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Committee of Permanent Representatives  
Subcommittee Meeting  
Tuesday 25 November 2021  
10:00 - 13:00; 15:00 – 18:00  
Conference Room 1, United Nations Office of Nairobi  
Hybrid Meeting (GoTo meeting platform)

**Agenda Item 3: Consultations on a possible draft decision on the Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR) of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA).**

This note serves as a background document for consideration of Agenda Item 3: Consultations on a possible draft decision on the Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR) of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA).

It contains a draft decision for consideration for possible adoption by an Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA).

The draft decision reflects a limited number of changes as compared to the [latest version of the draft](#) which was considered at the CPR subcommittee meeting on [23 April](#) 2020, where Member States expressed general support for the content of the draft, with the exception for a reserve on the operative paragraph 1 from one delegation, as well as a request to add a reference to SDG target 6a from another delegation.

The subcommittee meeting in April 2020 was preceded by two subcommittee meetings held on [23 January](#), [27 February](#) and [5 March](#) 2020, where Member States initially expressed general support for a the [proposed way forward regarding the GPA](#), and then provided general guidance on [draft elements of a decision for the IGR](#) tabled by the secretariat. Further background information is available in a [secretariat options paper](#) dated 26 February 2019.

The latest text, as reflected in the attachment to this cover note, has been amended by the secretariat in the preambular paragraph 2 and Operative Paragraph 1, following informal consultations among interested delegations.

Delegations are invited to further consider the amended draft decision with a view to seek broad agreement for possible finalization and adoption at an Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA that will be organized prior to the resumed session of the fifth Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives scheduled for 21-25 February 2021. Subject to adoption at that IGR, the matter may be further referred to the resumed session of UNEA-5, as appropriate.

## **Draft 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)**

*Developed by the Secretariat of UNEP based on guidance and written inputs by member States as well as informal consultations, following the CPR subcommittee held on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020*

### **[Preambulary 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 to counter the impact of land-based activities on the marine environment **from nine source categories**, and that the GPA was adopted by 108 Governments, and the European Commission at an intergovernmental conference convened in Washington, D.C., in 1995<sup>1</sup>;

3 *Further recalling* that Intergovernmental Review Meetings of the GPA have been organized in Montreal (2001), Beijing (2006), Manila (2012) and Bali (2018), whereby 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 the GPA and its implementation;

4 *Also recalling* the Bali Declaration<sup>2</sup> 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 in which it was agreed to work on the function, form and implications (including legal, budgetary and organizational) of the **GPA**, including the future of the intergovernmental review process and the work currently coordinated by the Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action;

5 *Noting with appreciation* the (regional) consultations on the future of the GPA held by the Secretariat in 2019 and 2020, as well as the related briefings to the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);

6 *Also noting with appreciation* that UNEP has hosted the GPA Coordination Office since its establishment and the work of the office on preventing land-based sources of marine pollution on the global level through demonstration projects, policy recommendations, research, capacity-building and awareness raising activities, as well as as 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 provides the Secretariat functions;

7 *Recognizing* that the general objectives and activities of the GPA remain relevant to the mission of UNEP and form part of its Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work, as well as to several resolutions adopted by the UN Environmental Assembly;<sup>3</sup>

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

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

<sup>3</sup> 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 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 Plastic Planet" (UNEP/EA.4/Res.6);

[Operative section]

1. *Decides* to hold no further meetings of the periodic Intergovernmental Review (IGR) of the Global Programme of Action, **recognizing that the United Nations Environment Assembly can continue to provide guidance on priorities and actions to address marine pollution from land-based activities.**
  2. *Recognizes* the continued relevance and valuable role of the GPA and its three global partnerships in tackling land-based pollution under, namely the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management and the Global Wastewater Initiative, as tools that contribute to the implementation of the relevant SDG targets, **in particular SDG targets 6.a, SDG 6.3, and SDG 14.1,** 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, nongovernmental 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 general objectives of the GPA as well as its three partnerships and in 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 **United Nations** Environment Assembly to continue to review the progress on the prevention of land-based sources of marine pollution in the context of the implementation of UNEP's Programme of Work and Budget and where relevant to consider the results of scientific assessments and reports on emerging issues that contribute to achieve high-quality coastal and marine environments in line with partnerships' program of work and operational frameworks. ;
  5. *Invites* the **United Nations** Environment Assembly at its fifth session to take note of this decision and to include it in its report to the **United Nations** General Assembly.
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