

Report of the Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans

(Monaco, 6-10 November 2000)

Introduction

The Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans was held at the Hotel Marriot, Monaco, from 6 to 10 November 2000, at the invitation of the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) and the Government of Monaco.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

A. Opening statements and organizational matters

1. The meeting was opened at 9 a.m. on Monday, 6 November 2000 by Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. After welcoming all participants, he asked Mr. Bernard Fautrier, Minister for International Cooperation for Environment and Development of Monaco, to convey thanks and gratitude to His Serene Highness Prince Rainier of Monaco for the hospitality that his Government had demonstrated in supporting the meeting. He also thanked the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for co-hosting the meeting.

2. He was gratified to note that the current meeting brought together the Directors or Bureau Members of 17 of the world's regional seas programmes to discuss areas of common concern, and to renew joint efforts to safeguard oceans and coastal areas. The Southwest Atlantic was the only major populated coastal area where countries still had to come together in a collaborative effort to address the major threats to their marine and coastal environment, and UNEP would renew its efforts to facilitate a regional seas programme for that vital region. Also participating were the Directors and representatives of the secretariats of eight multilateral environmental agreements, making the current session the largest meeting ever of multilateral environmental agreements. Such outstanding attendance was surely a reflection of the importance that the Global Meetings of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans had assumed.

3. The meeting was one of the most critical for collectively addressing the environmental problems facing the world's oceans and coastal areas. Seven out of 10 people today lived within 80 kilometers of the coast. Half of the world's cities with a population in excess of one million were sited near tide-washed river mouths. As much as 80 per cent of all marine pollution originated from municipal, industrial and agricultural wastes and run-off, with the rest coming from ships and oil drilling. Many species of fish, marine mammals and turtles were threatened. One-fourth of all coral reefs had been eliminated and one-third were severely threatened. Rising sea levels caused by human greenhouse gas emissions threatened to displace both human settlements and natural ecosystems. The duty to address those problems was shared by many global and regional treaties, action plans and organizations. It was necessary to improve collaboration amongst those regimes and accelerate global action to return the sea to health.

4. To that end, the meeting had four principle objectives: to promote and increase horizontal collaboration among regional seas conventions and action plans in addressing more effectively the protection and sustainable use of the marine environment; to strengthen the linkages between the regional seas conventions and action plans and global environment conventions and related agreements; to strengthen the linkages between the regional seas conventions and action plans and

the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Sources of Pollution (GPA) through agreed concrete actions; and to continue to move forward the vitalization of the regional seas conventions.

5. The recommendations of the Second Global Meeting had served as a blueprint for programming UNEP support to the regional seas programmes for the period 1999 to 2001. The Third Meeting should build on those recommendations, and it was to be hoped that the recommendations made on the current agenda items would serve as elements for the proposed actions on oceans and coastal areas to be presented to the Governing Council of UNEP at its twenty-first session, in February 2001.

6. UNEP was committed to give priority to the provision of programmatic support to the work programmes of the regional seas conventions and action plans, especially where their priorities interfaced with the priorities of UNEP's programme of work, such as: the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Sources of Pollution (GPA); the Global International Water Assessment (GIWA), funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF); Integrated Coastal Area Management; the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), particularly through the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN); increased collaboration and synergies among conventions; and improved collaboration among partner agencies, stakeholders and civil society in addressing ocean and coastal issues. Recognizing the expertise available within the IAEA-MEL, he strongly endorsed the work of the laboratory and recommended that the regional seas conventions and action plans make full use of what it was able to offer.

7. For UNEP to vitalize the regional seas programmes, it was necessary to identify the priority challenges that needed to be met head-on and effectively. He was particularly concerned that a number of regional seas conventions and action plans were in very difficult and unsustainable financial circumstances, but discussion also needed to be based on the realization that there were obstacles or constraints that fell outside of the control of UNEP. Those constraints included: lack of political will on the part of member Governments in certain regional seas programmes due to territorial disputes, lack of formal diplomatic relations and/or other disputes; inadequate financial resources committed, or inadequate capacity at the regional and/or national levels, for implementing the convention and action plan effectively and efficiently; and inadequate legal instruments for effectively addressing the assessment and management of marine and coastal resources. It was the task of UNEP to formulate responses to those constraints and to identify the areas for priority attention.

8. Mr. Bernard Fautrier, Minister for International Cooperation for Environment and Development of Monaco, welcomed all participants on behalf of the Government of Monaco. After describing his country's involvement in the activities of the environmental conventions and of the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), in particular, he drew attention to Monaco's role in the conservation of cetacean species through its hosting of the interim secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS). In addition, Monaco cooperated with France and Italy in the creation of a subregional sanctuary for marine mammals within their shared waters.

9. To enhance the synergies within the regional seas conventions and action plans, it was necessary to have not only the will of the secretariats, but also the zeal of the contracting parties. Strengthening the programmes also called for better consistency in the listing of species and in national reporting systems; meaningful use of the work of the global conventions; and

greater emphasis on the socioeconomic realities of the issues raised. He attached great importance to UNEP's strong expression of support for the regional seas programmes as the main mechanism for UNEP's implementation of Chapter 17 of Agenda 21. In conclusion, noting the differentiation between the various regional structures and action plans, he expressed the view that the twinning of regional seas agreements, as had recently been the case between the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention) and the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment in the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention), was a good example of action to strengthen programmes experiencing problems and he encouraged further such activity.

10. Mr. Stephen de Mora, Head of the Marine Environment Studies Laboratory (MESL) of the Marine Environment Laboratory (MEL) of IAEA, welcomed participants and extended an invitation to tour IAEA-MEL in Monaco. At the current meeting, a number of crucial issues were on the agenda that were of direct interest and relevance to MEL, given its unique position as the only marine laboratory in the United Nations system. Those included: implementation of the GPA; the chemicals-related conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO); and the future legally binding instrument on persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

11. After briefly describing the history and origins of IAEA-MEL, he explained that MESL itself had developed expertise in the investigation of heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, POPs and marine biocides and, inter alia, coordinated the Inter-agency Programme on Marine Pollution (involving IAEA, UNEP, and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). MESL cooperated closely with MAP, the Black Sea Environment Programme and the Kuwait Action Plan, and had initiated cooperation with the Caspian Environment Programme. In addition, it was undertaking training courses, sponsored by MED POL, for the analysis of organic contaminants in marine sediments and biota. The IAEA-MEL thus had a tradition of working with the regions, and he welcomed the scope for initiating and renewing further cooperation that was provided by the current meeting.

12. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Jorge Illueca, Assistant Executive Director, Division of Environmental Conventions, UNEP, and adopted the agenda contained in annex 1 to the present report.

B. Attendance

13. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following organizations:

(a) Regional seas conventions and action plans: Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission); Black Sea Environmental Programme (BSEP); Caspian Environment Programme (CEP); Commission of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Commission); Coordinating Unit of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP); Interim Secretariat of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP); Northeast Pacific Regional Seas Programme; Permanent Commission of the South East Pacific (CPPS) as the secretariat of the Lima Convention and the Southeast Pacific Action Plan; Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) International Secretariat; Regional Coordinating Unit for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CAR/RCU); Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA); Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) of the Kuwait Convention region; Regional Coordinating Unit for the East Asian Seas (EAS/RCU); Regional Coordinating Unit for the West

and Central African Action Plan (WACAF/RCU); Regional Coordinating Unit of the Eastern African Region (EAF/RCU); the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP); and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP);

(b) Global and international agreements: Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA); International Maritime Organization (IMO) marine pollution conventions; Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS); Secretariat of the Global Plan of Action for Marine Mammals (MMAP); Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.

(c) Intergovernmental organizations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), United Nations; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); International Maritime Organization (IMO); Marine Environment Laboratory of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);

(d) Non-Governmental Organizations: World Conservation Union (IUCN); Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS).

14. The list of participants is provided in annex 2 to the present report.

II. FOLLOW-UP TO THE SECOND GLOBAL MEETING OF REGIONAL SEAS CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS

(THE HAGUE, 5-8 JULY, 1999)

15. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to document UNEP (DEC)/RS 3.1.0, entitled "UNEP Water Policy and Strategy: Progress Report on Component 2: Managing Global Water Resources: Regional Seas, 1 January - 31 December 2000", and document UNEP (DEC)/RS 3.1.1, entitled "Status of implementation of decisions of the Second Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans: The Hague, 5-8 July 1999". He explained that inputs from the current meeting concerning the issues raised in those two documents would be used as a guide in the preparation of recommendations to the UNEP Governing Council at its twenty-first session, in February 2001. The Chair also gave a brief presentation on the Regional Seas Website of UNEP (<http://www.unep.org/dec/docs/indexold.htm>), as well as the new UNEP conventions website (<http://www.unep.org/dec/docs/indexold.htm>) in which regional seas programmes featured prominently.

16. Several representatives made oral corrections to the substance of document UNEP (DEC)/RS 3.1.0, which were subsequently submitted to the Chair.

Recommendation

17. The meeting recommended that, for purposes of follow-up, the recommendations of the third global meeting should be added to document UNEP(DEC)/RS 3.1.1, so as to produce a rollover

report on the status of implementation of the decisions of the Global Meetings of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans.

Financial concerns

18. On the subject of resources, the Director of UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions said that the available biennial budget for regional seas programmes had declined drastically from a level of some \$10 million to \$12 million per biennium during the first half of the 1990s, to a current level less than \$3 million. Governments continued to task UNEP with extra mandates, but failed to match their demands with appropriate contributions to its budget and devoted resources to other areas, such as convention trust funds or GEF.

19. Many representatives, stressing the importance of past UNEP support for their activities, regretted the decline in available funds and the cutbacks in activities that had resulted. They considered that a clear message needed to be sent to the Governing Council of UNEP to the effect that UNEP needed to be given resources commensurate with the task of adequately implementing the regional seas programmes and to give them the attention they deserved.

20. Some representatives, highlighting the importance of adequate preparation of projects to be submitted to GEF, considered that UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions needed to develop the expertise required for that activity. It needed to set up a small team with the specialist task of identifying suitable projects and subsequently preparing project proposals in a way that would make them acceptable for GEF funding.

21. It was noted, however, that not all projects dealing with marine problems were eligible for GEF funding, as GEF disbursed funds to cover incremental costs. Some representatives said that projects had to reflect the wishes of governments, not donors. The view was expressed that, since funding questions had assumed such importance, it was also necessary to create a post within UNEP for an expert to work on resource mobilization for the regional seas programmes. One representative held that the regional seas programmes could act as the coordinator between agencies in the implementation of GEF projects. Another said that active cooperation was needed between the GPA and GEF, and that could best be coordinated by UNEP.

Recommendations

22. In light of the fact that representatives had expressed some concern over their relationship with GEF and its operational methods, the meeting recommended:

(a) That a meeting should be organized between the regional seas programmes and GEF. Prior to that meeting, it was necessary to hold a coordinating meeting of the regional seas programmes to prepare a common position;

(b) That UNEP should bring to the attention of the next meeting of the Governing Council the concern of the Third Global Meeting over the declining support being allocated to the Regional Seas Programmes, despite the expressed recognition of past Governing Councils that the revitalization of the regional seas conventions and action plans is a UNEP priority;

(c) That UNEP should consider the establishment of a post in the Division of Environmental Conventions dedicated to mobilization of resources in support of regional seas programmes, taking

into account the wide range of funding sources available, including, but not limited to, the GEF, bilateral and multilateral donors, private industry and non-governmental organizations.

III. THE OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

ON OCEANS AND LAW OF THE SEA (UNICPOLOS)

23. In the absence of a representative from the United Nations Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS), which serves as secretariat for the new UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, a briefing on the background and first meeting of the consultative process was presented by Ms. Anne Rogers of the Division of Sustainable Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

24. The idea of a UN consultative process on oceans, to provide an integrated review including economic, social, environmental and legal dimensions of developments affecting oceans and seas, had been proposed by the Seventh Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) in April 1999. The UN General Assembly subsequently established in its resolution 54/33 of November 1999, the consultative process on oceans to meet for one week annually in New York, with the participation of all UN member States and relevant international and regional organizations and agencies. Its first meeting was held from 30 May – 2 June 2000 and addressed two main topics: responsible fisheries and illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries (IUU); and economic and social impacts of marine pollution, especially in coastal areas. In addition, there was a one-half day dialogue with members of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas (SOCA) on increasing coordination in oceans affairs. The report of the meeting, presented as recommendations of its two co-chairmen, is available on the DOALOS website: <http://www.un.org/depts/ola/doalos>.

