



ROPME

المنظمة الإقليمية لحماية البيئة البحرية
REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF MARINE ENVIRONMENT
سازمان منطقه ای حمایت محیط زیست دریائی

DOCUMENT 1

DEVELOPMENT OF THE
**FIRST ROPME MARINE ENVIRONMENT
OUTLOOK 2026 - 2050 FOR ROPME SEA AREA**

Project Inception
January 2026



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Project Overview

The aim of this project is to produce a first edition of the 'Marine Environment Outlook for ROPME Sea Area'. This will provide a synthesis of information on the status and trend of the marine environment in the ROPME Sea Area (RSA), following the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Guidelines for Conducting Integrated Environmental Assessments (EIA) using the DPSIR Framework (Drivers, Pressures, State, Impacts and Responses). It will consider future scenarios, including 'business-as-usual' and 'sustainable pathway', as well as considering policy options and recommendations through the production of a standalone policy-makers' summary.

The overarching objectives are to:

- Provide a concise, high-level synthesis of key regional developments as driving forces, and key marine environmental state and challenges in the RSA, up to 2025.
- Provide a strategic outlook on emerging environmental challenges, associated risks and opportunities in the RSA.
- Present a high-level synthesis of existing environmental information and policy responses based on available literature (primary and secondary) sources.
- Develop future-oriented scenarios to support decision-making and regional planning.
- Offer policy-relevant insights (policy options) and recommendations for sustainable marine and coastal management aligned with ROPME's regional priorities and international commitments, including UN Sustainable Development Goals.



Project Scope

Building on ROPME's mandate to assess and report on the state of the marine environment in the RSA, this project will produce a forward-looking, policy-relevant Marine Environment Outlook for 2026-2050. The main elements of this work include the following:

1. Retrospective Overview

- Provide a concise, high-level synthesis of coastal and marine environmental trends over the past 22 years.
- Use the ROPME State of the Marine Environment Report (2013) as a starting point for this overview, referencing published updates and data only.
- Use publicly available information, published research, peer-reviewed journals, and open sources.

2. Forward-Looking Outlook with Scenarios Forecasting

- Develop qualitative scenarios exploring plausible future environmental trajectories for the RSA.
- Identify key drivers of change (e.g., environmental risks, economic development, and governance trends) and their implications for marine and coastal ecosystems as part of the future outlook.

3. Policy and Institutional Review

- Conduct a qualitative review of existing regional and international policy frameworks relevant to the RSA.
- Country-level assessments will be included only if inputs are provided by ROPME in the timeframe necessary for the project delivery.

4. Regional Case Studies and Strategic Insights

- Develop illustrative, evidence-based case studies highlighting national policy responses or initiatives to showcase positive environmental activities/initiatives across the region. Where possible, these will be linked to the scenarios and policy recommendations.
- Identify key opportunities for ROPME to strengthen regional cooperation and strategic alignment.



5. Project Coordination and Delivery

- This project will be conducted in collaboration with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Sciences in the UK (CEFAS), with regular online consultations and progress reviews with the ROPME delivery team.
- A single in-person presentation of final outputs will be delivered by Cefas at ROPME Headquarters, at a workshop organised by ROPME with the participation of representatives from member states.
- ROPME will facilitate with member states to request for information/evidence/case studies/success stories to support the development of the ROPME Marine Environment Outlook Report.

6. Outputs and Deliverables

- Marine Environment Outlook for RSA – a project report integrating a description of key drivers and pressures, marine environmental status and impacts, narratives for future scenarios, regional analysis, and policy options/recommendations.
- Summary for Policymakers – this will be a standalone document highlighting key messages and policy options/recommendations, based on the applicable chapters of the Report .
- Final presentation at ROPME Headquarters workshop.

The Marine Environment Outlook Report for RSA -2025 will provide ROPME and its Member States with a concise, credible, and strategically focused assessment of current status and future environmental trajectories in the RSA. It will inform regional dialogue and policy formulation, laying the groundwork for more comprehensive and data-driven assessments in future ROPME environmental reporting cycles.

Report Structure

The report size will be 50-60 pages excluding the table of contents, lists of figures and tables, abbreviations, bibliography and report appendices. Below is the proposed structure of the ROPME Marine Environment Outlook Report-2025, along with brief notes on each chapter's content and development approach.



