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**Progress in implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the
Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) and
specifically the Manila Declaration**

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ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

Progress in implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) and specifically the Manila Declaration
Prepared for 17th Annual Regional Seas Meeting
20-22 October 2015, Istanbul, Turkey

Implementation of the GPA in partnership with the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans

I. Introduction

The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) was adopted by 108 governments and the European Commission in an intergovernmental conference held in Washington D.C., USA, on November 3, 1995. The Programme represented a clear commitment among national governments, international and regional organizations and programmes, non-governmental organizations and major groups to protect and preserve the marine environment from adverse impacts of land-based activities. The GPA framework calls for comprehensive, continuing and adaptive actions and provides a series of recommendations as well as criteria for their development at different levels with a focus on actions by governments. It provides a comprehensive yet flexible framework to assist countries in fulfilling their duty in accordance with international law to preserve and protect the marine environment from sewage, physical alterations and destruction of habitats, nutrients, sediment mobilisation, persistent organic pollutants, oils, litter, heavy metals and radioactive substances.

As secretariat for the GPA, the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, which is an integral part of UNEP's Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Branch of the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, assists States and intergovernmental organizations in the implementation of the GPA, inter alia, through the preparation of guidance material, assessments and manuals as well as the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building. It works closely with the Regional Seas Programme, which has spearheaded implementation efforts at the regional level. Since the move of the GPA Coordination Office from The Hague to Nairobi in 2008, the GPA related activities have been largely embedded into UNEP's programme of work across all UNEP Divisions and sub-programmes. This in turn has led to broadened support from UNEP to the fulfilment of the functions of the GPA Coordination Office.

This report serves as documentation on the success stories and provides a summary and overview of the implementation of the GPA by countries in the past 20 years, along with the assistance provided in so

doing by UNEP as the Secretariat through the UNEP/GPA Co-ordination Office and other multiple actors. UNEP as the Secretariat of the GPA is tasked with facilitating and promoting the implementation of the GPA through international, regional and national action.

A number of important considerations should be borne in mind with regard to the compilation of this report. Firstly, the primary responsibility for implementing the GPA lies with governments. However, governments and stakeholders are able to implement the GPA in a variety of ways and under different initiatives. For example, action on persistent organic pollutants (POPs), a major source category under the GPA, is now taken forward at a multilateral scale under the Stockholm Convention, adopted in 2001. Similarly, countries now adopt analogous approaches to the GPA, such as integrated coastal zone management and/or integrated water resources management plans. For these reasons it is very difficult to capture the full extent, and, in a systematic way, detail how countries are taking forward the implementation of GPA-related activities. This report therefore is just a summary and overview, though additional information on national actions is required for a complete picture. In addition, given the very important role of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in implementing the GPA within respective regions, information on their work is also provided.

II. Key Achievements of the GPA

Paragraph 144 of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 65/37 recognises “that most of the pollution load of the oceans emanates from land-based activities and affects the most productive areas of the marine environment”, and calls upon “States as a matter of priority to implement the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities and to take all appropriate measures to fulfil the commitments of the international community embodied in the Beijing Declaration on Furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action”.

There have been three inter-governmental reviews (IGR) of the progress in implementing the GPA, the first in Montreal, Canada, in 2001; the second in Beijing, People’s Republic of China, in 2006; and the third in Manila, Philippines, in 2012 (which resulted in the Manila Declaration). . A number of activities in the GPA Coordination Office Programme of Work were successfully implemented since the establishment of the GPA. The progress outlined in this report seeks to capture findings from those reviews and demonstrates the political determination on the part of governments to undertake tangible action to address the underlying causes of marine degradation resulting from land-based activities. In many countries, governments have taken actions to integrate the implementation of the GPA across sectors and ministries and into national budgets, development plans and strategies. Efforts at strengthening the UNEP Regional Seas Programme and developing strategic partnerships with the GEF, and more specifically the GEF supported International Waters projects and the various Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, have been instrumental in bringing about these results. Notwithstanding the above, as outlined in this report, much remains to be done to protect the marine environment from land-based activities.

