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Final report on the implementation of the Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2013 – 2016

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Chapter 1: Implementation of the RSSD (2013-2016) by UNEP

1. Analysis of the implementation of the RSSD (2013-2016) by UNEP

UNEP made a significant contribution to the Regional Seas Strategic Directions (2013-2016), especially to the Strategy 1 (*Effectively apply an ecosystem approach in the management of the marine and coastal environment*) and the Strategy 2 (*Contribute to the implementation of the Manila Declaration of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities (GPA), in particular the partnerships on wastewater management, nutrients and marine litter*). These two strategies are closely related to the activities of the UNEP Programme of Work (PoW) and the contributions towards the strategic goals were smoothly made.

On Strategy 4 (*Support the provision of tools to decouple economic growth from environmental pressures in the marine and coastal environment by promoting resource efficiency and productivity*) various activities are ongoing at UNEP including development of tools and methods for Green Economy. However, there are opportunities for UNEP to create further collaboration with the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) particularly in implementing the concept in the oceans. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sustainable production and consumption patterns have been emphasized and thus the concept of Green Economy will continue to be important and relevant to the RSCAPs.

UNEP has also contributed to the achievement of the Strategy 5 (*Strengthen coordination and build necessary capacities at the regional and national levels to improve global knowledge and trends on the status of the marine environment, contribution to the World Ocean Assessment*), providing technical as well as financial supports to the workshops and to the Expert Group. The summary of the regular process¹ and the lessons learnt² from the first cycle have been produced. As a spinoff of the process, Nairobi Convention has produced the first report on the state of the marine environment in the region. The regular process has, therefore, helped develop regional capacities to monitor the status of the oceans.

On the other hand, it seems that UNEP has made limited progresses on the implementation of the Strategy 3 (*Strengthen capacities at the regional level and national level on marine and coastal environment*) and 6 (*Strengthen collaboration mechanisms with relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), UN Agencies and International Financial Institutions (IFIs)*). Particularly, it has been difficult to secure financial resources for the RSCAPs (3.4). Further efforts are needed in order to foster partnerships with MEAs and other international organizations to increase visibility of the Regional Seas Programme and to attract future funding. However, it should be noted that the Regional Seas programmes also need to develop their own strategies to achieve financial as well as institutional sustainability.

Due to the lack of clear targets and indicators for the RSSD (2013-2016), it is difficult to assess the overall level of achievements that UNEP has made toward the RSSD (2013-2016). Furthermore, it is not

¹ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/112

² http://www.un.org/depts/los/global_reporting/lessons_learned_submission.htm

clear how UNEP was able to use the RSSD (2013-2016) to implement its work because the PoW is the principal guiding document for the implementation of the activities. For the future RSSDs, therefore, it is recommended to set explicit targets to encourage commitments towards the implementation both by UNEP and the RSCAPs.

2. Implementation of the each action item by UNEP

1. Effectively apply an ecosystem approach in the management of the marine and coastal environment

1.1 Identify areas/indicators related to Sustainable Development Goal on oceans.

Significant efforts have been made to link indicators used by the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators through Regional Seas Indicators Working Group³. It is expected that the RSCAPs will be able to provide technical assistance to the participating countries with monitoring on the progress towards the SDGs related to the oceans.

Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
Technical Workshop on Selecting Indicators for the State of Regional Seas (Geneva, 30 June – 2 July 2014)	The workshop confirmed important principles for choosing indicators and recommended to establish a regional seas indicator working group to develop an indicator toolbox ⁴ .	30 June – 02 July 2014
Publication “Measuring Success – Indicators for Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans”	The publication was submitted to UNEP SDG Task Force and Inter-Agency SDG indicators working group. It was also presented to ICP on Sustainable Development and Oceans in May 2015.	Dec 2014
Launching of the Regional Seas Indicator Working Group, 23 October 2015, Istanbul	Based on the recommendations from the 2014 technical workshop, UNEP would like to launch regional seas indicator working group, and the results of the working group should be provided to the continuing discussion on the SDG indicators ⁵ . The WG organised two intercessional meetings. The progress was	October 2015

³

<http://www.unep.org/ecosystemmanagement/water/regionalseas40/Meetings/RegionalSeasIndicatorsWorkingGroup/tabid/1060470/Default.aspx>

⁴ http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/globalmeetings/Indicator_RS_meeting/indicator_workshop.asp

