

[Republic of Korea]

OECS IN MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS

Understanding and Accelerating Actions on OECS
in the Marine and Coastal Areas of East Asian Seas

Iloilo City, The Philippines

14 - 16 August, 2025



Background

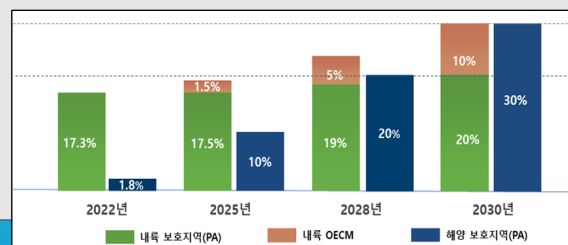
CBD-GBF 30 by 30 target

- 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Dec. 2022)
 - Adopted the GBF's 2050 vision and 2030 action targets.
 - Set a goal to designate 30% of marine areas as protected areas or OECMs by 2030 (30 by 30 goal).
- 5th National Biodiversity Strategy (2024-2028)
 - Linked national plans to the GBF 2030 targets and outlined implementation measures.
 - Proposed expanding ecologically valuable natural areas (protected zones).



Interagency roadmap

- 2030 National Roadmap for Expanding Protected Areas (Dec. 2023)
 - Set cross-ministerial targets to meet international commitments.
 - Called for identifying OECMs to achieve the 30 by 30 goal.
 - Strategy 1: Expand protected areas and OECMs.
- Broaden site identification and strengthen conservation of key biodiversity areas (KBAs).
- Strategy 2: Improve management systems for protected areas and OECMs.
- Institutionalize management effectiveness evaluations and enhance ecological connectivity.
- Strategy 3: Strengthen community-based co-existence frameworks.



OECM verification guidelines

- Ministry of Environment to develop OECM verification guidelines (Dec. 2024)
 - Establish identification criteria and a five-step process.
 - Propose amendments to the Biodiversity Act (Nov. 2024).
 - * Define OECMs, create and register official lists, provide support mechanisms, and form a consultative body.
- Korea Forest Service to register arboreta and recreational forests as OECMs (Apr. 2025).
 - Evaluate three pilot sites for official registration with the KDPA.
 - Prepare guidelines for identifying and designating forest OECMs.



Korea is reviewing domestic and international policy trends and legal frameworks across ministries to draft guidelines for marine OECMs and establish the legal foundation for their adoption.

OECM definitions and criteria (global)

▷ First referenced in Aichi Target 11 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity adopted at the 10th Conference of the Parties to the CBD (2010).

Term	Definition	
OECM (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures)	CBD	• Areas that are not formally designated as protected but are managed to deliver long-term, in-situ conservation outcomes for biodiversity and associated ecosystem functions and services. Depending on the context, they may also maintain cultural, spiritual, social, economic, or other locally significant values. These are geographically defined areas.
	5th National Biodiversity Strategy (2024-2028)	• Areas that are not officially recognized as protected but are managed in ways that contribute to biodiversity conservation
	Proposed amendment to the Biodiversity Act (Nov. 2024)	• Areas that are not designated as protected but are recognized as making a long-term contribution to biodiversity conservation and the enhancement of ecosystem services and are therefore listed and registered under relevant laws
Protected areas (IUCN, 2008)	• A clearly defined geographical space that is recognized, designated, and managed through legal or other effective means to ensure the long-term conservation of nature along with associated ecosystem services and cultural values	
OECM vs. protected areas	• Protected areas are designated specifically for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, whereas OECMs are areas that achieve long-term biodiversity outcomes regardless of whether conservation is their primary objective.	
In-situ conservation (CBD)	• Conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and maintenance and recovery of viable species' populations in their natural surroundings • For domesticated or cultivated species, conservation and recovery within the environments where they developed their distinctive traits	

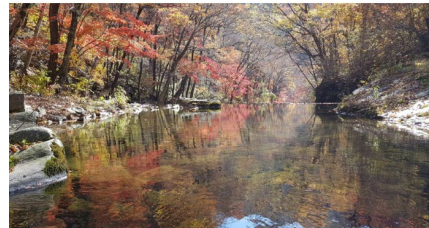
OECM definitions and examples (Korea)

▷ **Definition:** In Korea, the Ministry of Environment (ME) defines OECMs as “areas of coexistence with nature,” while the Korea Forest Service (KFS) refers to them as “other effective area-based conservation measures.”

– The 5th National Biodiversity Strategy, developed jointly by relevant ministries, adopts the term “**areas of coexistence with nature**,” which is expected to be reflected in upcoming **amendments to the Biodiversity Act**.

▷ **Examples:** Three **terrestrial OECMs** were officially registered in **May 2025** by the KFS(Korea Forest Service), with guidelines and legal frameworks now in development.

