

**UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
COORDINATING BODY ON THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA
(COBSEA)**

JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER REQUEST

General Information

Post Title: Junior Professional Officer

Unit: Secretariat of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)

Location: UNEP Asia and the Pacific Office, Bangkok, Thailand

Duration: 2 years, with optional extension for a third and fourth year

Background information on UN Environment Programme and the requesting Unit

UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is the United Nations system's designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action. UNEP's Ecosystems Division is responsible for ecosystem management for human well-being, which including marine and coastal ecosystems.

UNEP launched the Regional Seas Programme in 1974. Today, more than 143 countries have joined 18 Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans for the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environment, and the Regional Seas play a crucial role in supporting countries with the implementation and monitoring of the ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets.

The Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) is the lead agency of the United Nations for marine environmental matters in East Asia, coordinating and facilitating implementation of the Action Plan for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the East Asian Seas Region (the East Asian Seas Action Plan). COBSEA is administered by UNEP's Ecosystems Division. The Secretariat is hosted by Thailand, located at UNEP's Asia and the Pacific Office in Bangkok.

COBSEA's programme of work is guided by the Strategic Directions and thematic frameworks. COBSEA's Strategic Directions 2023-2027, which focuses on three thematic programmes in addressing the triple planetary crises: Marine Pollution Prevention; Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, Ecosystem Conservation and Management; and Climate Action.

The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) will support the COBSEA Coordinator in the implementation of the COBSEA Strategic Directions 2023-2027, including supporting related initiatives such as the implementation of the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems (MCE) Framework, increasing COBSEA's internal and external communications efforts, and support for the effective operation of the COBSEA Secretariat.

Why is the Junior Professional Officer requested/needed?

A JPO is requested to support the work of the COBSEA Secretariat in providing overall policy and technical coordination and supervision of the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan.

The JPO will provide critically needed support towards key Secretariat functions, including liaison with partners, policy analysis, communication, and outreach, as well as project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, in line with COBSEA Strategic Directions 2023-2027 and the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework. COBSEA's work on MCE, which include blue economy, marine and coastal spatial planning, and marine protected areas, is recently being upscaled and would need technical expertise and human resources to be fully implemented. Furthermore, COBSEA is also strengthening its communications efforts to improve visibility and outreach. Finally, the JPO will enable enhanced focus on building strategic partnerships, and supporting the full implementation of UNEP environmental and social safeguards as well as gender policies in COBSEA activities.

COBSEA has received positive feedback from JPOs seconded by Sweden and Germany in the past and has been able to provide follow-up opportunities within the Secretariat and UNEP.

The JPO is requested initially for two years, with an optional third and fourth year jointly funded by UNEP /COBSEA and the donor.

Supervision

First appraising officer: Mr. Mahesh Pradhan

Title first appraising officer: COBSEA Coordinator

Unit first appraising officer: Ecosystems Integration Branch, Ecosystems Division

Location first appraising officer: Bangkok, Thailand

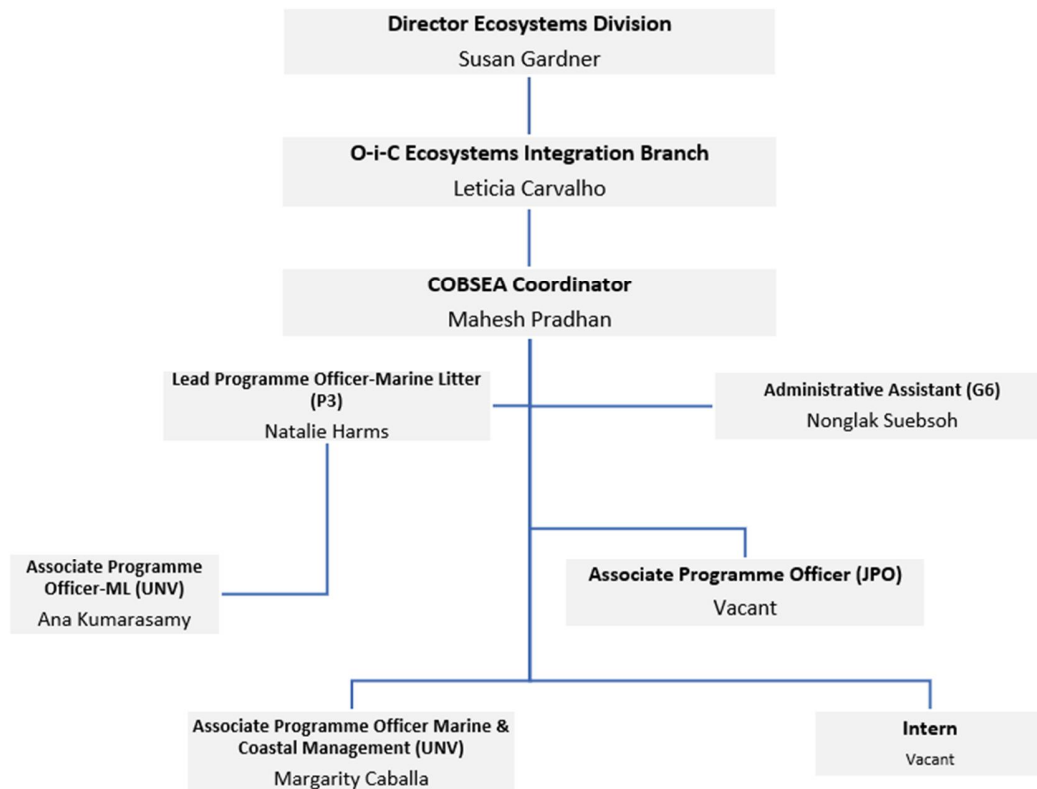
Second appraising officer: Mr. Johan Robinson

