



The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project

the next steps

Eight countries connected by one ecosystem, working together to secure its future

The BOBLME Project has produced a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis that identifies and prioritizes the major transboundary environmental and fisheries concerns in the Bay of Bengal.

Three main issues of concern

A Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) for the Bay of Bengal was finalised by the BOBLME Project in February 2012. The TDA identifies three main issues:

- Overexploitation of marine living resources
- Degradation of mangroves, coral reefs and seagrasses
- Pollution and water quality

The vital next step is for the countries of the region to collectively develop a **Strategic Action Programme** to address these issues.

A transboundary problem is an *environmental problem* that is *transboundary in scale*. In other words, it is an environmental problem originating in, or contributed by, one country and affecting (or impacting) another.



the next steps

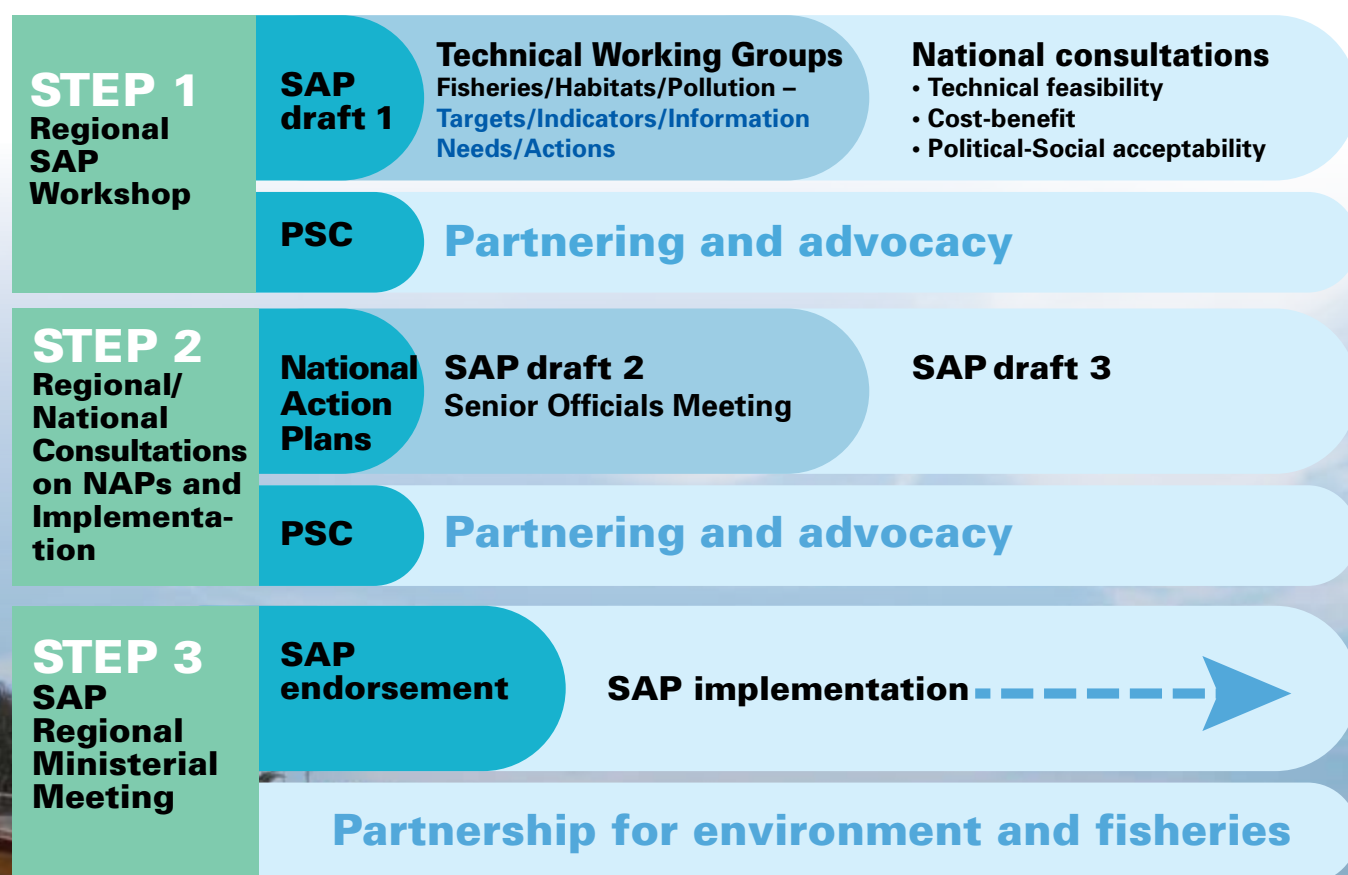
The next step is to draft a Strategic Action Programme that will help the countries of the region to collectively address and remediate the concerns.

