

# **FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT**

*1 January 2001*

## **FIRST INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT FROM LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES**

**Montreal, Canada, 26 to 30 November 2001**

*The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Government of Canada have the pleasure to announce the convening of the First Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), in Montreal, Canada, from 26 to 30 November 2001.*

The GPA was adopted by 108 Governments and the European Commission in November 1995 at an Intergovernmental Conference in Washington, United States of America. The GPA aims at addressing major threats to the health, productivity and biodiversity of the marine and coastal environment resulting from human activities on land. The GPA recommends an integrated, multi-sectoral approach and recognizes the need for serious commitment and preventive action at all levels: local, national, regional and global.

The UNEP/GPA Coordination Office in The Hague, the Netherlands, coordinates the tasks and activities of UNEP as Secretariat of the GPA. The main responsibilities of the Secretariat, in close partnership with other bodies and organizations, are to: (i) promote and facilitate implementation of the GPA at the national level; (ii) promote and facilitate implementation at the regional and sub-regional level through, in particular, the UNEP Regional Seas Programme; and (iii) play a catalytic role with other organizations and institutions in the implementation at the international level.

The GPA calls for the convening of periodic intergovernmental meetings to review progress in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. The 20<sup>th</sup> session of the UNEP Governing Council decided to convene the first intergovernmental review meeting in 2001.

### ***Goals and Objectives of the First Intergovernmental Review***

The major goal of the Intergovernmental Review process and meeting is to secure commitments from a full range of partners (including Governments, international and regional governmental and non-governmental organizations, private sector, international financing institutions, regional banks and commissions, civic society and other major groups) to advance GPA implementation, based on defined specific activities, targets and financial agreements. The meeting also aims at mobilizing awareness, active participation and involvement of relevant stakeholders at the national, regional and global level. The specific objectives of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting, as agreed in paragraph 77 of the GPA, are to:

- (a) Review progress on implementation of the Global Programme of Action at the national, regional and global level;
- (b) Review the results of scientific assessments regarding land-based impacts upon the marine environment provided by relevant scientific organizations and institutions, including GESAMP<sup>1</sup>;
- (c) Consider reports provided on national plans to implement the Programme of Action;
- (d) Review coordination and collaboration among organizations and institutions, regional and global, with relevant responsibilities and experience;
- (e) Promote exchange of experience between regions;
- (f) Review progress in capacity-building and on mobilization of resources to support the implementation of the Programme of Action, in particular in countries in need of assistance and, where appropriate, provide guidance; and
- (g) Consider the need for international rules, recommended practices and procedures to further the objectives of the Global Programme of Action.

---

<sup>1</sup> UN-sponsored Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection.

### ***Thematic Focus***

The preparatory process, and thus the expected products of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting, will focus on five thematic areas in relation to priority pollutant source categories identified by the regions:

- (a) Binding and non-binding agreements at the national and regional level
- (b) Voluntary agreements and involvement of the private sector
- (c) Capacity-building
- (d) Innovative financing and use of economic instruments
- (e) Sharing experiences through reporting and the further development of the GPA clearing-house mechanism

### ***Specific Products***

- ***A workprogramme for 2002-2006*** to further the implementation of the GPA, with identification of specific priorities and activities, targets and financial implications (as per the five thematic areas above), to be undertaken by Governments, international and regional governmental and non-governmental organizations, private sector, international financing institutions, regional banks and commissions, civic society, other major groups and the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office.
- ***A Ministerial/High Level Declaration*** adopted by Governments and other stakeholders and major groups addressing concrete action required to further the implementation of the GPA.
- ***Endorsement of the "Recommendations for Decision-Making on Municipal Wastewater"***<sup>2</sup>, and agreement that a similar approach taken in preparing the GPA strategic action plan on municipal wastewater be used to address other GPA pollutant source categories (e.g., physical alteration and destruction of habitats, nutrients).
- ***Sharing of experience and expertise*** among Governments and a wider range of stakeholders in support of GPA implementation, among other, through national and regional reporting on progress in implementing the GPA.

### ***Proposed Structure of the Meeting***

The meeting, which is expected to be attended by more than 500 participants representing Governments and a wide range of stakeholders, will comprise five days:

- ***Day 1***, to consider the GPA strategic action plan on municipal wastewater and obtain the endorsement of the "Recommendations for Decision-Making on Municipal Wastewater".
- ***Day 2***, to address the role of the regional seas programmes in furthering the implementation of the GPA, including collaboration with other global and regional agreements and organizations active in the regions.
- ***Days 3***, to address the role of other partners (e.g., non-governmental organizations, UN organizations, private sector, regional banks and commissions, civic society) in the implementation of the GPA, including sharing of experiences, possible public-private partnerships and discussion/agreement on GPA-related activities for 2002-2006, with emphasis on specific activities by region, as well as global approaches where appropriate.
- ***Day 4 and 5***, devoted to a Ministerial/High-Level segment, where the results of the previous days will be presented and discussed; and a Ministerial/High-Level Declaration will be adopted.

*The Second Announcement will provide a progress report on the various preparatory activities being carried out at the national, regional and international level as part of the Intergovernmental Review. In the meantime, for more information on the GPA please visit the GPA clearing-house [www.gpa.unep.org](http://www.gpa.unep.org) and/or contact the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, P.O. Box 16227, 2500 BE, The Hague, the Netherlands, e-mail: [gpa@unep.nl](mailto:gpa@unep.nl)*

---

<sup>2</sup> Available in English, Spanish and French through the GPA clearing-house ([www.gpa.unep.org/documents](http://www.gpa.unep.org/documents)).