



EAS CONGRESS 2006 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER

On Thursday morning, participants at the East Asian Seas (EAS) Congress convened in plenary to hear keynote presentations, followed by thematic workshops on, *inter alia*: securing the oceans; communities in sustainable development; and safer shipping and cleaner oceans. Three special seminars were also held on ecosystem-based management, integrating science into coastal and ocean management, and pollution management. In the afternoon, delegates convened in plenary for the closing ceremony of the International Conference and the opening of the Ministerial Forum.



Paul van Hofwegen, World Water Council



Su Jilan, Honorary Director, State Oceanic Administration, China

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COASTAL AND OCEAN GOVERNANCE

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Paul van Hofwegen, World Water Council, spoke on linkages between water, environment and development. Stressing that 1.1 billion people still lack access to clean drinking water and 2.4 billion – to sanitation, he stressed the need to step up efforts to provide basic sanitation. On achieving the MDG targets on water and sanitation, he highlighted: the role of local governments; use of local knowledge and expertise; enhanced access to finance; capacity building; public-private partnerships; and implementation of integrated water resources management. Hofwegen concluded that: implementation of the water agenda and management of water resources and services is carried out primarily at the local level; decentralized processes allow for better participation by local stakeholders; institutional capacity depends on adequate infrastructures; and migration and urbanization are essential elements in the planning and development of water services and infrastructure.

Su Jilan, Honorary Director, China's State Oceanic Administration (SOA), presented on applying the ecosystem approach to integrated ocean and coastal management, focusing on ecosystem-based management of China's seas. Stressing increasing fish catches from China's seas to meet the food demand of the country's increasing population, he expressed concern regarding "fishing-down" the food web, which may result in ecological extinction of some fish species, and the impacts of bycatch on marine ecosystems. Noting the impracticality of applying the catch-quota management approach to ensure sustainability of Chinese fisheries, Jilan said that China has adopted the fishing-closure management

approach and that its strategy for sustainable fisheries is based on the catch-target shift and poly-mariculture. He concluded that challenges for sustainability of marine and coastal ecosystems remain an important area for research and science.

THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

SECURING THE OCEANS: Advocacy, leadership, legislation and interagency collaboration in coastal and ocean governance: The workshop was divided into two segments.

Advocacy and leadership: Tony Oposa, Philippines

Ecological Network, said effective marine conservation depends on three key elements, namely: education; engineering; and enforcement. He presented experiences in the Philippines, including the School of the Seas to promote marine conservation, a Visayan Sea



Tony Oposa, Philippines Ecological Network

Squadron to combat illegal fishing and destructive practices, and legal actions such as petitions and lawsuits.

Diane James, Chair, Victorian Coastal Council, Australia, identified preconditions for effective leadership in coastal and ocean governance, including: conviction and determination; access to resourceful networks; willingness to take risks; efficient team work; innovation and creativity; action- and

outcome-oriented strategies; and meaningful engagement. She also underscored the importance of nurturing future leaders.

During the discussion, Romeo Trono, Conservation International, identified leadership values, including passion, respectfulness, optimism, ability to take risks, integrity, long-term commitment, and resourcefulness. Participants further highlighted the role of NGOs in leading international partnerships, and constraints posed by political timeframes in ensuring continued leadership. It was also noted that leadership can be exercised from the highest political to the grassroots level.

Legislation and interagency collaboration: Fu Yu, China

Institute for Marine Affairs, presented an overview of maritime legislation in China, noting that the first law for the protection of the marine environment was adopted in 1982. She highlighted the Sea Area Use Management Law, which establishes a sea area use rights management system, a functional zoning scheme, and a user-pays principle. She further noted that local maritime legislation is often ahead of the national legal framework.



Fu Yu, China Institute for Marine Affairs

Gunnar Kullenberg, former Assistant Director General of UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, stressed that the achievement of WSSD targets on oceans and coasts requires strong interagency collaboration, which remains a challenge from the international down to the local level. He highlighted triggers for interagency collaboration, such as shared resources, transboundary issues, public pressure and partnerships. Kullenberg also noted that regionalization promotes interagency collaboration, but requires resources to make it work, highlighting PEMSEA as a model in this regard.

