

UN-OCEANS VII  
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Intergovernmental  
Oceanographic  
Commission

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION**  
(of UNESCO)

**REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF UN-OCEANS**  
**UNESCO-IOC Headquarters, Paris 14-15 April 2009**

**SUMMARY**

The 7th Meeting of UN-Oceans was held in Paris from 14 to 15 April 2009 at UNESCO Headquarters. Representatives from WMO, UNIDO, UNEP, UN/DESA, FAO, IMO, UN/OLA/DOALOS, UNDP (Deputy Coordinator), and UNESCO/IOC (Coordinator) attended the meeting. CBD reported on item 3.2 of the agenda via teleconference, and also followed the subsequent discussion.

The participants discussed the progress made by the thematic task forces (Biodiversity in Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction and the Marine Protected Areas and Other Area-Based Management Tools), the development of the "Assessment of Assessments" (AoA) process and the UN Atlas of the Oceans, in addition to the activities of GESAMP. Inputs into ICP-10 were also considered. Finally the participants commented on possible strategic planning for future directions of UN-Oceans and accepted the candidature of DOALOS for new Coordinator for election to be held when Mr. Bernal reaches the end of his term (December, 2009).

## **1. OPENING OF THE SESSION**

The meeting was opened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 14 April 2009, by Mr. Patricio Bernal, Coordinator of UN-Oceans, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO and Executive Secretary of IOC. Mr. Bernal and the Deputy Coordinator, Mr. Andrew Hudson, welcomed the participants to UNESCO/IOC headquarters, and thanked them for their attendance to the meeting. The Coordinator introduced the Agenda of the meeting (Annex I to this document), which was accepted without amendments; afterwards, the participants introduced themselves and gave a short description of their functions and past activities within UN-Oceans (the List of Participants is available as Annex II).

Mr. Bernal remarked on the commitment of the UN-Oceans network to improve the coordination of actions that UN organizations with competencies in marine activities do independently. The *modus operandi* and the strengths and weaknesses of UN-Oceans were briefly analyzed. These aspects were treated in deeper detail under item 7 of the Agenda.

## **2. REPORTS ON AGENCY PROGRAMMES RELEVANT TO UN-OCEANS**

Ongoing Programmes, activities and coming meetings related to UN-Oceans were reported by the agencies. Annex III contains the list of documents provided for the meeting participants.

### **WMO**

Mr. Edgar Cabrera remarked that WMO is very satisfied of its participation in UN-Water and that similar outcome is expected from participating in UN-Oceans. He mentioned that a 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the Joint WMO-IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) will take place the 4-11 November 2009 in Marrakech; the aim of this meeting is to discuss work plan for the Commission (2010-2013). Mr. Cabrera mentioned that WMO is hosting the 36<sup>th</sup> session of GESAMP next 27 April – 1 May. In addition WMO takes part in the Ad Hoc Steering Committee of the AoA, and hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> and last meeting of the AoA Group of Experts. Mr. Cabrera also indicated that the third World Climate Conference will take place at Geneva the 31 August – 4 September 2009 and it will be an important event with an international organizing committee. In the Conference, oceans will be dealt as a special topic.

### **UNIDO**

Mr. Pablo Huidobro Nordenflycht indicated that UNIDO is also involved in UN-Water and their role in UN-Oceans is to examine the contribution of industrial activities and how they impact on oceans and coasts. UNIDO is involved in several GEF International Waters projects and is coordinating with other agencies under clearly defined roles. Regarding the coastal area, ocean and application of Ecosystem Approach, UNIDO with GEF financing is collaborating with UNEP in a new assessment of the impact of coastal tourism, including working with the tourism industry towards mitigating negative impacts of tourism activities. UNIDO also collaborates with GESAMP as a Sponsoring Organization and Technical Secretary which he valued as an important contribution. Mr. Huidobro remarked that although UNIDO is not a research organization, there is an important area where they can contribute to UN-Oceans. In terms of UN-Oceans he considered that UNIDO is supportive and can learn from UN-Water and UN-Energy by helping elevate it to higher levels, both in the working of the secretariat and raising the level of political awareness.

### **UNEP**

Ms. Jackie Alder discussed the activities of the UNEP Marine Programme during the last year. She mentioned the programme goals that includes now a long term perspective contained in the marine and Coastal Strategy and short term issues such as trying to support countries in building capacities for Ecosystem Based Management (EBM), working on Climate Change with IOC and FAO, sponsoring the Manado World Ocean Conference, the WCC3 with WMO and the Mediterranean Action Plan. UNEP has also been working in developing programmes in small islands, helping countries to implement the EBM approach, and looking at ways in which the Global Programme of Action (GPA) can be improved. UNEP has been working with FAO on ecosystem effects of fisheries, supporting countries in their continental extension claims with GRID ARENDAL, and Regional Seas.

## **IOC**

Mr. Luis Valdés highlighted the significance of UN-Oceans as a coordinating body between the agencies and the importance to give more content to the group. He continued with a description of IOC activities during the past year; these include the AoA, start-up phase of the Regular process under the UN General Assembly, and the importance of establishing an integrated assessment of the oceans in the framework of the many sparse and isolated activities that are currently taking place; Climate Change items including the Ocean Carbon program which is working on a policy paper about ocean fertilization; preparation of Biogeography Guidelines relevant to Agenda item 3.2. "Marine protected areas and other area-based tools"; and the fruitful collaboration with IMO in WCRP. He mentioned that IOC had organized two major meetings in 2008: the International Symposium on Impacts of Climate Change on the World's Oceans (Gijón, May 2008) and the Ocean Acidification Meeting (Monaco, October 2008). The latter was followed by a declaration that was recently published and has had a significant impact in terms of raising the profile of the ocean acidification issue (printed copy of this Declaration was distributed during UN-Oceans meeting). In the very near future, IOC is also involved in the Manado World Ocean Conference (May, 2009) and is organizing OceanObs'09 (Venice, September 2009). In 2010 IOC will organize in collaboration with FAO, ICES and PICES an International Symposium on Effects of Climate Change in Fish and Fisheries.