– **Terrestrial OECMs:** Baekdudaegan National Arboretum, Gariwangsan National Recreational Forest, and Geombongsan National Recreation Forest



– **Guidelines:** As part of the joint Korea OECM Identification Project (Korea National Park Service, 2022-2024) conducted by the IUCN and ME, Korea's K-OECM toolkit was completed in December 2024.



⇒ **The Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF) has not yet announced an official name or definition for marine OECMs, as research is still underway.**

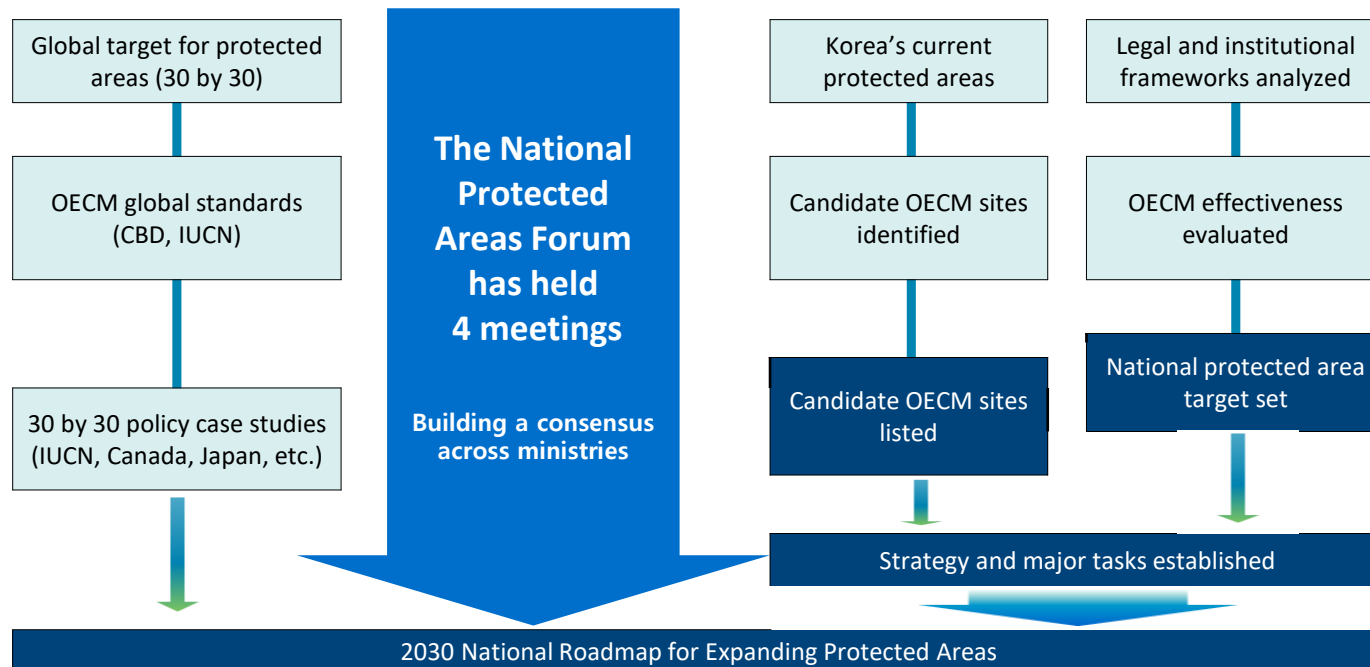
Institutional framework for OECMs and governance

Institutional framework (Which agencies are responsible for OECM-related tasks?)

▷ Implementation measures for identifying and registering OECMs are being discussed through the National Protected Areas Forum.

[Participating agencies in the forum]

Subject		Agencies
Government ministries	7	ME, MOF, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT), Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA), Ministry of National Defense (MND), KFS, Korea Heritage Service (KHS)
Affiliated and research institutions	11	National Institute of Forest Science, Korea National Arboretum, National Institute of Biological Resources, Korea National Park Service, National Institute of Ecology, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology, Korea Maritime Institute, National Marine Biodiversity Institute of Korea, Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements, Korea Environment Institute.
Expert members	14	Specialists from the environment, marine, land, agriculture, forestry, and cultural sectors, along with NGOs and international organizations



Institutional framework (Which agencies are responsible for OECM-related tasks?)

▷ Implementation measures for identifying and registering OECMs are being discussed through the National Protected Areas Forum.

