



WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE AREA OF THE NORTHWEST PACIFIC

19 - 23 February 2024

Tokyo, Japan

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Terms of Reference

The International Seabed Authority (ISA), in collaboration with Japan, will convene a workshop on the development of a Regional Environmental Management Plan (REMP) for the Area of the Northwest Pacific in Tokyo, Japan, from 19 February to 23 February 2024.

Background

In line with the mandate of ISA to ensure effective protection for the marine environment from harmful effects which may arise from activities undertaken in the international seabed area (the Area), the Council of ISA, during the 24th session, took note of a strategy for the development of REMPs for key provinces in the Area where exploration activities under contracts were being carried out (ISBA/24/C/3). The Council agreed with priority areas that had been identified on a preliminary basis as the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the Indian Ocean triple junction ridge and nodule-bearing province, as well as the North-west Pacific and South Atlantic for seamounts (ISBA/24/C/8). At its 25th session in 2019, the Council took note of a report of the Secretary-General of ISA on the implementation of the REMF strategy (ISBA/25/C/13), including a programme of work to develop these through a series of expert workshops.

In this context, ISA Secretariat, in collaboration with Japan, will convene a workshop on the development of a REMF for the Area of the Northwest Pacific Ocean. The workshop will build on the results of previous workshops held in Qingdao, China in 2018 and the online REMF workshop in 2020. Since the convening of the last workshop, new environmental studies have been conducted in this region, which can be used to inform the further development of a REMF in this region.

Workshop Objectives

Building on the scientific results from the previous REMF workshop held for this region,¹ the workshop will

¹ The report from the online workshop held in 2020 is available at [NWP_REMF_workshop_report.pdf \(isa.org.jm\)](https://www.isa.org.jm/NWP_REMF_workshop_report.pdf). Further information about the workshop is available at [Workshop on the Regional Environmental Management Plan for the Area of the Northwest Pacific – International Seabed Authority \(isa.org.jm\)](https://www.isa.org.jm/Workshop-on-the-Regional-Environmental-Management-Plan-for-the-Area-of-the-Northwest-Pacific-International-Seabed-Authority)

primarily focus on further refining and improving the scientific basis for the development of the REMP for this region. The specific objectives are to:

- (i) review and synthesize newly available scientific data and information related to the biological, oceanographical and geological aspects of the marine environment in the Northwest Pacific Ocean;
- (ii) validate and refine the design of potential area-based management tools (ABMTs) identified in the previous online workshop,² and review and further improve the scientific rationale for the identification of such potential ABMTs based on agreed scientific criteria;
- (iii) drawing on the results from the quantitative modeling of cumulative impacts from the previous online workshop,³ determine ecosystem components, which may be at a high risk from future potential exploitation activities and cumulative impacts, and on this basis, appropriate management approaches for addressing such impacts, including non-spatial measures; and
- (iv) discuss priorities for future, regional-scale monitoring and research.

The data report and regional environmental assessment⁴ will be updated before the workshop to incorporate new data and information published since the online workshop held in 2020. An annotated agenda for the workshop will be available on the ISA website in due course.

Expected Outputs

A workshop report will be prepared by the designated co-chairs with assistance from the Secretariat. The workshop report will include 1) a scientific proposal for potential ABMTs, 2) suggested management approaches for addressing cumulative impacts, and 3) proposed priorities for future monitoring and research at the regional scale. The workshop report, together with the updated data report and regional environmental assessment, will be submitted to the Legal and Technical Commission for its consideration.

The results of this workshop will contribute to the future development of the REMP for this region. This may include another policy and management workshop to inform the Legal and Technical Commission in its consideration and drafting of the REMP for this region. The combined results from the expert workshops held for this region⁵ will inform the Legal and Technical Commission in its development of a REMP for this region.

² See Annex V of the report from the online workshop held in 2020 [NWP REMP workshop report.pdf \(isa.org.jm\)](#)

³ See Annex IV of the report from the online workshop held in 2020 [NWP REMP workshop report.pdf \(isa.org.jm\)](#)

⁴ Available at [Workshop on the Regional Environmental Management Plan for the Area of the Northwest Pacific – International Seabed Authority \(isa.org.jm\)](#)

⁵ Including this workshop as well as previous workshops held in Qingdao, China in 2018 and the online workshop in 2020.