



THIRD GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON OCEANS, COASTS, AND ISLANDS MOVING THE GLOBAL OCEANS AGENDA FORWARD: 24-27 JANUARY 2006

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GLOBAL FORUM AND INTERNATIONAL OCEANS AND COASTS POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

The Third Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, "Moving the Global Oceans Agenda Forward," took place at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) headquarters in Paris, France from 24-27 January 2006.

The Third Global Conference was organized by the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, which was created by an informal World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) coordinating group in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002. Comprised of individuals from governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Global Forum serves as a platform for cross-sectoral information sharing and dialogue on issues affecting oceans, coasts and islands, with the goal of achieving sustainable development in these areas. The Conference is part of the activities of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) project on Fostering a Global Dialogue on Oceans, Coasts, and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and on Freshwater-Coastal-Marine Interlinkages.

Bringing together over 400 participants from 78 countries representing high-level government officials, UN and other international agencies, NGOs, industry, ocean donors, organized science groups, and networks of museums and aquaria, the Third Global Conference sought to accelerate progress in the attainment of international ocean policy targets, especially those related to the WSSD and to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (including integrated ocean and coastal management, fisheries, small island states, pollution, biodiversity, and freshwater/oceans linkages) and examined two major emerging ocean policy issues, namely high seas governance and the wide-ranging effects of climate change on oceans and coastal environments.

During the Conference, participants heard presentations by high-level ocean officials, and engaged in topical panels, roundtable discussions and dialogue sessions.

Outcomes from the Third Global Conference will be included in a Co-Chairs report, which will contain WSSD targets and MDGs implementation perspectives, reports from the various panel sessions, dialogue sessions and roundtables, as well as summaries of the papers presented.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, was the first major international gathering to address issues related to sustainable development at the global level. UNCED participants adopted Agenda 21, a plan for achieving sustainable development in the 21st century. Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 calls for new and integrated approaches to the sustainable development of oceans and coasts, and the Rio Principles on environment and development introduced the precautionary principle as a component of new approaches to ocean-related agreements.

POST-UNCED AGREEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES: Since UNCED, significant progress has been made in the development of legislation, agreements and programmes of action at the international level. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) entered into force in 1994, and provides an overall framework for other ocean-related agreements. The United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Jakarta Mandate on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity (Jakarta Mandate) and the United Nations Agreement on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UN Fish Stocks Agreement) were all adopted in 1995. UNEP's Regional Seas Programme, launched in 1974 in the wake of

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the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, continued after UNCED to guide the process of regional cooperation, while the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) for the Sustainable Development of SIDS has contributed to an overall strengthening of issues related to SIDS on the political agenda.

Numerous efforts in capacity building and integrated coastal management have also been undertaken at national and local levels, including the creation of policy frameworks and the establishment of protected areas and conservation projects. Investments by the private sector in partnership with governments, advances in technology and scientific research, and NGO efforts to raise public awareness have all contributed to the evolution of sustainable development and management of coastal and marine areas.

WSSD PREPARATIONS AND OUTCOMES: The WSSD convened from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. A number of meetings prior to the WSSD contributed to putting oceans, coasts and islands issues on the agenda.

The November 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review Meeting in Montreal, Canada, brought together high-level government officials from 98 countries, international financial institutions, international organizations, UN agencies and NGOs. Participants adopted the Montreal Declaration, which provided input to the WSSD and represents an important political commitment to improve the state of the world's oceans. It calls for concrete actions to address the impacts of sewage, physical alteration and habitat destruction, and nutrient-loading on the marine and coastal environments. It also highlights the importance of managing shared waters - both freshwater and marine.

The First Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10: Toward the 2002 WSSD took place from 3-7 December 2001 in Paris, France. Participants assessed the status of oceans and coasts and progress achieved over the last decade, identified continuing and new challenges, examined options for concerted action on cross-sectoral issues and laid the groundwork for the inclusion of an oceans perspective and SIDS issues on the WSSD agenda.

POST WSSD: The Second Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands: Mobilizing for Implementation of the Commitments Made at the 2002 WSSD on Oceans, Coasts, and SIDS, took place from 12-14 November 2003, in Paris, France. The Conference was organized by the Global Forum and spurred the process of initial implementation of the WSSD commitments.

The International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for SIDS convened from 10-14 January 2005, in Port Louis, Mauritius. Delegates adopted the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of SIDS.

The Ocean Policy Summit International Conference on Integrated Ocean Policy: National and Regional Experiences, Prospects, and Emerging Practices (organized by the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands) was held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 10-14 October 2005. The Summit considered advances made in achieving the WSSD targets and the MDGs

related to integrated oceans governance at national and regional levels. Participants addressed how national and regional ocean policies may be enhanced and further expanded.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

The Third Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands commenced on Tuesday, 24 January 2006. The Conference began with opening statements, which were followed by twelve plenary panels that addressed various aspects of oceans affairs. Throughout the Conference, participants heard special presentations and engaged in concurrent dialogue sessions on achieving synergy and on progress in achieving the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) targets and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Roundtables on ocean donors and on business and industry leaders, as well as informal ministerial roundtables, were held on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Participants heard reports from these dialogue sessions and roundtables on Friday afternoon in plenary. This report is organized by agenda item and summarizes the dialogue sessions as reported in plenary, as well as the various presentations and discussions.

OPENING SESSION

During the Tuesday morning plenary session, on behalf of Patricio Bernal, Executive Secretary, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) International Oceanographic Commission (IOC), Umit Unluata, IOC, welcomed participants to the meeting.

Nelly Olin, French Minister for Environment, called for the adoption of integrated management strategies and a partnership approach in order to enhance marine governance. She stressed the role of marine protected areas (MPAs) and early warning systems.

Biliana Cicin-Sain, Co-Chair and Head of the Secretariat, Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, encouraged participants to focus on shared issues, find creative solutions, and be candid in exposing current problems. She stressed the role of oceans management in reducing poverty and called for enhanced South-North and South-South cooperation.

Veerle Vandeweerd, Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Seas Programme (RSP), and Coordinator, UNEP Global Programme of Action on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), urged delegates to review the WSSD targets in detail, engage in multi-stakeholder partnerships, and identify the economic and environmental costs of inaction.

Manuel Lobo Antunes, Portuguese Secretary for National Defense and Maritime Affairs, urged delegates to build upon the conclusions of the 2005 Lisbon Ocean Policy Summit by adopting an ambitious, integrated and multi-faceted approach.



Nelly Olin, French Minister for Environment

PANEL SESSIONS

PANEL 1: STATUS OF OCEANS AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS AND PEOPLES; OPERATIONALIZING ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT: This panel was held on Tuesday morning. Panel Co-Chairs Ellen Pikitch, Pew Institute for Ocean Science, University of Miami, and Indumathie Hewawasam, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank, outlined the panel's goals and identified the need for tangible steps forward.

Pikitch introduced the report on the UN Millennium Project and listed the obstacles to and recommendations for achievement of environmental sustainability. She called for the immediate suspension of deep sea bottom trawling, emphasizing that this would prevent irreparable harm to the seabed ecosystem without impacting food security.

Al Duda, Senior Advisor, International Waters, Global Environment Facility (GEF), outlined GEF support at different scales for large marine ecosystems (LMEs). He stressed that the responsibility for achieving the WSSD targets lies with Ministers from the North and the South, and urged the North to reform the global trade regime to eliminate distortions and subsidies, enact ecosystem safeguards and discipline fleets.

On benefiting people and coastal communities through ecosystem management, Hewawasam argued that if ecosystems are managed wisely, pro-poor growth and poverty reduction are possible. She said this calls for rigorous implementing institutions, sound science, and community participation in decision making.

Awni Behnam, President, International Ocean Institute (IOI), argued that a partnership approach, which includes all stakeholders and emphasizes information sharing, is essential to the proper enforcement and implementation of oceans, coasts and islands conventions. He also called for the creation of a single UN entity to oversee oceans governance to close the "permanent lacuna" that characterizes the present fragmented oceans governance system.

Hamid Ghaffarzadeh, Project Manager, Caspian Environment Programme, said the ecosystem approach should include socioeconomic considerations, including emphasis on the cost of environmental degradation. He stated that cost-benefit analyses must play a role in all analytical processes, and called for linkages between environmental and economic bodies.

In the ensuing discussion, a number of participants supported the creation of a special representative in the UN system for oceans. Participants also addressed the scientific basis of LMEs and good governance in oceans management. Many called for a moratorium on deep sea bottom trawling.



Al Duda, Senior Advisor, International Waters, Global Environment Facility (GEF)

PANEL 2: OCEAN INDUSTRIES: BEST PRACTICES IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE SECTORS:

This panel was held on Tuesday morning. Panel Chair Paul Holthus, Executive Director, Marine Aquarium Council, said sustainability requires the proactive involvement of business and industry leaders, and underscored the importance of building intersectoral partnerships and tailoring economic considerations.

Tim Wilkins, Environmental Manager, International Association of Independent Tank Owners (INTERTANKO), highlighted the efforts of the tanker industry to improve its compliance with international environmental standards. He indicated that industry is working towards improving biodiversity protection and the reduction of marine pollution and air emissions through incentive-based schemes, measuring its success according to environmental management and awareness indices.