[Main OECM review targets by ministry and agency]

Scope of review			Potential OECM resources
ME	Natural recreation areas		75.7km ²
	Ecological buffer zones		Nine zones
	Special conservation zones along rivers		8 sites spanning 198km ²
MOF	Uninhabited islands	Absolute and semi-conservation areas	140 sites / 550 sites
	Marine use areas	Marine ecological control areas	6,020.8km ²
		Marine research and education areas	1,637.3km ²
		Marine safety management areas	3,999.0km ²
	Community-managed fisheries		1,133 sites
MOF/local governments	Protected waters (under Fishery Resources Management Act)		47.16km ²
Local governments	Tidal flats outside marine protected areas		2,489.4km ²
MOLIT	Urban green areas		12,592km ²
	Areas under control (conservation zones)		10,116km ²
	Protected areas (ecological reasons)		28km ²
KFS	National recreation forests		192 sites including national forests
	Conservation areas and forests for Buddhist temples		13.2km ² / 662.7km ²
KHS	World Natural Heritage buffer zones		2 sites, including Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes
MAFRA	Important Agricultural Heritage sites		17 sites

MPA In Korea

39 MPAs (3,124.712 km²) as of July, 2025

- Wetland protected area (18)
- Marine ecosystem protected area (17)
- Marine life protected area (3)
- Marine scenery protected area (1)

World natural heritage sites	Measures (km ²)		
	heritage	Buffer	Total
Seochoen	68.09	36.57	104.66
Gochan	55.31	18.80	74.11
Shinan	1,00.86	672.54	1,773.4
Boseong-Suncheon	59.85	18.01	77.86
Total	1,284.11	745.92	2,030.03

