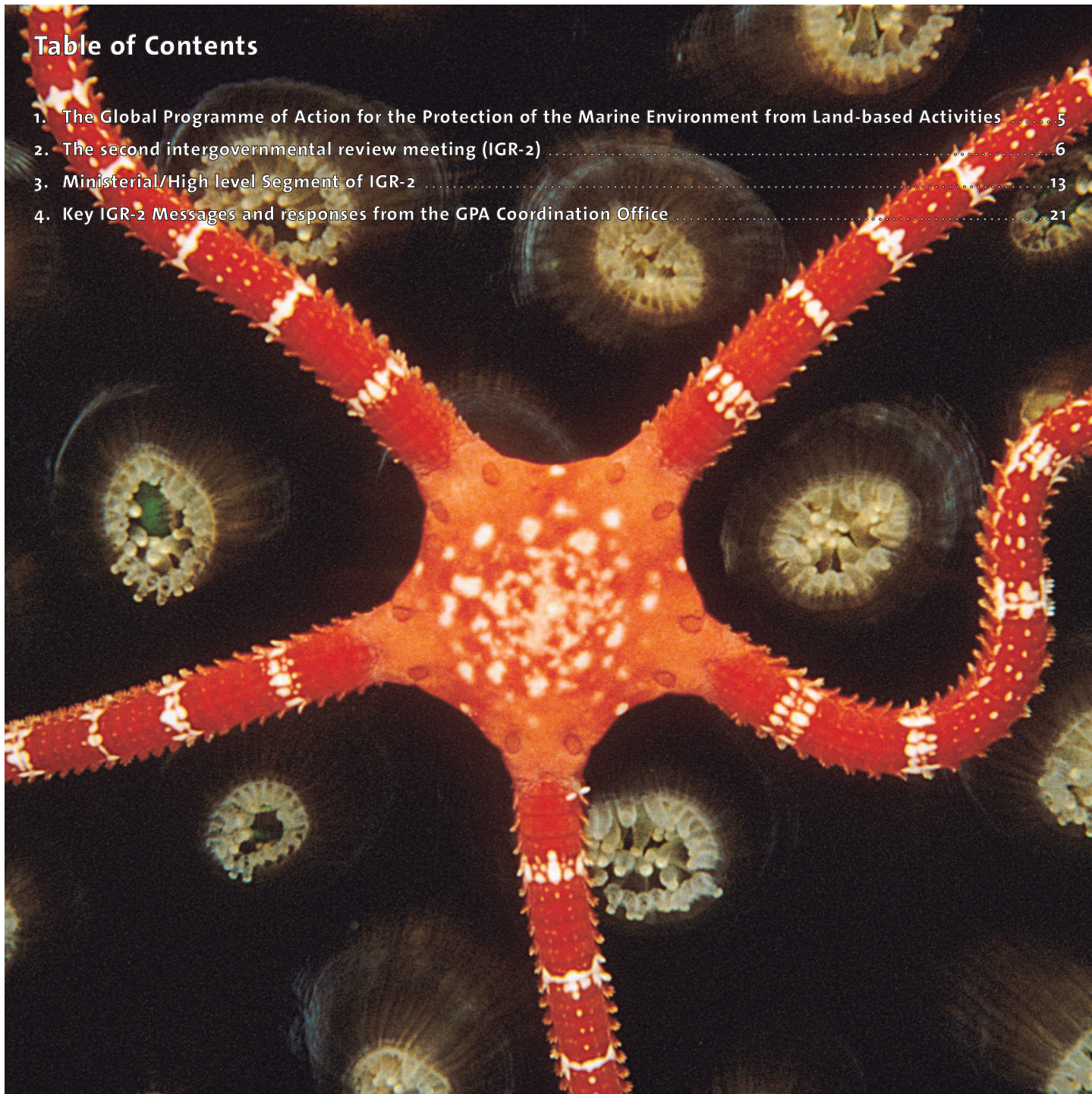
