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Programme of Work of the Regional Seas

Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2004-2007*

The coordinators/representatives of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) at their 5th Global Meeting agreed upon a set of global Strategic Directions for 2004-2007, in response to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, decisions adopted by the UNEP Governing Council at its 22nd session, Agenda 21, and the Millennium Declaration. The directions are aimed at strengthening the Regional Seas Programmes (RSPs) at the global level, while continuing to implement the action programmes of the individual RSPs as agreed upon by their governing bodies.

The 6th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas, 30th November – 2nd December 2004 in Istanbul, Turkey included a high-level session of the Chairpersons/representatives of the Conference of the Parties (COPs)/Governing Bodies of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs). The UNEP RS Secretariat submitted a progress report on the implementation of the Strategic Directions to the meeting, which included recommendations for further action by the RS Secretariats, COPs and the UNEP RS secretariat. Additionally, representatives from individual RSPs presented progress summaries on the implementation of the Strategic Directions in their specific Regional Sea. The meeting reviewed, revised and approved the Strategic Directions, as well as the recommendations for further action.

The table below summarizes these outcomes and recommendations, set into actions to be undertaken by the Regional Seas. Recommended actions for the COPs are to be undertaken with support from their Secretariats.

* As discussed by the representatives of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans Secretariats at the 5th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas in Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2003 and further endorsed by the chairpersons, or their representatives of the COPs and IGMs at the 6th Global RS meeting, Istanbul, Turkey, 30th November-2nd December 2004.

1. Increase Regional Seas' contribution to Sustainable Development (SD), 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.

1. CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	
Action by Chairs of COP/IGM with support from the Secretariats	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate discussions on the new global RS strategic directions into the agendas of the next COPs/IGMs. • Based on the overview of major actors/programmes in the region that address issues within the realm of the RS, propose concrete measures on how cooperation can be improved, possibly culminating in a decision at the COP/IGM. • Identify how the COP and Secretariats can further contribute to enhancing RS contribution to sustainable development, including to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). • Consider if the RS programme of work should address new programme elements to enhance regional partnerships and increase RS contribution to SD. 	
Action by RS Secretariats	Action by UNEP RS Coordinating Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forge increased partnerships within and across the regions with the various major actors and players in the field of conservation & management of the coastal and marine environment, as reflected in the databases compiled on the RS website. • Continually Update the individual RS sections of the database of major actors/players on the RS website with support from the UNEP Regional Seas Coordinating Office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage an expert to undertake a Global Review of the RS. (<i>Begin by May 2005 – review to take 6 months</i>) • Finalise/publish the Regional Seas Brochure, "Partnerships for Sustainable Development" by end of May 2005 • Link the database of major actors via the RS website to the following sites: Large Marine Ecosystem website; Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA) database, which also lists all major partners, action programmes and projects; Relevant Global Environment Facility (GEF) project websites; International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW-Learn) site. • Ensure continuous update of the database on major actors in the RSPs, to keep abreast with new partnerships and strengthen existing ones. • Assess by the 7th Global RS Meeting, the usefulness of the database. Send out questionnaire to the RSPs. • Compile inputs from the RSPs to the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA in 2006.

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.

2.1 COUNTRY OWNERSHIP	
Action by Chairs of COP/IGM with support from the Secretariats	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify alternative means to enhance reporting by countries at COPs/IGMs (Governing Bodies) on implementation of RS Convention/Action Plan, other than review of Programme of Work (POW) of RS Secretariats, with the goal to shift the emphasis in the implementation of Conventions/Action Plans from the Secretariat to the national level. (Such implementation review with a focus on the national level is already being utilized by some RSCAPS (such as PERSGA, MAP and the Black Sea) but some countries might require expert advice (in the form of consultancies) in order to competently report in this manner. • Consider means for amending COP/IGM agendas to better reflect the contribution by countries to the implementation of Conventions/Action Plans, as well as to review the impact of the national and regional action and annual/biannual POW of the Secretariats at the national level, the measures taken and the results achieved. • Assess if and how COPs/IGMs should address common policy development towards global issues and present them in relevant <i>fora</i> such as Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), International Comparisons Project (UNICP), World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), SIDS, Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas (UNSOCA), and UNEP Governing Council (GC). • Assess how to ensure closer co-operation between RS Secretariats, COPs/Governing Bodies, the UNEP Regional Offices and UNEP's Governing Council. 	
Action by Secretariats	Action by UNEP RS Coordinating Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretariats/countries might also wish to consider assessing the impact of the implementation of the Convention/Action Plan on the social, economic and environmental conditions of participating countries. The role of the Secretariats in monitoring the national implementation of RSCAPS should be enhanced, amongst others to be able to better assist countries to develop the necessary capacity to implement the Convention/Action Plan, and to solicit international financing targeted towards increasing the capacity of national governments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage an expert to assess how countries could be assisted in better reporting on how through other international agreements and obligations, they implement the RSCAPS & other Conventions and action programmes e.g. CBD, Basel, POPs etc. • Develop short papers on upcoming major events/meetings and inform the regions accordingly, soliciting their input. • Explore on ensuring participation of the RSPs at the UNEP GC, as is with the Secretariats of other Conventions.

