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**Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the
Implementation of the Global Programme of Action
for the Protection of the Marine Environment
from Land-based Activities**

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda for the technical segment

Item 3 of the provisional agenda for the high-level segment*

**Policy issues in relation to the further
implementation of the Global Programme of Action**

**Policy guidance for implementing the Global Programme of
Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from
Land-based Activities over the period 2012–2016**

Note by the secretariat

Introduction

1. The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities was adopted in Washington, D.C., in 1995 by 108 Governments and the European Commission. It is a flexible, non-binding instrument that contributes to the sustainable development of coastlines, oceans and islands and adapts to changing realities. It encompasses the following source categories: sewage, nutrients, sediment mobilization, persistent organic pollutants, oils, litter, heavy metals, radioactive substances, and physical alterations and destruction of habitats. Paragraph 36 of the Global Programme of Action provides that effective international cooperation is important for the successful and cost-effective implementation of the Programme and that international cooperation is required to ensure regular review of the implementation of the Programme and its further development and adjustment.

2. Progress in implementing the Programme was first reviewed in Montreal, Canada, in 2001, and subsequently in Beijing in 2006. In the light of the progress achieved by 2006, the Governments present in Beijing agreed that during the period 2007–2011 they would devote additional effort money and support to addressing point and non-point source nutrients, including municipal, industrial and agricultural wastewater, as major and increasing source categories directly affecting human health and well-being and the environment, including marine ecosystems and their watersheds. They also agreed that over the same period they would focus on mainstreaming the implementation of the Programme in national development planning and budgetary mechanisms, including through the application of

* UNEP/GPA/IGR.3/1.

ecosystem approaches and valuation of the social and economic costs and benefits of the goods and services that coasts and oceans provided.

3. Over the past five years, the international community has embarked on several initiatives and discussed and developed policies concerning the marine and coastal environment that are relevant to the implementation of the Programme. Paragraph 75 of the Programme calls upon the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to perform its role as secretariat of the Programme in an efficient and cost-effective manner, on the premise that responsibility for implementation of the Programme, whether at the regional, national or local level, remains with countries. The Programme urges UNEP to be flexible and responsive to the evolving needs of the Programme and the availability of resources.

4. The present note has been prepared by the UNEP Global Programme of Action Coordination Office to present a proposed policy and strategy for the implementation of the Programme over the period 2012–2016 with a view to informing international discussions on sustainable development as they relate to the marine and coastal environment. Governments are requested to review the approach proposed and discuss it at the third session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting with the aim of agreeing on a framework and approaches that could guide them and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Programme over the coming five years.

I. Progress and achievements in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action over the period 2007–2011

5. The General Assembly, in paragraph 144 of resolution 65/37 of 7 December 2010, recognized that most of the pollution load of the oceans emanated from land-based activities and affected the most productive areas of the marine environment, and called upon States as a matter of priority to implement the Global Programme of Action and to take all appropriate measures to fulfil the commitments of the international community embodied in the Beijing Declaration on Furthering the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action.

6. A number of activities set out in the Global Programme of Action Coordination Office programme of work were successfully implemented during the reporting period. With regard to the economic valuation of coastal and marine ecosystems, innovative pilot studies (such as those covering the South China Sea, the Guinea Current large marine ecosystem and the south-east Pacific) were conducted and associated tools developed. In the case of the South China Sea, the decision of the littoral countries on the formulation of the Strategic Action Programme was made based on a cost-benefit analysis of actions to tackle issues affecting key ecosystems in the region. These pilot valuation studies have not, however, yet been evaluated as they must be effectively incorporated into policy decisions on coastal ecosystem management. Additional tools need to be developed to enable valuations that can be effectively used to inform policy decisions.

7. The Beijing Declaration urged the application of ecosystem approaches consistent with the guidance provided in existing instruments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which called for the application of an ecosystem approach by 2010. Concepts and methods for ecosystem approaches were developed during the reporting period, with UNEP publishing introductory documents to promote ecosystem-based management and beginning to apply the approach to selected pilot areas. The new integrated coastal management initiatives and programmes stand as good examples of the incorporation of ecosystem approaches at the regional, national and local levels.

8. Unfortunately, partnerships were not developed to the levels expected and their usefulness in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action also left something to be desired. The establishment and maintenance of viable global partnerships have been hampered by limited financial resources, varied levels of commitments on the part of stakeholders and changing global priorities. Partial success was demonstrated by the facts that partnerships were able to expand on a limited basis and existing partnerships proved viable. New global partnerships, such as the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management, the Global Partnership on Waste Management and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, emerged only where there were clearly targeted objectives and well-defined outcomes. It is expected that such partnerships, with their clearly defined objectives and outcomes with time-bound targets and well-prepared financial and support resources, can effectively contribute to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action over the coming five years.

9. Among the Programme source categories, progress was made in integrating the actions related to persistent organic pollutants in the Programme into the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Mercury is addressed in the Global Mercury Partnership and is the subject of an intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument pursuant to

section III of UNEP Governing Council decision 25/5. Coordinated action on cadmium and lead is now being considered. The considerable progress made in these areas further confirms the call made in the Beijing Declaration in 2006 for participating States to increase efforts to address point and non-point source nutrients, including municipal, industrial and agricultural wastewater.

10. Of the nine source categories, the Coordination Office work programme accorded priority to nutrients, sewage, marine litter and physical alterations and destruction of habitats. Concerning nutrients, marine litter and sewage, the Office, working with its partners, responded to the diverse and challenging nature of the problems by proposing partnerships and initiatives on nutrients, wastewater and marine litter. The Global Partnership on Nutrient Management was established in 2009 to bring together government policymakers, scientists, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies with a view to raising awareness of the challenges inherent in managing nutrients and helping to build constituencies of interest and action on the issue.

11. A UNEP global initiative on marine litter was established in response to General Assembly resolution 60/30 of 29 November 2005 and fosters cooperation in and the coordination of activities for the control and sustainable management of marine litter. At the Fifth International Marine Debris Conference, held in Honolulu, United States of America, in March 2011, participants endorsed the Honolulu Commitment, which outlines 12 actions to reduce marine debris. The Honolulu Strategy: A Global Framework for the Prevention and Management of Marine Debris was formulated from the results of the conference, and calls for action by stakeholders to address the issue. A key recommendation was the establishment of a global multi-stakeholder platform and partnership.

12. The UNEP/Global Programme of Action wastewater programme takes into consideration the fact that water supply and wastewater treatment are closely linked and promotes low-cost technologies, regional training courses and partnerships. In 2010, in cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, UNEP and the Global Programme of Action produced a report entitled "Sick Water? The central role of wastewater in sustainable development". In the light of that report, a proposal was made for a multi-stakeholder collaborative agenda on wastewater that would respond to the recommendations made in the report, under the auspices of the United Nations mechanism for inter-agency coordination on water resources (UN-Water). The partnerships on marine litter and on wastewater, as described herein, are relevant to the partnership approach agreed upon in Beijing in 2006.

13. Marine litter has emerged as a major global marine pollution issue since 2006. The importance of the matter was confirmed at the Fifth International Marine Debris Conference, in 2010, and by the formation of a marine debris task team led by UNEP and the Global Programme of Action within the inter-agency coordination mechanism on ocean and coastal issues within the United Nations system (UN-Oceans) in 2011. In fact the General Assembly, in paragraph 136 of its resolution 65/37, welcomed the activities of UNEP relating to marine debris carried out in cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies and organizations, and encouraged States to further develop partnerships with industry and civil society to raise awareness of the extent of the impact of marine debris on the health and productivity of the marine environment and consequent economic loss.

14. In the same resolution, the General Assembly expressed its concern regarding the spreading of hypoxic dead zones in oceans as a result of eutrophication fuelled by riverine run-off of fertilizers, sewage outfall and reactive nitrogen resulting from the burning of fossil fuels and causing serious consequences for ecosystem functioning, and called upon States to enhance their efforts to reduce eutrophication and, to that end, to continue to cooperate within the framework of relevant international organizations, in particular the Global Programme of Action. Effective action on nutrients and wastewater, which are major contributors to eutrophication, has proven elusive, especially in developing countries. Some 417 eutrophic and associated oxygen-depleted areas were identified in 2007. Given that the situation is deteriorating and these source categories continue to be priority issues, as requested by the General Assembly, it is suggested that in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action over the coming years further attention be paid to tackling these sources of pollution.

