

Contribution to the report of the SG on oceans and the law of the sea

Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)

The Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) is a regional intergovernmental policy forum and the sole decision-making body for the East Asian Seas Action Plan. COBSEA supports the nine participating countries (Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam) in the development and protection of the marine environment and coastal areas of East Asian Seas. The COBSEA Secretariat is hosted by Thailand and administered by UN Environment, located at the UN Environment Asia and the Pacific Office in Bangkok, Thailand

In relation to paragraphs 232-235; 254-259 of the Resolution

COBSEA Strategic Directions 2018-2022 were adopted at the Second Extraordinary IGM of COBSEA 25-26 April 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand. Under these Strategic Directions COBSEA will focus on regional governance; addressing land-based marine pollution with a particular focus on nutrients, sediment, wastewater and marine litter; and marine and coastal planning and management, with a particular focus on ecosystem-based management approaches, including MPAs and MSP, towards achievement of relevant SDGs and Aichi Targets. A SDG implementation outlook focusing on these substantive priorities of COBSEA will be developed in 2018.

Specifically in relation to paragraphs 209, 213, 214, 221 of the Resolution

The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter 2008 remains the only intergovernmentally adopted framework for addressing marine litter in the region. A process to update this Regional Marine Litter Action Plan is underway, to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose and fully reflect priorities identified e.g. in UN Environment Assembly Resolutions 1/6, 2/11 and 3/7 as well as the 2030 Development Agenda and SDGs. A first draft of the revision was considered by the Second Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA in April 2018, prepared based on consultation with participating countries, other stakeholders and desk review. At that meeting, participating countries agreed steps towards finalization of the revised action plan. A decision on the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter will be made at the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting in 2019.

COBSEA and UN Environment are developing a regional project on reducing marine litter through management of the plastic value chain (USD 6.5M). The inception phase of the project is expected to commence in Q3 2018. The project will support countries implement key provisions of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, including in relation to and in doing so also facilitate development, planning and implementation of national commitments made in the context of the global Clean Seas campaign and voluntary commitments related to SDG 14.1.