2.2 ASSIST COUNTRIES IN TRANSLATING RS CONVENTIONS/ACTION PLANS (RSCAPS) INTO NATIONAL REGULATION AND LEGISLATION		
Action by Chairs of COP/IGM with support from the Secretariats		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice for capacity building on means for translating RSCAPS into national legislation. • Provide advice for capacity building on improving the implementation of the Conventions/Action Plans at the national level, and for utilizing, where appropriate, monitoring of and reporting on compliance and enforcement at COPS/IGMs as a means of spurring improved implementation. 		
Action by Secretariats	Action by UNEP RS Coordinating Office	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in cooperation with the RS Coordinating Office to support legal implementation and strengthen compliance and enforcement of the RSCAPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop and revise guidance on developing implementing legislation and strengthening compliance with and enforcement of RSCAPs. • Design and develop an initial capacity building workshop programme (to be tested in two regions in 2005) for training on developing implementing legislation for RSCAPs, strengthening institutional structures for improved compliance and enforcement and identifying means for coordinated implementation of RSCAPs with related environmental Conventions (such as Basel and POPs). • Prepare overview and analysis of options for future legal support to the Regional Seas by the Coordinating Office for presentation to and consideration of the 7th Global Regional Seas Meeting. This overview should include outcomes and results of the regional workshops, options for further legal capacity building, analysis of alternative options, such as organizing workshops with those responsible for ongoing Regional Seas GEF projects for insuring a coordinated approach. • Promote integration of RSCAP-related issues into various existing legal training and capacity building exercises, to increase opportunities for those implementing RSCAPs to improve their legal knowledge base and take advantage of synergies and inter-linkages with other environmental Conventions. For example, ensure that Regional Seas legal issues and the draft legal guidance on Regional Seas will be made a major component of upcoming DEPI legal workshops for Latin America, Francophone Africa, and West Asia. • Coordinate and develop, in conjunction with GPA, a network of land-based sources of pollution (LBS) protocols that facilitates information sharing and exchange of expertise and experience. • Regional Seas Coordinating Office will also provide legal advice and support to Secretariats on legal issues such as competence, mandate, rules of procedure, financial rules and terms of reference. 	

2.3 RAISING FINANCIAL RESOURCES		
Action by Chairs of COP/IGM with support from the Secretariats		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise on how to make better use of domestic resources for the implementation of Conventions and Action Plans at the national level, and the role the COPs and Secretariat can play in this regard, including on measures to be taken to ensure adequate contribution by countries to the RS Secretariats. • Assess how intersectoral/interministerial cooperation at the national level can contribute to the implementation of the RSCAPs. • Assess how international programmes, including those co-financed by the GEF, lead to sustainable (domestic and international) financing of the implementation of the RSCAPs in the long run, as well as the long-term sustainability and impact of international funded regional programmes and activities. • Incorporate the social, economic and environmental vulnerability of SIDS into the sustainable financing strategies. 		
Action by Secretariats	Action by UNEP RS Coordinating Office	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariats should provide details on topics they would like to see discussed/addressed at the pre-meeting of UNEP-administered Secretariats. • If desired, assess how other international and regional agencies and institutes contribute to the implementation of the RSCAP through the implementation of their mandates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare agenda items and materials to make financial discussions a key topic for the 7th Global Regional Seas Meeting. – <i>Strengthening long-term sustainable financing.</i> • Organize a one-day pre-meeting in conjunction with the 7th Global Regional Seas Meeting for UNEP-administered RSCAP Secretariats to discuss issues of mutual interest. Compile from the regions issues to be addressed prior to the meeting. 	