Title second appraising officer: Head of the Ecosystems Integration Branch

Unit second appraising officer: Ecosystems Division

Location second appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

Figure 1: COBSEA Secretariat organizational structure



Content and methodology of the supervision

The JPO will undergo the same induction procedures as other professional staff joining the organization, encompassing information and briefings by UNEP focusing on the substantive work and administrative procedures of the organization, as well as induction and related training offered by UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, focusing on security, host country relations, staff rules and regulations, etc.

The incumbent will receive a detailed substantive introduction to the work of the Ecosystems Division, including in particular the UNEP Regional Seas Programme and Ecosystems Integration Branch, and the Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific. In addition, the incumbent will receive an introduction to UNEP's Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work, with particular emphasis on the Healthy and Productive Ecosystems Subprogramme. This briefing will be provided by COBSEA, with support from the Head of the Ecosystems Integration Branch, Regional Seas Coordinator, Marine and Freshwater Branch, the Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, and the Ecosystem Management Subprogramme focal point for Asia and the Pacific.

The Inspira system will be utilized for performance appraisal. A detailed annual work plan including goals, activities and success criteria will be developed upon joining the organization. Progress towards workplan goals are reviewed at regular intervals and at the end of the cycle. General objectives, desired results and anticipated problems are discussed beforehand with the incumbent. Regular feedback on the progress of activities is obtained by the supervisor through review of work in process. The incumbent is expected to carry out the duties under general supervision and to consult with the supervisor on issues of policy or other sensitive matters. Final results of each set of activities, are reviewed for attainment of objectives and quality of work.

At the duty station, the incumbent will also be supported by a Buddy, who will provide support especially in relation to arrival and instalment, as well as by a Mentor, who will support the incumbent throughout her/his tenure, including to increasing knowledge and learning, help in navigating the organization, and provide career support.

Duties, responsibilities, and output expectations

Under the overall guidance of the Head of the Ecosystems Integration Branch and day-to-day supervision of the COBSEA Coordinator, the incumbent will assist in the development and implementation of the COBSEA Strategic Directions 2023-2027.

The incumbent will have the following duties:

1. Assist the COBSEA Coordinator in developing and overseeing activities towards implementation of the COBSEA Strategic Directions;
2. Assist in developing, administering, monitoring and reporting (to donors and internally) on projects and other activities;
3. Assist in the development and strengthening of strategic partnerships with governments, United Nations agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations, private sector and donors;
4. Provide administrative as well as technical support in relation to meetings, capacity building, and knowledge management and knowledge transfer, including support to the Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM);
5. Lead COBSEA's efforts on internal and external communications efforts including public outreach, generating content for use on the website, updates on social media, in newsletters, outreach materials, presentations etc.;
6. Support the implementation of the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework including efforts on blue economy, marine and coastal spatial planning, marine protected areas, and all relevant marine and coastal habitats.
7. Support the COBSEA Coordinator's engagement and liaison with participating country governments, UNEP Headquarters and in particular its Regional Seas Programme as well as other Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, United Nations entities and other partners;
8. Support the Coordination Body on the Seas of East Asia Coordinator in relation to administrative matters.

Output expectations:

- Project proposals developed to strengthen the delivery and implementation of the COBSEA Strategic Directions and Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework;
- Support provided in the organization of meetings, including Intergovernmental Meetings as well as technical/project meetings;
- Substantive publications or reports arising from project/partnership activities;
- Drafting of at least one policy brief on a current/emerging issue;
- Increased information sharing, internally as well as externally; through website, social media channels, and other information materials and activities.
- Strengthened knowledge management and knowledge exchange, including drafting of a COBSEA knowledge management strategy/plan;
- Development and execution of COBSEA projects implement/reflect alignment with UNEP environmental and social safeguards as well as gender policies;
- Reporting on COBSEA activities, outputs and achievements to participating countries as well as more broadly through UNEP's communication channels.