## **DOALOS**

Ms. Alice Hiciburundi presented an overview of DOALOS's relevant activities during the past year and provided information on: the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea to the General Assembly (64<sup>th</sup> session); the ninth and upcoming tenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal ICP on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP), the Informal Consultations of the States Parties to the Fish Stocks Agreement and preparations for the third meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. She also referred to the development by DOALOS of an interdisciplinary manual on "Developing and Implementing an Ecosystem Approach to the Management of Ocean-related Activities" and its delivery at a training workshop in Mombasa, Kenya, organized in collaboration with UNEP and the Nairobi Convention. She also announced that the UN General Assembly had designated the 8<sup>th</sup> of June as World Oceans Day (a copy of the UN announcement, dated 6 April 2009, is incorporated as Annex IV to the present report). DOALOS has sent a communication to UN agencies to consider hosting events to celebrate World Ocean Day and to examine how to join in the celebrations organized in New York.

## **FAO**

Ms. Tina Farmer informed on the outcomes of the biennial FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) meeting held in March where the focus of FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture would include, among other things, continued and improved implementation the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; promoting hatchery-based aquaculture, strengthening regional fisheries management organizations some of which are still underperforming; emphasizing sustainable management practices such as the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture. FAO concerns with the effects of climate change on the oceans is driving the discussion towards risk mitigation and adaptation strategies and FAO is working with UNEP (among others) in raising awareness within the member States. A new programme on acoustic surveying has been launched, focusing on Africa as a pilot study. Finally it was announced that "FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea fisheries in the High Seas" will soon be published as part of ongoing work on that topic and a "Technical Consultation to draft a legally-binding instrument on port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing" will be held in May 2009 as part of action to combat IUU fishing.

## **IMO**

Mr. René Coenen informed on the imminent diplomatic conference (11 – 15 May 2009) to adopt a ship recycling convention, which is aimed at ensuring that ships, when being recycled after reaching the end of their operational lives, do not pose any unnecessary risk to human health and safety or to the environment. He informed of the GEF-UNDP-IMO Project-Building Partnerships to assist developing countries to reduce the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms in ships' ballast water (GloBallast Partnerships Project). Within the framework of that Project, the Global Industry Alliance (GIA) for Marine Biosafety was set up to accelerate innovative solutions to help address ballast water management issues and to serve as a major facilitator and model for such private-public sector alliances at regional and national levels. IMO is also finalizing measures to reduce greenhouse gas

emissions from international shipping as a contribution to UNFCCC COP 15 in Copenhagen. Ocean fertilization is an emerging issue that Parties to the London Convention and Protocol are addressing with the final objective to provide in 2009 a transparent and legal base for legitimate research activities and in which IOC and CDB are helping with technical assistance. Finally, Parties to the London Convention and Protocol were closely co-operating with UNEP's Regional Seas Programme for harmonized implementation of international agreements to protect the marine environment, with recent activities (2007 – 2008) in the S/E Pacific (CPPS) and new collaborations planned for the Mediterranean Sea Region (2009-2011).

#### **UNDP**

Mr. Andrew Hudson informed on several new UNDP-GEF International Waters programmes on capacity building that were approved for financing in 2008, including: exploring mechanisms for high seas governance regimes in the Western Indian Ocean, developing a Strategic Action Programme for the Humboldt Current LME, reducing overfishing in the Caspian Sea, several linked activities under the Coral Triangle Initiative including planned TDA/SAP work in the Timor-Arafura Sea and Sulu-Celebes Sea LME, and engaging 3 additional countries (Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia) in the W/C Pacific Fisheries management regime, and a second phase GEF project in Rio de la Plata focused mainly on implementing measures aimed at nutrient reduction.

#### **UNESCO (Culture Sector)**

Ms. Ulrike Guerin informed on some UNESCO activities that could be relevant for UN-Oceans, such as the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. This convention was adopted in 2001 and entered into force on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2009. It enables States Parties to better protect their submerged archaeological heritage from being damaged, looted or scattered away. It provides guidance for underwater archaeology. Shipwrecks and underwater ruins have become increasingly accessible. While professional equipment and a high level of training remain necessary to undertake excavations, sites are no longer beyond the reach of treasure hunters. They therefore need protection through practical measures and control. The UNESCO 2001 Convention for the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage stipulates that sites should preferably be left as they were found, in the absence of any type of valid justification for intervention or recovery. The preference given to preservation takes into account the integrity of sites, the information they may yield in the future and the fact that - due to the often low levels of oxygen in well preserved sites- underwater preservation is even easier and less costly than when taking it on land. The first Meeting of States Parties to the Convention took place on 26 and 27 March 2009.

### **3. REPORTS BY THE UN-OCEANS TASK FORCES**

#### **3.1 TASK FORCE ON BIODIVERSITY IN AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION**

Ms. Alice Hiciburundi from UN-DOALOS introduced and presented progress achieved by this Task Force focusing, in particular, on the status of preparation of the document on tools on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, pursuant to a decision adopted at the sixth meeting of UN-Oceans.

#### **Background**

The First Inter-Agency Meeting of UN-Oceans (January 25-26, 2005, UNESCO-IOC, Paris, France) established the UN-Oceans Task-Force on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction for the purpose of coordinating information input to the General Assembly, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and other international processes dealing with biodiversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. The expected outputs of this Task Force which is co-lead by DOALOS and the CBD are to focus on:

- Consensus on the global distribution of biodiversity (including genetic resources) in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, as well as the status of this biodiversity and the threats that it is under; and
- Consensus on what tools (within the international and regional legal regime) are available for the conservation and sustainable use of this biodiversity.

## **Activities in 2008-2009**

The main activities of this Task Force were focused on implementing the decision of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of UN-Oceans.

- Preparation of a compilation of information on existing tools provided for under relevant international instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in these areas, and the ways to strengthen existing mechanisms of cooperation and coordination among intergovernmental organizations and bodies.
- Convening of a meeting of the Task-force during ICP-9 that took place from 23-27 June 2008.

Ms. Alice Hiciburundi also informed the meeting of the development of a webpage in consultation with the CBD addressing the issue of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. [www.un.org/Depts/los/biodiversityworkinggroup/marine\\_biodiversity.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/biodiversityworkinggroup/marine_biodiversity.htm). The webpage contains information on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction including background information and links to relevant reports and other documents. It also includes a section on the UN-Ocean Task force with a list of links to the websites of the Task Force members, which have been invited to confirm them.

## **Proposed activities for consideration**

- The Compilation will be coming out soon. It will be distributed for comments and inputs and members will be invited to consider ways to strengthen existing mechanisms of cooperation and coordination among intergovernmental organizations and bodies.
- In preparation of the third meeting of the BBNJ Working Group, members will be invited to submit relevant documentation to be made available during the meeting.
- Confirmation and update of links to other UN-Oceans members.

## **Discussion**

FAO noted that Biodiversity is extremely important in different ways: maintaining biodiversity means to maintain different options for the management of exploited resources, so it is necessary to bring the biodiversity concept onboard within the ecosystem approach to the management to fisheries. In addition, to build ecosystem (and human systems) resilience to climate change, biodiversity needs to be preserved.

The IOC Head of Ocean Sciences, Mr. Luis Valdés, mentioned that biodiversity will remain on the political agenda for the next 10-15 years, and even if there are still many open points that can be interpreted in different ways, biodiversity is a common concept that may be applied for apparently very different uses of the sea, for example for the management of fisheries on one side, and good practices on management of ballast water in trans oceanic navigation on the other side. Furthermore, biodiversity is the concept underpinning changes in biogeography and fauna due to the opening of the Arctic; each of these examples is fully applicable in context of areas of the oceans beyond national jurisdiction.

A general discussion ensued recalling the ongoing debate about the general competence of the United Nations General Assembly with regard to issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological biodiversity and the complementary role of the Convention on Biological diversity activities within its established mandate.

Finally the Coordinator of UN-Oceans, Mr. Patricio Bernal, called for a reflection on what other outputs should be expected from the Task Force in addition to the ongoing compilation of tools on marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

### **3.2 TASK FORCE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS AND OTHER AREA-BASED TOOLS**

Through teleconference, Ms Jihyun Lee (CBD), made a presentation on Marine Protected Areas and Other Area-Based Tools.

#### **Background**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of UN-Oceans (21-22 May 2007) established the Task Force on Marine Protected Areas and Other Area-based Management Tools. UNESCO (IOC, MAB and WHC), CBD, UNEP, and FAO were designated as co-lead organizations. The main purpose of the Task Force was to strengthen collaboration and coordination among UN organizations dealing with marine protected areas, especially to promote the accomplishment of the targets set by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). In this regard, the Task Force focused on:

- Promoting and facilitating the application of MPAs as a management tool for marine and coastal conservation by UN Member States;
- Enhancing coordination among UN organizations dealing with MPAs to improve coherence and effectiveness of the application of MPAs;
- Developing a mechanism for exchanging information on MPAs among UN and non-UN organizations; and
- Enhancing coordination and coherence in providing reporting inputs to relevant UN processes and mechanisms and/or the relevant processes of other international bodies.

#### **Activities in 2008-2009**

The ninth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 9), held from 19 to 30 May 2008 in Bonn, Germany, made a remarkable step forward toward achieving 2012 MPA target by adopting the scientific criteria (see Annex I to decision IX/20, available at <http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=11663>), for identifying ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in need of protection, in open ocean waters and deep sea habitats, and the scientific guidance (see Annex II to decision IX/20, available at the same web site) for designing representative networks of marine protected areas, as recommended by the Expert Workshop on Ecological Criteria and Biogeographic Classification Systems for Marine Areas in Need of Protection, held from 2 to 4 October 2007 in Azores, Portugal.

In the same decision, COP 9 further decided to convene an expert workshop, including scientific and technical experts from different Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, with balanced regional and sectoral participation and using the best available information and data at the time, in order to provide scientific and technical guidance on the use and further development of biogeographic classification systems, and guidance on the identification of areas beyond national jurisdiction, which meet the scientific criteria (Annex I to decision IX/20). The workshop will review and synthesize progress on the identification of areas beyond national jurisdiction which meet the scientific criteria (Annex I to decision IX/20), and experience with the use of the biogeographic classification system, building upon a compilation of existing sectoral, regional and national efforts, and requested the Executive Secretary to transmit the results of this workshop to the 14th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice for its consideration prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of Parties with a view to assisting the United Nations General Assembly. This workshop shall not consider issues relating to management and only provides scientific and technical information and guidance. In this regard, COP 9 invited Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations to provide relevant information concerning the objectives of the workshop referred to above and on the progress towards the 2012 target to the Executive Secretary for compilation and provision to the expert workshop.

In response to the above requests, the CBD Secretariat is convening, with financial support from the Governments of Canada and Germany, an expert workshop on scientific and technical guidance on the use of biogeographic classification systems and identification of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction in need of protection, in Ottawa, Canada from 29 September to 2 October 2009. CBD

Secretariat has been closely collaborating with Task Force Members, including FAO, IMO, ISA, UN-OLA-DOALOS, UNEP, and UNESCO-IOC, in undertaking various preparatory activities.

In particular, the Task Force Members were invited to submit nominations of experts (CBD notification No.65788, issued on 12 December 2008), participate in the e-forum on the Ottawa workshop (<http://www.cbd.int/marine/forums/>), and submit relevant information to the workshop (CBD notification No. 66531, issued on 2 March 2009).

### **Proposed activities for consideration**

- The Task Force members are invited to actively participate in the e-forum and contribute relevant information to the Ottawa Expert Workshop.
- For effective coordination of each other's activities, the Task Force Members are invited to develop joint calendar of activities relevant to objectives of the Task Force.
- To further enhance communication, the Task Force Members are invited to designate operational focal point to this Task Force.

### **Discussion**

The meeting welcomed the report provided by Ms. Jihyun Lee. In the ensuing discussion, the meeting noted that IOC has recently published a report on *Global Open Oceans and Deep Seabed (GOODS) – Biogeographic Classification*. (IOC Technical Series, 84, 2009), which contains relevant information for the work of this Task Force as well as the Ottawa Expert Workshop.