Dierk Peters, International Marketing Manager for Sustainability, UNILEVER, said his company is emphasizing the sustainability of its raw material fish supply, to protect its long-term position in the market. He outlined the work the company undertook with World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to develop the Marine Stewardship Council, which assesses and certifies the sustainability of particular fisheries.

Arthur Bogason, Co-Chair, World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers, highlighted the plight of small-scale fishermen. Considering the importance of including this group in the sustainable future of the industry, he suggested establishing a university to educate the fishing community about the institutional framework of oceans governance and the community's corresponding rights and responsibilities.

John Connelly, President, National Fisheries Institute and International Coalition of Fishing Organizations, noted the global importance of seafood as a source of protein. He stressed the need for governments to engage all stakeholders, including industry, to sustainably manage their fisheries, and called for more robust regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) in some areas of the high seas.

Mark Caney, President, Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) Europe, highlighted the size of the recreational diving industry in Europe, and outlined the AWARE project, which involves shark and reef protection, and beach and underwater cleanups.

Noting the significant introduction of invasive species through ballast water, Jose Matheickal, International Maritime Organization (IMO), elaborated on the GEF/UN Development Programme (UNDP)/IMO Global Ballast Water Management Programme. He highlighted the transport industry's active participation in this programme, including through the adoption of voluntary guidelines. He advocated technological cooperation, institution strengthening and capacity building, particularly in sensitive regions such as Small Island Developing States (SIDS).



Mark Caney, President, Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) Europe

Bruno Corr ard, Carrefour, said the seafood industry has a legal, moral and economic obligation to pursue sustainability. Stressing that certified products are still more expensive than regular products, he underlined the need for awareness raising in order to increase their demand.

During the ensuing discussion, one participant noted that methods of certifying the sustainability of fish products, as well as any definition of ‘sustainable fisheries’, rely on quota that are based on landing data rather than on scientific estimates of the actual status of fish stocks. Delegates also discussed the relationship between sustainable fisheries and climate change.

PANEL 3: PROGRESS ON MAJOR WSSD TARGETS AND MDGs ON OCEANS AND COASTS: This panel was

held on Tuesday afternoon. Panel Chair David Freestone, Deputy General Counsel, Advisory Services, World Bank, explained that the panel would deal with four areas: integrated ocean and coastal management; fisheries; conservation of biodiversity; and regional cooperation.

Integrated ocean and coastal management: Paul Nemitz, Deputy Head, Maritime Task Force, EU, detailed progress on an integrated maritime policy EU Green Paper, expected to be published in May 2006. He argued that the EU suffers from treaty congestion and that a central aim of the forthcoming maritime policy is to simplify and integrate the present raft of legislation dealing with this issue.

Jean-Didier Hache, Executive Secretary, Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), expressed concern about the effects of climate change, which will have particular impact on the CPMR’s members. He welcomed the emergence of a new form of world governance, in which regional bodies interface with international organizations such as UNDP to facilitate an increase in regional participation.

Won-Tae Shin, Deputy Director, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Republic of Korea, detailed progress made towards implementing WSSD targets. He conceded that, despite the gains made, more work is required to coordinate the functions among relevant ministries and local governments and to enhance his country’s role in fostering further international cooperation.

Focusing on African fisheries, Magnus Ngoile, Tanzanian National Environment Management Council, called for harmonization of fisheries management processes at all levels. He stressed the need to restore the balance between small-scale and industrial fisheries and suggested establishing a ministerial forum to stimulate effective governance.

Fisheries (WSSD Goal): Serge Garcia, Director, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Fishery Resource Division, said the ecosystem approach calls for sectoral integration and needs to be embedded in national policies. He highlighted FAO’s projects, including guidelines on MPAs and eco-labeling and

stated that effective stakeholder participation and sustainable funding mechanisms are essential conditions for environmental sustainability.

Presenting the World Bank’s Global Programme on Sustainable Fisheries (PROFISH), Marea Hatzioios, Senior Coastal and Marine Specialist, World Bank Environment Department, explained that PROFISH is a World Bank-led global partnership, with multi-donor support and partners, which aims to promote the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, help mainstream sustainable fisheries into national strategies, and raise awareness on fisheries issues.

Alistair Graham, Marine Programme, WWF, highlighted the need for global oversight of regional arrangements to ensure greater accountability and uniformity of norms. He stated that the prohibition of deep sea bottom trawling is the most cost-effective measure that can be taken today and indicated his organization’s willingness to encourage consumer action for more sustainable industry practices.

Barbara Hanchard, Project Coordinator, GEF/UNDP Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (Pacific), presented on the Western and Central Pacific tuna fishery, the world’s most important source of tuna. She described the process leading to the adoption of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, stressing the importance of good governance in achieving sustainable fisheries.

In the ensuing discussion, Garcia explained that the FAO is working directly with the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the issue of incentives and their impacts on fisheries.

Conservation of biodiversity, networks of MPAs (WSSD targets): Marjo Vierros, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, highlighted the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment’s main conclusion that unprecedented additional action is needed to achieve the CBD’s target to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. Identifying protected areas as an important tool in achieving this target, she noted that most countries have MPAs in place, but that they cover only a fraction of the world’s overall ocean surface. Noting a lack of awareness, political will and long-term vision, she called for better communication between scientists and policy makers.

Nguyen Viet Thang, Vice-Minister of Fisheries, Vietnam, reported on progress on a national master plan for an MPA system. He detailed Vietnam’s work with the World Bank, GEF, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, and WWF in developing community-based management systems and institutional frameworks to effectively protect marine ecosystems against pollution and overfishing.



David Freestone, Deputy General Counsel, Advisory Services, World Bank



Nguyen Viet Thang, Vice-Minister of Fisheries, Vietnam

Regional Cooperation (WSSD targets and MDGs): Chua Thia-Eng, Regional Programme Director, GEF/UNDP/IMO, Partnership in Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), stressed the importance of improving regional cooperation through intergovernmental, inter-agency and multisectoral integration. He used the example of cooperation between Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam to highlight the benefits of regional cooperation.

Mara Warwick, Senior Urban Environmental Specialist, World Bank, detailed how the World Bank/GEF Strategic Partnership for East Asia allows financiers and technical experts to propose and critique innovative approaches to marine conservation, and facilitates the establishment of common monitoring systems and evaluation techniques.

Michael O'Toole, Chief Technical Advisor, GEF UNDP Benguela Current LME Programme, listed the extreme events affecting Benguela and the actions taken through this Programme, including developing an early warning system, assessing links between extreme weather events and climate change and creating MPAs. He indicated that promoting an ecosystem approach and capacity building are essential elements of the Programme.

Ellik Adler, UNEP RSP Coordinator, explained that the WSSD created the opportunity for revitalizing the Regional Seas Programme (RSP), which was originally launched in the early 1970's. He detailed the achievements of the RSP, including reaching global coverage and adopting regional conventions and protocols covering oil spills, ocean dumping, and pollution from land-based activities. He explained that the RSP promotes the adoption of ecosystem-based integrated management and called for a close cooperation between LME and RSP institutions.

In the ensuing discussion, Warwick described one of the seven projects funded by the World Bank under the Strategic Partnership for East Asia, which aims to simplify and strengthen pollution control laws and institutions in Manila, Philippines. Participants discussed priorities in advancing marine management, with Vierros highlighting high seas biodiversity as a high priority for all. Thia-Eng emphasized Asia's need for funds and technical expertise for implementation, while Graham stressed the importance of capacity building.

PANEL 4: LINKING FRESHWATER TO OCEANS (WSSD TARGETS): This panel was held on Wednesday morning and was chaired by Al Duda, International Waters, GEF, who introduced the panel and outlined its objectives.

Margaret Catley-Carlson, Chair, Global Water Partnership, emphasized that human, social and political aspects are as important as science in achieving sustainable management. She listed six principles applicable to freshwater as well as oceans management, namely: involving all relevant stakeholders;

identifying and prioritizing issues; building political commitment; establishing common knowledge; facilitating awareness raising; and creating institutional and financial backing.

Peter Bridgewater, Secretary General, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, indicated that over a third of all Ramsar sites are coastal or marine. He underlined that management objectives are a matter of societal choice and called for decentralization.

Erik Uandikov, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Republic of Kazakhstan, listed the environmental threats faced by the Caspian region and the remedial actions taken by his country. He noted the adoption of the 2003 Framework Convention for the Protection of the Caspian Environment, hoping its entrance into force will succeed in resolving the environmental threats through good neighborhood relations.

Porfirio Alvarez-Torres, on behalf of Antonio Díaz de Leon, Director-General for Environmental Policy Regional and Sectoral Integration, Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, reported on a freshwater-coastal-marine management interlinkages workshop held in Mexico City in January 2006. He listed the challenges identified, including bridging different cultures, enhancing water policy, enacting further legislation, raising awareness and focusing attention on socioeconomic factors. He called for cooperation between communities and between global oceans and water organizations.

