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Marine and Coastal Strategy

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The Other 70%: UNEP Marine and Coastal Strategy

CONSULTATION DRAFT

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Foreword

Whatever your interest in marine and coastal environments, we encourage you to read this Strategy and welcome your feedback directly to UNEP Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Branch (email: marine.coastalstrategy@unep.org).

List of Abbreviations

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
DEPI	UNEP Division of Environmental Policy Implementation
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries
EBM	Ecosystem Based Management
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GPA	Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities
GRAME	Global Regular Assessment of the Marine Environment
GRID	Global Resource Information Database
ICARM	Integrated Coastal Area and River-basin Management
IUCN	World Conservation Union
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PADH	Physical Alteration and Destruction of Habitats
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
PoW	Programme of Work
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
RSP	Regional Seas Programme

SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
WTO	World Trade Organisation
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre

Introduction and Background

“...recent assessments tell a tale of unprecedented environmental change at global and regional levels, which may reach tipping points, beyond which there are abrupt, accelerating, or potentially irreversible changes. This unprecedented change is due to human activities taking place in an increasingly globalized, urbanized and industrialized world, driven by expanding flows of goods, services, capital, people, technologies, information, ideas and labour.”

UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013, p8.

We are all dependent on the oceans, coasts and seas to provide food, energy, climate regulation, transport and even recreation – the sustenance of life. Every day we expect this natural resource to accept our growing demands and to ultimately bear much of the impact of human activities. What covers up to 70 per cent of our earth’s surface surely deserves more attention. UNEP and its partners around the world recognize we need to renew our focus on what is the earth’s finite, fragile and most valuable resource.

UNEP’s Marine and Coastal Strategy (the Strategy) focuses on the fragility of marine and coastal ecosystems, at the same time acknowledging the continued stress ecosystems face in providing services for humanity. The Strategy articulates UNEP’s desire that urgent action is needed to maintain and rehabilitate marine and coastal resources. More importantly, the Strategy’s vision - *prosperous and healthy oceans and coasts where conservation, productivity and resource use are sustainable* - will be achieved through a long-term plan that outlines what is needed to improve our marine and coastal environments and ultimately reduce human impact.

Since its inception, UNEP has addressed a range of marine and coastal issues through comprehensive assessments, legal instruments, action plans and capacity building initiatives. This has been achieved, in large part, under multilateral programmes and UNEP coordinated activities such as: the Global Environmental Outlook, the Regional Seas Programme (RSP), the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) and projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). These programmes and initiatives have responded to the many calls for UNEP to take action on issues spanning pollution from land-based sources, to assisting Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to implement the Mauritius Strategic Action Plan.

To achieve UNEP’s mandate for marine and coastal ecosystems necessitates working with a range of partners to ensure that issues relevant to these ecosystems, their resources and their beneficiaries, especially the poor, are addressed effectively.

Looking forward to the period 2010 to 2013, UNEP’s Medium Term Strategy (MTS) provides the overall framework for the development of this marine and coastal strategy. The MTS encompasses the ecosystem approach essential to enhancing human wellbeing and ensuring equitable access to ecosystem services. This approach utilizes the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment’s (MA) findings to focus the ecosystem management efforts to assess, maintain and enhance river-basin, coastal and marine ecosystem services through the MTS.

In 2007 UNEP staff, collaborators and experts identified the strengths of UNEP in the marine and coastal sector on which this strategy builds, namely:

- Existing established legal and institutional platforms (RSP, Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs))
- Global and regional mandates
- Regional presence
- Ability to address shared and trans-boundary issues
- Ability to approach and influence and obtain the cooperation of Member countries

- Good ‘critical mass’ of expertise and capacity in intergovernmental process management.

These strengths, priority issues, the MA conceptual framework, UNEP’s comparative advantage, the UNEP Ecosystem Management Programme and the drive to deliver practical, outcome oriented results, guided the development of this strategy. This has resulted in a specific marine and coastal vision, a set of objectives, and an implementation framework that reflects these needs and meets the objectives within the current and planned UNEP Programmes of Work (PoWs), and beyond (coming 10-15 years) with periodic reviews of the strategy.

This Strategy is underpinned by an explanatory *UNEP Marine and Coastal Strategy Background Paper* (Appendix 1) that provides further details on the UNEP mandate and comparative advantage. Strategies and indicators to assess success in implementing the Strategy are contained in the companion *UNEP Marine and Coastal Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Plan* (Appendix 2), which also provides further information on implementation activities.

Vision and Objectives

Informed by UNEP’s overall vision, the management drivers and mandates given by countries the vision for the Marine and Coastal Strategy is:

Prosperous and healthy oceans and coasts where conservation, productivity and resource use are sustainable.