15. In the same resolution, the General Assembly welcomed the continued work of States, UNEP and regional organizations in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action and encouraged increased emphasis on the link between freshwater, the coastal zone and marine resources in the implementation of international development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and of the time-bound targets in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"), in particular the target on sanitation, and the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for

Development. The resolution also reaffirmed the need for enhanced efforts to establish a policy link between coastal zone and watershed management. A number of pilot initiatives have resulted in practical ways to address these policy linkages, through means such as integrated watershed and coastal area management for Caribbean small island developing States and the provision of support to the national plan of action for the protection of the arctic marine environment in the Russian Federation. It also highlights the further work needed to tackle nutrients and wastewater emanating from land-based activities in watersheds through management efforts to link watersheds and the coastal environment.

16. Regarding physical alteration and destruction of habitats, concerns have been raised in the General Assembly and other international forums regarding the continued decline of coastal and marine ecosystems and their functions and adverse impacts on them by land-based activities, such as urban development, coastal reclamation and aquaculture development. During the reporting period, the Coordination Office received information on initiatives and practices by participating States and regional organizations, such as the countries bordering the South China Sea that have developed and are implementing national and regional programmes of action for mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs and coastal wetlands. Under some such regional initiatives, valuations of coastal and marine ecosystem services were used to inform decision-making in favour of the conservation of those ecosystems and the wise and sustainable use of goods and services provided by them. In recent years, among the ecosystem services attracting international attention are those related to carbon sequestration and storage in coastal ecosystems, particularly mangroves and coastal salt marshes. The values of coastal ecosystem services related to water quality maintenance and fisheries are also related to livelihoods, food security and poverty alleviation. Although ecosystem approaches are included in national and local coastal management initiatives, the values of coastal ecosystems should be more integrated into national and local coastal management and policies, demonstrating the linkages between coastal resources and ecosystem services and economic and social development, poverty alleviation and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

17. At the regional level, Global Programme of Action implementation has been facilitated through the development of seven protocols to regional seas conventions that specifically address the protection of the marine environment from land-based sources of pollution and activities. These protocols cover the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment Sea Area, the south-east Pacific, western Indian Ocean, the wider Caribbean and the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. A typical example of regional action is the development and implementation of the European Union Marine Strategy and Water Directives. The regional seas agreements covering seas in the European Union (the north-east Atlantic, the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean) have greater motivation, along with financial and technical support, to introduce the necessary mechanisms and to make the revisions to implement protocols related to land-based sources of pollution and activities.

18. The Beijing Declaration called for regional organizations to apply ecosystem approaches and to strengthen partnerships; it also called for interregional action and greater sharing of knowledge, technology and experience. The Global Environment Facility has facilitated the application of ecosystem approaches through its large marine ecosystems projects, with many such projects considering issues related to the Global Programme of Action. Just as at the global level, and for many of the same reasons, regional partnerships have proved challenging.

19. A clearing-house mechanism for sharing information is proposed in the Global Programme of Action. The Coordination Office has been instrumental in developing an information-sharing platform through the Programme website. A lack of resources, however, has caused the Office difficulties in maintaining and expanding the mechanism so that Governments and other stakeholders can take full advantage of the information held in the system. Furthermore, there has been no official mechanism enabling reporting by Governments on progress in implementing the Global Programme and national programmes of action. Coupled with the limited success of the clearing-house mechanism, this makes it difficult to analyse progress at the national level, the commitment made in Beijing to improve monitoring notwithstanding. In the light of the resource constraints that UNEP faces, it is suggested that existing and proposed partnerships play a key role in sharing and mobilizing information.

