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**WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT  
TWELFTH MEETING**

**4-5 October 2021  
VIRTUAL**

**Cooperation between RECOFI and the Regional Organisation for the Protection of the  
Marine Environment (ROPME)**

**Executive Summary**

This document outlines the background of the cooperation between RECOFI and Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) since 2013 and presents a summary of ROPME's plan of work to stimulate discussion on possible joint workplans between RECOFI and ROPME in line with the work of the WGFM. The outcomes of the tenth session of RECOFI and the recently received ROPME workplans are outlined.

**The WGFM is invited to:**

- Review the updates on cooperation between RECOFI and ROPME with particular note to the most recent outcomes of the tenth session of RECOFI and the workplan areas of ROPME to propose possible workplan details for RECOFI and ROPME

## Introduction

1. This document outlines the background of the cooperation between RECOFI and Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) since 2013 and presents a summary of ROPME's plan of work to stimulate discussion on possible joint workplans between RECOFI and ROPME in line with the work of the WGFM.

## Background

2. At the seventh session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 14-16 May 2013, the Commission concurred on the need for due consideration to be given to ongoing ecosystem changes and their impacts, including climate change and red tide impacts on both fisheries and aquaculture. The Commission welcomed the opportunity to strengthen cooperation with the Fisheries Resources Committee of the GCC and other relevant regional partners including the execution of joint activities of fisheries and aquaculture.

3. In this respect, and also with regards to common regional priorities, the Commission emphasized the value of effective and viable regional cooperation which should be fostered by RECOFI in partnership with other interested entities, such as the Fisheries Resources Committee of the GCC, Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). In this regard, the Secretariat proposed that a formal partnership arrangement between these bodies be sought.

4. At the ninth meeting of the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) held on 24-26 November 2015 in Kuwait City, Kuwait, the RECOFI Secretary noted that the Commission had requested cooperation with other relevant regional entities, such as the Permanent Fisheries Resources Committee (PFRC) of GCC and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME). Further to this request, the RECOFI Secretary and Mr Rashid Al Shihi, Oceanographic Specialist with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates, used the WGFM meeting in Kuwait as an opportunity to meet Mr Abdul Rahman Al Awadi, Executive Secretary of ROPME and Mr Hassan Mohammadi, Coordinator of ROPME.

5. The Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) is an Intergovernmental Organization, the permanent headquarters of which is located in Kuwait. ROPME was established on 1 July 1979 in accordance with Article XVI of the Kuwait Regional Convention for Cooperation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution, 1978. Bahrain, I.R.Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE are Parties to the Convention and the State of Kuwait is the Depository. There are four Protocols under the Convention addressing marine emergencies, land-based activities, sea-based pollution and hazardous wastes. The Convention and its four Protocols and the Kuwait Action Plan for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Areas are registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

6. The Chairperson and the Secretary of RECOFI represented the Commission at the regional workshop entitled “Toward the Development of a Regional Ecosystem Based Management Strategy for ROPME Sea Area” held from 4 to 7 April 2016 in Dubai, UAE. The Secretary made a presentation on the challenges and opportunities for regional fisheries management and aquaculture development in the region. The presentation provided a brief overview of RECOFI and a case study of the work conducted by the Commission. He referred to the international legal framework under which the flag and coastal States have the obligation and duty to cooperate for fisheries management through appropriate regional mechanisms/agreements such as RECOFI. The power of RECOFI to adopt binding recommendations was explained.

7. The Dubai meeting produced 12 recommendations. Recommendation 10 specifically addressed the cooperation between ROPME and RECOFI: “Considering the identical geographical coverage and membership of ROPME and RECOFI, it would be highly desirable and advisable to establish an effective and viable cooperation framework. In this regard, ROPME and RECOFI should discuss areas for cooperation through a joint meeting”.

8. The RECOFI Secretary and Chairperson were invited to participate in the “Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets”, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 26 to 28 September 2016. The case of the potential cooperation between RECOFI and ROPME was included in the Agenda and outlined by the RECOFI Secretary through a joint FAO/RECOFI and UNEP/ROWA presentation.

