



**Governing Council  
of the United Nations  
Environment Programme**

Distr.  
GENERAL



UNEP/GC.22/INF/19/Rev.1  
12 November 2002

ENGLISH ONLY

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**Twenty-second session of the Governing Council/  
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

Nairobi, 3-7 February 2003

Item 4(a) of the provisional agenda\*

**Policy issues: State of the environment**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNING COUNCIL DECISION 21/13 ON THE FEASIBILITY OF  
ESTABLISHING A REGULAR PROCESS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF THE  
MARINE ENVIRONMENT**

**Note by the Executive Director**

The present note contains information on the activities of the United Nations Environment Programme in the implementation of Governing Council decision 21/13 of 9 February 2001 on global assessment of the state of the marine environment. Document UNEP/GC.22/INF/19 has been revised to reflect recent progress in the ongoing work of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly on this issue. The text of the present note has been reproduced without formal editing.

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\* UNEP/GC.22/1.

K0263482 091202

## Background

1. The UNEP Governing Council (GC) adopted at its 21<sup>st</sup> session in February 2001 a decision concerning a “Global Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment” (UNEP GC Decision 21/13). Article 4 of this Decision requests the Executive Director,

*“.....in co-operation with IOC/UNESCO and other UN agencies, the CBD Secretariat, and the regional seas programmes to explore the feasibility of establishing a regular process for the assessment of the state of the marine environment, with active involvement by governments and regional agreements, building on ongoing assessment programmes.”*

2. To implement UNEP GC Decision 21/13, a first informal consultative meeting was held in Reykjavik, 12-14 September 2001 and was attended by 37 persons representing international bodies, regional organisations, national governments and other concerned organisations. This meeting strongly agreed that a global assessment of the marine environment (GMA) was both desirable and urgently needed and welcomed the opportunity to examine the feasibility of developing this process with all relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, this meeting recommended, *inter alia*, that the GMA process should be aimed at policy-makers. Based on a scientific assessment of the global marine environment, the GMA should provide this target audience with advice, guidance and assistance on actions required to mitigate environmental impacts and changes.

3. In the light of the outcome of the Reykjavik meeting, UNEP decided to convene a second meeting in form of a technical workshop to further elaborate the key objectives and define the practical framework for developing a GMA process. This workshop was kindly hosted by the German government in Bremen, 18-20 March 2002. Funds from the German and Swedish government enabled a large number of interested developing countries and international organisations to be represented at the workshop, thereby expanding the audience involved in the consultations to implement UNEP GC Decision 21/13 at both meetings to 16 countries and 10 regional and 14 global Conventions, Agreements and organisations. This document outlines the main aspects discussed and agreed at the Reykjavik and Bremen meetings.

4. Recommendations from the consultative and technical meetings were presented during the United Nations Informal Consultative Meeting on the Oceans – New York, April 2002 – and were taken into consideration in Bali (during the PREPCOM IV - Refer to the Chairman Text as presented in Bali 27 May - 7 June 2002). At the WSSD in Johannesburg’s, Governments called for **“the establishment by 2004 of a regular process under the United Nations for global reporting and assessment of the state of marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, both current and foreseeable, building on existing regional assessments”**.

### UNEP GC Decision 21/13 (UNEP/GC.21/CW/CRP.2)

5. The discussions held at the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the UNEP Governing Council (Nairobi, 5-9 February 2001) indicated that there is:

- a lack of overview on links between state of marine environment and cross-cutting issues;
- an inadequate government involvement in assessment and monitoring process;
- a lack of coherence in follow-up at international level;
- an inadequate development of policy recommendations.

6. Consequently, the Governing Council has adopted a decision as regards a Global Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment (UNEP GC DECISION 21/13) to resolve these inadequacies.

7. The Decision was founded on information presented by Iceland's discussion paper and a number of other international activities<sup>1</sup>.

