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7th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas
Conventions and Action Plans

Helsinki, Finland 18-20 October 2005

Progress in Implementing the Global Regional Seas Strategic Directions

Progress in implementing the Global Regional Seas (RS) Strategic Directions.

A new global strategy highlighting new directions was discussed by the Coordinators/Executive Secretaries of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) at their 5th Global Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2003, and further endorsed by the Chairs of the COPs/IGMs of the RSCAPs at the 6th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas in Istanbul, Turkey, 30th November-2nd December 2004.

| Strategic Direction | Achievements/Progress |
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| <p>1. Increase Regional Seas' contribution to Sustainable Development, through the enhancement of local, national, regional and global partnerships with relevant social, economic and environmental stakeholders, and through the strengthened implementation of the mandates of the Regional Seas, as a major contribution to the implementation of the WSSD Plan of Implementation and the goals and targets associated with the Millennium Declaration.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A database developed, giving an overview of all major actors and players in the field of conservation and management of the marine and coastal environment of the various Regional Seas Programmes (RSPs), to facilitate partnerships and consultations on cooperation and best practices. This is on the RS website for each of the regions e.g. http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/Publications/parts_data/part_car.doc. This website also links to other databases of major actors e.g. the GEF, IWLEARN, LMEs and GIWA. • A Regional Seas brochure on 'Partnerships for Sustainable Development' has been published and can also be viewed on the RS website http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/Publications/default.asp • Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) developed - to be adopted at the next MAP COP meeting in November 2005. • Several other partnerships achieved, e.g. the White Water to Blue Water (WW2BW) partnership in the Caribbean resulted in valuable lessons. Further activities planned for 2006, in the framework of the Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management (IWCAM/GEF) project. The Regional Seas & Large Marine Ecosystems (LME) partnership (<i>see item 6 below</i>) |
| <p>2. Enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of Regional Seas Programmes through increasing country ownership, incorporating Regional Seas conventions and protocols into national legislation, promoting compliance and enforcement mechanisms, involving civil society and the private sector, building capacities, ensuring viable national and international financial arrangements, as well as developing assessment/evaluation procedures where appropriate.</p> | <p><u>Legislation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Legal officer position established to provide legal advice to the RSPs in implementing and complying to their conventions and protocols. Legal advice already being provided in the various RSPs. • Two legal capacity-building training workshops on implementing legislation, strengthening institutional structures for improved compliance and enforcement and identifying means for coordinated implementation of RSCAPs with related environmental conventions, were held in July & August in the Wider Caribbean and in the Pacific (SPREP), jointly organised with UNEP's Compliance and Enforcement Programme. • Support in the development and revision of LBS protocols is being provided in the Caspian Sea, Black Sea and Nairobi Convention. <p><u>Financing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased financing in the RSPs over the years. UNEP continues to provide guidance in strengthening the long-term sustainability of the RSPs and has assisted in mobilizing donor support for various individual RSPs as well as linking partners and stakeholders. • The 7th Global Meeting, 18-20 October 2005, is focussing on sustainable financing mechanisms and will bring together various experts to share advice and experiences. • A training package and training course are under preparation in collaboration with UNEP/GEF, aiming at assisting RSPs to develop viable proposals and providing guidance on implementing GEF projects more effectively. Various RSPs participated in the GEF International Waters Conference, June 2005. • RS and the LMEs partnership strengthened through the existing GEF/LME projects in the RSPs (<i>See also the 6th Strategic Direction below</i>). <p><u>Civil society</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review has been undertaken to identify some of the best practices and rules facilitating the cooperation between civil society organisations (CSOs), governments and RS secretariats with the aim to increase the ability of RS to effectively involve CSOs in their work. The draft will be circulated. |
| <p>3. Enhance Regional Seas' visibility and political impact in global, regional and national policy setting, through strengthening the Regional Seas Partnership, increasing political and public awareness on the economic, social, and environmental importance of coastal and marine resources, promoting concerted information and communication policies, and ensuring participation and promotion of Regional Seas in relevant national, regional and global fora.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new RS website, provides a one-stop centre for information. It includes individual RS profiles, a database of major actors in the field of the marine and coastal environment, links to partner websites and other stakeholders, latest developments within the RS and major related meetings in the international fora, among others. (See: http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/default.asp). This will also enable users to identify and collaborate with mutual partners in the RSPs. • The RSP published a "Feasibility Study on Sustainable Management of Marine Litter" (see http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/Publications/default.asp), to assess the threat posed by marine litter worldwide and to examine the efficacy of current instruments, programmes and initiatives that address this global threat. This study was also distributed at the 6th UNICPOLOS Meeting, 6-10 June 2005 in New York during the discussion panel on Marine Debris. Taking into account these recommendations, the RSP, in coordination with the GPA, is initiating the preparation of a GEF Medium Size Project proposal on the Marine Litter Initiative, with potential partners including IMO, FAO, IOC of UNESCO and the Basel Convention. |

