

PRESS COVERAGE

04/10/2012 BOBLME PROJECT IMPROVES MARINE LIFE AND FISHERIES IN BAY OF BENGAL

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[News Archive](#) BOBLME PROJECT IMPROVES MARINE LIFE AND FISHERIES IN BAY OF BENGAL

BOBLME PROJECT IMPROVES MARINE LIFE AND FISHERIES IN BAY OF BENGAL

PENANG 2 October 2012 – A regional workshop was held here today to determine fisheries, coastal and marine environment policy directions in the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) countries.

Among the objectives of BOBLME is to improve the lives of the coastal populations through improved regional management of the Bay of Bengal environment and its fisheries.

Eight countries – Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand – are working together through this project to ensure that there is enough fish for future generations by prudent management of the shared ecosystem.

The three-day workshop was organised by Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) through *(CenPRIS) and School of Biology* in collaboration with Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME).

Director of CenPRIS (*Centre for Policy Research and International Studies*), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Azhari Karim said that the workshop will serve as a platform for more specific discussions on bringing stakeholders together to discuss on ways to manage the ocean to improve the livelihood of coastal populations.

"The main challenges in the Bay Bengal are over exploitation of marine resources, loss of critical habitats and water pollution," BOBLME Chief Technical Advisor, Regional Coordination Unit, Dr Rudolf Hermes highlighted.

He said that the aim of the workshop is to determine the policies pertaining to the sustainability of the marine environment as well as exploring ways to overcome the underlying problems and working collaborations with the countries concerned.

Rudolf expressed concern on overfishing, adding that "declines in fish stocks, such as the mackerel, affect these countries within the Bay of Bengal region."

The workshop represents yet another initiative in the on-going effort by USM to address issues relating to the management of the health of marine ecosystems, ensuring its long term sustainability.

It is aimed at enhancing knowledge and capacities towards the development of new global approaches.

Inputs on the integrated coastal system management and marine spatial planning, framework for policy and governance, indicators, tools and best practices during the workshop will help chart the direction for BOBLME project.

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1/1