### Chronology of key events

8. This section of the paper aims to highlight salient points from each stage of the discussion to date. Reference documents from key meetings are available on line at <http://www.unep.org/marineassessment/>

**Table 1.** Summary table of key events

Date	Meeting	Major outcomes
<u>February 2001</u>	21 <sup>st</sup> session of the UNEP Governing Council and second global ministerial environment forum, Nairobi, Kenya, 5-9 <sup>th</sup> February 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iceland proposed the need for a global marine assessment</li> <li>• UNEP GC Decision 21/13 adopted</li> </ul>
September 2001	First meeting for a feasibility study to establishing a regular process for the assessment of the state of the marine environment, Reykjavik 12-14 <sup>th</sup> September 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed that developing a GMA process is both desirable and urgently needed</li> <li>• Recommended that the process should be aimed at policy makers providing advice and guidance to mitigate environmental impacts and changes based on science</li> <li>• Recommended the organisation of a technical workshop to establish a blue print for the process</li> </ul>
March 2002	Technical workshop establishing a regular process for the global assessment of the marine environment, Bremen (Germany) 18-20 March 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieved a consensus about a regular process and how it might be set up</li> <li>• Endorsed a general outline of the assessment process and its components</li> <li>• Recommended a survey of current and future marine environmental assessments and related scientific activities</li> </ul>
August/ September 2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August – 4 September 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to establish a regular process for a global assessment of the state of the marine environment under the United Nations (Paragraph 34b)</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 5 of the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (part XII), the Convention on Biological Diversity (Jakarta Mandate), GESAMP reports, and others noted in footnote 1.

**First meeting on the feasibility study for establishing a regular process for the assessment of the state of the marine environment, Reykjavik 12-14 September 2001**

9. The Icelandic Government sponsored the meeting with 37 attendees including International bodies, regional organisations, national governments, and other concerned organisations.

10. *Objectives of the meeting:*

- Establish whether an assessment process was needed
- Whether a process would be feasible
- The resources that would be available
- Who would be the principal users
- What the principal users would require from the process

11. *Recommendations:*

a) Determined four key criteria for the suitability of existing mechanisms and to guide the assessment eluded to in Decision 21/13:

- Cost effectiveness
- Credibility
- Sustainability
- Ability to address policy issues

b) Assessment goals established:

*“To provide on a regular and timely basis, scientific assessments of the state and trends of all aspects of marine ecosystems for use by policy makers. These assessments shall include consideration of socio-economic implications and identify scenarios so as to assist policy makers in addressing marine-related issues. The assessments should take the form of technical scientific reports, supplemented by summaries for policy makers.”*

c) Proposed awareness building meetings

d) Proposed a technical workshop to outline a blueprint for the technical development of the GMA process.

**Technical workshop for establishing a regular process for the global assessment of the marine environment, Bremen (Germany) 18-20 March 2002**

12. The German Government sponsored this second gathering. A broad range of participants attended from International bodies, regional organisations, national governments, and other concerned organisations. To assist the meeting a background paper prepared by UNEP in co-operation with ACOPS was presented to summarise present activities in assessing the marine environment (GESAMP, GOOS, GIWA, GPA, GEO, Regional Seas, MEA, ICRAN, UN Atlas of the Oceans, IPCC)

13. *Objective:*

- To outline a technical blueprint for the development of the assessment process using four criteria identified by the Reykjavik meeting – cost, effectiveness, credibility, sustainability and ability to address policy issues.

14. *Workshop outcomes:*

- Achieved a consensus about a regular process and how it might be set up
- Endorsed a general outline (blue print) of the assessment process and its components. It was felt that the process as outlined would maximise its credibility, relevance, transparency and legitimacy.

15. *Recommendations:*

- Endorsed the idea of reporting to the General Assembly’s Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the WSSD Preparatory process on its progress.

- Encouraged information dissemination of planned activities in all relevant regional meetings.
- Agreed paragraph 62, in order to implement the UNEP GC Decision 21/13:
 

*62. An important first, or pre-requisite, step in the GMA process is to evaluate existing major assessments of the state of the marine environment and to identify the scope, status and timing of forthcoming assessment activities carried out under relevant national, regional and global organizations.*

### **Main goals for the establishment of a suitable GMA mechanism**

16. The goals of the assessment were established as follows: *‘To provide on a regular and timely basis, scientific assessments of the state and trends of all aspects of marine ecosystems for use by policy makers. These assessments shall include consideration of socio-economic implications and identify scenarios so as to assist policy makers in addressing marine-related issues. The assessments should take the form of technical scientific reports, supplemented by summaries for policy makers’*

17. The main goals for the establishment of a suitable GMA mechanism are to provide on a regular, timely and scientific basis the necessary assessments of the state and trends of all aspects of marine ecosystems. These assessments should be built upon existing mechanisms related to and/or relevant for marine environmental assessments. They should involve and be used by policy makers and stakeholders on the national, regional and global level.

