

CENTRE FOR COASTAL AND MARINE ENVIRONMENT

RESEARCH PROJECTS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Preparation of a National State of the Oceans and Coasts Report

CMER, PEMSEA, and relevant national government and non-governmental agencies are collaborating in preparing the first National State of Oceans and Coasts (SOC) Report with a focus on the Blue Economy. This is in line with the proposed Regional SOC to monitor progress, impacts and benefits, and to continually improve work on assessing the regional and national ocean economy, ecosystem services, and investment opportunities for sustainable blue economy development. Specifically, the national blue economy assessment is aimed at strengthening understanding of the role of the ocean and its contribution and impacts to the economy, impacts of human activities on ocean health and sustainability, potential areas for investments in environmentally-sound technologies and infrastructures, and the interventions and innovative mechanisms needed to respond to changing environments and climate. This is a work in progress and will be continued as scheduled for completion in 2018.

The Establishment of a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) under MARPOL 73/78 in the Straits of Malacca

A PSSA is an ecologically, economically and scientifically significant area which could be negatively affected by shipping and requires protection under the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). The PSSA concept was originally discussed between 1986-1991 and guidelines for its designation adopted in 1991 and revised in 2005. The guidelines specify the process, procedures, and criteria for designating a PSSA, stipulate its possible vulnerabilities to international shipping, and propose measures to protect it from shipping impacts. Based on previous work done, this phase of the project progressed further into the procedures and criteria for designating a PSSA, as well as related issues on Malaysia's initiatives on identifying and designating a PSSA in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS). This was conducted under the framework cooperation agreement between IMO and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) for the prevention of pollution from ships through the adoption of PSSAs within the East Asian region. The areas identified include Pulau Kukup and Tanjung Piai National Parks at the southern tip of Peninsular Malaysia. Among the main achievements in 2017 include the submissions of the Malaysian Proposal and Information Papers (*Ref: MEPC 71/8/1 & MEPC 71/INF.24*) to the IMO MEPC-71st Session Meeting in London. The IMO-Norad phase of the regional programme was completed in July this year although work will continue on addressing challenges faced and effective adoption and implementation for Malaysia.

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction: Options for Malaysia

Growing international concerns over the adequacy of the existing legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction have led to discussions under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on the possible development of a new international instrument. There is growing pressure for a comprehensive global regime to better address the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The preparatory negotiations which took place in New York from 10-21 July 2017 included governments, global and regional intergovernmental organisations, and civil society. Overall, countries agreed to

recommend elements for consideration in the development of a new treaty on marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The UNGA will decide at its next session the convening and starting date of an intergovernmental conference to elaborate on a treaty, most likely to begin early in 2018. The new legal instrument would fall under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. It would cover governance on ocean space and resources, navigational rights, exploration and exploitation of resources on the seabed, conservation and management of marine living resources, protection and preservation of the marine environment, marine scientific research, development and transfer of marine technology and settlement of disputes between states. The meetings thus far have focused on a package of issues namely marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments, and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology. Most of the work is presently in progress, and will require further assessments on the actions required from Malaysia on moving forward in line with the international agenda and mechanism on the subject area.

Adequacy of Fisheries Policy in Malaysia: An Assessment of Issues, Challenges and the Way Forward

The growing demand for fisheries products is due mainly to increased human population. Demand for fisheries and its exploitation has grown significantly over the years and has been somewhat met by advances in fishing technology inshore and territorial fishing as well as aquaculture and deep sea fishing. Current policies on fisheries in Malaysia have been reviewed in providing the way forward to meet demand. Various policy and management efforts have been undertaken over the years including the adoption of controlled fishing efforts, gear-based measures, zoning schemes, as well as the promotion of conservation of marine resources and ecosystems. This study takes into account the protection and conservation of fisheries resources, managing and harvesting them, and prevention and control of pollution through enforcement. Sustainable fisheries are a goal in its management in Malaysia. In examining the issue and challenges of sustaining fisheries resources, effective implementation of the plan is evaluated as well as the overexploitation of fisheries resources, poaching activities and enforcement capability. As a way forward, it has been suggested to bridge MPAs and fisheries management, minimise the usage of destructive fishing gears, and identify fish breeding areas for conservation.

Marine Spatial Planning as a Tool to Achieve Ocean Stewardship and Advocacy through Good Governance

The study was carried out in collaboration University Malaysia Terengganu and WWF-Malaysia. The main objective was to arrive at a best-governance solution to initiate marine spatial planning (MSP) in the state of Terengganu. Five districts were involved based on the two selected study areas of Setiu Wetland (Setiu and Kuala Nerus) and the long coastal stretch from Bandar Marang to Geliga (Marang, Dungun and Kemaman). This study involved both qualitative and quantitative elements. Content analysis involving a legal and policy study was carried out on policy documents, statutes (international legal documents and domestic acts, enactments and other directives and circulars) as well as the local plans of the respective districts. For the way forward, the next steps suggested are to conduct a thorough study on the selected areas to initiate MSP in Terengganu based on the most threatened and conflicting interests found, undertake a specialised focus-group MSP training for stakeholders in the selected areas based on the localities, as well as to get the buy-in from the state government in order to present the proposed plans to the State Planning Committee in the near future.

Program Hari Pembersihan Pantai Secara Serentak Negeri Selangor Tahun 2017: The Application of the Clean Coast Index (CCI) for coastal cleanliness monitoring and assessment

This initiative focused on training and presenting an overview on the beach clean-up initiative by Selangor state in conjunction with the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) celebration. Analyses of the data and information obtained from the selected sites in Selangor were an important contribution towards effective monitoring at the selected (pilot) coastal areas. The initiative was supported by the State Economic Planning Unit and carried out with assistance from the Lembaga Urus Air Selangor (LUAS) and several local councils. The CCI methodology established by MIMA through an earlier study was employed to complement the effort in formulating effective monitoring, assessment and record-keeping. Assistance in this project was also provided by the Selangor Branch of the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS).