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**Blue Synergy for a Shared Future:
One Sustainable and Resilient Ocean**

6-8 NOVEMBER 2024 • XIAMEN CITY, CHINA

2024 EAS YOUTH FORUM

PROCEEDINGS

**15-18 APRIL 2024
ULJIN COUNTY, RO KOREA**

ORGANIZERS:



NATIONAL OCEAN
SCIENCE MUSEUM



REPORT ON THE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE EAST ASIAN SEAS YOUTH FORUM 2024

Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea
Korea National Ocean Science Museum
PEMSEA

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INTRODUCTION

1. The ocean, covering 70 percent of the Earth's surface, is the planet's largest biosphere, and is home to up to 80 percent of all life in the world. It generates 50 percent of the oxygen we need, absorbs 25 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions, and captures 90 percent of the additional heat generated from those emissions. But the same ocean is under tremendous pressure, especially from climate change, marine pollution and biodiversity loss.

2. These so-called triple planetary crises require innovative and fresh approaches. The youth are in a unique position to contribute as their energy, creativity and passion are a force for action to shape their own future. It is in the long-term interest of the global society to meaningfully engage the youth in the critical issues confronting our coasts and ocean today to help them tackle these challenges well into the future.
3. The East Asian Seas region recognizes the crucial importance of engaging and empowering the youth in the pursuit of sustainable ocean and coastal development. In particular, the youth play a significant role in helping the region achieve the targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), other international commitments such as the UNFCCC Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the global ocean agenda.
4. The Asia-Pacific region is home to approximately 2 billion people under the age of 30 or approximately 60% of the world's total population¹. Therefore, they are an essential stakeholder to scale up coastal and ocean action at the local level, as they will become the next generation of ocean experts and decision-makers, and have an increasing role in influencing public discourse on global issues.
5. Through the youth forum, PEMSEA aimed to expand the knowledge of selected youth delegates from 10 countries, who have exhibited exemplary leadership in their respective advocacies to protect the marine environment, by exposing them to practical and theoretical sessions that will increase their appreciation for our shared ocean. Delegates were selected through an open call for applications, which were then subjected to a rigorous selection process to identify two (2) outstanding youth leaders from each PEMSEA Country Partner.
6. The EAS Youth Forum 2024 was held on 15-18 April 2024 at the Korea National Ocean Science Museum in Uljin, Republic of Korea, as a special pre-event of the East Asian Seas Congress 2024. It was co-organized by PEMSEA and the Korea National Ocean Science Museum (KOSM), in collaboration with PEMSEA's longstanding non country partners, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM), and the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST).
7. Echoing the EAS Congress theme, 'Blue Synergy for a Shared Future: One Sustainable and Resilient Ocean', the four-day event featured interactive lectures and practical sessions on marine data monitoring, a museum and coastal tour, team building activities, and peer-to-peer discussions.
8. The forum aimed to help delegates understand the changes and the challenges in the marine environment that the next generation will face, and promote discussion on

¹ <https://www.aphousingforum.org/youth-assembly/>

strategies to overcome them, with support from current research, practices, and experience.

9. Specifically, the Youth Forum aimed to:
 - a. Increase the understanding of youth on the severity of ocean environmental changes and climate crisis and jointly develop fresh and innovative response strategies to overcome these challenges;
 - b. Provide information on measures to address the effects of the triple planetary crisis, through the perspective of ROK's policies and research efforts;
 - c. Share ROK's experiences and best practices in the conservation and restoration of marine ecosystems, as well as various efforts to recover marine biodiversity, with highlighting experience of engagement with young people and recommendations to strengthen future engagement;
 - d. Facilitate learning about the application of marine science and technology, such as AI and big data in coastal and marine management
 - e. Explore strategies for the discovery and utilization of marine resources through marine science and advanced technology
 - f. Facilitate dialogue on increasing youth engagement in ocean action and governance;
 - g. Produce a clear youth call to action for blue synergy and inclusive ocean governance; and incorporate the youth's recommendations as inputs to the 8th East Asian Seas Ministerial Declaration.
10. The forum gathered 19 delegates from EAS countries, namely, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Philippines, RO Korea, Singapore, Timor Leste, and Vietnam to interact with a variety of marine experts from RO Korea (See Annexes 1-3 for detailed list).

EAS YOUTH FORUM 2024 PROGRAM

11. The Youth Forum featured sessions and discussions among experts and young leaders on the following topics:
 - a. ROK's marine environmental conservation policies and governance
 - b. Progress on research and development in valuing Korea's mudflats as blue carbon ecosystem
 - c. Initiatives on marine ecosystem restoration and biodiversity restoration, including the designation of marine protected areas
 - d. Programs to protect endangered marine species, and strategies for managing designated marine protected species
 - e. Application of advanced technologies such as AI and big data in sustainable

marine and coastal management, along with practical training using marine GIS programs

- f. Development and utilization of marine resources through the latest scientific technologies, such as creating sea forests for sustainable smart fisheries and managing fishing grounds, and developing new and sustainable materials derived from marine organisms.
12. This forum reactivated the PEMSEA Youth Programme, which will provide a sustainable platform for youth engagement on coastal and ocean development efforts in the region.
 13. Before the travel to Uljin, youth delegates were also requested to provide their inputs to the draft Youth Call to Action through a series of online consultations, to ensure a participatory approach wherein each country representative will have a substantive contribution to identifying youth-led strategies towards promoting blue synergy and inclusive governance. The Call to Action was filmed during the Youth Forum proper and will be presented during the 8th EAS Ministerial Forum in November 6, 2024 in Xiamen, PR China.
 14. In Uljin, youth delegates had the opportunity to have a special tour of KOSM and its major exhibitions, participate in a yacht tour across the Uljin coast, and have practical experience in upcycling marine plastics and using R program for marine data monitoring.
 15. The detailed programme of the EAS Youth Forum 2024 can be found in Annex 4.

ACTIVITIES AND SPECIFIC OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

DAY 1: ORIENTATION, MUSEUM TOUR, OPENING CEREMONY AND EASYF24 SESSIONS

16. The EAS Youth Forum opened with a brief orientation on PEMSEA, KOSM, and the EAS Congress led by the PEMSEA Resource Facility Secretariat. The 19 youth delegates were also requested to deliver a short introduction about their personal and advocacy works in their respective countries and their expectations on the forum.

17. Mr. Kim Oichul, President of the National Ocean Science Museum, welcomed the participants to the Korea Ocean Science Museum during the orientation. He encouraged the delegates to be active in the learning sessions and expressed his hope that they may be able to utilize the new knowledge to improve their respective advocacies in their countries.



18. Ms. Aimee T. Gonzales, PEMSEA's Executive Director shared her opening remarks online. Ms. Gonzales shared PEMSEA's Youth Program and thanked MOF for sustained support for youth education and capacity development even during the pandemic. She looked forward to reading the young leaders' recommendations in fostering healthy coasts, communities and economies for the 8th Ministerial Declaration.

19. The orientation was followed by a tour of the National Ocean Science Museum, where delegates were divided into 2 groups. KOSM volunteer staff guided the participants through 10 major exhibition zones that provided interactive information on various aspects of the marine ecosystem, ocean research, and impacts of climate change and marine pollution, among others. Among the major zones included a kinetic LED which showcased



how temperature and chemical changes affect the flow and current of water in the ocean, an earthquake and tsunami simulator, a visual exhibit of marine pollution sources and flow patterns in Korea, and simulations of chemical and physical processes in the ocean and how anthropogenic activities can affect them.

20. Youth delegates also had the unique experience of viewing the actual marine biodiversity of the East Sea at 7 meters below sea level, without any diving equipment, when they visited the Underwater Observatory of KOSM.

21. The youth delegates got a visual grasp of the complex nature of the ocean and its biodiversity, its significance as a major source of food, energy, and water, and how human activities affect the ocean and the variety of organisms in it.



22. The Youth Forum sessions formally began in the afternoon with an Opening Ceremony, participated by the delegates and key officials from KOSM, MOF, Uljin, and the Gyeongsangbuk-do province. The forum was formally opened by KOSM president, Mr. KIM Oichul, who underscored the importance of strengthening youth-led impactful initiatives towards marine ecosystem conservation, and Ms. Aimee Gonzales, PRF Executive Director, through a recorded video. Ms. Gonzales highlighted the significant roles of the youth in supporting national and international efforts toward sustainable coastal and ocean development.



23. Mr. OH Haengnok, Director of the Marine Environment Policy Division of the Ministry for Oceans and Fisheries of RO Korea, highlighted the critical role of the ocean and coasts in sustaining life on Earth, through climate control, food resources, and livelihood opportunities. He underscored RO Korea's efforts towards

sustainable solutions for coastal areas, citing examples such as utilizing South Korea's

strengths in advanced technologies such as satellites, AI, and big data to improve data and monitoring of the state of its coasts and seas. Through these innovations, RO Korea can craft more evidence-based policies that can adequately tackle marine issues such as pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change.

24. Mr. Oh also shared ROK's efforts in developing eco-friendly marine energy technologies like ocean green hydrogen and high-temperature resistant aquaculture species through the integration of advanced technologies, which addresses the economic needs of Korean citizens without harming the marine environment. He emphasized the key role of the youth in finding solutions to the problems humanity faces in the marine environment.



25. Other important guest speakers Mr. Lee Young, the Director General of the East Sea Rim Headquarters (Ocean, Fishery & Energy) of Gyeongsangbuk-do, and Mr. Kim Jung Hee, the Vice Chairman of the Uljin County Council. The guest speakers talked about the importance of partnering and collaborating with different countries represented by youth members through the forum and how the government of Korea has

been involved in providing solutions addressing ocean problems. The opening ceremony was followed by a short photo opportunity with the youth delegates and the speakers.

26. Dr. Young Nam Kim of the Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM) delivered the keynote lecture for session 1, discussing Korea's marine environmental conservation policies and how monitoring the changing status of Korea's marine ecosystems has shaped environmental policies in the country.



27. He underscored the relevance of monitoring marine species as they serve as indicators on how climate change and pollution impact the environment. Dr. Kim shared examples of RO Korea's efforts in maintaining and monitoring their marine ecological networks, marine protected areas,

marine litter management and blue carbon management, all of which will support Korea's commitments to international agreements such as the Global Biodiversity Framework, Paris Agreement, and UN SDGs.

28. Dr. Kim also emphasized how protecting regional marine ecological networks play a significant role in meeting the targets of the GBF. Marine Ecological networks are constructed by connecting important and highly biodiverse marine areas to integrate the conservation or management of marine ecosystems and marine biodiversity while also maintaining the continuity of the structure or function of the marine ecosystems.

29. Delegates were given the opportunity to share their questions or insights in a short open forum after the keynote lecture. Ms. Shenghui Li asked what the total area of MPAs in ROK accounts for in the overall jurisdiction under ROK, in line with the 30x30 global target to conserve at least 30% of the ocean by 2030. Dr. Kim responded that MPAs cover approximately 3% of the total jurisdiction. However, he emphasized that GBF targets may also include Other effective conservation measures (OECM) in accounting, and Marine Ecological Networks, which have their own protection schemes, may be utilized as OECM which can contribute to GBF targets. Furthermore, ROK is also exploring offshore MPAs in the ROK Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to identify bigger offshore MPAs and accounting MENs to contribute to 30x30 targets.



30. The second session of the learning series was a practical session led by Dr. Hong-Yeon CHO and Dr. Gi-Seo LEE from the Marine BigData-AI Center of the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology, who introduced the delegates to marine big data utilization and analysis. and

marine data statistical analysis workshops using the R program (Dr. Lee Gi-seop, KIOST). These sessions aimed to provide more technical insight into the various methodologies, tools, and parameters to collect marine data. In particular, the session highlighted the importance of big data, which are vast and varied datasets that can be brought together through Big Data infrastructure, data sharing, and standardization, and understood at scale using machine learning and artificial intelligence. The outputs

of this, from trends to deep models of ocean ecosystem evolution, can form the evidence base to justify balanced, cost-effective, conservation measures and policy.

31. Dr. Cho underscored the importance of the innovative technologies used to gather big data for research conservation and underscored the need for various sources of data to be able to create more accurate projections on climate impacts on the ocean, marine pollution flows, and nutrient changes that affect biodiversity, among others.

32. Dr. Lee presented how Big Data can be utilized to monitor data related to help address issues such as climate change mitigation and environmental pollution, and support marine spatial planning. Big data can be gleaned from various methodologies, such as in-situ observation data,



remote sensing, global scale secondary products (i.e., GODAS, ORAS5, etc.) and data produced through individual research. Approaches to developing Big Data include Time series approaches, which typically involve long-term records; spatial planning; spatio-temporal estimation, which focuses on understanding the current biogeochemical state of the ocean; and inverse problem in coastal environment, which looks into source tracing of issues such as marine pollution.

33. Dr. Lee also guided the youth delegates through a workshop on the integration of big data and creating these into maps using R Studio. Delegates were given two hours to follow a code to create a map of the RO Korea coast which showed changes in sea surface temperature. Youth delegates were able to appreciate the craft and science of developing interpretable data that can be used in developing policy recommendations and actions to mitigate climate change impacts on coastal areas.

34. After dinner, the delegates headed back to the museum for an upcycling activity hosted by a local eco-business enterprise, USISAN, whose advocacy is to promote circular economy through the upcycling of single-use plastics that are often discarded on the beaches and ocean. During this activity, the delegates were able to make whale plushies stuffed with plastic fibers sourced from recycled PET bottles. They used chopsticks to insert the plastic fibers inside the plush toys. Upcycling activities one of USISAN's strategies to reduce plastic pollution in South Korea and promote sustainability in the market.



DAY 2: EASYF24 SESSIONS, FIELD TRIP AND PARTNERSHIP NIGHT



35. The Day 2 activities began with the delegates getting the materials needed for the afternoon field trip including customized windbreakers, bucket hats, and sunscreen lotions, courtesy of KOSM.

36. The learning series in the morning started with a session on the development outcomes of deep-sea brine groundwater in Uljin. The first lecturer was Mr. Park Young-chan, Director of AriBIO, a biotech company in ROK focused on developing novel therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases, which recently delved into the production of deep-sea mineral water 'Minerock' through their efforts to identify alternative methods to cure neurodegenerative diseases. Minerock is sourced from 1050 meters underground, from saline groundwater (SGW), which is a mix of groundwater and seawater which have seeped into the bedrock, combining with minerals to form a unique water source.

37. Saline groundwater contains about 50% of the salt content of seawater, and its production process is complex as it undergoes various stages of filtration, desalination, mineral separation, and concentration. This results in mineral water which contains 20 times the minerals in other mineral waters. Some byproducts during the desalination process of creating GSW mineral water include edible salt and mineral concentrates which can be used as ingredients for liquid health supplements or cosmetic products.



38. SGW cannot be found in many places, but the geography of Uljin, allows it to be a good source of SGW. Saline groundwater has also been of interest to researchers as an alternative and more sustainable water resource to freshwater groundwater. Mr. Park emphasized that while saline groundwater is a good alternative water source to regular groundwater, its quality and sustainability as a resource is challenged by the increasing pollution in seas and oceans.
39. He underscored the importance of maintaining the ecological integrity of coastal areas, particularly those like Uljin which are sources of GSW, as further degradation of these ecosystems can adversely affect sustainable sources of potable water.
40. Ms. Rheane Senangote and Mr. Alvian Wardhana from the Philippines and Indonesia, respectively, raised some concerns about the potential environmental impact of extracting GSW and its sustainability as a water resource. Mr. Park clarified that the process of extracting GSW underwent stringent review and approval from relevant regulatory authorities in Korea, and it was deemed that the extraction process does not have any significant environmental impact. In terms of sustainability, Mr. Park clarified that saltwater is one of the main components of GSW, which seeps from the ocean to the bedrock. Hence, in theory, GSW is a sustainable source as long as the quality of saltwater from the ocean is not contaminated by pollutants.



41. To give the delegates some insights on how local organizations can help support national efforts in addressing marine pollution, the next session led by Mr. Byun Ui-Hyun, CEO of USISAN, presented Exemplary Cases of Upcycling Utilizing Marine Plastics. USISAN is a local social enterprise in Ulsan, ROK

which began as an eco-friendly business to upcycle single-use plastics but has since evolved to establish a resource circulation network working together with local communities, companies as well as organizations.

42. Mr. Byun presented the marine plastic landscape of the world and how this global problem made multiple impacts to biodiversity, especially to large marine vertebrates such as whales. He shared USISAN's efforts in partnering with national agencies, the

private sector and international organizations through upcycling of single-use plastics recovered from ships.

43. The social upcycling company has been collecting plastic bottles from ships and ports to have these recycled into different materials such as socks, tote bags, and among others to combat the plastic pollution in South Korea. Their efforts have since expanded outside of the shipping industry to



include Korea Expressway Corporation, Korea Railroad Corporation, Korea Workers' Compensation and Welfare Service, Occupational Safety and Health Agency, and local social welfare organizations.

44. He shared an example of using discarded materials and refurbishing them into new products. Unused or discarded face shields after the pandemic were upcycled into emergency kits, while old clothes were collected to repurpose the cotton fiber and create socks and gloves. Mr. Byun also shared how USISAN support developmentally disabled people by engaging them in the production of the upcycled items, either through design or manufacturing.

45. Ms. Channimol Ky of Cambodia asked whether USISAN's activities are subsidized by the government. Mr. Byun responded that funding for the project was supported through partnerships with Korean government agencies such as the Ulsan Port Authority and international organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). USISAN is also supported through donations from Korean citizens.

46. Mr. Matthew Tabilog inquired on USISAN's plans to expand to other countries. Mr. Byun confirmed that they have plans to expand, noting that the increase in marine plastic pollution is not just in ROK but all over the world. Currently, raw materials are being collected from different countries such as Africa and the Philippines, and the upcycled products are exported to other countries.

47. Ms. Bich-Nhi Chau asked whether USISAN contributes to governance initiatives related to Extended producer responsibility (EPR) policies in Korea. Mr. Byun clarified that as a

local enterprise, USISAN contributes to Korea's EPR laws through the upcycling of discarded plastics, as this also contributes to promoting circular economy.



48. Ms. Shenghui Li of China inquired on USISAN's efforts in ocean literacy or ocean education in local schools and

communities, citing an example of a similar enterprise in China that does knowledge sharing activities as part of their advocacy to reducing marine plastics. Mr. Byun responded that USISAN partners regularly with KOSM to share their knowledge and experience in upcycling with different stakeholders, such as students or practitioners.

49. The delegates who raised questions and shared their insights during the learning session received upcycled socks from USISAN.

50. The next session introduced the delegates to Efforts for Marine Ecosystem Restoration and Marine Biodiversity recovery. The first speaker for this session was the Team Lead



of the Ocean Education and Culture Outreach Team of the Korea Ocean Science Museum, Mr. Bae Jin ho. The discussions of Mr. Bae were the achievements in marine biodiversity restoration projects of KOSM. In line with this, Mr. Bae highlighted the need to protect our marine ecosystems because of the multiple ecological and socioeconomic benefits that they provide to the

people and to the environment.

51. He shared how KOSM regularly contributes to ROK's national ocean policies through technical support in identification of marine species, particularly those that are endemic to ROK, endangered, or have high academic or economic value, and management of marine protected areas (MPAs). Among the conservation activities that KOSM has done

include the development of artificial shelters for spotted seals, an endemic endangered species found in the East Sea.

52. Ms. Theara Mao of Cambodia asked on the methodology for monitoring the movements of seals and whales and their habitats. Mr. Bae responded that underwater assessments through scuba diving are conducted to assess the conditions of the target species and the habitats that need to be restored. Geotagging or satellite tagging is used to monitor the movement of marine species.

53. Ms. Shenghui Li inquired whether prioritization of managing MPAs over expansion is a means for ROK to ensure quality of the protected areas or to meet GBF targets. Mr Bae clarified that marine area management, while present, requires

54. constant collaboration and improvement to continuously and effectively conserve marine ecosystems and important species. While meeting the GBF targets are equally important, Mr. Bae underscored the need to balance efforts in expanding MPAs while also maintaining the quality of existing ones.

55. Ms. Bich-Nhi Chau asked on how the longevity of partnerships with the private sector can be ensured to prevent greenwashing. Mr. Bae responded that the government regularly engages big companies to advocate on conservation as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR). One example is having a company adopt a beach, which they will regularly maintain and keep clean from plastics. This encourages the companies to have ownership in the protection of coastal areas.

56. The final speaker was Dr. Lee Youngran, an IUCN Cetacean Specialist Group Member and the CEO of PlanOcean. She introduced marine mammals - specifically on cetaceans or whales and dolphins and she highlighted the different characteristics of these animals from their morphological features and physiological



features. Furthermore, there were also discussions about rescuing and treating cetaceans from different hazards including boat strikes and these animals are vulnerable from anthropogenic factors. There were also cases of dolphins suffering from cancer brought by poor water quality in the area. Lastly, Dr. Youngran underscored the need to protect our oceans to protect vulnerable marine species such

as cetaceans as they are important in maintaining the balance in marine ecosystems.

57. The learning sessions were followed by a yacht tour around the coast of Uljin. The tour showcased the Uljin seascape while also showing how Uljin developed public spots where locals and visitors can enjoy the coast and appreciate sightings of dolphin pods or whales. However, due to the weather conditions, the delegates were not able to sight any marine species during the tour.



58. After the yacht tour, the delegates went back to the museum to prepare themselves for dinner and for the Partnership Night.



59. During the Partnership Night, the delegates wore their traditional costumes and they brought snacks coming from their home country. They presented the delicacies and souvenirs they brought to everyone. After that, games were enjoyed and participated by the delegates to harness camaraderie and

develop sense of belongingness in the youth forum. It was a sentimental and memorable night for everyone.

DAY 3: BEACHCOMBING ACTIVITY AND CLOSING SESSION

60. Day 3 started early in the morning with a beachcombing activity, to help delegates experience local coastal cleanup activities that are conducted by companies in their



adopted beaches, as mentioned in the previous lecture session. The delegates prepared sacks and tongs and they went to the beach adjacent to the museum to pick up pieces of trash such as plastic bottles, nets, cigarette butts, and other physical discarded items. The collected pieces of trash were then disposed inside the sacks

and the most common trash found were discarded nets, plastic bottles, cigarette butts, styrofoams, and other pieces of residual plastics.

61. The objectives of the activity were to see real-life examples of plastic pollution happening along the coastal areas and for the delegates to be reminded that beach clean-up activities - no matter how big or small can lead to a big impact. Nevertheless, the activity was a call to action that pollution in any form does persist in the marine environment and it is high time to combat this ecological and socioeconomic issue to protect our environment.

62. Right after the beach cleanup, the advocates then headed back to the session hall inside the museum for the sharing activities. Three selected delegates of the East Asian Seas Youth Forum shared their advocacies and experiences in their home countries and these applicants were Shenghui Li from China, Matthew Vincent Tabilog from the Philippines, and Isaura Baptista Barros from Timor-Leste.

63. Ms. Li talked about her experiences in ocean literacy and marine spatial planning and how these advocacies and research contribute to inclusive coastal development. Mr. Tabilog discussed his initiatives for the protection of coastal habitats in the Philippines through science communication and how his youth organization that he





founded promoted for the protection of mangrove forests and sustainability in mangrove planting. Ms. Barros, on the other hand, talked about her community efforts and educational discussion in ocean conservation with the youth using her platform as the National coordinator of the Laudato Si' Movement Timor-Leste Youth Organization.

64. After this, all youth delegates were divided into groups for another set of sharing activity and guide questions were the following: (1) What are the most pressing environmental challenges facing our oceans today, and how can youth be effectively engaged in addressing these challenges? (2) Based on your experiences and what you've learned from the forum, what innovative strategies can young people implement to contribute to marine conservation and sustainable management?; and (3) How can we strengthen and sustain the collaboration among young leaders across different countries to amplify our impact on marine environmental protection and climate action?

65. The discussions revolved around how the youth can be able to provide solutions in addressing oceans and climate issues and how the East Asian Seas Youth Forum influenced and opened doors to them. A group presentation was then done after the discussions based from the lessons learned during the youth forum.



66. Youth delegates identified the following as the most pressing challenges that the ocean faces today:

- a. Marine pollution, particularly single-use plastics that are discarded in beaches or seas;
- b. Impacts of climate change, such as increasing sea surface temperature, sea level rise, and ocean acidification;
- c. gaps in top-down policy and bottom-up advocacy on ocean literacy resulting in lack of public knowledge;

- d. Unsustainable coastal development;
- e. Overfishing and/or destructive fishing and illegal/unregulated fishing;
- f. Need for more carbon reduction strategies;
- g. Lack of criteria for food production; and
- h. Other threats to endangered marine animals, i.e, whale hunting



67. They suggested the following solutions that can increase youth engagement in coastal and ocean management:

- a. Promotion of marine environment education;
- b. Developing youth activities or educational courses on marine ecosystem assessment;
- c. Involving youth in the policymaking process, such as stakeholder consultations of marine policies;

- d. Incorporating marine conservation as part of curriculums from primary to tertiary education;
 - e. Providing support to regularly conduct capacity building activities for the youth such as the EAS youth forum, where youth leaders can develop youth-led sustainable actions that can be replicated in their respective countries; and
 - f. Integrating resources within the region, both technical and financial, to create a viable regional mechanism to empower youth in developing and implementing scalable local actions in support of national priorities.
68. On innovative strategies that the youth can implement to contribute to marine conservation and sustainable management of resources:
- a. Pursuing ocean literacy as a priority policy to increase awareness of the ocean and the impacts it faces from the triple planetary crisis;

b. Develop a regional network for the youth to promote cross-border collaboration and integration of efforts;

c. Craft competitions on marine conservation or climate action to increase awareness and encourage other youth to take action;



d. Make us of AI and social media to create quiz bees as an interactive way to learn and understand about the oceans;

e. Utilizing digital platforms to promote awareness and facilitate dialogue amongst youth, policymakers, and researchers;

69. On strengthening and sustaining collaboration amongst young leaders to amplify actions on marine environmental protection and climate action:

a. Providing enabling mechanisms for the youth to address climate change impacts in the ocean, whether through education or capacity-building;

b. Providing financial mechanisms such as study/business grants, project funding for youth-led activities;

c. Develop a regional program for young professionals who are interested in working in the field of ocean management;

d. Establishing a space for young professionals as youth coordinators in the field of marine conservation;

e. Youth engagement in eco-tourism; and

f. Lobbying for ocean conservation and climate action in policymaking processes.

70. Ms. Abi Cruzada, Secretariat Coordinator of the PEMSEA Resource Facility synthesized the discussions from the workshop and formally closed the Youth Forum proper. She congratulated and thanked the delegates for their active participation in the forum



sessions and highlighted the key takeaways from the discussions, such as:

- a. Various countries in the region have made significant strides in improving marine conservation and responding to the impacts of climate change, however the extent of the effectiveness of their actions depend largely on political willpower and engagement of various stakeholders, such as the academe, private sector and local civil society organizations;
- b. Monitoring the changing status of marine ecosystems and marine species are essential to be able to craft more effective and evidence-based policies that adequately address the impacts that oceans and coasts face;
- c. New and innovative technologies and approaches are now available to improve data that can support ocean policy refinement, i.e., Big Data and AI;
- d. Local organizations, such as social enterprises play a significant role in promoting effective ocean action, for example through upcycling or beachcombing projects to reduce marine plastic pollution;
- e. These locally-led advocacies are crucial in raising awareness and increasing engagement with youth to be more involved in marine conservation and climate action;
- f. Ocean literacy is essential to engage and empower more youth to be the next advocates for the ocean;
- g. There is a need to engage more youth leaders in the policymaking process, as they have their own unique experiences and knowledge that can contribute to developing more effective and responsive policies;
- h. There are similar youth-led efforts on coastal management in the region, and these can be scaled up through formalizing a regional network of youth leaders that can share their respective knowledge and experiences while also capacitating and lobbying for action at the national and regional level; and
- i. Development of youth-led initiatives and formalization of youth networks require adequate funding and support from national governments.

71. She thanked the youth for their valuable inputs during the workshop, and informed the delegates that their discussions and inputs to the youth call to action will serve as inputs to the 8th EAS Ministerial Declaration.
72. The last activity of the youth forum was the recording of a video message of a youth declaration calling for urgent ocean protection which will be aired on the East Asian Seas Congress in Xiamen, PR of China this November 5-8, 2024. The delegates then were transferred to Seoul for their departure going back to their home countries.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The East Asian Seas Youth Forum provided opportunities to the delegates coming from the region and they were able to learn a lot in terms of marine conservation, climate change, and solutions towards addressing oceanic and climate issues. The forum also gave an avenue for the youth leaders to talk about the initiatives they have been doing and the forum boosted their knowledge and leadership skills.
- The opening ceremony showed that the Republic of Korea remained steadfast and committed towards partnering with different countries in the pursuit of ocean conservation. They have been leveraging advanced technologies and fostering collaborative research to ensure the health and resilience of our oceans for the next generations to come.
- The learning sessions discussed by the speakers made the youth delegates learn more about innovative ways to conserve the marine environment and how they can apply them as they go home to their home countries
- The youth forum was able to bring in young leaders calling for the protection of the oceans and it expanded their network within the region – crucial in building partnerships towards specific goals. Furthermore, the delegates valued the forum because it promoted genuine friendship that advocates for the same cause.
- A youth declaration was made to show commitments of the youth delegates in doing their part in protecting the environment and acknowledging that the climate crisis and anthropogenic factors that contribute to oceanic problems must be solved to have a sustainable and greener future for the current and future generations to come
- The onsite learning activities promoted camaraderie towards youth delegates and the Partnership Night promoted their culture and traditions.
- **Recommendations:**
 - There should be more funding opportunities to mobilize youth-led initiatives to sustain the work in conservation in this sector.
 - Ocean literacy is essential to increase awareness of the youth and the general public on the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution in the ocean;

- There is a need to establish a youth-led network to promote collaboration and synergize action amongst youth leaders in the region. This, however, needs adequate funding support from the region's countries.
- There is a need to capacitate the next generation of ocean leaders, and opportunities towards developing a career in ocean management should be made more accessible to interested youth.
- The youth have many innovative ideas to promoting ocean literacy and developing ocean conservation initiatives; it is crucial that they also be given a stronger voice in policy dialogues so they can relay their unique experience and knowledge in ocean action.