18. Country representatives at Reykjavik meeting outlined the need for the assessment to provide an examination of current and future changes in the state of the global marine environment; should determine the global impacts of changes in the marine environment; and should provide advice on actions required to mitigate the impacts of environmental change.

19. The Reykjavik meeting had identified and documented the overlap in effort, possible gaps, and potential areas for further collaboration between the relevant international organisations. The outcome of this exercise had shown that:

(a) the principal target audience of an assessment should be policy-makers, mainly at national level. The output and analysis should be aimed towards this group and address:

- (i) the current and future changes in the state of the global marine environment;
- (ii) the global impact of changes in the marine environment;
- (iii) advice on actions required to mitigate the impacts of environmental changes.

(b) the process should have a broad marine ecosystem approach, be transparent and include a broad range of stakeholders;

(c) the outcome of the process should be produced in a ‘two-tier’ format, i.e. a scientific/technical report accompanied by another report with the same information, but aimed towards policy makers in language and style;

(d) the assessment mechanism should be adapted from an existing mechanism and based on (i) cost effectiveness, (ii) credibility, (iii) sustainability and (iv) the ability to address policy issues.

### **GMA Stakeholders**

20. In general, stakeholders in the GMA process are those involved in policy or affected by degradation of the marine environment. The assessment should demonstrate an effective, inclusive, broad stakeholder approach. Participants in the Reykjavik meeting recognised that in the past there had been an unwillingness to co-operate between UN agencies and other organisations.

21. The principal target audience will be governmental policy makers, mostly at the national level, and as such, emphasis will be placed on providing high quality scientific advice on the state of the environment in

formats that are both easily accessible and can be readily utilised by this group. Commercial-corporate user groups were not identified as significant user groups but there may be scope for potential sources of sponsorship from these bodies.

22. In the GMA process, stakeholder groups will be better defined at the regional level and could include:

- regional and national policy makers;
- constituencies that are poorly represented such as small developing islands;
- communities whose livelihoods depend on the marine environment;
- the private sector, such as multi-national and nationally-based industries;
- civil society.

### **Scope of GMA Activities**

23. The GMA should take a broad ecosystem approach based on commonly accepted ecological boundaries and should include socio-economic considerations.

24. The geographical area in which the assessment should operate was defined as ‘marine and coastal ecosystems and associated estuaries’. The assessment will examine inputs into this defined area including impacts with sources outside this area (e.g. watersheds and atmospheric deposition of pollutants). The ecosystem approach should provide an analysis of the impacts of environmental change in the marine system on ecosystem resources and services.

25. Equal consideration should be made for living marine organisms, their physical surroundings, and the natural cycles that sustain them. The assessment will establish methodologies that demonstrate this integration, and will recognise that humans are an integral part of the global marine ecosystem. It is important that the global assessment should not solely concentrate on fisheries and/or biological resources, but should also include an evaluation of changes in the geophysical and chemical features of the oceans, and indicate the impact these changes would have on the Earth’s ecosystems and functions.

26. It was agreed that the assessment should not be a static process, but should include the development of ongoing trend and scenario methods to demonstrate the implications for socio-economic systems of changes in the global marine environment. The assessment will not discuss the “acceptability” of these changes to socio-economic systems.

27. The assessment should be based on regional and sub-regional ecosystem assessments, grouped at the global level. Collation of material at the global level may: provide guidance to increase opportunities for the production of comparable reports; identify and address shared and common problems; consider common methodologies; facilitate some regional and sub-regional assessments and provide for comparison of similar ecosystems (e.g. upwelling).