25. The results of the first meeting of the consultative process were considered by the UN General Assembly at its 55th Session, which adopted resolution a/55/L.10 on “Oceans and the Law of the Sea” on 30 October 2000. This resolution, inter alia, decided that the second meeting should be held in New York from 7-11 May 2001, with two main areas of focus: marine science and the development and transfer of marine technology, including capacity building; and coordination and cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery at sea. The resolution also calls for strengthening regional cooperation in several specific areas, including fisheries management organizations and arrangements, integrated management and sustainable development of coastal and marine areas, capacity building, IUU fisheries, and piracy and armed robbery at sea.

26. In the ensuing discussion, questions were raised as to what concrete results might result from the UN process that can help the regional seas programmes and in what ways the regional seas conventions and action plans can provide inputs to the future meetings. It was suggested that the ACC/SOCA can play a role in promoting regional issues, and it was noted with satisfaction that the joint UNEP/FAO paper on the ecosystem-based management of fisheries, presented to the Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, was a direct result of the UN informal consultative process.

27. In reply to a question from IUCN about potential regional inputs to the ten year review of UNCED (Rio + 10), to take place in 2002, the representative of UN/DESA provided some information on proposed intergovernmental and interagency preparatory activities, including at the regional and subregional levels. It has been suggested that regional preparatory meetings will be organized by the UN Regional Commissions and UNEP, in consultation with DESA, and take place

in the period from March to November 2001. The results of these meetings would be considered by CSD-10, acting as the preparatory committee for the 10-year review (which is likely to be called the World Summit on Sustainable Development). In addition, it is also proposed to convene regional Agenda 21 round tables involving prominent experts from each region and representatives from civil society. It has been agreed at an organizational meeting held by DESA in June 2000 that UNEP and the Regional Commissions will undertake steps to raise awareness regarding the 2002 process within the respective regions.

Recommendations

28. In view of the potential benefits for enhancing awareness and support of the work of the regional seas programmes in important forthcoming global forums on oceans, the meeting recommended:

- (a) That regional seas programmes participate in future meetings of the UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea (May 2001) and provide inputs, as appropriate, to its background documentation, including reports to be provided by the ACC/SOCA and the UN/DOALOS;
- (b) That the regional seas programmes play an active role in the regional and subregional preparatory activities being organized for the 2000 review of UNCED; and
- (c) That the UNEP Secretariat and Governing Council be urged to promote a more active involvement of the regional seas conventions and action plans in these important intergovernmental processes and in their follow-up.

IV. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON CRITICAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

FACING REGIONAL SEAS CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS

29. The Roundtable Discussion on Critical Problems and Issues Facing Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans was chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP. In the course of an initial tour de table, the representatives of the regional seas conventions and action plans briefly outlined the main problems, constraints and challenges faced in their endeavours to implement their mandate, and possible ways to overcome those factors. A summary of the points they raised is contained in annex 3 to the present report. Financial constraints hindering the implementation of the conventions and action plans was the most commonly raised issue. Among the most frequently raised concerns were the following: inadequate exchange of information; the need for increased participation of civil society and the private sector; compliance and enforcement; marine pollution prevention and response; and improved monitoring. The representatives of intergovernmental organizations and of environmental convention secretariats were subsequently invited to describe the problems and constraints they faced, and to expatiate on how their activities related to those of the regional seas conventions and action plans.

30. The representative of IAEA-MEL highlighted the problems he faced in the funding of personnel; in communications with other agencies and with countries; and in strategic planning, since the dependence on sponsors made it difficult to set research priorities. There was a need to promote reference methods and pragmatic techniques that worked for developing countries; a need for quality assurance; and a need for self-evaluation of projects and of monitoring to check that activities were in fact what was required.

31. The Executive Secretary of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade drew attention to the awareness-raising programme, implemented with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), to teach countries how to manage their own chemicals and pesticides through country-based projects. Activities by the global conventions were a complimentary counterpart to help countries to implement the regional seas programmes and action plans.

32. The representative of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), recalling that IMO is the regulatory body for maritime safety and marine pollution prevention and response, stressed that regional cooperation was important in contributing to the implementation of IMO conventions, as was the case with marine pollution response, for example. Other areas where synergies could be developed included waste management, problems of ballast water, and pollution prevention. Stressing the importance of private sector involvement, he said that IMO was itself attempting to improve cooperation with the oil and shipping industries. To pursue cooperation at the regional level, IMO followed a policy consisting of cooperation with regional secretariats, including the signing memorandums of understanding. While there were constraints that prevented full coordination at the national and regional levels, he stressed the need for further cooperation to improve the situation. New regional initiatives existed, and IMO wished to be properly involved in those issues.

33. The Secretary General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) considered that training could best be carried out at the national/regional level, using existing structures, such as the regional seas conventions and programmes. Of concern to CITES was the programme of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), especially concerning proposals for exploitation of turtle species. In addition, the situation of the sturgeons of the Caspian Sea had become serious, and was compounded by the problem of poaching and lack of enforcement of caviar quotas in the range States of the species. At the Caspian regional level, CITES, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention on Biological Diversity were all involved in efforts to protect the species.

34. The representative of CMS said that, because CMS operated through regional agreements, the potential for cooperation with the regional seas conventions and action plans was enormous, particularly at the institutional level. Because CMS did not always enjoy full country coverage within a region, the regional seas conventions and action plans could also facilitate the Convention's contacts to others within a specific region. Moreover, CMS had the technical expertise to develop agreements and could provide inputs to the regional seas programmes at the technical level. The case of ACCOBAMS was a good example where an agreement under CMS could already be implemented through the existing mechanisms of MAP and the Bucharest Convention. It was thus a model for similar initiatives for other regions. In addition, such activities would help avoid any duplication of efforts or competition.

35. In the course of the discussion on the agenda item, the following points were raised: the question of whether harmonization of monitoring and/or reporting among regions should constitute a priority activity; the problem of communications within and among the regional seas conventions and action plans; the important role of new institutions; the question of how to create synergies between the environmental conventions and the regional seas programmes and action plans, and avoid duplication of work; the need for a regional approach to common problems, such as POPs and heavy metals, and for the identification of hot-spots; the question of a trade-off with

stakeholders, such as oil and gas-drilling concerns, whereby a stable investment climate could be guaranteed in return for environmental protection; the need to refine environmental impact assessment procedures; the need for concrete programmes to translate national action plans into business plans to which the private sector could relate, perhaps for financing; how to integrate socioeconomic and environmental repercussions into the activities of financial institutions; the importance of protocols as channels of contact with the environmental conventions; the refusal of international financial institutions to allow any ring-fencing of funds for environmental purposes, thus precluding environmental levies on private stakeholders; the question of what services the regional seas programmes and action plans provide to stakeholders, and who must pay for them and in what way; the question of what main indicators could be identified for the successful leveraging of finances; and the unresolved problem surrounding the GEF replenishment, which had resulted in a drastic curtailing of badly needed and anticipated resources for the secretariat of the Black Sea Convention.

Recommendations

36. The meeting recommended that representatives of the shipping industry, the chemical industry and the tourism industry be invited to participate in the Fourth Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans to address the issue of closer collaboration in the regional seas programmes, including the financing of activities.

Based on the elements of the discussions under this agenda item, and taking into account the discussion under other agenda items, the meeting requested the UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions to prepare a document, for consideration by the Governing Council at its twenty-first session, on strengthening the work of UNEP in the continued vitalization of the regional seas programmes.

1. Innovative financing options for regional seas conventions and action plans

37. The Chair introduced document UNEP(DEC)/RS 3.3.0, "Financing Regional Seas Conventions: Paying for a Regional Public Good", which outlined framework ideas for the generation of financial resources, based on the premise that 80 to 90 per cent of the funds raised at the national level would go to support the national components of the regional seas conventions and action plans. He recalled that the Committee of Permanent Representatives of UNEP had asked UNEP to prepare a strategy to help the regional seas conventions and action plans to mobilize resources.

38. One representative considered that the paper could be one input, together with others, to the upcoming examination of initiatives for funding the GPA. Others considered the paper to be a valuable example of the kind of thing secretariats should be attempting.

39. Another representative stressed the importance of distinguishing between the financing of the implementation of the regional seas programmes and action plans and the financing of the machinery to promote the latter. If national economic institutions did not work effectively in, for example, tax collecting, then economic incentives were useless. Unless finance could be put in place for the core machinery with which to lobby for the aims of the programmes or action plans, those programmes could not increase the capacity of a country to provide support for itself. Another representative considered that the link between funding for projects and funding for a secretariat needed to be clarified, perhaps in a paper setting out the elements of success that could be drawn upon by others. Yet another representative said that, if a programme had nothing to begin with, it had no means of further leveraging resources.

40. Several representatives said that, in order to ensure that countries contributed to the regional seas conventions and action plans, it was vital to ensure that the programme coordinators did what the countries themselves wanted, and did not pursue mandates or priorities set elsewhere. In that connection, said one representative, it was important to have an idea of precisely what the countries themselves wanted, and not be donor-driven. Another representative held the view that, by carrying out projects in which donors were interested, donor confidence increased and the donor base could be expanded. One representative pointed to the importance of political commitment to the regional seas conventions and action plans and to the significance of a mechanism to participate in the international-level environmental forums for the leveraging of financial resources. It was stressed that recognized ownership of the action plan itself was the key to obtaining the commitment of the members.

41. A number of representatives stressed the crucial role of the coordinators in lobbying to obtain funding for their respective programmes. The secretariats needed strong leadership to mobilize resources, obtain the necessary political commitment from governments and operationalize the action plans. No situation was entirely without hope. Even apparently unusual and highly innovative schemes for fund-raising could be tried, as had been evidenced by the success of the "POPs Club", which had been used to raise funds for the negotiating process for the POPs convention. It was noted that very few regional seas conventions and action plans had a financial strategy, and those that did were the successful ones. Moreover, experience had shown that those regional programmes with a strong legal framework managed to do the most to protect the environment.

42. One representative believed that, since cooperation with the regional seas conventions and action plans would facilitate the implementation of global conventions, those conventions needed to contribute some form of mutual support in return for the increased responsibility assumed. Another observed that, if one activity were carried out effectively with a global convention, it would enable governments to understand and evaluate what the regional seas conventions and action plans could actually do.

43. Some representatives, noting that each regional seas programme or action plan was in a different situation, questioned the wisdom of trying to determine a common approach to all financial questions.

Recommendations

44. The meeting recommended:

(a) That a small informal working group be set up with a mandate to work on the preparation of a strategic approach to financing regional seas programmes, including the consideration of document UNEP(DEC)/RS 3.3.0 on financing regional seas conventions: paying for a regional public good. The group should comprise the secretariats of the Cartagena, Barcelona, and Nairobi Conventions, the East Asian Seas Action Plan and the GPA, and be coordinated by the UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions;

(b) That UNEP use the above exercise to prepare an overarching strategy for the mobilization of resources for regional seas programmes for the consideration of its Committee of Permanent Representatives and the intergovernmental meetings of concerned regional seas programmes. Such a strategy will distinguish between funding mechanisms and sources for (i) the coordination and

management of a regional seas programme and (ii) the implementation of its Action Plans. The strategy should consider various funding sources, including the GEF, overseas development assistance (ODA), multilateral donors and innovative funding mechanisms at the national and regional levels, including the participation of private industry and local authorities. The overarching strategy would need to be further refined to meet the specific needs of concerned regional seas programmes.

(c) That UNEP should raise with GEF its concerns about the effects of the cutback of GEF resources to the International Waters projects.

