



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



UNEP(DEC)/RS. 6.INF.1

Original: ENGLISH

6th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas
Conventions and Action Plans

Istanbul, Turkey 30th November – 2nd December 2004

A Global Initiative to strengthen Regional Seas Conventions and
Action Plans and enhance co-operation

Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2004-2007*

* 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



Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2004-2007

The strategic directions, listed below, aim at strengthening the Regional Seas Programme (RSP) at the global level. They are intended to complement the implementation of the programmes of work of the individual Regional Seas, as well as the decisions of the governing bodies of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Programmes. They provide an opportunity to improve efficiency, individually and collectively, in the RSPs, increase cooperation, and incorporate new elements in future programmes of work.

The Regional Seas Programme (RSP), an alliance between the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAP), has since its inception 30 years ago constituted a unique approach to the protection of the coastal and marine environment. The Regional Seas programmes of work are mandated by the Governing Bodies of the RSCAP. The Regional Seas have a long history of challenges, successes and lessons learnt, that can be beneficial in optimising the potential and prospects of both individual RSCAP and the global RSP.

Changes in the development agenda, the state of the coastal and marine environment, the international policy framework, scientific knowledge as well as socio-economic realities and trends, constitute challenges that RSP must meet, but at the same time provide opportunities for strengthening the programme as a whole.

Recognising this, the UNEP Governing Council requested in its Resolution 22/2 III A the development and strengthening of RSCAP in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of the marine and coastal environment and requested UNEP to encourage and support RSCAP to incorporate new strategic elements in their programmes of work, bringing those elements to the attention of their respective Member States through governing bodies and other relevant *fora*.

In order to effectively address evolving challenges and the priorities identified in UNEP GC Decision 22/2 III A, and to contribute to reaching the relevant targets of Agenda 21, the WSSD Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals, the RSP must be strategically adaptive and proactive.

This document sets out the Strategic Directions for the RSP, as agreed by the representatives of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans Secretariats, at their 5th Global Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya 26-28 November 2003.

Strategic Guidelines for the Regional Seas Programme

1. Increase Regional Seas' contribution to Sustainable Development, through the enhancement of local, national, regional and global partnerships with relevant social, economic and environmental stakeholders, building upon the WSSD Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals within the context of the Regional Seas mandate.
2. Enhance sustainability and effectiveness of Regional Seas Programmes through increasing country ownership, translating Regional Seas conventions and protocols into national legislation, promoting compliance and enforcement mechanisms, involving civil society and the private sector, building capacities, ensuring viable financial arrangements, as well as developing assessment/evaluation procedures where appropriate.
3. Enhance Regional Seas' visibility and political impact in global and regional policy setting, through establishment of a strengthened 'Regional Seas Alliance', addressing emerging and priority issues, publishing regular statements on these, promoting a joint information policy and ensuring participation and promotion of Regional Seas in relevant regional and global *fora*.
4. Support knowledge-based policy making, development and implementation of relevant environmental legislation, improve knowledge on the state of the marine environment and enhance public awareness, by contributing to the establishment/strengthening of appropriate national and regional monitoring and periodic assessment of the marine and coastal environment.
5. Increase the use of Regional Seas as a platform for developing common regional objectives, promoting synergies and co-ordinated regional implementation of relevant MEAs, global and regional initiatives and responsibilities of United Nations Agencies, such as IMO, IAEA, IOC of UNESCO and FAO, as well as other international actors as a contribution to the sustainable management of the coastal and marine environment.
6. Promote the development of a common vision and integrated management, based on the ecosystem approach, of priorities and concerns related to the coastal and marine environment in Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, introducing amongst others proactive, creative and innovative partnerships and networks.

Elements of the 2004 workprogramme for the RS Secretariats and the RS Co-ordinating Office in Nairobi.

In order to effectively implement these Strategic Guidelines, following the outline of the GC/22 RS decision and the WSSD Plan of Implementation, the 5th Global Meeting of Regional Seas recommended that the following actions will be undertaken by the UNEP Regional Seas Co-ordinating Office in Nairobi and the Regional Seas Secretariats during 2004. They agreed that progress in implementing the agreed action will be assessed at the next global RS meetings and the work programme adopted accordingly.

1. Increase Regional Seas' contribution to Sustainable Development

<i>Action by RS Secretariats</i>	<i>Action by UNEP/RS Coordinating Office</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify all major actors/programmes in the region that address issues within the realm of the RS; - List concrete examples on how RS are contributing to SD, identifying successes and failures as well as models that can be replicated throughout the RS (sharing of expertise); - Provide a platform at the regional level for partners to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ share information; ▪ identify synergies as they relate to regional policy development and/or addressing issues of common concern (project implementation); ▪ form new partnerships, and assign a lead organisation to implement the partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and maintain a database of who is doing what in the RS including major actors/programmes in the regions; - Develop and maintain a database on how RS contribute to SD.

2. Enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of the Regional Seas

Country Ownership	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify how to enhance reporting by countries at COPs (Governing Bodies) on how countries implement the RS convention/action plan, besides reviewing POW of RS secretariats at COPs, with the goal to shift the emphasis in the implementation of Conventions/Action plans from the secretariat to the national level; - Consider how to amend the COP/IGM agenda to better reflect the contribution by countries to the implementation of Conventions/Action plans. - Assess if and how COPs should address common policy development towards global issues and present them in relevant <i>fora</i> such as CSD, UNICP, WSSD, SIDS, UNSOCA, and UNEP GC; - Assess how to ensure closer co-operation between RS secretariats, COPs/Governing Bodies, the UNEP Regional Offices and UNEP's Governing Council. 	
<i>Action by RS Secretariats</i>	<i>Action by UNEP/RS Coordinating Office</i>
Legal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist countries in translating the RS Conventions and Action Plans into national legislation and regulations; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop guidance on how to translate the RS conventions and action plans into national legislation and regulations with an emphasis on promoting compliance and enforcement; - Assist countries in the development of their national legislation, in full co-operation with other UNEP-supported national law programmes.
Finance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pursue external financial resources; - Assist countries in mobilising domestic resources for the implementation of RS Conventions/Action Plans, including innovative financial agreements; - Assist countries in implementing their financial obligations towards their common RS secretariat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist countries, through RS Secretariats, in identifying domestic and external financial mechanisms to better implement the RS; - Engage GEF fully in the further development of the RS and the internalisation (institutionally, financially and programmatically) of the RS conventions and action plans at the national level; - Ensure that the RS have a common position towards the GEF council; - Facilitate a co-ordinated approach and substantive and result-orientated reporting to the major bilateral donors of the RS.
Civil Society and Private Sector	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate partnerships with civil society and private sectors to address priority issues of common concern; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the link between UNEP civil society and private sector programmes with the RS programmes;

<p>issues of common concern;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use NGOs to raise the profile of RS at the countries' level. 	
---	--

3. Enhance the Regional Seas visibility

<i>Action by RS Secretariats</i>	<i>Action by UNEP/RS Coordinating Office</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solicit the inclusion of RS national focal points and chairpersons of COPs in national delegations at GC and other relevant international meetings, including MEAs, COPs; - Facilitate the inclusion of RS in regional environmental ministerial <i>fora</i>, organised by the UNEP Regional Offices, and representation of these ministerial <i>fora</i> at the COPs of RS; - Facilitate common RS positions versus current policy questions and developments (e.g. water supply and sanitation targets, IWRM); - Promote at the national and regional level, combined reporting to relevant regional and global conventions and programmes (e.g. RS, GPA, SIDS, ICARM etc.); - Contribute to the annual RS statement on an emerging or priority issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate a concerted and visible input and policy statement by RS in relevant international <i>fora</i>, including UNICP, GA, CSD, MEAs, COPs and global programmes such as ICRI, ICRAN, IUCN, SIDS, GPA and GEF IW; - Produce annual RS statements on a current/emerging issue that is bound to attract policy and media attention (e.g. sanitation and municipal wastewater, protected areas in the high seas, dumping of military waste etc.); - Conduct meetings of the chairpersons and secretariats of the RS in the margin of GC and other relevant meetings; - Develop RS website and outreach publications; - 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.

4. Monitoring and Assessment

<i>Action by RS Secretariats</i>	<i>Action by UNEP/RS Coordinating Office</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and strengthen ongoing monitoring and assessment activities in the region (also by others) and identify gaps and possibilities; - Mobilise financial resources and secure long term monitoring and assessment, including quality control and assist in capacity building where needed; - Contribute to global assessment exercises such 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support a co-ordinated RS contribution to relevant Global Assessments and ensure RSPs participation in the GMA processes; - Facilitate linkages with ongoing monitoring activities of IOC; - Upon request from regions, facilitate collaboration of RSPs with the IAEA MESL laboratory in Monaco.