28. The assessment should analyse social and economic aspects being influenced by changes in the marine environment, but should not examine those aspects influencing changes. While there was not full agreement on this issue by participants, a detailed review of socio-economic factors influencing changes in the marine environment was largely considered to be beyond the scope of the assessment process.

29. Where possible the assessment should identify, but not analyse, risks to human health; moreover the assessment should analyse other human uses of the environment (e.g. those related to shipping).

### **Main Data Providers for GMA**

30. The main data providers for the GMA are:

- intergovernmental organisations
- government agencies
- academia

31. However, it should be noted also that NGOs, commercial sources and individual experts hold an enormous body of valuable, pertinent data, that are less frequently used in existing assessment processes.

32. To regulate the quality of scientific input into the assessment from this broad collection of sources it will be necessary to develop 'screening' process for contributors to ensure that scientific integrity is maintained.

33. The management of fishery resources was considered to be already sufficiently monitored by organizations such as the FAO and ICES, and it was recommended that they would be best placed to assess the status and trends of marine fisheries.

34. Relatively few associated organisations use commercial data sources. This is somewhat surprising as commercial sources, and their associated industrial bodies, can provide substantial comparative data on a wide range of marine related topics such as coastal tourism growth, and the coral reef fish trade. Further consideration should be given to using these resources where appropriate.

35. The data types to be used for example will be living resources, socio-economic, geographic, habitats, pollution, pathogens and alien species, ecosystem structure, non-living resources, carbon cycles, physical and human health. This broad spectrum of data types will be used to create a comprehensive assessment of the marine environment.

36. It was agreed after presentations at the Reykjavik meeting by organisations currently engaged in marine assessment activities, that sufficient baseline information was available to allow the construction of a regular, comprehensive, assessment of the marine environment at the global level.

37. Noting that there was some duplication of effort by data providers, the Reykjavik meeting had agreed that a comparative exercise should be performed amongst organisations participating at the meeting. This was undertaken using a Comparative Study Matrix. This comparative exercise had demonstrated that:

#### **Users / customers**

- the main users / customers of the organisations participating at the Reykjavik meeting are other intergovernmental, governmental, and scientific organisations;
- considerable opportunities exist to improve co-operation and to avoid competition;

#### **Data Providers / Sources**

- the main data providers are intergovernmental and government agencies as well as scientific academia;
- there is a need to investigate the opportunities to explore data from NGO's and individual experts;

#### **Data Types**

- in general, there is a need to distinguish the priority activities for organisations;
- a considerable amount of data is being collected, but an overview is needed to avoid duplication of efforts;
- a detailed analysis of the socio-economic issues is required;
- collaboration with other organisations and commercial sources should be investigated, especially for the collection of data regarding pathogens, pollution, non-living resources and human health;

#### **Methods**

- all organisations (except IOI) are using an ecosystem approach for the collection and analysis of data, but there is a lack of standardised use of biogeographic regions;
- there is a need to present results in the form of scenarios;
- there is a need for developing a system by which various indicators can be combined and/or compared;

### **Output of Assessments**

- all organisations produce scientific reports, but there is a general need to build more open relationships between institutions;
- there might be potential for co-ordinating and comparing information for educational and public awareness material;

### **Data Quality Assurance**

- several organisations operate both a non-peer review and a peer review process;
- there is a need to establish a formalised data review course in a marine assessment process;

### **Geographical Coverage**

- the involvement of more regional/national bodies should be encouraged;
- where possible, globally orientated organisations should be encouraged to work closely with relevant regional bodies.

## **Institutional Mechanisms and Operational Arrangements for the GMA**

38. Decision 21/13 specifies that the “process for the assessment of the state of the marine environment” should be:

- Regular
- Established with active involvement by governments and regional agreements; and
- Building on ongoing assessment programmes.

39. The commitment of governments to provide a regular flow of reliable data and information needed for the assessment process is among the basic prerequisite for their active participation in the process. Only a universal, globally balanced data- and information-base can lead to a truly global assessment of the environmental problems and ensure full transparency of the process.

40. At the Reykjavik meeting it was recommended that the global assessment should be based upon standardised regional and sub-regional ecosystem assessments, contributed by regional and sub-regional organisations and agreements, and grouped at the global level. While the assessment should be built on existing assessment programmes, participants did not consider it reasonable to expect assessments to be prepared by government-nominated experts and then endorsed by the governments who had nominated the experts.