### **Memorandum of Understanding between RECOFI and ROPME**

9. Formulation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FAO/RECOFI and ROPME began in early 2016. The version of MoU which was sent to FAO for clearance was submitted to the Ninth Session of RECOFI (2017) for information. The Commission acknowledged the convenience of the MoU with ROPME and expressed its desire to work with the ROPME under the terms of the MoU. Some changes were made to the original version of the MoU during the necessary clearance procedures. On 27 November 2018, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME). FAO’s signing, which was on behalf of RECOFI, came at ROPME headquarters in Kuwait City, Kuwait. The enforced version of the MoU is provided in Appendix 1.

10. The MoU (Appendix 1), establishes a framework for identifying, facilitating and strengthening cooperation between FAO/RECOFI and ROPME aiming at benefiting from both parties’ initiatives and

work in relation to sustainable use of marine living resources. Both organizations agreed to cooperate on the management of marine environment and its ecosystems, marine biodiversity conservation and management, promotion of awareness on conservation of the marine environment, joint technical projects, joint organization of seminars, workshops and technical training in the fields of mutual interest, and joint technical publications. The MoU marks the launch of an important regional partnership in support of sustainable use of marine living resources and protection of marine environment. The MoU is in effect and has a duration of four years, concluding in 2022.

11. The Eleventh meeting WGFM (Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 19-21 February 2019) reviewed the likely cooperation activities listed in the Annex 1 of the current MoU. There was a concern that some of the likely cooperation activities would fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment of the RECOFI Member States. Following discussions, the WGFM suggested, the following selected cooperation activity areas to be implemented, in order of priority, under the MoU within budgetary limits of the two parties:

- Conservation, protection, management and sustainable use of marine living resources;
- Management of coastal and marine resources and ecosystem;
- Promotion of ecosystem-based fisheries and aquaculture management including the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and Aquaculture;
- Mitigation of the impact of fisheries and aquaculture activities on the marine habits and species;
- Conservation and responsible management of threatened and endangered species;
- Joint organization of seminars, workshops and technical training in the fields of the mutual interests; and
- Promotion of ecosystem based approach to the conservation of marine environment, its ecosystem and the sustainable use of marine living resources.

12. At the tenth session of RECOFI, held from 9 to 11 July in Rome, Italy, the Commission acknowledged the value in cooperation between RECOFI and ROPME and the important role the MoU would play in that cooperation. The Commission acknowledged the efforts of the WGFM to identify areas for cooperation and agreed that the promotion of ecosystem-based fisheries and aquaculture management, and the joint organization of seminars, workshop and technical training in fields of mutual interest are good starting points, with further priorities agreed upon at a later stage.

13. In August 2021, the ROPME Secretariat sent a communication to the RECOFI Secretariat which noted three areas they had elaborated workplans that could be relevant for the MoU with RECOFI. These workplans were:

- Regional marine biodiversity strategy (Appendix 2)
- Regional ecosystem-based management strategy (Appendix 3)
- Regional Eutrophication and Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Strategy (Appendix 4)

14. A virtual meeting will be held to further discuss areas of work under this MoU

**Enforced MoU between FAO/RECOFI AND ROPME****MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**between**

**THE REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT (ROPME)**

**and**

**THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO) ON BEHALF OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES (RECOFI)**

The Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME),

and,

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), on behalf of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI),

Hereafter jointly referred to as "the Parties",

WHEREAS ROPME is a Regional Organization established in 1979 under the Kuwait Regional Convention for Co-operation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution, with a mandate to protect the marine environment and the coastal areas from pollution and degradation and to apply the integrated management approach to the use of marine resources and services to sustain the health, vitality and sustainability of the environment,

WHEREAS the RECOFI is a Regional Fisheries Management Organization established in 2001 by an agreement concluded under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution with the aim of, *inter alia*, promoting the development, conservation, rational management and best utilization of living marine resources as well as sustainable development of aquaculture within its competence area,

WHEREAS the Parties recognize the benefit to be derived from enhanced collaboration and cooperation in the pursuit of their respective mandates and objectives,

WHEREAS the Parties intend to conclude this Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter referred to as "MoU") with the aim to establish a broader cooperation aimed at harmonizing their activities and avoiding duplication of efforts,

ROPME and the RECOFI have agreed to cooperate under this MoU as follows:

**Clause 1  
Interpretation**

This MoU supersedes all prior communications and representations between the Parties, whether oral or written, concerning the subject matter thereof.