The idea on developing a joint calendar of activities relevant for this Task Force was supported by several members of the meeting as the increasing numbers of meetings convened by UN-Ocean members are creating serious scheduling challenges to the necessary coordination of relevant works among different agencies.

UN-DOALOS requested a clarification on the activities and role of the Focal points for this task Force, as suggested under proposed activities, as it seems a duplication of the current focal points to UN-Ocean members. It was clarified that what is needed is a practical way of maintaining effective communication and that in some organizations the professionals involved might be different.

FAO informed the meeting of forthcoming technical guidelines and case-studies related to marine protected areas for fisheries. FAO will disseminate these documents to CBD Secretariat as information to the Ottawa workshop as well as other members of UN-Oceans..

## **4. OTHER INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATIONS**

### **4.1 ASSESSMENT OF ASSESSMENTS AS THE START-UP PHASE OF THE UN REGULAR PROCESS**

Mr. Bernal introduced this item as the work has been lead jointly by IOC and UNEP. He reminded UN-Oceans that the first initiative of this process dates back to 1998, when the need of having a global assessment of the Ocean was suggested in a workshop in London preparing CDS. Following a decision adopted at the UNEP Governing Council in February 1999, two workshops were carried out jointly with UNEP (Reykjavik and Bremen) to study the feasibility and modalities of a global marine assessment process. At the WSDD in Johannesburg the adopted Plan of Implementation called to: *“establish by 2004 a regular process under the United Nations for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects (..)”*. The initial lack of agreement among member States on the scope of the regular process delayed the beginning of the process and in 2005 the General Assembly adopted resolution 60/30 asking UNEP and IOC to co-lead the start-up phase of the Regular Process consisting of, *inter alia*, a review of all existing assessments on ocean and coasts, the “Assessment of Assessments”. In 2006, the *Ad hoc* Steering Group was constituted by the President of the General Assembly to oversee the execution of the AoA, and a Group of Experts to undertake the work of assessing the various assessments was also

established. The report of the AoA has just been finalized and will be transmitted to the Secretary General for consideration by the General Assembly Ad hoc Working Group of the Whole created by General Assembly resolution 63/111. The WG of the Whole will meet in New York from the 31<sup>st</sup> August to the 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2009. The Full report of the start-up phase of the Regular Process together with the proceedings and recommendations of the WG of the Whole, will be presented to the 64th UNGA for its consideration and decision (more information available in [www.unga-regular-process.org](http://www.unga-regular-process.org)). The members of UN-Oceans engaged in a lively exchange of views agreeing on the relevance of this process for all agencies and programs and remarked that the indicative financial costs requested by the General Assembly and provided by the Group of Experts was a critical aspect for the future of the initiative.

The members of UN-Oceans expressed their willingness to fully engage in the Regular Process and to support it by participating in the governance of the process and in the planning and execution of the future assessments. UN-Oceans can also express a willingness to play a more direct role in the coordination of the process as suggested in one of the options proposed by the group of experts (an inter-agency secretariat), as well as become part of any follow-up decided upon by the General Assembly.

#### **4.2 GESAMP (IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/WMO/IAEA/UN-DOALOS/UNEP/UNIDO JOINT GROUP OF EXPERTS ON THE SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION)**

Mr. René Coenen, Head, Office for the London Convention and Protocol briefed the meeting on the activities of GESAMP since UN-Oceans VI. In keeping with GESAMP's mission "to provide authoritative, independent, interdisciplinary scientific advice to organizations and Governments to support the protection and sustainable use of the marine environment", five GESAMP Working Groups are currently active, as follows:

- WG 1 (Evaluation of the hazards of harmful substances carried by ships) with IMO as the lead agency,
- WG 34 (Review of proposals for approval of ballast water management systems that make use of 'active substances') with IMO as the lead agency,
- WG 37 (Expanded scientific review of mercury and its compounds and threats to the marine environment) with UNIDO as the lead agency,
- WG 38 (Atmospheric input of chemicals to the ocean) with WMO as the lead agency, and
- WG 39 (Global trends in pollution of coastal ecosystems: retrospective ecosystem assessment) with IAEA-MEL as the lead agency.

GESAMP is also actively contributing to the start-up phase of the UN Regular Process (AoA), at the request of the lead agencies, UNESCO-IOC and UNEP, as follows:

- GESAMP hosted a Workshop in September 2006 to review the draft UNEP-WCMC Survey Report on the latest achievements concerning global and regional assessment activities since their identification in a UNEP-WCMC survey published in 2003;
- a GESAMP Task Team prepared a report on the assessment landscape of the open oceans, which will also be published separately; and
- a second GESAMP Task Team carried out a peer review of the final Group of Experts report under the AoA.

In this way GESAMP has shown that its new structure since 2006 allows it to respond quickly and flexibly to the needs of its sponsoring Organizations. This has been possible through the substantive support received from the Swedish Government since 2006 and which will, subject to confirmation in 2009, possibly be extended to 2011. One of the conditions of the Swedish Government is that a strong capacity building element is built in the activities of GESAMP. GESAMP will convene its 36<sup>th</sup> session in Geneva from 27 April to 1 May 2009.



On a question how GESAMP received a mandate for specific advice to be given, it was clarified that such requests could come through any of the Sponsoring Organizations, directly or through their governing boards. Such requests were then discussed in the Executive Committee of GESAMP, consisting of all Sponsoring Organizations and the Chairman/Vice-Chairmen of GESAMP. Once a draft terms of reference and a work plan was developed and co-sponsorship and funding was secured, GESAMP then decides whether or not the activity will be undertaken.