National Programmes of Action (NPA)

A National Programme of Action (NPA) is the policy framework envisaged in the GPA to facilitate implementation and mainstreaming of the GPA at the national level. Implementation of NPAs has been through policy measures and pilot projects to address priority issues. Pilot projects implemented by countries have aimed at demonstrating sustainable management approaches, testing of new technology (e.g. use of constructed wetlands for wastewater management), stimulating multi-agency cooperation and developing partnership between State and non-State actors to address land-based sources of coastal and marine pollution. The partnerships with non-State actors (e.g. Major Groups, non-governmental organizations and private sector institutions) are an important contribution to the development of new institutional arrangements for coastal resources management and to addressing land-based sources of marine pollution through the application of appropriate technology and management systems suited to local circumstances. As detailed later on, partnerships have grown significantly, at the global level, through the GPA.

Many Governments have developed NPAs or their equivalents. Many governments have also included GPA issues in wider environmental and/or coastal and marine policies since many GPA-related priority actions addressing key coastal issues and priority source categories such as wastewater, nutrients and marine litter (and solid wastes) can easily be included in either an Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) or Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) programme and therefore mainstreamed through these programmes at national and local levels depending on the evolution of responsibility for coastal management in each country. Indeed, the GPA recognizes the benefits of linking its implementation with integrated coastal management (ICM) initiatives. In fact paragraph 19, chapter II, of the GPA states that, "[T]he effective development and implementation of national programmes of action should focus on sustainable, pragmatic, integrated environmental management approaches and processes, such as integrated coastal zone management....".

Recent reviews by the GPA Coordination Office suggest that trying to embed the GPA in national development planning and budgeting mechanisms may sometimes face difficulties. The ICM and IWRM frameworks may be better approaches since many countries have or are developing these plans and policies, with subsequent commitments to implementation.

From 1995-2001 progress was reported by participating countries in developing regional and national action plans, as well as increasing the use of integrated coastal area management and environmental impact assessment approaches, and identifying problems and policy needs. However, at the First IGR (in 2001), it was noted that little concrete action had yet taken place. Identified barriers to implementation included a lack of political will, finance and awareness of the GPA, limited availability of appropriate technologies, weak compliance and enforcement of policies, and an institutional divide between the freshwater, coastal zone and marine communities. By the Second IGR (in 2006), many of the goals set by the international community for the further implementation of the GPA were considered to have been met. The strategic direction set at the First IGR in 2001, was to facilitate the process of moving from planning to action at all levels. This was considered to have been achieved in large measure by 2006.

In 2006, the number of NPAs stood at just over 60. Jumping ahead to 2015, over 80 countries had established framework NPAs since the inception of the GPA. Others have embarked on the development

of NPAs and/or revised their NPAs and many of them have successfully integrated coastal and marine environmental management and pollution reduction measures into national sustainable development plans/strategies and budgetary mechanisms.

Mainstreaming & Outreach

Pursuant to the decisions taken by the IGR-2 in Beijing, the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office in partnership with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) produced a guidance document “Making Mainstreaming Work: An Analytical Framework, Guidelines and Checklist for the Mainstreaming of Marine and Coastal Issues into National Planning and Budgetary Processes”. Following the finalization of this guidance document, the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office organized a series of regional training workshops, in partnership with the governments, Regional Seas Programmes and others, to familiarize national governments and key stakeholders with the concept of mainstreaming and the key steps that would entail to mainstream coastal and marine issues into national planning and budgetary processes leading to integrated planning. These workshops enhanced the opportunities for many policy makers to recognise the contribution of the coastal and marine resources to national gross domestic product and the livelihoods of coastal population.