During the panel discussion, Declan O'Driscoll, East Asia Response Limited, lamented lack of integrated response to offshore and land-based pollution from oil spills, noting that "the shoreline provides a boundary between government departments."

Maitree Duangsawasdi, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Thailand, said some national laws are over 100 years old, but their revision is complicated due to political changes, and highlighted interagency tensions. Koh Chul-Hwan, Seoul National University, the Republic of Korea, noted that civil society involvement can foster interagency collaboration.

Participants also drew attention to bureaucratic hurdles to achieving interagency collaboration and the tendency of agencies to "fiercely protect" their mandates and budgets. Duangsawasdi suggested that personal communication works better than official channels. Several participants noted that



Hemani Braganza, Mayor, Alaminos, Pangasinan, the Philippines

emergencies, such as oil spills, mobilize agencies to work together.

Chair Cielito Habito, Director, Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development, the Philippines, summarized the workshop's recommendations to the Ministerial Forum, including on: the importance of governmental leadership in facilitating interagency collaboration; better promotion of sub-regional collaboration mechanisms; the need for legal frameworks to adjust to emerging issues and transboundary concerns; the need for a long-term commitment by all stakeholders; and the role of youth as powerful advocates for change.

COMMUNITIES IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

Sustainable eco-tourism: Carlos Libosada, Sustainable

Tourism Consultant, discussed the concepts and practices of sustainable eco-tourism that provide both local economic development and resource protection. He stated that eco-tourism is a rapidly evolving market, and when appropriately applied can be an effective conservation tool.



Carlos Libosada, Sustainable Tourism Consultant

Makamas Suthacheep, Ramkhamhaeng University, Thailand, highlighted lessons learned through coral reef management at the Koh Nanh Yuan Resort. She said that poaching of fish, trampling of reefs, and coral bleaching were all impacting the health of the reefs, yet the resort has minimized these impacts through coral reef monitoring and strict rules. She also emphasized the need for improved cooperation between the resort owner, other tourism operators and local communities.

Gerry Ledesma, Philippine Reef and Rainforest Conservation Foundation, described how his organization has purchased Danjungan Island to avert further environmental destruction from mining. He presented the Danjungan Island Nature Tourism Project, which aims to identify sedimentation sources, establish an MPA network, and provide sustainable livelihoods to coastal communities.

Noting that eco-tourism is the fastest-growing market in the tourism industry, Masako Bannai Otsuka, International Ocean Institute, discussed how eco-tourism in small islands can benefit the local people in a sustainable manner, highlighting experiences on Bonin and Myakojima islands. She said that

local people and governments are beginning to recognize the environmental benefits of combining tourism and conservation practices such as limiting the number of visitors to the islands.

Hemani Braganza, Mayor, Municipality of Alaminos, Pangasinan, the Philippines, said that uncontrolled fishing had contributed to the degradation of ecosystems in the city's coastal areas. He

said that the municipality promoted a people-focused approach to address the issue and develop eco-tourism, which has contributed to environmental improvements and eco-tourism development.

Grace Favila, Sustainable Coastal Tourism in Asia Project, the Philippines, said the Project builds local capability in solid waste management and sanitation systems in prime tourist areas as a way to protect the water quality of beaches and coastal areas and ensure tourism. She said the Project focuses on coastal resource and environmental management through strategies such as an environmental user-fee system.

Noting a limited budget and lack of human resources for beach management, Jong-Deog Kim, Korea Maritime Institute, said that the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries introduced a new beach management model based on public-private partnership. He said the program reduced management costs and facilitated awareness of the value of beach resources.

Tertuliano Apale, Municipality of Bacayon, the Philippines, reflected on eco-tourism as a conservation tool, noting challenges such as cultural dilution and negative impact on ecosystems. However, Apale also said that sustainable ecotourism is achievable through a partnership between the government, private sector, and local communities along with research and education campaigns.

In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted conclusions and recommendations to be forwarded to the Ministerial Forum, including: establishing a network for sharing best practices and concerns; requesting PEMSEA to provide seed funding; encouraging private sector involvement; and enhancing local knowledge.

SAFER SHIPPING AND CLEANER OCEANS: Safer coasts: Living with risks: Chair Anjan Datta, UNEP-GPA, noted that the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina demonstrated that all countries are vulnerable to the effects of extreme events.