Travel

Missions and costs of travel envisaged during the assignment: to be determined, if there is a need for a mission, costs will be covered by UNEP.

Training and Learning Elements

Training

The JPO will receive on the job training on the function, mandate and working procedures of UNEP, Coordination Body on the Seas of East Asia as well as other Regional Seas conventions and action plans, regular administrative and management procedures of UNEP, the use of legal instruments, reporting procedures, use of the UNEP intranet, the UNEP projects database and other relevant online platforms, and use of office/computer equipment as necessary. On the job training will also cover the substantive work of the Unit, including ecosystem-based management of tropical coastal areas.

The JPO will be given the opportunity to attend training programmes relevant to his/her tasks, at the duty station or through travel, as necessary. This may include training courses offered by technical organizations or formal learning institutions, as well 'training by doing', such as attending relevant international meetings and workshops, e.g., meetings of Regional Seas conventions and action plans, organizing seminars or events and presenting the work of UNEP, and attending global events relevant to the substantive work of the JPO.

The JPO will have access to the training facilities provided at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and by UNEP Asia and the Pacific Office, including language training as well as training on the United Nations system, rules and procedures, competency-based recruitment, security and safety, result based management, gender, etc.

Training and learning elements and career development goals will be included in the workplan and performance appraisal of the JPO (using the Inspira system).

Learning elements:

After one year the JPO is able to: draft internal reports, draft information on activities suitable for a general/external audience, e.g., material for website and social media; contribute to proposals or technical publications including through conducting literature research; and correspond directly with partners on general substantive matters. The JPO will be familiar with the structure of the United Nations system, UNEP's administrative structure and the UNEP programme of work as well as the remit of COBSEA. The JPO will be able to explain the work of COBSEA to internal as well as external audiences and will have developed a network of colleagues within the regional office as well as substantive division.

After two years the JPO is able to: draft technical documents; review or contribute substantively and significantly to project proposals; draft legal instruments, terms of reference and budgets according to UNEP standards; monitor progress on activities implemented by partners under subcontracts; correspond directly with partners on substantive matters; and represent the unit in technical meetings. The JPO will be fully aware of all aspects of COBSEA activities, including collaborative arrangements with internal and external partners. The JPO will have acquired a detailed knowledge of the United Nations system and in particular UNEP, will be able to explain UNEP's structure and programme of work to an external audience including donors, and will have developed a network of colleagues extending to Regional Seas, other substantive divisions within UNEP, as well as outside UNEP.

After three years (if applicable) the JPO is able to: lead development of project proposals; assume responsibility for monitoring activities implemented with partners under legal agreements; lead compilation of technical documents; represent the organization in technical meetings and provide support in intergovernmental meetings; and supervise the work of junior consultants and interns. The JPO will have a detailed knowledge of the global as well as regional (East Asian Seas) institutional framework for sustainable development and will be able to pass on detailed knowledge of UNEP's administrative structure and the UNEP programme of work to partners and external audiences. The JPO will have developed an extensive network of colleagues within and outside the organization, including among governments, donors and technical partners.

Qualifications and experience

Qualifications: A second-level university degree (Master's or equivalent) is required. An advantage will be if studies are related to marine issues, geography, natural resources management, economics, sustainable development or international relations.

Skills: Ability to communicate effectively, verbally as well as in writing, to a diverse audience; ability to prepare technical documents to a high standard; ability to work in a multicultural environment; knowledge of common computer software for office use. Experience with web-based platforms for communication, information sharing and networking and use of social media.

Working experience: At least 2-3 years working experience in one or more of the above areas is necessary. Working experience related to project management and contributing to team work is highly desirable. Preferably experienced to work outside home country. It is strongly desirable to have documented experiences from engagement with various stakeholders including private sector, civil society and government. International work experience is a must, preferably as a full-time employee outside the home country. Experience of working in the environmental field is required and a particular interest to work in marine related areas is essential.

Languages: Fluency in English is essential. Working knowledge of other UN languages or languages from the COBSEA region is an asset.

Professionalism: Shows pride in work and in achievements; Demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; Is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; Is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; Shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; Remains calm in stressful situations.

Communication: Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify, and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors language, tone, style and format to match audience; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.

Teamwork: Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; solicits input by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; is willing to learn from others; places team agenda before personal agenda; supports and acts in accordance with final group decision, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.

Commitment to Continuous Learning: Keeps abreast of new developments in own occupation/profession; actively seeks to develop oneself professionally and personally; contributes to the learning of colleagues and subordinates; shows willingness to learn from others; seeks feedback to learn and improve.

Living conditions at duty station

Bangkok is classified as an 'A' duty station.