20. According to information received by the Office, many Governments have already developed national programmes of action or their equivalents. Many Governments reported that Programme issues were included in their wider environmental and/or coastal and marine policies. The Office has not received sufficient information to assess global progress in mainstreaming national programmes of action into poverty reduction strategies or United Nations development assistance frameworks. Some of the information that the Office gathered suggests that embedding the Programme in national development planning and budgeting mechanisms may prove difficult. Integrated coastal management

and integrated water resources management frameworks could be used as complementary approaches since many countries have or are developing them and are therefore committed to implementing them.

21. Many Programme-related priority actions on key coastal issues and priority source categories such as wastewater, nutrients, marine litter and solid wastes can easily be included in either an integrated coastal management or an integrated water resources management framework and therefore mainstreamed through such programmes at the national and local levels, depending on the evolution of responsibility for coastal management in each country. Indeed, the Programme recognizes the benefits of linking its implementation with integrated coastal management initiatives.¹ Paragraph 19 of the Programme states that the effective development and implementation of national programmes of action should focus on sustainable, pragmatic, integrated environmental management approaches and processes, such as integrated coastal zone management.

22. As secretariat of the Global Programme of Action, the Coordination Office, which is an integral part of the UNEP Freshwater and Marine Ecosystems Branch of the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, assists States and intergovernmental organizations in the implementation of the Programme through, among other things, the preparation of guidance material, assessments and manuals and the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building. It works closely with the Regional Seas Programme, which has spearheaded implementation efforts at the regional level. In discharging its responsibilities as secretariat over the reporting period, UNEP made arrangements to provide better support. The Office moved from The Hague to Nairobi in 2008, and since then activities related to the Programme have been largely embedded in the UNEP programme of work across all UNEP divisions and subprogrammes. This in turn has led to greater support from UNEP for the fulfilment of the functions of the Coordination Office.

II. Basis for furthering implementation over the period 2012–2016

23. The value and contribution of marine and coastal ecosystems to sustainable development are not being fully realized, as these ecosystems continue to be undermined by land-based activities such as discharges from agriculture and wastewater and coastal urbanization. More than 50 per cent of the world's population is estimated to live within 100 kilometres of the coast, a figure that could rise to 75 per cent by the end of the current decade. In the case of coastal waters, the impacts of such trends are set to increase in severity and scope in the light of higher food and energy production and coastal urbanization undermining the ecosystems on which livelihoods depend. The issues of degraded water quality and eutrophication of coastal waters are also set to become more serious.

24. Governments appear to be increasingly confronted by global, regional and national drivers that are leading to apparent divides between the need for food, energy, water security and urban development, and interlinked adverse environmental impacts that in turn undermine the ecosystems, livelihoods and services that they support and provide. For the reasons given above these divides are expected to intensify in coastal zones if current development trends and management approaches persist. Over the coming decades coastal communities will face greater threats from climate change and increased migration to coastal areas, placing further strain on the ability of coastal and marine ecosystems to deliver services. These trends highlight the need for the valuation of ecosystem services so that decisions on ecosystem trade-offs are well informed, especially within an integrated coastal management framework.

25. Scientists now better understand the magnitude by which changes in land use affect downstream rainfall patterns and have estimated the volumes of water appropriated by society to produce rain-fed crops. It is well understood that riverine input of water, pollutants, nutrients and sediments originating from land-based activities and land-use changes affects the functioning of coastal ecosystems. Such knowledge influences how we can better manage water and land, highlighting the urgent need to boost water-use efficiency and linking land and water management more closely. Integrated coastal management and integrated water resources management frameworks can facilitate this closer linking, improve water management, especially for sewage and nutrients, and contribute to countries moving to a green economy in coastal areas.

¹ Integrated coastal management can be seen as the governance through integrated planning of human activities that affect the sustainable use of goods and services generated by marine and coastal ecosystems. It aims to promote the sustainable economic development of coastal resources while balancing the competing use of those resources to ensure that their functional integrity is maintained. It is an internationally advocated approach adopted in an increasing number of countries, often through cooperative processes at the regional level. Various terms have been used to describe integrated coastal management initiatives such as integrated coastal area management, integrated coastal zone management and integrated coastal area and river basin management.