Veerle Vandeweerd, Head, UNEP RSP, and Coordinator, UNEP-GPA, elaborated on GPA objectives and actions in preparation for GPA's second intergovernmental review meeting (IGR-2), to be held in Beijing, China, in October 2006. Noting that national governments are responsible for GPA implementation, she said the aim of the meeting is to link integrated water resources management (IWRM) plans and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and focus on domestic financing, legislation and institutional development.

Ivan Závadský, Regional Programme Director, GEF-Danube Black Sea Basin Strategic Partnership, noted that the region's environmental degradation has led to reduced biodiversity and economic loss. He outlined the Partnership's remedial actions, including: new policies; legal mechanisms at national and regional levels; investment projects; capacity building and monitoring; and stakeholder involvement.

Shammy Puri, UNEP-DGEF Task Manager 'Groundwaters' and Liaison Officer to UNESCO-International Hydrological Programme (IHP), elaborated on the long-term and irreversible dangers that polluted terrestrial aquifers pose to coastal regions.

In the discussion, a participant acknowledged the commitments made by countries such as Kazakhstan, and called on international organizations to integrate their respective approaches and assistance to national and regional programmes.



Mara Warwick, Senior Urban Environmental Specialist, World Bank



Veerle Vandeweerd, Head, UNEP RSP, and Coordinator, UNEP-GPA

PANEL 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR SIDS (WSSD GOAL): This panel took place on Wednesday morning. Panel Chair Ambassador Jagdish Koonjul, Mauritius Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and outgoing Chair, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), highlighted progress in implementing the Mauritius Strategy and identified challenges, such as increasing funding, strengthening monitoring, improving capacity building and enhancing cooperation between SIDS.

Willie John, Chief Executive Officer, Cook Islands, pledged his country's commitment to the Barbados Plan of Action (BPoA) and the Mauritius Strategy. Identifying progress in achieving the MDGs, he highlighted the successful conservation of natural resources and associated traditional knowledge and the development of a national environmental strategic action framework.

Fernando Trindade, on behalf of Celestino Andrade, Ministry of Environment, São Tomé and Príncipe, emphasized his country's vulnerability to pollution from land-based activities, noted regional cooperation and said a national LME project had been prepared as part of a national action plan under the GPA.

Rolph Payet, Director, Ministry of the Environment, Seychelles, underscored SIDS' need for assistance to submit their maritime delimitations as provided under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). He said implementation requires developing and strengthening the coordination and cooperation mechanisms between SIDS, building conservation networks, and improving access to resources and capacity building.

Vincent Sweeney, Executive Director, Caribbean Environmental Health Institute, St. Lucia, outlined the domestic waste management situation and listed recent improvements, including stronger legal and institutional backing, the construction of sanitary landfill sites, and increased recycling and public awareness.

Nelson Andrade, Director, UNEP Caribbean Programme, UNEP/UNDP/GEF Programme on Integrated Water and Coastal Area Management (IWCAM) for SIDS, presented the objective and components of the IWCAM. He outlined challenges in implementing the project, including: achieving coordination at national and regional levels; linking with other initiatives; ensuring the sustainability of IWCAM; and engaging all stakeholders.

Dominique Benzaken, Coastal Management Adviser, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, argued that in order to achieve healthy oceans and sustainable livelihoods in the Pacific, the Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy (PIROP) requires prompt implementation. She urged SIDS to integrate the



Dominique Benzaken, Coastal Management Adviser, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

PIROP within their national sustainable development strategies and called upon international organizations to recognize the efficacy of this approach.

Enele Sopoaga, Permanent Representative of the Mission of Tuvalu to the UN, called on States and international organizations to recognize the special vulnerabilities of SIDS. With a view to implementing the BPoA, he called for increased capacity building, regional coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

Marina Silva, Cape Verde consultant to the Global Forum, urged Atlantic SIDS to identify priority actions to implement the BPoA. She acknowledged Cape Verde's offer to become a focal point for the BPoA and stressed the importance of linguistic diversity to increase local involvement.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed strategies for increasing UN involvement in SIDS issues, evaluation techniques and a ban on deep sea bottom trawling. Chair Koonjul concluded by underscoring that SIDS require financial and technical assistance with implementing

national and regional action plans, coordinating efforts and monitoring. He also called for an innovative approach to be taken, arguing that "one size does not fit all" when dealing with SIDS.

PANEL 6: THE TSUNAMI DISASTER AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: This panel took place on Wednesday afternoon and was co-chaired by William Brennan, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and François Schindelé, former Chair, Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System in the Indian Ocean (ICG/IOTWS).

Co-Chair Brennan commended the IOC, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and regional organizations for coordinating and developing regional tsunami early warning systems, and called for increased focus on multi-hazard warning systems. Co-Chair Schindelé, on behalf of Patricio Bernal, Executive Secretary, IOC, elaborated on the five regional early warning systems that are either currently in place or under development. Noting that the IOC coordinates national scientific and technological programmes, he said implementation is improving, but called for better data sharing, increased financial support for developing countries and enhanced capacity building and awareness.

Maitree Duangsawasdi, Director General, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand, outlined reconstruction efforts following the December 2004 tsunami, including the creation of a national disaster relief center to coordinate monitoring and awareness programmes. He described the restoration of natural and water resources, and the rebuilding of livelihoods, and tourist confidence.



Marina Silva, Global Forum consultant

Franklin McDonald, UNEP Adviser, former Director, Jamaican National Environment and Planning Agency, and former Project Manager, Pan-Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project, stressed that the region also faces a number of forms of coastal inundation, and outlined the region's long history of tsunamis. He called for enhanced public awareness, a system of maintenance, optimization of existing systems, and partnerships between nations, scientists and their institutions.



Franklin McDonald, UNEP Adviser, former Director, Jamaican National Environment and Planning Agency, and former Project Manager, Pan-Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project

Russell Arthurton, Consultant, Coastal Geoscience, and formerly British Geological Survey, said risk assessment should take into account the incidence of hazard events at local to regional levels, the susceptibility of specific coasts to inundation, and the vulnerability of coastal populations. Noting that this last factor is most easily influenced, he recommended hard and soft engineering responses in combination with the regulation of human activities that exacerbate vulnerability, and said emergency plans must be tested.

Lahsen Ababouch, Chief, Fish Utilization and Marketing Services, FAO, outlined FAO activities in restoring livelihoods in the countries affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami. He listed challenges faced, including the coordination of activities among UN agencies, non governmental organizations (NGOs), and governmental institutions, and avoiding re-establishing or exacerbating factors of vulnerability and non-sustainability, such as developing fishing capacity in excess of productive capacity.

Stefano Tinti, Chair, Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Early Warning and Monitoring System in the North Eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas (ICG/NEAMTWS), explained the Group was established in June 2005 by the IOC to create a plan of action by December 2006. He said its mandate included conducting implementation trials for key components of an early warning system with the aim of having an initially operational system in place by December 2007.

François Schindelé, former Chair, ICG/IOTWS, stressed the importance of assessment data and described progress made by the Group, including the production of evacuation maps and the establishment of warning centers.

Following the presentations, participants discussed the gap between countries' stated intention to deal with a tsunami threat, and their true commitment, which suffers from decreasing levels of political will and financial backing.

PANEL 7: LINKING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EFFORTS IN OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT: AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES: This panel took place on Wednesday afternoon. Panel Chair Magnus Ngoile, National Environment Management Council, Tanzania, drew attention to

the variety of present and future national and regional oceans and coasts projects in Sub-Saharan Africa, and stressed the importance of building upon and achieving synergy between them.

Albert Owusu-Sarpong, Ambassador of Ghana to France, on behalf of Christine Churcher, Minister of Environment and Science, Ghana, highlighted the rapid degradation of vulnerable coastal and offshore habitats due to local sources of pollution, which is exacerbated by regional oil spills. She affirmed Ghana's intention to embrace a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to coastal management to reverse this trend.

Aristides Ocante da Silva, Minister of Natural Resources, Guinea Bissau, highlighted domestic activities to improve oceans management, including creating and managing new MPAs, improving maritime surveillance systems, and carrying out research on erosion. He stressed the need for research on links between climate change and oceans, and noted the adoption of a national plan for adaptation to climate change.

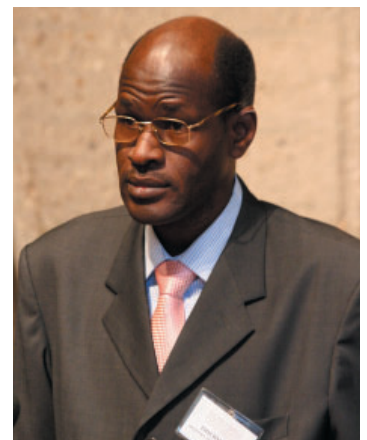
Joseph Konzolo Munyao, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development, Kenya, explained that African countries' international debts fetter their ability to achieve the MDGs and WSSD targets. He highlighted Kenya's commitment to oceans and coasts issues, citing the recent creation of his Ministry, which recognizes fisheries as a social and economic activity.

Outlining actions taken in the context of the Eastern Africa RSP, Rejoice Mabudafhasi, South African Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, said the main challenge lies in developing adequate legal frameworks and policies. She lauded the RSP as a platform for coordinating regional initiatives.

