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**Report of the 9th Global Meeting
of the
Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans**

**Report of the 9th Global Meeting
of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs)
held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
29-31 October 2007.**

The ninth Global Regional Seas meeting was held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 29th to 31st October 2007. The Secretariat of the Jeddah Convention/Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (PERSGA) hosted the meeting. Representatives from 16 Regional Sea Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs), several UN and non-UN international organizations attended the meeting (list attached). The meeting reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the global regional seas strategy 2004-2007, and discussed among others some current issues/themes such as climate change, mainstreaming of coastal and marine issues into national planning, and delineation of continental shelf. A number of resource persons were specifically invited to address these issues. Based on the deliberations during the three days meeting, a new global regional seas strategy for 2008-2012 was finalized, and the meeting also adopted the Jeddah Declaration. This meeting report provides an overview of the various sessions, highlighting the main issues discussed and the conclusions reached. The detailed agenda of the meeting and the key outcomes i.e., the Global Regional Seas Strategy 2008-2012 and the Jeddah Declaration are attached to this report as annexure.

Day 1: Monday 29th October 2007

The inaugural session

Dr. Ziad Abu-Ghaarah, Secretary General of PERSGA called the meeting to order and delivered the address of welcome. Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel, UN Assistant Secretary General and Deputy Executive Director of UNEP highlighted the history of the Regional Seas Program (RSP) and UNEP's role in supporting the RSP. The guest of honour, HRH Prince of Saudi Arabia Turki bin Nasser bin Abdul Aziz, President of the Department of Meteorology and Environmental Protection, inaugurated the meeting. His Royal Highness welcomed the delegates to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and emphasized the need for and importance of exchanging knowledge and experiences on environmental research and actions at both local and international levels. His Royal Highness also informed the meeting that the Saudi Arabian government has adopted an action plan to clean 200 kilometers of Jeddah's coastline and beaches.

The working sessions

At the outset of the working session, the delegates unanimously elected HE Eng. Abdul Rahman Fadhl Al-Eryani, Minister of Water and Environment, Government of Yemen as the Chair of the meeting, and Mr. Hamid Ghaffarzadeh of the Caspian Environment Program and Ms. Nassere Kaba, Director, Ministry of Environment and Quality of Life, Government of Cote d'Ivoire and Interim Coordinator of the Abidjan Convention as Rapporteurs of the meeting.

Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Director of the UNEP Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (UNEP/DEPI) outlined the background, purpose and expected outcomes of the meeting. Mr. Thiaw noted the special importance of the meeting given that one expected outcome is a new strategy for the RSP for the next five years - 2008-2012, that will take into account the impact of climate change on the environment, particularly on coastal and marine ecosystems. He urged the delegates to discuss the key global challenges that should guide the Global Strategic Directions for the Regional Seas Programme (2008-2012) and to define practical and innovative approaches to mainstream the Regional Seas activities into national development planning and budgeting process based on their accumulated experiences of the past years.

Mr. Nelson Andrade Colmenares, Coordinator of Caribbean Environment Program and on behalf of the UNEP as the Secretariat of the Global RSP, reported on the implementation on the RS Strategic Directions 2004-2007. The presentation also highlighted the key accomplishments and challenges. It was reported that RSP facilitated the implementation of global initiatives such as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), World Summit on Sustainable Development/ Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (WSSD/JPOI) targets, and ensured high-level participation in the decision-making process for the sustainability of the marine environment at national and regional levels. This generated increased global interest in the marine environment and also created opportunities for partnerships with NGOs, private sector, and civil society in general.

After these presentations, the Chair invited responses from the delegates on their observations on the progress in the implementation of the Global Regional Seas Strategies Directions 2004-2007. The representatives of MAP, Caspian Environment Program, Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, Black Sea Commission, PERSGA, ROPME, OSPAR, COBSEA, NOWPAP, CPPS, HELCOM, SAS/SACEP, SPREP, COCATRAM/NEP and Caribbean Environment Program briefly reported on their accomplishments and challenges, and elements of a way forward. Key highlights emerged from the various interventions, which can be summarized as follows.

Accomplishments:

- Member countries have taken considerable actions towards an ecosystem-based approach and sustainable development strategies and approaches.
- Legal frameworks have been developed and/or strengthened at both national and regional levels.
- Protocols to address land-based sources of pollution have been developed and ensure integrated coastal zone management in some of the conventions.
- While designing intervention strategies there have been greater emphasis on science-based actions.

Challenges:

- Long-term financial sustainability of activities initiated by the RSP is uncertain
- Decision-making is yet not fully coordinated in several regions.

- Ecosystem-based approaches are not fully understood by many actors both at national and regional levels. General awareness of actions taken is limited.
- Exchange of information and data among various stakeholders and countries is limited, and often the quality of data is poor or unavailable.

Way forward

- Climate change and its implications must be considered.
- The high seas issues also require more attention.
- Ecosystem-based approaches should be an integral part of program planning.

Session 2: Climate Change: Adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change on the marine and coastal environment.

Three presentations were made: Prof. Wong Poh Poh of IPCC, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw of UNEP and Prof. David Johnson of OSPAR.

Prof. Wong Poh Poh, the Coordinating Lead Author of Chapter 6 (Coastal Systems and Low-Lying Areas) of the 4th Assessment Report prepared by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group 2: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability of Climate Change, presented an overview of the findings of the latest IPCC report as regards the marine and coastal environment. Prof Poh Poh reported that evidence in support of climate warming is ‘unequivocal’ and that it is now evident that the global average temperature will increase around the world. This prediction however, excluded Antarctica, a region for which data is not available. It was emphasized that climate change will have major implications including rise in sea level, increase in tropical cyclones, coral bleaching, ocean acidification, threats to wetlands and increased flooding. He highlighted the ‘drivers’ and concluded that sea level rise will continue beyond 2100 with irreversible damage to coastal areas in particular to hotspots of vulnerability in Asia, Africa and small to low islands. He also noted that in the long-term, inaction to address climate change would cost society considerably more than adaptation measures, and therefore urged the development of adaptation measures, e.g. integrated coastal/delta management, addressing research needs such as better baseline data, strengthened prediction capacities, methods for prioritization of actions and in knowledge networking.

Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw (Director, UNEP/DEPI) informed the meeting about the Draft UNEP Strategy on Climate Change, and invited their views and contributions in this process. He stressed that UNEP attached high priority to climate change and noted that IPCC was established by UNEP and IMO. He argued that the draft strategy on climate change has been developed based on UNEP’s comparative advantage including its long term association with the climate change issue and relevant stakeholders, *inter alia*; governments, industry, civil society, the UN family and the scientific community. The Strategy will focus on capacity building, innovative initiatives, engaging multiple stakeholders, adapting through building resilience, strong proactive action and transition to low carbon societies.

Prof. David Johnson (Executive Secretary, OSPAR) presented the recent amendments to the OSPAR Convention permitting carbon capture and storage. He joined the earlier speakers in stressing that 'the need for action was inescapable' as climate change would lead to unprecedented and profound changes in marine/coastal environments with major implications for sustainable development. Noting that CO₂ was the major culprit he suggested that sequestration, although not a panacea, was a major option. He briefly listed OSPAR activities including studies on CO₂ capture, transmission and storage processes and the legal and technical workshops held, communication and engagement with industry and the success in defining Amendments to the Annexes which lay down the legal framework for 'actions regarding climate change'. He highlighted that the measures unanimously agreed by the OSPAR Commission in 2007 which are (or will become) legally binding to all OSPAR Contracting Parties (see RS.9/Inf.9), consisting of; (a) Amendments of Annex II and Annex III to the OSPAR Convention (1992) in relation to the Storage of Carbon Dioxide Streams in Geological Formations; (b) OSPAR Decision 2007/1 to Prohibit the Storage of Carbon Dioxide Streams in the Water Column or on the Sea-bed; (c) OSPAR Decision 2007/2 on the Storage of Carbon Dioxide Streams in Geological Formations and their strategic implications. The importance of the OSPAR Guidelines for Risk Assessment and Management of Storage of CO₂ Streams in Geological Formations including a framework for Risk Assessment and Management of Storage of CO₂ Streams in Geological Formations (FRAM), which the OSPAR Commission had agreed to accompany OSPAR Decision 2007/2.

After the presentation, questions, comments, and observations were invited from the floor. During the discussion, more information was sought on measures such as 'ocean bed fertilization' and on 'use of depleted oil and gas reservoirs as storage facilities', climate change impact on inland waters and the impact of climate change on salinity and on sea bed currents. Information was provided on the High Level Meeting of Scientists and Politicians planned for April 2008 in Ecuador. Information was also provided on climate change adaptive measures being developed and pursued in the Mediterranean Sea - 'a climate change hotspot'. Participants also voiced concern on the need to consider climate change adaptation measures as business opportunities through use of appropriate financial and economic instruments and cost recovery mechanisms. The meeting emphasized on the need for more research on issues ranging from ocean fertilization, CO₂ storage, and impacts on currents and on deep oceans. It was also suggested to seek a more UN wide joint strategy on climate change.

In the light of the above discussion, the meeting was informed that the draft UNEP Strategy on climate change reflects a partnership approach to make best use of limited resources and to avoid overlap and/or duplication. As regards the marine part of this strategy, the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans will be a key partner for UNEP. The suitability of sub-seabed geological formations for a safe, permanent storage/containment of CO₂ has to be judged on a case-by-case basis. The guidelines adopted by OSPAR offer advice on the relevant risk assessment and management considerations. The 4th Assessment reports prepared by the various IPCC Working Groups provide information on other actual or potential effects of climate change, such as on enclosed/inland seas, the strength and circulation patterns of deep-sea currents, and

salinity. It was also mentioned that there are clear financial incentives, including the potential for carbon credits, to look into (and invest in) carbon sequestration and storage opportunities. However, carbon sequestration and storage (CSS) measures should be taken as only one of a portfolio of options to reduce levels of atmospheric CO₂. CCS represents an important interim supplement to measures for the reduction or prevention of CO₂ emissions and should not be considered as a substitute for other means to reduce CO₂ emissions. Finally, it was mentioned that the current climate change 'momentum' provides opportunities for the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans to increase their work on climate change adaptation. There is a need to consider, *inter alia*, how to position and strengthen the role of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in the international processes, what contributions they can provide, and how the up-take of these contributions, e.g. to improve national action plans, could be facilitated.

The meeting concluded this session by congratulating Prof. Wong Poh Poh, representing the scientists and experts involved in the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, for receiving the Nobel Peace Prize and requested him to convey this message to all his fellow colleagues of IPCC.

Session 3: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

Dr. Anantha Kumar Duraiappah, Head of Ecosystem Services Economics (ESE) Unit UNEP presented the findings from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. He informed the meeting that the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) was carried out by more than 1000 scientists from 100 countries. This was conducted at multiple scales (local to global) and was designed to both provide information and build capacity to provide information. It was expected that the exercise will be repeated at 5-10 year intervals if it successfully meets needs. The key goal of the MA was to carry out policy-relevant assessments of ecosystems and the linkages to human well-being for use by decision makers. Dr. Duraiappah emphasized that the degradation of ecosystem services is a barrier to achieving the MDGs and reported that in the last 50 years human beings have changed the ecosystem more than any comparable time period and 60% of ecosystems in decline with consequent impacts on human well being and economic development. He noted that the challenge of reversing the degradation of ecosystems while meeting increasing demands for their services can be partially met under certain scenarios considered in the MA but as these involve significant changes in policies, institutions and practices, they are not likely to be implemented in the short-term. Furthermore, many options exist to conserve or enhance specific ecosystem services in ways that reduce negative trade-offs or that provide positive synergies with other ecosystem services. These options involve global coordination of major investments in public goods (e.g., education, infrastructure) and poverty reduction, the removal of trade barriers and the elimination of distorting subsidies, widespread use of adaptive management practices and significant investment in the development of technologies to increase efficiency in the use of ecosystem services, the widespread use of 'payments for ecosystem services', and the development of market mechanisms. Finally, it was stressed that one principal reason for the decline in ecosystem was that their full value was not captured in decision making processes.

Due to time constraints, the Chair did not open the floor for discussion and proposed to take up comments on the following day. The Chair then opened the agenda item on establishment of ad-hoc working groups for drafting the Jeddah Declaration and the Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2008 – 2012.

Establishment of Ad-hoc Working Groups

The Chair introduced the agenda item and briefly described the functions and expectations of the two Ad-hoc Working Groups; one to develop the Strategic Directions 2008-2012 and the other to work on the Jeddah Declaration. The delegates nominated by consensus the following representatives to lead the Ad-hoc Working Groups, but also invited others to join the group at their own convenience.

Ad-hoc Working Group for Strategic Directions 2008-2012:

- Dr. Leo Brewster (Chair)
- Mr. Kent Blom (Member)
- Ms. Jeeyun Lee (Member)
- Mr. Lucian Chabason (Secretary)

Ad-hoc Working Group Jeddah Declaration

- Dr. Ziad H. Abu Ghararah (Chair)
- Mr. Paul Mifsud (Member)
- Prof. David Johnson (Member)
- Dr. Ahmed Khalil (Secretary)

Subsequently, the work of these groups were supported by many other delegates notably by Ms. Anne Christine Brusendroff of HELCOM, Mr. James Kamara of Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, Mr. Gonzalo Pereira and Fernando Felix of CPPS, Ms. Rosa Maria Rodriguez and Ms. Maria Isabel Fernandez of NEP, Mr. Nelson Andrade Colmenares of CEP and Mr. Ruisheng Yue of COBSEA and NOWPAP.

Day 2: Tuesday 30th October 2007

The morning session was opened with a brief update on the progress of the two Working Groups. This was followed by **Session 4** while three presentations were made. Firstly, Dr. Duraiappah of UNEP in continuation of his previous presentation highlighted the core principles for using the ecosystem services human well-being approach, such as among other, treating of various resources as interrelating parts of living and dynamic systems rather than as individual components to be managed separately and need to separate impacts on various social and economic groups. He also emphasized on need for looking at cause and effects across time and space and the need to further work at interdependences and trade offs among ecosystem services and among well-being

constituents and determinants and addressing the long-term consequences of today's decisions.

Mr. Ameer Abdullah of IUCN presented 'Enhancing Red Sea Resilience in case of Climate Change'. Based on the work of IUCN Climate Change and Coral Reef working group he informed the meeting that signs of coral bleaching due to impact of climate change started to appear in 1998. He provided information on the Red Sea Marine Program's case study of applying ecosystem-based approaches assessing coral reef bleaching in the red sea and how ecosystem 'resilience' could be enhanced through local empowerment, capacity building and training efforts. This according to him would require well-planned actions with appropriate monitoring system in place.

Dr. Alan Simcock briefed the meeting on his work to develop a "manual for RSP on ecosystem-based approaches to managing human activities affecting the marine environment". He added that the manual would provide a framework for thinking, a confirmation of essential principles and a toolbox of techniques. During the discussion, UNEP's advocacy of ecosystem-based approaches was praised. Many participants stressed that the target group for the manual should be the RS and that it should be developed with the substantive involvement of the RS. Other delegates questioned how the proposed manual would be different from other manuals already available, and whether the 'Manual' could be developed for various sectors. A suggestion was made to orient the work towards 'EBA guidelines' rather than a 'manual'. The participants suggested that there was a need for UN agencies to harmonize the development and application of the EBA noting the ongoing work at UNEP/WCMC and WRI of Washington on other EBA manuals. Participants also observed that the EBA is complex, holistic and sustainable development oriented, but to date it is dominated by biological thinking which made it difficult for other stakeholders to understand and appreciate. They emphasized that the EBA should be able to address human development and economic concerns, and argued that in developing the manual/guidelines different perspectives in terms of what ecosystems management and services mean should be clearly defined and articulated. The manual should also include discussion on the potential services and services realized. Some participants requested UNEP to take the lead in harmonizing the concept of ecosystem management with reference to decisions taken during the 24th Session of the UNEP Governing Council on the need for the international panel for sustainable resource management and follow-up of the Millennium Assessment. Dr. Alan Simcock responded that EBA manual is based on the sustainable development tripod - environment, society and economy, and that the use of the word 'manual' is used to emphasize the 'practicality' of the document for the target users, i.e. the Regional Seas Secretariats and their governing bodies. He assured the meeting that the manual will be practical and broad enough to bring in elements of the related works 'like the Assessment of Assessments'.

Mr. Paul Mifsud (Coordinator MAP) made a brief presentation on the application of ecosystem-based approaches (EBA) in the Mediterranean Sea where a political decision has been made by the member countries to implement the EBA as a comprehensive and integrated approach and to develop a road map moving towards measurable targets. He

noted that there were different meanings to EBA and that the definition of the 'system' appeared 'too biological'. He stressed the need to better understand the ecosystem's 'services potentials' and the 'nature of human activities' in any application of EBA.

Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw noted the excellent work in promoting ecosystem principles done by IUCN and WWF and highlighted that UNEP is building on this work to develop a new program on 'Ecosystem services' to highlight some of major services that the ecosystems provide and their relevance to human well-being.

Session 5 focused on International governance and scientific issues regarding the high seas and deep-water ecosystems and biodiversity. Dr. Stefan Hain of the UNEP Coral Reef Unit emphasized that although only a very small part of the deep seas have been scientifically investigated, it has been clearly established that they are 'highly structured and dynamic' providing living space for a considerable number of species, are closely connected to coastal/shallow waters, and are being seriously subjected to climate change and global warming. He added that the deep-sea biodiversity and ecosystem provide crucial services and that the human impact on high seas was rapidly increasing due to their importance for industry. He stressed that the goals, targets and commitments established in connection with the high seas, e.g. Marine Protected Areas, would not be met and that there was a gap in the governance of high seas and UNEP could well assist in filling this gap. He suggested that the mandate/scope of the Regional Seas be extended to cover high seas beyond national jurisdictions and that Integrated Ocean Management be vigorously pursued under the UNEP Shelf program.

Thereafter two technical presentations were made by Mr. Vladimir Jares of UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea UN/DOALOS and Mr. Joan Fabres GRID Arendal on delineation of the continental shelf which focused on methodological and data facilitation aspects of the work as well as on capacity building and training opportunities. With reference to these presentations, questions were asked on how to approach UNEP or UNDOALOS to seek assistance for delineation of continental shelf where the national capacity was inadequate and how to solve differences between delineations based on old and fresh data. Both UN-DOALOS and Grid-Arendal informed the participants about various technical support programs offered by them which the countries can take advantage of.

Session Six began with a presentation by Mr. Stefano Belfiore of the International Hydrological Organization (IHO) on the IHO mission, credentials, capacity building efforts including standards setting and maritime safety information management. This was followed by presentations made by Rear Admiral Abdul Rahman Al Shehri, Director of the Hydrographic Department, General Directorate of Military Survey (GDMS), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Representative of International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia who explained the role of GDMS in the field of hydrograph and capacity building efforts of his organisation in Saudi Arabia. Mr. John Fabres of Grid-Arendal provided a brief on the history of the institution and its core competencies, activities and potentials for assistance and collaboration with countries towards capacity building for sustainable management of marine resources. Mr. Kent

Blom of SIDA briefly spoke on the Swedish new focus on marine issues and processes including the targeted 8 areas of concern. He reconfirmed SIDA support for the Regional Seas Program and informed of upcoming changes in Sweden pertaining to SIDA support before end of the year. Many participants in the meeting praised SIDA's continued support to Regional Seas program.

Session 7 was on sharing information on upcoming events of interest. Dr. Indroyono Soesilo from Indonesia informed the meeting on the World Ocean Conference (WOC) that will be held in 11-15 May 2009 in Indonesia with support from UNEP. He highlighted the main focus of the WOC 2009 which is to create greater awareness on the richness of the Ocean and the resources that it provides for human-well being and eradication of poverty, and indicated the co-sponsors of the event, which are governments, UN agencies, NGOs and various academic and research institutes.

Dr. Stefan Hain provided information on the International Year of the Coral Reef 2008, which follows a highly successful 1997 International Year of Coral Reefs. He stressed that coral reefs are highly valuable as they provide food, income and jobs for half a billion people and are worth of USD 375 billion. He listed the successes and challenges, which will be the pillars of IYOR 2008, and encouraged Regional Seas community to become engaged and involved in the IYOR. Mr. Nelson Andrade of CEP provided additional information, while Mr. Bruce Chapman of SPREP added on the Pacific Year of the Reef.

Day 3: Wednesday 31st October 2007.

The day started with a brief update on the progress of the Working Groups responsible for drafting the Jeddah Declaration and the Global Regional Seas Strategies 2008-2012.

Chair then invited Dr. Veerle Vandeweerd, Director, Environment and Energy of UNDP to provide an overview on the ongoing initiatives to mainstream the environment into national development planning and budgeting with a particular emphasis on the Regional Seas. Dr. Vandeweerd emphasized on the need for mainstreaming of Regional Seas activities in national policies to ensure increased country ownership and to secure necessary financial resources for both national and regional actions. She referred to Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) that are the foundation for collaboration between the UN and the host government. To ensure mainstreaming of coastal and marine issues into national planning, Regional Seas programs must engage in these processes. She stressed that the Regional Seas programs to date are far too dependent on the GEF which has been subject to drastic changes although there are still entry points in a number of program areas such as fisheries, POPs, nutrients, and conflicting use of water resources. She went on to add that the international response to climate change could be a great potential to be utilized by the Regional Seas program in field of mitigation, adaptation, financing and technology related activities. She also observed that Regional Seas program has also not utilized avenues such as Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). She also spoke of the Adaptation Fund, which may be managed in a 'bank' model and could as well be hosted

by GEF. In her new capacity as Director Environment and Energy in UNDP she offered to cooperate with the Regional Seas programs and expressed her willingness to attend the Conference of Parties to provide a briefing on how these additional financing mechanisms could be accessed. She concluded by stressing that the Regional Seas could be marginalized if they do not use the opportunities including the new windows of funding that are available.

The discussion focused on the challenges in utilizing the CCA and UNDAF mechanisms and processes. As CCA and UNDAF are country driven process, it may be difficult to incorporate environmental issues, which are often not restricted to national boundaries, but have regional and international dimensions. The need for having more constructive interactions between the Regional Seas program and the GEF was clearly recognized. Some participants expressed their concerns over the lengthy and time-consuming project approval system by the GEF. Few also mentioned that the apparent focus of GEF on nutrients is not the most pressing and priority concern in comparison with more important issues such as coastal and marine degradation. It was agreed that to have influence on the GEF, the Regional Seas must work more closely with the Ministers that attend the GEF Council. This means Regional Seas Secretariats need to update themselves with expertise, skills and sound data and information that are not only pertinent to influence to GEF but also to access other resources that are internationally mobilized to address climate change. UNEP Director Mr. Thiaw noted that in spite of the above-mentioned challenges there is a need to 'get out of the dual ghettos of sectors and projects' and broaden dialogues with the non- environmental ministries for developing more programmatic approaches. During the discussion participants urged UNEP and UNDP to provide 'guidelines' on how to ensure mainstreaming and better access to resources that are available through climate change related windows.

During Session 8 presentations were made by Mr. Stefano Belfiore of Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and Prof. John Soussan of Stockholm Environmental Institute (SEI), Sweden. Mr. Stefano Belfiore provided general information on the work of the IOC and its activities focusing on early warning systems, adaptation to coastal and climatic changes, and ocean observation, data and information management and fostering marine science for development. He emphasized hazard management issues particularly on tsunami warning systems, and noted that the lessons learnt included the need for awareness raising programs to be incorporated in the long term strategic planning and in mainstreaming of marine hazards. A number of representatives thanked IOC for its support their programs.

Mainstreaming of marine and coastal issues into national planning and budgetary processes was the subject of the presentation made by Prof John Soussan. He stressed the need to go to the planning and budgeting authorities with 'solutions' rather 'problems' to secure support and finance. It was emphasized that national development planning frameworks should be the starting point and he urged to present environmental issues in a simple manner depicting them as a tool for development not a barrier to development. Environmental issues and agendas also need to be presented to other sectors as an opportunity for promoting growth. To make it happen and convince others, understanding

ecosystem services is seen as essential. Prof Soussan articulated six steps to mainstreaming, and they include establishing institutional mechanism; defining strategic frameworks on water contribution to development objectives; selecting key sectors and setting sectoral policies and priorities; identification and analysis of negative impacts in present and future; identification and analysis of positive impacts in present and future; and finally preparation of a consolidated strategy. He concluded by highlighting the need to 'listen to the audience' and to try to understand the 'incentives and drivers' in decision making processes in the inter-sectoral dialogue.

The discussion concurred with the need for mainstreaming through engaging other sectors through simple yet effective dialogue. The need to incorporate the concerns of the most vulnerable and the spatial impacts of environmental actions alongside efficiency considerations were noted as well the need to adequately account for decentralization, sub-national levels, community level and civil society concerns. A concern was expressed that the suggested approach might be 'reactive' in the sense that it responded to 'evidence' and did not account for issues/concerns where there was not yet any concrete scientific support. Prof. Soussan responded that proactive actions needed to be fully thought through.

During **Session 9**, Mr. Lucien Chabason presented the report of UNEP brainstorming meeting devoted to develop the 'ocean and coast related program of UNEP. Mr. Chabason in his presentation elaborated the context of the exercise and informed the meeting on the priorities that have been agreed to be the core focus of the ocean and coasts program. After the presentation, Mr. Kent Blom of SIDA took the floor, and congratulated UNEP for sharing the information in a transparent manner and urged UNEP to promote this practice further. He also stated that there is a need for more work on inter-agency interactions and to explore ways and means to encourage participation by non-UN partners and by local levels into such dialogues.

Ms. Jihyun Lee of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was the next presenter. Noting that the CBD had entered into the phase of 'enhanced implementation', she called for renewed collaboration between the CBD and the RSP in areas of mutual interest including ICZM, EBA and marine protected areas. She noted that joint activities including sharing case studies and best practices and review of implementation instruments would benefit the parties, including increased visibility. She invited the RS to participate in the in-depth review of the Jakarta Mandate during the COP 10 in 2010 in Japan and suggested that the need for RS to collaborate with the CBD to be included in the Jeddah Declaration. UNEP DEPI Director Mr. Thiaw concurred that there was room for increased cooperation with CBD.

Finally, the drafts of the Jeddah Declaration and the Global Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2008-2012 were presented to the meeting by the Chairs of the two Working Groups. After brief discussions and with few small changes of the text both the documents were approved by acclamation.

The floor was then opened for additional remarks and announcements before the formal closing of the meeting. During this time several delegates took the floor to thank the host organization PERSGA and the host Government, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality. Mr. Gonzalo Pereira, Secretary General of CPPS, on behalf of the CPPS countries and the Secretariat extended the invitation to host the next Global Regional Seas meeting in Ecuador in 2008. The meeting accepted the invitation with great appreciation expressed in round of applause.

Closing session. Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw Director UNEP/DEPI Dr. Ziad Abu-Ghaarah of PERSGA and Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel Deputy Executive Director of UNEP addressed the meeting. Mr. Thiaw in his address thanked various Secretariats of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans for their participation and contribution to the discussions that led to defining the strategic direction of the program for next four years. He also acknowledged the contribution of all speakers for their rich and diverse inputs in initiating dialogues and debates that contributed greatly in redesigning the program focus and the strategy. He assured the meeting that UNEP will take note of the outcomes of this meeting and will make use of the deliberations not only for defining UNEP approach to Regional Seas program, but for designing its Ecosystem Program. He delivered words of special thanks to the interpreters, and all colleagues of PERSGA for their contributions and working beyond normal working hours to make the meeting a success. He expressed gratitude and thanks to PERSGA and Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on his behalf and of UNEP for hosting the meeting and for the excellent hospitality that has been extended to all the participants to the meeting. Dr. Ziad Abu-Ghaarah of PERSGA expressed his sincere thanks to all the delegates for their cooperation and deliberations. He also noted that PERSGA was honoured to be the host of the Global meeting, and more particularly being the first organization to host the meeting in the Arab world. He praised UNEP for its support to PERSGA and all other bodies of the Regional Seas program. Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel on behalf of the UNEP Executive Director thanked the host organization PERSGA and the Saudi Government for hosting the ninth meeting of the Global Regional Seas program. He congratulated the delegates for their achievements and setting clear priorities for the coming years that are clearly reflected in the Jeddah Declaration and the Global Regional Seas Strategy. He reiterated UNEP's total support to the Regional Seas Program.