26. In the face of these challenges, Governments and stakeholders are seeking to boost resource-efficient growth and innovation in order to decouple the links between economic growth and environmental degradation, notably through increased resource efficiency and reduction of pollution over product life cycles and along supply chains. Public policies and private-sector initiatives that promote increased investment in efficient and environmentally friendly products and services are emerging. Economic development models based on the relationship between resource use and pollution need further development to ensure that resources are used efficiently. Such models afford opportunities for Governments and other stakeholders to see pollution load reduction as an opportunity for investment and pollutants as resources.

27. *Global Programme of Action source categories:* Under the current situation, in which resources for implementing the Global Programme of Action are limited, it is proposed that Governments prioritize the Programme's source categories in order to guide resource mobilization and expenditure. Three priorities are suggested: nutrients and sewage, given their importance to coastal eutrophication, and marine litter, for its impact on marine ecosystems and the economies of coastal communities. These sources continue to prove challenging at the local, national and regional levels and their impacts on the coastal and marine environment are spreading. Physical alteration and destruction of habitats continue to prove a challenge and can be tackled under various programmes such as integrated coastal management, biodiversity management and marine protected areas, particularly by taking an ecosystem approach.

28. Work to tackle these source categories affords opportunities to demonstrate the potential benefits of ecosystem-based management and approaches and to see these pollutants as resources. In focusing Global Programme of Action implementation in the coming five years, it is proposed that the approaches of fully using coastal ecosystem services and of reusing and recycling pollutants as resources be fully taken into consideration.

29. By taking such approaches to these source categories, management efforts and investments can lead not only to improvements in environmental quality in coastal areas but also to social and economic development. Full treatment sewage systems, for example, following traditional models of primary to tertiary treatment are often prohibitively expensive. Reuse of the nutrients in wastewater could help avoid excessive treatment costs while providing benefits in terms of organic fertilizer. In terms of treating wastewater, the nutrient-cleaning capacity of natural systems such as lagoons, ponds, and wetlands could be better used. Systems exist in both developing and developed countries for converting wastewater into a useable resource. These integrated systems combine processes and practices to optimize resource use by recycling wastewater so that water and nutrients can be reused. Clean biosolids can be used in agriculture as fertilizer and to improve the soil structure through the approaches advocated as ecological or productive sanitation.

30. In China, there are large farms that are almost self-sufficient in terms of energy and nutrients because of the effective recycling of their waste streams. In India, the Calcutta wetland system provides the world's largest example of wastewater-fed aquaculture. The wetlands receive some 555,000 cubic metres of untreated wastewater per day, flowing through approximately 3,000 hectares of constructed fishponds. Annual fish production amounts to 13,000 tonnes. These approaches also offer genuine benefits in reducing carbon footprints; for example, in a number of countries the manufacture and use of synthetic nitrogen fertilizer can account for a significant proportion of the country's greenhouse-gas emissions. More efficient nitrogen use can mean increased net incomes for farmers, a decreased carbon footprint, less pollution and no loss of crop production levels.²

31. Much of the marine litter from land-based sources results from unsustainable production and consumption and poor waste management. Every year, marine debris results in substantial economic costs and losses to individuals and communities worldwide. Marine litter forms part of a broader problem of solid waste management, which affects all coastal and upland communities, including inland waterways, and is closely linked to the protection and conservation of the marine and coastal environment. In its resolution 65/37, the General Assembly urged States to integrate the issue of marine debris into national strategies dealing with waste management in the coastal zone, ports and maritime industries, including recycling, reuse, reduction and disposal, and encouraged the development of appropriate economic incentives to address that issue, including the development of cost recovery systems.

32. *Multi-stakeholder partnership approaches:* The multisource and intersectoral nature of wastewater, nutrients and marine litter, while potentially providing a range of opportunities and benefits from resource reuse and recycling and lower carbon footprint approaches, require governance

2 UK-China Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network. Low Carbon Agriculture. Policy Brief no. 2, December 2010.

and institutional mechanisms. Mechanisms need to be established that are able to bring Governments, industrial sectors, scientists and other stakeholders together around the shared agenda of win-to-win investments. As described above, UNEP and the international community have initiated multi-stakeholder partnership approaches, advocating clearly defined objectives and targets that can produce tangible results in reducing the impacts of these source categories and bringing to stakeholders specific economic benefits derived from the partnerships. Such partnership approaches can overcome the challenges faced by the global and regional partnerships to date, as Governments and other stakeholders can clearly show their commitment to achieving the defined objectives and targets, such as those set out in, for example, the Honolulu Commitment and Strategy.