This vision will be achieved through four objectives that guide the organization to lead and support the Regional Seas Program and the Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities, and work collaboratively with, the RSPs, the GPA, the UN family, governments, regional organizations, industry, NGOs, researchers, civil society and communities:

- **Land-Ocean Connections:** to integrate the management of coastal watersheds, the coastal area (including cities) and the marine environment to optimize the ecosystem services and resilience of marine and coastal systems.
- **Ecosystems for Humanity:** to identify, assess and value the status, key drivers of change and services of marine and coastal ecosystems and their link to human well-being.
- **Reconciling Use and Conservation:** to ensure that appropriate governance frameworks, management tools, capacity and options are available for regions, countries, communities and the private sector to effectively engage in the sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems including reconciling competing uses.
- **Vulnerable People and Places:** to strengthen the ecological, economic and social resilience of vulnerable communities and places including SIDS, including SIDS, to improve access and benefit sharing arrangements and to adapt and respond to natural disasters and climate change.

These four overarching objectives were developed through consultations with stakeholders, both within and outside of UNEP, based on the need to collate and provide focus on the effective delivery of identified marine and coastal priorities within the MTS framework. The objectives are designed to be broad to ensure UNEP can be flexible and responsive to current and emerging issues, governments and other stakeholders. The four objectives present a continuum of outputs from focusing primarily on bio-physical based science-policy work to very human ecosystem centered programs and policies. Outputs achieved from each objective inform the achievement of other objectives.

Importantly, the outcomes will be achieved by focusing on UNEP’s core competencies of assessment, policy, planning and communications, providing objective science-based information and enhancing users capacities.

Strategies and Expected Outcomes

The strategies within the four overarching objectives described in Section 2, and their expected outcomes are shown in Table 1 below.

Land-Ocean Connections Strategies	Expected Outcomes
<p>1: Understand and communicate factors affecting the amenity, productivity and resilience of marine and coastal ecosystems, with a focus on the effects of land-based activities on water quality and habitats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The knowledge base (natural and social) underpinning integrated river basin, coastal and marine management is enhanced and made more accessible to policy makers, industry and civil society. • The economic and social costs (direct and opportunity) of coastal/marine pollution and the Physical Alteration and Destruction of Habitats (PADH) are better understood, communicated and considered in policy decisions at national and regional scales.
<p>2: Support governments in their respective efforts to mainstream environmental governance of coastal areas and associated catchment/watershed areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries are better equipped to develop and implement cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder instruments, protocols and National Programmes of Action to protect the marine environment from land-based activities. • The capacity of governments operating at municipal, sub-national, national and regional scales to mainstream policies and mitigation measures to assess, manage, reduce and adapt to the risks posed to human well-being and the marine environment by land-based sources of pollution and climate change is increased. •
<p>3: Identify, develop and encourage countries to take up best practices, innovative technologies and production systems that reduce or eliminate the detrimental impacts of land-based and maritime activities on marine or coastal ecosystems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enabling environment to encourage experimentation with, development of, and progression to, best practices and innovative technologies to protect marine and coastal ecosystems is enhanced. • Best practices and innovative technologies to protect marine and coastal ecosystems are more accessible and replicable. • Countries have increased capacity to adapt best practices and innovative technologies to protect marine and coastal ecosystems to their respective political, social, economic, and geographical circumstances. • The coverage of low-carbon maritime industries and sustainable greenhouse-gas emission reduction programmes in the marine sector is expanded.
Ecosystems for Humanity Strategies	Expected Outcomes
<p>1: Enhance the understanding of the status, trends and key drivers impacting marine and coastal ecosystems and the services they provide for human well-being and poverty alleviation as a basis for informed and coherent policy making and governance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global marine and coastal biodiversity targets met by countries and regions through enhanced access to appropriate and timely scientific information. • Compatible tools, guidelines and frameworks developed for defining, assessing and valuing marine and coastal habitats and their ecosystem services. • Integrated and regular national, regional and

	<p>global regular assessments of the status, trends and key drivers of marine and coastal ecosystems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced understanding and awareness of the role of marine and coastal ecosystem services for human well-being and climate regulation.
<p>2: Assess and enhance ecosystem and social resilience to climate change and incorporate climate change interventions into planning and budget processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced understanding of processes including climate change that impact on ecosystem and social resilience. Resilience assessments and tools developed to effectively inform national and regional adaptation plans. Climate change policy and adaptation plans integrated into planning and budgeting processes and access to management options enhanced. National and regional policies addressing environmental aspects of ocean carbon sequestration supported.
<p>Reconciling Resource Use and Conservation Strategies</p>	<p>Expected Outcomes</p>
<p>1: Enhance the awareness and capacities to use planning tools to prioritise management options where there are competing human uses with the view to reconcile conservation and human use of marine and coastal ecosystem services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management tools and decision-support systems for marine and coastal management within countries and regions enhanced. Enhanced understanding and awareness for tool application. Technical support provided to enhance coherent advocacy on global marine and coastal issues.
<p>2: Support integrated management and governance to manage and restore marine and coastal habitats and their ecosystem services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced capacity of countries and regions to use ecosystem based management. Development of innovative tools for integrated marine and coastal spatial management. EBM and governance of marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystems enhanced within countries and regions. Support of mainstreaming Marine Protected Area (MPA) within integrated management frameworks. Financing mechanisms developed by countries and regions to address declining marine and coastal ecosystem services. Increased harmonisation in countries and regions to multiple marine and coastal ecosystem management objectives via partnerships and collaborations

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