

Outline for the Progress Report of UN Ocean Decade (UN Decade Action 21: Accelerate MSP in the Western Pacific and its adjacent areas)

1. Introduction

Human well-being and prosperity are inseparable from the health, protection and sustainable use of the ocean, coasts and related resources. However, the increasing use of marine resources leads to growing pressures and impacts on marine environment. The increasing conflicts among users and marine environment have become a significant management challenge, compromising the sustainable provisioning of ecosystem services.

Marine spatial planning (MSP) is a multi-sectoral participatory process and methodology for planning and management of ocean and coastal zones. The MSP has rapidly become a commonly accepted approach to addressing conflicts among users and marine spaces. To accelerate its implementation, IOC/UNESCO and the EU's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) produced the MSPglobal 2030 project and published "MSPglobal International Guide on Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning" to assist governments, partners and practitioners in their MSP processes.

In view of the demand of Member States at the 13th Intergovernmental Session for a joint initiative on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in April 2021, and the incubator program "Solutions to the conflicts of ocean uses: Accelerate marine spatial planning in the Western Pacific" in the kick off meeting of the UN Ocean Decade in the Western Pacific region and its adjacent areas, the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC), together with interested countries and their institutions, proposed a Decade Action entitled "Accelerate Marine Spatial Planning in the Western Pacific and its adjacent areas." This proposal was officially endorsed and registered as the UN Decade Action 21.

2. Timeframe and Objectives

The UN Decade Action 21 aims to improve the planning of sustainable sea use activities by facilitating the development of MSP case studies and creating an environment conducive to transnational cooperation among the Western Pacific and

its adjacent areas. The implementation of the Action will promote the practice and capacity building of marine spatial planning and management in the region and is also of great significance to the achievement of the UN Ocean Decade.

The Action will fully connect with the Ocean Decade and the “MSPglobal 2030”, and set the first five-year phase (2023-2027) to apply and adapt the MSPglobal International Guide in support of the blue development and the 2030 Agenda, by cooperation with countries in the region and its adjacent areas, demonstration areas will be determined for the implementation of the MSP scheme; A joint MSP Roadmap/Initiative is on the agenda to be formulated and released, and a regional platform for capacity building and blue economy development will be constructed following the MSPglobal Roadmap.

The main activities of the Action include:

- Establishment of a regional network of MSP Experts and partners
- Mspglobal adaptation and demonstration
- Transboundary MSP study
- Regional MSP Forum
- Capacity Development

3. Activities and Progress Made from 2022 to April 2023

Since its endorsement by UNESCO, the project team has conducted the following activities to push forward this project.

- Brainstorming meeting (June 23, 2022)

On 23 Jun. 2022, a brainstorming meeting to accelerate the implementation of MSP in the Western Pacific region was held online which aimed at pooling suggestions of participants from relevant countries in the region on the following issues: What are the biggest challenges for conducting/accelerating MSP in your country? Why do you think we shall take this or these as pilot site(s)? Which kind of activities would you suggest the UN Action 21 shall focus on this site? Why? Any other suggestion(s) or idea(s) on this Action as a whole? All the participants filled out the form and gave constructive suggestions on the topic.

- Side event in 2022 UN Ocean Conference (June 28, 2022)

On June 28, 2022, during the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, the project team organized and held the side event named “Progressing Blue Economy through Marine Spatial Planning: Opportunities for the Pacific” and publicized the latest progress of project, which expanded the influence of the project and gained more communication with relevant countries.

➤ Regional MSP Dialogue (December 16, 2022)

On 16 December, 2022, Regional MSP Dialogue was held online by WESTPAC, which offered opportunities to learn from others’ valuable experience. Jointing with experts, authorities, and representatives from different stakeholder communities in the Western Pacific, the project team had a fully discussion on the topic of the development of MSP.

The outcomes mainly include: 1) Conveyed the spirits of the 3rd International Marine Spatial Planning Conference and sharing relevant achievements, tools and innovation demonstration; 2) Sought new opportunities for exchange and cooperation on MSP in the Western Pacific region; 3) Discussed on the Route of Marine Spatial Planning in the Western Pacific.

4. Objectives to be achieved, if applicable, over the next intersessional period (May 2023- April 2025)

The key objectives of the Action for the next inter-sessional period can be summarized as follows:

- A Regional MSP expert group
- A Regional MSP Platform
- A roadmap to carry out the MSP in the region
- A draft report of Mspglobal guide adaptation
- Four MSP Demonstrations
- Training Courses/Workshops and Regional MSP Forum

5. Planned activities for May 2023- April 2025

[provide, in tabular form, the action items that should be included in the work plan and budget]

Program					Funding Required		Remark
	Activities	Objectives	Expected outputs/outcomes	Date and place	IOC	Other sources (i.e., from national or international)	
UN Decade Action 21	1. The Kick-off meeting	To establish PMO and expert group	Officially launch the Action of the Accelerate MSP in the Western Pacific	2023 Qingdao, China		50K USD from First Institute of Oceanography (FIO), Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), China	In a hybrid form
	2. MSPglobal Guide localization	To provide more suitable technology for the regional MSP	Report	2023-2025 Region	Depends on IOC Budget	200K USD from First Institute of Oceanography, MNR, China and China Oceanic Development Foundation (CODF)	
	3. Pilots project	To develop MSP plans	MSP Demonstrations	2023-2025 Region	Depends on IOC Budget	300K USD from FIO and CODF	
	5. Training	To build institutional capacity and advance the MSP process in the Region	4 training courses	Thailand, SIDS, China	Depends on IOC Budget	200K USD from FIO and CODF	
	6. Seminar	To summarize the existing outcomes and difficulties of UN Decade Action 21	Annual research report of PMO	2023-2025 Thailand, China		FIO, CODF, DMCR, PSU and etc.	
	7. Conference	To joint release the Western Pacific MSP Roadmap	the Western Pacific MSP Roadmap	TBD		FIO, CODF, IOC-WESTPAC, DMCR and etc.	