

## 2024 EAST ASIAN SEAS YOUTH CALL TO ACTION FOR BLUE SYNERGY AND INCLUSIVE OCEAN GOVERNANCE

We, the young leaders from the nations bordering the East Asian Seas, gathered at the 2024 EAS Youth Forum, call upon our governments, decision-makers, private sectors, civil society, international organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to take urgent and meaningful actions to protect our ocean and coasts.

**As the inheritors of our blue planet, we demand a sustainable future where thriving and equitable communities are united in synergy towards one goal - a healthy and resilient ocean that can provide for generations to come.**

**We acknowledge** the critical state of our seas and ocean, which are under unprecedented stress due to climate change<sup>1</sup> and other anthropogenic threats that lead to biodiversity loss.

**We recognize** the essential role of the ocean in providing oxygen, absorbing carbon dioxide, and regulating the Earth's climate, which is foundational to our survival and prosperity.<sup>2</sup>

**We recall** the commitments and recommendations from the [2012 Changwon Youth Declaration](#) and the [2018 East Asian Youth Declaration on Sustainable Seas and Climate Action](#), which emphasized the vital role of youth in promoting sustainable practices, education, and cooperation for the conservation of coastal and marine resources;

**We strongly support and recognize** the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) 13, 14, and 17, and the [Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia \(SDS-SEA\)](#) as the primary frameworks, guiding principles, and strategies that will shape our actions and initiatives for the East Asian Seas region;

**We continue to commit** to fostering a spirit of cooperation and innovation among the youth of the EAS region to actively participate in the protection, sustainable management, and development of our coastal and marine resources.

**We stand ready** at the forefront of the movement to protect, restore, and develop our ocean, ensuring a sustainable future for all generations by:

- **Educating** our communities about the ocean's significance to our heritage, culture, and economy; fostering profound respect and understanding that leads to tangible actions supporting marine conservation;
- **Engaging** in marine conservation initiatives, lending our voices, energy, and creativity to advocate for the ocean health;

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate 2019

<sup>2</sup> [Link](#)



- **Advocating** for the integration of youth perspectives in the development and execution of policies and programs in the East Asian Seas region, and recognizing the value of intergenerational leadership in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to the ocean;
- **Collaborating** with governments, civil society organizations, academe, private sector, international organizations, underrepresented groups, and other relevant stakeholders to amplify the impact of our actions; recognizing that the challenges we face are interconnected and require a unified response; and
- **Advancing** innovation and scientific collaboration among nations, sharing expertise and technology across disciplines, and cultivating innovative thinking among the younger generation.

To embody and fulfill these commitments, we call for:

- The development of inclusive policies and solid legal frameworks that ensure increased representation of youth, particularly those from underrepresented and vulnerable communities and areas, and their meaningful participation in ocean governance at all levels;
- Universal access to quality marine education and capacity-building opportunities;
- Strong support for youth-led initiatives that develop local and grassroots solutions toward coastal and ocean conservation;
- The establishment and promotion of ocean-based career development pathways, that encourage youth to enter and excel in marine sectors;
- Cross-sectoral, intergenerational dialogues to incorporate youth perspectives in the policy-making process;
- Increased investments in sustainable ocean economies and marine conservation efforts;
- Strengthened regional cooperation and partnerships to address the transboundary nature of marine environmental challenges; and
- Leveraging the Network for Ocean and Marine Science Technology and Innovation.

**We invite** all stakeholders within the East Asian Seas region and beyond to join us in this critical mission, as we refuse to stand by idly and watch further destruction of our ocean heritage.

**We, the youth, represent hope and promise for change. Equipped with passion, knowledge, skills, and innovative thinking, we stand ready to lead the transformation towards sustainability and safeguard the ocean for the generations beyond us.**

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*Agreed upon by the delegates of the 2024 East Asian Seas Youth Forum, held in Uljin County, Republic of Korea from April 15 to 19, 2024, organized by the Korea National Ocean Science Museum and Partnerships in Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia.*

Ky Channimol (Cambodia)  
 Theara Mao (Cambodia)  
 Shenghui Li (China)  
 Ting Guo (China)  
 Alvian Wardhana (Indonesia)  
 Surya Gentha Akmal (Indonesia)  
 Motoya Takise (Japan)  
 Soukphansa Manivong (Lao PDR)  
 Sengsouvanh Thammachedy (Lao PDR)  
 Matthew Vincent Tabilog (Philippines)

Rheane Joy Senangote (Philippines)  
 Minsu Yu (RO Korea)  
 Eunkyung Park (RO Korea)  
 Alex Lew (Singapore)  
 Yukie Yokoyama (Singapore)  
 Isaura Baptista Barros (Timor-Leste)  
 Delio Da Costa (Timor-Leste)  
 Bich-Nhi Chau (Viet Nam)  
 H.E. Mr. Dao Manh Nghia (Viet Nam)