

### Annex III

#### OUTLINE INFORMATION ON REGIONAL SEAS ACTIVITIES

1. On the margins of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting, four sessions were held on the regional seas programmes. At these sessions, brief presentations were made describing experience in the development and implementation of the Global Programme of Action in relation to programmes in 12 regional seas areas.
2. The objectives of these sessions were to contribute to mobilization of technical and financial resources at the regional and global levels for regional implementation, to show real progress in addressing pollution and degradation problems regionally, and to illustrate regional leadership through Government-driven projects, based, among others, upon relevant regional and/or national programmes of action on land-based activities.
3. The following is a brief account of the main thrust of each of these presentations, together with highlights of the major issues related to the Global Programme of Action which have been addressed in the context of these regional seas programmes.

#### Caribbean

4. In 1999 in Aruba, the Parties to the Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean adopted a Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities. This Aruba Protocol broke new ground as the first new regional treaty, negotiated after the adoption of the Global Programme of Action and incorporating a source-specific approach modelled on the Global Programme of Action. Over the next few years, Governments will concentrate on its ratification and entry into force and the implementation of the Protocol's regionally specific effluent guidelines.
5. The main features of the current programme of work for the Caribbean Environment Programme are projects intended to prevent, reduce and control land-based pollution, with priority being given to domestic waste-water and agricultural non-point sources. Currently the emphasis is on reducing pesticide run-off to the Caribbean Sea, integrating coastal area planning for Central America and small island developing States and addressing sewage treatment needs while identifying appropriate innovative means of tackling the problem. Funding partners include GEF and Governments of the United States of America and Sweden.
6. The proposed work plan for the period 2002-2006 will include work on domestic waste-water, the establishment of a clearing-house node and enhancement of the marketability of waste-water infrastructure. The clearing-house node is intended to be a regional Internet-based clearing-house mechanism on pollution from land-based activities, which will be linked to other databases. A further future activity will focus on the financing of waste-water infrastructure in the Wider Caribbean region, through identification of options, convening of partnership meetings on financing and the demonstration and monitoring of the effectiveness of new technological and financial approaches. Some of the smaller Caribbean countries have endorsed a series of principles governing environmental sustainability as a cross-cutting issue. There is a clear need to involve the private sector in the mobilization of much needed funds for projects, as public funds and status quo of funding arrangements are not sufficient to meet the great need in the Wider Caribbean.

## East Asia

7. The East Asia regional seas programme is not a convention, but an Action Plan. It carries out activities in the context of the Global Programme of Action. It has commissioned a report on the socio-economic effects of sewage, including the economic opportunities offered by sewage.
8. A workshop on protection of marine and coastal ecosystems from wastewater was held, involving 40 participants from 10 countries and funded by the Global Programme of Action and the Government of Japan. The workshop recommended that a Steering Group, comprising a representative from each member country, should be convened to further implement the Global Programme of Action within the broader East Asian region. The mandate of the Steering Group is to develop regional guidelines for the East Asia and North-West Pacific regions, in order to provide a framework for Global Programme of Action activities. Each individual country will then identify ways to implement the regional framework, taking into account its own regulatory, institutional and statutory arrangements. Further roles of the Steering Group are to facilitate the application of technical practices in waste-water management, to manage information on innovative technologies and practices, to facilitate the development of pilot projects, and to develop further partnership approaches, incorporating capacity-building.
9. Among the activities proposed in the Global Programme of Action East Africa Seas Action Plan for the period 2002-2006, there are three activities that will be integrated into demonstration sites of the UNEP/GEF project "Reducing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand":
  - (a) Develop methods and criteria for determining carrying capacity for sediments and nutrients on three habitats – mangroves, coral reefs and sea-grass;
  - (b) Identify "hotspots" of pollution in the East Asian Seas and choose one or two sites at which to reduce pollution. Stakeholders, users and governments will be involved in the identification;
  - (c) Establish demonstration and trial sites for low cost, community or household level sewage treatment and trial forests, crops and wetlands for using water and nutrients from wastewater.

## Eastern Africa

10. The Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention) was signed in 1985 and ratified in 1996. It has nine member states: Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Reunion (France), Seychelles, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania. South Africa has been invited to join.
11. Complementary instruments are two protocols, one concerning protected areas and wild fauna and flora and the other concerning cooperation in combating marine pollution in cases of emergency, and an action plan.
12. The work programme covers four areas: assessment, management, coordination and cross-cutting issues. The assessment component covers fragile ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangroves and sea-grass beds, shoreline changes, land-based sources of pollution and social and economic issues. Management deals with coral reefs and associated ecosystems; shoreline changes; land-based sources of pollution; and

marine sources of pollution. The component dealing with coordination and legal aspects covers review of the Convention and its protocols; strengthening of programme coordination structures; and coordination with other conventions and partners. The cross-cutting subcomponents are information dissemination and exchange and emerging issues.