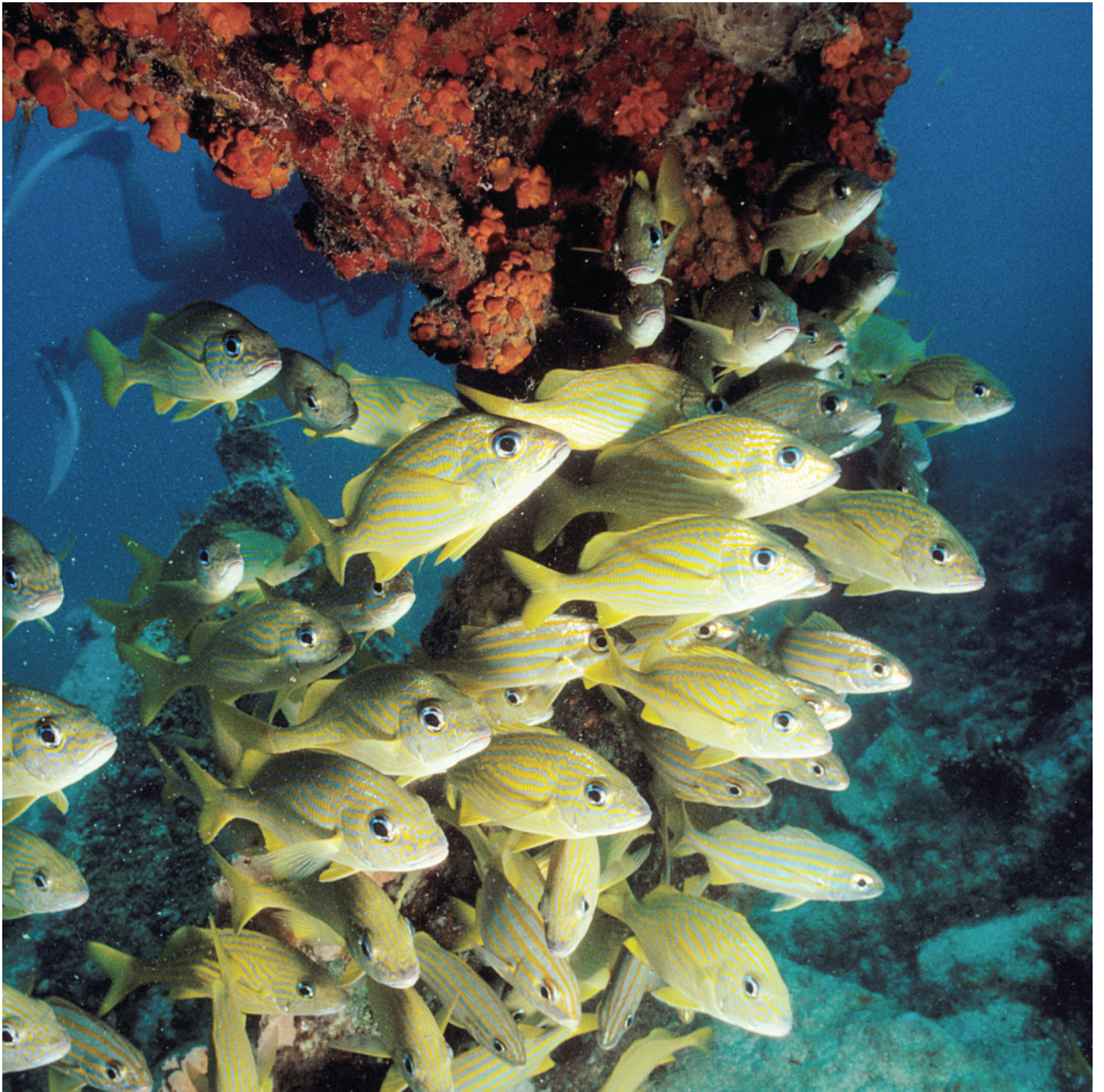