30%

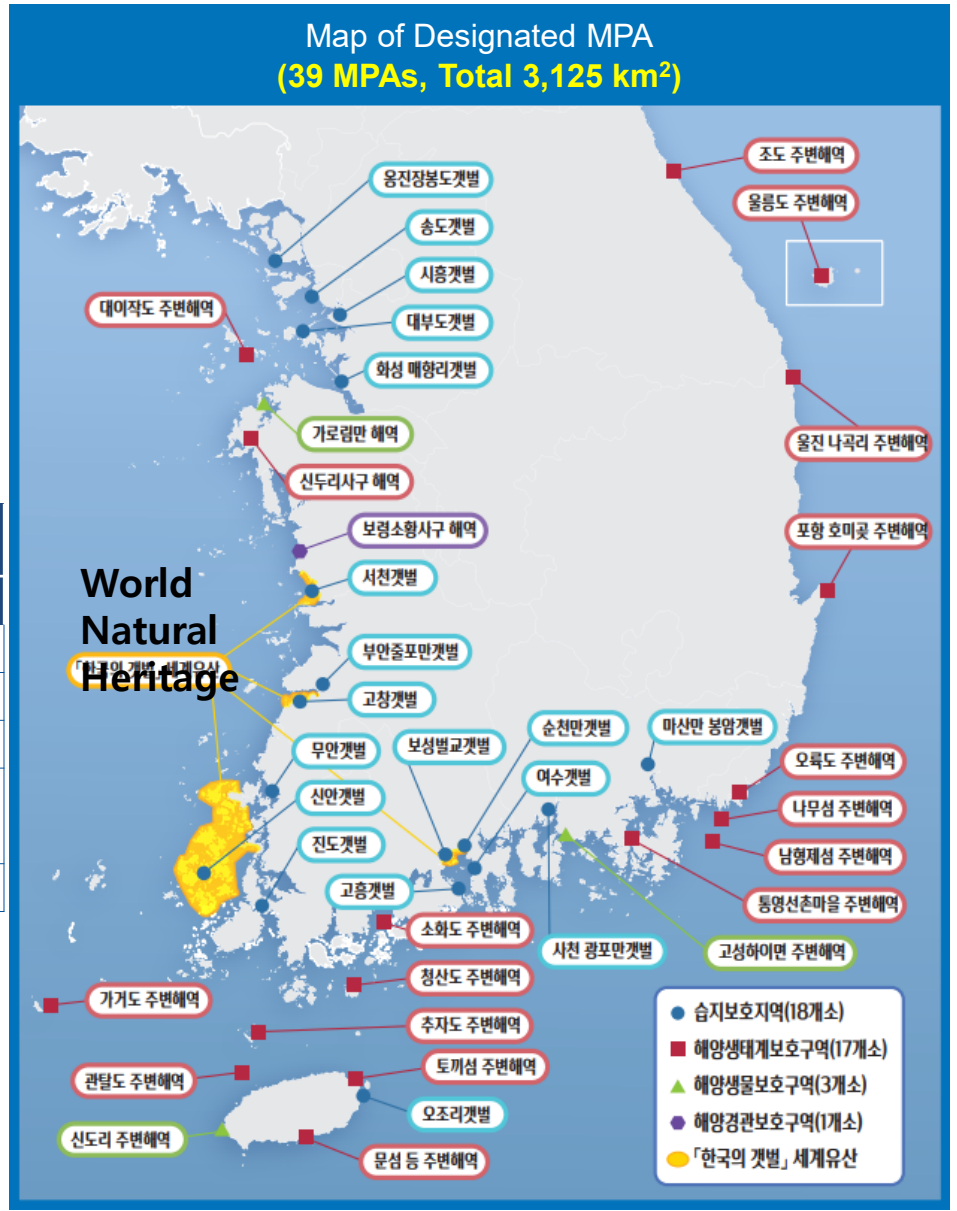
Global goal

21.5%

OECD Average

2.09 %

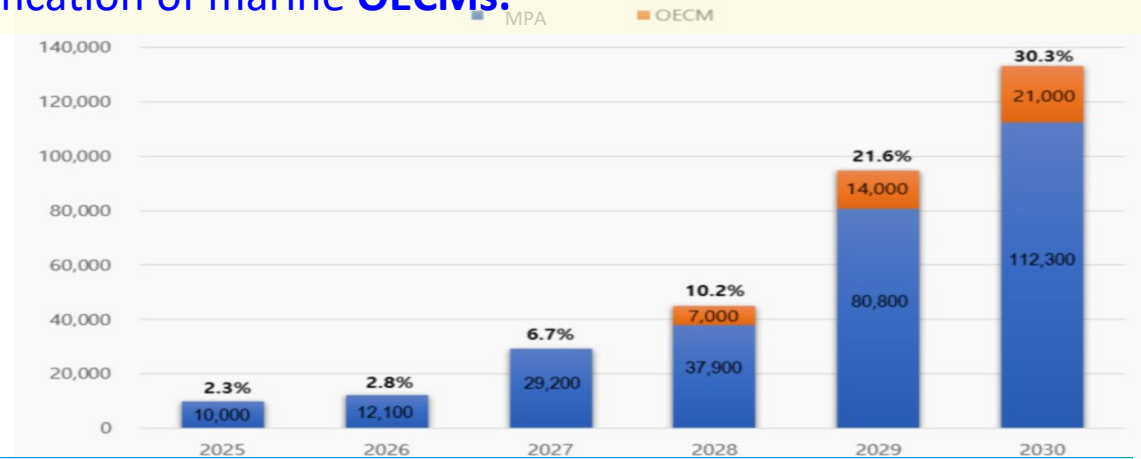
Republic of KOREA



III National OECM strategy

National strategy for marine OECMs

▷ The **MOF** has developed a strategy to meet the 30 by 30 target for marine protected and is moving forward with the identification of marine **OECMs**.



[Key components of the marine OECM strategy]

Guidelines

Develop **Marine OECM guidelines** by the end of 2025, drawing on IUCN guidance (2021) and other sectoral **examples to establish evaluation indicators and standards**.

- Ongoing research since June 2025 is focused on drafting these guidelines and preparing the necessary legal framework.

Using the finalized guidelines, begin **identifying potential OECM sites** starting in 2025, including specific island zones and buffer areas around tidal flats designated as World Natural Heritage sites.

Candidate site identification

OECM registration

Pilot the registration of marine OECMs through 2027 in line with the guidelines.

– From 2028 onward, aim to register more than 7,000km² of OECMs each year.

Starting in 2026, pursue amendments to the Marine Ecosystem Act to establish a legal basis for OECM definitions, registration procedures, management systems, and support mechanisms.

