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

First meeting

Montreal, Canada 26-30 November 2001

Items 7 and 10 of the provisional agenda\*

IMPROVING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE  
PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT FROM LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES  
THROUGH IMPROVED COASTAL AND OCEAN GOVERNANCE

MINISTERIAL HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT AND MONTREAL DECLARATION ON  
THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Note by the secretariat

1. Ministers and other high-level officials attending 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 (Ministerial/High-level segment to be held on 29-30 November 2001), are invited to provide strategic policy guidance to further the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, particularly on coastal and ocean governance and on financing the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, building on the discussions of the multi-stakeholder segment of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting to be held from 26 to 28 November 2001, prior to the ministerial segment.
2. Ministers and other high-level officials will be invited to incorporate that guidance into the Montreal Declaration on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. They will also be invited to provide direction on how to ensure implementation of the Montreal Declaration by the wider international community, including actions relating to the forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg, in September 2002.

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Note: All documents referred to in this document are or will be available on the Global Programme of Action clearing-house Web site, [www.gpa.unep.org](http://www.gpa.unep.org).

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3. It is envisaged that the Montreal Declaration will reflect the commitments and determination of the Ministers and High-level officials to effectively address the protection of the coastal and marine environment from land-based activities in the broader context of sustainable development, integrated river basin and land-use planning, and coastal and ocean management. The overarching aim of this process and the final Montreal Declaration is to enhance the health and livelihoods of coastal populations and reduce poverty.

4. The Montreal Declaration is expected to include elements on: the status report on implementation of the Global Programme of Action, for the period 1995-2001; the approach to developing the draft recommendations for decision-making on municipal wastewater; the costed work programme of the Global Programme of Action for the period 2002-2006; improved implementation of the Global Programme of Action through improved coastal and ocean governance; building partnerships and financing the implementation of the Global Programme of Action; concrete recommendations to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at its twenty-second session; and concrete recommendations to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

5. In this context, ministers and other high-level officials are invited to consider the attached agenda paper on coastal and ocean governance, giving particular regard to:

- (a) The specific actions required at the international, regional, national and local levels;
- (b) The role of Governments, regional and international governmental and non-governmental organizations, financial institutions, private sector and civil society;
- (c) The institutional, legislative and financial issues.

#### A. Introduction

6. Some 80 per cent of the pollution load to the oceans originates from land-based activities. The economic value of goods and services provided by the oceans has been estimated at \$23 million million per annum<sup>1</sup>.

7. Land-based sources of marine pollution and the physical alteration and destruction of coastal habitat impact on both the natural and human resource base, habitats and species, and thus on the health and well-being of coastal communities and their hinterlands. The seriousness of the problem is illustrated by the impact of municipal wastewater discharges (sewage), which have been identified as one of the most significant threats to sustainable coastal development worldwide. For example, pathogenic organisms in wastewater-contaminated marine and estuarine waters cause massive transmissions of infectious diseases to bathers and consumers of raw and undercooked shellfish, with a global economic impact recently estimated at \$10 thousand million per annum<sup>2</sup>.

8. In a serious attempt to respond to these problems, 108 Governments and the European Commission committed themselves to protect and preserve the coastal and marine environment by adopting the Global Programme of Action and the Washington Declaration on Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities at an Intergovernmental Conference in Washington, DC, in November 1995 (UNEP (OCA)/LBA/IG. 2/7, UNEP (OCA)/LBA/ IG.2/6).

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<sup>1</sup> Costanza, R. *et al.* 1998. The value of ecosystem services: putting the issues in perspective. *Ecological Economics*, 25 (1998) 67-72

<sup>2</sup> GESAMP 2001. Protecting the Oceans from Land-based Activities – Land-based sources and activities affecting the quality and uses of the marine, coastal and associated freshwater environment. Rep. Stud. GESAMP No. 71, 162 pp, GESAMP 2001. A Sea of Troubles. Rep. Stud. GESAMP No. 70, 35 pp.

9. The basic premise of the Global Programme of Action is that a clean and healthy coastal and marine environment is essential for many of the goods and services that directly or indirectly support national economic development, and that incorporating the Global Programme of Action into national development plans or environmental policies will address key issues such as food security, poverty alleviation, public health, and the conservation and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems. Consequently, the Global Programme of Action adopts an integrated policy approach to the multisectoral challenges of coastal and marine degradation. Successful implementation of the Global Programme of Action will result in environmental, economic and social benefits, and lead to integrated coastal zone and watershed management.

10. Coastal zones and oceans currently do not receive the international attention they deserve, commensurate with their importance and contribution to the economic and social well-being of the coastal population which accounts for approximately 50 per cent of the world population.

