



# The First Asian Regional Dialogue on Seagrass and Dugong Conservation:

## From Gaps to Impactful Action

### *Provisional Agenda*

*Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand,  
20–21 February 2025*

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## Agenda Overview

### Day 1: February 20, 2025, Thursday

#### **Focus: *Knowledge exchange and sharing of project outcomes***

- Opening Session and Keynote Presentations
- Country and Project Updates (IKI SES / GEF SCS-SAP): Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities
- Interactive Discussions on Gaps and Regional Collaboration

### Day 2: February 21, 2025, Friday

#### **Focus: *Policy, Monitoring, and Coordinated Strategies***

- Working Groups: Addressing Policy, Research, and Management Gaps, and co-ordinated strategies
- Reporting Back and Closing Discussions

*Please refer to the detailed agenda on the following page.*

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## Detailed Agenda

Day 1: February 20, 2025, Thursday

Time	Agenda Item	Speakers
8:30 – 8:50 AM	Registration of Participants	
8.50 – 9:00 AM	Security Briefing	
<b>Master of Ceremony: Dr Yasmeen Telwala (IKI SES, Project Manager, CMS)</b>		
9:00 – 9:30 AM	Opening and Welcome Remarks	<p><b>Ms. Rouba Abou-Atieh</b> Executive Coordinator of CMS</p> <p><b>Ms. Teresa Reubel</b> Policy Advisor on Biodiversity for the International Climate Initiative (IKI)</p> <p><b>Mr. Anders Faaborg Poulsen</b> Senior Project Manager of SCS-SAP</p> <p><b>Admiral Suvin Jangyodsuk</b> Deputy Chief of Defence Forces &amp; Vice Chairperson of the Princess Sirivannavari Thai Coral Reef and Marine Life Conservation Foundation</p> <p><b>Ms. Marlene Nilsson</b> Deputy Regional Director of UNEP ROAP</p> <p><b>Dr. Ukkrit Satapoomin</b> Deputy Director General of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Thailand Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</p>
9:30 - 9:40 AM	Group Photo	
9:40 – 10:00 AM	Setting the scene (Each Presentation 10 mins)	Topic: The Critical Role of Seagrass Ecosystems in Supporting Dugong Conservation: A Regional Perspective. Speaker: <b>Dr Abdelmenam Mohamed</b> , Dugong MOU Coordinator, CMS
		Topic: Regional Efforts in Seagrass Conservation under SCS-SAP Speaker: <b>Dr Vo Si Tuan</b> , SCS-SAP

10:00 - 10:25 AM	Technical Presentations on Seagrass and Dugongs <i>(Each Presentation 10-12 mins)</i>	Topic: Seagrass conservation and challenges in South East Asia  Speaker: <b>Mr Len McKenzie</b> , Director Seagrass-Watch and Principal Researcher James Cook University
		Topic: Key learnings for the region from the 2025 global assessment of dugong conservation status and trends (video presentation)  <b>Dr Helen Marsh</b> , Emeritus Professor, James Cook University, Australia
10:25 - 10:45 AM	Q&A	
10:45 – 11:00 AM	Coffee Break	
<b>Moderator: Mr. Anders Faaborg Poulsen (SCS-SAP Project Manager)</b>		
11:00 – 12:40 PM	Country Presentations: <i>Showcasing Progress and Challenges</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cambodia</li> <li>2. China</li> <li>3. India</li> <li>4. Indonesia</li> <li>5. Malaysia</li> <li>6. Philippines</li> <li>7. Sri Lanka</li> <li>8. Thailand</li> <li>9. UAE</li> <li>10. Viet Nam</li> </ol> <i>(10 mins/ country)</i>	Insight from government partners
12:430 – 12:50 PM	Presentation on Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project	Speaker: <b>Makiko Yashiro</b> (UNEP – ROAP)
12:50 – 1:30 PM	Lunch Break (4th Floor)	
<b>Moderator: Dr Nicolas Pilcher (Executive Director, Marine Research Foundation, Malaysia)</b>		
1:30 – 3:00 PM	Partner Presentations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yapeka, Indonesia</li> <li>2. MareCet, Malaysia</li> <li>3. Blue Ventures, Timor Leste</li> <li>4. SAN, Thailand</li> <li>5. C3, Philippines</li> <li>6. OMCAR and SDMRI,</li> </ol>	Insight from Project Partners