The participants reached the conclusion that to move the mainstreaming process it would be important to set priorities that have wide and high level support and good prospects for success, and articulate these priorities based on an economic analysis that demonstrates the full value of the sustainable management of marine and coastal resources to national development. Valuation of resources has now come into greater focus by the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, through recent efforts related to marine litter and wastewater.

An effort of UNEP/GPA Coordination Office to facilitate mainstreaming, by supporting a study in Sri Lanka, led to introduction of policy reforms at the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and the establishment of an environmental conservation levy exclusively for environmental conservation. The GPA and its NPA and mainstreaming approaches have helped catalyse broader approaches to integrated coastal management. In China, the development of an NPA and associated coastal pollution control programmes was embedded in their 12th five-year plan (2011-2015). The government of Seychelles, while revising its Environment Management Plan for the period 2011-2020, set out that the Plan represents a national environmental strategy for Seychelles. Other countries such as Kenya and Japan have also finalized or enacted integrated coastal zone management plans, intended to protect the marine environment from land-based activities.

A Clearing House Mechanism for information sharing has been proposed in the GPA. The GPA Coordination Office has been instrumental in the development of information sharing platforms through the GPA website, which was recently upgraded (see www.unep.org/gpa). Due to a lack of resources, the GPA Coordination Office had difficulties in maintaining and expanding such a mechanism, so that Governments and other stakeholders can take full advantage of the information in the system. Further, there has been no official mechanism enabling reporting by Governments on progress in implementing the GPA and National Programmes of Action (NPAs). Coupled with the limited success in the clearing

house mechanism, this has made analysis of progress at national level difficult despite a commitment by countries in Beijing in 2006 to improve monitoring. Under the resource constraints UNEP faces, in order to facilitate information mobilization, the existing global and existing and proposed regional partnerships are expected to play key roles in the information sharing and mobilization. The online marine litter network and the tools being developed by the GPNM are excellent examples. These are described in more detail below.

Outreach efforts have significantly increased within the GPA in recent times. Outreach material, such as flyers, awareness videos, upgraded website with regular articles of topical interest, and production and translation of training and other material (e.g. in Spanish & Chinese), have all contributed to raising the profile of the GPA. Some of these videos have actually won international awards (e.g. Jim Toomey video on nutrients; see: <http://unep.org/gpa/resources/Videos.asp>).

Starting from the IGR-3, the GPA Coordination Office has used the First and Second Global Land-Ocean Connections Conferences (GLOC-1 in Manila, 2012; GLOC-2 in Montego Bay, 2013), to highlight the issues relevant to the GPA among global audiences. These GLOCs were two to three-day gatherings of scientists, experts, policy makers and NGOs who made recommendations towards the implementation of the Manila Declaration on Furthering the Implementation of the GPA. The objective of these conferences was to discuss current and emerging issues in the marine and coastal sector with a focus on the three priority source categories of the GPA for 2012-2016, namely marine litter, nutrients and wastewater. The overall purpose of the GLOC is to emphasize the interconnectedness of activities on land and how they impact on the oceans, with a focus on pollution, while proposing ways to address these impacts through international cooperation. The GLOC-2 served as a Partnership Forum for the three Global Partnerships on marine litter, nutrients and wastewater, and showcased the success of the GPA in addressing land-based sources of pollution, as well as the contribution of Regional Seas Programmes to the implementation of the Manila Declaration.

Another way in which the GPA Coordination Office has increased visibility is through publications and representation at strategic regional and global events. Key recent publications (or in press) include:

- Economic Valuation of Wastewater
- Wastewater laws, norms and regulations
- Technology matrix of (innovative) Wastewater related treatment technologies (and a guidance document)
- UN-Water Analytical Brief on Wastewater
- Plastics in Cosmetics
- Valuing Plastics
- Biodegradable Plastics

Important or key meetings for which the GPA has been involved include:

- World Water Forums (including Korea, April 12-17, 2015)
- World Water Congresses (including Edinburgh, May 2015)
- Stockholm World Water Weeks (including August 23-28, 2015)
- GEF International Waters Conferences
- East Asian Seas Congresses
- Annual meetings and IGMs of Regional Seas
- Annual LME meetings
- Africa Marine Litter Summits, Cape Town, South Africa (including June 3-5, 2015)

The GPA will celebrate its 20th Anniversary on November 3, 2015. As Secretariat for the GPA Coordination Office, UNEP plans a number of activities to raise awareness on the successes of the GPA, its impacts, and future role. The main goal of the communication activities for the 20th Anniversary would be to engage governments in order to gain political support for the GPA and its next Intergovernmental Review (IGR-4), possibly in 2017. The Anniversary activities will start formally in November 2015 and carry on until November 2016. A second goal would be to improve understanding and gain internal support for the GPA within UNEP as well as deciding on a UNEP positioning for the GPA (i.e. what UNEP wants out of it).

A formal presentation to the Committee of Permanent Representatives took place in September 2015 and again in October 2015. The GPA Coordination Office will prepare a formal document on the success stories for presentation to member states and possible publication. Activities would be focused around highlighting and distributing GPA success stories to governments and other relevant stakeholder. Other activities may include:

- Meetings with the UNEP Senior Management Team to highlight what UNEP can get out of the GPA and how UNEP can help gathering political support for the GPA (regional offices focal points, division directors, and executive office);
- Producing a GPA booklet gathering case studies and policy guidance to distribute to governments;
- Creating and distributing media by-products based on the success stories;
- A series of meetings, consultations and webinars with GPA focal points to gather political support and further distribute success stories.

The GPA also hopes to encourage a government to host World Environment Day in 2016 (e.g. Sweden; Japan), with a focus on marine pollution and plastics. 2016 presents opportunities for highlighting the GPA through UNEA-2 and possibly the Third Global Land-Ocean Connections Conference (GLOC-3). However preparations will start in 2015. If all goes well and Marine Pollution becomes a theme for

UNEA-2, GPA will play a major role in the development of the content. The next UNEA will also be a key event to gather political support in preparation for the IGR-4.

The next GLOC, if held, could also serve as another opportunity to highlight achievements and promote solutions while obtaining multi-stakeholder input to the IGR-4 and the partnerships. Costings and budget are under development but it is estimated that approximately US\$300K needs to be raised to host the conference. Since the GLOC does not fit into any of the GPA projects, special funding is needed.

Partnerships

Partnership development has been encouraged by member states throughout the life of the GPA. During the review of the GPA in 2012, the anticipated level of partnerships development and their utility in the implementation of the GPA was recognized as not being fully achieved. Establishing and maintaining viable global partnerships was acknowledged to be a challenge due to limited financial resources, varied levels of commitments of the stakeholders, and changing global priorities. The partial success was, at that time, reflected in the limited expansion of partnerships and the viability of existing partnerships. New global partnerships had only emerged where there were clearly-targeted objectives and well-defined outcomes, with the examples of the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management, the Global Partnership on Waste Management, and the Global Partnership on Tourism, amongst others. It was therefore expected that such partnerships with clearly defined objectives and outcomes, with time-bound targets, and well-prepared financial and support resources could effectively contribute to the implementation of the GPA in the next five years (2012-16).

The Work Programme of the GPA Coordinating Office has placed priorities amongst the nine source categories, i.e., on nutrients, sewage, marine litter and physical alteration and habitat destruction. Concerning the nutrients, marine litter and sewage, the UNEP/GPA Coordination Unit, working with its partners, has responded to the diffuse and challenging nature of these problems by establishing global partnerships and initiatives on nutrients, wastewater, and marine litter. The existing Global Partnership on Nutrient Management (GPNM) and the newly established global partnerships on Marine Litter and on Wastewater in this document are relevant to the partnership approach as agreed in Beijing in 2006. Details are presented in the following sections.

The Manila Declaration

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