Victor Manuel Borges, Deputy Minister of Fisheries, Mozambique, outlined national marine and coastal management initiatives, including the development of a legal and institutional framework, and the establishment of MPAs. Addressing regional projects, he highlighted monitoring, control and surveillance initiatives, as well as fisheries cooperation protocols. He said poverty reduction and MPA management should go hand-in-hand, and noted the lack of finances, enforcement, and wastewater management.

Thierno Lô, Minister of Environment and Natural Protection, Senegal, underscored his country's support for the African Process for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Environment Action Plan and detailed Senegal's involvement in programmes such as: the UNDP/GEF/UNESCO-IOC Programme; a regional sustainable coastal tourism project; and a sub-regional programme to combat coastal erosion in countries in the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

Rahma Mshangama, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Environment and Cooperatives, Tanzania, explained that a lack of funding and expertise hampers poverty reduction through the sustainable use of natural resources. She highlighted Tanzania's national



Thierno Lô, Minister of Environment and Natural Protection, Senegal

poverty reduction strategy, which focuses on coastal regions and cooperation with neighboring States in implementing regional projects.

Rolph Payet, Interim Coordinator, Regional Coordinating Unit for Eastern African Action Plan (EAF/RCU), indicated how the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region impacts oceans management in the region. He stressed that the outcomes and recommendations from existing projects need to be integrated into government policies and activities on the ground.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed the impacts of climate change in Africa and identified capacity building, conflict resolution and synergies as integral elements of Africa's oceans agenda.

PANEL 8: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR OCEANS AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT: MOBILIZING TO ADDRESS NEEDS: This panel took place on Thursday morning and was co-chaired by Indumathie Hewawasam, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank, and Ralph Cantral, Chief, National Policy and Evaluation Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, United States NOAA.

Co-Chair Hewawasam reported from the Capacity Development Task Force and urged implementation of the Task Force's recommendations by: supporting leadership training for directors, practitioners, decision makers and stakeholders; encouraging national science leaders to focus on local issues; raising the profile of oceans locally; and investing in institutional processes. Co-Chair Cantral explained that rather than delivering individual presentations, the panel would respond to questions and comments from the floor.

On improving the ability to identify capacity development issues in a structured and nation-specific approach, Co-Chair Hewawasam explained that all World Bank projects are tendered and only awarded to consultants who involve local communities in their needs assessment and subsequent projects. Chua Thia-Eng, Regional Programme Director, PEMSEA, called on donors and multilateral lending agencies to engage with countries whose "democratic space" has newly opened up.

On improving management skills to better the performance of individuals, institutions and processes, one participant noted the flight of trained professionals from SIDS. Robin Mahon, Caribbean LME Programme, said that indigenous academic institutions should encourage their students to remain in-country to contribute to domestic development. Mary Power, South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, suggested that professionals who have emigrated can make a positive

contribution by exerting influence in international fora. Participants discussed the need to disseminate examples of successful partnerships in capacity building. One participant stated that Africa requires capacity mobilization, utilization and incentives, in addition to what is commonly referred to as capacity building. Chua argued that while some nations lack fisheries expertise, a number of Asian States have a surplus of experts in that field.

On championing leaders to mobilize a critical mass of local-level opinion, one participant suggested that the concept of 'leadership' is unsuited to all cultures and social systems. James Hardcastle, Technical Advisor for Island Conservation, Nature Seychelles, underlined the need to engage with community members, who have the power to persuade others. Another participant suggested the Global Conference invite more young leaders. Biliانا Cicin-Sain, Co-Chair, Global Forum, recommended: training future ocean policy leaders from SIDS; supporting oceans policy training within the SIDS Consortium of Universities (a result of the Mauritius International Meeting); improving oceans technical networks; and funding for 'ocean fellowships' for media representatives.

PANEL 9: REGIONAL DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION: THE MEDITERRANEAN CASE: This panel was held on Thursday morning and was co-chaired by Ezio Bussoletti, Scientific Advisor, Permanent Delegation of Italy to UNESCO, and Aldo Cosentino, Director-General, Nature Protection, Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory.

Co-Chair Cosentino stated that threats to the Mediterranean region include oil pollution, pollution from land-based activities and the introduction of non-native species. Noting that the region is being considered for listing on UNESCO's World Heritage List, he called for better harmonization between, and implementation of, relevant conventions.

Veerle Vandeweerd, Head, UNEP RSP, and Coordinator, GPA, said the Mediterranean region's problems are universal, and urged immediate action. Stressing the region's leading role within the RSP, she called for involvement of all major partners, including the European Commission, the World Bank and NEPAD, but emphasized that the responsibility to implement the Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution and the Protocol for the prevention of the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft (Barcelona Convention) lies with individual governments.

Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), UNEP RSP, described the Protocols under the Barcelona Convention. He said the Protocol on pollution from land-based activities has led to the development of a strategic action programme and national action



Indumathie Hewawasam, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank



Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), UNEP RSP

plans, which are complemented by a large-scale capacity-building programme, and financed, *inter alia*, through a GEF strategic partnership and a World Bank investment fund.

Marie-Christine Van Klaveren, Executive Secretary, Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black and Mediterranean Seas and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), said ACCOBAMS was concluded under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and focuses on: conservation; research and monitoring; capacity building; promotion of synergies and bilateral cooperation; and exchange of expertise. She highlighted ACCOBAMS' legally binding action plan, which tackles pollution, noise, loss of habitat, and fishing activities, including by-catch.

Zoran Šikic, Assistant Minister of Culture, Republic of Croatia, described the national legal regime for the conservation and sustainable use of the Croatian coastal and marine environment, highlighting the creation of protected coastal zones, special marine reserves, national parks and an Adriatic MPAs network.

Ivica Trumbić, Director, Regional Activity Centre for Priority Actions Programme (PAP/RAC), MAP, noted the political, cultural, environmental and social complexity of the Mediterranean and identified unsustainable exploitation of its resources as a key issue in the region. He said integrated coastal management is the cornerstone of the MAP and the Barcelona Convention, and expressed hope for the future adoption of a regional protocol on coastal management.

Gennaro Longo, Chief, Earth, Environmental and Marine Sciences and Technology, International Center for Science and High Technology, UN Industrial Development Organization, described the Center's activities, highlighting that it aims to strengthen and promote sustainable use of coastal and marine resources through the development of supporting tools for integrated coastal management. He added that the Center promotes using tools to support decision making for industrial site planning in developing countries and adopting a sustainable approach.

Sami Marrouki, Executive Director, Mediterranean Renewable Energy Centre (MEDREC), stated that the Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme provides sustainable energy services, particularly to rural populations, in order to contribute to climate change mitigation by increasing the share of renewable energy in the energy mix of the Mediterranean basin.

Aldo Consentino, Director-General, Nature Protection, Ministry for the Environment and Territory, Italy, urged Mediterranean countries to learn from past experiences and to cooperate in finding new solutions to protect the environment.



Zoran Šikic, Assistant Minister of Culture, Republic of Croatia

PANEL 10: IMPROVING HIGH SEAS GOVERNANCE: This panel was held on Thursday afternoon and was co-chaired by Salvatore Arico, Programme Specialist, Biodiversity Division of Ecological Sciences, UNESCO, and Alfonso Ascencio Herrera, Permanent Mission of Mexico to the UN.

Stressing the importance of UNCLOS, Co-Chair Ascencio Herrera stated that the Convention does not define marine scientific research, and there is also no internationally agreed definition of bioprospecting of the international seabed area. He called for further studies and underlined the need to address, coherently and harmoniously, all issues relating to marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction within the UNCLOS framework. He argued that the UN General Assembly is the appropriate forum for debating these issues as it plays a key role in promoting cooperation and coordination and in ensuring integrated approaches.

Tullio Scovazzi, Bicocca University of Milan, Italy, pointed out that marine scientific research is not defined but regulated by UNCLOS, whilst bioprospecting is not specifically mentioned in the Convention. He said this lacuna must be tackled by a new agreement on MPAs.

Alex Rogers, Biological Sciences Division, British Antarctic Survey, elaborated on deep sea biodiversity and fishing activities. Stressing that the deep seabed houses a startling level of biodiversity, much of which is still unknown, he described its unique ecosystems, including seamounts, coral reefs and hydrothermal vents. Underlining their high degree of endemism and important role in the marine ecosystem, he said deep sea bottom trawling causes significant and irreversible damage. He also noted the negative effects of over-harvesting and climate change.

Lee Kimball, IUCN, gave a conservation perspective on issues related to high seas and the deep seabed. She underscored that IUCN aims to restore and maintain biodiversity, and listed direct and emerging threats to deep sea biodiversity, including marine debris, ship pollution, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, seabed mineral developments, and noise pollution. She stated that the creation of high seas MPAs and the adoption of an integrated approach require reaffirming existing principles and elaborating new ones, and strengthening cooperation in marine scientific research. She stressed that these efforts do not require the creation of a new high seas instrument, and urged immediate action.