2. Exploring new options for horizontal cooperation among

regional seas conventions and action plans

45. There was broad recognition of the advantages of the twinning arrangements between the Baltic Marine Environment Commission and UNEP as the secretariat of the Nairobi Convention and between PERSGA (Jeddah Convention) and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (Kuwait Convention), as well as the Memorandum of Understanding for closer cooperation among PERSGA, ROPME, the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and UNEP. Several representatives pointed to the need to promote the “tripling” of regional seas conventions and action plans on issues of common concern. Capacity building was viewed as a priority.

Recommendation

46. The meeting requested:

(a) That UNEP prepare follow-up and explore the possibility of establishment of a network for capacity-building, linking the capacity-building activities undertaken throughout the regional seas programmes;

(b) That further work should be facilitated by UNEP in the negotiation and implementation of twinning arrangements between conventions. To that end, the meeting congratulates the OSPAR and Abidjan Conventions for progress in their on-going discussions of this matter;

(c) That UNEP assist in facilitating horizontal cooperation among regional seas programmes in areas of common concern such as Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and emergency response to oil spills and other related accidents.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION

FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

FROM LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES (GPA)

1. Status report on implementation of the GPA

47. The Coordinator of the Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), Ms Veerle Vandeweerd, gave a presentation on the GPA, describing the development and aims of the GPA, its core, and its

institutional framework. She pointed out the three main thrusts of the activities of the Coordination Office (assessment/analysis for action; mobilizing action at the local, national, regional and global levels; review and advancement of the implementation of the GPA) and described in detail the areas of focus through which those activities were carried out. In addition, in the first part of her presentation, she gave a progress report on the achievements of the GPA from August 1999 to October 2000, the physical and administrative establishment of the Coordination Office at The Hague, and the efforts aimed at broadening the donor base and raising funds.

48. She particularly highlighted the development of the GPA Strategic Action Plan (SAP) on Municipal Wastewater up to 2000, aimed at supporting States in addressing the human and coastal ecosystem health problems resulting from municipal wastewater that had been inadequately treated or disposed of. She listed the cooperation partners in the SAP; its assessment, management and coordination components; and its functions and management outputs. She also explained the aims and characteristics of the GPA Clearing-house Mechanism.

49. Answering a question on the GPA linkage with other global conventions in the context of upland and lowland interaction and its effects on coastal zones, the Coordinator pointed out that the GPA paid attention to the activities of other conventions and constantly strove to avoid any duplication of activity. In that connection, it was observed that a single action for coastal zone protection could simultaneously meet the requirements of several different conventions. One representative pointed to the close cooperation with the GPA on the subject of POPs and heavy metals.

50. The Director of the UNEP Regional Office for Europe (ROE) recalled that two documents had been made available at the Second Global Meeting, the Model Law on the Sustainable Development of Coastal Zones, and a Code of Conduct for Coastal Zones, both developed under the auspices of the Council of Europe. At that meeting there had been a request that they be scrutinized by the secretariats of the regional seas programmes for their usefulness and that ROE be given comments and suggestions. As none had been forthcoming, he wished to reiterate the request at the current meeting. The Coordinator of GPA agreed to make the documents available through the clearing-house mechanism.

51. In reply to a query on how the GPA harmonized the geographical differences between the regional seas regions and the GPA regions, the Coordinator explained that GPA worked closely with the regional offices as well as with the secretariats of the regional seas programmes to use their different abilities and constituencies. The regional offices, for example, often had important links to Ministries of the Environment. In that context, the Director of ROE pointed to the role of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in managing regional conventions related to marine pollution and underlined the need to involve ECE in the work of GPA.

52. The representative of MAP praised the positive role of GPA in the Mediterranean area, particularly with regard to the protocol on land-based sources of pollution, where MAP had redirected its activities in line with GPA. Indeed, MAP activities took into account the GPA approach, especially the 1997 Strategic Action Plan.

53. On the question of how GPA could support for the implementation of a regional seas work programme, the Coordinator explained that GPA could help regional seas conventions and action plans in joint fund-raising endeavours, both from the private sector and when anticipated contributions to GPA funding were in place. GPA could also help regions to identify their priorities. Concerning mobilization of resources, GPA had raised funds for action plans, for the

clearing-house mechanism, from UNEP, from countries and was currently seeking longer-term support from donor countries and institutions for larger-scale projects.

54. It was noted that, while so-called “soft” funds could be obtained for preparation of plans, studies, etc., the mobilizing of “hard” money for infrastructure projects was more problematic. One representative said the regions needed to be also proactive in mobilizing funding, since it was not realistic to expect 100 per cent of the funding for sewage treatment to be provided by donor institutions. The importance of identifying successful demonstration projects was underlined as examples to bring together the different interested parties. The Coordinator pointed out that GPA aimed to be very pragmatic, to bring donors and financial institutions to meetings, to demonstrate best possible practices and to explore new approaches to financing.

55. One representative, while expressing strong support for GPA and the direction in which it was moving, wondered whether POPs deserved the amount of attention accorded to them and whether the GPA overemphasized the importance of the clearing-house mechanism as a tool for problem-solving. In the mobilization of resources, he believed that GPA had a role as an “honest broker”, bringing together those who needed finance and those provided it. It could also help countries to formulate their requests to international financial institutions appropriately.

56. Noting that the construction of water treatment plants required full cost recovery from clients, one representative observed that plants needed to be tailored to the capacities for capital investment and low-cost maintenance in the areas in which they were to be located. There was little point in constructing high-technology, tertiary treatment plants if countries lacked the resources for proper maintenance and operation.

2. 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review process and meeting

57. The Coordinator of the GPA Coordination Office, turning to the First Intergovernmental Review of the Implementation of the GPA, to be hosted by the Government of Canada in 2001, outlined its purpose, thematic focus, structure, preparatory process and expected outcomes. The latter included a Ministerial/High-level Declaration; a work programme for the period 2002 to 2006 (local, national, regional, global); endorsement of the GPA Municipal Wastewater Guidelines; provision of examples of sustainable financing and partnerships; and sharing of experiences and expertise. She sought guidance on how the regional seas conventions and action plans could have an input into the preparatory process and the outputs of the Intergovernmental Review. Moreover, since it was planned to devote one day of the Intergovernmental Review to a Regional Seas Day, she sought concrete suggestions from participants on how that part of the Review should be structured, in line with the aims and priorities of the regional seas conventions and action plans themselves.

3. Role of the regional seas conventions and action plans in the 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review process and meeting

58. In the course of the discussion on the subitem, the following points were raised: in the activities of regional seas conventions and action plans, priority should be accorded to waste management and sewage treatment; how could the commitment of the private sector and non-governmental organizations be also taken into account at the review meeting; there was a need to identify how to implement concrete activities in support of protocols on land-based sources of pollution and to involve the international financial community; the high-level declaration was important in reinforcing what activities needed to be undertaken; as the key actors, the municipalities needed to

be involved in activities concerning wastewater; the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans needed to form partnerships with the GPA to work together; some secretariats of regional seas conventions and action plans wished to come up with a common regional position on activities at the regional level in preparation for the meeting; there was a need for regional seas conventions and action plans to identify their problems, priorities and barriers to action, so that that could be taken into account in the formulation of the 2002-2006 work plan; countries should prepare their national plans in an innovative way, so as not to lose the momentum while awaiting funding; tourism should be addressed as a major and growing sector that was linked to issues of sewage and shoreline modification, bearing in mind that the International Year of Ecotourism will take place in 2002; the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) should be approached by GPA as a funding partner; the Baltic Environment Programme could contribute to the meeting by sharing experience on the successful implementation of a municipal sewage treatment project; there was a need to examine the problems posed by agriculture and eutrophication; in wastewater treatment, it was necessary to apply standards and guidelines appropriate to the area step-wise, and not necessarily strive to immediately implement the strict standards of the EC; there was a need to address the issue of sludge disposal and its cost, particularly for small island States; a subsidiary body for scientific, technical and technological advice should be set up to discuss pollution from land-based sources and make recommendations to a second high-level meeting; there was a need to take societal factors into account, for example some governments faced difficulties in the levying of charges for water; capacity-building was needed to educate public authorities on wastewater issues and advise them, for example, in the formulation of contracts with waste companies; plans and projects needed to incorporate milestones, so that achievements could be monitored; since prevention was cheaper than remediation, it was necessary to prevent extra pressure being placed on ecosystems by regulating developments and factoring into them the costs of water supply and disposal.

Recommendations

59. The meeting recommended:

- (a) The secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans, in consultation with their member countries, will work together, as regional focal points, with the GPA Coordination Office on the regional preparatory process for the first intergovernmental review meeting on implementation of the GPA (Montreal, November 2001), including activities dealing with the (i) identification of regional problems, priorities and barriers to action (to be incorporated in the regional workprogrammes 2002-2006 related to land-based activities, which will be considered at the review meeting); (ii) preparation of the GPA ministerial/high-level declaration; (iii) reporting on progress in implementing the GPA; and (iv) preparation of the one day session on the regional seas programme at such meeting. The modalities for this collaboration were or are being discussed and agreed upon by the GPA Coordination Office and each secretariat;
- (b) The role of the GPA secretariat as a "broker", bringing together potential recipients and potential donors of assistance is considered important. The GPA secretariat and those secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans that wish to do so, should work together in joint fund-raising activities for implementing the GPA. The GPA secretariat could also assist interested countries/regions in preparing relevant project proposals for funding;
- (c) The regional seas conventions and action plans should consider municipal wastewater, as appropriate, a priority in preparing their workprogrammes;

(d) The regional seas conventions and action plans and the GPA Coordination Office should, as appropriate, address tourism as a major economic activity linked to, among others, sewage and physical alteration and destruction of habitats;[1]and

(e) The regional seas conventions and action plans and the GPA Coordination Office should, as appropriate, address agriculture and its effects on the coastal and marine environment, including eutrophication and pesticides reaching the ocean.

VI. ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF OCEANS

1. Status of implementation of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA)

60. In his presentation, the new Coordinator of the GIWA project, Mr. Dag Daler, described its background; the organization into 66 subregions; the goals of the project; the elements of its assessment methodology; the 22 issues identified, that were grouped into five areas of concern; the causal chain analysis; the progress of GIWA; and the schedule of upcoming events.

61. He explained that, as follow-up to the phased work plan for the regional seas involvement in the GIWA project, which had been prepared at the Second Global Meeting, GIWA had undergone a reorganization and had adopted a new schedule. He agreed that GIWA should work closely with the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans, as the custodians of the management plans for the marine and coastal areas, rather than solely with the UNEP regional offices, which often lacked the necessary expertise. GIWA intended to enter into contracts with all parties, some through GEF, others using different funding methods. The first contracts had been signed and others would follow once the terms of reference had been clarified. He was confident that the planned timeframe for signing contracts with focal points of the regional seas conventions and action plans would be followed. On the question of GIWA coordination with other United Nations conventions and organizations, he pointed out that GIWA's terms of reference meant it had no role to play in influencing the latter. GIWA simply took their results and data and coordinated them with ongoing projects. The representative of the Convention on Biological Diversity said that the secretariat of the Convention had already submitted its comments on the GIWA assessment.

62. One representative, pointing to the GIWA trial carried out in Thailand, considered that GIWA would provide a valuable assessment of the problems associated with waters. He stressed that its aim was not to write project proposals for GEF, but rather to establish prioritization at the global level. The representative of SPREP said that a proposed contract from GIWA had already been received from GIWA and it had been returned with some questions. Other representatives of regional seas programmes questioned the practicality of the GIWA time schedule, such as the signing of all contracts by the end of December of this year.

Recommendation

63. The meeting recommended that the GIWA office be encouraged to engage the regional seas programmes as soon as possible in the implementation of the programme of work concerning GIWA adopted at the Second Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans. Concrete results in the implementation of this programme of work need to be presented by GIWA to the Fourth Global Meeting.

2. Presentation by UNESCO on the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and strengthening interactions between regional seas conventions and action plans

64. In his presentation, Mr. Colin Summerhayes, Director of the GOOS Project Office, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, explained how interactions between GOOS and the GOOS products and services could be strengthened. GOOS could provide a greatly enhanced capacity for understanding and forecasting ocean properties, behaviour and resources on time-scales that permitted relevant and effective management decision-making. It was a new tool to enhance the information base for decision-making under the regional seas conventions and action plans. He described the operational elements of GOOS; its holistic approach; the ongoing data-gathering and distribution activities; and the future challenge to provide environmental forecasts to underpin the management of coasts and coastal seas. He highlighted the caveat that GOOS must be user-driven, providing products and services to meet the needs of a wide range of users and customers. He presented the elements of the GOOS Initial Observing System (IOS); the GOOS Health of the Ocean Module (HOTO); and the regional GOOS. He pointed to the applicability of GOOS data to the implementation of the GPA. In addition, he observed that the experience of the MESL could be applied in the application of GOOS.

65. On the issue of coastal GOOS, as a tool for coastal zone management, he explained the three subsystems, the six main observing elements (many of which were already in place), and pointed to the problem of how to obtain the information on a common set of key (core) variables and how to train personnel to use the information. He listed the current 17 core variables, noting that UNEP needed to tell GOOS what further variables needed to be added, and described the three main activities and the key pilot projects. Concerning the GOOS products and services, he explained that provisions for a number of the environmental indicators were not yet in place and that it was important for UNEP to play its part in the development of the coastal component of GOOS. While UNEP, as a co-owner of GOOS, was currently doing little to influence what GOOS did, that could change. UNEP needed to decide on the level of its cooperation with GOOS and that required a clear idea of the requirements of the regional seas conventions and action plans. Noting the possibility of including MESL as a component of GOOS, he pointed to possible capacity-building activities with UNEP. In conclusion, he expressed the view that the possibilities of UNEP/GOOS cooperation should be brought to the attention of the UNEP governing bodies. A memorandum of understanding had already been signed with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and UNEP should explore the possibility of also using such an instrument in its cooperation with GOOS.

66. In reply to questions, he confirmed that a GOOS meta-database could be made available, that GOOS would be discussing the issue of non-point sources of pollution in the coming fortnight, and that recruitment of an officer to staff the IOC-CARIBE office was underway. Concerning the observing of the El Niño system, he pointed to the fact that GOOS, as a component of IOC, was already involved in observation work, but that efforts were being made to increase that involvement. Concerning how to integrate the work of the MAP regional activity centre for remote sensing, he stressed that it was important not to view GOOS as centralized. Regional GOOS could adopt the data from the MAP centre. It was necessary to make use of what already existed. Ultimately, GOOS would be implemented regionally and nationally. It was also important for regional centres to take responsibility for training.

67. One representative considered that the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans should consider what benefits they could bring to GOOS in the form of data, which they would ultimately use themselves. They were more relevant than the IOC focal points, who were not the end-users of the data. Strong links with GOOS were needed to pursue the matter. In addition, there was a need to investigate the possible ways in which GOOS, which provided important data

to fisheries bodies, could act as a link to enhance cooperation between such bodies and the regional seas conventions and action plans.

Recommendation

68. The meeting recommended:

(a) That the new Chief of the Regional Seas Branch of the Division of Environmental Conventions work closely with the GOOS Project Office to ensure that the concerns of the regional seas programmes are taken into account in the management and implementation of GOOS. To that end, special attention will be given to the design, management and operationalization of the Coastal GOOS, which should contribute significantly to meeting the scientific and technical needs of regional seas conventions and action plans. As a first step the Chief of the Regional Seas Branch and the Director of the GOOS Project Office will elaborate the elements for a cooperative arrangement between the two to ensure that the needs of regional seas programmes are fully taken into account in the development, management and implementation of the Coastal GOOS in particular, as well as the overall work of the Global Ocean Observing System. This recommendation is based on the recognition that the effectiveness of the Coastal GOOS will depend on the participation of the regional seas conventions and action plans;

(b) That IOC/UNESCO, through its GOOS programme, given the complimentary scientific work that it is undertaking, should be integrated into the UNEP/FAO initiative on the ecosystem-based management of fisheries, further discussed under agenda item 7.6;

(c) That the importance of the Coastal GOOS in support of the Regional Seas Programmes should be brought to the attention of the upcoming meeting of the Governing Council of UNEP, including the need to implement supportive capacity-building activities in regional seas programmes as required

3. Presentation by the IAEA Marine Environment Laboratory

on marine environmental pollution and analysis

69. Mr. Stephen de Mora, Head of the Marine Environment Studies Laboratory of IAEA-MEL, described the mission of MESL and its experience in marine analytical chemistry, marine pollution monitoring and assessment and in chemical oceanography and marine biogeochemistry. He described its work within IAEA; the F-3 subprogramme of activities; comparison exercises; analysis of trace metals; data reporting and intercomparison exercises; production of reference materials; capacity-building activities and education and training in analytical techniques; the monitoring of marine contaminants; some specific activities with the MED POL programme, the Black Sea Environment Programme and the ROPME seas area; the biogeochemical cycle of mercury; new partners and priorities; and ongoing support to the United Nations. In connection with support to the regional seas conventions and action plans, he described the techniques developed in marine analytical chemistry; the formulation of reference methods and guidelines; intercomparison exercises; education; capacity building; monitoring programmes; and research activities.

70. In answer to a question on the kind of specific services MESL could provide to regional seas conventions and action plans, he said that those were dependent on the requirements, the priorities and the level of maturity of the particular programme, although a service such as capacity-building

through training was always in demand due to staff turnover in the programmes themselves. Assistance could be provided in trend monitoring, which was becoming increasingly important and which required a monitoring network which could not only provide comparable data, but which was also reliable over time. Good regional quality assurance was required, and the best way to set up a network was for MESL to visit a region and evaluate the infrastructure and personnel. In addition, MESL could be tasked, as was the case for the Caspian region, with carrying out an initial survey of contaminants in a region.

71. There were some areas, such as reference methods and updating of procedures, which could not be costed to any particular region and which needed additional funds across the board from UNEP. The laboratory needed a new staff post for an engineer. Somehow, additional resources had to be obtained from UNEP.

Recommendations

72. The meeting recommended that the regional seas programmes should make use of the services of the Marine Environment Studies Laboratory (MESL) of IAEA in support of its marine pollution monitoring and assessment programmes. Individual regional seas programmes were encouraged to take opportunity of this meeting to further discuss with MESL possible collaboration.

73. UNEP was requested, within its available resources, to work with MESL in supporting sampling and monitoring activities in developing countries that are member States of regional seas programmes.

4. Presentation by UNEP-WCMC on biodiversity data and information

management for regional seas programmes

74. The Director of the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), Mr. Mark Collins, presented background information on WCMC and explained that, now that the Centre was fully integrated into UNEP, it was to be hoped that it would work more closely with the UNEP components, particularly the regional seas conventions and action plans, since it offered an approach to build capacities for information management for coastal zone and marine areas. He looked forward to learning how WCMC could link up with the regional seas conventions and action plans and explore ways of cooperating over and above the existing programmes in which WCMC was involved.

75. Mr. Edmund Green, Head of the Marine and Coastal Programme, WCMC, presented the four main areas of WCMC activity in the marine environment: addressing data gaps; original research; science; and the regional seas conventions and action plans. Concerning support for the latter, he described the biological diversity data and analyses held by WCMC; the regional products; the traditional reports and maps; and the new Internet Map Server (IMS) products. IMS, he explained, was fundamentally a Web-based GIS system, which was quick and efficient. It was easy to access round the clock; required little technical knowledge of GIS; required no maintenance by users; provided data for the whole world in limitless detail; and could be supplemented by non-environmental data. As a pilot project, a prototype map server had been set up for four areas (Baltic Sea, Eastern African Sea, Mediterranean Sea, and Caribbean Sea) which represented a technical skeleton for access to WCMC data. In addition, data from the regions could be received through the IMS regional systems. He sought suggestions on how the system could be adapted to the work of

the regional seas conventions and action plans, how useful it could be for the exchange of information, and on the directions in which it should be developed.

76. There was general agreement on the need for cooperation between the regional seas conventions and action plans and WCMC and on the value of its products. One representative observed that the WCMC materials would be a valuable aid in selling the work of the regional seas conventions and action plans. Another stressed the importance of WCMC work on seagrass beds and the need for cooperation to set up a seagrass awareness campaign. Yet another described the use he had already made of the WCMC database.

77. In answer to queries, Mr. Green explained that WCMC data came from many hundreds of sources, whose reliability was classified according to a ranking system, depending on whether they had been peer reviewed. The oil industry had originally funded the collation of data for oil spill scenarios, and those data would also prove useful to the regions in large-scale contingency planning. Concerning costs of services, he explained that, now that the institutional arrangements had been put in place, access to WCMC data was simplified, though it was not free and its cost depended on what was required. He underlined the fact that WCMC's close association with the private sector would help to provide a link to potential sources of funding for regional seas conventions and action plans.

Recommendation

78. The meeting took note of the possibilities of cooperation with WCMC and agreed that the secretariats of regional seas conventions and action plans would carry out their own appropriate follow-up.

VII. STRENGTHENING LINKAGES BETWEEN THE REGIONAL SEAS

CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS AND THE

CHEMICALS-RELATED CONVENTIONS

1. The IMO conventions

79. In his presentation, Mr. Jean-Claude Sainlos, Senior Deputy Director, Marine Environment Division, IMO, drew attention to document UNEP(DEC)/RS 3.6.0, which gave a comprehensive report on IMO policy regarding protection of the marine environment. He described the regulatory functions of IMO, with particular emphasis on major recent developments such as port reception facilities for ships, the use of tributyl tin (TBT) in anti-fouling paints for ships and the transport of alien species in ships' ballast water, which were of relevance to the regional seas programmes. He also reported on the technical cooperation programme to assist in the implementation of IMO conventions and on the latest activities within the regions with regard to the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Co-operation (OPRC), MARPOL and the London Dumping Convention. In conclusion, he gave an update on global activities and on activities related to the London Convention. He proposed that UNEP and IMO consider organizing a forum of the regional seas conventions and action plans on the subject of preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution. He believed there was a lot to gain from the sharing of experiences of Regional Activity Centres (RACs) like MAP's Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean (REMPEC) and the regional seas secretariats.

80. A number of representatives expressed appreciation for the activities undertaken through cooperation with IMO so far, and wished to see an increase in such activities and synergies between IMO and the regional seas conventions and action plans. They also desired additional information and an exchange of experiences to how best to apply IMO activities to their regions. The view was expressed that, once governments saw the fruits of such cooperative work, such as the establishment of a Regional Activity Centre (RAC), they would be encouraged to increase their own cooperation and perhaps make funding available for other activities.

81. It was considered that the cooperation with IMO should not just be limited to the field of pollution response, but should be expanded, perhaps to include the issue of prevention of pollution from ships. In addition, UNEP needed to have a high-level input into IMO activities at the global level to discuss all aspects of the environment. One representative questioned the wisdom of compartmentalizing all the different types of marine pollution, and considered that it would be good if REMPEC were to be made the responsible body for all such pollution in the Mediterranean, for example. There needed to be a more coherent approach to all aspects of marine pollution. It was, however, noted that the Mediterranean countries themselves were free to adopt a common position themselves and expand the scope of their response protocol to encompass preventive measures. It was proposed that the MAP secretariat could prepare a paper on the broad issues of political and legal responsibility involved, perhaps providing case studies.

82. It was observed that, as there were plans to review and enlarge the scope of the two protocols on marine pollution under the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions, it was desirable for IMO to work with the GPA to see if it would be possible to have only one protocol on land-based sources of pollution, rather than a piecemeal revision of the existing protocols.

83. Regarding implementation of MARPOL, it was considered that there is a need to assess how the provisions of MARPOL were being fulfilled. On the subject of possible UNEP involvement in the ecological aspects of the problem of invasive exotic species, Mr. Sainlos stressed that, as the problem was related to ships, projects to deal with the problem had originally been an IMO initiative and fell under its mandate.

84. One representative questioned the value of a protocol on exotic species when there were other priorities, since a number of countries were unable to identify what species in their areas were in fact exotic. He also doubted the value of IMO's planned activities concerning wrecks.

85. In answer to one representative, who wondered at the delay in approval of port reception facilities in his region, funded by the private sector, Mr. Sainlos recalled that this is a responsibility of the concerned governments.