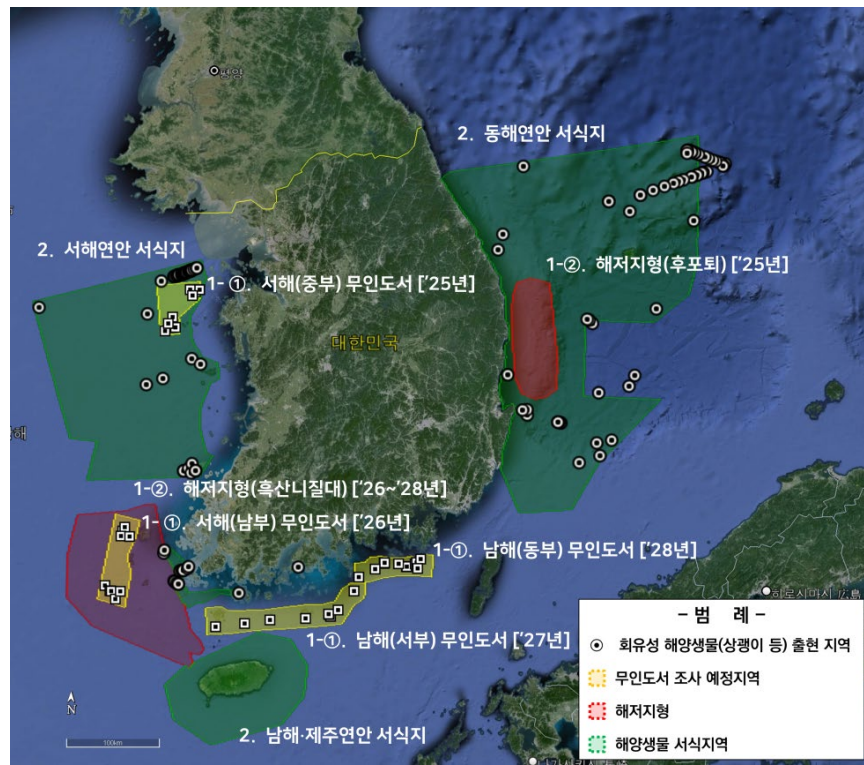
Institutional framework

Proposed OECM candidate sites in Korea

Candidate area	Description
Waters surrounding specific islands	Coastal areas around uninhabited or sparsely populated islands with exceptional ecological, geological, or topographical features
Buffer zones of World Natural Heritage tidal flats	Surrounding zones designated to ensure the effective protection of tidal flats listed as World Natural Heritage sites
Tidal flat restoration sites	Areas where degraded tidal flats have been RESTORED to their natural state through ecological restoration projects
Tidal flats outside marine protected areas	Tidal flat zones identified through ecological surveys that have NOT yet been designated as MPAs

Proposed OECM candidate sites in Korea

[Waters surrounding specific islands]



Category	Measures (km ²)
uninhabited island	11,200
Migratory area	81,000
Underwater topography	12,500
Upwelling sea area (Open sea)	20,000
Total	124,700

Marine Ecological Axis Map

해양수산부 KOEM 해양환경공단

해양생태축이란?

해양생태계의 구조와 기능 유지를 위해 해양생물의 주요 이동로나 서식지 등 생태계의 연결성을 고려하여 통합적 관리가 필요한 해역을 연결한 축

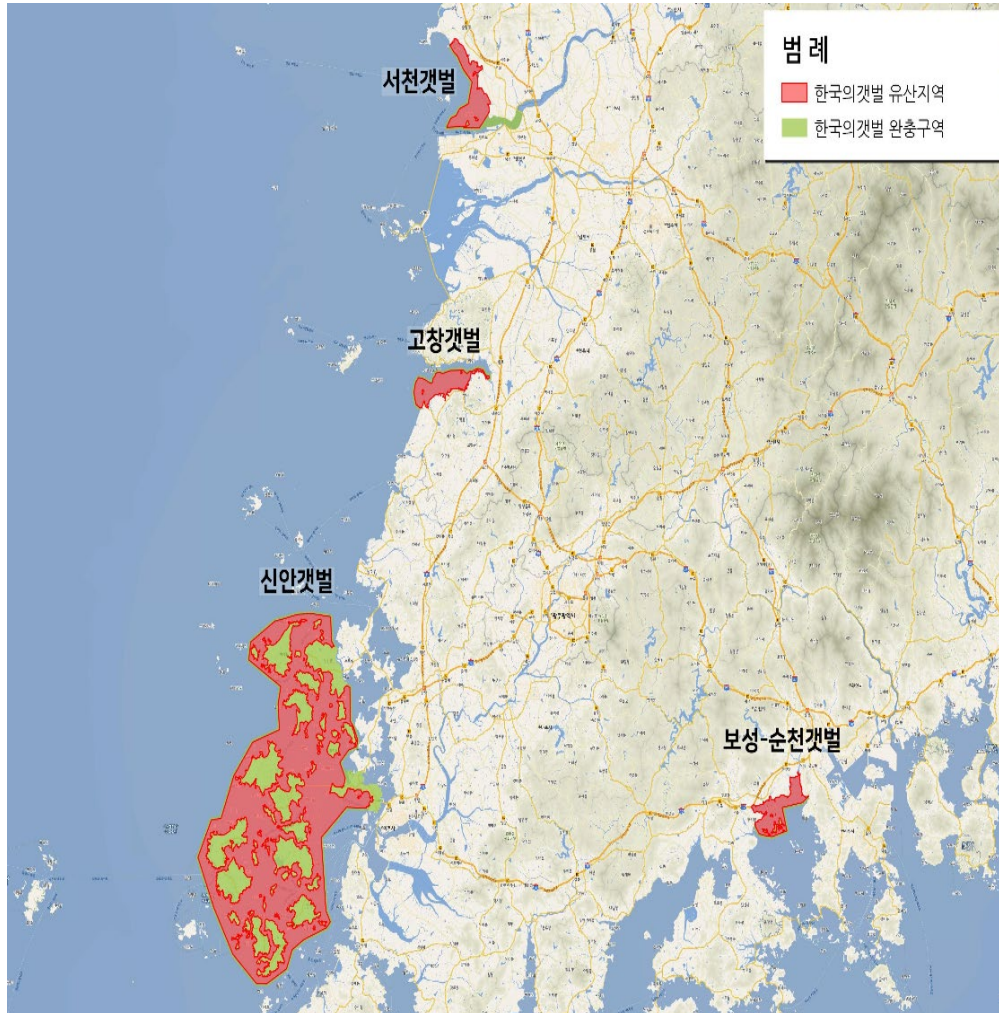
[5대 핵심 해양생태축]

