



Bangladesh



India



Indonesia



Malaysia



Maldives



Myanmar



Sri Lanka



Thailand

# WORKSHOP ON ASSESSING GOVERNANCE IN THE BAY OF BENGAL LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM

October 28-30, 2014, Bangkok, Thailand

## Workshop summary and messages for Bay of Bengal marine resource policy-makers and other stakeholders

### Key messages

The net must be cast wider when dealing with governance assessment and include other players such as private sector associations, law-makers and politicians.

**Principles** - Explicit attention should be given to understanding principles as perceived by stakeholders in various settings, as this is foundational to good governance.

**Regional governance arrangements** - There is the need to further assess both governance arrangements and performance for transboundary ocean issues.

**National regional interface** – promotion of good regional ocean governance in the BOBLME will require greater attention to national level arrangements for engagement in regional matters.

**Science-Policy interfaces** - The science-policy gap in regional level ocean governance must be addressed if governance is to use 'best available knowledge (scientific and traditional)'.



Fisheries



Pollution



Biodiversity and habitats

### The BOBLME Project

The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project is one of several Global Environment Facility International Waters Programme Projects globally. The first full project began in 2009 and conducted a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) which identifies three main transboundary issues for the BOB:

- Overexploitation of marine living resources
- Degradation of mangroves, coral reefs and seagrasses
- Pollution and water quality

The Project has also prepared a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) to address these issues and will begin implementing the SAP in the next phase.

### Why a focus on ocean governance in the Bay of Bengal

Poor governance was identified in the TDA as a root cause of environmental degradation and overexploitation of natural resources in the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME). Consequently, the SAP includes strengthening transboundary governance mechanisms. Workshop participants were of the view that it is of critical importance for the countries of the Bay of Bengal to begin to assess the transboundary governance arrangements in place for the key issues and develop the interventions that will be required in order to improve them.



*The Workshop on Assessing Governance in the Bay Of Bengal LME was held to initiate a multi-stakeholder dialogue on what is needed to improve transboundary governance in the region*

## Why hold the workshop at this time?

The SAP implementation phase is expected to begin in 2015. Implementation will include attention to transboundary governance arrangements. These arrangements include a variety of global and regional agreements and organisations with mandates to address aspects of three key issues identified above. It is critical that BOBLME countries begin to assess these arrangements for ocean governance, which all together comprise the governance architecture for the region, as well as their performance. Participants affirmed that this information is needed to guide improvements in governance.

## Workshop specifics

There were seven working sessions over three days:

1. The opening - looked at governance in general.
2. The big picture – examined how the CLME had approached governance through the LME Governance Framework.
3. Principles – explored the importance and role of principles as a foundation for governance.
4. Transboundary governance arrangements in BOBLME – examined the structure and integration of regional agreements for the key transboundary issues.
5. National-regional interfaces – reviewed the mechanisms in place for countries to engage with regional bodies and projects to address transboundary issues.
6. Science-policy interfaces – examined the mechanisms by which knowledge informs policy in the region.
7. Planning post-workshop activities

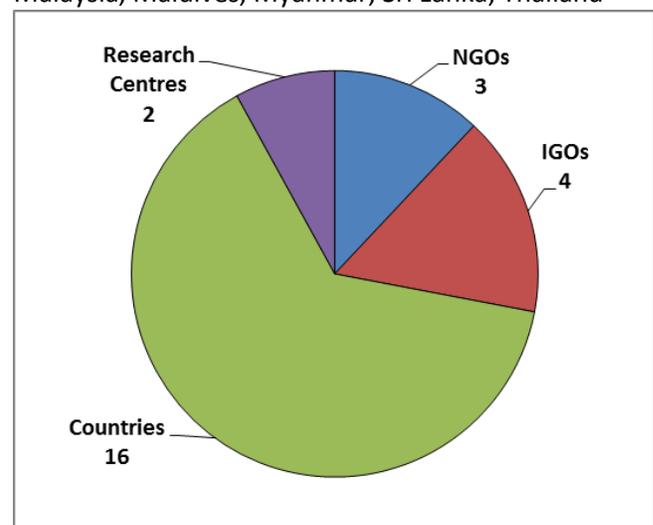
## What did the workshop set out to achieve?

The objective of the workshop was to begin a structured discussion on regional ocean governance in the BOBLME, drawing on lessons from a developing region with similar issues to identify key areas of concern and to carry out preliminary assessments by:

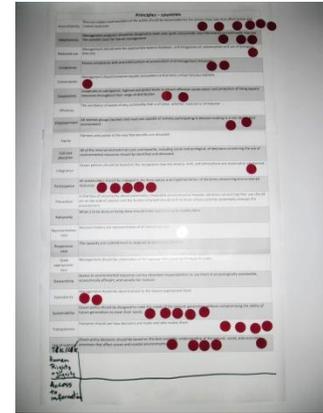
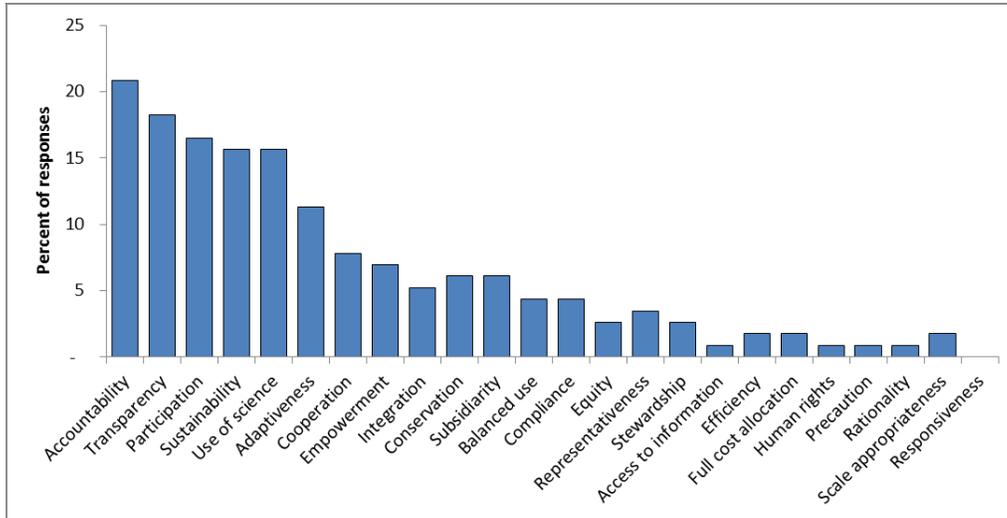
- Sharing the approach to regional ocean governance in the Caribbean LME Project
- Determining which aspects of the CLME approach are relevant for BOBLME
- Exploring next steps in assessing and improving transboundary ocean governance in the BOBLME

## Workshop statistics

Participants came from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand



## Participants' prioritization of principles for the Bay of Bengal



Participants used dots to prioritize principles on a list



## Workshop conclusions and future work

### *Principles*

As the stakeholders of the BOBLME proceed towards principled ocean governance, the process should include opportunities for them to reflect explicitly on the principles that are most relevant to the issues that concern them and how these should be put into practice.

### *Regional governance arrangements*

The policy processes (arrangements) associated with the transboundary issues are an important aspect of governance. Participants concluded that it would be useful to continue to assess their structure, performance and integration to determine governance effectiveness in the region and guide its improvement.

This would include analyses of organizational mandates, actual activities and networking among organizations in the BOBLME. The findings of these analyses would inform the development of the 'consortium' proposed in the SAP.

### *The national-regional interface*

Good regional ocean governance in the BOBLME will require greater attention to the national level arrangements for engagement with agencies and projects at the regional level. Development and enhancement of national level, multi-stakeholder, mechanisms will also provide improved integration at the national level. Participants concluded that the types and functioning of these mechanisms in BOBLME countries should be explored in greater depth to determine gaps and gather best practices for the region.

### *Regional science-policy interfaces*

The constraints to uptake of science by regional level ocean governance arrangements should be examined to determine how to promote use of 'best available knowledge'. Addressing this will require strategic and tactical action within the context of the BOBLME but will also require the active engagement of science producers, knowledge holders and consumers at many levels.

## How we will proceed

Further work is planned in two parts:

- The first part will collect further information needed to complete the analyses started at the workshop, this includes preliminary assessments for the BOBLME of;
  - national-regional interface mechanisms
  - science-interfaces in the BOBLME,
  - transboundary governance arrangements

These reports will be available in the first quarter of 2015,

- The second part will involve planning and implementation of work to be done over the duration of the next phase of the BOBLME Project. This will involve more detailed assessments and development of the proposed coordinating 'consortium'.

## What supporting actions are needed?

- Policy makers are encouraged to take the time to understand regional ocean governance issues and to promote improving them
- Senior civil/public servants are invited to take leadership roles in pursuing the directions identified in this workshop and to facilitate lower level involvement.
- IGOs are encouraged to be clear and persistent in identifying enabling reforms and actions needed for them to achieve their mandates.
- Civil society is urged to intensify its efforts to engage with national and regional processes that are essential for effective transboundary ocean governance.



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Further details can be found in the workshop proceedings available at [www.boblme.org](http://www.boblme.org)*



Food and Agriculture Organization  
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