Resilience and adaptation in the aftermath of tsunamis:

Suprayoga Hadi, Bapenas, Indonesia, spoke on implementing the master plan for post-tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction in Aceh, stating that using a master plan causes some initial delay in recovery but leads to better long-term results. He outlined recovery phases that moved from addressing emergency needs to reconstructing housing and physical and social infrastructure, while rebuilding livelihoods and business.



Suprayoga Hadi, Bapenas, Indonesia

Hamzah Latief, Institute of Technology, Indonesia, illustrated the role of forests in reducing tsunami impacts using a case study from Banda Aceh City. He described scientific models that demonstrate the effectiveness of forests at stopping tsunami debris, reducing water flow and currents, and sheltering people,

as well as raising dunes as barriers.

Iouri Oliounine, International Ocean Institute (IOI), outlined the role of NGOs in the aftermath of natural disasters, which includes providing assistance to communities and unbiased information. He also highlighted the Institute's long-term roles such as education and training, performing risk assessment, and promoting cooperation through memorial days, drill exercises and publications.

Cherdsak Virapat, IOI, presented on the Thai Government's response to the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, including establishing a national disaster warning center to coordinate the work of government agencies. A national master plan was also developed that includes preparedness and education programmes, a training center and information database, and a tsunami alert rapid notification system.

Wong Poh Poh, National University of Singapore, discussed post-tsunami ICRM, noting that the tsunami wrought environmental changes beyond ICRM's normal framework, fundamentally altering land quantity and tenure, buffer zones, coastal ecosystems and livelihoods. Explaining that existing issues of conflicting human uses, coastal degradation and poverty were aggravated by the tsunami, Wong called for demonstration villages to evaluate rehabilitation, recovery and mitigation efforts.

Ensuing discussion focused on: organization of interagency foreign aid; re-evaluation of existing ICRM practices; integrating physical restoration into social and economic restoration; improving the lives of local people; and the need for a high-quality baseline data for tsunami modeling.

Addressing vulnerabilities to coastal hazards: Gil Jacinto, University of the Philippines, presented on the marine emergency response system for mariculture areas in Pangasinan, the Philippines, featuring: review and assessment of existing emergency response procedures; training of local government staff; conduct of mock emergencies; and finalization of the plan and publication of public information materials.



Gil Jacinto, University of the Philippines

Ramon Faustino Sales, Conrado Benitez Institute for Sustainability, presented on vulnerability and adaptation of coastal communities to climate variability, climate extremes and sea-level rise, focusing on a case study from Cavite City, the Philippines. He recommended adaptation-sensitive ICRM planning, including land and sea use zoning; insurance coverage for coastal families and properties; and limiting subsidies and incentives that promote excessive coastal development.

Fernando Siringan, University of the Philippines, reported that frequency and magnitude of flooding in Manila is increasing due to land subsidence. Noting that over-extraction of groundwater is accelerating this subsidence, he warned that existing flood control efforts will be ineffective as subsidence



Grace Favila, Sustainable Coastal Tourism in Asia Project

rates are not properly taken into account, and recommended reduction of groundwater extraction.

James Paw, IMO, presented on the IMO GloBallast Partnership Project, which aims to improve ballast water management by promoting global efforts to design and test technological solutions and enhancing global knowledge management and marine electronic communications. He said that the project involves an alliance of global, regional and country-specific partners, representing the governments, industry and nongovernmental organizations.

Zou Keyuan, National University of Singapore, presented on the Chinese approach to addressing waste dumping at sea, including recent regulations for prevention of pollution from construction waste. Keyuan emphasized that given rapid economic growth and the increase in new offshore projects, effective ocean dumping waste management is required for marine environmental protection.

The ensuing discussion focused on: GloBallast coverage of world shipping tonnage; allocating responsibility for extreme event forecasting; and the importance of reliable science. On land subsidence and flooding, one participant noted that climate change should not automatically be blamed for all events, and that knowledge, including specific local information, should be used to design proper solutions.

SPECIAL SEMINARS

ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT: Strengthening the conservation and management of coastal resources and habitats: The seminar was co-chaired by Meryl Williams, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, and Miguel Fortes, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

Ester Zaragoza, Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development, summarized results of a pilot monitoring of fisheries in the Manila Bay. Noting that the monitoring was conducted using National Stock Assessment Programme standard methods, she said that 163 fish species were observed and 465 boats were surveyed. She emphasized that the results of the monitoring helped identify changes in fish species population and in catch composition.