**Clause 2  
Purpose**

Having regard to the respective mandate of the Parties, the purpose of this MoU is to provide a framework for identifying, facilitating and strengthening cooperation between the Parties with a view to benefiting from each other's initiatives and works in relation to the management, conservation and sustainable exploitation of marine environment and its ecosystems and the sustainable use of marine living resources in their respective competence areas.

**Clause 3  
Areas and scope of cooperation**

Cooperation under this MoU may take place, to the extent possible, within the purview of their respective mandates in the following broad thematic areas:

- Joint studies or projects on specific thematic areas;
- Capacity building and training;
- Knowledge-sharing and exchange of information and data;
- Advocacy, awareness raising through joint events;
- Collaboration in other areas as determined necessary.

Possible collaborative activities in which the Parties intend to focus their efforts, subject to the respective available resources, are highlighted in Annex I, which is an integral part of this MoU.

**Clause 4  
Organizational arrangements pertaining to the cooperation**

- 1) The Parties shall hold bilateral consultations on matters of mutual interest, in accordance with an agenda agreed in advance by them, aiming also at the development and/or review of their joint activities. Subject to the applicable internal rules and procedures of each Party and to prior consultation among the Parties, The following two items should be examined at least once per year on the occasion of consultations:
  - a) Technical and operational issues related to furthering the objectives of the MoU;
  - b) Review the progress of the work by the Parties in implementing the MoU.
- 2) Further bilateral meetings at desk-to-desk and at expert level will be encouraged and convened on an *ad hoc* basis, as deemed necessary by the Parties to address priority matters regarding the implementation of activities in specific areas, countries and regions.
- 3) Where the Parties convene a meeting at which policy matters related to this MoU will be discussed, the Parties will, as appropriate, invite each other as observers. The Parties may consider the possibility of joint missions and the hosting of joint training activities and informal sessions.

- 4) ROPME and the RECOFI will inform their relevant governing bodies on the progress made in implementing this MoU in each Ordinary Meeting or Session of their respective governing bodies (Council Ordinary Meetings for ROPME and Commission Sessions for the RECOFI).
- 5) The Parties will encourage, and where possible promote, contacts, exchange of information and joint activities at national level between their respective focal points. The Parties may subsequently develop these contacts, exchange of information and joint activities.
- 6) Within the areas of cooperation specified in Clause 3, collaboration between ROPME and the RECOFI will be carried out, as appropriate, through joint elaboration, fundraising for and implementation of projects on specific issues of common interest.
- 7) Neither Party shall engage in fundraising with the third Parties for activities to be carried out within the framework of this MoU in the name of or on behalf of the other.
- 8) Nothing under this MoU imposes financial obligations upon either Party. If the Parties mutually agree to allocate specific funds to facilitate an activity undertaken pursuant to this MoU, such an agreement will be reflected in writing and signed by both Parties. In particular, for the implementation of joint activities within the framework of this MoU that might involve payment of funds, a specific separate legal instrument will be entered into, as appropriate, taking into account those relevant administrative and financial rules and procedures applicable to each Party.
- 9) The Parties will undertake, within their global knowledge network and to the extent possible, to facilitate mutual access to relevant information and body of work as well as dissemination between them. The Parties will consider the possibility of joint missions and the hosting of joint training activities and information sessions.
- 10) Each Party shall identify a focal point within its internal organizational structure to coordinate cooperation, implementation and monitoring of the activities under this MoU.