	서해 갯벌 보전축	남해 도서생태 보전축	동해안 생태 보전축	최유성해양보호생물 (물범-상괘이) 보호축	기후변화 관찰축
기능	해양생물의 주요 서식처·이동로 보전	해양보호생물의 주요 이동로 보전	기후변화에 따른 해양생태계 변화 관찰		
관리 대상	바닷새, 어류 및 무척추동물의 서식·생육장	해조류, 무척추동물 및 어류의 산란·성숙장, 공급처	북한한류 해역에서 공급되는 수산자원의 유입통로	물범, 상괘이 등 '해양보호생물'의 주요 회유로	열대-아열대 해양생물 출현 해역
주요 사업	국가 해양생태계 종합조사, 갯벌 복원, 인공증식, 유해생물 제거, 서식처 환경 개선, 해양보호구역 지정·관리, 종복원 센터 건립 등				



Proposed OECM candidate sites in Korea

[Buffer zones of World Heritage tidal flats]



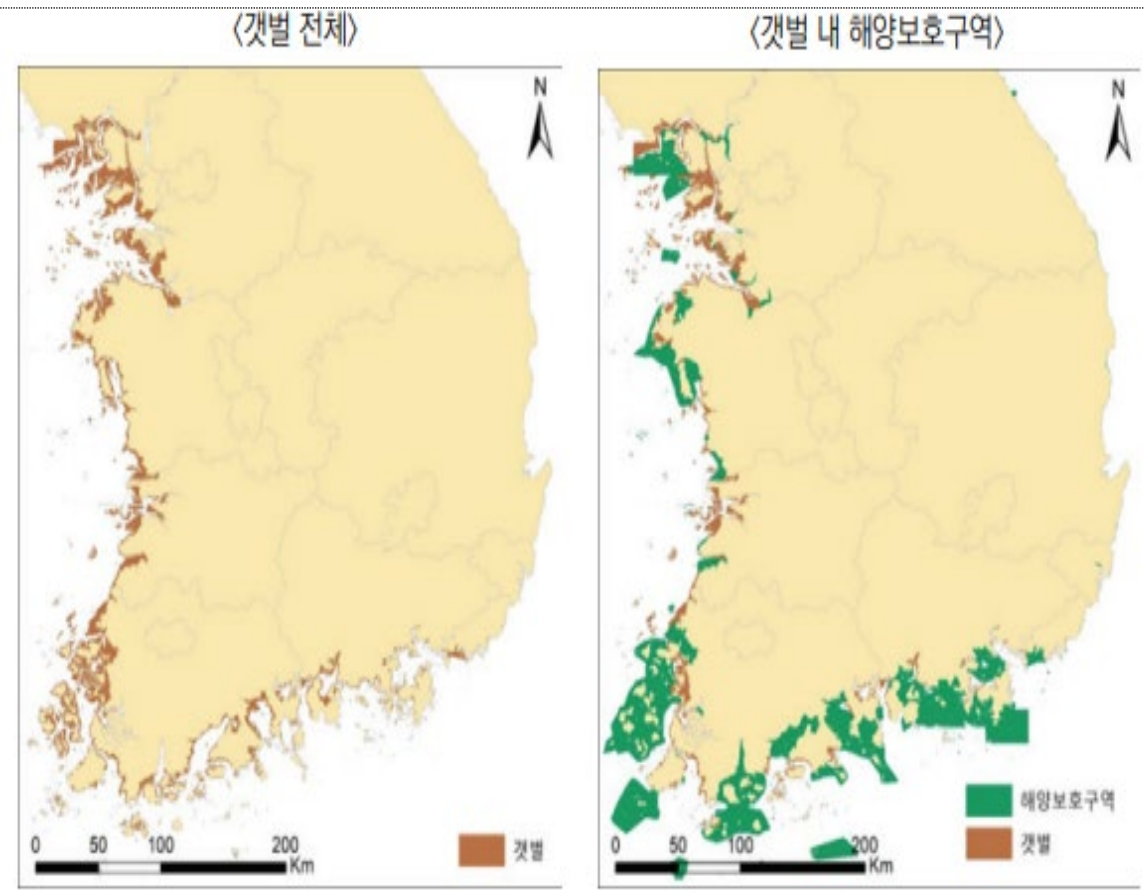
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Proposed OECM candidate sites in Korea

[Tidal flat restoration sites]

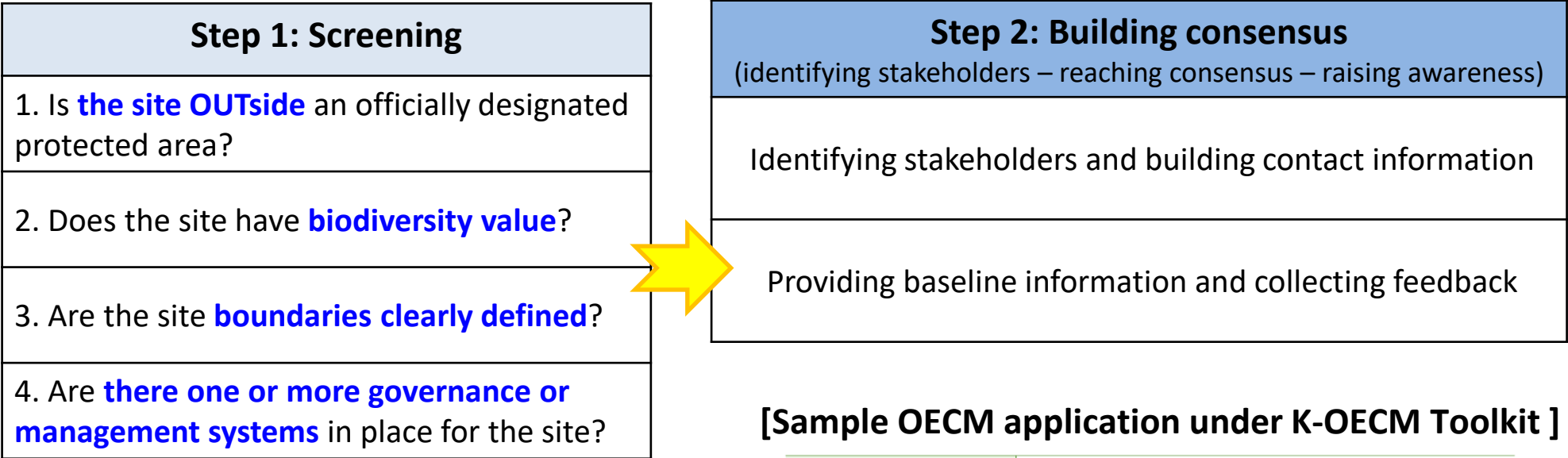


[Non-MPA tidal flats]



Source: Getbol Restoration Project on Gopado Island, Seosan (News1)

Draft certification procedure for OECMs in Korea



[Sample OECM application under K-OECM Toolkit]

구 분	내 용
(필수)대상지명(Name)	(필수)(국문) (선택)(영문)
(필수)신청기관명(신청자)	_____ sign: _____
(필수)관할/관리기관, 연락처	명칭(관할 and/or 관리기관): E-mail/Phone:
(필수)지정 유형	(예) 보전재산, 보전협약지, 하천구역 특별보전지구 등
(필수)자연공존지역 부합 여부	☐ Q1~Q4 전체 부합 ※ 선별(screening)결과 ¹⁵⁾
지정 상태 (Status)	(필수)지정 근거 (선택)지정 수준 ☐ 법 ☐ 계획 ☐ 조례 ☐ 기타: _____ ☐ 협약/계약 ☐ 자체규약 ☐ International ☐ Regional ☐ National ☐ Local
(필수)위치/주소	
면적(area)	(필수)육상(km²) (필수)해양(km²) _____ km² ☐ 해당 없음 _____ km² ☐ 해당 없음
(선택)지정연도(Status year)	

(선택)GIS 자료 제출 필수(3단계)¹⁶⁾(파일 이름은 '대상지명'과 동일하게 기재)