Arico presented a paper by Abdul Zakri, UN University Institute for Advanced Studies, on trends in deep seabed research, which he said is going on at an increasing pace. He noted a shift in the focus of deep seabed expeditions from geophysical and geological purposes to ecological, biological and bioprospecting ones. As topics for further



Vladimir Golitsyn, Director, UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS)

study, he identified public-private partnerships for deep seabed bioprospecting and aspects of intellectual property rights with regard to bioprospecting.

Vladimir Golitsyn, Director, UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS), called for further targeted marine biodiversity research, which he identified as highly sophisticated, costly and labor intensive. He also noted the need for better cooperation between governments, institutions, scientists and industry engaged in marine biodiversity research in order to share costs and information, increase geographical cover and ensure the participation of developing countries.

Marjo Vierros, CBD Secretariat, noted that parties at the seventh CBD COP had recognized the increased risks to marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and that marine and coastal protected areas are failing to achieve sustainable management. She mentioned the work of the CBD Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas and called for cooperation regarding the creation of high seas MPAs as well as enhancing scientific research in the high seas, information sharing, and capacity building for developing countries.



Norma Taylor-Roberts, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Jamaica

Norma Taylor-Roberts, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Jamaica, expressed concern over the lack of a legal regime to regulate bioprospecting. Calling for a wider acceptance and implementation of UNCLOS, she advocated concluding a new agreement under UNCLOS to address bioprospecting, rather than developing a new convention.

Participants commented on the respective roles of the Seabed Authority and the UN General Assembly in considering marine scientific research and bioprospecting, destructive fishing practices and the creation of high seas MPAs.

PANEL 11: OCEANS AND CLIMATE: This panel was held on Thursday afternoon. Panel Chair Robert Corell, Chair, Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, gave an overview of the recent scientific findings on climate effects on oceans, stressing that since the oceans contain 97% of the Earth's water, they are the thermodynamic engine of the planet. He listed current and projected effects of climate change on oceans, including sea level rise, biodiversity loss, the diminishing of Greenland's icecap, and the disappearance of the Arctic sea ice.

Noting accelerating climate variability, Ambassador Gunnar Pálsson, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iceland, said the availability of reliable scientific data is crucial, and called for increased resources for research on the risks and benefits of the impact of climate change on oceans, and improved integration of scientific data into the public domain.

Halldór Thorgeirsson, Deputy Executive Secretary, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), explained that the Kyoto Protocol allows for use of market

tools to mitigate climate change and that the most recent UNFCCC COP has set the base for the development of a future strategy. He stressed that dealing with climate change has many socioeconomic benefits and that adaptation is a necessity, not an alternative to mitigation.

Ambassador Enele Sopoaga, Tuvalu, Vice-Chair, AOSIS, and Permanent Representative of the Mission of Tuvalu to the UN, underscored the impact of climate change on SIDS, as illustrated by the recent increases in the frequency and intensity of hurricanes in the South Pacific. He argued that SIDS cannot begin to develop sustainably until climate change is comprehensively addressed, and urged developed nations to intensify their mitigation strategies and support SIDS' efforts to implement adaptation strategies.

Highlighting climate change-related sea level rise and acidification, John Shepherd, Tyndall Centre Regional Associate Director, Southampton Oceanography Centre, stated that any adaptation strategy must be: concentrated on reducing physical and social infrastructure in coastal areas; planned regionally whilst being focused locally; supported by government institutions; and long-term.

Ellina Levina, Climate Change Analyst, Environment Directorate, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), presented on integrating scientific knowledge into policy making. She called for: appropriate strategies and institutional and legal frameworks to allow for the development of a science-based policy framework; mechanisms that identify key players and key information; clear communication of scientific data to policy makers and local stakeholders; and additional research.

Magdalena Muir, Research Associate, Arctic Institute of North America, advocated incorporating adaptation measures into existing mechanisms and programmes, and underlined the leading role of the Arctic, Europe, and SIDS in understanding climate change impacts. She urged raising the profile of climate change in international fora on oceans, coasts and islands, while paying more attention to marine issues in international climate change fora.

PANEL 12: ENGAGING DECISION MAKERS AND

THE PUBLIC: This panel was held on Friday morning. Panel Chair Philippe Vallette, Managing Director, French national



Marie Laure de Langhe, Communications Consultant, Sea Web

Sea Experience Center NAUSICAÄ, and Chair, World Ocean Network, outlined the Network's public awareness programmes, including information booths in shopping areas, informative booklets on oceans issues and campaigns promoting the World Oceans Day.

Emphasizing the importance of a clear media message, Marie Laure de Langhe, Communications Consultant, SeaWeb, stressed that any campaign must include: knowledge of the target

audience; a tailored message; a connection between science and policy; relationship building with journalists; training of spokespersons; and positive choices for consumers.

Urging a focused approach to public engagement, Dann Sklarew, Director, GEF International Waters, Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN), detailed GEF International Waters projects, and explained the importance of including local leaders in educational videos, and of sharing lessons learned from workshops, distance learning programmes and outreach work.

Ram Boojh, Centre of Environment Education, India, and Co-Chair, World Ocean Network, noted the role of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) in creating public awareness of oceans issues. He outlined environmental education initiatives in India, including the establishment of an Information Facilitation Centre of the Ministry of Environment, a Regional Centre of Expertise, and local level awareness projects.

Guillermo García Montero, President, National Aquarium, Cuba, and Cuba's National IOC Committee, elaborated on information and education initiatives in his country. Stressing that understanding is only the first step, he said the public needs tools, orientation, norms, and ethical, social and moral values to allow them to act. He detailed successful awareness projects in Cuba, including television courses, excursions, publications, workshops and debates.

Peter Neill, Director, World Ocean Observatory, called for radical solutions in addition to current awareness activities. He said the perception of the ocean as an integrated global social system calls for a new ocean definition that emphasizes sustaining natural resources for the benefit of mankind. Calling for an increased focus on oceans in current programmes and organizations, he advocated integrating communication strategies, reallocating existing resources, and publicizing individual stories within the human context.

The subsequent discussion focused on the need to move from planning to implementation and on experiences from Vanuatu and Cook Islands. Participants stressed the need to collate best practices and involve local people in activities and decision making to promote ownership. They argued that tangible on-the-ground results help influence decision making.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

THE PUBLIC AND THE OCEANS: A LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR MOBILIZING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE GLOBAL OCEANS AGENDA: On Tuesday morning in plenary, Philippe Vallette presented the World Ocean Network's long-term strategy for mobilizing public support for the global



Dann Sklarew, Director, GEF International Waters, Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN)

oceans agenda. He highlighted field actions, including the World Oceans Day, the NAUSICAA meeting immediately following the current conference, and awareness raising campaigns.

STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES ON THE GLOBAL OCEANS AGENDA: On Tuesday afternoon, in plenary, Annick de Marffy, Former Director, UNDOALOS, indicated that almost 30 States are entitled to claim an extended continental shelf but have not yet done so, and that over 100 maritime boundaries are still to be negotiated. She underlined the difficulty that many States encounter in implementing the multiple norms governing the use of the oceans and called for progress in, *inter alia*: enforcing existing rules; teaching and training; research; cooperation and coordination; political involvement; and good governance. She recommended looking into the creation of an institution that would supervise and centralize all aspects of ocean affairs.

THE WAY FORWARD ON ADVANCING THE GLOBAL OCEANS AGENDA: On Tuesday afternoon, in plenary, Lori Ridgeway, Director-General, International Coordination and Policy Analysis, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada, stressed the multidimensional nature of ocean affairs and called for: enhancing implementation; balancing sustainable use with conservation; increasing cooperation; and creating a system of capacity building and assistance. She urged focusing on "that which needs protecting," and addressed the importance of tackling disincentives and providing incentives to promote oceans stewardship and international cooperation.

ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING: On Wednesday afternoon, in plenary, Ben Bradshaw, Parliamentary Secretary, UK Department for Food Environment and Rural Affairs, called for practical steps to improve marine



Ben Bradshaw, Parliamentary Secretary, UK Department for Food Environment and Rural Affairs

governance and unite fisheries and conservation interests. Advocating effective prohibitions on deep sea bottom trawling and an increased level of ratification of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, he outlined the adverse effects of IUU fishing. Summarizing an upcoming report by the Ministerial Task Force on IUU fishing, he stressed the need to develop a global partnership to: increase the exposure of IUU operations and make them uneconomic; improve governance; strengthen monitoring, control and information systems; adopt widespread port State

measures; and heighten RFMO performance. He called for an emphasis on assistance to developing countries.

REDUCING POVERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: On Thursday afternoon, Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute at Columbia University, Director of the UN Millennium Project, and Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General on the MDGs, argued that despite the plethora

of statements, goals and laws aimed at poverty reduction and environmental protection, there is little follow through on work programmes. He said developing countries are unable to protect their natural environments because: they cannot afford to increase their environmental capital; vested interests strip countries of their resources without distribution of profits; the global economic paradigm is forcing countries to adopt unsustainable economic models; and they lack the scientific knowledge with which to determine the best course of action.

During the subsequent discussion, Sachs addressed the importance of including the environment in countries' PRSPs, ensuring that information relating to the environment is disclosed, and projecting scientific consensus concerning the state of the oceans. He affirmed his belief in the strength of the tools available to policy makers to spur action on the ground.

