

The PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLG) 2023 Annual Forum Briefing

PNLG Secretariat

November 2023

The PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLG) Annual Forum 2023 was held in Xiamen, Fujian Province, China, from November 8 to 11. Themed “Developing Coastal Cities, Fostering Blue Partnership”, the Annual Forum consisted of the General Assembly, the Technical Workshop, and the Field Trip, providing a platform for facilitating experience exchange among PNLG members, promoting sustainable coastal development in the East Asian Seas region, and accelerating the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Forum was attended by approximately 130 participants, including delegates from 23 PNLG member local governments and four associate members across seven countries, namely Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, RO Korea, and Timor-Leste, as well as eminent experts and scholars in the marine field.

1. PNLG General Assembly

On the afternoon of November 9, the PNLG General Assembly was held in the Xiamen Juntai Hotel.



PNLG General Assembly

(1) Opening Ceremony

Mr. Wang Antao, Deputy Director-General of Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Natural Resources, P.R. China; Mr. Zeng Dongsheng, Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Director-General of Xiamen Municipal Bureau of Ocean Development; and Ms. Aimee Gonzales, Executive Director of PEMSEA Resource Facility, delivered opening remarks respectively, welcoming all guests to the 2023 PNLG Annual Forum in beautiful Xiamen and wishing the Annual Forum a complete success. Dr. Hong Huasheng, Professor of Xiamen University and Chief Scientist of Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI), Xiamen University, and Mr. Zhang Da, Deputy Secretary-General of Xiamen Municipal People's Government, attended the meeting. The PNLG General Assembly was chaired by Mr. Lin Huaiyuan, Executive Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Chief Engineer of Xiamen Municipal Bureau of Ocean Development.



Mr. Wang Antao

Deputy Director-General of Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Natural Resources, P.R. China



Mr. Zeng Dongsheng

Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Director-General of Xiamen Municipal Bureau of Ocean Development



Ms. Aimee Gonzales
Executive Director of PEMSEA Resource Facility



Mr. Lin Huaiyuan
Executive Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and
Chief Engineer of Xiamen Municipal Bureau of Ocean
Development

(2) Keynote Speech

Dr. Chua Thia-Eng, Chair Emeritus of PEMSEA, delivered a keynote speech entitled “Local Governments’ Role in Sustainable Coastal Development: PNLG’s History, Development and Future”, and pointed out the irreplaceable role of PNLG in sustainable coastal development, along with PEMSEA’s thirty years of development and the achievements and experiences of integrated coastal management in the East Asian Seas region.



Dr. Chua Thia-Eng
Chair Emeritus of PEMSEA

(3) PNLG Work Progress and Plan

On behalf of the PNLG Secretariat, Dr. Fang Qinhua, Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Deputy Director of Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI), Xiamen University, made a report on the PNLG work progress and plan as well as the 2023 expenditure and 2024 budget.

In 2023, with the support of PEMSEA Resource Facility, the PNLG Secretariat promoted the implementation of the PNLG Strategic Action Plan (2022-2030). The participants acknowledged the efforts made by the PNLG Secretariat in the past year to improve the integrated coastal management capacity of its members and unanimously adopted the 2024 work plan and budget.



Dr. Fang Qinhua
Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Deputy Director of Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI), Xiamen University

(4) Implementation of the PNLG Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

Ms. Nancy Bermas, Regional Project Manager of PEMSEA Resource Facility, introduced the progress of the implementation of the PNLG Strategic Action Plan (SAP) and called on local

governments in the East Asian Seas region to strengthen cooperation and jointly promote sustainable coastal development in the region.



Ms. Nancy Bermas
Regional Project Manager of PEMSEA Resource Facility

2. Technical Workshop

On the morning of November 10, the PNLG Technical Workshop was held at the Xiamen Juntai Hotel, aiming to provide a platform for local administrative officials to share experiences and insights on the achievement of the Sustainable Coastal Development Goals and the building of Blue Partnerships.

The Technical Workshop is divided into two sessions. The Session 1, which focused on the subtheme “Addressing the Twin Targets of Reducing Marine Pollution and Protecting and Restoring Ecosystems under the SDG 14 Framework”, was chaired by Ms. Aimee Gonzales, Executive Director of PEMSEA Resource Facility.

Ms. Nancy Bermas, Regional Project Manager of PEMSEA Resource Facility, delivered a keynote presentation entitled “Addressing the Twin Targets of Reducing Marine Pollution and Protecting and Restoring Ecosystems in Support of SDG 14”. Mr. JC Rahman Nava, Governor of Guimaras, Philippines; Mr. Guo Yinfeng, Chief Expert for International Cooperation, National Marine Hazard Mitigation Service (NMHMS), Ministry of Natural Resources, P.R. China; and Mr. Kong Vitanak, Vice Governor of Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia, presented case studies respectively on the habitat conservation and marine litter prevention, the application of Eco-DRR to address multiple societal challenges at local levels, and the private sector engagement in ICM implementation.



