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Kickoff Workshop on Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration in the Western Pacific

*Advancing science, sharing practices, and building cooperation for
a healthier coastal future*

Xiamen, China, 6-8 November 2025



The UNESCO/IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC), together with the Third Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources, China, and the SEE Foundation are pleased to invite you to participate in this workshop to be held from 6 to 8 November 2025 in Xiamen, China.

The workshop will bring together leading experts, policy-makers, and practitioners to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and strengthen international cooperation for the restoration of mangrove and other blue carbon ecosystems in the Western Pacific

1. Background

Coastal ecosystems such as mangroves, tidal marshes, and seagrass meadows provide vital benefits and services, including carbon sequestration, coastal protection, and biodiversity support. The Western Pacific is a global hotspot for blue carbon ecosystem, yet these ecosystems face severe threats, resulting in significant habitat loss and reduced ecological functions.

Over the past decade, multiple initiatives have been launched to protect and restore blue carbon ecosystems. However, in the Western Pacific, several challenges remain. For instance, tailored approaches that consider local ecological, economic and social context are still needed, and critical knowledge gaps persist, particularly in practical restoration methodologies and long term monitoring techniques.

Therefore, fostering knowledge exchange and strengthening cooperation are essential for advancing both scientific understanding and practical developments in the protection and restoration of blue carbon ecosystems.

To address this challenge, the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) has decided to establish a Working Group on Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration, with an initial focus on mangrove ecosystems. The Working Group aims to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise, promote effective restoration techniques and practices, and support collaborative actions across the region.

As a first step, this kickoff workshop, hosted by the Third Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources, China, and SEE Foundation, will convene leading experts in mangrove ecology and ecosystem management to foster collaboration and drive impactful actions.

2. Workshop Objectives

The workshop aims:

- a) To facilitate the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and best practices in ecological restoration focusing on mangrove, and identify shared priorities for regional cooperation.
- b) To launch the Working Group for Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration with an initial focus on mangroves and initiate its major activities.
- c) To develop a workplan for the next two years and beyond, including developing a regional guidebook on mangrove restoration.

3. Workshop Outline

The 2.5-day workshop will combine expert presentations, interactive discussions, and collaborative planning sessions, including:

- Session 1:** Global Overview - Blue carbon science, policy development, and international initiatives
- Session 2:** Regional and National Perspectives - Current status, science, methodologies, and best practices in mangrove restoration across the Western Pacific
- Session 3:** Identify Gaps and Challenges - Barriers, knowledge gaps in mangrove ecological restoration, and opportunities for cooperation in the Western Pacific
- Session 4:** Brainstorm the way forward - Collaborative planning to outline priorities, actions, and next steps.

4. Participants

The workshop will gather scientists, decision-makers, public and private sector from Member States in the Western Pacific, with expertise in mangrove ecological restoration and strong willingness to foster cooperation and knowledge exchange.

Participants are expected to present the current mangrove restoration science, methods, and practices in their country or region, and existing challenges, knowledge gaps, and opportunities for cooperation.

Other stakeholders including government agencies and private sectors, will also be invited to contribute knowledge, share experience, and explore partnerships.

5. Registration

Interested individuals, either nominated or self-nominated, who are committed to contributing to the collective effort and shared goals are encouraged to complete the [Online Registration/Application Form](#) as early as possible, preferably **before 31 August 2025**.

If you are unable to access the online form, please complete the offline registration/application form ([Annex 1](#)) and email it to iocwestpac@unesco.org with the subject line: **Registration/Application Form - Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration Workshop**.

Funding for international travel is limited and will be prioritized for participants from developing countries. Selection will be based primarily on the applicant's CV, relevant work experience, and prior engagement with WESTPAC or related international programmes.

Update about the workshop will be made available in due course on the WESTPAC website: <https://ioc-westpac.org/event/kickoff-workshop-on-blue-carbon-ecosystem-restoration/>