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# The Global Programme of Action

## Coasts and oceans under pressure

Healthy coastal and marine environments are essential to human well-being and sustainable development. Coastal and marine ecosystems provide a wide range of valuable resources and goods and services that are of significant direct and indirect economic and social value. However, the natural resource base of coastal areas is under growing pressure: 70 per cent of mega-cities with populations over 8 million are located on the coast, and in some countries as much as 90 per cent of sewage is dumped directly into the sea. In addition, 38 per cent of the global human population lives along a narrow fringe of coastal land, which constitutes only 7.6 per cent of the earth's total land area. It is generally accepted that some 80 per cent of all marine pollution originates from land-based activities either near the shore, or from far inland. There is growing evidence that coastal degradation arising from land-based sources of pollution or from the physical alteration and destruction of coastal habitats results in large direct costs to the economy and to society.

## The GPA

In response, 108 governments and the European Commission adopted the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) during an intergovernmental conference held in Washington, D.C., U.S.A. in 1995. The GPA is a source of conceptual and practical guidance to be drawn on by national and/or regional authorities in devising and implementing sustained action to prevent, reduce, control and/or eliminate marine degradation from land-based activities. UNEP was requested to act as Secretariat of the GPA. With the kind support of the Government of the Netherlands, UNEP established the GPA Coordination Office in The Hague, the Netherlands, in 1997.

## From planning into action and mainstreaming

The catalytic role of the Coordination Office in the first phase, from 1996 to 2001, was characterized by a focus on priority setting and translating the Global Programme of Action from the international to the regional level. The First Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-1), held in Montreal, Canada in 2001, was instrumental in shifting focus from planning to action, and developing the GPA as a tool for furthering ecosystem approaches to coasts, oceans and island management. More than 300 participants from over 80 countries took part in IGR-1. The second phase, from 2002 to 2006, was characterized by a move from planning to action, leading to widespread Programme-related activities at the national and regional levels. The Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-2) held in October 2006 in Beijing, China reinforced the catalytic role of the GPA. The third phase, from 2007 to 2011, will maintain the crucial role of promoting the Global Programme of Action at all levels and of strengthening the Regional Seas Programme and other regional mechanisms to facilitate its implementation.

In addition, the third phase will focus on mainstreaming the implementation of the Global Programme of Action in national development planning and budgetary mechanisms. Mainstreaming will require integration of the Global Programme of Action across sectors and ministries and also integration into domestic and international aid budgets, development plans, strategies and actions. As such, the Global Programme of Action will remain a valuable and flexible tool to achieve the various goals and targets set by the international community as they relate to the coastal and marine environment and their associated watersheds.



# The second intergovernmental review meeting

## Beijing, China - 16-20 October 2006

### Continued support

The success of the Second Intergovernmental Review (IGR-2) meeting of the GPA, hosted by the Government of the People's Republic of China in Beijing from 16-20 October 2006, demonstrates a growing momentum to address land-based sources of marine

pollution through the GPA. Over 600 participants - representing 104 governments and the European Commission, international and regional organizations, international financial institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) - gathered to review the implementation of the GPA and chart the way forward.



They firmly renewed their commitment to address land-based sources of marine pollution at the national, regional and global levels.

### **Interactive debate**

Participants actively took part in working groups, workshops, side events and the plenary sessions, which promoted open discussions, a review of problems encountered and lessons learned, and the identification of practical solutions that can be replicated and scaled up in other countries and at the regional and global levels. During the Ministerial/High-Level segment, over 40 ministers and other high-level delegates representing 104 governments participated in roundtable discussions designed to promote dialogue, focus on results, and produce practical ideas.

### **A new programme of work**

Building on a review of the accomplishments in GPA implementation from 2002 to 2006, participants fully recognized the benefits and value of the GPA as a flexible international instrument for environmental management of coasts oceans and their associated watersheds. Implementing the GPA significantly contributes to achieving the various goals and targets set by the international community. Governments also renewed their support to the catalytic role of the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office in furthering the implementation of the GPA by endorsing the Programme of Work for the office for the period 2007-2011.