33. It is proposed that Governments formally agree to establish and/or develop these partnerships on nutrients, wastewater and marine litter with clear government ownership and impetus. The partnerships would have their overall objectives and aims, including, possibly, targets on reducing discharges, reuse and recycling agreed upon by Governments at the third session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting. The partnerships would be responsible for developing information management systems and networks of experts from institutions, Governments and the private sector, helping to establish and share best practices and available and acceptable technologies. They would also set up demonstration projects to pilot test innovative approaches and technologies embodying a resource-efficient approach. UNEP and the Global Programme of Action would provide secretariat support that would include establishing the networks, helping to develop pilot projects and mobilizing resources. As discussed above, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management has already been launched and its further development is expected over the coming years under the Programme implementation framework. The proposed global partnership on marine litter would be operated under the Global Partnership on Waste Management referred to in UNEP Governing Council decision 26/3. The wastewater partnership will be developed on the basis of the taskforce on wastewater under UN-Water.

34. *Oversight of partnerships:* The partnerships need to work effectively to guide national policies related to the source categories. Accordingly, there must be a way of ensuring a role for Governments in overseeing and engaging in the partnerships' work on a regular basis, rather than relying simply on a full-scale intergovernmental review after five years. It is therefore proposed that Governments be engaged in oversight of the partnerships' work through the Programme intergovernmental processes, including intersessional activities as proposed below.

35. *Global Programme of Action as an intergovernmental platform:* Two interlinked functions are proposed for the Programme intergovernmental mechanism. First, a Bureau would be established for the third session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting, with representation from each of the five United Nations regions. The Bureau would continue to function after the session, and would play a role in receiving regular reports from the partnerships and in providing a conduit back to them. Second, as part of the work programme for 2012–2016, the Coordination Office would develop and implement intersessional activities. Such activities would be organized for the purpose of reviewing progress in implementation and identifying emerging issues related to the Programme. The intersessional activities could be organized through the Bureau, and an intersessional meeting or meetings organized in conjunction with other global meetings and subject to available resources.

36. *Further implementation of the national programmes of action:* At the second session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting, it was agreed that there should be a focus on developing and implementing the national programmes of action in order to help facilitate ecosystem approaches. The ecosystem approach to the management of river basin, coastal and marine resources and environments has been endorsed under international bodies and initiatives such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. The latter was completed in 2005 and focuses on ecosystem services, which are the benefits that redound to people either through the natural operation of, or the deliberate use of, the conditions and processes that characterize natural ecosystems. Such benefits include fish and fibre production, water supply, water purification, climate regulation, flood regulation, coastal protection, recreational opportunities and increasingly tourism.

37. In paragraph 119 of its resolution 61/222 of 20 December 2006, the General Assembly included proposed elements of an ecosystem approach, noting that continued environmental degradation in many parts of the world and increasing competing demands required an urgent response and the setting of priorities for management actions aimed at conserving ecosystem integrity; and that ecosystem approaches to ocean management should be focused on managing human activities in order to maintain and, where needed, restore ecosystem health to sustain goods and services.

38. As part of the continued implementation of the Programme, it is proposed that the principles and approaches of ecosystem-based management of coastal and marine areas be further considered in

the implementation of national programmes of action and possibly within national and regional integrated coastal management frameworks. For this purpose, it is proposed that Programme implementation over the coming five years contribute to developing and incorporating methods and approaches to the valuation of coastal ecosystem services and other policy tools such as clearer trade-off analyses in respect of ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration and storage and water cycling and purification. There also needs to be a focus on building the capacities of policymakers to understand the social and economic value of marine and coastal ecosystems as a basis for policy and management decision-making on coastal management.

