

# **Programme of work for the period 2021-2025 for the third cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects**

*(Draft)*

## **A. Introduction**

### **Launch of the third cycle and its duration**

1. In resolution [74/19](#), the General Assembly decided to launch the third cycle of the Regular Process, to cover five years, from 2021 to 2025. The General Assembly also requested the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process, with the assistance of the Group of Experts and the secretariat, to develop a draft programme of work for the third cycle. The programme of work was to be developed on the basis of the possible outcomes and building blocks of the third cycle prepared by the Bureau and endorsed by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole at its twelfth meeting and taking into account lessons learned from the second cycle. The Bureau was further requested to report to Member States in advance of the thirteenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole.

### **Scope**

2. In resolution [64/71](#), the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations adopted by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole during its first meeting. One of these recommendations was that, in the first cycle, the scope of the Regular Process would focus on establishing a baseline and in subsequent cycles, the scope would extend to evaluating trends ([A/64/347](#), para 19). In resolution [71/257](#), the General Assembly recalled that the scope of the first cycle of the Regular Process focused on establishing a baseline, and decided that the scope of the second cycle would extend to evaluating trends and identifying gaps. Based on these considerations and the lessons learned from the second cycle, this draft programme of work assumes a similar scope for the third cycle.

### **Lessons learned from the second cycle**

3. The General Assembly, in its resolution [74/19](#), also requested the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole to consider the lessons learned from the second cycle of the Regular Process, including with regard to the duration of the cycle and its outputs, in line with the modalities set forth in paragraph 282 of resolution [70/235](#) and on the basis of input received from Member States and other participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group and the Group of Experts, as well as from the secretariat, and also requested the Bureau to inform the Ad Hoc Working Group of the views received and to circulate that information in advance of the thirteenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

4. In a letter dated 14 May 2020, the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole invited Member States, observers and other participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the

Whole to provide written input on lessons learned from the second cycle of the Regular Process. A list of relevant documents and questions for consideration was developed by the secretariat for Member States, observers and other participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole to take into account in preparing their input.

5. Member States, intergovernmental organizations, the Group of Experts and the secretariat provided written input on lessons learned from the second cycle. A compilation of such input prepared by the secretariat as well as the full texts of all written input are available on the website of the Regular Process at <https://www.un.org/regularprocess/content/second-cycle-regular-process/lessons-learned>.

### **Draft programme of work**

6. The draft programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process set out below is developed by the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, with the assistance of the Group of Experts and the secretariat, on the basis of the possible outcomes and building blocks of the third cycle and taking into account lessons learned from the second cycle. It forms the basis for the resource requirements for the third cycle. In view of the situation concerning the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and its impacts, the draft programme of work also takes into account the need for more extensive use of web-based working methods, including the holding of web-based meetings and the use of common online collaboration platforms. This draft programme of work will be submitted to and considered by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process during its thirteenth meeting from 9 to 10 September 2020.

## **B. Outputs of the third cycle**

7. The programme of work for the period 2021-2025 consists of three main outputs and activities in support of making the third cycle operational, with the understanding that additional activities may be required in this regard.

### **Output I: Assessment(s) of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects**

8. Building on the first global integrated marine assessment (First World Ocean Assessment, WOA I) which provided a baseline study of the state of the world's oceans, and the second world ocean assessment (WOA II) the scope of which extended to evaluating trends and identifying gaps, the Group of Experts will oversee the preparation of assessment(s) of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects. The assessment(s) of the third cycle may focus on specific topics in evaluating trends, if the Group of Experts and the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole so decide. The process will begin with a scoping exercise starting in 2021 with the assessment(s) being finalized by late 2025. The scoping exercise and the preparation of the assessment(s) would be supported through, inter alia, regional workshops which will help, among other things, identify regional priorities and progress the writing of individual chapters comprising the assessment(s). In view of the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impacts on the third cycle, regional workshops that would, inter alia, support the scoping exercise could be supplanted by regional webinars or other web-based activities if needed.

