Regional Seas: Bangkok, October 5/7, 2009
Caspian Sea
Caspian Sea

News – good since we met in Ecuador

1. New GEF funded Project approved / operational

- $6 millions through UNDP/UNOPS

- Focus on a) ecosystem based approach bio-resources management and b) on consolidation of Tehran Convection process

- Project Coordination Unit moved to Astana, Kazakhstan, fully equipped, staffed and functional

- Inter Agency Agreement (IAA) signed with UNE/ROA to assist
Caspian Sea

News – good since we met in Ecuador

2- Have re-started activities

• Inception Meeting held & work Plan approved; interest shown in climate change; Thematic Regional Work Groups being formed

• LBS protocol Meeting and Shared Information on State of Environment meetings held; Biodiversity protocol meeting is being held now; two more protocol meetings till end year; COPIII planned for 2010 in Asana

• Started work on Sturgeon Gene Bank; Caspian Trout Centre; Eco-system Based Bioresource Management; Fish Passage/ladder Review; Inventory of Spawning Grounds; Seals Protected Area Plan etc etc
Caspian Sea

• News –not so good- since we met in Ecuador
  – **Tehran COP II** not a full success
  – **Slow and mixed progress on protocols**
  – **Still no progress on Fisheries protocol, or on Data and Information Exchange**
  – **Continued pressure on Sturgeon and Kilka**
  – **Seals moving to the threatened category- see the slide**
  – **Unhelpful financial climate; less funds for environment**
  – **Nothing for climate change!**
Caspian seal demography 1930-Present
(Courtesy of Leeds University/Seals Int)
What are the real issues then?

- Politics taking a toll in Caspian
- Environment still at the bottom of the priority list for governments; environmental agencies not politically strong; poor inter-sectoral coordination
- Fisheries –environment divide still there
- International environmental bodies are weak, have little money at their disposal - for which they all go - yet appear to ask for too much from countries in terms of plans etc
- Climate change not yet taken fully seriously
Way ahead?

- Re-think international environmental agencies institution

- International agencies need to engage economic, financial and planning ministries in addition to environmental ministries in a package approach

- Climate change stimulus package required

- We all have to stay optimistic !!!!