41. Regional bodies will play a key role in the GMA process. In principle, the involvement of regional agreements does not pose a technical problem as it was successfully demonstrated through the collaboration between GESAMP, the regional seas agreements and the Global programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA/LBA). However the coordinated input from regional agreements will have to be standardised and it should be considered as an integral part of the global process.

42. An ecosystem approach framework in the use of data collection and analysis is used by all participating organisations with the exception of GESAMP and IOI. It is probable that the development of a global assessment of the marine environment would also follow this methodology to best reflect the interconnections between biological, chemical and physical aspects of the marine environment.

43. The assessment should build upon an existing assessment framework. Country representatives at the Reykjavik meeting insisted that any proposals for a new mechanism would not receive support from their governments. The advantages of building the assessment process on ongoing assessment programmes are as follows:

- it would avoid duplication of efforts;
- it would considerably reduce the costs of the process;
- it would build on existing experience and benefit from the “prestige” already acquired by an existing programme;
- it would be based on existing organisational and supporting arrangements; and
- it could be launched with minimal delay.

44. There are three basic options available for satisfying the requirements of a regular process for the assessment of the state of the marine environment as envisaged by decision 21/13:

- a) adaptation of an existing assessment mechanism and programme to satisfy the requirements laid down in decision 21/13;
- b) establishment of a mechanism to co-ordinate the work and outputs of existing assessment mechanisms and programmes; and
- c) creation of a new assessment mechanism and programme that would build on ongoing assessment programmes and mechanisms.

45. At present it is difficult to establish the suitability of an existing assessment mechanism or programme that could be adapted to satisfy the requirements of decision 21/13 without clarification of the framework of the assessment process. Options that could be considered include:

- to “nest” the assessment with the GEO project/process;
- to use an adequately reformed GESAMP;
- to use GOOS, with a broadened mandate, as the general framework for the assessment; or
- to set up the process as a follow-up to GIWA.

46. The establishment of a coordinating mechanism for the assessment process to co-ordinate the work and outputs of ongoing assessment programmes is required regardless of the approach, and may seem attractive as a relatively low-cost option. This may however cause difficulties in securing the effective collaboration and coordination of existing programmes.

47. The creation of a new assessment programme and mechanism, building on ongoing assessment programmes and organised in a manner similar to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) or the GEO process is a possible option. This would enable maximum involvement and control by governments and allow the reflection of issues and formulation of policy-relevant recommendations within the mechanism, thus promoting the acceptance of these recommendations by governments. This option was rejected by delegates at the Reykjavik meeting due to it possibly having a detrimental effect on the integrity and scientific credibility of the assessment and that it did not meet the specifications of governments.

48. It was suggested that a reformed GESAMP, provided with adequate funding, might be the best option, largely because of its strong scientific expertise. The process should demonstrate sustainability so as to provide regular future assessments. The expert group it has been suggested should contain experts involved in the regional assessments.

49. The assessment should demonstrate full transparency throughout the process. Transparency will promote confidence building and engender compliance; it will provide reassurance to both partner organisations and national governments. Full transparency should be encouraged in demonstrating the scientific approach and input used; in the construction and management of the mechanism used to co-

ordinate the assessment (including funding issues); in the contributions to the assessment by UN agencies and collaborating organisations; and in any policy recommendations generated by the assessment process. Contributing organisations should advise partners in the assessment of any consultations made; organisations with an interest in the development of the process should be given the opportunity to make their views known; the outcome of all consultations/meetings should be reported back to all participants for their consideration; and wherever possible attempts should be made to identify gaps in transparency coverage.

50. Mechanisms for a peer review of both the regional and global assessments should be established. It is important that these peer reviews are carried out by independent experts, who are not involved in the assessment process. From the comparative analysis it was identified that most of the organisations represented have a long term, peer review process in position for data-quality assurance. In general, standardised internal methods are used to review data. Several of the organisations operate a non-peer review process through which data are examined by an independent scientific source. There is a need to establish a formalised data review course as part of a global marine assessment process.