### 4.3 UN ATLAS OF THE OCEANS

Ms. Tina Farmer gave a presentation on the UN Atlas of the Oceans ([www.oceansatlas.org](http://www.oceansatlas.org)), an Internet portal providing information relevant to the sustainable development of the oceans. It is designed for policy-makers who need to become familiar with ocean issues and for scientists, students and resource managers who need access to databases and approaches to sustainability. The Atlas was developed 10 years ago and was launched online in June 2002. The web-site contains important and useful information such as maps, images and data. At the moment there are 10,000 registered members (Figure 1), a number that continues growing as well as the general use of the Atlas (on average the Atlas received ~100,000 monthly visits in 2008). Plans for the future include continuing developing and strengthening partnerships, obtaining a wider collaboration, adding new partners, updating content and functionality and ensuring equitable use. Further needs were remarked such as institutional mainstreaming within the UN and associates, increased participation of governmental and non-governmental partners, strategies for wider involvement, and securing long-term funding for sustainability of the initiative. Mr. Jorge Csirke emphasized the importance of sustaining support for the Atlas from the partners to ensure its continuity. FAO proposed a regular commitment of US\$10,000 dollars per year from each UN Agency for the maintenance and development of the UN Atlas of the Oceans. FAO also proposed convening a Technical Committee Meeting of the UN Atlas members in autumn 2009 (last one was held in February 2007).

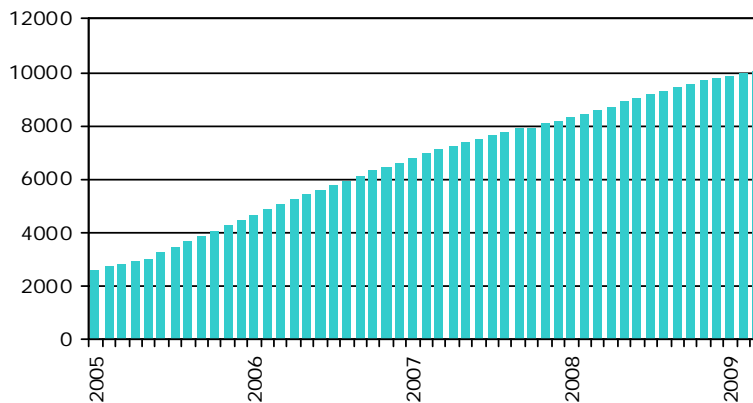


Figure 1: Trends in use of UN Atlas of the Oceans; number of monthly registered membership since 2005

Discussion focused on how partners could best support continued growth and development of the UN Atlas – through regular content updating, a thorough review of the original topic tree, enlarged partnership. In response to the request for regular funding from partners, the participants requested a small budget proposal in order to better consider such commitment. It was also suggested that the Atlas could be used to as a key instrument to promote UN-Oceans activities and communication messages (such as the upcoming and first celebration of UN World Oceans Day). A calendar (as mentioned above under 3.2) could be created in order to publish UN-O members' events/activities. A collaborative work space could also be established to better coordinate the group's actions. UNIDO expressed interest in possibly joining the UN Atlas partnership. FAO will follow-up and send relevant information to participants, including on plans for the Technical Committee meeting.

## 5. ACTIVITIES OF UN-OCEANS MEMBERS IN ONE UN PILOTS

Following the useful experience of mapping UN agency activities in the One-UN countries, Mr. Bernal summarized that a comprehensive global inventory of all projects on ocean and coasts could be done for all the agencies of UN-Oceans. After an exchange of views there was agreement that such a project would add-value to the activities of the network and show the real impact of the UN-system work on ocean and coasts. UNDP volunteered to take the lead and provide a template for consideration/input by UN-Oceans members. A target date for completion of the inventory was agreed for August 2009, to capture **all active ongoing** projects including operational pilot projects based on a scale of operational portfolio, country, region, etc. The inventory should not include projects that have already been completed, and should be restricted only to those that are presently operational. It was mentioned that the World Bank may have a similar inventory of marine projects and programmes that are or were funded in the past, and that they might wish to contribute in building such inventory. In order to avoid any “double counting” effect from multi-agency projects and programmes, each agency should do an inventory and will double-check their entries with the other agencies. The representative of DOALOS noted that information on the “One UN” had been included in the reports of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea (A/63/63 and Add.1) and suggested that as much as possible, additional information should be submitted for inclusion in the Part II of the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea to be issued in the fall.

## 6. INPUTS INTO ICP-10

Ms. Alice Hicuburundi (UN-OLA-DOALOS) informed UN-Oceans that the next ICP meeting will be held in New York on 17-19 June. She noted that contrary to past practice, the first part of the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea (available on DOALOS website) had focused solely on the topic of focus of the tenth meeting of the ICP. She noted in this regard that all contributions from States and international organizations and other bodies, as well as other documents relevant for the meeting of the ICP (e.g. Format and annotated agenda) were all posted on the DOALOS website. The focus of the June discussion will be on “The implementation of the outcomes of the ICP, including a review of its achievements and shortcomings in its first nine meetings”. Ms. Hicuburundi also informed the meeting of a change in the traditional agenda of the meetings of the ICP, which owing to time constraints did not include, this year, an item on “Inter-agency cooperation and coordination”. However, the Coordinator of the UN-Oceans, who usually takes the floor under that agenda item, will be invited during the first plenary session on Wednesday 17 June 2009, to provide information on UN-Oceans activities, particularly as they relate to the topic of focus. In this respect, Mr. Bernal invited the agencies participating in the ICP to offer their opinion to the plenary about the impact of the ICP on their activities.

To help set the context of the discussions, Mr. Bernal provided some background on the origin of the ICP. In 1997/98, SOCA as task manager of Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 was charged to produce a five year after Rio review for CSD. The Soares Independent World Commission on Oceans provided a number of observations and recommendations on ocean governance such as the disconnect between the Meeting of States Parties to UNCLOS and other ocean governance processes. Several alternatives were proposed, such as a GA Committee on the Whole to review ocean governance issues every 2-3 years. The ICP emerged from this review by the CSD. The preferred approach was to have a collective review of the ocean agenda where all the UN member States and UN agencies programmes could participate, along with elements of civil society.