1. Executive Summary

- High-level synthesis of key findings, outlook messages, and policy options.
- Targeted for regional policy and decision-makers.

2. Introduction and Background

- Overview of the context, report objectives and limitations of the Outlook Report.
- Overview of the geographic and temporal scope of the report.
- Summary of method and sources used.

3. Overview of regional trends from up to 2025

- Brief summary of key regional developments and associated environmental trends.
- Drawn entirely from existing published regional literature and reviews.
- Desk-based literature review of existing scientific reports and regional assessments of relevance to the key regional developments and trends.

4. Regional Drivers and Pressures

- Drivers of change: An assessment of main drivers of change including population trends in the ROPME region and associated future pressure hotspot locations; urbanization (on coastal areas), technological, climate change...
- Qualitative analysis of environmental, social, and economic pressures (to include quantitative data where available), including sub-regional differences.
- Based on published regional reviews and expert knowledge, with new data to be sourced by ROPME where available.



5. Key Environmental Challenges

- Summary of the current, key environmental challenges in the region (e.g., climate change, marine pollution, and biodiversity loss).
- Also consider how these shared and transboundary environmental challenges might develop in the future (such as key regional vulnerabilities and resilience).
- Where possible, consideration of the economic cost of environmental degradation will be included.

6. Future Scenarios for the ROPME Sea Area-2050

- To compose narratives of 'business-as-usual' and 'sustainable pathway' scenarios for plausible futures in the region based on potential trajectories of drivers.
- Incorporating consideration of cross-cutting themes in the scenario narratives including governance, environmental resilience, and innovation, such as new technologies and approaches.

7. Regional Policy and Governance Landscape

- Overview of ROPME protocols, regional strategies, and institutional mechanisms.
- Summary of international environmental agreements relevant to the ROPME Sea Area.
- Analysis limited to the regional level.
- Desk-based literature review of existing policy documents.

8. Strategic Options and Recommendations

- Recommendations for regional cooperation, governance, and investment, to include environmental, social, and economic considerations.
- Case studies (national and regional) of existing best practice, to be coordinated by ROPME.
- Scenario-aligned policy pathways for ROPME Member States.



9. Summary for Policymakers

- Concise, accessible overview of messages, options for policy and management and a vision for action.
- Formatted in a way that it can be used as a stand-alone summary document.
- An aim of ~4 pages for this section to keep it focused for a policymaker audience.

10. References and Annexes

- Bibliography of reviewed sources.
- Supplementary materials, figures, maps (as required).

Approach / Methodology

To prepare the Marine Environment Outlook Report, we will take a pragmatic approach to sourcing and collating the best-available and relevant literature/information/ evidence for the RSA, within the time-bounds and budget of the project. This will include the use of existing technical reports published on the ROPME websites (Technical Reports - ROPME), and drawing from published reports and peer-reviewed papers by Cefas, including from the UK-Gulf Marine Environment Partnership (GMEP) Programme, UK-Kuwait Climate, Health, and Environment Resilience Programme (CHERP), and projects delivered by Cefas for ROPME.

We will also utilise applicable evidence from reports and papers that ROPME can source from Member States in the project timeframe. This will be complemented by literature reviews to identify and source relevant peer-reviewed literature from online scientific bibliographic databases and Google Scholar, notably to fill gaps in literature/evidence that may not covered in the sources from ROPME and Cefas-led regional work.

The Cefas report authors will use expert scientific and technical knowledge and regional experience to synthesise relevant evidence into the chapters of the Marine Environment Outlook Report, working collaboratively with ROPME during the preparation and finalisation of the Report and Summary for Policy Makers.



Project deliverables and timetable:

		Jan 2026				Feb 2026				Mar 2026				Apr 2026				May 2026			
Deliverable		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	Project inception report (Scope, Objectives, Approach, Methodology, report structure)																				
2	Literature review, publications, reports, open sources																				
3	Collection of information, case studies, and success stories																				
4	Production of the 1st draft ROPME Outlook Report																				
5	Review by ROPME																				
6	Production of 2nd draft ROPME Outlook Report																				
7	Conduct a Regional Workshop in ROPME headquarters with Participation from Member States																				
8	Production and publishing of the final ROPME Outlook Report																				