	India 7. SeaWorld Research and Rescue Center 8. SEAFDEC 9. Kasetsart University <i>(10 mins/ presentation)</i>	
3:15 – 3:45 PM	Coffee Break	
<b>Moderator: Mr. Mahesh Pradhan (Coordinator, COBSEA)</b>		
3:45 – 4:15 PM	Open Discussion: Reflections on Key Gaps and Opportunities	
4:15 – 4:30 PM	Wrap-Up and Closing Remarks for Day 1	
5:30 PM- onwards	<b>Reception Dinner</b> <i>(Garden Area, 8th floor)</i>  Welcome Remarks  Opening Remarks  Short Film on the H.R.H. Sirivannavari Thai Coral Reef and Marine Life Conservation Foundation (TBC)	<b>Dr. Pinsak Surawasdi</b> Director General of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Thailand Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment  <b>Prof. Dr. Nantarika Chansue</b> President, Earth Agenda Foundation

**Day 2: February 21, 2025, Friday**

Time	Agenda Item	Speakers
<b>Moderator: Dr Abdelmenam Mohamed (Dugong MOU Coordinator, CMS)</b>		
<b>Rapporteur: Ms. Margarita Victoria Caballa (UNEP-COBSEA &amp; SCS-SAP)</b>		
9:00 – 9:15 AM	Recap of Day 1 and Overview of Day 2	
9:15 – 9:55 AM	<b>Focus: <i>Policy, Data, and Coordination</i></b>	
	Keynote presentation: Advancing Dugong Population and Habitat Monitoring: Survey Methods, Challenges, and Standardization  10 mins	Presenter:  <b>Dr Amanda Hodgson</b> , Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Marine Ecosystems Research, Edith Cowan University, Australia
	Presentation on Policy and Institutional Frameworks for Seagrass Conservation  10 mins	Presenter:  <b>Dr Abdelmenam Mohamed</b> , CMS <b>Mr Mahesh Pradhan</b> , COBSEA
	Presentation on Mapping and Monitoring, Data Collection, and Research for Effective Management  10 mins	Presenter:  <b>Dr Milica Stankovic</b> , Prince of Songkla University  <b>Dr Leanne Cullen-Unsworth</b> , Project Seagrass
	Presentation on Coordinated Management Strategies for Seagrass Ecosystems  10 mins	Presenter:  <b>Dr. Christophe Cleguer</b> , James Cook University  <b>Mr. Jonas Brandi Mortensen, Sr.</b> , Environmental Scientist, DHI Group
9:55 – 10:15 AM	Q&A	
10:15 – 10:45 AM	Coffee Break	
<p><b>Structure and Facilitation of Working Group Sessions:</b></p> <p>Participants will be divided into four groups. Each group will select a rapporteur and a presenter to share their outcomes during the plenary. There will be three working group sessions, each followed by a reporting back segment. The group composition will remain consistent throughout all three sessions.</p> <p>To ensure productive discussions, a co-facilitator will be assigned to each working group to guide and support the session. In each session, groups will discuss two questions, with 55 minutes</p>		

allocated for deliberating on both questions. Active participation and collaborative discussions are encouraged to maximize the value of each session.