### **Key outputs**

The IGR-2 meeting report includes a number of important annexes that summarize the discussions that took place in the break out groups on the national implementation of the GPA, the partnership workshops, key points raised on other agenda items specifically the work of the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, and a stakeholder submission to IGR-2. The key outputs of IGR-2 include:

### **Beijing Declaration**

The Beijing Declaration marks a new strategic direction for the Global Programme of Action as Governments endorsed an approach with greater emphasis on national and local-level action supported by a call for creating sustainable financial mechanisms, economic valuation of goods and services provided by oceans, coasts and watersheds, local participation and integrated approaches in particular linking freshwater and coastal management. Also, the interlinkages between GPA implementation and poverty reduction-focused development strategies is clearly stated, as well as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation targets for implementing the ecosystem approach and integrated water resource management activities. The Beijing Declaration outlines specific actions and commitments of Governments at the national, regional and global level. It also endorses the Programme of Work for the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office and, amongst others, requests UNEP to convene the third intergovernmental review meeting in 2011.

### **Implementation of the GPA in the global environment context**

Participants agreed that the GPA must remain responsive to new developments in the international agenda and welcomed the document “Guidance to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action: 2007-2011”. Since the adoption of the GPA ten years ago, many important developments have taken place. The Programme of Action needs to be consistent with the evolving international environment and sustainable development agendas. The Guidance Document demonstrates that the GPA remains a valuable tool to achieve the goals and targets established by the international community in recent years for the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands. The Guidance Document provides assistance to Governments and other stakeholders on how to address these new developments while continuing to ensure coherence, mutual reinforcement and consistency with emerging issues in the international environmental context.







### Partnership approach key to success

An entire day of IGR-2 was devoted to discussing existing partnerships and to launching new partnerships, with a particular focus on planning activities for the coming five years. Over 25 workshops and side-events were held. The main outcomes are highlighted in the report of the IGR-2 meeting.

The workshop presentations and debates illustrated that multi-stakeholder partnerships provide flexible frameworks for addressing competing uses of coastal and marine resources. Partnerships are critical tools to further the implementation of the GPA, as they facilitate flexible financing arrangements, they support replication and up-scaling of successful practices, they are instrumental to increase awareness on coastal and marine issues, and they can promote new paradigms such as on the natural linkages between freshwater and coastal and marine management. Partnerships also provide a mechanism to enhance the efficient use of the available, sometimes underutilized capacity for addressing land-based sources of pollution and activities that impact the coastal and marine environment.

The central characteristic of partnerships that successfully mainstream the objectives of the GPA is clarity of purpose, or a common goal. They should have unambiguous assignments of specific responsibilities to relevant partners, as well as clear performance objectives with measurable indicators and targets for which they are accountable. Successful partnerships inspire participants to explore synergies and generate new ideas. They remain simple in their delivery, despite complex and multi-dimensional problems.

The participants emphasized that the development of targeted and robust partnerships is key to the successful implementation of the GPA, at national, regional and global levels. In this regard, the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office can and should play a very effective role in brokering and supporting partnerships at global and regional levels.





### Stakeholder submission

Stakeholders and other major groups were active in the preparations for IGR-2 and during the IGR-2 meeting itself. A Stakeholder Submission was presented to IGR-2 and is included in the IGR-2 meeting report. The Stakeholder submission is based on the premise that stakeholders recognize that progress has been made in implementing the GPA, though in many places programmes are incomplete or are not being implemented with sufficient vigour to prevent further deterioration. The submission points out that the GPA provides a unique opportunity to secure high-level political commitment to a more determined programme of action at national and international levels.

The stakeholder submission includes specific actions for stakeholder and major groups to consider, as well as action for Governments to further promote the implementation of the GPA. For example, the stakeholder submission asserts that the establishment of targets, timetables and commitments of appropriate resources are critical to the delivery of the GPA and the preservation of the coastal and marine environment. The submission also states that stakeholders believe that their involvement in all stages in the development and implementation of strategies at national and local levels is vital, taking full advantage of their knowledge, experience and skills. Further, the National Programmes of Action

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