ICP has emerged over the last ten years as the principal mechanism for international dialogue on ocean governance. By facilitating the participation of the UN Secretariat, UN Agencies, external civil society members (academics, NGOs, worker unions, etc.), ICP has served as a transparent and multi-stakeholder forum linked to the UNGA. The recommendations of ICP are non-binding, but the agreed elements adopted at ICP are taken very seriously since actionable items are usually included as part of the annual UNGA Resolution on Oceans and the Law of the Sea after been negotiated by delegations in New York.

An exchange of views on the experience of agencies and programs' participation in ICP ensued. FAO noted that one of the benefits of ICP is that the discussion is open to participation of the civil society and scientists who can help to shape policy. It is mostly a pre-negotiation process, where the different positions on a given subject can be known and their implications explored, but it is also an education and awareness raising process. IOC-UNESCO noted that there is a clear difference between the composition of delegations sent to ICP that include specialists and experts from capitals, and local delegations (missions) stationed in New York, participating in the subsequent negotiation process, who often lacked the technical expertise on ocean matters.

FAO suggested that UN-Oceans could draft a report which would include an analysis of previous ICP reports and achievements. IMO noted that the discussions, while primarily technical and very informative and useful, sometimes go to a political level.

DOALOS noted that some countries seem to be concerned about the potential disconnect between the ICP as it has developed and its mandate as originating from the CSD. DOALOS also noted that ICP, as a forum for an informative and educational dialogue on oceans and law of the sea issues is appreciated by developing countries, in particular.

UNEP noted that, since consultations stays within the UNGA, most people outside the UN don't know about the ICP. The number of side events has increased during the sessions, but still the general public is not aware of this important process.

UNIDO noted that it has provided usual contributions for reporting on its oceans-related activities and agreed that ICP can provide a good vehicle for UN-Oceans to enhance its role.

WMO expressed its willingness to provide a contribution to UN-Oceans inputs to ICP and noted the key importance that delegations have in the ICP process.

The Chair suggested to 'step back' and have a balanced assessment of the situation. ICP is a "consultation" mechanism, and as such it has been very successful in trying to integrate an ocean agenda. ICP doesn't have the authority or the means to assign tasks and check on their implementation. UNCLOS provides an integrated legal framework on which to build sound and effective regulations. However, limitations do exist especially in terms of national and international institutions. Governmental institutions at the national level are still subscribing to the classical view of economic development, which is usually too compartmentalized with a sector by sector division of duties and responsibilities. This leaves little room for integrated policy-making addressing cross-cutting issues. At the international level the UN institutional arrangements have duplicated this scheme and the post facto coordination of actions, independently adopted at different times by different Governing Bodies, is a poor substitute for an integrated organized plan of action, supported by a joint-secretariat overseeing the global ocean agenda.

In summary it was agreed that UN-Oceans, under the authority of the Deputy Coordinator, should produce a summary of UN-Oceans member's views on the ICP for the New York meeting.

IOC also informed the group that the UNESCO General Conference will include a Ministerial Round Table on Ocean Governance, the 12 and 13 of October 2009 in Paris and invited the UN-Oceans members to provide inputs describing each agency and programs field of action for this meeting.

Decision: It was decided that the Coordinator & Deputy Coordinator would produce a document summarizing UN-Oceans views and experience with the ICP and send the draft to all the agencies for review/inputs for finalization and formal transmission during ICP10 in June.

## **7. FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR UN-OCEANS**

The item was introduced by Mr. Andrew Hudson who made a presentation with a cross comparison of UN-Oceans' and UN-Water's (Table 1), showing the similarities, parallels and differences by activity areas and by awareness/advocacy, policy dialogue, coordination & cooperation, monitoring/reporting analysis, and capacity building. The table was considered very comprehensive and useful to have an overview of the differences in the programmatic approach.

Activity Area	UN-Water	UN-Oceans
Awareness/Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>World Water Day</i></li> <li>• <i>UN-Water Web site</i></li> <li>• <i>UN-Water Decade for Action (Zaragoza)</i></li> <li>• <i>Int'l Year of Sanitation</i></li> <li>• <i>WaterWiki</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Oceans Day</li> <li>• <i>UN-Oceans Web site</i></li> <li>• <i>Oceans Atlas</i></li> </ul>
Policy Dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Water Forum</li> <li>• CSD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts &amp; Islands</li> <li>• World Oceans Conference</li> <li>• ICP</li> <li>• CSD</li> </ul>
Coordination & Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>UN-Water &amp; TFs</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>UN-Oceans &amp; TFs</i></li> </ul>
Monitoring/Reporting/Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>World Water Development Report</i></li> <li>• <i>Joint Monitoring Program (JMP)</i></li> <li>• <i>GLAAS</i></li> <li>• <i>Reports of TFs</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assessment of Assessments</i></li> <li>• <i>GESAMP</i></li> <li>• SG-Oceans Report</li> <li>• <i>Reports of TFs</i></li> </ul>
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>UN-Water DPC (Bonn)</i></li> <li>• Agency Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train-Sea-Coast</li> <li>• IOI</li> <li>• Regional Seas Program</li> <li>• LME Programs</li> <li>• GPA</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>

Table 1: Cross comparison of UN-Oceans' and UN -Water's activities; items in *italic* are formally integrated and publicly presented as activities of UN-Water and UN-Oceans.

The two volumes of the World Water Development Report recently published by UN-Water were shown as an output of their initiative coordinated by 25 agencies. Mr. Bernal pointed out that UN-Water has been successful in coordinating agencies and programs, but also in maintaining an active link with a multi stake-holder Water Forum with strong civil society participation and with financial institutions.

In recent years, UN-Water clearly has advanced more than UN-Oceans in areas such as capacity building, policy analysis, outreach, etc., which is in part sustained by the significant financial resources that have been mobilized on behalf of the work of UN-Water.

UN-Oceans has not benefited from establishing a stable link with a multi stake-holder Forum. The World Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, has not been endorsed officially by all agencies and programs participating in the network, and different policies on cooperation with NGO's exist across the secretariats.

UN-Oceans facilitate the exchange of information about the activities of participating agencies and programs, and tries to harmonize and mutually support their implementation. In this regard, the important opportunity for the UN agencies to participate in the follow up to the "Assessment of Assessments" (AoA) was mentioned and it was noted that the AoA might be followed with the first integrated assessment of the ocean to be completed in the next 5 years (this item was discussed in more detail in point 4.1).

