
Committee of Permanent Representatives
Briefing by the Secretariat
Thursday 21 September 2017
United Nations Office at Nairobi Gigiri,
Conference Room 4

Briefing note on the 4th Inter-Governmental Review (IGR-4) of the GPA and Global Land-Oceans Connections Conference (GLOC)

1. Background Info/Summary:

- The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (Global Programme of Action), adopted in 1995 in Washington, D.C., is designed to be a source of conceptual and practical guidance on preventing, reducing, controlling and eliminating marine degradation resulting from land-based activities. It is the only global action programme that explicitly addresses the linkages between the freshwater, coastal and marine environments.
- The Fourth Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Global Programme of Action follows previous IGRs which took place in 2001 (Canada), 2006 (China) and 2012 (Philippines) and will be held in Bali, Indonesia from 25 to 27 October 2017.
- The main goal of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting is to secure additional commitments from a full range of partners to further the implementation of the Global Programme of Action in addressing the priorities and needs of countries.
- The meeting will be preceded by the Third Global Conference on Land-Ocean Connections from 23 to 24 October 2017. The Global Conference on Land-Ocean Connections is open to all partners including Member States, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, regional and international organizations, major groups and stakeholders. The event will showcase cutting-edge science and innovative approaches to address marine pollution including emerging pollutants. The outcomes will feed into the discussion of the Fourth Intergovernmental Review Meeting.

2. Objectives and Expected Outcomes of the Inter-Governmental Review:

The meeting is expected to:

- Review the implementation of the Global Programme of Action at national, regional and global levels during the period 2012-2017.
- Consider the policy issues relevant to the future implementation of the Global Programme of Action and agree on the way forward so as to ensure that it remains an effective mechanism for ecosystem-based coastal and watershed management.

- Make decision on the best option for the future operation of the Programme among three presented options that includes options to either substantially retain the current configuration and governance of the Programme, modify it to merge with the governance of the UN Environment Assembly, or wind-down the Programme. Members can also propose alternative options.
 - Agree on a Ministerial Declaration : the “ Bali Declaration” reflecting the commitments of governments to keep the Global Programme of Action as a fundamental and flexible global framework for achieving internationally agreed goals and targets for the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands

The outcomes of the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Review of the Global Programme of Action will feed directly into the preparations for and proceedings of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

3. Expected topics for discussion:

During the meeting, the Governments present will take stock of what has been achieved since the last intergovernmental review, decide on the way forward for the Programme, and how it can best respond to the very serious challenges facing our oceans. Suggested key topics for decision are:

- The Programme’s future mandate
- Options for diversifying the Programme’s funding sources, possible new funding sources include the private sector, foundations and various international environmental funding schemes, such as the Green Climate Fund.
- The possibility of establishing a new architecture on marine litter
- Innovative ways of financing wastewater treatments plants as a way of improving sustainable wastewater management in developing countries
- The development of norms together with the business community for various sources of nutrient pollution, such as detergents, while at the same time keeping the focus on issues such as agricultural runoff jointly
- Strengthening the cooperation with the Regional Seas Programmes to curb marine pollution originating on land

4. Structure of the meeting of the Global Land Ocean Connections and the Inter-Governmental Review

- The Global Conference on Land-Ocean Connections (GLOC) is a 2-day technical/science conference held just before the IGR to inform policy makers.
- The GLOC will have a plenary session with presentations and discussion in the morning of the 23rd, and four parallel sessions on key source categories of the Global Programme of Action. The outcomes from the parallel sessions will be reported on the 24th, in plenary, followed by presentation and discussion and the formulation of key recommendation to feed into the IGR. The last version of the GLOC’s agenda is attached.

- The IGR is a formal 5-year review of the Programme (over 3 days, with technical and high-level segments) that provides an opportunity for Governments and other relevant stakeholders to take stock of the implementation of the GPA and decide on the way forward. It is a platform for strategizing on how to increase the relevance and impact of the GPA and link its work closer to on-going processes and salient issues (such as the SDGs, climate change, Rio+20, etc.).
- The IGR will have 13th items as follow (details in the attached organization of work and agenda):

Day 1, on October 25th, 2017, from 10 am to 6pm

- Item 1: The opening of the session will be by a Representative of the Host Country and the UNEP Deputy Director on Wednesday 25th October 2017, at 10 a.m.
- Items 2 and 3: Organizational matters and Credentials of representatives
- Item 4: Review of implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities at the national, regional and international levels for the period 2012-2017
- Item 5: Remarks by a representative of the host country of the third session of the Intergovernmental Review
- Item 6: Presentations on wider support frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda on the sustainable development goals, the Paris Agreement..
- Item 7: Statements by regional groups and regional seas programmes
- Item 8: Outcomes of the third Global Conference on Land-Ocean Connections

Day 2, on October 26th, 2017, from 10 a.m to 6pm

- Item 9: Governance and policy issues in relation to the further implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the period 2018-2022, from 10 a.m
- Item 10: Programme of work of the Global Programme of Action Coordination Office for the period 2018–2022
- Item 11: Bali Declaration - discussion and adoption

Day 3, on October 27th, 2017, from 3pm to 6pm

- Item 12: Adoption of the report of the session- during Friday afternoon, the plenary will reconvene to formally adopt its decisions and take final decisions
- Item 13: Closure of the session

5. Sensitivities/Issues to be aware of:
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A number of new and important global developments have taken place since the third session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting in 2012, with serious implications for the future direction of the Global Programme of Action:

- The adoption of the 2030 Agenda of the sustainable development goals
- The Paris Agreement on climate change
- The establishment of a universal membership of the governing body of UNEP- UNEA
- Since 2011, there has been no contribution by countries to the trust fund of the Global Programme of Action

6. Other events in the margins

During Friday morning, from 9am to 3pm, the COBSEA will have an Extraordinary Inter-Governmental Meeting to adopt the new COBSEA Strategic Directions.

7. Substantive and supporting documents

- Agenda of the GLOC
- Annotated agenda of the IGR4- UNEP/GPA/IGR.4/Add.1
- Advance Progress report- UNEP/GPA/IGR.4/2
- Advance Policy paper- UNEP/GPA/IGR.4/3

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