2.3.2 COLLABORATION WITH THE GEF	
Action by Secretariats	Action by UNEP RS Coordinating Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in the GEF training courses. Invite, if desired, GEF national focal points and/or project coordinator to COPs. Continue to collaborate and support countries in the implementation of GEF projects in the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a two phase GEF related training programme for the Regional Seas: <u>Phase I</u> – Development of GEF project proposals. Directed to RS secretariats. Sources of finance to be identified (possibly GEF and GPA). <u>Phase II</u> – Implementation of GEF International Waters projects. Directed to GEF projects personnel once the project has started. Source of finance a special allocation within the project budget. Training materials and course content for both phases is currently under development by the GEF. Make a presentation at the GEF's 3rd Biennial IW Conference (June 2005; Brazil), to review GEF's global IW portfolio, share experiences and promote collaboration between RS and GEF and across the IW portfolio. Inform RS on IW GEF related activities. Produce an overview of all GEF projects involving Regional Seas summarising the value of RS for the GEF and vice versa.

2.4 CIVIL SOCIETY	
Action by Chairs of COP/IGM with support from the Secretariats	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an (increased) role of civil society and private sector in the COP/IGM and how to effectively engage them in the implementation of Conventions/Action Plans. Review if amendment of POW of RS Secretariats is needed to increase the contribution of civil society, private sector to the implementation of RS Conventions/Action Plans. 	
Action by Secretariats	Action by UNEP RS Coordinating Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate partnerships with civil society and private sector to address priority issues of common concern noting the crucial role of civil society in reaching the goals of the RS Use NGOs to raise the profile of RS at the countries' level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess how RS can be involved in and represented at global civil society <i>fora</i>, convened by the UNEP Civil Society Unit. Conduct a study on how different RS interact with civil society, how they contribute to the implementation of the Action Programmes and the Conventions, and how this contribution and involvement can be strengthened.

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l impact in global, regional and national policy setting, through strengthening the Regional Seas Partnership, increasing political and public nmental importance of coastal and marine resources, promoting concerted information and communication policies, and ensuring in relevant national, regional and global *fora*.

3.1 VISIBILITY	
Action by Chairs of COP/IGM with support from the Secretariats	
	dually and jointly, in the countries, with the public at large, different ministries and relevant international divisions, amongst others by e socio-economic and environmental fabric of the countries and the way the RS address/respond to countries' priorities. inable development issues and upcoming events in the COPs/IGM. s Convention/Action Plan, UNEP GC and other relevant <i>fora</i> and/or ensure that country delegations are well briefed.
Action by UNEP RS Coordinating Office	
l nationally ce of ROPME the consecutive environmental : ministerial JNEP Regional combined entions &) in Office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a greater visibility of the RS at different international <i>fora</i>, including at relevant meetings of the UN, COPs of MEAs amongst others through joint representation of the RS, briefings on RS to country delegations in UNHQ and other relevant meetings. (<i>See also briefs on major meetings -item 2.1</i>) • Assist UNEP RS Secretariats to report, as relevant, on progress in the implementation of RS Conventions/Action Plans at UNEP GC and other relevant <i>fora</i> including MEA COPs (e.g. upcoming CMS COP in November 2005). • Ensure an updated RS website and continued links & cross-references to other RSP websites for better outreach. (<i>See also item 1.</i>) • Advise on how RSPs can better contribute to relevant international policy issues (e.g. GEF, CSD, MEAs, MDG, Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and the role COPs/IGMs can play in this regard. • When necessary, prepare a side event on RS at relevant international <i>fora</i>, including CSD, GC, Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS) and others. • Increase visibility of RSPs within UNEP through informing UNEP Divisions and Programmes on the possibility to implement relevant activities through RSPs, and vice-versa inform RS of ongoing UNEP Programmes in their region through UNEP Regional Offices.

iced public participation, education, awareness, and improved reporting on the state of the coastal & marine environment, its resources, and ontributing to appropriate national and regional monitoring and assessment activities.

4.1 MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT	
Action by Chairs of COP/IGM with support from the Secretariats	
	o regional monitoring and assessment activities and the realistic measures, including prevention and prediction, e.g. as they relate to e in this regard, including forecasting and financial measures. nt needs and requirements, of relevance to the regional needs and requirements (e.g. reporting to MEAs). oring and assessment programmes, including those conducted by universities and NGOs that are relevant to the RS and can contribute ties and promote their cooperation and coordination at national and regional level. -economic and health aspects, the valuation of goods and services provided by coastal and marine resources, and the relation to ent programmes, as well as the vulnerability of SIDS and the economic impact of different policy options and/or of continued