Recommendations

86. The meeting recommended:

(a) That a joint IMO/UNEP forum on emergency response to marine pollution should be considered with a view to exchange experiences and to discuss issues of common interest among the regional seas conventions and action plans, with the participation of the RCUs of regional seas programmes and their respective regional activity centers (RACs) such as REMPEC. IMO and the UNEP Regional Seas Branch of the Division of Environmental Conventions should cooperate in preparing such a forum, in consultation with the RCUs of the regional seas conventions and action plans;

(b) In contiguous areas, such as the Mediterranean and ROPME regions, it was worth examining the possibility of close cooperation in the implementation of emergency response programmes.

2. The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements

of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

87. Mr. Pierre Portas, Senior Legal Officer of the Basel Convention, described the aims and operational elements of the Convention; its cooperation mechanisms; and the possible avenues of cooperation with the regional seas conventions and action plans, particularly concerning the dismantling of ships and the environmentally sound management of waste oils. He believed that the global conventions needed to be implemented at the regional level, but the commitment at that level was sometimes lacking. In addition, it was necessary to identify the needs at that level and to assess where synergies could operate. For example, a joint approach to donors could help to overcome the problems created by the multiplicity of actors that sought financing. Capacity building was a critical area for establishing links between the Basel Convention and the regional seas conventions and action plans, perhaps through provision of training courses in the regions. Joint project implementation to streamline or develop adequate national legislation and regulations was another possible area of cooperation. Instead of having such activities implemented on an ad hoc basis, it might be useful to consider establishing a framework or platform to sustain such cooperation. In the final analysis, the effective implementation of the Basel Convention relied heavily on the capacities of the regional and subregional organizations.

88. A number of representatives expressed an interest in increasing their cooperative activities with the Basel Convention, but were unsure how to initiate or operationalize such cooperation. It was suggested that joint activities in areas of common concern should be identified. One representative noted that some members of his region had preferred to develop their own regional convention on hazardous waste, with more manageable objectives. Other representatives wondered how cooperative activities with the Basel Convention could be pursued by those African countries that had ratified the Bamako convention. It was noted that, if regulations governing transboundary movements of hazardous wastes were to be harmonized, the regional seas conventions and action plans need to cooperate with the Basel Convention in formulating regional protocols on the subject.

89. Mr. Portas acknowledged that the Basel Convention had in recent years lost potential partners, but he stressed that it was critical to build or rebuild the links and relationships. It was necessary to look at instruments to facilitate cooperation, such as memorandums of understanding and letters of agreement. Joint activities in areas of common concern should be identified. He agreed to prepare a paper on the subject of how to initiate more intensive cooperation with the regional seas conventions and action plans.

Recommendations

90. The meeting recommended that the Basel Convention Secretariat and the Regional Seas Programmes should reinitiate efforts for collaborating together on the issue of transboundary movement of hazardous wastes, including the work of the Basel Convention's regional centres for training. To that end, interested regional seas programmes and the Basel Convention Secretariat will consider the negotiation and implementation of Memoranda of Understanding.

91. The meeting expressed its appreciation and gratitude to the offer of the representative of the Basel Convention Secretariat to assist regional sea programmes in the development of protocols on transboundary movement of hazardous wastes.

3. The Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent

Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and

Pesticides in International Trade

4. Development of an international legally binding instrument

on persistent organic pollutants (POPs)

92. In his presentation, Mr. J. Willis, Director, UNEP Chemicals, and Executive Secretary of the Rotterdam Convention, first gave a detailed overview of the UNEP Chemicals Programme, describing its catalytic role in treaty negotiation; its capacity-building activities for awareness-raising, training, and regional and country-based projects; assessment work; information products; and its coordination and cooperation activities. In conclusion, he pointed to a large number of opportunities for collaboration in activities at the regional/subregional level. Noting that the Programme cooperated widely with the World Bank in the use of GEF resources, he stressed that the implementation of GEF projects did not have to go solely through UNEP. Moreover, donors were happy to take advantage of the fact that the World Bank charged two per cent in agency costs for capacity-building work.

93. Giving an overview of the Rotterdam Convention, he described its history and negotiation; the Diplomatic Conference; the resolution on interim arrangements; the outcome of the sixth and seventh sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee; and the first session of the Interim Chemical Review Committee. He explained the procedure for which a chemical became a candidate for inclusion in the convention, but stressed that the procedure was not open for the general nomination of candidates.

94. Concerning the POPs negotiations, he set out the characteristics of POPs, the international initiatives, and the background, mandate and status of the negotiations. He listed the 12 POPs already identified for action, and noted that the list was likely to increase, once the POPs instrument had been adopted. He explained that the draft convention also included in an annex the specific criteria for assessment of the toxicity of individual POPs. Although no decision had yet been made on the choice of a financial mechanism for the instrument, GEF had expressed a willingness to assume the role. The cost of implementing POPs had been estimated by GEF at \$150 million for an initial biennium, but actual clean-up of all existing POPs was probably financially unsustainable.

95. In reply to a question on how the increasing number of chemicals conventions could be coordinated, he underlined the difficulty of the task, which often depended on the relationship between the conventions and their geographical location. One answer lay in the establishment of memorandums of understanding for coordinating mechanisms, with follow-up activities. The Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) brought together some of the key organizations dealing with chemical safety and offered cooperation possibilities.

96. On the subject of disposal of obsolete pesticides, he drew attention to guidance documentation, available in the working languages of the United Nations, on identification and management of

stocks and prevention of accumulation. UNEP-financed activities were currently helping countries to prepare inventories of stocks, but he believed that bilateral and not multilateral assistance was the answer. Although some companies pursued a policy of responsible stewardship of chemicals, and were prepared to take back and destroy obsolete stocks, it was not always easy to identify the producer. Some form of incentive means was needed to encourage wider use of a responsible care programme.

97. In response to a query on how cooperation could foster the use of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) in a region, he pointed to the possibilities of collaboration within the PRTR coordination group of the IOMC. Bilateral financing of activities could also be facilitated, and it was sometimes the case that countries had an interest in funding activities to control chemical problems originating in a particular region that needed assistance. In cases where ideas or models for chemicals-related activities in a region had been developed, it was important for them to contact UNEP Chemicals. While there was no guarantee of assistance, sometimes a matching donor could be found.

98. Attention was drawn to the importance of ensuring that all information on activities in the regions was posted on their websites, so that other regional seas conventions and action plans could make use of the experience gained.

99. On the subject of illegal trade in POPs, the Director, UNEP Chemicals, said that the issue involved institutional measures, training and availability of customs inspectors, and questions of infrastructure, national enforcement and compliance. Cooperation was underway with the World Customs organization (WCO) in the long and difficult process of formulating customs codes for identification of relevant chemicals. One representative offered to make available on the region's website the details of its regional strategy on hazardous substances.

100. One representative observed that the developing countries, which needed to address the issue of POPs and have stockpiles removed, lacked the capacities and resources to monitor POPs and were unable to formulate for GEF the incremental costs of stockpile removal. That was not just a problem for the developing countries. Very few countries in the world had the necessary laboratory capacities for POPs analysis. Moreover, analyses of POPs could be very costly, laboratories sometimes disagreed on the analytical techniques to be applied, and they showed variability in their findings. Because the traditional monitoring methods were proving so costly, countries and regions had to be clear about their precise requirements when specifying what kind of monitoring they wanted to be carried out. In some cases, policy was enacted while the background science was still in dispute. The POPs instrument, it was pointed out, was based on agreement that sufficient science was required to take a decision on a chemical.

Recommendation

101. The meeting recommended:

(a) That regional seas programmes and chemicals-related conventions work closely together in the implementation of capacity-building and information exchange activities for assisting countries in meeting their obligations under the Rotterdam Convention and the forthcoming convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs);

(b) That the Regional Seas Programmes, the Rotterdam Convention and the forthcoming convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) collaborate on other mutually supportive activities, such as the development and application of harmonized customs codes.

102. The meeting requested the UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions to prepare an inventory of the work in chemicals undertaken by the regional seas programmes as an information base for collaborating on mutually supportive activities with the Rotterdam Convention and the forthcoming convention on POPs.

VIII. STRENGTHENING LINKAGES BETWEEN REGIONAL SEAS

CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS AND BIODIVERSITY-

RELATED CONVENTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

103. Introducing the item, the Chair recalled that examination of the possibility of closer cooperation between the regional seas conventions and action plans and the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES was a direct follow-up to two recommendations of the Second Global Meeting. He believed that the concrete expression of such collaboration between regional seas conventions and action plans and the multilateral environmental agreements was very critical. It was not sufficient to solely sign memorandums of understanding. While they offered a useful basis for cooperation, it was necessary to somehow involve the governing body of the convention in the issue of cooperating with the regional seas conventions and action plans in the implementation of the convention. The decisions of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity at its Fifth Meeting and the COP of CITES at its Eleventh Meeting calling for closer collaboration with the regional seas programmes were both the results of recommendations emanating from the Second Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans.

1. Follow-up to the decision of COP V of CBD on joint programming

of CBD and the regional seas conventions and action plans

104. Mr. Hamdallah Zedan, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, explained the background to decision V/3 of the Conference of the Parties, calling for cooperation with the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans in the development of joint work programmes for the implementation of the Jakarta Mandate. He described the history of the Convention; elements of its work programme, focusing on marine and coastal biodiversity; and areas of cooperation, particularly with GPA.

105. Mr. Peter Fippinger, Jakarta Mandate, Convention on Biological Diversity, gave a detailed presentation on the Jakarta Mandate; the relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties; the Convention's programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity; possible areas of cooperation with the regional seas conventions and action plans, with emphasis on problems such as coral bleaching and alien invasive species; mechanisms for increasing such cooperation; and specific requests for information.

106. It was agreed that cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity provided an important forum to bring together governments and organizations to tackle many issues that were of direct concern to the regional seas conventions and action plans. While such cooperation was

currently somewhat limited in extent, the secretariat of the Convention needed specific ideas and suggestions for cooperative activities. Moreover, it offered a forum to inform Parties of the aims and activities of the regional seas conventions and action plans. Participation in the expert meetings and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) would give the regional seas conventions and action plans an opportunity to play a role in the formulation of recommendations to the Conference of the Parties. The regional seas conventions and action plans can be an implementing tool for the Convention's work programme on coastal areas management. The governments of the regions also had an opportunity to submit the names of experts for inclusion on the Convention's roster of experts. Moreover, many activities of the regional seas conventions and action plans sought GEF funding, and GEF was the funding mechanism of the Convention and received its instructions through the Conference of the Parties.

107. In connection with the poor attendance of the secretariats of regional seas conventions and action plans at meetings of the bodies under the Convention, attention was drawn to the problems some regions faced in financing attendance at such a multiplicity of meetings. However, such problems could be mitigated by having two or three designated representatives from regional seas conventions and action plans attend expert meetings or the meetings of the SBSTTA. The regional seas conventions and action plans should devise a mechanism, perhaps through UNEP or their governing bodies, to identify their priorities, as well as the representatives who should bring them to the SBSTTA and COP meetings. They needed to prepare a document, for submission to SBSTTA and the Conference of the Parties, setting out how they are and can contribute to the implementation of the Convention. The Executive Secretary offered the help of the secretariat in the preparation of documentation submitted to the meeting. Decision V/3 of the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to report to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties which will be held in April 2002, so that was the time-frame in which the regional seas programmes needed to act. It was also observed that an official communication by governments of a region could be addressed to the Conference of the Parties to draw attention to activities and concerns of a regional seas convention or action plan.

108. Further points raised in the discussion included: how to get concrete results in terms of implementation of regional seas programmes from cooperation with the Convention; the need for regional seas conventions and action plans to review their own work programmes in light of how they related and contributed to the implementation of the Convention and its Jakarta Mandate; the need for full information on the aims and activities of the Convention, and for liaison with its focal points; the provision of feedback from the regional seas conventions and action plans to the Convention; the need to demonstrate where regional activities also provided global benefits, so as to attract GEF and other funding; the possibility of the Convention secretariat reviewing regional seas programme projects for potential submission to GEF.