(선택)거버넌스 유형 (Governance Type)	☐ 정부(Federal or national ministry or agency) ☐ 준정부 기구(Sub-national ministry or agency) ☐ 정부 위탁 관리(Government-delegated management) ☐ 접경지역(Transboundary governance) ☐ 협력거버넌스(Collaborative governance)(하나의 의사결정 기관이 협력) ☐ 공동거버넌스(Joint governance)(의사결정 권한/책임 주체가 둘 이상) ☐ 개인(Individual landowners) ☐ NGO (Non-profit organisations) ☐ 영리단체(For-profit organisations) ☐ 지역공동체(Local communities) ☐ 모름(Not reported) ☐ 기타: _____
(선택)소유권 (Ownership type) ※복수 선택 가능	☐ 중앙정부(State government) ☐ 지방정부(Local government) ☐ 공동체 소유(communal) ☐ 개인(individual landowners) ☐ NGO (Non-profit organisations) ☐ 영리단체(for-profit organisations) ☐ 공동 소유(multiple ownership) ☐ 불분명(contested) / 모름(not reported)
(선택)기타 권리보유자/이해관계자	☐ 이해관계자/권리보유자 그룹(개인): 이름, 연락처, 신청 참여(합의) 여부 1. E-mail/Phone: _____ ☐ 참여(합의) 2. E-mail/Phone: _____ ☐ 참여(합의) 3. E-mail/Phone: _____ ☐ 참여(합의) ☐ 기타 권리보유자/이해관계자 없음
(선택)관리 목적 (Conservation objectives)	☐ 생물다양성 최우선 관리 ☐ 2차적 관리(최우선 관리 목적이 따로 있으나 생물다양성도 고려하는 경우) ☐ 기타: _____
(선택)기타 대상지 특성 정보	(사회·경제적 여건·특성, 관리·관할체계 지속성, 생물다양성 가치의 장기적 동향 및 보전 의도 등)

Draft certification procedure for OECMs in Korea

Step 3: Site identification and registration (in-depth assessment and data compilation)

5. Does the site demonstrate support for important biodiversity and ecosystem service values?
6. Are the site's **key biodiversity values** likely to be effectively conserved in situ **over the long term**?
7. Does the site's **governance or management system actively conserve** its **key biodiversity values** by preventing or mitigating threats—or is it reasonably expected to do so?
8. Do the site's governance and management efforts incorporate the three dimensions of equity, i.e., recognitional, procedural, and distributive?



Step 4: Finalizing the OECM assessment report

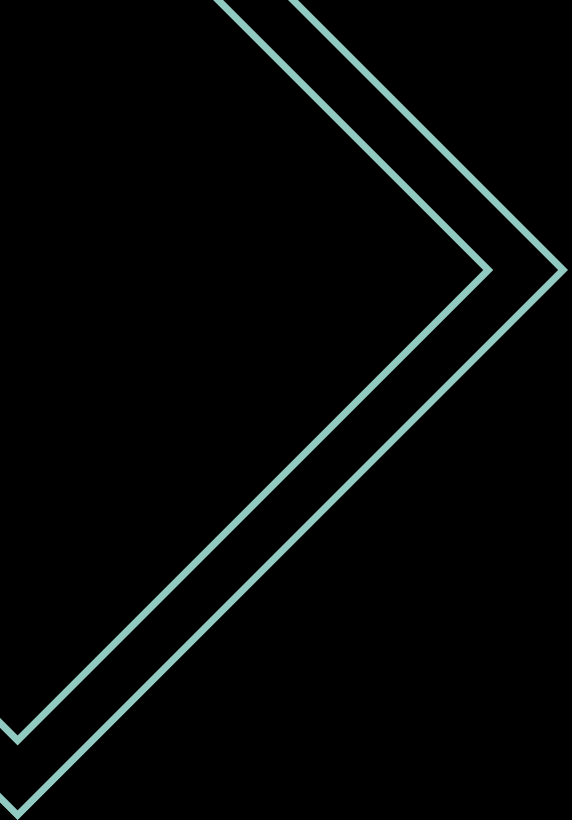
Sites that receive a “Yes” on all assessment criteria are confirmed as OECMs, subject to the agreement of the managing authority and relevant stakeholders.

Draft certification procedure for OECMs in Korea

Step 4: Finalizing the OECM assessment report

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Step	Criterion		Response (V)		
			Yes	Uncertain / partial	No
Step 1: Screening	Protected status	Q1. Is the site located outside a formally designated protected area?	☐	n/a	☐
	Biodiversity	Q2. Does the site hold important biodiversity or ecosystem service values?	☐	n/a	☐
	Clearly defined boundaries	Q3. Are the site's boundaries clearly defined and geographically identifiable?	☐	☐	☐
	Mechanisms for governance and management	Q4. Are there governance or management systems, tools, or mechanisms in place for the site?	☐	☐	☐
Step 2	Has consensus been reached on registering the site as an OECM?		☐	n/a	☐
Step 3: Comprehensive evaluation	Long-term conservability	Q5. Have the site's key biodiversity and ecosystem values been clearly confirmed?	☐	☐	☐
		Q6. Is there a strong likelihood that these values will be conserved in situ over the long term?	☐	☐	☐
	Sustainability of governance and management	Q7. Is the governance or management system capable of responding to threats and supporting conservation?	☐	☐	☐
		Q8. Does the governance system incorporate equity considerations?	☐	☐	☐



THANK YOU

Understanding and Accelerating Actions on OECMs in the Marine and Coastal Areas of East Asia Seas

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