**Clause 5**  
**Status of personnel**

For the purpose of implementation of this MoU, no agents, sub-contractors or employees of one of the Parties shall be considered in any way as agents, sub-contractors or employees of the other Party. Neither of the Parties shall be liable for the acts or omissions of the other Party or its agents, sub-contractors, employees or any persons performing services on behalf of it.

**Clause 6**  
**Official emblems and logos**

- 1) Neither Party shall use the name, emblem or logos of the other Party, its subsidiaries, affiliates, and/or authorized agents, or any abbreviation thereof, in any press release, memo, report or other published disclosure related to this MoU, without the express prior written approval of the other Party in each case.
- 2) In no event will authorization of the ROPME or the RECOFI name or emblem, or any abbreviation thereof, be granted for commercial purposes.

**Clause 7**  
**Intellectual property rights**

- 1) Intellectual property rights, in particular copyright, in material such as information, software and designs, made available by ROPME and FAO to be used to carry out activities under this MoU shall remain with the originating Party. Appropriate authorizations for use of such materials by the other Party will be addressed in the agreements concluded in accordance with Clause 4(9) above.

- 2) Intellectual Property Rights over materials developed jointly by the Parties shall be addressed as necessary in supplementary agreements concluded under this MoU.

**Clause 8  
Privileges and Immunities**

Nothing in this MoU or in any document or arrangement relating thereto shall be construed as constituting a waiver of privileges or immunities of FAO, nor as extending any privileges or immunities of either Party to the other Party or its personnel.

**Clause 9  
Confidentiality**

Neither of the Parties nor its personnel shall communicate to any other persons or entity any confidential information made known to it by the other Party in the course of the implementation of this MoU, nor shall they use this information to private or company advantage. This provision shall survive the expiration of termination of this MoU.

**Clause 10  
Notification and amendments**

- 1) Each Party shall notify the other in writing, within three (3) months, of any proposed or actual changes that it deems necessary for this MoU.
- 2) Upon receipt of such notification, the Parties shall consult each other with a view of reaching an agreement on any actual or proposed change(s) suggested in accordance with Clause 10 (1).
- 3) This MoU may be amended only by mutual agreement of the Parties reflected in writing.

**Clause 11  
Dispute settlement**

Any dispute between the Parties concerning the interpretation and execution of this MoU, or any document or arrangement relating thereto, shall be settled by negotiation between the Parties. Any differences that may not be so settled shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Heads of the two institutions for final resolution.

**Clause 12  
Termination**

- 1) This MoU may be terminated by either Party by giving six (6) months prior written notice to the other Party. It shall cease to exist in three (3) months following notification of the termination of this MoU. In that event, the Parties will agree on measures required for the orderly conclusion of any ongoing activities.
- 2) Unless agreed otherwise, upon termination of this MoU, the rights and obligations of the Parties defined under any specific arrangement established in accordance with Clause 4(8) of this MoU, will cease to be effective.

**Clause 13  
Duration**

- 1) This MoU shall enter into force once it is signed by the duly authorized representatives of both Parties. As of that moment, the MoU shall remain in effect for four (4) years or until terminated in accordance with Clause 12 above. Its content shall be reviewed every two (2) years, as appropriate.
- 2) This MoU is signed in two (2) original copies in English equally authentic.

#### Annex I

##### Activities relating to the areas of cooperation of this MoU

Parties may collaborate in the following activity areas:

- 1) Management of marine environment and its ecosystems
  - Mitigation of environmental degradation;
  - Mitigation of marine pollution;
  - Promotion of ecosystem-based approaches to the conservation of marine environment, its ecosystems and the sustainable use of marine living resources;
  - Conservation, protection, management and sustainable use of marine living resources;
  - Management of coastal and marine resources and ecosystems;
  - Mapping, protection and management of locations of environmental characteristics, such as biologically sensitive areas and flora and fauna; areas of importance for fisheries and/or for the conservation of endangered species and coastal wetlands;
  - Monitoring and assessment of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) and of marine litter and microplastics in the marine environment.
- 2) Marine biodiversity conservation and management
  - Conservation and responsible management of threatened and endangered species;
  - Conservation and management of marine protected areas/nature reserves with marine or estuarine component;
  - Sustainable management of native species and ecosystems, and protection against invasive alien species;
  - Ecosystem services identification and valuation.
- 3) Promotion of awareness and conservation of the marine environments.
- 4) Fisheries and aquaculture
  - Promotion of ecosystem-based fisheries and aquaculture management including the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and Aquaculture;
  - Mitigation of the impact of fisheries and aquaculture activities on the marine habitats and species;
  - Monitoring of impact of environmental changes and factors on fishery and aquaculture activities.
- 5) Joint technical projects.