Recommendations

109. The meeting recommended that:

(a) The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity should provide the following to the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans:

(i) List of SBSTTA documents relevant to the marine and coastal programme of work available through the clearing-house mechanism;

- (ii) List of documents of the Conference of the Parties relevant to the marine and coastal programme of work available through the clearing-house mechanism;
- (iii) List of the national focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (iv) List of the GEF focal points;
- (v) List of the GEF-supported biodiversity projects;
- (vi) List of the national reports received;
- (vii) The decisions of the Conference of the Parties comprising the marine and coastal programme of work;
- (viii) A sample of a Convention on Biological Diversity memorandum of understanding;
- (b) The regional seas conventions and action plans should report to the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on the implementation of the marine and coastal programme of work within the respective regions, which will subsequently be reported to SBSTTA and the Conference of the Parties;
- (c) The regional seas conventions and action plans should seek to identify experts on marine and coastal biological diversity from the respective regions and encourage their nomination to the roster of experts of the Convention on Biological Diversity through the appropriate national focal points;
- (d) The regional seas conventions and action plans, through their secretariats, should be represented at the relevant meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (e) The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity should, when appropriate, seek to participate at the global meetings of the regional seas conventions and action plans;
- (f) The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity should seek comment and contributions from the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and coordinators of the action plans in the preparation of relevant documentation of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (g) The regional seas conventions and action plans and the Convention on Biological Diversity should seek to identify common elements between the respective regional activities and the marine and coastal programme of work, with a view to harmonizing work plans, bearing in mind that one issue common to all regional seas programmes and the CBD is the application of the ecosystem approach to their programmes of work;
- (h) The regional seas conventions and action plans, together with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, should seek to encourage national reporting consistent with the guidelines approved by the Conference of the Parties, with a view to harmonizing reporting requirements of regional and global instruments.
- (i) The regional seas conventions and action plans should seek the advice and technical comment of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on project proposals regarding biodiversity-related issues.

(j) The regional seas programmes should promote the ratification of the CBD and its protocol on biosafety in their regions.

2. The CITES Strategic Action Plan adopted by COP XI

110. The Secretary General of CITES, Mr. Willem Wijnstekers, made a presentation on potential collaboration between CITES and the regional seas programmes. In his opening words he made reference to the Strategic Action Plan and the paper on Synergies presented to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties of CITES, which contained proposals for cooperation between CITES and the regional seas programmes. A number of issues addressed by CITES such as sturgeons, corals, sea turtles and tourism souvenirs were of interest to several regional seas conventions and action plans. CITES would be interested in sponsoring dialogue on some of those critical problematic issues. He made reference to CITES activities such as the meeting being organized for Pacific island states and the Mexico workshop on the Hawksbill Turtle dialogue. He also proposed the establishment of focal points in regional seas programmes that could be co-financed by global conventions whose work is linked to three or four regional agreements. Such focal points could help in addressing shared enforcement efforts.

111. The representative of the Cartagena Convention expressed interest in establishing a cooperation arrangement with CITES. To that end, it would be desirable to identify areas of compatibility with CITES. Some representatives agreed that the regional seas programmes could be a vehicle for supporting the implementation of CITES. Another representative stated that he would like to work with CITES in the organization of the meeting of Pacific island states.

112. Several interventions were made concerning the issue of the Hawksbill Turtle in the Wider Caribbean region, underscoring the controversial nature of the subject, including the divergence in scientific information and the conflict between conservation and sustainable use. The importance of preparatory dialogue at the regional level to meetings of the Conference of Parties to CITES was stressed. The issue of global sharing of costs for protecting species at the national level was also discussed.

Recommendations

113. The meeting recommended that bilateral discussions would be held between CITES and the Regional Seas Programmes on the development of cooperative arrangements and that progress in this area would be reported at the Fourth Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans. One area of cooperation to receive attention would be the organization of regional dialogue on problematic issues of common concern.

114. The meeting also recommended that UNEP should facilitate the development of cooperative arrangements between CITES and the regional seas programmes.

115. The meeting requested that UNEP, through the Division of Environmental Conventions, to work with CITES in facilitating information to regional seas programmes on activities to be undertaken by CITES within their respective regions.

3. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species

of Wild Animals (CMS)

116. Mr. Marco Barbieri, Technical Officer, CMS, gave a presentation on the Convention, describing its background, aims, membership, institutional structure and operational tools. He drew particular attention to the role of CMS in the conservation of species of marine mammals, and pointed to the main regional Agreements to that end: the Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea; the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS); and the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS). He also said that memorandums of understanding concerning turtles had been promoted among range states for the Atlantic coast of Africa and the Indian Ocean.

117. Although CMS was a global convention, its implementation was basically regional, and it was possible for countries to cooperate in Agreements without being party to CMS. Moreover, CMS Agreements obtained GEF funding resources. The Convention could collaborate with the regional seas conventions and action plans by helping to formulate legally binding agreements or soft law tools and frameworks (i.e., non-legally binding) for the conservation of species. A good model for the synergies that could be created through CMS at the regional level was provided by ACCOBAMS, where negotiations were also underway to use existing structures within MAP and the Black Sea regional seas programme as subregional coordinating centres for the agreement.

118. A number of representatives considered that CMS could provide help in identifying and catalysing funding for conservation projects in regional seas conventions and action plans, and sought further information on the best way to approach the Convention for cooperation. It was noted that, with the current proliferation of environmental conventions and agreements, countries often had problems in identifying which body best met their needs and how to go about initiating cooperation.

119. Several representatives stressed the role which CMS could play in the event of sudden die-back of species listed in its annexes as a result of natural or man-made catastrophes, such as the coordination of action to help the species recover and the leveraging of resources to that end. CMS could also have an important role in enforcing the removal or mitigation of barriers to migratory routes.

Recommendation

120. The meeting recommended:

(a) That regional seas conventions and action plans be provided with full information on the focal points of the conventions and agreements operating in their respective regions, to enable them to identify the actors that best met their needs;

(b) That regional seas conventions and action plans cooperate with CMS in the implementation of the UNEP Marine Mammals Action Plan and that CMS should strengthen its cooperation with MMAP.

(c) That CMS should involve the relevant regional seas convention/action plan at an early stage in developing and implementing CMS regional agreements affecting marine species, e.g. on turtles, albatrosses, sharks, whales and marine mammals. Opportunities for synergies should be identified and fully explored.

4. Marine Mammal Action Plan

121. An overview of the status of the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP) was presented by Mr. Robert Hepworth, Deputy Director, Division of Environmental Conventions, UNEP. The Division of Environmental Conventions in collaboration with UNEP's Division of Early Warning and Assessment is serving as the secretariat of MMAP. Sixteen years have passed since the Marine Mammal Action Plan was established. In light of this fact, there is a need to review the MMAP and the work being undertaken by the regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans vis-a-vis this Plan.

122. In the ensuing discussion, issues pertaining to the possible need to retool this plan to increase its relevance and usefulness were discussed. A number of views on possible new structures, scope, activities, linkages and resources were proposed. The majority of the views expressed advocated a broader, modernized and better resourced MMAP. Mr. Hepworth assured the meeting that the options presented and discussed on the MMAP would be considered by UNEP in consultation with its partners.

123. A special report was presented to the meeting by Carole Eros on the IUCN Action Plan on Dugongs, which is partly financed by UNEP. Like other members of the Sirenia family, dugongs have a slow rate of reproduction and a specialized diet based on seagrass. Threats to this species include by-catch, marine pollution, boat-strikes, habitat destruction and severe storms (which damage sea grass). Most Dugongs were classified as critically endangered or endangered under the IUCN 2000 Redlist. Australian populations have recently been placed on CITES appendix I. Dugongs are also protected under the Convention on Migratory Species. The emerging action plan recommended a number of research and management measures, including aerial surveys, the protection of key dugong habitats, the reduction of by-catch and the control of pollution from land-based activities. Education, especially involving local communities, was also a key element of the plan. The plan is due to be published in 2001 and will be circulated to the RCUs of the regional seas conventions and action plans.

Recommendation

124. It was agreed that UNEP would continue the retooling of the Marine Mammal Action Plan in consultation with CMS, CIITES, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the regional seas conventions and action plans and relevant partner organizations, including IUCN, and present a revised MMAP to the Fourth Global Meeting.

5. Potential cooperation between regional seas programmes

and regional fisheries bodies (RFBs)

125. Mr. Benedict Satia, Chief, International Institutions and Liaison Service, FAO, presented the joint UNEP/FAO paper entitled "Ecosystem-based Management of Fisheries: Opportunities and Challenges for Coordination between Marine Regional Fisheries Bodies and Regional Seas Conventions", drawing attention to the document on the subject before the meeting (UNEP (DEC)/RS3.7.1), and invited comments from participants on how it could be refined to take more fully into account the issues of concern to the regional seas conventions and action plans, prior to its finalization. Mr. Stjepan Keckes, Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS), assisting in the presentation, called particular attention to annex V of the document (on activities of regional seas conventions and action plans of direct relevance to fishery resources) which needed to be updated in light of the discussions and the current meeting. He also pointed to the four main conclusions contained in the document.

126. The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, noting that the Conference of the Parties had adopted the ecosystems approach for the implementation of the Convention, considered that the approach proposed in the document would be of great practical use. He offered to make available case studies on the ecosystems approach for RFBs. It was observed that case studies prepared by the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas could also be made available and would help identify areas where representative models could be applied.

127. A number of representatives reported on the activities of their organizations and their relationship, or lack thereof, with RFBs, and offered to provide FAO with further information to supplement the report. It was observed that, in the case of regions where no RFMO existed, and an ecosystems approach was required because of problems such as alien species or eutrophication, the ecosystems approach could be applied at the level of individual countries.

128. It was observed that the RFBs lacked information on external factors which influenced fisheries management and which could be provided by the regional seas conventions and action plans, for example, on land-based sources of pollution, habitat destruction, etc. Likewise, they could provide an input for the regional seas conventions and action plans. It was noted that, since there was a need to share experiences and also to follow up with other activities, it was desirable for RFBs to be able to attend meetings of the regional seas conventions and action plans.

Recommendations

129. Recognizing the potential benefits that could be derived from closer cooperation among the regional seas conventions and action plans and RFBs in the fields relevant to ecosystem-based management of fisheries, the meeting endorsed the actions recommended for the enhancement of this cooperation to:

- (a) Formalize the observer status of the regional seas conventions and action plans at the meetings of the governing bodies of the RFBs and their technical subsidiary organs, and vice versa;
- (b) Exchange data and information available at the level of RFBs and regional seas conventions and action plans that may be of mutual interest;
- (c) Organize joint technical meetings on subjects of mutual interest; and
- (d) Design and implement joint programmes between RFBs and regional seas conventions and action plans, taking fully into account the respective mandates, objectives and scope of the regional seas conventions and action plans and RFBs.

140. On the understanding that the paper was intended to be presented to the forthcoming meeting of RFBs organized by FAO in February 2001, the meeting also recommended that, before presenting the paper to that meeting, it should be amended taking into account the following comments and suggestions:

- (a) Information on the status and activities of regional seas conventions and action plans should be updated and expanded, whenever necessary;
- (b) The role of the EU in shaping the fisheries management policy of its member States should be highlighted;

(c) The advantages and mutual benefits that would derive from the association of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) with the programmes carried out under the regional seas conventions and action plans and the RFBs should be recognized and elaborated;

(d) The enhanced cooperation among RFBs and regional seas conventions and action plans on issues relevant to ecosystem-based management of fisheries would be a considerable contribution towards the implementation of global conventions and programmes, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the GPA, as well as to the 2001 Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Ecosystem (Reykjavik, Iceland, 24-28 September 2001).

6. The International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN)

141. The Coordinator of the East Asian Seas RCU, Dr. Hugh Kirkman, briefed the meeting on the recent meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative Coordination and Planning Committee (ICRI CPC) on 28 – 29 October, where he participated on behalf of the DEC. He especially highlighted the resolutions that were adopted by the ICRI CPC. These include, among others, resolutions on the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), coral reef fisheries (including the role of FAO), and ICRAN. The complete list of ICRI resolutions is available from the DEC or directly from the ICRI Secretariat.