ANNEX 1: EAST ASIAN SEAS YOUTH FORUM 2024 DELEGATES

Cambodia



Ky Channimol - Ky is currently the Chief Officer of the Office of Policy Coordination under the General Directorate of Policy and Strategy, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia. With a Master's in Marine Science specializing in marine biology from Zhejiang University, China (2017-2020), her expertise is on harmful algal blooms. Over the past seven years, Ky's career has seamlessly blended scientific rigor with policy coordination, contributing significantly to biodiversity conservation, climate change, water governance, and sustainable development in her home country. From conducting impactful lab experiments to actively shaping marine and ocean management policies, she brings a holistic approach to environmental challenges. As the Chief Officer at the Office of Policy Coordination, Ky is dedicated to bridging the gap between scientific knowledge and effective policy implementation for a sustainable and resilient environmental future in Cambodia and beyond.

Theara Mao - Theara has a master's degree in Water and Sanitation Engineering from the Institute of Technology of Cambodia. Currently, she is working at the ECOLAND Research Center and has done several research projects related to water security and pollution, agricultural and agroecological practices, and community zone management in the conservation area of Cambodia.



China



Shenghui Li - Shenghui Li is a marine social scientist specialising in marine spatial planning (MSP), marine protected areas (MPAs) and sustainable ocean governance. She is currently a lecturer and researcher at Guangdong Ocean University, China. As a marine early career researcher (ECR), Shenghui is passionate about connecting and empowering ECRs across disciplines and regions. She is also the co-chair of the Interdisciplinary Marine Early Career Network (IMECaN) under the Integrated Marine Biosphere Research (IMBeR), member of the Steering Group of MSP Research Network, member of the Executive Committee of the Global Ocean Negative Carbon Emission (Global ONCE programme), and member of the Executive Committee of the Early Career Ocean Professional (ECOP) China national node. She has actively participated in and organised many youth workshops and webinars on ocean governance and interdisciplinary research. She has also given trainings on marine conservation to primary and secondary school students and coastal communities.

Ting Guo - Ting Guo is currently a Ph.D. student at Xiamen University, specializing in sustainable development of the ocean and coastal zone, maritime economy, and marine spatial planning. Ting has participated in the Sustainable Ocean Development Forum during the Xiamen International Ocean Week in 2022 and 2023, as well as the China Sustainable Development Forum for Marine Economy. She has authored and published four marine relevant research papers and has been involved in two research projects.



Indonesia

Alvian Wardhana - Alvian is a seasoned safeguard policy consultant for the Asian Development Bank who excels in crafting safeguard policies in the Asia Pacific region. As Founder of Literasi Anak Banua (LAB), he transformed education in remote areas, empowering 1,800+ children and elevating education quality by 30-60%. His commitment extended when he served as Youth Advisor for UNESCO Asia Pacific, where he advocated for Climate Resilience for Indigenous people through educational and interfaith framework, including, but not limited to, marine education for coastal indigenous people. Through his contributions, he received some of the most prestigious awards, such as The Diana Award 2021 and the Y20 Award. Besides his work, he built innovative ideas called Sustainable Integrated Multitrophic Aquaculture (SIMA), which he won 3rd in the OIC Scientific Competition from over 1200 applications, and the concept ideas are now implemented in early stage on coastline areas of Brazil under UNFCCC.



Surya Genta Akmal - Genta is one of the young researchers in ocean, coastal and fisheries management, and aquatic invasive alien species, who has been involved in several activities related to the national policy on ocean, coastal and fisheries management and governance in Indonesia. He has also contributed to the improvement and development of several policies related to sustainable fisheries in Indonesia. Genta has interest and focus on ocean, coastal and marine resource management; aquatic invasive alien species and their impact on native biota in Indonesia; fisheries biology; and disaster management. He is affiliated as a Researcher at Center for Coastal and Marine Resources Studies, IPB University; Secretary of the Indonesian Centre for Research on Bioinvasions, and co-founder of Sulawesi Keepers.



Japan



Motoya Takisa - Motoya Takise is a sophomore student at Hitotsubashi University. He previously graduated from Nishiyamato Gakuen High School and is currently based in Tokyo. He is deeply passionate about environmental economics and econometrics. Motoya's fascination lies in understanding how data-driven analysis can address pressing global challenges. As a student, he aspires to contribute to a sustainable future by leveraging his skills in his chosen fields. He participated in many business plan contests related to the environment and education and has received awards.

Lao PDR

Soukphansa Manivong - Soukphansa is a bachelor's student at the National University of Laos, majoring in Environmental Science and Bachelor of Arts in English at the Lao-American Institute. As an environmental major student, she is passionate and committed to making a positive impact in subjects like ecology, climate change, renewable energy, and resource management. While excelling in her studies, Soukphansa is also engaged in volunteer activities and aims to inspire individuals to take action toward a greener and more sustainable future.



Sengsouvanh Thammachedy - Sengsouvanh is a student at National University of Laos. She was a former intern at the Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. During her internship, she gained a lot of knowledge about water protection, which helped her understand the value of cooperation and water resources management.

Philippines



Matthew Vincent Tabilog - Matthew is an early-career marine biologist and a science communicator from Negros Occidental, Philippines focusing on marine conservation, mainly mangrove forests. He took his Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology from the Institute of Environmental and Marine Sciences of Silliman University where he graduated with Latin Honors - Magna Cum Laude. He is the founder of Mangrove Matters PH, a youth organization aiming to mainstream mangrove conservation in the country, and he has presented studies in conferences about mangrove blue carbon for climate change mitigation. Moreover, he advocates for climate justice and he has been involved with coastal communities on mangrove planting initiatives and mangrove nursery management workshops in his island. Currently, he is the Advocacy and Networking Staff under the Oceans and Climate Program of CEED (Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development). Matthew enjoys wildlife and drone photography and he is a licensed open water diver.

Rheane Joy Senangote - Rheane Joy is a fisheries professional passionate about communicating science to the people. With more than four years of experience in communications and advocacy campaigns, she is the Information Officer of the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Regional Office VI in the Philippines. Her work in fisheries resource management and science communication has been instrumental in the conceptualization and implementation of the 'Pahuway sang Baybay Campaign' (Respite of the Sea) for the Visayan Sea Closed Season, material development in partnership with the USAID Fish Right Program, management of the official Facebook Page of the Bureau, and publication of their official news magazine, Haw-as. She is also the Founder of the Fisheries Communication Page called The Speaking Sea and regularly volunteers at the Iloilo Mega Book Fair. Her work and skills include Fisheries Policies, Fisheries Management Campaigns and Communications, and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) planning and facilitation.



Republic of Korea



Minsu Yu - Minsu is currently pursuing a doctoral program in Marine Biology at Pukyong National University, Republic of Korea. During his master's program, he contributed to research on the growth and reproduction of crustaceans inhabiting the Korean coastal waters, including *Charybdis bimaclata*, *Oratosquilla oratoria*, and *Metanephrops thomsoni*. Additionally, Minsu authored a thesis focusing on otolith morphology analysis and growth parameter comparison of *Konosirus punctatus* stocks along the Korean coast. Presently, his research interests lie in otolith morphology analysis and age determination in fish species. With a strong academic background and practical experience in marine biology research, he is dedicated to advancing our understanding of marine ecosystems and contributing to sustainable fisheries management practices.

Eunkyung Park - Eunkyung graduated with a Master's degree in Oceanography from Chonnam National University. Currently, she is currently employed as a researcher at the National Ocean Science Museum, where she focuses on various aspects of marine science exhibition curation and management. Her academic background has equipped her with a solid understanding of marine ecosystems, biodiversity, and conservation, which she applies in her work in engaging museum visitors in the exhibitions. Her role allows her to bridge the gap between scientific research and public understanding of marine science, fostering appreciation, and stewardship of our oceans. With a passion for education and outreach, Eunkyung strives to communicate complex scientific concepts in accessible ways, inspiring curiosity and awareness about the importance of the marine environment.



Singapore



Alex Lew - Alex is a 28-year old ocean climate solutionist passionate about the interconnection between Ocean Health and Human Health (OHHH). As the CEO of ASEAN-Australia Strategic Youth Partnership, he believes in the power of young people in creating impact at scale. He is a master student of Southeast Asian studies at Chulalongkorn University studying oceans, environmental action, and business. Alex was selected as a youth speaker and moderator for the Cultural Wisdom for Climate Action: The Southeast Asian Contribution At The Siam Society Under Royal Patronage, Bangkok, Thailand. Recently, he is also an academic presenter for the Workshop on Climate Change, Human Mobility, and Human Rights organised by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights & Humanitarian Law, where he presented on Fake News in Post-Truth Societies: Policy Response to Disinformation on Climate Change in Thailand and Singapore. He also worked on a multi-disciplinary research collaboration centered on the Asia Pacific region.

Yukie Yokoyoma - Yukie Yokoyama is an Ecologist and Nature-based Solutions Specialist at Witteveen+Bos with a bachelor degree in Environmental Studies (Biology specialization, minor in GIS). She has four years of experience in different sectors of conservation and sustainability including non-profit organizations such as World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-Singapore). Her specialties and interests include nature-based solutions related to climate mitigation and adaptation, conservation ecology, and geospatial visualization and analyses. As an ecologist and nature-based solutions specialist, her responsibilities include integrating nature-based solutions and ecology into coastal protection design in mangroves, reefs and seagrass ecosystems in Asia to provide long lasting benefits for people, nature, biodiversity and climate. Closer to home, she has also kick-started Singapore's first artificial oyster reef restoration project to explore the feasibility of oyster reefs as a nature-based solution for coastal protection.



Timor-Leste



Isaura Baptista Barros - Isaura is the co-founder and national coordinator of the Laudato Si' Movement Timor-Leste Youth Organization, where she works voluntarily to lead environmental awareness programs. She is also a freelance trainer on environmental and climate change with different international and national organizations in Timor-Leste. Isaura was selected as one of 22 fellows of Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Academic Fellowship Program - Spring 2023 on Environmental Issues and Natural Resources Management and had the opportunity to study for five weeks at the University of Montana, USA. In 2021, she organized the Local Conference of Youth on climate change for the first time in Timor-Leste. As a result, Isaura and the Sustainable Ocean Alliance Timor-Leste (SOA Timor-Leste) led successfully the "OCEAN HEROES BOOTCAMP" in 2024, with the theme "Educating and empowering students and youths to protect and preserve our ocean for the future."

Delio Da Costa - Delio is a young ocean leader with a profound passion for the marine environment. Born and raised in Lospalos, Timor-Leste, he holds a Masters degree in Environmental Sciences from Universitas Diponegoro and Masters degree in Global Fisheries Sciences from PKNU. He has cultivated a diverse skill set and maintains an unwavering commitment to fostering an abundant and healthy marine life. This led Delio to accumulate valuable experience as a Fisheries and Aquaculture Investigator staff at the National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, and Forestry. Delio is also the founder and coordinator of the Sustainable Ocean Alliance Timor-Leste. With his team and other co-founders, this initiative brings together a community of young leaders, advocates, divers, entrepreneurs, mentors, and partners, fostering a collaborative platform to share, learn, and take action in protecting our oceans. Their initiatives include mangrove restoration, ocean bootcamp, and various activities aimed at promoting a sustainable and healthy ocean ecosystem.



Viet Nam



Bich-Nhi Chau - Bich-Nhi is the Green Economy Forum & Exhibition (GEFE) Project Officer at EuroCham, spearheading the organization's largest annual event. GEFE fosters high-level dialogue and collaboration between government, business, academia, and civil society, driving sustainable practices in Vietnam. Reports on policy recommendations are presented to the Vietnamese delegation at COP, shaping national conversations and driving policy change. Driven by a deep connection to her hometown, Hau Giang, Bich-Nhi strives to address pressing marine and river issues impacting the region. Witnessing the challenges posed by climate change, she seeks to leverage her experience at the Youth Conference to shape GEFE and facilitate dialogue, ensuring

diverse perspectives and local voices are heard. Her passion for sustainability and commitment to her community serve as motivations for GEFE to become a platform for fostering a sustainable future for our shared waters and the lives they sustain/

H.E. Mr. Dao Manh Nghia - H.E. Mr. Dao Manh Nghia is a famous political-legal scholar and young leader who is also an advocate of the Sustainable Development Goals including peace, global security, environmental justice, and ocean conservation. He currently serves as the Founder and President of the DMN Initiative - SDGs Council - DMN Foundation. He also holds positions as a CEO, Legal Director, Youth Ambassador, Independent Arbitrator/Mediator, and Honorary Reporter. He has written 25+ political-legal articles and served as Chairman and keynote speaker, and senior delegate at 60+ conferences across 15+ countries worldwide and had 500+ speaking engagements. His contributions have garnered 50+ awards/certificates from prestigious organizations. With over six



years of experience, Mr. Nghia possesses valuable expertise in legal systems worldwide, marine science, ASEAN/EU studies, and political science. He is also the founder of DMN Youth Ocean Conservation Summit. He always believed that "young people have the power to create a healthy and sustainable marine and ocean environment.

ANNEX 2: EAST ASIAN SEAS YOUTH FORUM 2024 SPEAKERS

Dr. Kim Young Nam

Team Head, Marine Environment Impact Assessment TF
Korea marine environment management corporation (KOEM)

Dr. Jo Hong-yeon

Marine bigdata & AI Center
Korea institute of ocean science & technology (KIOST)

Dr. Lee Gi Seop

Marine bigdata & AI Center
Korea institute of ocean science & technology (KIOST)

Mr. Park Young-chan

Director, AriBIO
Marine Industry Research Institute for East Sea Rim

Mr. Byun Ui-Hyun

CEO
USISAN

Mr. Bae Jin ho

Team Head, Ocean education and culture outreach team
Korea national ocean science museum (KOSM)

Mr. Lee Youngran

CEO / DVM / IUCN Cetacean Specialist Group
PLAN OCEAN

ANNEX 3: EAST ASIAN SEAS YOUTH FORUM 2024 FACILITATORS

PEMSEA Resource Facility

Ms. Shinji Kim

Deputy Head of Planning and Partnerships Development

Ms. Abigail Fiona Cruzada

Secretariat Coordinator

Mr. John Castillo

Visual Communications Officer

Ms. Rizza Sacra-Dejucos

Communications and Knowledge Management Consultant

Korea National Ocean Science Museum

Mr. Jinho BAE

Team Head, Ocean education and culture outreach team

Korea national ocean science museum (KOSM)

ANNEX 4: PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

DATE	CONTENTS
4.15	Arrival at Incheon Airport, Transfer to KOSM (~20:00)
4.16 09:30-12:00	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Program Introduction and ice breaker (Moderator) · KOSM tour (Museum exhibition, under water observatory tour activities)
12:00-13:00	Lunch
13:00-14:00	Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Welcome speeches (KOSM, PEMSEA, MOF, Governor, etc.) Group photo Keynote speech <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · ROK's Marine Environmental Conservation Policies (KOEM)
14:00- 18:00	Session 1. Sustainable Oceans and Coastal Management in the Era of Big Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Introduction to Marine Big Data (KIOST) 1.2 Marine Coastal Management Using Big Data (KIOST) 1.3 GIS Program Practice (KIOST)
18:00-20:00	Dinner
20:00-21:00	Small upcycling activity

<p>4.17 09:30-11:00</p>	<p>Session 2. Enhancement and Utilization of Marine Resources through Modern Science and New Technology</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">2.1 Marine deep bedrock water (saline groundwater), a treasure of Uljin, ROK (AriBIO in MIRE)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">2.2 Exemplary cases of upcycling utilizing marine plastics learned from social upcycling company. (USISAN)</p> <p>Session 3. Efforts for Marine Ecosystem Restoration and Marine Biodiversity Recovery</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">3.1 Marine Biodiversity Recovery Projects (KOSM)</p>
<p>12:00-13:00</p>	<p>Lunch</p>
<p>13:00-14:00</p>	<p style="padding-left: 40px;">3.2 Field Cases of Marine Animal Rescue and Treatment, including Whales (Plan Ocean, NGO)</p> <p>Social Media Time</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Delegates will be given "Social Media Time" to echo what they have learned from the session</p>
<p>14:30-17:30</p>	<p>On-site learning activity</p> <p>Yacht tour</p>
<p>18:00-21:00</p>	<p>Partnership night</p>

4.18	Beachcombing activity
08:30-09:30	Session 4. Sharing
09:30-12:30	<p>4.1 Experience sharing from the delegates</p> <p>4.2 Group discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · discuss priority actions and how youth are being engaged to address our goal · sharing experiences and lessons learned from the forum <p>4.3 Group presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Each group will present outcomes based on the lessons learned from the forum <p>4.4 Youth call for action</p> <p>Closing</p> <p>Social Media Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Delegates will be given "Social Media Time" to echo what they have learned from the session.
12:30-13:30	Lunch
14:00-19:00	Transfer to Seoul
4.19	Departure

ANNEX 5: OPENING MESSAGE OF THE PEMSEA RESOURCE FACILITY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Message from Aimee T. Gonzales

PEMSEA Executive Director

EAS Youth Forum

April 15-18, 2024

Uljin, RoKorea

Distinguished representatives from the Ministry of Ocean and Fisheries, the Korean Ocean Science Museum, honored guests, resource speakers, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

On behalf of Partnerships on Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia or PEMSEA for short, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations and welcome to the young leaders from ten PEMSEA countries to the East Asian Seas Youth Forum 2024.

The Youth Forum is one of the key preparatory events of the East Asian Seas Congress- the premiere once in three years gathering of the ocean policy community to review, acknowledge successes and lessons and accelerate actions to enhance the sustainable development of our shared ocean in the next years to come.

For several years now, PEMSEA has engaged young leaders in various traineeships and internships on integrated coastal management, conducted targeted policy and field research work to implement components of the joint regional marine strategy, the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA) and also in promoting ocean literacy and awareness raising activities.

Young leaders have joined us in almost all the EAS Congresses and I'm proud to say that despite some challenges, our youth activities continued despite the global pandemic through the conduct of online video and photo competitions.

This Congress year, PEMSEA has partnered with KOSM and MOF to prepare an exciting mix of activities for young leaders where we hope that you will not only gain knowledge and learn from each other, commit to become active members of PEMSEA's Network of Young Leaders, and most importantly forge lasting friendships amongst one another.

The four day program is specifically curated so that you will not only be listening and learning from experts in RoK, but also sharing your ideas, views and recommendations.

Most specifically, I look forward to receiving your inputs to help shape the 8th East Asian Seas Ministerial Declaration which aims to strengthen synergies in building sustainable, inclusive

and climate-resilient ocean. Emphasis on 'inclusive'.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for all of you as the chosen young leaders from your countries. May you seize this privilege and embrace your role and responsibilities as the next generation of coastal and ocean leaders in the East Asian Seas region who will continue to foster healthy and resilient coasts, communities, people and economies.

Last but not the least, I wish to thank the government of RoKorea through the Ministry of Ocean and Fisheries and KOSM, for coconvening this special event. I also wish to acknowledge Ms. Shinji Kim, Head of Policy and Partnerships of PEMSEA seconded from MOF who led and coordinated both PRF and KOSM in the planning of this critical part of the EAS Congress and for ensuring a smooth and successful meeting.

Thank you and I wish you all a productive and fun Forum!

ANNEX 6: 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 change² 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 prosperity³.

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;
- **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;

² IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate 2019

³ [Link](#)

- **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.

ANNEX 7: LINK TO PHOTOS AND PRESENTATIONS

Photos: [Highlight Photos](#)

Presentations:

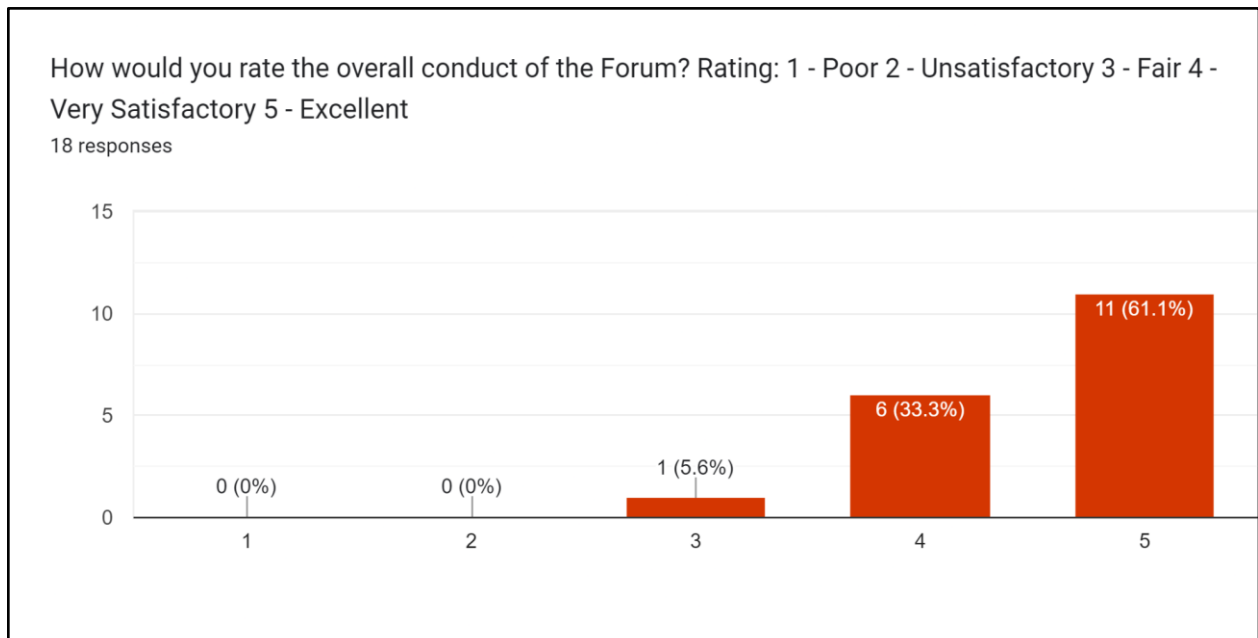
[Resource Speaker Presentations](#)

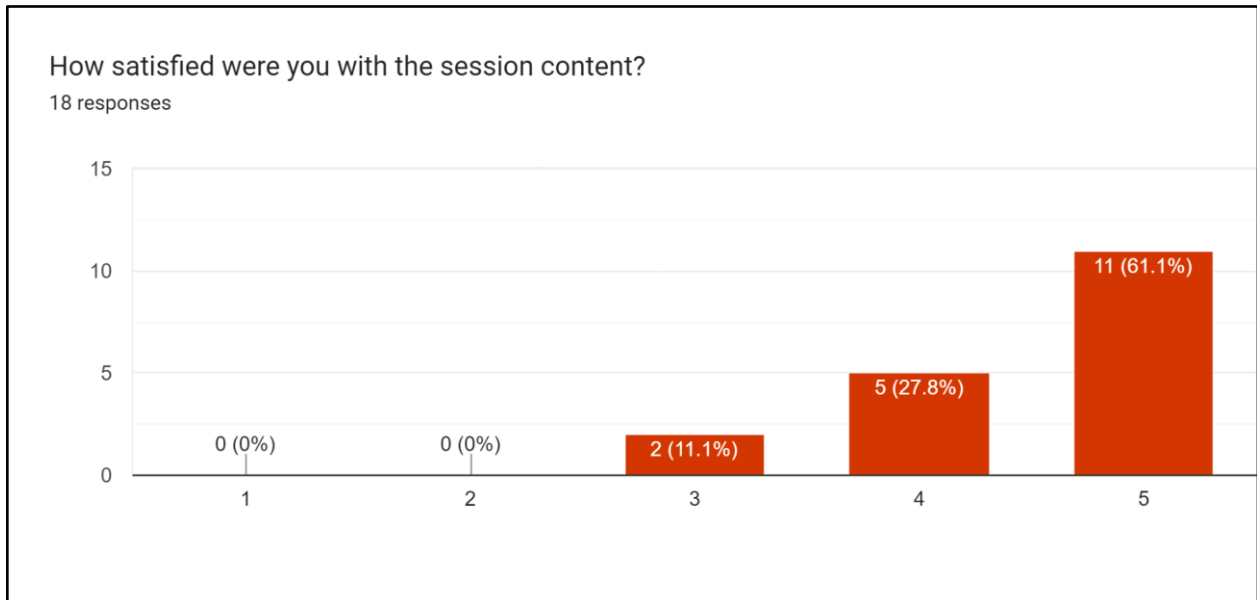
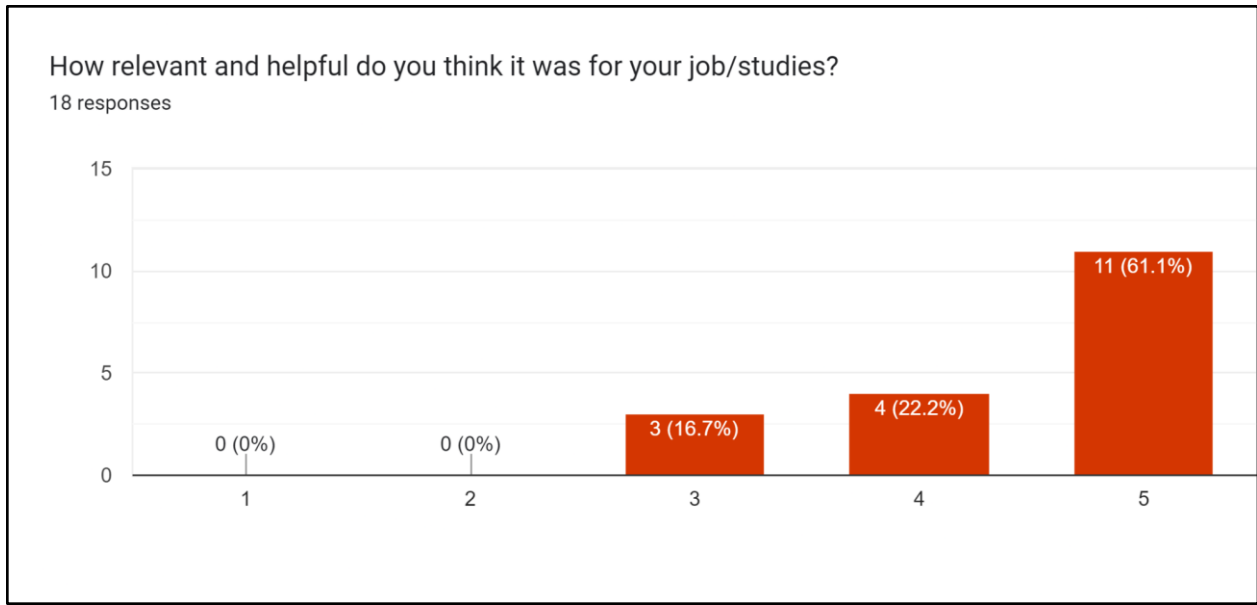
[Delegate Presentations](#)

ANNEX 8: YOUTH FORUM EVALUATION

Link: [Detailed Evaluations](#)

The following graphs show the evaluation of the youth forum in different aspects.





Key Takeaways from the event:

- There is an urgent need to solve environmental challenges such as biodiversity loss and climate change impacts in the oceans.
- The EAS 2024 Youth Forum provided valuable networking, knowledge exchange, and collaboration opportunities among youth delegates and speakers. The delegates also gained insights into marine sustainability, environmental policy, big data monitoring, and innovative business models.
- There is a recognition of the importance of collaborative solutions, youth engagement, and transboundary cooperation to enhance marine protection efforts.

The forum highlighted public-engaging marine conservation initiatives particularly from Korea and it highlighted the interconnectedness of the challenges faced by the oceans that are affecting the countries within East Asian Region.

- The delegates showed deep understanding of specific topics on marine mammal protection, plastic recycling, and saline groundwater extraction for drinking water
- The event fostered harmonious friendship and it underscored the importance of innovation, technology, and climate resilience. Overall, the forum inspired the young leaders to continue in advocating for ocean conservation.

Feedbacks on Logistics

- The delegates were overall satisfied with the event organization and logistics
- The transportation arrangement from Incheon Airport to the museum was smooth and the bus used was comfortable
- There were recommendations in using fast trains as part of the journey
- The Partnership Night would have been enhanced
- Food wastes were abundant and a buffet style instead of packed lunch would have been more sustainable
- So far there were no major complaints and the event was well-received

Comments Regarding the Sessions or Overall Agenda

- The feedback of the overall event is positive, with participants commending the management and expressing gratitude for the opportunity given to them
- Key points include:
 - Positive Feedback: General satisfaction with the organization of the event
 - Suggestions for Improvement:
 - More time for Q&A sessions
 - More opportunities to learn from other youth delegates
 - Inclusion of interactive activities like whale watching or intertidal walks
 - A desire for a concrete output from the youth
- The delegates appreciated the topic discussions and the experts who were involved in the forum. They look forward to applying the things they have learned during the forum.

Summarized Overall Feedback for the Event

- The event was overall positive – praising the organizers for their efforts in coming up with a successful youth forum
- The delegates appreciated the smooth organization and adherence to the time schedule of the different programs and sessions
- A lot of freebies were provided making the experience more memorable and valuable
- Suggestions from the delegates:
 - Invite local youth or students from Uljin to join as observers

- Encourage the delegates to focus more on being present rather than on social media
 - Provide grants to support youth-led initiatives
- The delegates also expressed that the youth event can lead up to future collaborations among themselves gearing towards the protection of the oceans