11. The awareness of the impact of land-based activities on the coastal and marine environment, and the need to implement the Global Programme of Action to ensure long-term sustainability of this vital resource, is generally low. As a result, the Global Programme of Action has yet to translate its potential into fully effective action across a broad front. Effective coordination mechanisms are needed, around which the objectives and activities of the Global Programme of Action can coalesce, thus enlisting broad stakeholder involvement and mobilizing political will to implement the Programme.

B. The challenge of the first Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action

12. The challenge of this first Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action is to change the situation described above, by involving Governments, the private sector, civil society, donor, financial and multilateral communities, in efforts to:

- (a) Bring to the fore the social, economic, human health and environmental benefits that can be derived from implementing the Global Programme of Action;
- (b) Bring the Global Programme of Action into the mainstream of national policies and programmes, within the framework of regional and global cooperation;
- (c) Develop realistic guidance on how to finance the implementation of the Global Programme of Action.

IMPROVING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT FROM LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES THROUGH IMPROVED COASTAL AND OCEAN GOVERNANCE

A. Primary issue for consideration

13. What needs to be considered primarily are the specific measures required to improve the current coastal and ocean governance framework for the purpose of accelerating implementation of the Global Programme of Action at global, regional and national levels.

B. Setting the scene

14. The activities under the Global Programme of Action are closely related to the work of a number of global and regional conventions and multilateral agreements, as well as to that of United Nations organizations, international financial institutions and other partners. The Global Programme of Action's integrated and action-oriented approach offers opportunities for the development of synergies and linkages: between Governments, within the United Nations and multilateral system, and with other partners. The first Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action lends itself, therefore, to a discussion about enhancing coastal and ocean governance, with the overall goal of improving the delivery of the Programme. In this regard, this first intergovernmental review can contribute to global discussions on environmental governance more broadly (UNEP Governing Council decision 21/21 of 9 February 2001), and their translation into concrete action and measurable progress at the regional and national levels.

15. In particular, it is anticipated that the outcomes - including the Montreal Declaration - of the first Intergovernmental Review Meeting will have direct relevance to governance issues to be considered, inter alia, at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)-Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10 (Paris, 3-7 December 2001), the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2-11 September 2002) and future meetings of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process established to facilitate the annual review by the General Assembly of developments in ocean affairs (Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs).

C. Global context

16. Mindful of the importance of the oceans and seas for the earth's ecosystem, including climate change, in terms of providing the vital resources for food security, sustaining economic prosperity, and the well-being of present and future generations, the United Nations General Assembly, at its fifty-fourth session, emphasized the need to improve cooperation and coordination at both intergovernmental and inter-agency levels, in order to address all aspects of oceans and seas in an integrated manner.

17. This need led to the establishment of the Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs, a process designed to help prepare for the annual oceans discussion by the General Assembly by focusing on improving coordination between Governments and the United Nations system within the framework of the existing architecture of global ocean governance.

18. Based on the recommendations of the Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs, the General Assembly, at its fifty-fifth session, expressed deep concern at the degradation of the marine environment, particularly from land-based activities. Emphasizing the need for international cooperation to address this problem, the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance of ensuring full implementation of the Global Programme of Action and called upon relevant United Nations agencies and programmes to fulfill their roles in support of the Programme.

19. Due to its focus on the benefits to the marine environment, the Global Programme of Action is frequently identified by the international community as a “marine” initiative. However, the Programme is actually a terrestrial initiative requiring integration of freshwater management with coastal zone management in a holistic ecosystem approach. There is a clear need to strengthen the linkages between international freshwater, coastal and marine initiatives in order to draw out the benefits of integrated action.

#### D. Regional context

20. At the regional level, the international community (through the Global Programme of Action) has recognized the UNEP regional seas programmes as a key mechanism for implementing the Global Programme of Action. Some of the regional seas programmes have well-developed mechanisms and legal frameworks which provide the necessary infrastructure to support the implementation of a complex and demanding programme such as the Global Programme of Action. However, the various regional seas programmes (both those linked and those not linked to UNEP) are not equal in terms of political support, infrastructure, expertise or their financial capacity to implement effective action to address land-based activities. In some regions, multilateral legal instruments either do not exist or are outdated. Where multilateral legal instruments do not exist, it is not certain that non-binding action plans or programmes of work would be sufficient to ensure implementation of the Global Programme of Action.

21. If the regional seas programmes are to become the main mechanism for the regional delivery of the Global Programme of Action, their capacity to do so must be enhanced. It is timely, therefore, to reflect on the different world in which the regional seas programmes are now operating, in relation to the one in which they were conceived in the 1970s.