Fan Hangqing, Guangxi Marine Environment and Coastal Wetland Research Center, China, presented findings of a study on Chinese seagrass, focusing on: species and horizontal distribution; ecological research; and structure and succession of seagrass community. He highlighted the importance of seagrass in biodiversity conservation of marine and coastal ecosystems.

Rey Mauricio Aguinaldo, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Philippines, outlined results of a pilot monitoring of avifaunal marine resources in the Manila Bay using the biodiversity monitoring system. He noted that inland swamps were also included in the monitoring using the ecosystem approach and that non-migrant species were monitored by modifying the system. He said that the data gathered provides important references for future avifaunal



Heidi Schuttenberg, James Cook University, Australia

surveys in the area.

Heidi Schuttenberg, James Cook University, Australia, stressed that mass coral bleaching is taking place in marine ecosystems, noting that 16% of world's coral reefs have been lost due to coral bleaching. She announced the release of a book entitled "A Reef Manager's Guide to Coral Bleaching," which provides a synthesis of evolving knowledge and strategies to address coral bleaching. She emphasized that strategies for management response and reef resilience during a mass coral bleaching event include, *inter alia*: early warning about bleaching probability; conducting impact assessments; direct management interventions such as shading reefs; adapting MPA

management; and reviewing management targets for recreation, water quality and fishing.

INTEGRATING SCIENCE INTO COASTAL AND OCEAN MANAGEMENT: Manuel Sabater, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Philippines, demonstrated the application of an Integrated Information Management System (IIMS) and an information network in the sustainable environmental management of the Manila Bay. Underscoring the importance of reliable data and timely information in decision-making, he highlighted that the pilot demonstration showed that IIMS has the potential to enhance environmental management. He identified challenges regarding the GIS interface with IIMS.

Ji Dawei, National Marine Data and Information Service, China, outlined the application of a web-based IIMS to the environmental management of Bohai Sea. He described specific features of this web-based IIMS, including: real-time operation; evaluation module oriented to marine environmental protection; built-in GIS functions; on-line access to the database; and higher interactivity. Emphasizing the possibility of wider use and application of IIMS in coastal and marine ecosystem management, he highlighted that IIMS offers powerful data management and storage capacities.

Duan Lijie, Sun Yatsen University, China, presented results of the application of static and dynamic models using the "Ecopath with Ecosim" simulation method to study the biomass flow in the Pearl River Delta Coastal Sea's ecosystem and the impacts of fishing. She said that study findings indicate that ecosystems in the area have been severely affected by overfishing and are dominated by small and low-valued fishes, thus causing changes in the composition of catches.

Kenji Hotta, Nihon University, Japan, outlined results of an experimental study on the effect of ocean fertilizer on the growth of seaweeds in the Philippines. Stressing the increasing ocean "desertification," declining

productivity of seaweeds and whitening events in coastal areas caused by environmental changes, he described an experiment aiming to solve these conditions by using "ocean fertilizers" containing ferrous sulfate for the culture of red seaweeds. He said that the use of fertilizer significantly increased the seaweed yield, highlighting its cost-effectiveness in view of the net seaweed yield, carrageenan content in plants and the cost of the fertilizer.



Duan Lijie, Sun Yatsen University, China

Suriyan Tunkijjanukij, Kasetsart University, Thailand, presented a case study on the impacts of cassava shipping through Sriracha Bay and Sichang Island. Regarding impacts of cassava uploading into coastal ecosystems, he noted no significant effects on water quality and plankton composition, but higher organic matter content in sediments in areas of cassava/starch uploading. He emphasized that the results of the study have been used to catalyze dialogue among concerned stakeholders to assess the impacts of sea-based cassava loading/unloading and to evaluate policies pertinent to operation.

In the ensuing discussion, participants put forward recommendations to the Ministerial Forum. The recommendations, *inter alia*, emphasize the need to integrate science and modern technologies in sustainable management and protection of coastal zones and ocean ecosystems; note that clearly defined scientific techniques and approaches, demonstrated in the studies, allow monitoring the changes in ecosystems and developing models for managing coastal and marine ecosystems; and advocate a holistic approach to sustainable coastal and ocean management, through integrating IIMS and the use of telemetry and remote sensing, which allow large scale comprehensive assessments of coastal and ocean ecosystems.