142. The Coordinator of the ICRAN project, Ms Agneta Nilsson, presented the UNEP project with UNESCO on the GCRMN. She explained that the GCRMN is a global network of governments, coral reef scientists, NGOs and local communities for monitoring and assessments of coral reefs. GCRMN promotes monitoring of both biophysical and socio-economic parameters with a focus on data needed for management. The network operates through a global coordinator based in the Australian Institute of Marine Science, regional coordinators and nodes established in consultation with the regional seas programmes, and national focal points. The network develops the Status of Coral Reefs of the World Reports every two years, with the most recent prepared in 2000. The GCRMN with UNEP support has also recently developed a socio-economic manual for coral reef management.

143. Ms Agneta Nilsson went on to present the International Coral Reef Action Network project, jointly initiated by UNEP and the World Fish Center (ICLARM). She explained that the ICRAN project is a catalytic effort that represents a unique collaboration among global initiatives and on-the-ground action through the framework of the Regional Seas Programme. ICRAN partners include UNEP with the Regional

Seas Programme, ICLARM, the World Resources Institute (WRI), the NGO Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the ICRI Secretariat. The United Nations Foundation (UNF) is providing funds to initiate the project. While the ICRAN Startup Phase is ongoing with pilot activities in the Wider Caribbean, Eastern Africa and East Asian Seas, the application for the four-year Action Phase (US\$10 million) is being developed for submission to UNF/UNFIP in mid January. Several Regional Seas, including The Caribbean, Eastern Africa, SPREP and East Asian Seas, with the South Asian region to follow, as funds become available, are involved in developing the proposal for the Action Phase. It was noted that ICRAN represents an opportunity for the regional seas conventions and action plans to take a lead role in the management and conservation of coral reefs and associated ecosystems. Through promoting improved practices in Integrated Coastal Area Management and management of marine

protected areas, ICRAN will not only benefit coral reefs, but also other important associated coastal ecosystems, for example mangroves and seagrass beds.

144. The Deputy Director of DEC, Mr. Robert Hepworth, announced new internal arrangements for coral reefs within UNEP: an upgraded Coral Reef Unit will be established on the 1st December under the Division of Environmental Conventions with strong lateral linkages to the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA). The new unit will be headed by Dr. Arthur Dahl (D1), who will work full time for the new Unit. A new P4 Programme Officer will urgently be recruited, and Ms. Agneta Nilsson will move from the DEWA to DEC to work in the Coral Reef Unit. UNEP-WCMC will continue to play a major role in coral reef related activities, including as the host of the ICRAN Coordinating Unit.

145. The new arrangements were very well received by the meeting. The representative of IUCN, Mr. John Waugh, expressed his appreciation of UNEP's initiative to establish a Coral Reef Unit within DEC and the representative of UNEP-WCMC welcomed the arrangements on behalf of the ICRAN partners. The meeting, especially the representatives of SACEP and ROPME, also welcomed the strengthened linkages between ICRAN and the Division of Environmental Conventions.

Recommendations:

146. The Meeting recommended:

(a) That UNEP proceed to establish the Coral Reef Unit in DEC as planned, thereby strengthening the linkages between the Regional Seas and ICRAN.

(b) That closer linkages are established between the ICRAN project and the Convention on Biological Diversity, especially its Jakarta Mandate. The representative of the Convention on Biological Diversity stated his interest in working closely with UNEP on this issue.

(c) That the cooperation with Regional Seas should not be limited to the regions currently involved in ICRAN, but should be expanded to involve additional regions. To that end, it was proposed that the new Coral Reef Unit takes an active role in working with relevant regions to develop funding proposals and seek additional funding for coral reef related activities, especially ICRAN.

IX. OTHER MATTERS

147. In the course of discussions on the margins of the meeting, a number of points were raised relating to two main issues: the situation of sturgeon species in the Caspian region; and the strengthening of the regional seas conventions and action plans in Sub-Saharan Africa. The meeting agreed that the results of these discussions should be provided in annexes 4 and 5 to the present report. It was also agreed that the report of the GPA, CBD and Regional Seas consultation meeting on proposed cooperation, held on the margins of the Third Global Meeting on 11 November, should also be annexed to the present report (see annex 6).

148. On the future structure of the Global Meetings of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, two representatives of regional seas secretariats, while feeling that the present meeting had been relevant and constructive, also felt that the agenda had been too overloaded. Not enough time had been allocated for bilaterals between secretariats, which have become one of the more important aspects of these meetings. Some of the presentations were too open-ended. It was

recommended that a distinction should be made in the agenda between items for (a) discussion requiring recommendations and (b) information. The papers for discussions items requiring recommendations should include suggested actions prepared by the secretariat or the relevant organization.

149. Seven regional seas secretariats and three international organizations felt that the meeting had been very useful and successful and that the agenda had not been overloaded. While it was true that the agenda was heavy, it was acknowledged that the Global Meetings provided a rare opportunity for regional seas conventions and action plans, relevant global environmental conventions and partner international organizations to come together to discuss issues of common concern, producing agreements that otherwise would take considerably longer to negotiate. For that reason, it should be expected that these meetings will be intensive and demanding. Some felt that instead of shortening the agenda, it was more desirable to shorten the presentation of the agenda items to no more than 15 minutes, thus allowing more time for discussion and consideration of recommendations. Several representatives of regional seas programmes emphasized the importance of the Global Meetings for exchanging information and experiences. One representative recommended that one-half day be dedicated in future meetings to the discussion of the management of regional seas programmes, including the sharing of experiences on resource mobilization and the development of mutually supportive activities with global environmental conventions. Others felt that more time should be dedicated to furthering the discussions on horizontal cooperation between regional seas programmes.

150. The chairman thanked the participants for their suggestions, which will be taken into account by the secretariat in the organization of the next Global Meeting.

151. The meeting gratefully accepted the offer of the Director of the East Asian Seas RCU to host the next meeting, which, it was agreed, would be held in November 2001, in the offices of the East Asian Seas RCU in Bangkok.

X. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

152. The present report was adopted on the basis of the draft that had been prepared by the secretariat, taking into account written corrections provided in writing by the participants and on the understanding that the finalization of the report would be entrusted to the secretariat.

XI. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

153. In their closing remarks, representatives reaffirmed the value and importance of the Global Meetings of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans for information exchange, sharing of experiences, and coordinating activities in areas of common concern. Several expressed their satisfaction with the results of the present meeting and the importance of the Global Meetings in support of their programmes of work. Several expressed satisfaction with the work of UNEP in the further vitalization of the regional seas programmes.

154. Before closing, the chair once again thanked the Government of Monaco and the International Atomic Energy Association for their support to the meeting. The chair also thanked all those present for their valuable contributions and to the staff of the secretariat for their excellent work in the preparation and organization of the meeting. Following that statement, he declared the meeting closed at 6 p.m. on Friday, 10 November 2000.

Annex 1

Agenda of the Meeting

1. Opening of the meeting

(a) Introductory Statement by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

(b) Statement by the Representative of the Government of the Principality of Monaco

(c) Statement by the Representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

2. Follow-up to the Second Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (The Hague, 5-8 July 1999)

3. The Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS)

4. Round table discussion on critical problems and issues facing regional seas conventions and action plans

(a) Innovative financing options for Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans

(b) Exploring new options for horizontal cooperation among regional seas conventions and action plans

5. Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA)

(a) Status report on implementation of the GPA

(b) 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review Process and Meeting

(c) Role of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in the 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Process and Meeting.

6. Assessment and Monitoring of Oceans

(a) Status of implementation of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA);

(b) Presentation by UNESCO on GOOS and strengthening interactions between Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans;

(c) Presentation by the IAEA Marine Environment Laboratory on Marine Pollution Monitoring and Analysis;

(d) Presentation by UNEP-WCMC on Biodiversity Data and Information Management for Regional Seas Programmes;

7. Strengthening linkages between Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans and Chemicals-related Conventions.

(a) The IMO Conventions

(b) The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

(c) The Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade

(d) Development of an international legally binding instrument on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

8. Strengthening linkages between Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans and Biodiversity-related Conventions and Agreements.

(a) Follow-up to the decision of COP V of CBD on joint programming of CBD and the regional seas conventions and action plans

(b) The CITES Strategic Action Plan adopted by COP XI

(c) Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

(d) Marine Mammals workshop: brainstorming session with representatives of the Regional Seas Programmes and Action Plans, biodiversity-related conventions and invited experts to: a-. review UNEP's Marine Mammals Action Plan and the work being undertaken by global and regional conventions in relation to these species and their ecosystems; b-. identify partners for future international work on the conservation and sustainable use of marine/aquatic mammals and c-. draw up a framework for a major new publication on the status of marine/aquatic mammals.

(e) Potential cooperation between Regional Seas Programmes (RSPs) and Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs).

(f) Session on Coral Reef ecosystems with Regional Seas Programmes and biodiversity-related conventions (CBD, CITES, CMS) and invited experts:

(i) The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) as the internationally agreed framework for coral reef protection;

(ii) Status report on the implementation of the ICRI Framework for Action, the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) and the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN);

(iii) c. Potential future cooperation and strengthened linkages with Regional Seas and biodiversity related conventions; funding arrangements; interregional exchange.

9. Adoption of the report of the meeting

10. Closure of the meeting

Annex 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Regional Seas Programmes

1. Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Seas Against Pollution (Barcelona Convention)

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2. Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention)

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3. Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention)

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4. Kuwait Regional Convention for Cooperation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution

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Annex 3

CRITICAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES FACING REGIONAL SEAS

CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS

1. East Asian Seas Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU), the secretariat of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA):

(a) a need for a higher level of cooperation between countries at the regional level and for greater cooperation between government departments;

(b) a need for full financing from member countries;

(c) a need for those undertaking activities in the marine environment to inform the RCU.

2. Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP):

(a) issues of prevention of pollution from ships and maritime safety were increasingly causing concern in the region, and the need to further strengthen and expand cooperation with IMO in the field was highlighted:

(b) the need to obtain reliable data on marine pollution trends and on compliance with existing legislation was stressed;

(c) a deeper involvement of national authorities in marine pollution monitoring activities was considered essential, as well as the full use of their results for appropriate coastal zone management;

(d) the lack of proper coastal zone planning and management was considered a serious threat to coastal ecosystems;

(e) concerning the implementation of the GPA, while funding was available from a number of sources for basic activities, the funding of larger investments for long-term pollution control was considered critical.

3. Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP):

(a) a decision was needed on the location of the RCU.

4. Commission of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Commission):

No critical issues were indicated.

5. Protection Arctic Marine Environment (PAME):

(a) a need to link issues to civil society and to involve the private sector;

(b) a need to involve Heads of State to a greater degree in the solving of problems and to gain greater government commitment;

(c) a need to establish a technical committee of the regional seas programmes and action plans for technology transfer, e.g. to deal with marine pollution issues;

(d) a need for environmental enforcement to be devolved to local government organizations.

6. Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA):

(a) the need to designate the Red Sea as a special area, especially with regard to waste from shipping;

(b) the need for increased regional monitoring of coral reefs and sensitive ecosystems;

(c) the need for sustainable financial arrangements, possibly through the establishment of government/private industry partnerships or the establishment of a special fund.

7. Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) of the Kuwait Convention:

- (a) the need for the development of a river basin management programme for Shatt Al Arab and its entire basin in cooperation with GIWA, UNEP, CBD and other concerned international organizations, with particular reference to the destruction of the marshlands of Mesopotamia.
- (b) the control of marine pollution from offshore operations of oil and gas, particularly pollution caused by produced water, in cooperation with concerned international organizations;
- (c) control of municipal sewage, industrial effluents (e.g., from petroleum refineries and the petrochemical industry), dredging and land reclamation, in cooperation with GPA, CBD, WHO and other concerned organizations;
- (d) establishment of reception facilities to meet the requirements of Annexes I and V of MARPOL 73/78 to declare the ROPME region as a "Special Area" by IMO;
- (e) conservation of coral reefs, in cooperation with UNEP, concerned international initiatives and donor programmes;
- (f) study of invasive alien species, in cooperation with UNEP, CBD, IMO, IOC and other concerned organizations;
- (g) monitoring of marine mortality phenomena, in cooperation with FAO, the Marine Mammals Action Plan, UNEP and other concerned organizations.