Several areas of collaboration within the framework of UN-Oceans were proposed:

- UN-Oceans could play a greater role in Capacity-Building, and particularly in training courses in partnership with the other organizations and agencies;
- UN-Oceans may build new task forces, such as one on Climate Change;

- UN-Oceans may also take advantage of the celebration of the World Ocean Day (8 June; Annex IV), by coordinating the activities of UN-Oceans members celebrating that day in future years as is done by UN-Water.
- UN Atlas of the Oceans is a powerful tool that can be used to give visibility to UN-Oceans, if UN-Oceans support, use and “feed” it accordingly.

Other points were also raised such as the preparation of a flyer on UN-Oceans structure & information; however, as we do not have a clear mid term strategy, programmatic actions, measurable objectives, products and deliverables, it seems that at this stage a flyer could be premature.

The need for a communication policy and strategy was discussed and considered as a primary action to be undertaken. Only if a good strategy on communication exists, the training courses, task forces, etc. make sense.

**At the end of the discussion there was a consensus for actions of UN-Oceans as follow:**

- Produce a communication strategy. UNEP and possibly UNDP offered financial support and FAO offered to draft a TOR for discussion.
- Support and engage in the Regular Process as established by the General Assembly and support it from the point of view of participating in planning and execution of future assessments. UN-Oceans members expressed its willingness to play a more important role and be part of the follow-up.
- UN Oceans members to endeavor to support the maintenance of UN Atlas of Oceans with a contribution of 10,000 \$ US per year and agency.
- Coordinate actions and activities for future celebrations of the World Oceans Day. These will be publicized in the UN Atlas of the Oceans on the World Ocean Day.
- Establish a Task Force on Climate Change inside of UN-Oceans with a purpose of bringing attention to the impact of climate change on oceans and awareness about the ocean issues to the climate change agenda. Commit to jointly produce a policy statement (paper) for August and sign it with all the logos of the agencies members of UN-Oceans (coinciding with the World Climate Conference - WCC3). UNEP agreed to take the lead in coordinating this paper. Terms of reference for the new task force will also need to be established.
- Create a common agenda and common calendar of events in order to do a better coordination and have a better knowledge of each other's actions.

## **8. ELECTION OF THE COORDINATOR**

Mr. Patricio Bernal is ending his term as UN-Oceans Coordinator at the end of 2009. Discussions focused on the principle of providing opportunities for different UN-Oceans members to take on the Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator roles, towards strengthened governance of the network through infusion of new leadership. UN-Water has a system with elections every 2 years and the same procedure is used by UN-Energy. The participants in the meeting unanimously agreed on the 2-year term, with the 2 Co-Chairs acting as “Coordinator” and “Deputy Coordinator”. Elected chairs may be re-elected until UN-Oceans deems otherwise (e.g. if it decides at some future date to add ‘term limits’).

A replacement system based of automatically electing the deputy Coordinator to the post of Coordinator, which alleviates the election process (only a Deputy Coordinator needs to be elected every other year) and also ensure the transfer of knowledge and memory and continuity was discussed, but not agreed upon.

DOALOS offered themselves as a candidate for UN-Oceans Coordinator for the next term (2 years). Due to the pending appointment of the new Director, DOALOS was not able to provide a name of the Coordinator so it was decided to continue discussion this item by email. Mr. Andrew Hudson, Deputy Coordinator, suggested that the nomination from DOALOS (or any other, if new nominations appear in the mid time) would be sent to him with a statement of intention and a background of the candidate.

To reinforce the secretariat structure it was decided to maintain two tier organizing structure with an administrative secretariat with DOALOS in New York, and the implementation secretariat with the IOC in Paris, and to explore possibilities of contracting a Young Professional under the Junior Professional Programme or similar programme. DOALOS suggested that it may be in the position to explore such possibility as appropriate and necessary with the Government of Sweden for an received from the Swedish government) Associate Expert.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The participants acknowledged Mr. Patricio Bernal for his leadership since the establishment of UN-Oceans and for his last term serving as Coordinator of UN-Oceans. He remarked the importance of the work done since the creation of UN-Oceans and his concern about the limited and variable level of participation of the agencies involved.

## **10. CLOSING**

Mr. Andrew Hudson, Deputy Coordinator of UN-Oceans, thanked the participants for attending the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of UN-Oceans and expressed his satisfaction with the success of this meeting, which was closed at 13:35 h, on Wednesday, 15 April 2009.

**ANNEX I AGENDA  
PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

- 1. OPENING**
- 2. REPORTS ON AGENCY PROGRAMMES RELEVANT TO UN-OCEANS**
- 3. REPORTS BY THE UN-OCEANS TASK FORCES**
  - 3.1 Biodiversity in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (UN/OLA/DOALOS)
  - 3.2 Marine Protected Areas and Other Area-Based Tools (CBD)
- 4. OTHER INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATIONS**
  - 4.1. Integrated Ocean Assessment 2010-2014: Inter-agency follow up to the Assessment of Assessments (IOC)
  - 4.2 GESAMP (IMO)
  - 4.3 UN Atlas of the Oceans (FAO)
- 5. ACTIVITIES OF UN-OCEANS MEMBERS IN ONE UN PILOTS (UNDP/IOC)**
- 6. INPUTS INTO ICP-10**
- 7. FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR UN-OCEANS**
- 8. ELECTION OF THE COORDINATOR**
- 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 10. CLOSING**

**ANNEX II  
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**I. Coordinator**

Mr Patricio Bernal  
Assistant Director-General UNESCO  
Executive Secretary IOC  
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)  
1 rue Miollis  
75732, Paris CEDEX 15  
France  
Phone: +33 1 45 68 39 83  
Fax: +33 1 45 68 58 10  
E-mail: p.bernal@unesco.org