51. A process for involvement of policy makers at the national, regional and global level needs to be established. At the international level, there are opportunities for interfacing with policy makers at meetings of decision-making bodies, e.g. the UN General Assembly (the only international body with a mandate in all oceans issues), or at high-level meetings of policy makers in thematic areas such as sustainable development, environment, use of living and non-living resources, health and research.

52. On a region-by-region basis, existing and ongoing assessments should be evaluated to determine whether support or facilitation is needed. Where existing arrangements are insufficient, capacity should be built through funding for regional consultations, the use of international professional societies or through inter/intra-regional co-ordinating mechanisms (e.g. twinning arrangements). These arrangements would provide opportunities to create new regional partnerships where governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations can participate and be engaged fully on an equal footing.

### **The Expected Outputs of the GMA**

53. The main message of the GMA should be aimed at policy-makers and should address the past, present and future changes in the quality status of the global marine environment, assess the impact of these changes and advise on actions required at all levels to mitigate impacts.

54. Country representatives outlined their needs and specifications for the process. It was suggested that the assessment should provide an examination of current and future changes in the state of the global marine environment; should determine the global impacts of changes in the marine environment; and should provide advice on actions required to mitigate the impacts of environmental change.

55. The results from the GMA should be reported in a 'two-tier' format: one report to address the needs of the scientific community; with a second report covering the same information but written in a language and style adapted to the needs of policy makers.

1<sup>st</sup> tier: A scientific/technical report.

This report should, in a synthesised and transparent way, describe the assessment, identify gaps in knowledge and provide the justification and rationale for proposed actions;

2<sup>nd</sup> tier: A policy-oriented report based on the same information.

This report should include recommendations for policy development, management and implementation and should target policy-makers on the national, regional and global level as well as other stakeholders involved in and/or affected by policies.

A scientific body like the International Council for Science (ICSU) could carry out peer review of the first tier reports, whereas the second tier reports could be reviewed through wider consultation with stakeholders and government representatives.

56. Other products of the assessment process may include special reports on some particular issue; advice, information or information provided on request; etc.

57. Several of the organisations represented at the meeting and workshop produce material for public information and educational purposes. Although much of this material may be specifically targeted at local or regional user groups, there is potential for organisations to collaborate in the development of a common 'resource pool', that would allow comparison between regions and with global trends. The 'resource pool' could take the form of a general website with hypertext links to participating organisations and relevant resources.

### **Costs and funding of the GMA**

58. The costs and funding of a GMA process, including capacity building, should be covered by contributions from key countries to support the process. Possibilities of establishing earmarked trust fund for the implementation of this process should be explored as well. Having considered the report of the Executive director of UNEP (UNEP/GC 22/2/Add.5 Governing Council:

- may wish to authorise the Executive Director to establish a Trust Fund to support a regular process for reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment,
- may wish to urge governments to contribute to the trust fund, once established and calls upon UN-agencies to support the work of the open ended ad hoc group of experts.

### **Raising the awareness of the proposed GMA process**

59. To increase awareness of the GMA process, the outcome of the consultations has been presented at the United Nations Informal Consultative Process (ICP) on Oceans; April 2002 in New York, USA.

60. During the Fourth WSSD PRECOMP held in May 2002 in Bali, Indonesia, governments discussed the feasibility of establishing under United Nations a regular process for the assessment of the state of the marine environment.

61. Finally, during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in August-September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa, governments called for the "establishment by 2004 and under United Nations of a regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, both current and foreseeable, building on existing regional assessments".

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**Acronyms**

ACC-SOCA	Administrative Committee on Co-ordination – Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas
ACOPS	Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity
EC	European Commission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GESAMP	Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution
GIWA	Global International Waters Assessment
GMA	Global Marine Assessment
GNP	Gross National Product
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System
GPA/LBA	Global Programme for Action for pollution from Land Based Activities
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
ICRAN	International Coral Reef Action Network
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IOC/UNESCO	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/ United Nations Educational and Scientific and Cultural Organisation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
MEA	Marine Environmental Assessment
OSPAR	Oslo and Paris Commission
PrepCom	Preparatory Committee for WSSD
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP GC	United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

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