THE WAY FORWARD ON OCEANS AND COASTS: On Friday afternoon, Fientje Moerman, Vice-Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for Economy,

Enterprise, Science, Innovation and Foreign Trade, Belgium, emphasized the progress the international community and Belgium have made with regard to oceans, coasts and islands policy. She called for renewed efforts on ecosystem approaches to coastal management, more research on fisheries and the effect of agriculture on water resources, and improved communication strategies for scientists to better communicate and feed their research into public and policy spheres.



Fientje Moerman, Vice-Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for Economy, Enterprise, Science, Innovation and Foreign Trade, Belgium

DIALOGUE SESSIONS AND ROUNDTABLES

On Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday afternoon and on Friday morning, participants engaged in concurrent dialogue sessions on achieving synergy and WSSD targets and MDGs. Roundtables on business and industry and on oceans donors took place on Monday in a pre-conference meeting and Friday, respectively. On Friday afternoon, in plenary, participants heard reports from all of these discussions in a session co-chaired by Biliana Cicin-Sain and Veerle Vandeweerd, Co-Chairs, Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands.

ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT, AND INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF OCEANS AND COASTS, INCLUDING REGIONAL COOPERATION, ALSO FOR INPUT INTO THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UN INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA (UNICPOLOS-7): This topic was addressed by panel 1 on Tuesday and panel 9 on Thursday as well as in dialogue sessions on the following themes: synergy among LMEs, regional seas, and national and multinational/NGO efforts (Tuesday); advancing integrated oceans and coastal governance: next steps (Tuesday); and bottom-line assessment on progress on implementation of the WSSD targets and the MDGs (Wednesday).

Charles Ehler, Vice-Chair, IUCN – World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) reported on all of these discussions. He discussed the fact that ecosystem-based management (EBM) has evolved to include a human dimension, and listed its limitations, which include that there are neither institutions responsible for tracking progress, agreed criteria for identifying EBM, nor means to measure its sustainability. He added that it is often donor or consultant driven as opposed to originating at the local level. He listed positive factors such as: increased investment in EBM projects; lesson sharing regarding sea planning and coastal zoning to make EBM operational; and the growing importance of NGOs in supporting EBM approaches. He reported a consensus on the fact that local involvement in design and development of EBM projects is the single most important factor in guaranteeing the success of a project. He called for a greater number of projects through investment, case studies to demonstrate the strength of the approach, and improved monitoring.

FISHERIES: This topic was addressed on Wednesday in a dialogue session on bottom-line assessment on progress on implementation of WSSD targets and MDGs.

Lori Ridgeway, Director-General, International Coordination and Policy Analysis, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada, reported on this discussion. She cited examples of progress, including: improved responsibility and cooperation among international, national and regional bodies; increasing national obligations regarding national fisheries management; momentum to tackle IUU fishing; lowered subsidies; Marine Stewardship Council certification and the evolution of legal concepts. She emphasized the need for indicators with which to measure this work and acknowledged that obstacles include: a lack of political will at all levels; inadequate technical and scientific knowledge, especially concerning ecosystem inter-linkages; weak national management; costs associated with achieving sustainability; organized corruption in the fishing industry; and flags of convenience.

BIODIVERSITY AND NETWORKS OF MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (ALSO FOR INPUT INTO CBD COP-8): This topic was addressed in a dialogue session on Wednesday.

Gerald Miles, Senior Advisor, the Nature Conservancy, reported on the group's findings. He noted that although the WSSD's 2012 target on establishing a comprehensive MPA network is not within reach, considerable efforts have been made. Stressing that MPA establishment is not the sole measure of success, he called for assessments of effectiveness and sustainability of investments, and underlined the importance of political commitment and public awareness. On progress made,



Charles Ehler, Vice-Chair, IUCN - World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)



Gerald Miles, Senior Advisor, the Nature Conservancy

he noted: steady efforts by the professional community; significant political commitment in many regions, including in the Pacific; general agreement to integrate MPA issues into the work of fisheries organizations, FAO and conservation organizations; and two large-scale studies on MPA existence and effectiveness. He identified significant gaps in scientific knowledge, especially on high seas and deep water habitats, and

insufficient consideration of climate change in MPA management, and said much data is available that has not yet been analyzed. On obstacles, he stated that communities' understanding of MPAs often differs from that of professionals, and called for political will and leadership, especially at local and provincial levels. On next steps, he cited: MPA network planning, especially in deep water and the high seas and preferably under the framework of UNCLOS; assessment of activities in MPAs, including monitoring of high seas fishing vessels, preferably by ecosystem management organizations rather than by RFMOs; and using the current momentum and awareness to act immediately in areas with strong political support for MPAs.

SIDS, WITH EMPHASIS ON OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT (ALSO FOR INPUT INTO CSD-14, MAY 2006): This issue was addressed by panel 5 on Wednesday and in the following dialogue sessions: island life and island biodiversity, livelihoods and international agreements (Tuesday); bottom line assessment on progress on implementation of WSSD targets and MDGs (Wednesday); and next steps in ocean and coastal management in SIDS (Thursday).

Franklin McDonald, Advisor to UNEP, Jamaica, summarized the discussions of the group on bottom line assessment on progress on implementation of WSSD targets and MDGs. He noted concern over the decline in official development aid (ODA) in relation to the BPoA implementation and stressed the need for a UN representative for SIDS and oceans issues. He outlined next steps including: formalizing SIDS' voice to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy; giving SIDS capacity issues specific attention; improving coordination; launching national platforms; developing learning programmes for the youth and innovative learning tools; and promoting awareness programmes. He called for: educating a new generation of managers in SIDS; creating a database for SIDS activities; increasing coordination and communication; following up on creating focal points for dealing with SIDS issues; and increasing funding for the continuation of SIDSnet.

Gerald Miles, Senior Advisor, the Nature Conservancy, reported on the discussions regarding island life and island biodiversity. He said the group made recommendations for CBD COP-8 and recognized the need for a better presence of islands representatives at the international level. He called for: the creation of a legal regime regarding sea mounts; strengthening national capacity; and recognizing the special need of SIDS to protect their coral reefs as part of the UNEP GPA process. He indicated that consultations on the elaboration of a global vision for local action on island biodiversity will continue at CBD COP-8, and will be facilitated by Seychelles, Tuvalu and Palau.

GPA AND IWRM, AND INPUT INTO IGR-2 (OCTOBER 2006, BEIJING) AND THE 4TH WORLD WATER FORUM (MARCH 2006, MEXICO CITY), INCLUDING NEXT STEPS ON COLLABORATION BETWEEN FRESHWATER AND OCEAN INTERESTS: This issue was addressed by panel 4 on Wednesday and during the following dialogue sessions: multi-stakeholder workshop on preparations for the 4th World Water Forum (March 2006, Mexico City) and the Second Intergovernmental Review of the GPA (IGR-2, October 2006, Beijing) (Tuesday); GPA and IWRM, and input into IGR-2 and the 4th World Water Forum, including next steps on collaboration between freshwater and ocean interests (Wednesday); and freshwater to oceans (Thursday).

Porfirio Alvarez-Torres, Director for Regional Integration, Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, noted participants' satisfaction with global level activities to implement the GPA, including through international meetings, capacity building and outreach programmes. He called for: cooperation with GPA-related partnerships and programmes; dedication to implementation rather than focus on obstacles; and harmonization between upstream, coastal and ocean management. Highlighting the impact of upstream activities on marine ecosystem health and the cost of inaction, he said the need for management interlinkages should be a priority issue at the upcoming World



Porfirio Alvarez-Torres, Director for Regional Integration, Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources

Water Forum. He stressed that action is needed at the local level throughout watersheds and that IWRM should be made relevant to local communities, and expressed hope that the World Water Forum outcomes and Ministerial Declaration will reflect this and set the tone for IGR-2's discussions. Underscoring the need to link the GPA with the scientific community and to highlight the relationship between land-based activities and marine ecosystem health, he commended the cooperative agreement between the GPA and the Ramsar Convention, and expressed satisfaction

with the fact that Ministers will be briefed on these issues during IGR-2.

GLOBAL MARINE ASSESSMENT AND UN COORDINATION: This issue was addressed by a dialogue session on the Global Marine Assessment (GMA) and UN coordination, which took place on Wednesday.

Reporting on the group's discussions, Awni Behnam, President, IOI, said participants had expressed concern with the GMA's rate of progress and had wondered how socioeconomic dimensions would be incorporated. He recalled that the UN General Assembly endorsed the report and conclusions of the second international GMA workshop and that the GMA is expected to start within the next two years. He said the two lead agencies, UNEP and UNESCO-IOC, have provided satisfactory and transparent updates. Noting that the GMA is currently relying on voluntary contributions, he appealed to governments to invest in the process in accordance with the relevant UN General Assembly resolution. Recalling the WSSD target to establish an effective transparent inter-agency ocean coordination mechanism within the UN system, he said this target had been implemented in 2004 by the establishment of UN Oceans, which comprises all heads of ocean-related UN programmes. He said UN Oceans has convened several times, established time bound task forces on post-tsunami reconstruction, the GMA, the GPA IGR, and marine biodiversity, and set up two websites. Noting that it is too early to judge long-term effectiveness of these measures, he expressed satisfaction with the mechanism and commitment, and reiterated the wide support for the appointment of a goodwill ambassador for oceans to the UN Secretary General found at this Conference.



