



# United Nations Environment Programme

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PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT · PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE

ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

## Second Global Conference on Land – Oceans Connection (GLOC-2) 2-4 October, 2013, Montego Bay, Jamaica

### **OUTPUTS FROM THE THEMATIC SESSION OF THE GLOC-2**

#### **Title of the Session:**

**Coral Reef Partnership Workshop, 3 October 2013, 11:00-18:00 and 4 October 14:30-17:30**

#### **1. PLEASE BRIEFLY INDICATE WHO WERE THE KEY PARTNERS/SPEAKERS OF THE SESSION**

UNEP; UNEP affiliated centres (UNEP-WCMC, GRID-Arendal); Regional Seas programmes (CEP, SPREP, NC, COBSEA); UN: UNU, DOALOS; Regional/LME Projects; Country representatives / representatives of national agencies, including MPA agencies; NGOs (some participants attended only part of the session)

#### **2. BRIEFLY SUMMARIZE THE MAIN DISCUSSION POINTS OF YOUR SESSION:**

Based on documents circulated in advance of the session, partnership purpose, functional and structural aspects, priority work areas and initial activities were discussed. A number of recommendations were made.

Key findings and recommendations include:

- The need for a partnership mechanism to support communication, collaboration and exchange of experiences, tools and approaches between regions was reaffirmed.
- A partnership mechanism was seen as useful to support actions towards internationally and regionally adopted targets and commitments. Aichi 10 is somewhat specific to reefs but there are many other relevant targets. There is a need to focus on a subset of these global targets. The ICRI CTA and FFA should be addressed specifically, but not exclusively.
- A secretariat hosted by UNEP is important for coordinating and facilitating partnership operations and useful in anchoring the partnership in the UN system.
- The partnership should focus on coral reefs as an integral part of the broader tropical coastal ecosystem, in order to enable and effectively support ecosystem based approaches (it was noted that e.g. seagrass remains a global gap). This should be reflected in the partnership name. "Coral Coast Partnership" was proposed (some felt this sounds like a specific place).
- The partnership should be seen as a two-way relationship, enabling partners to gain from being part of a global initiative, while contributing towards implementation of partnership activities.
- The partnership structure and procedural aspects should initially be kept minimal, with emphasis placed on establishing common principles, broad aims and objectives and implementing priority activities. As the partnership and activities expand, structural and operational aspects can be reviewed and revised.
- The Regional Seas are central to the partnership construct. The partnership should utilize Regional Seas mechanisms to ensure it responds to national and regional needs common to many coral reef regions. Adoption and uptake of its activities and outputs should be sought through the regional intergovernmental mechanisms. The regional scope should permeate all aspects of partnership operations.
- Participation in the partnership will be primarily sought from among the Regional Seas. However, the partnership should, as envisaged, be open to a broad range of organizations, in particular technical organizations.
- The partnership will draw upon and contribute towards ongoing activities by Regional Seas, UNEP and affiliated centres UNEP-WCMC and UNEP GRID-Arendal and other partners, as well as relevant networks including the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network and ICRI *Ad Hoc* Committees. Where relevant collaboration with other global partnerships will be sought (e.g. GPA, DTIE).

Partnership purpose and objectives were tentatively agreed:

- The purpose of the partnership is to provide a support framework for national and regional actions to bring pressures on coral reefs and related ecosystems to a sustainable level.
- The partnership will catalyse, enable and support an ecosystem approach to management of coral reefs and surrounding coastal and marine areas. It is established as a primary mechanism for implementation of the ICRI Call to Action and Framework for Action through UNEP's Regional Seas programme, in support of achieving Aichi Target 10 and other internationally adopted targets.
- The objectives of the partnership are to:
  - o At the national level, support uptake of ecosystem based management through information access, capacity building and pilot or demonstration activities implemented with local, national, regional and international partners;
  - o At the regional level, adapt approaches, tools and methods that enable ecosystem based management to regional and national needs, and facilitate their adoption by regional intergovernmental mechanisms through provision of policy guidance and other forms of support;
  - o At the global level, provide a community of practice to support exchange of best practice and lessons learned between regions and, where required, develop new tools and approaches that enable ecosystem based management.
- At all levels, the partnership should address needs without duplicating existing efforts. It should, where possible, provide a means to contribute and input to ongoing efforts in relation to coral reefs and other tropical coastal ecosystems.

Partnership structure and operational aspects:

- The partnership governance structure will initially be kept lean and simple, but may be further developed if/as required, depending on growth in membership and activities implemented under the partnership.
- The partnership is open to Regional Seas Programmes, which provide the primary mechanisms for delivering activities under the work programme in the regions, for supporting broad uptake and achieving impact at regional and national level. The partnership is also open to a broad range of other organizations, including public, academic, private, and civil society that support the partnership goals and objectives and commit to collaboration towards their achievement through activities implemented under the partnership.
- An Executive Secretariat is provided by UNEP, for coordination of development and implementation of the partnership work programme, day-to-day administration of the partnership, communication and networking. The secretariat will also, in consultation with partners, create a Pool of Experts for technical support, review and guidance.
- Meetings of partners in a 'Partnership Forum' held e.g. in association with Global Meetings of the Regional Seas, GLOC or other relevant meetings, provides overall guidance and direction.

### **3. WHAT ISSUES DID PARTICIPANTS FEEL SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE WORK PLAN OF THE PARTNERSHIP**

Elements of a work programme were discussed in terms of main partnership themes responding to priorities common to several regions. Scope of each theme was defined and initial priority activities identified, as follows:

Theme 1. Management for resilient coral reefs and related ecosystems in the face of climate change, ocean acidification and other anthropogenic stressors.

Under this theme the partnership will collect, share and, as necessary, develop indicators, methods, planning tools, and policy guidance to build capacity for adaptive, ecosystem-based management.

Initial Priority Activities:

- EBM training for coral reef/tropical coastal managers, utilizing and adapting available materials, building on and extending the approaches developed for the ITMEMS symposia;
- Guidance and demonstration interventions promoting coral reef resilience through spatial planning and water quality management that anticipates climate change and ocean acidification effects;
- Guidance and demonstration interventions for integrating strict nature reserves as reference sites within networks of multiple use MPAs and broader coastal and marine spatial management plans.

Theme 2. Sustaining coastal ecosystem services for communities, livelihoods and businesses.

Under this theme the partnership will enable application of an ecosystem services approach in decision-making. This may encompass tools for assessment and valuation of ecosystem services and development of sectoral codes of practice to support management for sustainable development, contributing towards a Green Economy.

Initial Priority Activities:

- Capacity building and guidance that enhance the use and application of ecosystem service assessment and valuation, including training for policy makers, planners and managers through workshops at the regional level;
- Pilot/demonstration application of ecosystem service assessment and valuation, for policy support as well as for business planning and engagement especially in the tourism sector;
- Policy outreach based on 'mining' of existing ecosystem service assessment and valuation studies, e.g. collating studies and reinterpreting findings, where possible responding to identified planning or management needs;
- Developing a sustainability model for Green Fins based on experiences in Asia, and providing outreach and initial training support to other regions for possible introduction of Green Fins.

Theme 3. Knowledge for coastal policy.

Under this theme the partnership will support Regional Seas needs with regard to state of environment reporting, management performance reporting and other assessments for coral reef decision-making. Indicators and approaches for tracking progress towards targets and management performance will also be developed and applied.

Initial Priority Activities:

- Conduct detailed gap analysis among Regional Seas to identify information and knowledge needs for policy and management at regional and sub-regional levels, map in more detail regional actions and targets in relation to globally agreed commitments, and guide partnership operations;
- Provide policy analysis, information and guidance to Regional Seas and other partners in relation to international processes including e.g. UNGA, CBD/SBSTTA, SIDS 2014, ICRI etc., and facilitate joint input where relevant;
- Support GCRMN policy engagement for enhanced uptake of findings as well as broader engagement in regional and country networks through Regional Seas;
- Analysis of and policy dissemination on emerging issues and new scientific findings;
- Develop regionally relevant indicators for international and national targets and commitments on coral reefs and related ecosystems, with the biodiversity indicators partnership;
- Ensure partnership input to meetings of Regional Seas governing bodies, in relation to relevant agenda items or through organization of side events, seminars etc.

#### **4. LIST ANY ACTIVITIES THAT THE PARTICIPANTS AGREED TO UNDERTAKE THEMSELVES/JOINTLY IN THE PERIOD 2013-2016**

UNEP and the Regional Seas programmes CEP, COBSEA, NC and SPREP (which were represented in the session), as well as UNEP-WCMC, GRID-Arendal agreed to collaborate on the further development and launch of the partnership, and on activities implemented under the partnership.

#### UNEP committed to

- hosting partnership secretariat, continued leadership on consultation in relation to partnership development and launch, coordination and facilitation of activities under the partnership, and communication and networking among partners;
- initiating activities under the partnership, including through providing financial and technical support for some initial activities under each of the partnership themes, and identifying institutional collaboration for implementation;
- developing a project document for the partnership for inclusion in the UNEP programme of work, by the end of 2013.

#### Regional Seas programmes committed to:

- regional implementation of specific activities under the partnership (to be identified) and, where possible, providing support for activities carried out in the respective regions;
- providing policy advice and technical input towards partnership activities;
- supporting utilization, exchange and adaptation of existing materials, tools and processes.

#### UNEP-WCMC and GRID-Arendal committed to:

- leading or participating in implementation of specific activities under the partnership (initial identification of activities has been carried out)
- providing linkages to, collaborating with and input to ongoing initiatives (e.g. the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, the Sub Global Assessment Network (SGA))

#### Next Steps:

- Since some tropical Regional Seas were not represented in the session, findings and recommendations will be shared for comment and input. It is assumed that the agreement achieved in the session will be broadly relevant also to other Regional Seas. Further input will provide clarification or may address critical omissions.
- Based on such inputs a partnership brief will be prepared by the secretariat and shared with a broad range of possible partners to invite collaboration.
- Further planning for formal launching of the partnership is required, led by UNEP.
- Preparation for implementation of some initial activities will commence immediately.