. Narcise  
Policy and Results-based Management  
Specialist  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+63 9228691822  
[cinarcise@pemsea.org](mailto:cinarcise@pemsea.org)

Ms. Casandra Tania  
Regional Biodiversity Specialist  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+62 85280300678  
[ctania@pemsea.org](mailto:ctania@pemsea.org)

Ms. Lyriss Lyssens  
Communications & Knowledge Management  
Specialist  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+62 81282681167  
[llyssens@pemsea.org](mailto:llyssens@pemsea.org)

Ms. Deti Triani  
Marine Technical Assistant  
PEMSEA Resource Facility  
+62 81284997180  
[dtriani@pemsea.org](mailto:dtriani@pemsea.org)

Mr. Nur Junaidi  
Project Associate  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 81318924468  
[nur.junaidi@undp.org](mailto:nur.junaidi@undp.org)

Ms. Ferdyani Atikaputri  
Project Assistant  
UNDP Indonesia  
+62 85701045255  
[ferdyani.atikaputri@undp.org](mailto:ferdyani.atikaputri@undp.org)

**ANNEX 2**  
**Opening Speeches**

## **WELCOME REMARKS**

**Hon. Antam Novambar  
Secretary-General, MMAF, Indonesia**

**Delivered by Mr. Tri Agung Prasetyo  
Head of Bureau for Public Relations and Foreign Cooperation, MMAF, Indonesia**

- Your Honorable Officials and Country Representatives from Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Australia
- Officials and representatives from the United Nations Development Program offices in Bangkok, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea.
- Esteemed colleagues from the PEMSEA Resources Facility, RPMU, and the NCU project ATSEA-2 from Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea.

### **Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Assalamu alaikum Wr. Wb.

First of all, allow me to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to be able to join you here to attend the Intersessional Regional Steering Committee Meeting of the Project of Arafura Timor Seas Ecosystem Action (ATSEA-2).

On behalf of the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, it is my privilege and pleasure to extend to you a warm welcome to this meeting. Let me assure you our deep appreciation for fulfilling our invitation to attend this meeting, where your participation will undoubtedly ensure a positive outcome for all of us.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

Fisheries are critical source of jobs, food, and trade for millions of people around the world. But due to some challenges, such as illegal fishing, destructive fishing activities, climate changes, and habitat degradation, fisheries is now facing an uncertain future.

However, strong collaboration among and commitment between all relevant parties at the regional level will benefit national, regional, and international levels to support responsible and sustainable fisheries.

In refer to the above mentioned, the implementation of ATSEA-2 is expected to be able to increase the sustainable development in the Arafura and Timor Seas (ATS) region for protecting biodiversity and improving the quality of livelihood in the region through conservation and sustainable management of coastal - marine ecosystems.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I believe that this Intersessional Meeting is particularly important to open discussions, exchange views, and share common experiences to address challenges and optimize

opportunity. I would like to encourage all of you to have a constructive dialogue to maximize the outcomes as well as to appraise and prepare members of ATSEA-2 for the next Regional Steering Committee.

I am aware that we also note the significant negative impact of COVID 19 pandemic had to the implementation of ATSEA-2. In this regard, we are here today in this meeting, aiming to review the mid-year progress on the implementation of project work plan and budget for 2020, particularly in discussing key constraints posed by Covid-19 and, of course, to discuss possible way out.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Indeed in the near future, there are still a lot of work that needs to be done.

And now, without further ado, I wish you all a productive and fruitful meeting.

Wassalamu alaikum Wr. Wb.

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## **OPENING REMARKS**

**Prof. Sjarief Widjaja**

**Chairman of the Agency for Marine and Fisheries Research and Human Resource**

Jakarta, August 18, 2020

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,  
Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,  
Good Morning, and best wishes to us all.

- Your Honorable Officials and Country Representatives from Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Australia
- Officials and representatives from the United Nations Development Program offices in Bangkok, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea.
- Esteemed colleagues from the PEMSEA Resources Facility, RPMU, and the NCU project ATSEA-2 from Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

Arafura and Timor Seas hold strategic values both in terms of economy and ecology for countries in the region. For this reason, the Government of Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Australia have the same share of commitment to protect and maintain sustainable management of resources in the area.

Like a hoop that never ends, our oceans are connected, to each other, and fisheries research to formulate sustainable management is best undertaken in collaboration. The Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action (ATSEA) Phase One (2009 -2014) was an excellence and a successful regional collaborative work, which resulted in the 2014 Ministerial Declaration and the Regional Plan of Action (RPoA). The two documents serve as a hallmark of our concerted action to achieve the objectives and the long-term vision on sustainable management of resources in the Arafura and Timor Seas.

