TWAP
TRANSBOUNDARY WATERS ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

Large Marine Ecosystems

A Global Comparative Assessment of Baseline Status and Future Trends

VOLUME 4: LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

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Large Marine Ecosystems

Status and trends

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
GESAMP Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection
NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Center for Marine Assessment and Planning, UCSB
THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS
GLOBAL IGBP CHANGE International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme
NOAA
TAT Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY Inspiring Minds
MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND
UNEP WCMC
CERMES
PlasticsEurope Association of Plastics Manufacturers
Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE DÉLÉGATION PERMANENTE DE LA FRANCE AUPRÈS DE L'UNESCO
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SEA AROUND US

Acknowledgements

Lead Authors

Igor Belkin, Lucia Fanning, Michael Fogarty, Benjamin Halpern, Sherry Heileman, Miranda Jones, Peter Kershaw, Kristin Kleisner, Laurent Lebreton, Robin Mahon, Liana Talaue McManus, Chris McOwen, John O'Reilly, Daniel Pauly, Sybil Seitzinger, Hideshige Takada, Jan-Willem van Bochove

Contributing Authors

Courtney Arthur, Kimberly Baldwin, Julian Barbiere, Benjamin Best, Simon Blyth, Andrew Cooper, Mark Dickey-Collas, Selicia Douglas, Marcus Eriksen, Maria Estevanez, Lucia Fanning, Melanie Frazier, Elizabeth Fulton, Nicholas Gutiérrez, Benjamin Halpern, Kimberly Hyde, Peter Kershaw, Kristin Kleisner, Trond Kristiansen, Vicky Lam, Kara Lavender Law, Catherine Longo, Robin Mahon, Emilio Mayorga, Carolina Minte-Vera, Cóilín Minto, Iago Mosqueira, Giacomo Chato Osio, Daniel Ovando, Daniel Pauly, Jesus Gago Piñeiro, Andrew Rosenberg, Sybil Seitzinger, Elizabeth Selig, Kenneth Sherman, Damon Stanwell-Smith, Julie Stewart Lowndes, Emma Sullivan, James Thorson, Rei Yamashita, Yimin Ye

Reviewers

Name	Primary affiliation	Primary review responsibility
TWAP Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)		
Andrew Rosenberg	Director, Center for Science and Democracy, Union of Concerned Scientists	Whole Report (interim and final draft)
Ashbindu Singh	Environmental Pulse Institute	Data Portal and Website
Pierre-Philippe Mathieu	European Space Agency (ESA), European Space Institute (ESRIN)	Data Portal and Website
Peer Review		
Paul Anderson	Environmental Monitoring Analyst, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Samoa	Extent of mangroves and drivers of change
Thorsten Blenckner	Theme Leader, Regime shifts in social-ecological systems, Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm Univ., Sweden	Cumulative human impacts in the world's large marine ecosystems
Cathy Dichmont	Senior Principal Research Scientist, CSIRO, QLD, Australia	The status of fisheries in LMEs, 1950-2010
FAO Experts	FAO, Rome	The status of fisheries in LMEs, 1950-2010
Rosalinda Gioia	Regulatory Environmental Fate Scientist, Centre for the Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture (CEFAS), Lowestoft, UK	Pollution status of persistent organic pollutants
Patricia Glibert	Professor, Horn Point Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, MD, USA	Nutrient inputs
Jakob Granit	Centre Director and STAC member for governance, Deputy Director, Stockholm Environment Institute, Sweden	Governance: Assessment of governance arrangements for transboundary LMEs
Angel Hsu	Assistant Professor, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies	Identifying patterns of risk among large marine ecosystems using multiple indicators
Vainuupo Jungblut	RAMSAR Oceania Officer, SPREP, Samoa	Extent of mangroves and drivers of change
Richard Kenchington	Visiting Professorial Fellow, University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia	Change in protected area coverage within LMEs
Yi-Chin Kuo	Dept. Environmental Biology and Fisheries Science, National Taiwan ocean Univ., Taiwan	Sea surface temperature trends
Rebecca Martone	Assistant Director for Science and Research, Center for Ocean Solutions, Montery, CA, USA	Ocean Health Index for the world's large marine ecosystems
Patrick McConney	Senior Lecturer, Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) Univ. West Indies, Barbados	Examining socio-economic dimensions of risk and vulnerability among coastal inhabitants of large marine ecosystems

David Obura	CORDIO East Africa, Mombasa, Kenya	Reefs at Risk Index
Stephen Olsen	Coastal Resources Center, Univ. Rhode Island, RI, USA	Governance: Assessment of governance arrangements for transboundary LMEs
Candace Oviatt	Professor of Oceanography, Director, Marine Ecosystems Research lab, Graduate School of Oceanography, Univ. Rhode Island, RI, USA	Primary productivity patterns and trends
Daniel Pauly	Professor, Sea Around Us, Univ. British Columbia, BC, Canada	Examining socio-economic dimensions of risk and vulnerability among coastal inhabitants of large marine ecosystems
Kenneth Sherman	Director, NOAA Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Narragansett Laboratory, RI, USA	Sea surface temperature trends; Examining socio-economic dimensions of risk and vulnerability among coastal inhabitants of large marine ecosystems; Fishery production potential of LMEs: a prototype analysis
Ariana Spawn	Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies	Identifying patterns of risk among large marine ecosystems using multiple indicators
Femke Tonneijck	Project Manager, Mangrove Capital, Wetlands International, The Netherlands	Extent of mangroves and drivers of change
Nancy Wallace	Director, NOAA Marine Debris Program	Floating plastic debris
Dixon Wairunge	Nairobi Convention Secretariat, UNEP	Whole report
Mick Wilson	UNEP/DEWA	Whole report
Victor Tsang	UNEP	Whole report