8. South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP):

- (a) the need for an exchange of information network among regional seas programmes via e-mail/internet;
- (b) the need for training and capacity-building;
- (c) the need for a database network;
- (d) the need for financial support for already identified projects in such fields as coastal zone management, national and regional oil spill contingency planning, sea-level rise, capacity-building, training and land-based activities.

9. South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP):

- (a) possibility of going beyond twinning arrangements for conventions and programmes to "tripling" arrangements, enabling the possibility to link up with other island regions, e.g., Latin America and the Caribbean;
- (b) inadequate funding;
- (c) in the provision of advisory services, more input from members required, as well as input from international and national non-governmental organizations.

10. RCU of the East African Region (EAS/RCU):

- (a) greater support needed to build up a stronger secretariat;
- (b) a one-stop shop for information needed;
- (c) better contact needed with all focal points of the EAS and of the West and Central African Action Plan (WACAF).

11. RCU of the Abidjan Convention and West and Central African Action Plan (WACAF/RCU):

- (a) need for financial contributions from the countries of the region;
- (b) lack of communications capacities at the regional level and between the RCU and the Steering Committee for better dissemination of information;
- (c) need for catalytic support for establishing a working communications network between the RCU and member States, as well as among member States;
- (d) need for stronger government commitment.

12. EAS/WACAF Joint Umbrella Mechanism:

- (a) need for financial resources;
- (b) the great difference in the economic capacities of the different members means that the poorer stakeholders could lose confidence in their convention;
- (c) need for strong UNEP support;
- (d) the Joint Umbrella Mechanism should become self-sufficient;
- (e) for EAS, projects need to be better aligned with the aims of the Convention;
- (f) in light of new developments, new provisions are needed in the Conventions.

13. Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission):

- (a) the need to discuss a new role for the private sector and non-governmental organizations;
- (b) the need for international financing institutions to reconsider the concept of guarantees given by municipalities;
- (c) the need to upgrade the monitoring programme;
- (d) the problems posed by agriculture;
- (e) the need for strong political support from governments and coordination of actions within the national governments.

14. RCU for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CAR/RCU):

- (a) the need to involve the private sector (e.g. tourism, industry, oil) and explain to members of that sector precisely what the programme does;
- (b) the need for better coordination with the global environmental conventions for the implementation of actions at the regional level and as follow up to memorandums of understanding;
- (c) the need for a better mechanism for coordination with UNEP headquarters and with GEF for management support in project implementation;
- (d) the need to examine how best to sell and promote the programme's activities to governments;
- (e) the need to go beyond the usual funding sources in the leveraging of financial resources.

15. Caspian Environment Programme:

- (a) the need for the programme to be given the status of a convention, cognisant of the fact that UNEP was working hard to that end and that there was the outstanding issue of the legal status of the Caspian Sea;
- (b) the need for countries' commitment;
- (c) the need to educate governments as to the benefits and values of environmental improvements;
- (d) the need for donor commitment, instead of provision of short-term finance tranches, which subsequently end abruptly, with a concomitant effect on country commitment;
- (e) the need for a realistic approach and an understanding that some problems can only be solved in the long term, requiring a long-term commitment from countries.

16. Black Sea Environment Programme (Bucharest Convention)

- (a) ecosystem degradation from eutrophication and the over exploitation of marine and coastal resources;
- (b) inadequate sewage collection and treatment;
- (c) industrial hot spots;
- (d) lack of port reception facilities and high risks of accidental pollution;
- (e) future financial requirements.

17. Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS):

- (a) the need for financial resources;
- (b) unsuitable mariculture, leading to declining shrimp production;

- (c) introduction of exotic species through ship ballast;
- (d) climate change and the effects of El Niño on the coastal zone;
- (e) lack of resources for sewage treatment.

Annex 4

CONSULTATION HELD IN MONACO ON THE STURGEON

(9 October 2000)

1. An evening consultation was organized with key players already present in Monaco at the Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans to discuss the general situation of the sturgeon in the Caspian Sea. Representatives were invited from the Caspian Environment Programme, the Bucharest Convention RCU, UNEP/WCMC, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), CITES and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). The latter two have asked UNEP to take the lead on sturgeon as a "horizontal" issue affecting migratory endangered species.

2. Major conservation, political and "symbolic" implications of the issue:

(a) Sturgeon is shaping up as a test-case for international action to control gross over-exploitation of fisheries, and as a specific test for CITES in the marine area.

(b) CITES listed all the main caviar-producing species of sturgeon in Appendix II in 1997. The objective was - and still is - to encourage sustainable trade in a multi-million dollar wildlife resource. But in the absence of enforceable quotas and effective co-operation between the Caspian states with the exception of Iran, overfishing has reached catastrophic levels threatening the commercial extinction of most species.

(c) International caviar trade is reported to be largely controlled by organized crime, protected by local police and officials in their pay. It is the most lucrative wildlife commerce in the world.

(d) The CITES Animals Committee in December will consider setting sustainable quotas for caviar under the "Significant Trade" process. Zero quotas - which would amount to a world ban on legal trade in caviar - are possible. However, a large underground trade would continue with major implications for enforcement in producing and consuming countries. There would be the possibility of a challenge to the quotas at the WTO, and socio-economic implications for fishing communities. CITES would need to ensure that a trade ban was scientifically watertight; UNEP would be asked to defend it.

(e) As with corals, the world community is looking for tangible action from UNEP. For example, can UNEP mobilize practical enforcement support such as patrol boats, from other CITES Parties to help Caspian States? At present rates of exploitation, sturgeon will be commercially extinct before we ever establish a Regional Convention for the Caspian.

3. Key questions for the consultation:

(a) What value added can UNEP including the Conventions deliver now in the face of the crisis facing sturgeon fisheries and species?

(b) Does CITES need support in preparing for a caviar trade ban?

(c) Can CMS and CBD do more?

(d) What should be the political message from UNEP HQ?

(e) What can the UN system do as a whole, including FAO?

4. Results of the Meeting: The sturgeon consultation in Monaco revealed both the gravity of the crisis and uncertainties about how to tackle it. UNEP was able to facilitate discussions between CITES and the Caspian Environment Programme. The latter had serious reservations – supported to some extent by previous experience in the Baltic – about a CITIES Caviar trade ban for all Caspian populations except those in the Iranian sector, which are still managed reasonably well. There were also valuable contributions from CBD, CMS, the Bucharest Convention and WCMC. In the end, a combination of stick (short-term trade ban) and carrot (investment in proper management of sturgeon stocks and assistance to root out mafia control of the trade) may be the optimal combination. All agreed that an early consultative meeting involving UNEP, CITES, CBD, CMS, CEP, FAO, UNDP, legitimate traders, producers, the Caspian authorities and funding agencies was advisable before the CITES trade prohibitions process gathered pace. This is now being arranged by UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions with the cooperation of other UN agencies and is likely to take place in February 2001.

Annex 5

Consultative Meeting on Cooperation between UNEP and the Advisory

Committee on the Protection of the Sea (ACOPS) in support

of Regional Seas Programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa

(8 November 2000)

1. An evening consultation on the implementation of the GEF Medium-Sized Project on the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment in Sub-Saharan Africa was held on 8 November. Participants included Jorge E. Illueca, Assistant Executive Director, Division of Environmental Conventions; Viktor Sebek, Executive Director, ACOPS; and Stjepan Keckes, ACOPS consultant. A principal outcome of the project will be the presentation of interventions addressing regional priority problems to the Partnership Conference for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment in Sub-Saharan Africa scheduled for June 2002. The project is being implemented in support of the decisions of the Maputo and Cape Town Conferences on the African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is designed to identify problems of the marine and coastal environment in the geographic areas covered by the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions and to prepare proposals for their solution or mitigation that will be submitted to a donors conference in late 2001 or early 2002.

2. The project is a direct contribution to the strengthening of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions and their action plans, and is intended to be implemented in the closest possible cooperation with the institutional structures of these conventions. UNEP as the secretariat of these conventions is envisaged to play a prominent role in the implementation of the project. In response to the Cape Town Conference decision requesting UNEP to take measures to vitalize the two Sub-Saharan regional seas conventions, UNEP has established within the Division of Environmental Conventions a Joint Umbrella Mechanism for coordinating the Secretariats of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions.

3. With the understanding that the Division of Environment Conventions is guiding and coordinating the UNEP-supported regional seas programmes, it was suggested that, taking into account the present status of the project, an early meeting should be organized between the staff of DEC and ACOPS directly involved in the implementation of this project. The purpose of this encounter would be to discuss and agree on a detailed technical workplan for UNEP's involvement in the project in the general framework of the MOU signed between UNEP and ACOPS. Arrangements for the preparation of such a meeting should be made during the forthcoming meetings of the projects Steering Group and the Preparatory Committee for the Donor Conference (The Hague, 25-27 November 2000) which the Assistant Executive Director of DEC, or his representative, will attend.

Annex 6

Consultative Meeting on Cooperation among the GPA, CBD and Regional Seas

on Conservation of Coastal and Marine Resources

(11 November 2000)

1. On 11 November 2000, within the framework of the Third Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, a half-a-day session was held for an exchange of ideas between the representatives of the regional seas conventions and action plans and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office. Representatives of other convention secretariats and of intergovernmental organizations also participated. In doing so, the meeting considered document UNEP/GPA/CBD/1/2, "Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities". The meeting also addressed the preparation of a strategic action plan for addressing physical alterations and destruction of habitats with the aim of implementing complimentary actions contained in the GPA and the Jakarta Mandate.

2. The meeting endorsed the general approach outlined to addressing the physical alteration and destruction of habitats, one of the GPA's 9 source pollutant categories, as set out in the flow chart submitted to the meeting, noting that it was necessary to place more stress on the socioeconomic aspects. The representatives of the Cartagena Convention and of the Barcelona Convention pointed out that the proposed approach in fact reflected the approach taken in their respective protocols on land-based sources of pollution.

3. The meeting stressed the need to ensure cooperation between the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA), the GPA and the Convention on Biological Diversity and the regional seas conventions and action plans, with the aim to ensure complementary ties and synergies.

4. Concerning the GPA clearing-house mechanism, it was noted that the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans held extensive information on data and activities in the regions, particularly concerning specially protected areas and activities concerning land-based sources of pollution.

Recommendations

5. It was agreed that the secretariats of the GPA and the Convention on Biological Diversity would develop a more concrete and focused version of the strategy to address physical alteration and destruction of habitats and submit it to the regional seas conventions and action plans for their review and comments, focusing on regional-level aspects.

6. As a complementary follow-up for the memorandum of understanding between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the GPA, the meeting agreed that interested regional seas conventions and action plans would develop an annex, to be appended to the memorandum, giving a detailed focus on the specificities of the region and the concrete areas of cooperation. The memorandum would enter into force regardless of the state of preparedness of the annexes, which could be prepared by regions within their own time frames. In cooperation with the Division of Environmental Conventions, the GPA Coordination Office would prepare a model format for the annexes, to give regions an idea of the information they could provide.

7. The meeting also agreed that the regional seas conventions and action plans would examine in detail the four activities listed in the work plan annexed to the memorandum of cooperation between the CBD and the GPA secretariats and submit their comments, together with details on how they could provide inputs to them.

8. The revised strategy on physical alterations and destruction of habitats and the regional annexes to the memorandum of cooperation would also be a concrete input into the 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review meeting.

9. Concerning the GPA clearing-house node on physical alterations and destruction of habitats, the meeting agreed that

(a) the regional seas conventions and action plans would discuss and review the preliminary outline of the GPA clearing-house node and send their comments on how it could best address some regional issues.

(b) the regional seas conventions and action plans would make available relevant information on physical alterations and habitat destruction for use by the GPA clearing-house that should also be linked to the CBD clearing-house mechanism, thus permitting a user-friendly and rapid exchange of valuable information among the regions.

10. It was noted that, on all matters pertaining to the above agreements, the point of contact would be the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office.

[1]For the 2002 International Year of Ecotourism, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and UNEP will be the lead agencies. The events of this year will provide regional seas programmes with the opportunity to demonstrate the work that they are doing in the field of tourism. The World Summit on Ecotourism will be held in Québec, Canada from 19-22 May 2002.