POLLUTION MANAGEMENT: Wen Quan, SOA, highlighted increasing pollution in China's seas, noting that 80% of it comes from land-based sources. He highlighted that in order to implement the National Maritime Environmental Protection Law and protect the marine environment, it is important to strengthen marine environmental monitoring. He introduced methodologies, standards and tools used to monitor marine pollution in China. He also said that new approaches on integrated ecosystem management are being applied, including zoning of coastal and marine areas.

Rain Chen, China Offshore Environmental Services, presented on optimization of oil spill response options in China offshore waters. Noting the importance of minimizing oil spill risks, he emphasized the need for training staff of offshore oil companies. He also outlined oil spill response options, including mechanical recovery, chemical dispersing and microbiological degradation.

Yang Xinzhai, China Maritime Safety Administration, said that China has ratified more than 30 IMO conventions and has developed national laws and regulations for the protection of the marine environment. He also outlined measures taken for prevention and response, including: implementing a ship routing system; providing vessel traffic services; establishing an automatic identification system; search and rescue; flag state control; supervising dangerous goods and activities; and enacting the National Contingency Plan for Marine Oil Spill from Ships.

Zhou Qiulin, Third Institute of Oceanography, China, outlined the administrative structure of the government agencies involved in environmental management of seas and oceans, and emphasized the importance of integrated ecosystem management.

Chair Tong Soo Loong, Novaviro Technology, Malaysia, summarized outcomes of the seminar highlighting the importance of an integrated approach to pollution management. He also drew attention to illegal dumping and oil spills as sources of marine pollution.

REPORTS ON THE CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

COMMUNITIES IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

Delfin Ganapin, UNDP, reported on the theme's outcomes, highlighting the need for: policies to mainstream civil society participation; taking into consideration the carrying capacity of ecosystems when developing aquaculture policies; fisheries co-management; and capacity building, local governance, financing, and partnerships for sustainable eco-tourism development.

SECURING THE OCEANS:

Biliana Cicin-Sain, University of Delaware, US, reported on the outcomes of the theme. Noting that ICRM is well-developed in the EAS region, she said recommendations focused on: scaling up ICRM to achieve full coastal coverage; achieving effective compliance and enforcement; establishing national ICRM policies; and strengthening performance indicators. She said discussions on EEZ management reflected the need to: harmonize laws; link coastal and EEZ management programmes; improve national interagency collaboration; assign dedicated budgets to ocean issues; and promote a new "ocean ethic." Cicin-Sain said participants acknowledged the role of PEMSEA and SDS-SEA in promoting regional cooperation. She

highlighted the need for: a shared vision built on "sufficient consensus"; a regional implementation strategy; codes of conduct; and dispute settlement mechanisms. She also reported that joint development of disputed ocean areas has been identified as a way forward.

ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT: Diane James summarized the theme, which she reiterated is "a way of doing business" – a holistic approach providing an effective basis for decision making. The theme outcomes included calls for: establishing marine protected areas as an integral component of ICM; partnerships for dealing with transboundary issues affecting large marine ecosystems; maintenance of coastal habitats to ensure the wellbeing of local communities and maintenance of ecological processes; promoting practical guides for local managers in the conservation and management of coastal resources; and incorporating climate change considerations in SDS-SEA programmes.

SAFER SHIPPING AND CLEANER

OCEANS: Jean-Claude Sainlos, IMO, said the theme addressed IMO conventions and their implementation; regional initiatives on maritime safety and environmental protection; and implementation of effective regional agreements for preparedness and response to marine pollution in East Asia. He highlighted several recommendations, *inter alia*: strengthening the existing IMO integrated technical cooperation programme through partnerships; improving the effectiveness of international and regional technical assistance



Biliana Cicin-Sain, University of Delaware



Jean-Claude Sainlos, IMO

on maritime safety and marine environment protection; and enhancing cooperation between maritime administrations and the private sector to build capacity for regional oil pollution preparedness and response.

CERTIFYING SUSTAINABILITY: Presenting the theme's recommendations, Hugh Kirkman highlighted the need to: adopt market-based approaches; explore partnerships with the private sector; increase the number of certified fisheries; and promote sustainable enterprises through public sector financing. On port security, safety, health and environmental management, Kirkman noted the recommendations to: extend PEMSEA's technical support; establish an ASEAN safety advisory body; and promote national legal frameworks and regulations. On clean and safe beaches, he said the recommendations focused on: recognizing the impacts of coastal development, using a scientific approach based on accurate baseline data; investing in sewage plants and cleanups; and mobilizing policy frameworks.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCING FOR WATER, SEWAGE AND SANITATION: Cielito Habito reported on the



Cielito Habito, Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development

theme's outcomes, noting that: water may become the next source of crises in the region; access to sanitation services remains low and privatization record for water and sanitation services is mixed. He emphasized the need to diversify sources of funding to include users, the public sector and donors, and achieve both cost recovery and water access. Habito

reported the main recommendations to: strengthen advocacy among local executives; use appropriate cost subsidy schemes; ensure independence of regulatory bodies; eliminate political interference; develop innovative financing schemes; and engage more effectively with youth.

APPLYING MANAGEMENT-RELATED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: Russell Reichelt, Reef and Rainforest Research Centre, Australia, presented the theme's conclusions, emphasizing that, *inter alia*: developing GIS databases and maps encourages a consensus approach and a shared vision for conservation and practical measures to achieve sustainable resource use and management; applying innovative approaches and technologies in the sustainable use and management of ecosystems has proved to be successful and practical; using nuclear technology for assessing and responding to marine environmental contamination to provide accurate evaluation models; and new approaches and technologies should be adopted and adapted for specific regional needs.

Following these reports, Arthur Hanson, IISD, summarized the outcomes of the International Conference. He noted that to arrest decline in ocean health, it is crucial to: focus on marine "hotspots"; promote regional agreements on issues such as illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing enforcement; reduce land-based pollution sources; and promote ICRM and MPAs. He also highlighted collaborative governance, co-learning and decentralization as strategies to improve coastal and ocean governance. Hanson noted that new global standards relating to safety and certification should be applied regionally, and that "scaling up" was the key term at the Conference used

in reference to partnerships, leadership, funding, knowledge, and benefits. In closing, he said that PEMSEA and the EAS Congress 2006 have been a success, and paid tribute to Chua Thia-Eng's inspired leadership.

CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

Cris Evert Lato, Youth Leaders Forum participant from the Philippines, made an emotional statement on behalf of East Asian youth, saying that young people bridge present and future generations and must empower themselves to contribute to the sustainability of oceans and coasts.



Cris Evert Lato, Youth Leaders Forum participant, the Philippines

It was also announced that the next EAS Congress will be held in the Philippines in 2009. EAS Congress 2006 Chair Alfred Duda thanked the Government and people of China for hosting the Congress and closed the International Conference at 4:25 pm.

MINISTERIAL FORUM

The Ministerial Forum opened late in the afternoon with statements from PEMSEA partners and host country representatives. In his message to the Ministerial Forum, Zeng Peiyan, Vice Premier, Government of China, conveyed his government's commitment to supporting the implementation of SDS-SEA, and the Haikou partnership agreement to be adopted at the Ministerial Forum.

Chair Sun Zhihui, Administrator, SOA, recalled progress made in the sustainable management of the East Asian seas and highlighted China's achievements.

Yu Xun, Vice-Governor of Hainan Province, highlighted the opportunity to promote regional cooperation and the relationship between East Asian countries.

Alfred Duda, GEF, emphasized that the partnership agreement for the implementation of SDS-SEA would set a new level of cooperation for the sustainability of East Asian seas. He likened the seas of East Asia to a "fevered patient," warning their continued degradation would bring economic loss, poverty and social unrest, but stressed that active implementation of the SDS-SEA makes sound economic sense and will set countries on the way to a more secure and prosperous future.

Andrew Hudson, UNDP, said that the adoption of the Haikou partnership agreement for SDS-SEA implementation will fulfill the vision of developing a regional coordination mechanism.

Jean-Claude Sainlos said SDS-SEA could serve as a framework for implementation of the IMO conventions in the region, and emphasized IMO's commitment to working through the next phase of PEMSEA.



East Asian Ministers at the opening of the Ministerial Forum