13. The Convention's implementation strategy is to collaborate with the Global Programme of Action, other United Nations agencies, sister regional seas programmes through "twinning", development partners and other interested parties for sourcing of funds; to collaborate with the Global Programme of Action for the development of management tools; and to engage the private sector and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of pilot projects.

#### Kuwait Action Plan area

14. Within the framework of its objective of promoting environmental management, protecting the marine environment and promoting the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) is implementing a regional programme of action on land-based activities to address the negative impacts of waste-water discharges. This includes demonstration or pilot projects on municipal wastewater, regional regulation of waste discharges, guidelines on sea water quality, guidelines and criteria for the treatment of industrial effluents, including their joint treatment with domestic sewage, and guidelines for environment impact assessment. A manual on the implementation of the regional protocol on land-based sources explains its legal, institutional and technical aspects in simple language for all stakeholders. A river basin management programme for Shatt-al-Arab has been initiated in cooperation with UNEP. There is a need for a comprehensive action plan to monitor the region's wetlands, current changes and their impacts on the quality of water and marine life. External funding is needed for many planned activities.

#### Mediterranean

15. The principal problem arising in the Mediterranean area is that of high population density in coastal areas, which is expected to increase. Pollution hot spots have been identified in all parts of the region. The Barcelona Convention was adopted in 1975 to address the problems of an area containing a resident coastal population of nearly 150 million which is visited by over 200 million tourists each year. In 1980, a protocol to combat land-based pollution was adopted. In response to subsequent developments, including the decisions of the Rio Summit and the adoption of the Global Programme of Action in 1995, many changes have been made in the instruments, and the protocol on land-based sources was substantially amended in 1996, marking a real step forward in pollution control. Major features of the amended protocol are the fact that it now covers the hydrological basin of the Mediterranean, the inclusion for the first time of provision for sanctions in cases of non-compliance, and the development of a reporting system. It is expected to enter into force in 2002.
16. In addition, a strategic action programme was adopted in 1997 and is now in its operational phase. GEF has agreed to fund 50 per cent of a \$12 million project for the implementation of the programme, paving the way for practical actions on the ground. It covers two main areas – the urban environment and industrial development – and its coverage coincides with that of the Global Programme of Action. The target dates stipulated are also those of the Global Programme. Outputs will include regional guidelines, pre-investment studies for pollution hot spots,

analysis of pollution-sensitive areas, training and capacity-building, measures to ensure public participation, economic instruments and a strategic action programme for biodiversity.

17. The MEDPOL programme for continuous monitoring of the status of and trends in marine pollution constitutes a notable example of implementation of the objectives of the Global Programme of Action at the regional level. The Mediterranean programme has greatly benefited from the adoption of the Global Programme of Action and has made good use of the example it has set. It stands ready to cooperate with organizations in other regions which are embarking on the same process.

#### North-east Pacific

18. The participating countries in the north-east Pacific regional seas programme are Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama; the United States participates as an observer. Since this was the first regional seas convention to be negotiated following the adoption of the Global Programme of Action at the Washington conference, the Global Programme of Action forms an integral part of it. It also differs from earlier regional seas conventions in taking a sustainable use approach from its onset: whereas the earlier ones focused primarily on marine pollution, this programme also covers issues such as food security, environmental security, poverty alleviation, ecosystem-based management of fisheries and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources.
19. Three meetings of high-level government-designated experts were held to negotiate the convention and plan of action. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries for signature at ministerial level is to be held in Guatemala in February 2002, followed immediately by the first intergovernmental meeting on the plan of action, at which the focus will be on institutional and financial arrangements, as well as the strategy for securing ratification of the convention and implementation of the plan of action. Other major achievements of the negotiating process were a regional diagnostic study of the impact of land-based activities on the marine and coastal environment and associated freshwater systems, and a work programme for 2001-2006 on land-based activities, covering 17 main areas for action.
20. Mobilization of financial support will be critical to the successful implementation of the plan of action and the land-based activities work programme, which will be implemented with the active engagement of civil society, including private industry, non-governmental organizations and local authorities, and in close cooperation with international and regional organizations.

#### North-west Pacific

21. The North-West Pacific Action Plan, which is not legally binding, was adopted in 1994 and covers areas of the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea under the jurisdiction of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. Efforts are under way to add the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the participants. UNEP acts as the secretariat; a regional coordinating unit is in the process of establishment. An agreement on land-based sources of pollution is under discussion, and a proposal will be submitted to GEF. Member States of NOWPAP have provided \$150,000 for this project proposal that is being developed by UNEP in cooperation with ACOPS. The institutional arrangements are being revised, and a forthcoming meeting will

examine a proposal to reorganise the regional activity centres to include one to deal with land-based activities.