- 6) Joint organization of seminars, workshops and technical training in the fields of mutual interest.
- 7) Joint technical publications.

Appendix 2: ROPME Regional marine biodiversity strategy



## Preliminary Work Plan

The ROPME Marine Biodiversity Strategy will be developed through the implementation of a Marine Biodiversity Regional Work Plan.

Phases	Activities
<b>Phase I: Development (15 months)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold Regional Workshop for the Working Group on Marine Biodiversity Strategy to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Establish the Marine Biodiversity Technical Support Group</li> <li>➢ Agree on TORs for Working Group and Technical Support Group</li> <li>➢ Agree on Phase I detailed work plan</li> <li>➢ Hold initial meeting of the Technical Support Group</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Draft technical report on common criteria for inclusion of species in Annexes 1 and 2, and for including habitats in the list of Special Habitats, of the ROPME Biodiversity Protocol</li> <li>- Draft technical report on common criteria for selection of areas to be established as Specially Protected Areas</li> <li>- Prepare draft list of species and habitats for initial assessment in accordance with species and habitat listing criteria</li> <li>- Prepare draft review of the presence and impacts of invasive alien species in the ROPME Sea Area and pathways of introduction</li> <li>- Hold a technical drafting workshop for the Marine Biodiversity Technical Support Group</li> </ul>
<b>Phase II: Assessment (15 months)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold Regional Workshop of the Marine Biodiversity Working Group to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Review the common criteria for inclusion of species and habitats</li> <li>➢ Review the common criteria for selection of areas to be established as Specially Protected Areas</li> <li>➢ Review report on impacts of alien species in the ROPME Sea Area</li> <li>➢ Agree on Phase II detailed work plan</li> <li>➢ Hold meeting for the Marine Biodiversity Technical Support Group</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Draft evidence reports on species and habitats for initial assessment based on public information and National data submissions</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare preliminary lists of species for inclusion in Annexes 1 and 2, and habitats for inclusion in the list of Special Habitats, of the ROPME Biodiversity Protocol</li> <li>- Hold technical species and habitat classification workshop for the Marine Biodiversity Technical Support Group</li> <li>- Draft listed species and habitats sensitivity and vulnerability to human impacts report</li> <li>- Prepare report reviewing existing coverage of listed species and habitats by areas eligible as Specially Protected Areas</li> <li>- Prepare draft list of priority alien species present in the RSA and priority species with the potential to be introduced</li> <li>- Draft Regional guidelines for monitoring invasive alien species in the ROPME Sea Area</li> <li>- Draft ROPME Marine Biodiversity Policy Briefing Report</li> <li>- Hold Regional Workshop of the Marine Biodiversity Working Group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Review the lists of Species for Annex 1 and Annex 2, and the list of Special Habitats</li> <li>➢ Review the report of existing species and habitat coverage by areas eligible as Specially Protected Areas</li> <li>➢ Review priority invasive species monitoring and surveillance lists and invasive species monitoring guidelines</li> <li>➢ Review the ROPME Marine Biodiversity Policy Briefing Report</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Draft outline of the ROPME Marine Biodiversity Strategy in support of National Biodiversity Strategies of Member States</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase III: Prepare Marine Biodiversity Strategy (8 months)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold a High-Level Regional Workshop to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Present the review of existing protection for listed species and habitats and launch the ROPME Species and Habitats Marine Biodiversity Policy Briefing Report</li> <li>➢ Review and revise the draft Marine Biodiversity Strategy</li> <li>➢ Draft technical report on monitoring and reporting protocols for species and habitat biodiversity in the ROPME Sea Area</li> <li>➢ Draft technical report on monitoring and management of invasive alien species in RSA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop draft Strategy Implementation Plan</li> <li>➤ Develop draft Strategy Monitoring Plan</li> <li>- Hold Workshop of the Marine Biodiversity Working Group to review and agree on the draft Strategy and associated Implementation and Monitoring Plans</li> <li>- Present the Strategy to the ROPME Council for adoption</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase IV: Implement Marine Biodiversity Strategy (ongoing)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement the Marine Biodiversity Strategy</li> <li>- Monitor implementation of the Marine Biodiversity Strategy</li> <li>- Regional Workshops to report on success of the implementation of the Marine Biodiversity Strategy and to identify next steps</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: ROPME Regional ecosystem-based management strategy

**Preliminary Work Plan**

The development of Regional EBM Strategy for RSA will be conducted in phases:

Phases	Activities
<b>Phase I (12 months)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of three reports on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inventory of existing policies, activities, projects and institutions relevant to EBM based on information provided by the Member States;</li> <li>- Scoping study, which will identify elements for the EBM Strategy;</li> <li>- Ecosystem assessment of the ROPME Sea Area, including assessment of ecosystem goods, services and their value.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Organization of a Training Workshop on Communications for the Working Group Members on Regional EBM Strategy</li> <li>• Organization of National inter-Ministerial Committees for the EBM Strategy in each Member State</li> <li>• Preparation of National reports on existing policies and activities related to the EBM Strategy</li> <li>• Identification and analysis of stakeholders, individuals, organizations and agencies across sectors</li> <li>• Identification of proposed common goals, interests and objectives to include in the Strategy</li> <li>• Preparation of a preliminary outline of the EBM Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Phase II (12 months)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of brainstorming meetings with decision makers on Ecosystem-Based Management</li> <li>• Organization of a Regional multi-stakeholder workshop on EBM to agree on approaches for the development of the Regional EBM Strategy</li> <li>• Preparation of Region-wide assessment of state-of-the-art in the management of RSA ecosystem with identification of management gaps</li> <li>• Preparation of a qualitative valuation of ecosystem goods and services in the RSA and specification of guidelines for development of detailed National valuation studies</li> <li>• Preparation of the final outline of the EBM Strategy (a strategic framework), and outline scope of the Implementation Plan, to be reviewed by key stakeholders</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of multi-stakeholder meetings to agree on the strategic framework. Wider stakeholder consultation in the Region (such as online-public consultation) on the strategic framework</li> <li>• Establishment of increased capacity in the ROPME Integrated Information System (RIIS) to include the EBM requirements for the network of professionals in the Region (to include specification and design of the requirement)</li> </ul>
<b>Phase III (8 months)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of the draft EBM Strategy, and associated Implementation Plan</li> <li>• Conduct rounds of stakeholder consultation to review the draft of the EBM Strategy</li> <li>• Finalization of the Regional EBM Strategy document</li> <li>• Submission of the EBM Strategy, and Implementation Plan, to the ROPME Council for consideration and adoption</li> </ul>
<b>Phase IV (ongoing)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a monitoring and follow-up scheme</li> <li>• Application of Regional EBM Strategy</li> <li>• Monitoring and follow-up of the Implementation Plan of the EBM Strategy</li> <li>• Encouraging any organizational change, if this is needed</li> </ul>

## Appendix 4: ROPME Regional Eutrophication and Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Strategy

**Preliminary Work Plan**

The ROPME Eutrophication and HABs Strategy will be developed through the implementation of a Eutrophication and HABs Work Plan.

Phases	Activities
<b>Phase I: Review (12 months)</b>	Hold Workshop of the Eutrophication and HABs Regional Task Force to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Establish the Eutrophication and HABs Technical Support Group</li> <li>➤ Agree on terms of reference (TORs) for the Task Force and Technical Support Group</li> <li>➤ Agree on Phase I detailed Work Plan</li> <li>➤ Hold initial Meeting of the Technical Support Group</li> <li>– Draft a preliminary assessment report on Regional extent, frequency and current understanding of the drivers and impacts of eutrophication and HABs in the ROPME Sea Area</li> <li>– Hold a technical drafting Workshop for the Eutrophication and HABs Technical Support Group to support the preliminary assessment report</li> <li>– Hold National monitoring and analysis activity review Workshop</li> <li>– Draft a report on National eutrophication and HABs monitoring and analysis activities and capability in the ROPME Sea Area, also identifying National and Regional data sources and modelling capability</li> <li>– Hold second technical drafting Workshop for the Eutrophication and HABs Technical Support Group to support the monitoring and analysis report.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase II: Assessment (15 months)</b>	– Hold Workshop of the Eutrophication and HABs Regional Task Force to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review the preliminary report on Regional extent, frequency, drivers and impacts of eutrophication and HABs</li> <li>➤ Agree on Phase II detailed Work Plan</li> <li>➤ Hold Meeting for the Eutrophication and HABs Technical Support Group to initiate the reports on monitoring and assessment guidelines</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare draft guidelines on coordinated Regional eutrophication and HABS monitoring, analysis and data reporting aligned with International standards associated with the onset of eutrophication and HABS</li> <li>- Prepare draft guidelines for Regionally coordinated assessment methods and standards for eutrophication and HABS</li> <li>- Draft report on Regional eutrophication and HABS data housing and data exchange processes</li> <li>- Hold a technical drafting Workshop for the Eutrophication and HABS Technical Support Group to support the monitoring, assessment and data housing reports</li> <li>- Draft report on management and mitigation options to reduce the impacts of eutrophication and HABS, and to identify priorities of management actions to reduce the impacts of eutrophication and HABS, particularly in line with reducing the frequency of HABS outbreaks</li> <li>- Develop an initial Regional scale model of the RSA to evaluate eutrophication and HABS and prepare recommendations for further development of Regional modelling capacity</li> <li>- Draft ROPME Eutrophication and HABS Policy Briefing Report</li> <li>- Hold a technical drafting Workshop for the Eutrophication and HABS Technical Support Group to support the modelling, management and policy briefing reports</li> <li>- Hold Regional algal species taxonomy technical training Workshop covering morphological and molecular approaches (including cell culturing to enable identification)</li> <li>- Hold technical training Workshop on the application of the monitoring and assessment guidelines prepared in Phase II</li> <li>- Develop draft Regional training and capacity development plan for inclusion in the Strategy</li> <li>- Hold Regional Workshop of the Eutrophication and HABS Task Force to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review the recommendations for i) developing operational modelling capability, ii) data hosting and data exchange processes, iii) training plans</li> <li>➤ Review the ROPME Eutrophication and HABS Policy Briefing Report</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Draft outline of the ROPME Eutrophication and HABS Strategy</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Phase III: Prepare Eutrophication &amp; HABs Strategy (6 months)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold Workshop of the Eutrophication and HABs Task Force to review the draft Strategy and associated Implementation and Monitoring Plans</li> <li>- Draft Strategy and associated Implementation and Monitoring Plans</li> <li>- Hold a High-Level Regional Workshop to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Present the ROPME Eutrophication and HABs summary report card</li> <li>➢ Review and revise the draft HABs Strategy</li> <li>➢ Review and revise the draft Eutrophication and HABs Strategy Implementation Plan</li> <li>➢ Review and revise the draft Eutrophication and HABs Strategy Monitoring Plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Present the Strategy to the ROPME Council for adoption</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase IV: Implement Eutrophication &amp; HABs Strategy (ongoing)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement the Eutrophication and HABs Strategy</li> <li>- Monitor implementation of the Eutrophication and HABs Strategy</li> <li>- Regional Workshops to report on success of the implementation of the Eutrophication and HABs Strategy and to identify next steps</li> </ul>