<p>as GIWA, GMA, GEO, Millennium Assessment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance collaboration with regional GOOS and GTOS; enhance collaboration when possible with IAEA/MESL. - Assess the feasibility to use appropriate monitoring and assessment methodologies to provide the basic information for informed policy setting and decision taking. 	<p>laboratory in Monaco.</p>
--	------------------------------

5. Enhance the use of Regional Seas as a platform for the co-ordinated implementation of MEAs and global initiatives

<i>Action by RS Secretariats</i>	<i>Action by UNEP/RS Coordinating Office</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively collaborate with global and regional biodiversity related conventions (CBD and its Jakarta Mandate, CITIES, CMS, Ramsar etc.) and reinforce them on a regional level (e.g. as regards to key marine species/coral reefs etc.); - Actively collaborate with the Chemicals and Waste Management Conventions (Basel, PICs, POPs, etc.) and the relevant Atmosphere and Climate Change Conventions; - Further build on the strong alliance between RS and IMO, through the UNEP/IMO Forum on activities related to MARPOL and OPRC and incorporation of RS MPAs in IMO sensitive areas (e.g. SPAs, PSSAs and MPAs); - Compile an overview of agreements between RS and other global/regional organisations, to identify and fortify existing collaboration. - Encourage and assist countries to implement their responsibilities towards different global and regional conventions, as they relate to the Regional Seas, in a coherent and co-ordinated manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperate with MEAs in particular CBD and Biodiversity MEAs, Basel and Chemical MEAs, through amongst others: promoting and facilitating the cross-participation of RSPs in relevant meetings of the COPs of MEAs, Global/International Bodies and Organizations; Cross nominations of Focal Points between RSPs and MEAs, Global/International Bodies and Organizations; - Cooperate with UN and non-UN Bodies in particular: UN – IMO (UNEP/IMO Forum, MARPOL, OPRC, LDC, MPAs), UNESCO/IOC (GOOS), FAO (sustainable fisheries and ecosystem approach), IAEA, GEF, UNICP (UNCLOS), GA, CSD; Non-UN - IUCN, WWF; including developing the Marine Litter Programme with IMO, Basel, FAO and IOC; - Cooperate with Global Programmes and initiatives: GPA, SIDS, WCMC, ICRI, ICRAN, AIS, GISP, GloBallast.

6. Promote the ecosystem approach for integrated management

<i>Action by RS Secretariats</i>	<i>Action by UNEP/RS Coordinating Office</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with global and regional biodiversity related conventions and programmes such as FAO, the NOAA Large Marine Ecosystem Programme and seek their co-operation in the development and implementation of the ecosystem approach; - Develop, together with relevant regional partners programmes for ecosystem based management of living marine resources and large marine ecosystems; - Co-operate with FAO and Regional Fisheries Bodies on the implementation of joint programmes for ecosystem based management of fisheries; - Exchange data and information available at the level of RSPs and RFBs that may be of mutual interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further develop links with FAO on how to jointly implement ecosystem-based management programmes in RSPs and regional fisheries bodies; - Promote and facilitate formalisation of cross participation of RSPs in the meetings of governing bodies of RFBs and their technical subsidiary organs; - Exchange data and information available at the level of RSPs and RFBs that may be of mutual interest; - Seek association and co-operation with regional components of global programmes providing data and information relevant to ecosystem-based management of living marine resources (including fisheries) such as IOC-GOOS.

ACRONYMS

AIS	Alien Invasive Species
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CITIES	Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species
DEWA	Division of Early Warning and Assessment
DRC	Division of Regional Cooperation
DTIE	Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GA	General Assembly
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GIWA	Global International Waters Assessment
GISP	Global Invasive Species Programme
GMA	Global Marine Assessment
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System
GTOS	Global Terrestrial Observing System
GPA	Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICRI	International Coral Reef Initiative
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ICRAN	International Coral Reef Action Network
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
ICARM	Integrated Coastal Area and River Basin Management
IGM	Inter-Governmental Meeting
IMM	Inter-Ministerial Meeting
IW-LEARN	International Waters-Learning Exchange and Resource Network
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
LDC	London Dumping Convention
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEA	Multilateral Environment Agreements
MESL	Marine Environmental Studies Laboratory
NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
OPRC	International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-Operation, 1990
PICs	Prior Informed Consent
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
POW	Programme of Work
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategies
PSSA	Particularly Sensitive Sea Area
RSCAP	Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans
RSP	Regional Seas Programme
RFB	Regional Fisheries Bodies
SD	Sustainable Development
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPA	Specially Protected Areas
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICP	United Nations Informal Consultative Process
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi
UNSOCA	United Nations Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas
WCMC	World Conservation and Monitoring Centre
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WWF	World Wildlife Fund