Awni Behnam, President, IOI

THE ROLE OF OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT IN REDUCING POVERTY (MDG): This issue was addressed in a dialogue session held on Tuesday on reducing poverty, achieving socio-economic benefits through improved national and regional oceans governance, including through more beneficial ocean use agreements.

Ali Mohammed, Regional Coordinator, Coastal and Marine Secretariat, NEPAD, Kenya, reported on this discussion. He recognized the global commitments to reduce poverty as evidenced in the WSSD targets and the MDGs, but noted that the international community is "completely off track" on meeting these targets. He identified poverty drivers, including: policy weaknesses; "locking-up" of resources from local communities for national interest such as tourism development and commercial fisheries; and the limited enforcement of rules. He called on the Global Forum to:

- promote a culture of transparency and disclosure among ocean users;
- promote corporate social responsibility through partnerships;
- promote and facilitate harmonization of programmes and processes; and
- promote advocacy and innovative mechanisms for debt relief.

NEXT STEPS IN CAPACITY BUILDING IN OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT: This issue was addressed by panel 8 on Thursday and in a dialogue session which took place on Thursday.

Mary Power, South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, reported on these discussions, and recommended that the Global Forum:

- prepare a communication strategy with fact sheets on the key issues raised during this conference for the public, key politicians, public leaders and provide input for upcoming relevant meetings;
- organize a young professionals' forum at the next Global Conference;
- set up a professional cadre of "movers and shakers" in oceans issues;
- propose the nomination of a UN goodwill ambassador for Oceans;
- promote capacity development programmes for leaders from SIDS;
- invite media to oceans meetings to interact with participants and look for opportunities to engage media at the regional and national level to sensitize them about oceans issues;
- promote the South-South exchange of existing education materials and curricula through an electronic library or a copyright free clearing house;
- improve South-South cooperation and exchange especially through the strengthening of the SIDS University Consortium and other regional scientific networks;
- identify key oceans, coasts and islands issues and organize future meetings in regions where these issues are prominent;
- establish links with the Millennium Ecosystem Fund; and
- promote the Ocean Portal.

NEXT STEPS IN OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA: This issue was addressed by panel 7 on Wednesday and in a dialogue session on Friday morning.

Ali Mohammed, Regional Coordinator, Coastal and Marine Secretariat, NEPAD, reported on these discussions. He outlined major issues for achieving sustainable oceans and coastal management in Africa, including: governance capacity building and communication; empowerment through access to information; disclosure; capacity to negotiate resource agreements; benefit sharing at all levels; linkages between national and regional processes; and strengthening African institutions. He suggested the Global Forum:

- support the development of a strategy to highlight the values and opportunities offered by oceans and coasts to promote growth and alleviate poverty;
- support progress monitoring and information sharing regarding existing projects;



Ali Mohammed, Regional Coordinator, Coastal and Marine Secretariat, NEPAD

- support ocean-related gatherings for African journalists and communicators to develop their expertise on oceans issues;
- request commitment from donors, private sector and national governments to disclose access agreements and concessions; and
- provide support to revisit components of existing communication programmes.

HIGH SEAS GOVERNANCE (FOR INPUT INTO THE UN DISCUSSIONS OF FEBRUARY 2006): This issue was addressed by panel 10 on Thursday and in the following dialogue sessions: high seas governance: bioprospecting in the high seas (Thursday); and high seas governance: high seas fisheries governance (Friday).

Salvatore Arico, Programme Specialist, Biodiversity, Division of Ecological Sciences, UNESCO, reported on these discussions. He noted that participants of the dialogues sessions did not



Salvatore Arico, Programme Specialist, Biodiversity, Division of Ecological Sciences, UNESCO

intend to negotiate or reach consensus, but aimed to collect views on: the legal distinction between marine scientific research and bioprospecting; trends in scientific discoveries; current scientific knowledge; knowledge gaps; the need for studies on socioeconomic impacts; ways to address uncertainties; and a general way forward. He said the group recognized that UNCLOS provides the basic legal framework but needs to be strengthened to address high seas issues. He said the High Seas Task Force on IUU Fishing and the UN Fish

Stocks Agreement provide valuable opportunities for improving high seas fisheries governance, and noted that strong sectoral governance is key to achieving the WSSD fisheries targets. He said future strategies should aim to, *inter alia*: eliminate IUU fishing; improve regional governance; bring unregulated high seas fisheries under international governance. He also called for the promotion of: the precautionary approach and EBM principles; coordination and cooperation approaches between RFMOs and international processes; and cooperation between coastal States, market States, port States and beneficial owners. He said differences of opinion exist on the principles guiding bioprospecting, ranging from freedom of use to the need to protect the common heritage of mankind, and noted the need for a clear definition of bioprospecting and a legal framework. Outlining next steps, he recommended:

- further constructive dialogue to promote understanding of the different views and exploring ways forward;
- studies on ways to address the environmental consequences of bioprospecting, on issues surrounding intellectual property rights and on the role of international legal principles of bioprospecting;
- reviews of international legal and institutional options, including non-legally binding options;

- strengthening capacity development, including targeted training on, *inter alia*, intellectual property rights and patent issues; and
- understanding socioeconomic aspects, legal dimensions, and biodiversity effects of human activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Noting that issues surrounding bioprospecting are closely linked with those related to the establishment of high seas MPAs, he said participants of the dialogue sessions had favored continuing informal information sharing, analytical work and research to fill knowledge gaps, and invited others to join this open-ended and flexible process.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE TSUNAMI DISASTER FOR COASTAL PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS (FOR INPUT INTO CSD MAY 2006): This issue was addressed by panel 6 on Wednesday, and in a dialogue session on Tsunami and Disaster Preparedness on Thursday.

On Friday, Arvind Anil Boaz, South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), reported that post-tsunami debris clean-up was progressing, that coral reefs were being rehabilitated, and praised the international assistance to the fishery sector. He outlined lessons learned, including the need for: physical and social risk assessment to create susceptibility maps; effective warning systems; detailed and rehearsed emergency plans; and local land-use planning that integrates coastal management systems. He reported progress on regional tsunami warning systems, called for more scientific input regarding multiple hazards, and underscored the importance of improving data flow to warning centers.

NEXT STEPS IN LINKING SCIENCE AND POLICY RELATED TO CLIMATE AND OCEANS: On Thursday, this issue was addressed by panel 11 and in a dialogue session.

Magdalena Muir, Research Associate, Arctic Institute of North America, reported that participants of the dialogue session highlighted threats that climate change poses to oceans, coasts and islands, including acidification, sea level rise, and increased severity and frequency of extreme weather events. She called for more research on this complex issue to better understand global, regional and local ecosystem interlinkages, and cited expert meetings such as the Global Conference as constructive fora for further information sharing.



Magdalena Muir, Research Associate, Arctic Institute of North America

ACTION PLAN FOR ENGAGING DECISION MAKERS, THE MEDIA, AND THE PUBLIC ON OCEANS: This issue was addressed by panel 12 and in a dialogue session on Friday. The outcome of these discussions provided input for the Third International Meeting: Acting Together for the Future of the Blue Planet, which took place immediately after the current conference and was organized by the World Ocean Network.

Philippe Vallette, Managing Director, French National Sea Experience Centre NAUSICAA, and Chair, World Ocean Network, summarized these discussions. He said public involvement is the key to successful oceans governance, and called for an ambitious but realistic plan of action. Stressing the need to highlight success stories, he urged the education of future leaders and professionals and finances to support educational projects. He also advocated: communicating directly to decision makers; communication for prevention; partnerships and synergies; and convincing decision makers and communities that we all depend on the oceans for our health, wealth and survival.

COMMUNITY OF PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING

COUNTRIES: Isabel Torres de Noronha, Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), reported on CPLP deliberations, which took place from Monday through Thursday. She highlighted that the CPLP is an intergovernmental community, including SIDS and least developed countries, that aims to promote and strengthen intra-community cooperation and the role of the Portuguese language. She said coastal and marine zones are of significant economic and cultural value to the CPLP, and outlined activities to achieve oceans-related MDGs. She highlighted a high-level workshop on CPLP seas held in 2005 to develop concrete actions and priorities for all member States, and a subsequent series of multilateral meetings to further develop strategies and projects. Noting support from the IOC Capacity Building Strategy, UNEP and the World Bank, she highlighted the need for institutional partners and additional support. She said current work focuses on the development of: mechanisms for collaboration and cooperation between CPLP in international fora; capacity building; leadership; and a CPLP strategy and SIDS assessment in the Portuguese language to promote cultural cohesion and develop synergies. She also highlighted the drafting of a coastal zone management strategy, including capacity development, and a contingency plan to combat pollution. Noting CPLP participation in GPA IRC-2, she announced the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Brazil and Cape Verde to cooperate in capacity building for integrated coastal management and fighting oil pollution, and expressed hope that other CPLP MoUs and concrete ocean policy actions will follow.

NEXT STEPS ON OCEAN DONORS ROUNDTABLE:

This roundtable took place on Monday. Indumathie Hewawasam, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank, reported on this discussion on behalf of roundtable Chair David Freestone, Deputy General Counsel, Advisory Services, World Bank. She said the roundtable stressed the need to collaborate and share information, raise the profile of oceans issues, and carry out systematic progress monitoring on WSSD/MDG commitments. She identified next steps, including: developing a comprehensive directory of organizations that finance oceans and coastal issues; creating a list serve for oceans; promoting a more systematic monitoring of progress of existing programmes; and creating a secretariat for ocean donors to ensure continuity and sustainability.

NEXT STEPS ON BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

LEADERS ROUNDTABLE: This roundtable took place on Tuesday. Panel 12 also addressed this issue.

Paul Holthus, Executive Director, Marine Aquarium Council, reported on these discussions. Underscoring the importance of bringing together an intersectoral group of actors, he noted the benefits to all participants of: developing relationships and understanding; finding areas of common interest; disseminating best practices; developing partnerships; and fostering scientific data sharing. He said the group committed to: develop ongoing communications among participants; draft a mission statement; identify specific issues of overlapping concern for cross-sectoral approaches; develop a document on the contribution of the ocean industry to the global economy; and expand the network.

INFORMAL MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES: Ministerial roundtables were held on Tuesday and Wednesday. Veerle Vandeweerd, Head, UNEP RSP, and Coordinator, UNEP GPA, reported on these discussions. She said the roundtable participants recognized the need for oceans leadership, capacity building and involvement of local and regional actors at all levels of decision making. Although she noted the usefulness of the roundtables and urged maintaining its informal nature, she recommended future Conferences focus on fewer topics. She urged linking the recommendations of the Conference to other relevant processes.

CONCLUDING SESSION

Noting that over 70 percent of countries represented were either developing or had economies in transition, Biliana Cicin-Sain, Co-Chair, Global Forum, said the Conference provided a forum for a dialogue across regions. She said the discussions gave a mixed picture on WSSD targets and implementation of the MDGs and stressed the lack of data on implementation.

Veerle Vandeweerd, Co-Chair, Global Forum, underscored the usefulness of informal conversations during the meeting.

Andrew Hudson, Principal Technical Advisor, International Waters, GEF, on behalf of Al Duda, Senior Advisor, International Waters, GEF, thanked all participants and praised the Global Conference as a valuable exercise.

Magnus Ngoile, Tanzanian National Environmental Management Council, underlined that the Global Forum has been successful at building a constituency for oceans, coasts and islands.

Lori Ridgeway, Director-General, International Coordination and Policy Analysis, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada, noted the repeated calls for scaling down for implementation and underlined the need to think globally, plan regionally, and act locally. She called for further integration of science into decision making and carrying out research on the cost of inaction.

Julian Barbière, Oceans Sciences Section, IOC, urged participants to be oceans leaders and take the Conference's recommendations to their own constituencies. He closed the meeting at 6:35 pm.



Biliana Cicin-Sain, Co-Chair and Head of the Secretariat, Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands

UPCOMING MEETINGS

13TH OCEAN SCIENCES MEETING: This meeting will take place from 20-24 February 2006 in Honolulu, Hawaii. For more information, contact: AGU Meetings Department; tel: +1-800-966-2481, ext. 333 or +1-202-777-7333; fax: +1-202-328-0566; e-mail: os-help@agu.org; Internet: <http://www.agu.org/meetings/os06/>

POST-DISASTER ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS AND BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

AND ASIAN WATERS: This meeting will be held from 20-23 February 2006 in Phuket, Thailand. For more information, contact: Miguel D. Fortes; tel: +66-2-298-2142 or 298-2637; fax: +66-2-298-2637; e-mail: m.fortes@unescobkk.org or westpac@unescobkk.org; Internet: <http://westpac.unescobkk.org/upcoming%20events/Phuket%20WKSP.htm>

SHARING THE FISH CONFERENCE 2006: This conference will be held from 23 February to 2 March 2006 in Perth, Australia. Organized by the Western Australian Department of Fisheries in cooperation with FAO, this conference will focus on resource allocation and the sustainability of fisheries and will provide a neutral forum for the multi-disciplinary discussion of the elements of effective allocation of fisheries resources to ensure their sustainability. For more information, contact: Conference Secretariat; tel: +61-8-9387-1488; fax: +61-8-9387-1499; e-mail: info5@eventedge.com.au; Internet: <http://www.fishallocation.com.au/>

THE WORLD MARITIME TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE: This conference, organized by the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST), will take place from 6-10 March in London, UK. Conference themes will include: biodiversity of submarine reefs; eco-security: exotic species translocation; food security; climate change effects on reefs; and oceans policy. For more information, contact: IMarEST Events Department, tel: +44 (0)20-7382-2655; fax: +44 (0)20-7382-2667; e-mail: events@wmtc2006.com; Internet: <http://www.wmtc2006.com>

CBD COP-8 AND BIOSAFETY COP/MOP-3: The eighth meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties is scheduled to meet from 20-31 March 2006, in Curitiba, Brazil. This meeting will be preceded by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Biosafety Protocol, which will meet from 13-17 March 2006. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/meetings/default.aspx>

FIRST INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON MANGROVES AS FISH HABITAT: This symposium will be held from 19-21 April 2006 in Miami, Florida, US. The symposium will seek to provide an exchange of ideas, approaches, methods and pertinent data on the linkages between mangrove forests and the fishes and fisheries associated with them. For more information, contact: Joseph Serafy (NOAA); tel: +1-305-361-4255; fax: +1-305-361-4562; e-mail: mangrovesasfishhabitat@noaa.gov; Internet: <http://www.rsmas.miami.edu/conference/mangrove-fish-habitat>

ENVIROWATER 2006 CONFERENCE: The Ninth Inter-Regional Conference on Environment-Water ("Envirowater 2006") will take place from 17-19 May 2006, in Delft, the Netherlands. The conference will focus on concepts for water management and multifunctional land-uses in lowlands, with a particular focus on: opportunities and threats; water and

climate change; groundwater and salt water intrusion; and water management systems as a steering instrument for planning. For more information, contact: Organizing Committee; tel: +31-317-483-849; fax: +31-317-482-166; e-mail: envirowater2006@wur.nl; Internet: <http://www.isomul.com/envirowater2006/>

REVIEW CONFERENCE FOR THE STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS AGREEMENT:

This conference will take place from 22-26 May 2006 at UN headquarters in New York, US. It will be preceded by preparatory consultations from 20-24 March 2006. For more information, contact: UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea; tel: +1-212-963-3962; fax: +1-212-963-5847; e-mail: doalos@un.org; Internet: http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/review_conf_fish_stocks.htm

UNICPOLOS-7: The Seventh session of the UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea will be held from 12 to 16 June 2006, at UN Headquarters in New York. The Consultative Process will focus its discussions on the following topics: "Ecosystem approaches and oceans". For more information, contact: Secretary of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea; tel: +1 212 963-3962; fax: +1 212 963-2811; email: doalos@un.org; Internet: http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm

FIRST ASIA PACIFIC CORAL REEF SYMPOSIUM: This symposium will be held from 18-24 June 2006 in Hong Kong, China, and will seek to provide a forum for scientists, educators, managers, environmentalists and other stakeholders in the Asia Pacific region to share their knowledge and experiences on all aspects of coral reef biology, ecology, management, and conservation strategies. For more information, contact: Symposium Secretariat; tel: +852-2609-6770 or +852-2609-6133; fax: +852-2603-5391; e-mail: apcrs.secretariat@cuhk.edu.hk; Internet: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/bio/APCRS/index.htm>

41ST EUROPEAN MARINE BIOLOGY SYMPOSIUM: This symposium will take place from 4-8 September 2006 in Cork, Ireland. The theme of the symposium will be: Challenges to Marine Ecosystems. For more information, contact: Conference organizers; fax: +353 (0)21 4904664; e-mail: EMBS41@ucc.ie; Internet: <http://www.embs41.ucc.ie/index.htm>

ASCOBANS MOP-5: The fifth meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) is scheduled to take place from 19-22 September 2006 in Egmond aan Zee, The Netherlands. For more information, contact: ASCOBANS Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2416; fax: +49-228-815-2440; Internet: <http://www.ascobans.org/index0401.html>

GPA IGR-2: The Second Intergovernmental Review of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) will take place from 16-20 October 2006 in Beijing, China. For more information, contact: GPA Secretariat; tel: +31 (0)70 311 4460; fax: +31 (0)70 345 6648; e-mail: igr2@unep.nl; Internet: <http://www.gpa.unep.org/bin/php/igr/igr2/index.php>

ICRI GENERAL MEETING: This meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative will take place on 22 and 23 October 2006 in Cozumel, Mexico. For more information, contact: Emily Corcoran, ICRI Secretariat, tel: +44 (0)1223 277314 ext. 289; fax: +44 (0)1223 277136; e-mail: icri@unep-wcmc.org; Internet: <http://www.icriforum.org/secretariat.html>