A Strategic Action Programme for the Bay of Bengal

A Strategic Action Programme is a **negotiated policy document** that sets out the policy, legal and institutional reforms and investments that are required to address the problems identified by the TDA. It is endorsed at the highest political level, usually by fisheries, agriculture and environment ministers.

The preparation of the SAP is a **cooperative process** that is undertaken between the countries of a region. Specific commitments and actions for each country are set out in **National Action Plans**. These can be adopted nationally, but must be harmonized with those of the other countries in the region.

In the Bay of Bengal, the SAP development process is well underway. It is expected that the SAP will be completed and endorsed by 2014.



PSC – Project Steering Committee meeting

The aim is to achieve commitment at the highest political level so as to move forward on a selected set of priority actions and strategies.



A Regional Environmental Objective for the BOBLME SAP

A healthy ecosystem and sustainable use of marine living resources for the benefit of the countries of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem.

Ecosystem Quality Objectives for the BOBLME SAP

- Theme 1 Overexploitation of marine living resources:**
Fisheries and other marine living resources are restored and managed sustainably.
- Theme 2 Degradation of critical habitats:**
Degraded, vulnerable and critical marine habitats are restored, conserved and maintained.
- Theme 3 Pollution and water quality:**
Coastal and marine pollution and water quality are controlled to meet agreed standards for human and ecosystem health.

These objectives will guide regional technical discussions on SAP actions.

Ensuring that the people of the BOBLME have sufficient fish and other marine resources in the future, will depend on how well the countries of the region manage supporting marine ecosystems today.



The eight countries that are working together through the **BOBLME Project** have identified the need to take national and regional action to achieve this vision. The **Strategic Action Programme** is their roadmap.



A shared vision for the Bay of Bengal

Rapid population growth, high dependence on marine and coastal resources for food, trade and livelihoods, and changing land-use patterns are having major impacts on the Bay of Bengal. It is not clear how much longer the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) will be able to support the needs and aspirations of the 450 million people who use its resources – most notably the large population of coastal poor that depends on these resources for their very survival.

The **Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA)** completed by the BOBLME Project details the most pressing transboundary environmental problems affecting the Large Marine Ecosystem. Now the countries of the region have embarked on a two-year process to develop a Strategic Action Programme for the BOBLME.

At the heart of this process is a shared vision for the region:

- Enough fish for future generations
- Healthy coastal and near-shore marine habitats
- Reduced pollution from agriculture, industry and large coastal cities
- Coastal communities resilient to the impacts of climate change
- Stakeholders working together



Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand are working together through the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project. This five-year project aims to improve the lives of coastal populations through improved regional management of the Bay of Bengal environment and its fisheries.

The BOBLME Project brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including local communities, state and national governments, universities, NGOs, industry and regional organizations, with the goal of developing a Strategic Action Programme – a road map that outlines the ways and means of addressing priority transboundary environmental problems.

To learn more about the BOBLME Project, visit our website or contact:

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BAY OF BENGAL LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM PROJECT



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Donors:

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