10:45 – 11:40 AM	<p><b>Co-facilitators: <i>Dr Abdelmenam Mohamed (CMS) and Mr Mahesh Pradhan (COBSEA)</i></b></p> <p><b>Working Group session 1: Policy and Institutional Frameworks for Seagrass Conservation</b></p> <p><b>Question 1: What are the existing policy gaps in your country/region regarding seagrass conservation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prompt:</b> Consider the overall legal and regulatory frameworks for coastal and marine ecosystems. Are there any policies that explicitly address seagrass, or do they lack focus on this habitat? If so, which specific areas are most affected (e.g., insufficient protection, lack of integration into national climate change plans)? Are policies on Seagrass and Dugongs related/ talking to each other?</li> <li>• <b>Theory of Change Perspective:</b> Identify gaps where current policies are failing to create the necessary conditions for seagrass protection and restoration. What policies or legal frameworks could act as a catalyst for change?</li> </ul> <p><b>Question 2: What institutional frameworks need strengthening or creating to support seagrass conservation at a regional level?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prompt:</b> Which national or regional institutions (e.g., environmental ministries, coastal management agencies, NGOs) are responsible for seagrass conservation? Do they have the capacity, coordination, or mandates needed to address seagrass challenges effectively? Are there opportunities to create new institutions or enhance existing ones (e.g., regional governance bodies or inter-agency task forces)?</li> <li>• <b>Theory of Change Perspective:</b> How can strengthening or creating these institutions help bridge the gap between policy development and effective action? What specific institutional reforms or partnerships will lead to more integrated and coordinated management of seagrass ecosystems?</li> </ul>
11:40– 12:00 PM	<p><b>Reporting back from each working group</b> (Each group will have 5 mins of presentation time; total 20 mins)</p>
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch Break
1:30 – 2:25 PM	<p><b>Co-facilitators: <i>Dr Milica Stankovic (Prince of Songkla University) and Dr Leanne Cullen-Unsworth (Project Seagrass)</i></b></p> <p><b>Working Group session 2: Mapping and Monitoring, Data Collection, and Research for Effective Management</b></p> <p><b>Question 1: What are the most effective methodologies for mapping and monitoring seagrass health in your region/country?</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Prompt:</b> Consider different monitoring techniques such as remote sensing, in-situ monitoring (e.g., transects, quadrats, biomass measurements), citizen science, and data from local communities. Which of these methods have been effective in your context? Are there any new or innovative approaches being used? How can monitoring efforts be standardized across the region?</li> <li>● <b>Theory of Change Perspective:</b> Monitoring is essential for assessing the effectiveness of seagrass conservation efforts. How can a robust monitoring system contribute to early detection of issues (e.g., decline in seagrass health), enabling timely interventions? What role does consistent data collection play in adjusting conservation strategies and policies over time?</li> </ul> <p><b>Question 2: How can data be effectively shared and used for adaptive management and decision-making at the regional level?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Prompt:</b> Discuss mechanisms for sharing seagrass data across countries or regions (e.g., regional databases, shared monitoring platforms, collaborative research initiatives). How can data sharing be incentivized, and what barriers currently exist in data exchange? What role do local communities and stakeholders play in data collection and management, and how can their involvement be enhanced?</li> <li>● <b>Theory of Change Perspective:</b> The availability and sharing of data can lead to better decision-making and coordination between stakeholders. What are the steps to establish a more efficient data-sharing framework that leads to faster, region-wide responses to seagrass conservation issues? How can this collective data be used to improve regional adaptive management and make seagrass ecosystems more resilient to threats?</li> </ul>
2:25 – 2:45 PM	<p><b>Reporting back from each working group</b> (Each group will have 5 mins of presentation time; total 20 mins)</p>
2:45 – 3:30 PM	Coffee Break
3:30 – 4:30 PM	<p><i><b>Co-facilitators: Dr. Christophe Cleguer (James Cook University, Australia) and Mr. Jonas Brandi Mortensen, Sr. Environmental Scientist (DHI Group)</b></i></p> <p><b>Working Group Session 3: Coordinated Management Strategies for Seagrass Ecosystems</b></p> <p><b>Question 1: How can integrated management approaches enhance coordinated strategies for conserving interconnected ecosystems such as seagrasses, mangroves, and coral reefs?</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prompt: Consider existing frameworks for coastal ecosystem management. How can these approaches account for ecological interdependencies? What are some best practices for integrating seagrass management into broader coastal management plans (e.g., through marine protected areas or ecosystem-based adaptation)? How can seagrass conservation strategies align with climate resilience goals?</li> <li>● <b>Theory of Change Perspective:</b> Integrated management strengthens ecosystem resilience by addressing interconnections and shared threats. What interventions are needed to ensure that policies and actions prioritize seagrass conservation as part of a broader ecosystem strategy? How does this contribute to long-term sustainability and biodiversity goals?</li> </ul> <p><b>Question 2: What role do multi-stakeholder platforms play in fostering coordinated efforts for seagrass management across sectors and regions?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Prompt:</b> Discuss the effectiveness of current multi-stakeholder platforms in coordinating conservation efforts. How can governments, NGOs, scientists, local communities, and the private sector collaborate more effectively? What mechanisms or incentives can encourage shared responsibility and sustainable practices (e.g., business models supporting conservation)?</li> </ul> <p><b>Theory of Change Perspective:</b> Multi-stakeholder platforms can align diverse interests toward common goals. How can fostering such platforms lead to stronger governance, innovative solutions, and long-term funding for seagrass management? What specific strategies can ensure that the value of seagrass ecosystems is effectively communicated and translated into action?</p>	
4:30 – 4:50 PM	<p><b>Reporting back from each working group</b> (Each group will have 5 mins of presentation time; total 20 mins)</p>	
4:50 – 5:05 PM	<p>Summary of key points and way forward by each of the co-facilitator of each of the working group 5 mins each</p>	
5:05 – 5:15 PM	<p>Wrap-Up and Closing Remarks for Day 2</p>	<p>Dr. Abdelmenam Mohamed; Mr. Mahesh Pradhan and Mr. Anders Faaborg Poulsen</p>