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| Strategic Direction | Achievements/Progress |
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| <p>4. Support knowledge-based policy making, enhanced public participation, education, awareness, and <u>improved reporting</u> on the state of the coastal & marine environment, <u>its resources</u>, and possible threats to them, through amongst others, contributing to appropriate national and regional <u>monitoring and assessment</u> activities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint IAEA Marine Environment Studies Laboratory (MESL) publication, which reviews Regional Marine Pollution Monitoring and Assessment in the RSPs and gives recommendations for improved systems. See http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/Publications/default.asp. • Various IAEA/MESL monitoring and assessment activities are ongoing in the individual RSPs e.g. MAP, ROPME & East Africa among others. • RSP is closely following the ongoing discussions on the Global Marine Assessment (GMA). • RSPs are contributing to the overview <u>of the State of the Environment</u> being undertaken on <u>the GPA</u> that will contribute to the IGR2. • A framework for collaboration between the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and the RSP has been provided through an MOU between UNEP and IOC of UNESCO, approved by the 37th Session of the IOC Executive Council last year and signed in March 2005. Cooperation focuses on data and information networking, monitoring, selection of indicators of environmental variability and ecosystem change, remote sensing, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), and forecasting models to be used in environmental assessment among others. |
| <p>5. Increase the use of Regional Seas as a platform for developing common regional objectives, promoting synergies and co-ordinated regional implementation of relevant MEAs, global and regional initiatives, and responsibilities of United Nations Agencies and other international actors, as a contribution to the sustainable management of the coastal and marine environment.</p> | <p><u>IMO (International Maritime Organisation)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RSPs will benefit from the GEF-UNDP-IMO Globallast Partnership (GBP) through a PDF-B project, intended to assist developing countries to enact, through effective partnerships, the necessary national level policy, legal and institutional reforms, and build capacity to address the risk arising from the transfer of invasive aquatic species and pathogens in ships' ballast water and sediments. Regions will be identified through selected criteria, to implement this project. • A joint manual between UNEP and IMO is being developed on natural resource damage assessment following major oil spills to serve as guidance to national governments in determining the extent of injury to natural resources resulting from an oil spill, and a guideline to assist countries in preparing claims for compensation. • A joint UNEP/IMO Forum will be held in Jan/Feb 2006. A previous such forum was held in 2002. <p><u>CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEP/RSP, jointly with the CBD and the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) organized a workshop on 27-29 June 2005, in Montreal, agreeing on a joint Work Programme on Marine Invasive Species. • A toolkit and guidelines for training programs to enhance capacity on the management of invasive species of the marine and coastal environment in RS is currently being finalized. • Other joint activities in various regions e.g. Black Sea and East Africa are being undertaken including joint workshops and a training kit on MPAs. • UNEP/RSP in collaboration with CBD and the Integrated Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) is conducting an assessment and review of 'Networks of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas in the regional context: Role of the Regional Seas Programmes'. • <u>Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)</u>: UNEP/RSP and CMS jointly produced a publication titled: 'Review of Small Cetaceans: Distribution, Behaviour, Migration and Threats' which will be launched during the next CMS COP in November, in Nairobi, Kenya. Other activities are underway within the Abidjan Convention, to develop a status report and conservation strategy on the Western African manatee. • <u>Basel Convention</u>: Various joint activities are ongoing in the RSPs on the Basel Convention e.g. in the Wider Caribbean and the Pacific. • <u>Coral Reefs</u>: The RSP is working closely with the Coral Reef Unit, ICRAN, WCMC and GCRMN. A joint publication detailing experiences and lessons learnt from ICRAN sites in the Regional Seas has been published. Development proposals for coral reef and ICRAN related activities in the ROPME, PERSGA and South Asian Sea are underway. |
| <p>6. Develop and promote a common vision and integrated management, based <u>on ecosystem approaches</u>, of priorities and concerns related to the coastal and marine environment and its resources in Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, introducing amongst others proactive, creative and innovative partnerships and networks and effective communication strategies.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Economic Valuation of Goods and Services</u>: A report is being finalized, that compiles estimates of the direct output value of goods and services for each of the relevant marine sectors of countries bordering the world's Large Marine Ecosystems LMEs and RS. A presentation on the same will be made at the 7th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas. • <u>RS-LME Brochure</u>: UNEP, jointly with the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), has produced a brochure that includes a map overlay of RS and Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs), reflects the 64 LMEs of the world and provides a list of GEF-LME projects within the RS. See: http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/Publications/RSP_Large_Marine.pdf • <u>FAO</u>: UNEP continues to engage with FAO and to encourage cooperation between RSPs and Regional Fisheries Bodies in ecosystem based management of fisheries. RSP presented suggestions for enhanced collaboration on this issue at the 4th Global Meeting of FAO Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFB) held 14-15 March 2005 in Rome. |

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