39. By taking the above-mentioned approaches, Governments are also requested to implement the Programme through effective regional frameworks, notably the regional seas conventions and action plan frameworks. The proposed partnership approach would lead to the formulation of more coordinated stakeholder efforts on the priority source categories and would involve existing global, regional and national initiatives in the effort to tackle the issues relevant to these three source categories.

III. Outline of the programme of work for 2012–2016

40. There remains a pressing need to tackle the key source categories (nutrients, wastewater and marine litter), given their links to coastal water quality, health, livelihoods, agriculture and other relevant issues, and the persistent nature of the problems that they pose. The Programme should also, however, seek to catalyse broader integrated management approaches, notably national programmes of action, and to link them more effectively with integrated coastal management and other similar integrated management frameworks.

41. Building on the agreements and outcomes of Beijing, and in the light of current and emerging challenges, the approach proposed herein entails Governments, with the support of UNEP and in partnership with international and regional organizations and other stakeholders, focusing over the period 2012–2016 on:

(a) A partnership platform for improving coastal water quality with a focus on nutrients, wastewater and marine litter. Using the global multi-stakeholder partnerships, Governments would commit themselves to working with relevant sectors to mitigate the environmental impacts of these sources of pollution, to promoting efficiencies and incentives in their production and to making full use of recycling and reuse opportunities;

(b) A policy forum for the further implementation of national programmes of action and their integration into coastal management approaches. Governments would be requested to consider integrating ecosystem approaches and resource-efficient approaches into the implementation of their national programmes of action or broader frameworks such as integrated coastal management schemes;

(c) Using the Programme platform to look at integrated coastal management initiatives and to promote the scaling-up and wider adoption of best-practices in ecosystem-based management under the wider coastal management framework and based on integrated resource management for sustainable coastal development.

42. To provide the necessary support for the proposed approach it is estimated that the Coordination Office will require four Professional staff members, including a coordinator, in addition to one General Service staff member, who should be supported by UNEP. UNEP may, subject to further consideration by the Governing Council, cover the necessary costs for the operation of these core staff members, subject to the volume of resources available for the implementation of the parts of the UNEP programme of work relevant to the Global Programme. Additional staff members may be provided through funding from budgetary sources external to UNEP. Other costs, such as those incurred in maintaining the partnerships, providing capacity support and organizing intergovernmental meetings and intersessional work, should be covered by sources other than UNEP core funding.

IV. Suggested action

43. The representatives of Governments attending the third session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting are invited to consider the approach set out herein and, in particular, the following discussion items:

(a) The efforts by Governments and other stakeholders notwithstanding, the marine and coastal environment continues to degrade in terms of, among other things, water quality and physical alteration and destruction of habitats. There is a need for countries to accelerate the implementation of

the Global Programme of Action in the light of the growing pressures on marine and coastal ecosystems, which require more effective management approaches aligned to new and persistent challenges;

(b) The future work programme for the implementation of the Global Programme of Action should build on the approaches agreed upon at the second session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting and focus on effective management of nutrients, wastewater and marine litter and contributing to improvements in coastal water quality. This approach would see these substances considered to be not only pollutants but also important resources contributing to the sustainable development of coastal areas and economies;

(c) To take these issues forward effectively, global multi-stakeholder partnership approaches are necessary for nutrients, wastewater and marine litter, based on bringing Governments together with key industrial sectors, major groups, scientists and other stakeholders around a shared agenda;

(d) The partnership approaches should be complemented by ecosystem approaches, including ecosystem services valuation, and their contribution to water quality management, to promote the uptake of such approaches by Governments in their integrated coastal management or similar frameworks;

(e) The Global Programme of Action platform should be used to promote and accelerate integrated coastal management approaches, specifically national programmes of action and integrated coastal management initiatives, enabling them to accelerate moves towards ecosystem-based management;

(f) To provide momentum and effective oversight, the Global Programme of Action platform should have a new component comprising a bureau of regional representatives tasked to oversee the implementation of the Global Programme of Action during the intersessional period for the purposes of reviewing progress, overseeing the partnerships and identifying emerging issues.