Ms. Nancy Bermas
Regional Project Manager of PEMSEA
Resource Facility

Reducing marine pollution and protecting and restoring ecosystems are the twin targets to be addressed in support of Sustainable Development Goal 14. After the 17 years of development of PNLG, it is advisable to document good practices and lessons learned, refine the ICMS, and enhance learning exchanges and reporting on PNLG's contributions to local, national, and global SD targets.



Mr. JC Rahman Nava
Governor of Guimaras, Philippines

As an island susceptible to environmental issues, Guimaras adopted ICM as the key island development strategy to ensure a healthy environment. As an ICM parallel site of PEMSEA, Guimaras has been committed to achieving international targets, particularly SD Goal 14 (Life Below Water).



Mr. Guo Yinfeng
Chief Expert for International
Cooperation, National Marine Hazard
Mitigation Service (NMHMS), MNR, P.R.
China

National policy and technical standards in support of the Eco-DRR approach are conducive to the financial sustainability of ICM programs. There is a need for further education on the role of ecosystem services and functions and the sharing of good practices of Eco-DRR, particularly on the scientific evidence in urban coastal areas.



Mr. Kong Vitanak
Vice Governor of Preah Sihanouk
Province, Cambodia

It is important to engage young people, along with civil society, innovative start-ups and other private sector partners in any projects for sustainable city development. ICM is an approach to making partnerships with different sectors in addressing various aspects of sustainable development. We also need a strong communication platform to share the updates with the private sector, involving them in social events.

The Session 2, which focused on the subtheme “Developing the Blue Economy of Coastal Cities in a New Era”, was chaired by Dr. Fang Qinhuo, Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Deputy Director of Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI), Xiamen University. Prof. Teng Xin, Deputy Director of Department of Marine Resources Protection and Utilization Research of National Ocean Technology Center, MNR, P.R. China, made a keynote presentation entitled “The International Cooperation of Marine Spatial Planning to Promote the Blue Partnership Among Coastal Cities”. Mr. Muhammad Safari Azis, President of Indonesian Seaweed Association; Ms. Haslina binti Amer, Chief Assistant Director of River Basin and Coastal Management Division, Selangor Water Management Authority, Selangor, Malaysia; and Dr. Yonvitner, Professor of IPB University and PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC) President, shared their experience respectively on the development of Indonesian seaweed industry, empowering communities to achieve environmental sustainability and promoting climate adaptation through blue carbon research and training.



Prof. Teng Xin
Deputy Director of Department of Marine Resources Protection and Utilization Research of National Ocean Technology Center, MNR, P.R. China

Marine spatial planning can offer us a way to reduce conflicts and select appropriate management strategies to maintain and safeguard necessary ecosystem services. Marine spatial planning effectively promotes blue partnership among coastal cities, disaster prevention and mitigation, marine industry development and blue economy development.



Mr. Muhammad Safari Azis
President of Indonesian Seaweed Association

Indonesia must strengthen and improve its existing industries to compete in the global market. For all the emerging potential markets for seaweed that want to be developed, we must first have a better understanding of its seaweed diversity. Seaweed might have remarkable potential, but along with the potential, there are certain concerns that must be considered thoroughly.



Ms. Haslina binti Amer
Chief Assistant Director of River Basin and Coastal Management Division, Selangor Water Management Authority, Selangor, Malaysia

Moving forward, more efforts will be made to enhance integrated and holistic approaches in Coastal and River Basin Management, conserve the coastal resources, empower coastal communities, scale up management capacities, and promote sustainable blue economy development in coastal areas, thus achieving SDGs.



Dr. Yonvitner
Professor of IPB University and PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC) President

The Blue Carbon Capacity Building Program will provide knowledge, skill, and capacity to understand the Global Climate Change Impact Management Policy, the scope of the Blue Carbon Ecosystem, and methodological and technical skills in conducting the assessment, carbon calculation, reporting, and verification of emission reductions for parties who are concerned with blue carbon ecosystem.

3. Field Trip

On the afternoon of November 10, a field trip to the “Silk Road Maritime” Operation Center was conducted, where the participants learned about the route monitoring system, visualization of the overall logistics process, public booking service, association members, intelligent “Hairun Terminal”, and UAV services. The participants also took a field trip to the Wuyuan Bay area where they heard introductions about ecological restoration and integrated development practices and experienced the changes in the Wuyuan Bay area. They also participated in the 16th China (Xiamen) International Boat Show, an event of the World Ocean Week in Xiamen, where they viewed the exhibition boats and attended the interactive activities from the water platform.



4. Participation in the Activities during the World Ocean Week in Xiamen

On the morning of November 9, the 2023 World Ocean Week in Xiamen opened in the Grand Ballroom, Xiamen International Conference Center Hotel, with the theme “New Engine of Blue Development for the Maritime Community with a Shared Future”. The participants of the PNLG Annual Forum attended the opening ceremony and Xiamen International Ocean Forum.



Opening Ceremony of World Ocean Week 2023
and Xiamen International Ocean Forum

5. Behind the Scenes





2023 PNLG

2023东亚海岸带可持续发展地方政府网络年会
THE PEMSEA NETWORK OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (PNLG) ANNUAL FORUM 2023



2023 PNLG Annual Forum Group Photo