**II. Deputy Coordinator**

Mr Andrew Hudson  
Principal Technical Advisor  
International Waters  
Global Environment Facility  
UN Development Programme  
FF-998  
1 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017 USA  
Tel.: +1 212 906 6228  
Fax: +1 212 906 6998  
E-mail: andrew.hudson@undp.org

**III. Participants**

Ms Jacqueline Alder  
Head  
Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Branch  
Division of Environment Policy Implementation  
PO Box 30552  
Nairobi (Kenya)  
Tel: +254.20.762.4662  
Fax: +254.20.762.4618  
E-mail: jacqueline.alder@unep.org

Mr Jorge Csirke  
Director  
Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Division (FIM)  
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla  
00153 Rome, Italy  
Tel.: +39 06 57 05 65 06  
Fax: +39 06 57 05 30 20  
E-mail: Jorge.Csirke@fao.org

Mr Edgard Cabrera  
Chief, Marine Meteorology and Ocean Affairs Division Weather and Disaster Risk Reduction Services  
World Meteorological Organization  
7 bis, Avenue de la Paix  
Case postale No. 2300  
CH-1211 Geneva 2  
Switzerland  
Tel.: +41-22 730 82 37  
Fax: +41-22 730 81 28  
E-mail: ecabrera@wmo.int



Mr René Coenen  
Head, Office for the London Convention and Protocol  
International Maritime Organization  
4 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7SR  
United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 20 75 87 32 39 (direct)  
Fax: +44 20 75 87 32 10  
E-mail: rcoenen@imo.org

Ms Tina Farmer  
Communications and Publications  
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Tel: + 39 06 57 05 68 46  
E-mail: tina.farmer@fao.org

Ms Alice Hicuburundi  
Law of the Sea/Ocean Affairs Officer  
DOALOS Deputy Capacity-Building Coordinator  
Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea  
Office of Legal Affairs  
2 United Nations Plaza  
DC2-0422 New York, NY 10017, USA  
Tel: +1 212 963 5915  
Fax: +1 212 963-5847  
E-mail: hicuburundi@un.org

Mr Pablo Huidobro Nordenflycht  
Senior Industrial Development Officer  
Programme Development and Technical Cooperation Division  
United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
Vienna International Centre  
P.O.Box 300  
A-1400 Vienna Austria  
Tel: (43-1) 26026-3068  
Fax: (43-1) 26026-6855  
P.Huidobro@unido.org

Ms Jihyun Lee (by phone)  
Environmental Affairs Officer for Marine and Coastal Biodiversity  
Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity  
413, Saitn Jacques Street, suite 800  
Montreal QC H2Y 1N9  
Canada  
Tel: 1.514.228.2220  
Fax: 1.514.288.6588  
E-mail: [jihyun.lee@cbd.int](mailto:jihyun.lee@cbd.int)

Ms Kathleen Abdalla  
Chief, Emerging Issues Branch  
Division for Sustainable Development  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)  
2 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017, USA  
Tel.: (+ 1 212) 963-8416  
Fax: (+ 1 212) 963-4340  
E-mail: abdallak@un.org

Ms Ulrike Guerin  
Section of Museums and Cultural Objects Secretary of the Convention on the Protection of the  
Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)  
UNESCO

**IOC Secretariat**

Mr Luis Valdés  
Head of the Ocean Science Section  
E-mail: [jl.valdes@unesco.org](mailto:jl.valdes@unesco.org)

Mr Julian Barbrière  
Programme Specialist  
Ocean Science Section  
E-mail: [j.barbriere@unesco.org](mailto:j.barbriere@unesco.org)

Ms Carmen Morales  
Consultant, Ocean Science Section  
E-mail: [c.morales-caselles@unesco.org](mailto:c.morales-caselles@unesco.org)

**ANNEX III  
LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

<b>Document Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Agenda Items</b>	<b>Languages</b>
	<b>WORKING DOCUMENTS</b>		
UN-OCEANS VII/1	Agenda	1-10	E
UN-OCEANS VII/2	Provisional Timetable	1-10	E
UN-OCEANS VII/3	Provisional List of Participants <i>(to be issued early during the Session)</i>	1-10	E
UN-OCEANS VII/4	Report UN-OCEANS VI	1-10	E
UN-OCEANS VII/5	Monaco declaration	2	E
UN-OCEANS VII/6	United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 63/111	2	E
UN-OCEANS VII/7	Draft Chapter 5 of the Assessment of Assessment: Framework and Options for the regular process	4.1	E
UN-OCEANS VII/8	Power Point Presentation on: UN Atlas of the Oceans ( <a href="http://www.oceansatlas.org">http://www.oceansatlas.org</a> )	4.3	E

## ANNEX IV

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United Nations  Nations Unies

HEADQUARTERS • SIEGE      NEW YORK, NY 10017  
TEL.: 1 (212) 963.1234 • FAX: 1 (212) 963.4879

2009/WOD/UN System

6 April 2009

Dear Mrs. Gosselin,

I wish to refer to United Nations General Assembly resolution 63/111, adopted on 5 December 2008, entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea". In operative paragraph 171 of its resolution, the General Assembly resolved that, as from 2009, the United Nations would designate 8 June as World Oceans Day.

The United Nations will celebrate World Oceans Day for the first time on 8 June 2009. Accordingly, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs is organizing events to be held at United Nations Headquarters. An invitation from the Secretariat to attend these events will be forthcoming.

In light of this designation by the General Assembly, I invite you to consider how this day might be marked by your organization. Issues concerning the oceans receive considerable attention from the international community in many forums, including a number of forums within the United Nations system. It would be an important symbolic gesture for World Oceans Day to be observed across the United Nations system.

The Division would welcome any expression of interest from your organization in hosting any event to celebrate World Oceans Day in conjunction with the events to be held at United Nations Headquarters. The Division requests that any correspondence in this regard be sent by 30 April 2009, and addressed to the Director of the Division, at [doalos@un.org](mailto:doalos@un.org), with a copy to Ms. Elizabeth Gall, Ocean Affairs/Law of the Sea Officer at [gall@un.org](mailto:gall@un.org).

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Gabriele Goetsche-Wanli  
Officer-in-Charge  
Division for Ocean Affairs and the  
Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs