OPEN WEBINAR · SUB-GLOBAL ASSESSMENT NETWORK

GLOBAL PRESENTATION OF THE KEY FINDINGS OF THE THAILAND NATIONAL ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT

Marine biodiversity and ecosystem services

26 August 2026 · 09:00 – 10:15 British Summer Time (GMT+1)

Co-organised by the NEA Initiative at UNEP-WCMC, Chula Unisearch, Chulalongkorn University, and ONEP, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

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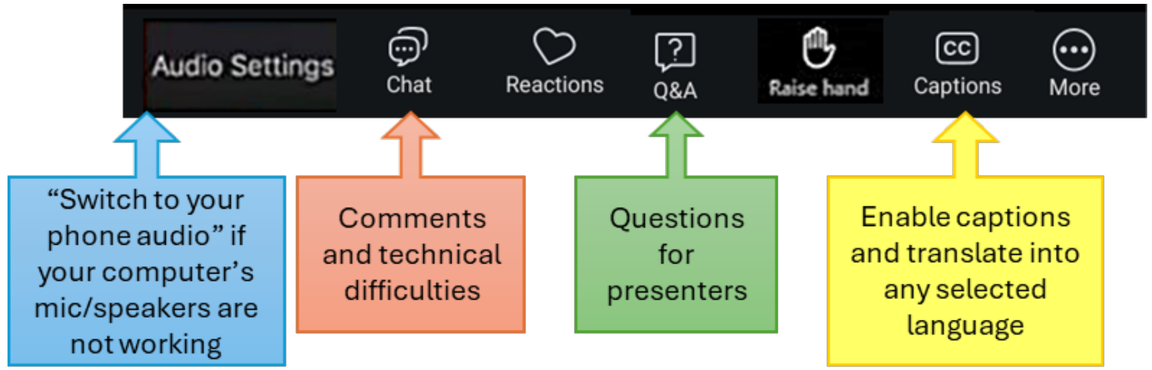

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

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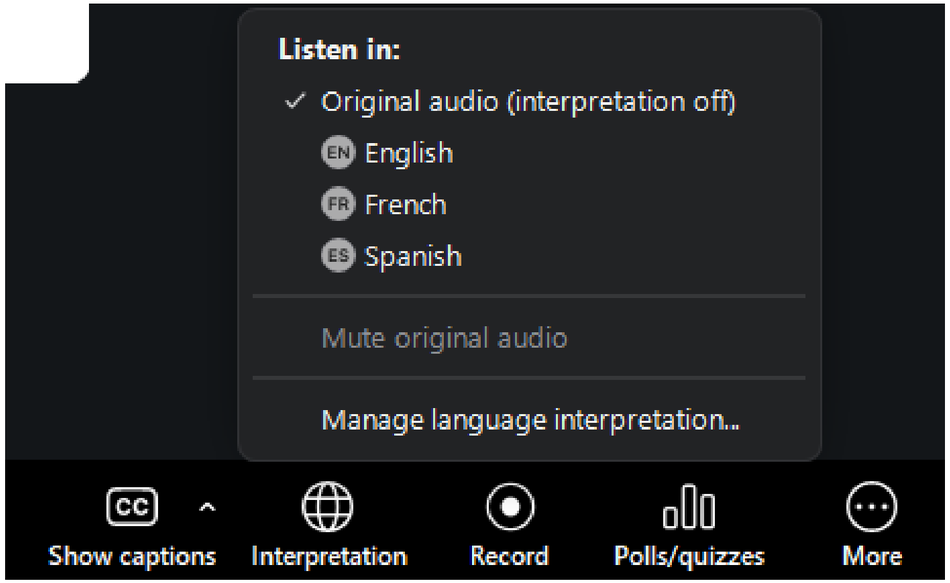

AGENDA

75 minutes

5’	**Welcome and Introduction to the webinar**	Moderator, UNEP-WCMC
10’	**Overview of the Thailand National Ecosystem Assessment process**	Dr. Benchamaporn Wattanatonchai ONEP · Pre-recorded video
25’	**Key findings from the Thailand National Ecosystem Assessment**	Prof. Dr. Padermsak Jarayabhand Project Director Lead Authors Team
10’	**Policy-relevant options and opportunities to use the assessment findings in national planning and decision-making**	Dr. Petch Manopawitr Project Manager
20’	**Panel discussion and Q&A** Use of assessment findings, financing, partnerships and peer-to-peer learning	Moderated by UNEP-WCMC
5’	**Closing remarks and next steps**	Charlotte Hicks Senior Technical Officer, UNEP-WCMC

SESSION 1 10 minutes

OVERVIEW OF THE THAILAND NATIONAL ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Dr. Benchamaporn Wattanatonchai

Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)

PRE-RECORDED VIDEO



SESSION 2 25 minutes

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE THAILAND NEA

Prof. Dr. Padermsak Jarayabhand

Thailand National Ecosystem Assessment Project Director

LEAD AUTHOR TEAM

Assoc. Prof. Thamasak Yeemin

Mr. Sakanan Plathong

Assoc. Prof. Orapan Srisawalak

Assoc. Prof. Narumon Arunotai

Prof. Suvaluck Satumanatpan

Dr. Vithet Srinetr

Dr. Wichin Suebpala

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Thailand National Ecosystem Assessment



Protecting Our Oceans

Strategies for Marine Conservation

Acknowledgement & Overview



Professor Padermsak Jarayabhand
Project Director





NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

COORDINATORS

Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE)

TECHNICAL LEAD

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Chulalongkorn University

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WITH DEEPEST RESPECT AND THANKS TO

The Chao Lay communities (Moken, Moklen, Urak Lawoi) and traditional small-scale fishers who generously shared their Indigenous and Local Knowledge to safeguard Thailand's marine heritage.



CHAO LAY COMMUNITIES (MOKEN, MOKLEN, URAK LAWOI)



TRADITIONAL SMALL-SCALE FISHERS



INDIGENOUS & LOCAL KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS



Together, we build knowledge. | Together, we protect our oceans. | Together, we secure our future.

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Thailand's Marine Wealth:
Strategic National Capital



1 ECONOMIC ENGINE

Underpins a Blue Economy valued at

THB 24 TRILLION

2 PROVINCIAL POWER

23 coastal provinces generate

THB 5.62 TRILLION

32% of total national GDP



3 BIODIVERSITY STANDING

Ranked

20TH

in the world for species richness

4 SOCIAL & LIVELIHOOD ANCHOR

Small-scale fisheries represent

20.7%

of total marine capture, securing food and coastal jobs

5 BLUE CARBON GIANTS



Crucial carbon sequestration services

Example:
TRANG SEAGRASS BEDS

Valued at

THB 727.2 MILLION

over 20 years

NATURAL CLIMATE SOLUTION

OUR OCEANS ARE NOT INFINITE. PROTECTING TODAY SECURES TOMORROW. | **STRATEGIC ASSET. SHARED FUTURE.**

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SYSTEMIC PRESSURES & INTEGRATED CO-PRODUCTION FRAMEWORKS

Understanding the Crisis Building Solutions Together

1. MARINE CRISIS & PRESSURES (THE PROBLEMS)

HABITAT LOSS

- Over 70% of seagrass beds are in poor-to-fair condition
- Massive coral bleaching: 85% Gulf, 90% Andaman reefs in 2024



HUMAN PRESSURES

- Wild fisheries capture cut in half
- Unmanaged tourism over carrying capacities



RIDGE-TO-REEF IMPACT

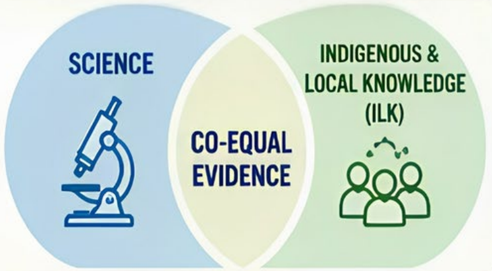
- Land-use shifts (e.g., steep-slope durian orchards)
- Trigger heavy chemical and sediment runoff



2. SYSTEMIC CO-PRODUCTION FRAMEWORKS (THE METHODOLOGY)

1 IPBES CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (VALUE PLURALISM)

Weaves science and Indigenous & Local Knowledge (ILK) as co-equal lines of evidence (MEB approach).



2 DPSIR CAUSAL CHAIN

Connects macro Drivers & direct Pressures to State changes, societal Impactis, and targeted policy Responses.



3 NAGOYA PROTOCOL INTEGRATION

Safeguards cultural rights and Data Sovereignty of coastal ethnic groups.



3. PRACTICAL TOOLS IN ACTION

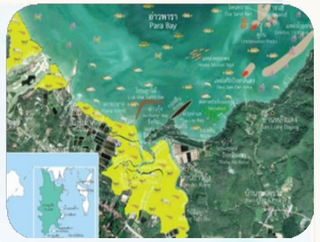
FIELD SCHOOLS

Building mutual trust to collect local observations.



PARTICIPATORY MAPPING

Local co-mapping of hidden features (e.g., Phuket's deep mangrove canals invisible to satellites)



NATIONAL TRIALOGUES (BES-NET)

Multi-stakeholder dialogues weaving science, policy, and lived experiences.



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Summary for Policymakers (SPM):
Chapters, Headings & Lead Authors

THAILAND NEA | MARINE BIODIVERSITY & ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

CHAPTER 1	(SPM 3)	**Current Status and Trends of Marine BES** Status of critical marine habitats (mangroves, reefs, seagrasses) and regulating services	 **LEAD AUTHORS** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thamasak Yeemin & Dr. Wichin Suebpala.
CHAPTER 2	(SPM 4)	**Drivers, Pressures, and Socio-ecological Impacts** Direct human impacts, carrying capacities, and Ridge-to-Reef agricultural runoffs	 **LEAD AUTHORS** Mr. Sakanan Plathong & Ms. Wipada Lalitpattarakit
CHAPTER 3	(SPM 5)	**Economic Valuation & Blue Finance** Ocean economy baseline, valuing invisible ecosystem services, and blue finance innovations	 **LEAD AUTHOR** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orapan Nabangchang
CHAPTER 4	(SPM 6)	**Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK)** Integrating Chao Lay wisdom and utilizing traditional oral legends (e.g., the giant wave Laboon)	 **LEAD AUTHORS** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Narumon Arunotai & ILKCo-AuthorsTeam
CHAPTER 5	(SPM 7)	**Governance, Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), & 30x30 Target** Ocean governance, spatial planning grids, and OECM deployment for sustainable targets	 **LEAD AUTHOR** Prof. Dr. Suvaluck Satumanatpan
CHAPTER 6	(SPM 8)	**Scenarios towards 2050 & Policy Options** Plausible futures (Business-as-Usual, Blue Economy, Nature-Positive) and immediate no-regret actions	 **LEAD AUTHOR** Dr. Vithete Srinetr

IPBES CONFIDENCE FRAMEWORK

Credibility of key findings is assessed using four confidence levels:

WELL ESTABLISHED
Strong evidence and high agreement

ESTABLISHED BUT INCOMPLETE
Moderate evidence and agreement

UNRESOLVED
Limited evidence or low agreement

INCONCLUSIVE
Evidence and agreement cannot be assessed

SCIENCE + POLICY + PEOPLE
Co-producing knowledge for a resilient ocean future

CO-PRODUCTION IN ACTION
Weaving science, Indigenous & Local Knowledge, and lived experiences

BETTER KNOWLEDGE, BETTER DECISIONS
For a sustainable and nature-positive Thailand



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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thamasak Yeemin

Status and Trends of Marine BES

Thailand's marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystem services are vital for people, livelihoods, and the economy.

Why Marine BES matters

- Marine BES covers biodiversity plus ecosystem services.
- Thailand's key ecosystems include mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs, beaches, lagoons and estuaries, and offshore systems.
- These systems support biodiversity, coastal communities, and the national economy.

Key ecosystems

- Mangroves
- Seagrass
- Coral reefs
- Beaches
- Lagoons & estuaries
- Offshore

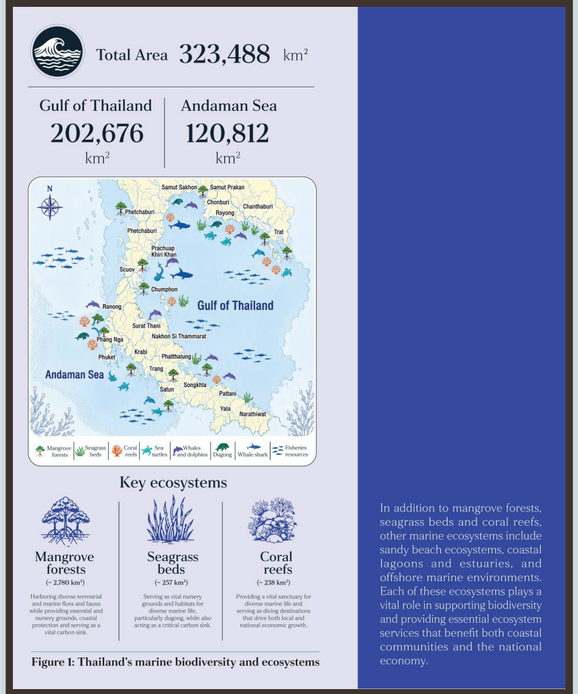
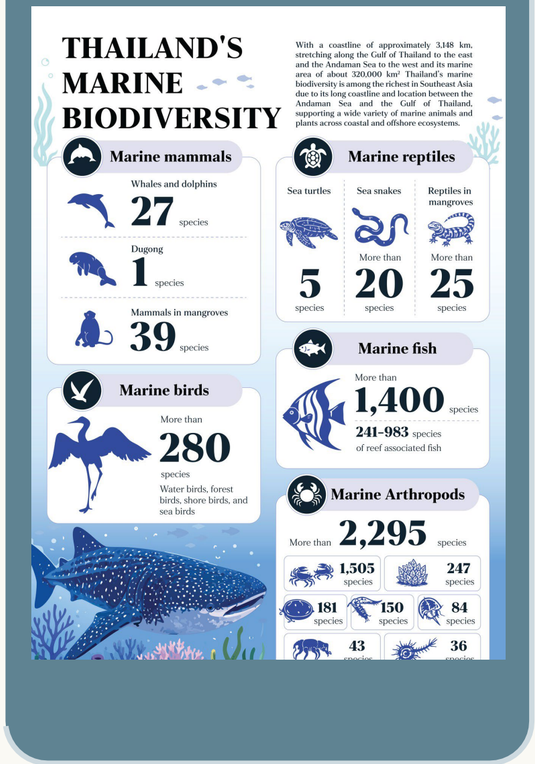
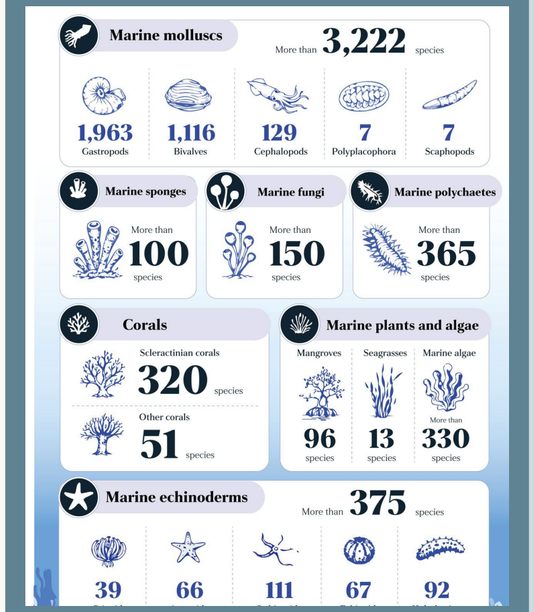


Figure 1: Thailand's marine biodiversity and ecosystems





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Dr. Thamasak Yeemin

Status and Trends of Marine BES

Three signals of decline

Key Messages show that ecosystems, ecosystem services, and environmental quality are declining.

1 Key Message

Ecosystems are degrading

- Major marine and coastal ecosystems have declined over recent decades.
- Drivers: human activities and climate change.
- Priorities: MSP, area-based conservation, EAFM, restoration, pollution control, and blue carbon.

Maintain ecosystem integrity, functions, and services.

2 Key Message

Ecosystem services are weakening

- Biodiversity loss reduces ecosystem service quality and benefits to people.
- Marine services support livelihoods, safety, culture, and human well-being.
- Priorities: service valuation, natural capital/SEEA/ocean accounts, EIA, and NbS.

Recognize the true value of nature in planning.

3 Key Message

Environmental quality is declining

- Environmental pressures are increasing across marine and coastal areas.
- Key issues: pollution, marine debris, bleaching, erosion, eutrophication, and overfishing.
- Priorities: land–sea management, enforcement, EBFM, sustainable tourism, restoration, and citizen science.

Enable adaptive management and rapid response.

Overall: marine policy should link conservation, restoration, pollution control, sustainable use, and long-term

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thamasak Yeemin

Status and Trends of Marine BES: Policy Pathway

Close knowledge gaps and strengthen monitoring

A stronger evidence base is needed for adaptive, science-based marine policy.

Key Message

Four knowledge gaps

1 **Biodiversity information**

Limited and inconsistent ecosystem and species data.

2 **Socio-economic & services**

Insufficient valuation and weak policy integration.

3 Drivers & pressures

Cumulative and land–sea impacts not fully understood.

4 **Monitoring & restoration**

Lack of standardized methods, indicators, and participation.

Key Message

Monitoring priorities

1 **National protocols**

Standardized indicators and methods.

2 **Beyond coastal zones**

Offshore ecosystems and connectivity.

3 **Integrated drivers**

Human and natural pressures, climate vulnerability.

4 **Advanced + participatory tools**

Remote sensing, GIS, AI, eDNA, citizen science, and ILK.

Takeaway: integrated science, local knowledge, and long-term monitoring support evidence-based marine policy and resilient ecosystems.



Mr. Sakanan Plathong
Drivers, Pressures and Impacts: Policy Pathway

MAIN POLICY FOCUS

What are the key drivers, pressures, and impacts affecting Thailand's Marine BES?

KEYPOINTS

- Assessment based on the DPSIRframework
- Marineecosystem degradation isdriven by socio-economicdevelopment and climate change
- Impacts extend to food security, economy, health, and human well-being



1 DRIVERS

Socio-economic development and climate change



- Population growth
- Economic growth
- Climate change
- Policy & technology

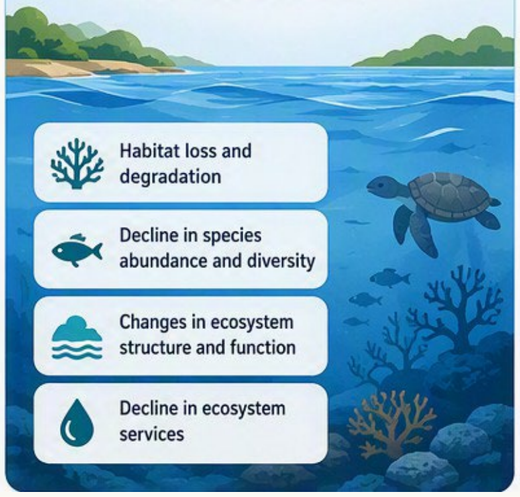
2 PRESSURES

Major human activities put stress on the ocean

- Tourism
- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Shipping and ports
- Coastal industries
- Coastal urbanization
- Offshore oil and gas production

3 MARINE ECOSYSTEMS (STATE)

Degradation of marine ecosystems and loss of biodiversity



- Habitat loss and degradation
- Decline in species abundance and diversity
- Changes in ecosystem structure and function
- Decline in ecosystem services

4 IMPACTS (HUMAN WELL-BEING)

Impacts extend to people and society

- **Food Security** — Reduced fishery yields and marine food availability
- **Economy** — Loss of income, jobs, and costs to coastal and marine sectors
- **Health** — Impacts on nutrition, disease risks, and mental well-being
- **Quality of Life** — Reduced recreation, cultural values, and community well-being

KEY MESSAGE

Addressing the root drivers and reducing pressures are essential to protect marine ecosystems and secure a sustainable future for Thailand's people and economy.



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Mr. Sakanan Plathong
Drivers, Pressures and Impacts: Policy Pathway

Policy Question

What are the drivers and pressures which affect marine biodiversity and ecosystem services?

Key Message

Government-driven, market-driven, and climate-related forces are key drivers of change affecting Marine BES

SOCIAL DRIVERS

- Demographic transition
- Resource-intensive consumption patterns

ECONOMIC DRIVERS

- Coastal tourism growth
- Fisheries and aquaculture expansion
- EEC development
- Commercial agriculture expansion

NATURAL DRIVER

- Climate change
- Sea-level rise
- Increasing sea surface temperatures

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Promote DPSIR-based planning
2. Develop indicators for drivers and pressures
3. Mainstream Marine BES into national development planning

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Drivers, Pressures and Impacts: Policy Pathway

Policy Question

What are the impacts of marine resource degradation on the environment and human well-being?

Key Message

Marine resources depletion and environmental degradation directly affect human well-being and human security.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Impacts across seven human security dimensions:



Examples:

- Declining fish stocks
- Reduced fisheries income
- Coastal erosion
- Increased climate-related risks

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strengthen EIA, SEA and EHIA regulations
2. Improve environmental monitoring
3. Enhance compliance and enforcement

POLICY QUESTION 13

Reorienting Marine Ecosystem Assessment



POLICY QUESTION

How can marine ecosystem assessments better identify and address drivers and pressures?

KEY MESSAGE

Marine assessments should move beyond environmental outcomes and focus on identifying underlying drivers and pressures.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Current limitations:

- Insufficient socioeconomic data
- No dedicated marine economic information system
- Assessments focus mainly on resource conditions rather than root causes

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop marine-specific socioeconomic information systems
- Create indicators for drivers and pressures
- Promote community-based data collection
- Integrate indigenous and local knowledge

CHAPTER 4

Key Takeaways from Chapter 4

01 MAJOR DRIVERS

Major drivers arise from economic, social, and climate-related factors.

- Economic Factors
- Social Factors
- Climate-related Factors



02 MAJOR PRESSURES

Major pressures include:

- Tourism
- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Shipping
- Coastal Industries

03 IMPACTS AFFECT

Impacts affect:

- Food Security
- Livelihoods
- Public Health
- Human Well-being



04 FUTURE MANAGEMENT

Future management should focus on root causes through:

- DPSIR-based Planning
- Integrated Governance
- Better socio-economic and environmental data integration



DPSIR FRAMEWORK: FROM CAUSES TO SOLUTIONS

D — DRIVERS



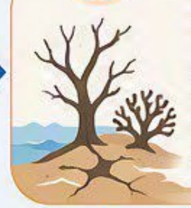
Socio-economic and climate factors drive human activities.

P — PRESSURES



Human activities create pressures on coastal and marine systems.

S — ECOSYSTEM DEGRADATION



Ecosystems degrade, losing structure, function and resilience.

I — HUMAN WELL-BEING IMPACTS



Degradation leads to impacts on people's well-being and quality of life.

R — POLICY RESPONSES



Policy and management responses address root causes and build resilience.

Continuous feedback and adaptive management

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orapan Nabangchang
Economics Valuation

POLICY QUESTION 14

How do marine ecosystems and ecosystem services contribute to Thailand's economy and people's well-being?

KEY MESSAGE 17

Marine ecosystems and ecosystem services play an important role in the economy and human well-being.

KeyPoints



Supports livelihoods and economic activities

Fisheries, tourism, and marine production provide jobs, income and food.



Provides vital regulating services

Coastal protection, carbon sequestration, and water purification sustain people and the environment.



Generates substantial but unpriced value

Many benefits are not reflected through market mechanisms and remain invisible in decisions.



Economic valuation informs better decisions

Valuation makes the true value visible and supports evidence-based policy and investment.

KEY RECOMMENDATION | Integrate ecosystem value information into public planning and investment.

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orapan Nabangchang
Economics Valuation

Why is economic valuation of ecosystem services necessary?

1 No Market Price — Ecosystem services have no market prices

2 Ignored in Planning — Benefits excluded from decisions

3 Hidden Costs — Degradation creates unaccounted losses

4 Economic Valuation — reveals true value

No Market Price
Many ecosystem services have no market price and are therefore often overlooked in economic decisions.

Not Considered
Without valuation, the economic value of ecosystem services is often excluded from planning and investment.

Revealing Hidden Value
Economic valuation reveals the true benefits and costs associated with ecosystem change.

Ecosystem services generated by marine resources are real and measurable. Without economic valuation, however, these values often remain invisible to policymakers and are overlooked in planning and investment decisions.

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orapan Nabangchang
Economics Valuation

Policy Question 14: How do marine ecosystems and ecosystem services contribute to Thailand's economy and people's we l-being ?

Strong economic evidence exists - but important valuation gaps remain

WHERE EVIDENCE IS STRONGEST

Mangroves
Fisheries · Carbon
Coastal protection

Coral reefs
Tourism · Fisheries
Coastal protection

Seagrass
Biodiversity · Dugong conservation
Carbon benefits

Use what we know, and fill the gaps

WHERE MAJOR GAPS REMAIN

- **Beaches & dunes**
- **Offshore ecosystems**
- **Regulating services**
  Nutrient cycling · Water purification
  Storm buffering
- **Pollution costs & cumulative impacts**
- **Coastal Protection**

POLICY IMPLICATION | Strengthen the evidence base, valuation databases and standardized methods to support policy and investment decisions.







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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orapan Nabangchang
Economics Valuation



Policy Question 15: What are the investment gaps, and how can the private sector and financial institutions help support conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems ?

KEY MESSAGE 18

Closing the investment gap requires systematic mobilization of private-sector and financial-sector resources.

Key Issues

01 Many investments still fail to account for the value of ecosystem services.

02 Ecosystem degradation creates long-term economic costs.

03 Conservation and restoration are often underfunded.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote
  - Blue Bonds ·
  - Blended Finance ·
  - Carbon-linked Finance
- Overhaul the existing user charge and pollution charge mechanisms

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orapan Nabangchang
Economics Valuation



Policy Question 16: Can existing public investment reduce negative environmental impacts while promoting Nature-Positive principles ?

KEY MESSAGE 19

Public investment must avoid environmental harm and support Nature-positive development.

KEY MESSAGE 20

Thailand's sustainable development future depends on systematically integrating marine and coastal natural capital into policy and investment decisions.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

No Net Loss / Net Gain
• Nature-based Solutions

Ensure development avoids net loss of ecosystems and delivers a net gain in natural capital through nature-based solutions.

Appropriate compensation for ecosystem damage

Require fair and effective compensation for unavoidable environmental impacts.

THE PATHWAY TO NATURE-POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

1 RECOGNIZE the value of natural capital



Understand and make visible the economic value of marine and coastal ecosystems and their services.

2 INVEST to conserve and restore natural capital



Allocate public and private resources to conserve, restore and sustainably use marine and coastal ecosystems.

3 ACHIEVE sustainable and nature-positive development



Build a resilient economy and well-being for people while enhancing nature for future generations.

BENEFITS FOR THAILAND

- Lower disaster and climate risks
- Healthy ecosystems and biodiversity
- Improved well-being and livelihoods for people

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Narumon Arunotai
ILK and Marine BES

ILK as evidence-based system for understanding and managing Thailand's coastal and marine ecosystems



Group	Description	Settlement	Number	Detail
Chao Lay	Sea nomads or Chao Lay whose life is deeply intertwined with marine, coastal and island environments	5 Andaman province	14,000 in 46 communities	Moken, Moklen, Urak Lawoi
Small-scale fishers	Coastal people who use simple tools for fishing and possess knowledge, traditional and customary management	23 provinces (Gulf of Thailand and Andaman Sea)	40,814 boats (2024)	The number of population /households inconclusive

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Narumon Arunotai
ILK and Marine BES





ILK and contribution to sustainable use and management through knowledge and relational values – with gratitude or appreciation, expressed through offerings, rituals, oral traditions, etc. Relationships evolve into bonds, leading to stewardship and conservation.

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ILK and Marine BES

Tha La Community in Phuket Province, Thailand, experienced significant degradation of its marine ecosystem, particularly the rapid disappearance of seagrass beds. An elder who was the leader of seagrass conservation group noticed the change and expressed his deep concerns,

"In my 75 years of life, I have seen this bay covered with seagrass beds. I cast my fishnet and trap shrimp here. I believe the seeds of seagrasses come from this area. If the seagrasses disappear, our community will surely face a food crisis, as seagrasses are home to fish and other sea animals."



Jurun Rachaphol







Roles of ILK in understanding the status and trends/changes of biodiversity and coastal and marine ecosystems.
By contributing to the assessment of marine and coastal change through evidence-based data and facilitates early warning of environmental change.



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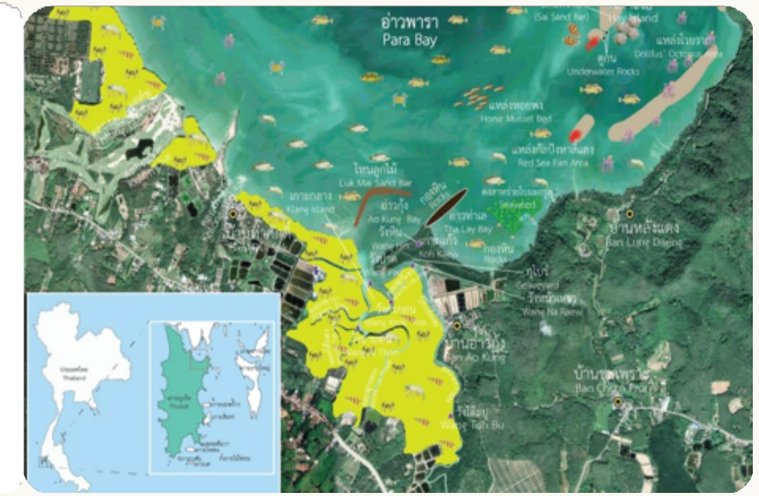
ILK and Marine BES

Current status of ILK – gradual decline, socio-cultural institutions governing sustainable practices weakened.
Weakening ILK causes cascading effects across the three domains of community viability, ecosystem integrity, and policy effectiveness
Driving factors and pressures
1)Restricted Resource Access,
2) Ecosystem Degradation
3) The Lack of Policy, Implementation, and Funding Support for ILK







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Locally-led effort for ILK revitalization











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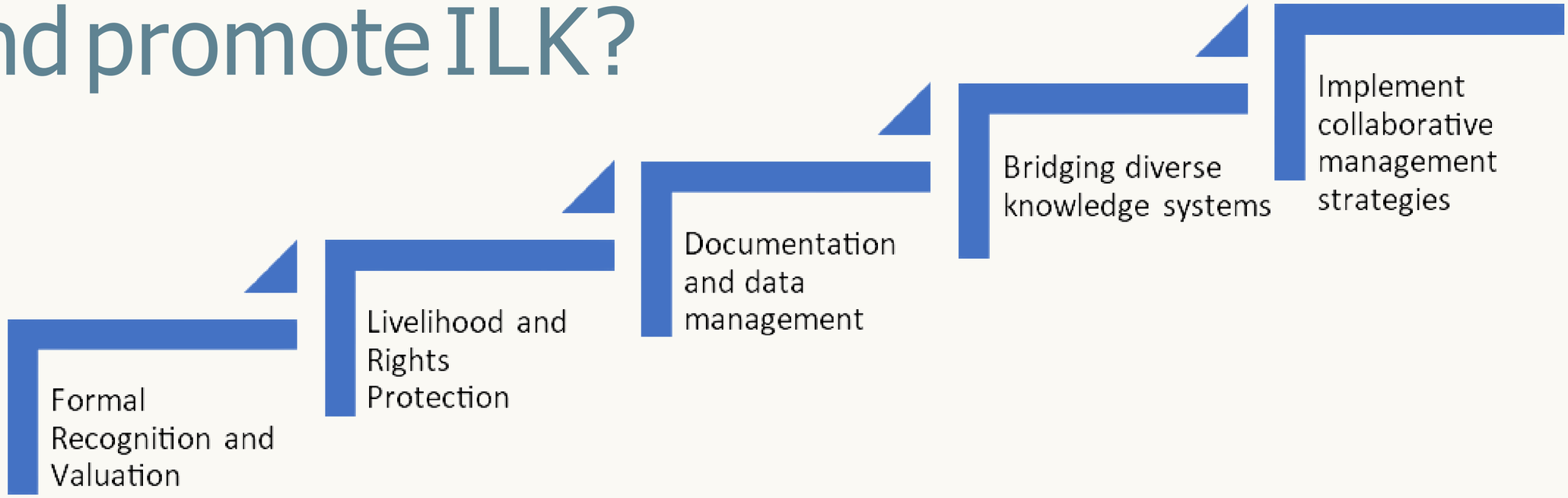
ILK and Marine BES

Policies to revitalize and promote ILK?



Five points policy recommendations – from recognizing ILK to collaborative management strategies with locally-driven stewardship.

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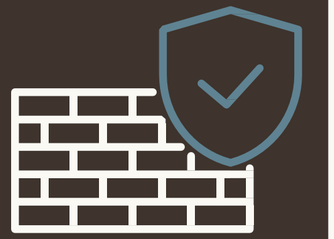
Prof. Dr. Suvaluck Satumanatpan
Marine BES Governance

Strong governance architecture, uneven implementation

STRONG



Formal architecture

- ✓ Policies aligned with CBD, SDGs and KMGBF
- ✓ Mature legal and institutional framework
- ✓ Government and non-government actors are involved

→ delivery gap

UNEVEN



Implementation across sectors and places

- Coordination
- Enforcement capacity
- Substantive participation
- Spatial integration

Strong policy ≠ effective delivery

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Marine BES Governance

Thailand's NEA identifies four bottlenecks

01 — SYSTEM

Fragmented mandates

Overlapping laws, parallel approvals and siloed data

02 — DELIVERY

Uneven enforcement

Capacity and compliance standards vary by agency and province

03 — INCLUSION

Consultation ≠ influence

Communities advise, but rarely share final decisions

04 — SPACE

Spatial tools not binding

MSP, OECMs and LMMAs remain incompletely institutionalised



These gaps reinforce one another: fragmentation weakens delivery, inclusion and spatial coherence.

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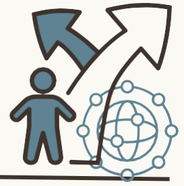
Three priorities emerging from Thailand's NEA

1 CONNECT THE SYSTEM



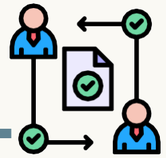
Clear mandates and performance monitoring

Shared marine data and enforcement protocols

Stronger provincial capacity

National coordinating bodies

2 MAKE MSP OPERATIONAL



A legally supported national marine spatial plan

Cross-sector zoning and integrated planning

Standard MPA, OECM and LMMA monitoring

Lead marine agency + sectoral partners

3 SHARE POWER



Mandated stakeholder representation

Gender-responsive governance and ILK integration

Long-term finance for co-management

Government + communities + intermediaries

For NEAs: examine how governance works — not only whether policies exist.

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Dr. Vithet Srinetr

Scenario Development: Thailand's Marine Futures to 2050

Co-producing marine futures

Scientific evidence + Indigenous and local knowledge + dialogue + expert review

---

Scientific evidence

Status, trends,
drivers and values

Indigenous & local knowledge

Coastal experience
and priorities

+

Stakeholder dialogue

Scenario workshops
and Trialogue

Expert synthesis

Review, refinement
and policy alignment

Co-production increased the credibility, relevance and legitimacy of the scenarios.

*Scenarios are not predictions - they are policy stress-tests for decisions under uncertainty.



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Scenario Development: Thailand's Marine Futures to 2050

Three pathways to 2050

BAU

Current trends continue
- Fragmented governance
- Rising pressures
- Risk baseline

Blue Economy

Ocean-based growth
- MSP / ICZM / safeguards
- Jobs and innovation
- Transition pathway

Nature-Positive

Halt and reverse biodiversity loss
- Ecosystem restoration
- Community rights + ILK
- Long-term resilience

Risk baseline → safeguarded transition → long-term direction

*Scenarios are not predictions - they are policy stress-tests for decisions under uncertainty.

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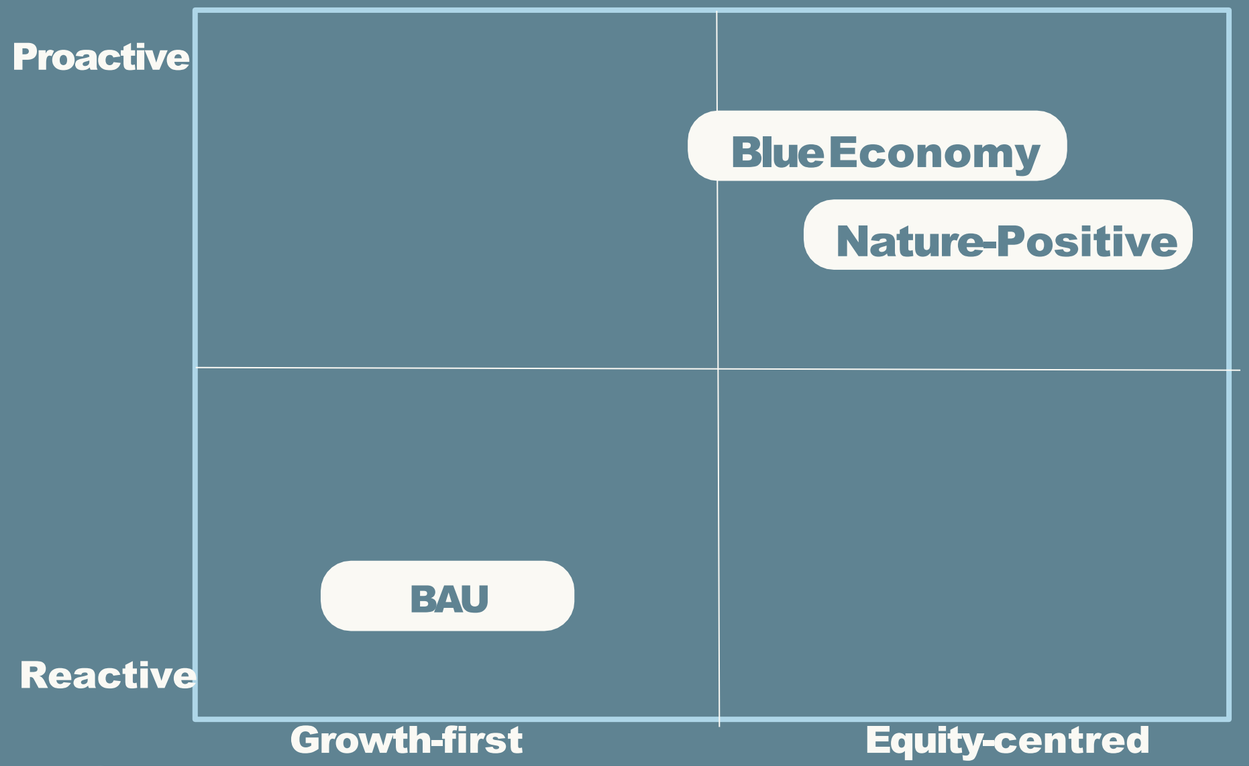
Why stewardship is decisive

Growth-first ↔ equity-centred | reactive ↔ proactive governance



BAU: reactive +growth-first
Blue Economy: proactive safeguards
Nature-Positive: proactive +equity-centred

Moving beyond BAU requires governance reform and community empowerment.

Adapted from Chapter 7, Figure 7.6.

*Scenarios are not predictions - they are policy stress-tests for decisions under uncertainty.



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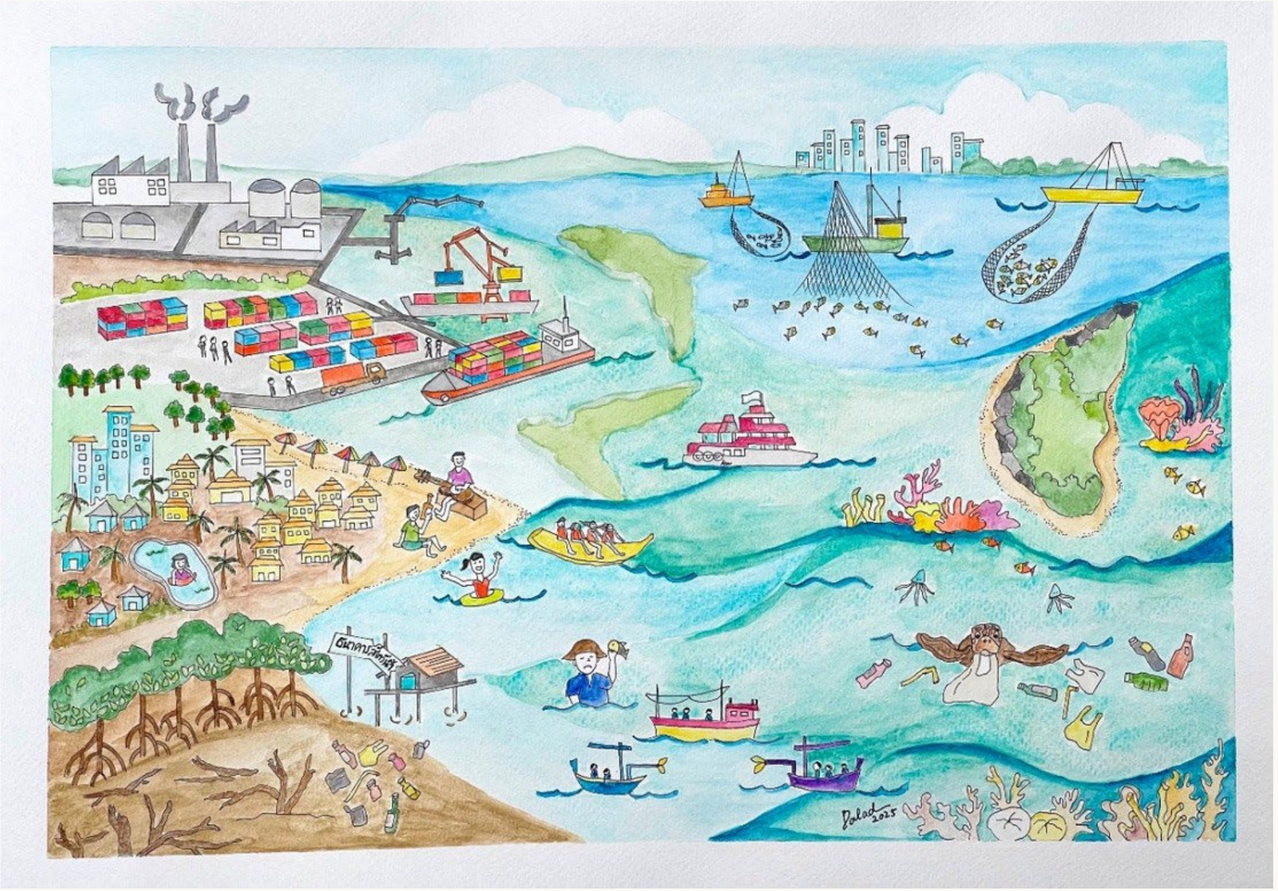
BAU: inaction is an active risk

Fragmented governance compounds ecological decline and climate exposure

- **Uncoordinated coastal development**
- **Rising pressure on reefs, seagrass, mangroves, fisheries and estuaries**
- **Eroding food, protection, carbon and cultural services**
- **Greater vulnerability for coastal communities**



BAU is not neutral - the ecological, social and economic costs accumulate.



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A safeguarded Blue Economy

Sustainable fisheries & aquaculture

Nature-based tourism

Green ports & shipping

Marine energy & innovation

- **MSP and ICZM set ecological limits**
- **Standards and finance reward better practice**
- **Safeguards protect ecosystems and equity**
- **Guard against blue-washing and concentrated benefits**



Blue Economy is credible only when safeguards are enforceable and benefits are fairly shared.

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A Nature-Positive future

Restore ecosystems Mangroves • seagrass • coral reefs → **Reduce climate & disaster risk** → **Resilient livelihoods** Fisheries • tourism • carbon → **Security, wellbeing & equity**



- **Expand protected areas and OECMs with community co-management**
- **Use ILK, blue carbon and biodiversity finance**
- **Align restoration with KMGBF goals**

Nature recovery is essential infrastructure for the economy and society.



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Choices shape future outcomes

Climate change affects every pathway, but governance and ecosystem condition shape the outcome

Dimension	BAU	Blue Economy	Nature-Positive
Ecosystems	Continued decline	Stable / partial recovery	Net ecosystem gains
Livelihoods	More vulnerable	New jobs, with safeguards	Diverse and resilient
Equity	Benefits concentrate	Depends on guardrails	Rights and ILK central
Climate risk	Compounds	Partly reduced	Substantially reduced
Policy role	Avoid	Transition	Long-term direction

Nature-Positive offers the strongest long-term co-benefits, but requires finance, coordination and monitoring.

Chapter 7 scenario synthesis (Table 7.7).

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Five no-regret actions

Useful across pathways, adapted to each coastal context

1. **MSP / ICZM**
   Integrated governance
2. **Community rights**
   ILK & co-management
3. **Blue-green finance**
   With safeguards
4. **Monitoring**
   Scenario signposts
5. **Policy stress-tests**
   Plans & investments

Marine conservation and restoration are not separate from development - they are conditions for long-term security, wellbeing and competitiveness.

THANK YOU

SESSION 3 10 minutes

POLICY-RELEVANT OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO USE THE FINDINGS

Dr. Petch Manopawitr

Thailand National Ecosystem Assessment Project Manager



Dr Petch Manopawitr
Marine Policy Options

Turning Marine Knowledge into Action

1 USE THE EVIDENCE

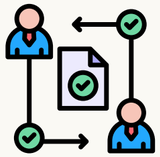


Make the NEA a living decision-support tool

Recognize ecological limits and community knowledge

Use scenarios to test choices

2 REFORM POLICY



Integrate findings into national and sectoral plans

Apply marine spatial planning and nature-positive safeguards

Support shared decision-making

Government + sectoral agencies

3 DELIVER ACTION



Restore priority marine and coastal ecosystems

Empower coastal communities and small-scale fishers

Mobilize accountable finance

Communities + business + investors



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10 Priority Recommendations for Thailand's Seas

1. Make the NEA the policy evidence base
2. Build a nature-positive blue economy
3. Restore critical ecosystems
4. Manage from ridge to reef
5. Put nature's value into economic decisions
6. Use MSP; strengthen MPA/OECM/LMMA networks
7. Recognize communities as knowledge holders
8. Advance co-decision and accountable governance
9. Scale blue–green finance
10. Use scenarios to choose Thailand's ocean future



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1. Make the National Ecosystem Assessment the National Evidence Base for Marine Decision-Making

Make science the foundation of policy, planning and marine investment.



- Embed findings in the NBSAP and national plans
- Guide marine and Blue Economy decisions
- Keep evidence updated and accessible

The NEA must become a living decision-support tool—not another report.

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2. Shift from Reactive Management to a Nature-Positive Approach

Marine management should move beyond responding to environmental degradation toward proactively halting and reversing biodiversity loss.

HALT LOSS
Protect ecosystems

→

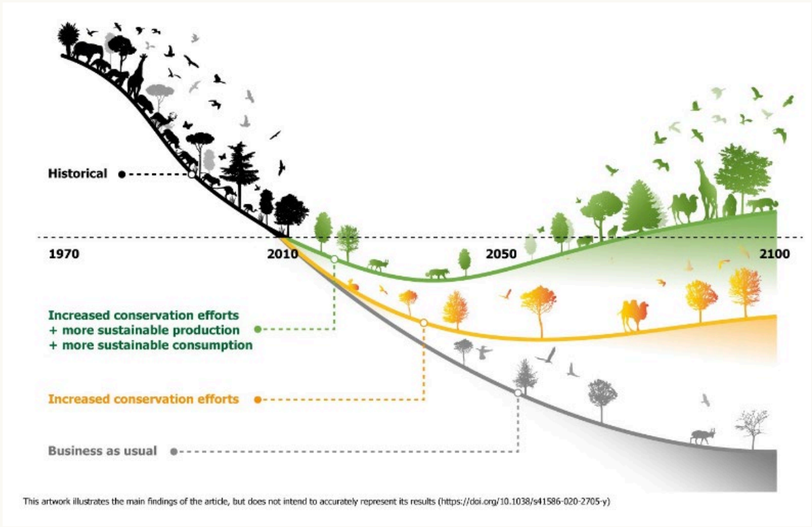
AVOID HARM
Reduce pressures

→

RESTORE NATURE
Rebuild natural capital

→

SHARE BENEFITS
Improve well-being





- Halt loss and reduce ecosystem pressures
- Restore reefs, seagrass and mangroves
- Share benefits through a resilient blue economy

A credible Blue Economy must halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

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3. Accelerate Ecosystem Restoration Before Ecological Thresholds Are Crossed

Restore ecological functions—not simply hectares, planted trees or infrastructure.

- Prioritize seagrass, coral reefs and mangroves
- Recover ecosystem functions and fisheries
- Track benefits for coastal communities



Measure recovery by ecosystem function, biodiversity and lasting community benefits.



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4. Manage the Ocean from Ridge to Reef

Treat watersheds, coasts and marine ecosystems as one interconnected system.

WATERSHEDS & rivers	COASTS & estuaries	SEAGRASS & coral reefs	PEOPLE & ocean uses

- Connect watersheds, coast and sea
- Reduce runoff, wastewater and plastic pollution
- Align ICZM, MSP and cumulative-impact planning



Many ocean problems begin upstream; policy must connect land and sea.



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5. Make Nature Visible in Economic and Investment Decisions

Natural capital and the value of ecosystem services must inform investment.

- Apply natural capital and ocean accounts
- Integrate ecosystem value into EIA and SEA
- Include real environmental costs in budgets



When nature is invisible in decisions, its loss is treated as free.



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6. Use Marine Spatial Planning as the Framework for Balancing Conservation and Development

CONSERVE
MPAs + OECMs

RESTORE
Priority habitats

USE WISELY
Fisheries + tourism

CONNECT
LMMAs + communities

Connect MPAs, OECMs and LMMAs through evidence-led marine planning

- **Give marine spatial planning clear legal status**
- **Connect MPAs, OECMs and community areas**
- **Balance conservation, livelihoods and use**



Marine spatial planning should connect conservation, livelihoods and development.



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7. Recognize Coastal Communities and Small-scale Fishers as Knowledge Holders and Ocean Stewards

RECOGNIZE
Knowledge holders

→

PROTECT RIGHTS
Access + consent

→

CO-MANAGE
Local marine areas

→

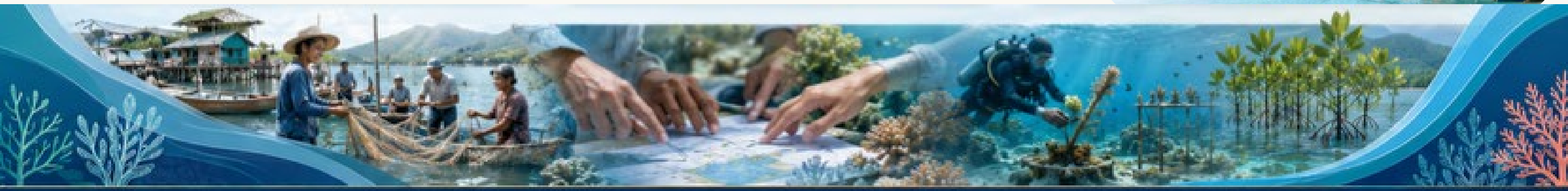
PASS IT ON
Next generations

Respect local knowledge, community rights and free, prior and informed consent.

- Recognize Indigenous and local knowledge
- Support fishers' rights and co-management
- Apply free, prior and informed consent



Communities are knowledge holders and ocean stewards—not only stakeholders.





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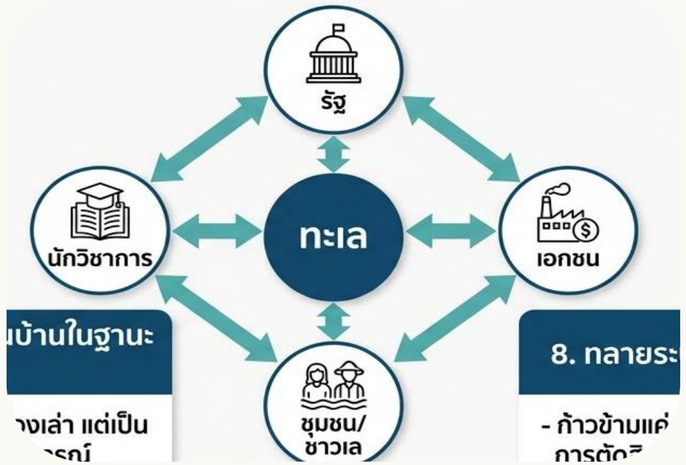
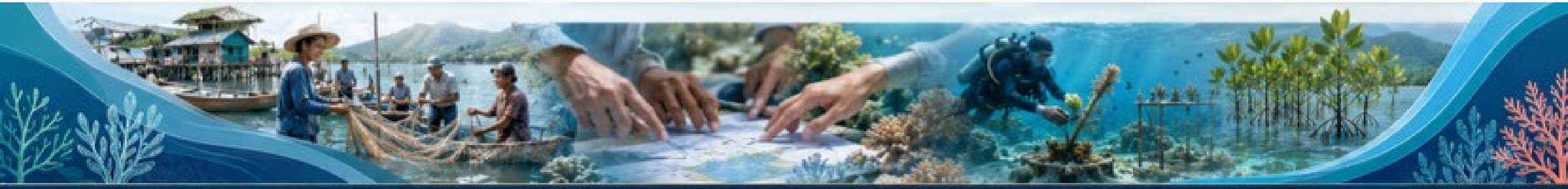
8. Strengthen Ocean Governance through Shared Decision-Making

Move beyond consultation toward genuine participation and shared decisions.

- Clarify mandates across marine agencies
- Give communities real decision-making power
- Share monitoring and adaptive management



Participation matters when people can influence the final decision.



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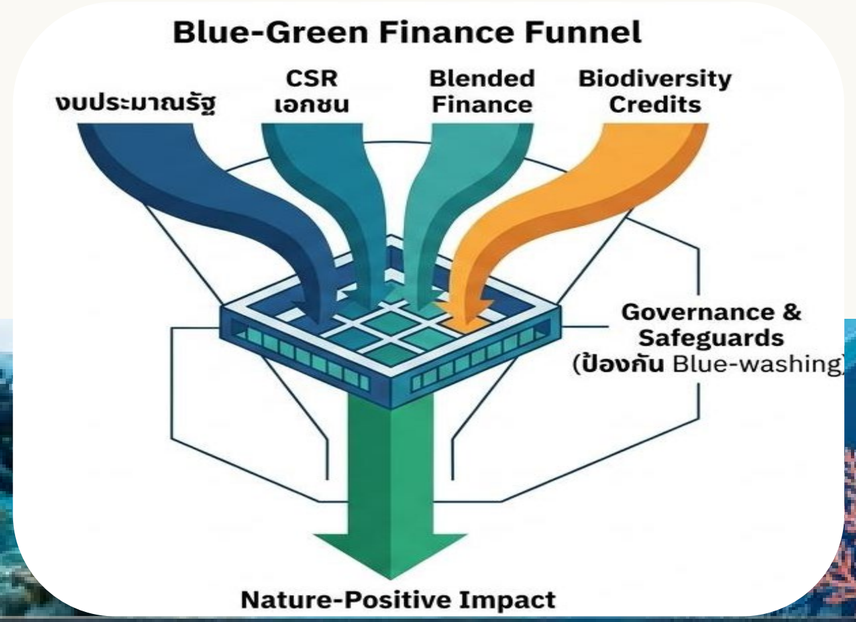
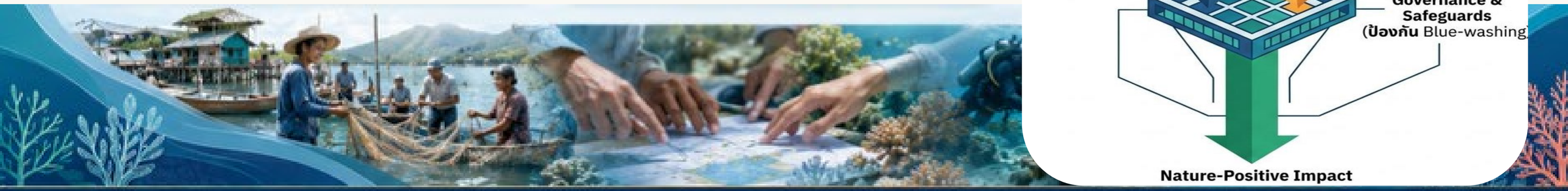
9. Mobilize Blue and Green Finance to Close the Marine Conservation Funding Gap

BLUE FINANCE	BIODIVERSITY	BLUE CARBON	BLENDED CAPITAL
Ocean outcomes	Private investment	Strong safeguards	Public + private

Match public and private finance with measurable ecological and social outcomes.

- Combine blue, green and blended finance
- Link investment to measurable nature outcomes
- Protect rights and prevent blue-washing







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Marine Policy Options

10. Use the NEA Scenarios to Shape Thailand's Future

Stress-test today's decisions against three plausible marine futures.

Business-as-Usual

ความเสี่ยง

Ecosystem decline continues

- Fragmented decisions
- Higher climate risk

Blue Economy

การเปลี่ยนผ่าน

Development with safeguards

- Coordinated planning
- A transition pathway

Nature-Positive

การฟื้นคืน

Nature and communities recover

- Ecosystem restoration
- Fairness and resilience

Ask: does this decision lock in risk—or help restore Thailand's seas?

Use scenarios to stress-test policy and investment—not to predict the future.

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Thailand ‘s Ocean Futures

Thailand’s Ocean Futures | Three Pathways to 2050

	BUSINESS AS USUAL Risk escalates	BLUE ECONOMY Transition	NATURE POSITIVE Net recovery is the goal
ECOSYSTEM CONDITION	Cumulative degradation; seagrass reaches crisis point	Ocean economy grows within environmental safeguards	Net ecosystem gains; OECMs expand
ECONOMY & QUALITY OF LIFE	Communities remain vulnerable to income loss	Impacts decline, but ecosystem recovery remains uncertain	Resilient livelihoods supported by natural capital
DISASTER RISK	Higher disaster-management and recovery costs	Risk reduction improves, but exposure remains	Nature-based buffers minimize cyclone and coastal risk

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Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability Strategy: Give the NEA a lasting national home



Anchor the platform in existing national biodiversity governance.



- National Biodiversity Committee anchors policy
- ONEP convenes the platform and knowledge hub
- A small task team coordinates delivery



Strengthen existing institutions—do not create a parallel structure.



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Sustainability Strategy

National Biodiversity Committee: One existing platform. Four coordinated functions.

Use the National Committee, its subcommittees and specialist working groups.

Integrated management

Policy uptake, NBSAP
and platform oversight.

Law + safeguards

Legal reform, OECMs
and inclusive governance.

+

Science + knowledge

NEA hub, ThaiBIF and
future ecosystem modules.

International + finance

CBD/IPBES alignment and
resources for continuity.

ONEP convenes; existing working groups connect science, communities and action.

Existing committee + four subcommittees + specialist working groups.

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Dissemination and Uptake

Put the right evidence in the right hands

Tailor communication to the people who can change decisions.

Policymakers + agencies

Policy briefs, committee briefings and planning tools.



Researchers + practitioners

Technical guidance, methods and applied training.

+

Business + finance

Nature-related risks, investment cases and safeguards.



Communities + society

Local dialogue, accessible media and stewardship tools.

One evidence base; different products, audiences and routes to action.

Policy • technical • business • media • digital • community products.

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Dissemination and Uptake

Convert national evidence into action on the ground

1 INFORM POLICY

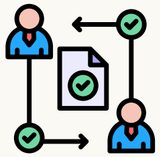


Brief ministries, ONEP and national committees

Apply evidence in the NBSAP and marine development plans

Government + policy leaders

2 MOBILIZE PARTNERS



Engage researchers, business and finance institutions

Share practical guidance, media and investment cases

Science + private sector

3 LOCAL ACTION



Convene communities and local authorities

Pilot seascape action in Phuket and Trang

Communities + pilot provinces

Dissemination matters when it changes policy, investment and local stewardship.



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Dissemination and Uptake

Sequence delivery—and measure what changes

Move from visibility to sustained use of evidence.

0–3 months | Engage

Leadership briefings,
public launch and media.

3–9 months | Equip

Sector products, technical
training and finance dialogue.

9–18 months | Apply

Community pilots, policy
uptake and institutional follow-up.

18+ months | Sustain

Maintain the platform,
update evidence and expand.

Measure success: REACH → UNDERSTANDING → REAL-WORLD USE

Evidence of use in policies, budgets, investments and local action.

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From Assessment to Action

From Knowledge to Policy to Action

USE EVIDENCE
Guide decisions

→

RESTORE NATURE
Recover ecosystems

→

SHARE POWER
Respect communities

→

INVEST WISELY
Secure the future



- Policymakers embed the evidence
- Communities and businesses shape action
- Investors back measurable recovery

TOWARDS A NATURE-POSITIVE BLUE ECONOMY

An ocean economy that restores nature and builds genuine resilience for people.

Thailand's seas thrive when evidence changes decisions—and decisions deliver action.

5 MINUTES

CLOSING REMARKS AND NEXT STEPS

Charlotte Hicks

Senior Technical Officer, UNEP-WCMC

EXPLORE THE EVIDENCE

DOWNLOAD THE SUMMARY FOR POLICYMAKERS

The concise, policy-focused synthesis of the Thailand National Ecosystem Assessment — its key messages and the options they open up for marine and coastal ecosystems.

SCAN OR VISIT

ecosystemassessments.net/content/uploads/2026/08/TH-NEA_SPM-EN-final.pdf

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THE SUB-GLOBAL ASSESSMENT NETWORK

A community of practice that connects and supports individuals and organisations involved in sub-global ecosystem assessments.

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SCAN TO JOIN & STAY UP TO DATE

THANK YOU

SUMMARY FOR POLICYMAKERS

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