#### E. National and local context

22. Action at the national level is fundamental and the main guarantee for the protection of the marine environment from land-based sources of pollution. National action can reflect local priorities and circumstances, including unique ecosystem characteristics, social, cultural and economic dynamics. Key actions at the national level can include, but are not limited to:

(a) The development and/or adaptation of national programmes of action, multi-sectoral strategies or policies, legislation and administrative or fiscal measures relevant to land-based activities;

(b) The development, funding and implementation of concrete projects at the national, provincial and local levels.

23. The main objectives of the Global Programme of Action should be incorporated into national policies and programmes, such as sustainable development strategies, local Agenda 21s and environmental strategies. This will consequently ensure that the Programme will be progressively incorporated in the international arena. As decisions regarding the protection of the marine environment are systematically discussed and adopted in appropriate international forums, implementation of the Programme will be enhanced through various regional and global instruments.

#### F. Stakeholders

24. Since the adoption of the Global Programme of Action in 1995, awareness has been raised of the crucial role of the private sector and civil society in moving the sustainable development agenda forward. It is clear that, for the Global Programme of Action to be successful, its implementation should involve not only Governments, but also other stakeholders and new sources of finance.

25. Active participation by non-government stakeholders in implementing the Global Programme of Action will increase acceptance of responsibility for marine pollution. It will strengthen present efforts but will also produce new and innovative ways of addressing marine pollution and further integrating sectoral management as it relates to the natural environment.

G. Options for improving the current coastal and ocean governance framework for the implementation of the Global Programme of Action

26. The following list of options relating to the primary issue outlined above, are provided for consideration by ministers and high-level officials attending the first Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action. It is a non-exhaustive list and other options may be proposed during the multi-stakeholder segment of the meeting:

(a) Incorporate (bring into the mainstream) the Global Programme of Action more effectively into the mandates and work plans of: United Nations organizations; global conventions and multilateral environmental agreements; regional conventions and multilateral environmental agreements; regional seas conventions and action plans; international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility, by, for example:

(i) Governments (working unilaterally or as groups) seeking to incorporate the Global Programme of Action into the mandates and work plans of existing global and regional mechanisms and organizations through, *inter alia*, decisions by Conferences of the Parties, memoranda of understanding and joint programmes between multilateral environmental agreements related to Global Programme of Action objectives;

(ii) Calling for the inclusion of an oceans cluster on the agenda of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, and feeding the outcomes of the first Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action into that cluster, as well as the output of other international coordination mechanisms such as the United Nations Informal Consultative Process on Oceans;

(b) Facilitate global, regional and national cooperation and linkages between initiatives, agreements and organizations relating to the management of river catchment basins, the coastal zone and the marine environment, by, for example:

(i) Strengthening institutional cooperation between river basin authorities, port authorities and coastal managers;

(ii) Incorporating coastal management considerations into relevant legislation and regulations pertaining to river basins;

(iii) Making optimum use of forums such as the International Conference on Freshwater (Bonn, 3-7 December 2001), the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, September 2002), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (The Hague in 2002), and the Third World Water Forum (Kyoto, March 2003);

(c) Broaden the scope and strengthen the capacity of regional seas programmes to implement the Global Programme of Action, by, for example:

(i) Calling on the Conferences of the Parties to address implementation of the Programme of Action as a standing agenda item;

(ii) Encouraging regional seas conventions and action plans to adopt legally binding measures, such as specific protocols, to address regional problems of land-based activities;

- (iii) Bringing into the mainstream regional seas programmes with regional development and watershed management plans;
  - (iv) Using regional seas programmes to provide forums for involving all stakeholders, including regional development banks, economic commissions, United Nations organizations and civil society, in cooperative actions to address priority problems;
- (d) Improve cross-sectoral cooperation among regional organizations and agreements, such as the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, the UNESCO-IOC regional commissions, regional fisheries management organizations, regional health organizations, regional ministerial forums, economic and social commissions and development banks, by, for example:
- (i) Developing joint work programmes;
  - (ii) Participating in respective governing bodies;
- (e) Incorporate the Global Programme of Action into national, provincial or local development and action plans, by, for example:
- (i) Developing national programmes of action on land-based activities;
  - (ii) Incorporating the Global Programme of Action objectives into integrated natural resource management, development and sectoral policies, such as tourism, fisheries, energy and transport;
- (f) Facilitate, at all levels, extensive stakeholder participation and commitment to implement the Global Programme of Action, by, for example, bringing key stakeholders, such as the private sector, financial institutions, and civil society, together around concrete problems in innovative partnerships to assess, finance and implement appropriate technological, institutional and financial solutions to the problems.

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