

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 27 February and 5 March 2020
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
United Nations Office of Nairobi
Conference Room 4

Background Document:
Draft elements of a decision the Global Programme of Action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities.

This note serves as a background document for consideration under the agenda entitled “Draft elements of a decision the Global Programme of Action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities.”

The note presents draft elements of a decision on the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities to be adopted by an Intergovernmental Review Meeting, tentatively scheduled to take place in conjunction with the 7th meeting of the annual subcommittee schedule for 12-16 October 2020.

It will be presented by the Secretariat at the meeting of the subcommittee on 27 February, and considered by member States at the meeting of the subcommittee on 5 March, with a view to provide feedback on the draft and seek broad consensus on its content.

Draft Elements of a decision to be adopted by an Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA)

[Preambular section]

1 *Recognizing* that maintaining a high-quality coastal and marine environment provides ecosystem functions and services in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in particular Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources);

2 *Recalling* that the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) was created as an intergovernmental mechanism to counter the impact of land-based activities on the marine environment, and that the GPA was adopted by 108 Governments, and the European Commission at an intergovernmental conference convened in Washington, D.C., in 1995¹;

3 *Further recalling* that Intergovernmental Review Meetings of the GPA have been organized in Montreal (2001), Beijing (2006), Manila (2012) and Bali (2018), wherein governments with the participation of stakeholders met to review the status of the implementation of the GPA and decide on the actions to be taken to strengthen its implementation;

4 *Also recalling* with appreciation, the Bali Declaration² on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities adopted at the Fourth IGR held in Bali, Indonesia, 31 October-1 November 2018;

5 *Noting* with appreciation that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has hosted the GPA Coordination Office since its establishment in 1995 and also welcoming the work of the office in preventing land-based sources of marine pollution on the global level through demonstration projects, policy recommendations, research, capacity-building and awareness raising activities, and further recognizing the valuable role of its three global partnerships, the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management, and the Global Wastewater Initiative, for which the GPA Coordination Office acts a Secretariat;

6 *Recognizing* that the aims, functions and general objectives of the GPA are relevant to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2021 and Programme of Work and to various relevant resolutions adopted by the UN Environmental Assembly;³

7 *Recognizing* that maintaining a high-quality coastal and marine environment provides ecosystem functions and services in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in particular Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources);

¹ <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/1995-gpa.pdf>

² <https://papersmart.unon.org/igr-meeting/sites/default/files/k1900652.pdf#overlay-context=working-docs>

³ Marine plastic debris and microplastics (UNEP/EA.1/Res.6); Oceans and seas (UNEP/EA.2/Res.10); Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11); Sustainable coral reefs management (UNEP/EA.2/Res.12); Environment and health (UNEP/EA.3/Res.4); Managing soil pollution to achieve sustainable development (UNEP/EA.3/Res.6); Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res.7); Preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally (UNEP/EA.3/Res.8); Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (UNEP/EA.3/Res.10); Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics (UNEP/EA.4/Res.6); Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (UNEP/EA.4/Res.11); Sustainable Nitrogen Management (UNEP/EA.4/Res.12); and Implementation Plan "Towards a Pollution-free Planet" (UNEP/EA.4/Res.6);

[Operative section]

- 1.** *Decides* to discontinue the Global Programme of Action as an intergovernmental mechanism governed by periodic Intergovernmental Review Meetings (IGRs);
- 2.** *Recognizes* the continued relevance and valuable role of the three global partnerships in tackling land-based pollution established in the framework of the GPA, namely the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management and the Global Wastewater Initiative as tools to contribute to the implementation of targets 6.3 and 14.1 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and calls upon all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other relevant regional and international organizations, the private sector, the academia, civil society, non-governmental organizations, individuals, and other relevant stakeholders to support its activities;
- 3.** *Invites* the Executive Director of UNEP, as appropriate and subject to available resources, to continue to support the aims and general objectives of the GPA and its three global partnerships to tackling land-based pollution within the framework of the UNEP Programme of Work and Budget and to maintain and strengthen UNEP's capacity to support Member States in implementing and reporting on national, regional and global programmes to address land-based sources of marine pollution;
- 4.** *Invites* the UN Environment Assembly to continue to consider the prevention of land-based sources of marine pollution and to, subject to available resources, organize at its fifth session a multi-stakeholder forum with the purpose of advancing partnerships and discuss relevant emerging issues that contribute to achieve high-quality coastal and marine environments in line with the SDGs and relevant mandates and resolutions of the Environment Assembly.
- 5.** *Invites* the UN Environment Assembly at its fifth session to take note of this decision and to include it in its report to the UN General Assembly.