### **Esteemed colleagues,**

Today, I am happy that once again, we put together our best efforts to implement the RPoA through the ATSEA Phase Two 2019 – 2025. For the next five years, our work will focus onto putting RPoA into action along with each country's national action plan to help achieve protection of the fisheries resources and welfare of people whose life depend on the region. In Indonesia, the ATSEA-2 program was implemented since February 2019 with focus on solidifying management of the project, building human capacity among the targeted fishery communities in the Arafura and Timor Seas through trainings and seminar as well as conducting scientific meetings to update the status of fisheries in the region. Details on how these activities have progressed will be discussed, reviewed, and evaluated today, but so far, we have identified that a network of conservation areas and institutions at the regional level need to be promptly established to support our coordination, especially during the Covid-19 situation.



**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Indeed 2020 has been a challenging year for us all. On one side, fishing activities and logistics mobilization in our archipelagic region have been inevitably affected by the Covid-19 situation. On the other side, the need for fishery sector to continue performing well is ever more important than before to help expediate economic recovery and provide nutrition security in our region. Therefore, the ATSEA-2 Program, as one of the tools to achieve this goal, must move forward as expected.

The question we have now is how to make necessary adjustment to the new situation. We need to find a way to move forwards from here. Obviously, with the use of technology and other available modern tools, we can expediate the project without having to sacrifice the key components that it hopes to achieve. I will give my support and will do within my authority to help with any new arrangement to ensure that progress can be achieved. Therefore, I hope today, in addition to reviewing the progress activities, we will also be able to discuss on how to move ahead with this project.

Lastly, on behalf of the Government of Indonesia, I would like to thank you all for the sustained support and commitment. It has been a pleasure to greet you this morning, and I hope despite our not being able to see each other in person this year, we will continue to work even closer. With that being said, I hereby officially open the Project Intersessional Virtual Meeting on the “Implementation of the Arafura and Timor Seas Regional and National Strategic Action Programs (ATSEA-2); Second Phase of the Arafura Timor Seas Ecosystem Action (ATSEA) Program”.

Now I would like to handover the meeting to the Chair and Co-Chair, Dr. Duto Nugroho and Dr. Jose Padilla to lead today’s program.

Thank you.

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**ANNEX 3**  
**ATSEA-2 Intersessional Meeting Agenda**

**INTERSESSIONAL RSC MEETING OF THE GEF/UNDP/PEMSEA  
ATSEA-2 PROJECT**

Virtual Meeting  
August 18, 2020

**AGENDA OF THE MEETING**

- |               |            |  |
|---------------|------------|--|
| 09:10 – 09:25 | <b>1.0</b> | <b>Opening Messages</b><br>Welcome Remarks<br>Opening Remarks  |
| 09:25 – 09:45 | <b>2.0</b> | <b>Organizational Matters and Meeting Agenda</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome participants</li><li>• Review and adoption of Meeting Agenda</li></ul>  |
| 09:45 – 09:55 | <b>3.0</b> | <b>Overall project progress overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall technical and financial delivery of the project covering both regional and country components</li></ul>   |
| 09:55 – 11:15 | <b>4.0</b> | <b>Key progress at the national and regional components (Technical and Financial Aspect), Key Constraints and Challenges, and COVID-19 response plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indonesia</li><li>• Timor-Leste</li><li>• Regional</li><li>• Australia</li><li>• Information on Status of Project Implementation Arrangements in Papua New Guinea</li></ul> |
| 11:15 – 11:25 |            | <b>Coffee Break</b>  |
| 11:25 – 11:45 | <b>5.0</b> | <b>Preparation for RSC and SPF Meeting 2020</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft agenda</li><li>• Meeting Scenarios (i.e., in Dili, Bali, or virtual)</li><li>• Documents/presentations to be prepared by countries</li></ul>   |
| 11:45 – 11:55 | <b>6.0</b> | <b>Meeting Summary and Way Forward</b>   |
| 11:55 – 12:00 | <b>7.0</b> | <b>Closing of the Meeting</b>  |

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**ANNEX 4**  
**RSC and SPF Meeting Preparation Timeline**

**TIMETABLE FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND CONDUCT OF  
SPF AND RSC MEETINGS**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>TARGET DATE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY CENTRE</b>
<b>(1) Release of Invitations and Agenda</b>	<b>mid- September</b>	<b>RPMU</b>
<b>(2) Develop meeting documents</b>	<b>mid-September to early-October</b>	<b>RPMU, Countries</b>
<b>(3) Circulate meeting documents</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> week of October</b>	<b>RPMU</b>
<b>(4) Confirm Chair &amp; Co-Chair</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> week of October</b>	<b>RPMU (in coordination with host and UNDP)</b>
<b>(5) Prepare PPTs</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> week to last week of October</b>	<b>RPMU, Countries</b>
<b>(6) Conduct of meeting</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> week of November</b>	<b>RSC members</b>

NOTE: For Virtual SPF, preparations will be two weeks ahead of schedule provided in the timetable.

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ATSEA-2 Regional Project Management Unit

Jl. Mertasari No. 140 Sidakarya,  
Denpasar 80224, Bali, Indonesia

Telephone: +62 361 448 4147

Email: [infoatsea2@pemsea.org](mailto:infoatsea2@pemsea.org)



<https://atsea-program.com/>