#### North-east Atlantic

22. The OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic region, which was a merger between the Oslo and Paris Conventions on dumping and land-based pollution respectively, was adopted in 1992 and its scope extended to include biodiversity and human activities. The Convention was established for protection of the marine environment of the north-east Atlantic region and its main features include a general obligation to take all possible measures to prevent and eliminate pollution and to protect the region against the adverse effects of human activities. The Convention is currently guided by five strategies and an action plan dealing with hazardous substances, radioactive substances, eutrophication, offshore oil and gas industry, marine biodiversity and habitats, as well as assessment and monitoring.
23. Biodiversity is the integrating feature of the Convention and in that context the OSPAR Commission, which was established by the Convention, reviews impacts of candidate lists of human activities to see where action would be justified and what measures would be needed. In the area of hazardous substances, for instance, a review is carried out of the chemicals that are known to be on the market and a list established for priority action, through a dynamic selection and prioritization mechanism.

#### South Asian Seas

24. The South Asian Seas Programme is a relatively recent programme whose priority action areas include integrated coastal zone management and land-based sources of marine pollution. Under the Global Programme of Action, several activities have been undertaken, such as the South Asian Seas Workshop on the Global Programme of Action, and the development of pilot national programmes of action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities. The priority issues are solid waste generation and management; sewage contamination; industrial waste general and management; agricultural runoff; oil pollution; ship breaking operations; sediment transport and physical alteration of habitats. In the coming year, the South Asian Seas Programme will focus on the promotion and facilitation of non-binding regional agreements, regional assessments and analyses for action and capacity-building. This will include work on the development of its own clearing-house mechanism and the building of capacities for implementation of the Global Programme of Action.
25. As part of its work programme for the period 2002-2003, the South Asian Seas Programme hopes to be able to approve draft national action plans prepared by national consultants for which it seeks external financial assistance. It will also assist in the implementation of the project on physical alterations and destruction of habitats, by helping prepare guidelines for actions and determine the role of stakeholders.

#### South-east Pacific

26. The Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the South-East Pacific was adopted in 1981 together with a convention and various complementary agreements, including protocols on oil pollution emergencies, the conservation and management of marine and coastal areas and protection against radioactive contamination, signed by Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Panama. They have the same features as other UNEP regional seas programmes. Regional

coordination is provided by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), backed up by national focal points and national institutions. The Plan of Action is viewed as a sound basis for international cooperation to address land-based activities, and, together with the protocol on land-based activities, as an appropriate mechanism for implementation of the Global Programme of Action at the regional level.

27. A regional diagnosis of land-based sources of pollution has shown the main sources to be domestic and industrial wastewater, wastewater from mining and the oil industry, insecticides from farming and livestock-raising, and high and rising population density in the coastal strip. Within the overall objective of protecting the marine and coastal environment, specific objectives are to support compliance with the Global Programme of Action, to strengthen national and regional capacity to deal with land-based sources, and to promote the application of national environmental policies, the dissemination of information, training, environmental education programmes, and technical and financial arrangements, including best practices, and to support evaluation and monitoring systems.

#### South Pacific

28. The work carried out by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is set out in its Action Plan which covers four key areas: nature conservation; pollution prevention; climate change and variability; and economic development. A number of activities have been carried out under the auspices of the Global Programme of Action such as the preparation of the Regional Framework for Action on Waste-water, the guiding principles of which include appropriate national waste-water management policies.
29. The programme is intended, *inter alia*, to review legislation, encourage research on traditional practices and cultural attitudes, while ensuring integration with emergency and disaster planning. There are, in addition, some related activities that are not driven by the Global Programme of Action, such as the POPs and hazardous waste management project under which an inventory of stockpiles and contaminated sites has been completed.
30. At the national level, there are also a number of ongoing activities: the upgrading of sanitation and solid waste systems in Kiribati; a new landfill/waste management facility in the Cook Islands; and a pilot project demonstrating the usefulness of public/private partnerships in solid waste management, in Samoa.
31. The South Pacific Regional Environment Programme has one of the best track records in the regional seas programme, in spite of the enormous physical challenges facing it, thanks in part to the periodic and transparent review of its work programmes.

#### West and Central Africa

32. Coastal cities in West and Central Africa (WACAF) have been the main point for industrial development. Migration of workers from inland rural areas to the coastal industrial centres has led to increasing threats of degradation to the coastal and marine environment. The sanitary infrastructure suffers from inadequate financial investments, irregular maintenance, and a lack of control and enforcement. Assessment and effective management of these sources of pollution are the priorities in the WACAF region.

Under the Abidjan Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region, a work programme for the reduction of pollution from land-based activities in the region has been established

covering two themes: assessment and management. Priority actions have been identified including socio-economic studies and assessment of discharges and emissions.

33. The general objective of the programme is to enhance awareness in order to ensure sustainable use of coastal zones. One of the specific goals under the “assessment” theme is to assess the capacities at national level to develop policies and strategies related to waste management in order, *inter alia*, to produce a status report on capacity development needs at the national level. A further activity planned is to minimize impacts from municipal and industrial discharges and waste disposal. Already partners have been identified for the activities proposed, both within and outside the region, including possible twinning arrangements with other conventions.
34. All the priorities have been established on the basis of regional source categories such as pesticides and use of fertilizers in agriculture, solid waste and marine litter and atmosphere pollution. The major hurdle to their implementation, however, remains the lack of necessary funds.