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- 17th Annual Large Marine Ecosystems Consultative Committee Meeting, 29 September-2 October 2015, Paris, France
- 2nd International Ocean Research Conference, 17-21 November 2014, Barcelona, Spain
- 16th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, 29 September-1 October 2014, Athens, Greece
- 16th Annual Consultative Committee Meeting on Large Marine Ecosystems and Coastal Partners, 8-11 July 2014, Paris, France
- Technical Workshop on Selecting Indicators for the State of Regional Seas, 30 June-02 July 2014, Geneva, Switzerland
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LMEs component manager: Julian Barbiere (IOC-UNESCO)

LMEs component coordinator: Sherry Heileman (Consultant, IOC-UNESCO)

Scientific editors: Sherry Heileman (Consultant, IOC-UNESCO) and Kenneth Sherman (NOAA)

Science communication expert: Joan Eamer, Eamer Science and Policy, Gabriola Island, BC, Canada

Maps and graphics designer: Kelly Badger, Eamer Science and Policy, Gabriola Island, BC, Canada

Copy editor: Peter Saunders

UNEP Secretariat: Liana Talaue McManus (Project Manager), Joana Akrofi, Kaisa Uusimaa (UNEP/DEWA) and Isabelle van der Beck (Task Manager)

Design and Layout: Audrey Ringler (UNEP) and Jennifer Odallo (UNON)

IOC-UNESCO support: Isabel Chavez, Bruno Combal, Fabiola Gaucher, Alejandro Iglesias-Campos, Laetitia Langlois

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Preface

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved a Full Size Project (FSP), "A Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme: Aquifers, Lake/Reservoir Basins, River Basins, Large Marine Ecosystems, and Open Ocean to catalyze sound environmental management", in December 2012, following the completion of the Medium Size Project (MSP) "Development of the Methodology and Arrangements for the GEF Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme" in 2011. The TWAP FSP started in 2013, focusing on two major objectives: (1) to carry out the first global-scale assessment of transboundary water systems that will assist the GEF and other international organizations to improve the setting of priorities for funding; and (2) to formalise the partnership with key institutions to ensure that transboundary considerations are incorporated in regular assessment programmes to provide continuing insights on the status and trends of transboundary water systems.

The TWAP FSP was implemented by UNEP as Implementing Agency, UNEP's Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) as Executing Agency, and the following lead agencies for each of the water system categories: the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for transboundary aquifers including groundwater systems in small island developing states (SIDS); the International Lake Environment Committee Foundation (ILEC) for lake and reservoir basins; the UNEP-DHI Partnership – Centre on Water and Environment (UNEP-DHI) for river basins; and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO for large marine ecosystems (LMEs) and the open ocean.

The five water-category specific assessments cover 199 transboundary aquifers and groundwater systems in 43 small island developing states, 206 transboundary lakes and reservoirs, 286 transboundary river basins; 66 large marine ecosystems; and the open ocean, a total of 758 international water systems. The assessment results are organized into five technical reports and a sixth volume that provides a cross-category analysis of status and trends:

Volume 1 – ***Transboundary Aquifers and Groundwater Systems of Small Island Developing States: Status and Trends***
Volume 2 – ***Transboundary Lakes and Reservoirs: Status and Trends***
Volume 3 – ***Transboundary River Basins: Status and Trends***
Volume 4 – ***Large Marine Ecosystems: Status and Trends***
Volume 5 – ***The Open Ocean: Status and Trends***
Volume 6 – ***Transboundary Water Systems: Crosscutting Status and Trends***

A Summary for Policy Makers accompanies each volume.

Volume 4 presents the results of the first global indicator-based, comparative assessment of large marine ecosystems, prepared in partnership with IOC-UNESCO (lead), the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the University of West Indies (Cave Hill) Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), the Center for Marine Assessment and Planning (CMAP) University of California Santa Barbara, Dalhousie University, the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (TUAT), the University of British Columbia Sea Around Us (UBC SAU), the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC), and a number of independent experts. An assessment of the Western Pacific Warm Pool, based on a sub-set of the indicators, is included.

Acronyms

BOB	Bay of Bengal
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CHI	Cumulative Human Impacts (Index)
CIESIN	Center for International Earth Science Information Network
CO_2	carbon dioxide
DBEM	Dynamic Bioclimate Envelope Model
DDT	dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
EBM	ecosystem-based management
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FiB	Fishing in Balance (Index)
GDEM	Global Digital Elevation Model
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	geographical information system
GIWA	Global International Waters Assessment
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GNI	gross national income
HCH	hexachlorocyclohexane