⁵ <http://www.unep.org/ecosystemmanagement/water/regionalseas40/40YearsofAction/IndicatorRSMeeting-2015/tabid/1060470/Default.aspx>

	summarized and was submitted to the 18 th Global Meeting of the RSCAPs ⁶ .	
<p>Sustainable Development Goals: SDG 14 (Oceans): Among the agreed indicators are Target 14c (governance): Number of countries making progress in ratifying, accepting and implementing through legal, policy and institutional frameworks, ocean-related instruments that implement international law, as reflected in the United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources</p> <p>Other relevant indicators of direct relevance to RSCAPs include 14.1 (pollution), 14.2 (ecosystem approach), 14.5 (MPAs) and 14.7 (SIDS).</p> <p>Details at: http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/index.html</p>	RSCAPs may utilize its relevant systems for monitoring and reporting on management and governance of the marine and coastal environment, incl.(a) compliance committees reviewing implementation of regional agreements within their mandates, (b) mandatory reporting on the state of the marine and coastal environment of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans at 3-5 year cycles.	August 2015 ⁷

1.2 Build capacities on application of EBM principles at the Regional/National level

UNEP has been promoting the implementation of Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM). A number of projects for EBM have been carried out at the regional and national levels. For example, capacity building activities have been conducted with CPPS and CEP. UNEP and SPREP are also working on an on-going project on cost-benefit analysis for ecosystem-based adaptation. Several policy guidelines and guidance materials have also been produced. The RSCAPs are encouraged to use these materials to conduct capacity development activities at their regions.

Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
Regional capacity building workshop on EBM conducted in specific regions, including preparation of site-level EBM pilot projects	Regional EBM Capacity Building workshops held in in collaboration between UNEP/DEPI-CPPS (14-18 Oct 2013 in Lima, Peru) to provide decision makers and planners across relevant sectors from the governments of the Lima Convention Region (Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile) with tools and skills to develop and implement ecosystem-based approaches for coastal management. EBM pilot project concepts were	Oct 2013

⁶ UNEP/WBRS.18/3 Regional Seas' assessments and indicators for SDGs

⁷ <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/index.html>

	prepared for each country, partly followed under the IOC/UNESCO SPINCAM project on indicators for coastal zone management	
Guidance on governing Marine Protected Areas – building resilience through diversity	<p>A governance framework with a set of guiding principles has been developed to assist analysing and combining different governance aspects in the planning and implementation of MPAs. The framework is informed by 20 MPA case studies from the field. The framework and principles are discussed in the peer-reviewed paper⁸.</p> <p>Follow-up work is ongoing to develop a practical guidance resource on MPA governance to be launched spring 2016 ('Guidance on MPA governance – resilience through diversity')</p>	Sept 2013
The report "Pacific Integrated Island Management: Principles, Case Studies and Lessons Learned published.	<p>The report Pacific Integrated Island Management (IIM): Principles, Case Studies and Lessons Learned was prepared through collaboration between SPREP, UNEP Wildlife Conservation Society, Alluvium Consulting, Edith Cowan University, Sustainable Island Innovations and Hodge Environmental, and presented during the 9th Pacific Island Nature Conservation Conference in early December 2013 as well as at the 3rd SIDS conference in September 2014. IIM is a planning process that recognizes the importance of integrated management that operates at the scale at which biological, social and physical processes occur on small islands. IIM calls for sustainable and adaptive management of natural resources through coordinated networks of institutions and communities that bridge habitats (e.g. land-sea) and stakeholders (e.g.</p>	Dec 2013

⁸ E.M. De Santo, O. Vestergaard , P.J.S. Jones , W. Qiu: An empirical framework for deconstructing the realities of governing marine protected areas, Marine Policy 41, 2013.

	communities, business, industry, government) with the common goals of maintaining ecosystem services and securing human health and well-being. Based on analysis of 15 case studies sourced from Pacific islands and covering a range of island environments, habitats and vulnerabilities, as well as varying development and governance contexts, the report presents ten best practice principles for IIM and synthesizes lessons learned. The report is accompanied by a brief policy outreach document ⁹ and the work was also published in a peer reviewed journal ¹⁰ .	
Report on the mangrove ecosystem services was prepared and launched.	The publication “The Importance of Mangroves to People: A Call to Action” was published and launched in October 2014. The publication presented a set of recommendations for global action, including establishment of a global mangrove commission and of a global mangrove fund. Based on the recommendations, UNEP, IUCN, Ramsar Convention and CBD are developing a global mangrove initiative (provisional title), and once it is fully developed, regional seas conventions and action plans are invited to participate in and contribute to this initiative.	October 2014
UNEP-LifeWeb: “Broad-scale Marine Spatial Planning for transboundary marine mammal management in Caribbean and Southeast and Northeast Pacific”	Key results: (a) Regional capacity and networking among govt. planners in 26 participating countries enhanced on broad-scale marine spatial planning; (b)	July 2010 – Dec 2014

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