## **Output II: Regular Process support for and interaction with other ocean-related intergovernmental processes**

9. On the basis of the second world ocean assessment, key activities will be identified so as to support and interact with other ongoing ocean-related intergovernmental processes, as appropriate. Outputs will be specifically tailored to the requests and needs of the processes, including the following:

- (a) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (b) The Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- (c) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- (d) The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- (e) The United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea;
- (f) The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030);
- (g) The United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030).

10. Relevant ocean-related intergovernmental processes will be consulted regarding the preparation of these outputs. These outputs may include a series of brief documents for the benefit of policymakers, based on the second world ocean assessment, if so decided, or other products or services identified through consultations with Member States and relevant ocean-related intergovernmental processes. Particular focus will be given to ensuring a dynamic and mutually reinforcing cooperation between the activities of the Regular Process and the United Nations Decade on Ocean Science throughout the first half of the Decade.

11. The third cycle of the Regular Process will also consider discussions held in other United Nations processes and relevant assessments prepared under other intergovernmental processes, including the following:

- (a) The General Assembly;
- (b) The Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- (c) The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
- (d) 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;
- (e) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);

(f) The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

### **Output III: Capacity-building**

12. Capacity-building is one of the core objectives of the Regular Process. During the third cycle, a coherent programme on capacity-building will be carried out. The aim of the programme would be to develop the capacities of States in strengthening the ocean science-policy interface at national, regional and global levels. In particular, it might relate to the co-production of knowledge through multi-stakeholder partnerships, translation of data into policy-relevant information and knowledge, the use of knowledge brokerage, the engagement of the scientific community and ocean users in policymaking processes, the links between the science-policy interface and the society, the role of citizen science, as well as integrating traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and science. Focus will also be given to institutional arrangements and legal frameworks that help ensure the integration of science and policy for ocean governance.

13. Through regional workshops, an international symposium, and other activities that might be developed, the capacity-building programme will provide opportunities for building knowledge and skills associated with strengthening the ocean science-policy interface, including its role in ocean governance. This may include identifying gaps and needs in the science-policy interface, as well as formulating measures to address the identified gaps and needs that are tailored to particular contexts, situations and regions, dependent on those participating in activities.

14. This capacity-building programme also aims to create a community of practice on the ocean science-policy interface across national, regional and global levels to foster partnerships, cultivate ocean literacy, discuss/develop best practices and share lessons learned, with a view to enabling continuous and collective learning beyond the third cycle. Furthermore, it aims to promote the adoption of an integrated approach to support efforts with regard to Sustainable Development Goal 14, as well as other ocean-related Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also aligns with and supports the Decade.

15. This capacity-building programme will be overseen by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) of the Office of Legal Affairs in its capacity as the secretariat of the Regular Process, and implemented in cooperation with the International Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC/UNESCO), other UN agencies, members of UN-Oceans and other partners as appropriate, including regional organizations or entities with competence in ocean science and in marine and coastal management, and other relevant stakeholders.

## **C. Activities in support of making the third cycle operational**

### **Activities relating to the achievement of output I - Assessment(s)**

16. Building on the practice from previous cycles, the Pool of Experts for the third cycle will consist of experts from all regional groups with expertise across multiple ocean disciplines. Efforts will be made to ensure adequate coverage of expertise and diversity in expertise and geographic representation, as well as gender considerations. The mechanism to establish the Pool of Experts for the second cycle, including the process to nominate and appoint experts to the Pool of Experts, will be reviewed at the beginning of the third cycle, with a view to strengthening the mechanism to establish the Pool of Experts for the third cycle.

17. The preparation of the assessment(s) will begin with a scoping exercise starting in 2021 to determine the focus of the assessment(s) taking into account the trends evaluated and gaps identified in the second world ocean assessment, regional priorities identified through regional workshops to support the third cycle, and input from other ocean-related intergovernmental processes. In parallel with the scoping exercise, the Group of Experts will develop the preliminary annotated outline(s) for the assessment(s) which would also list the specific expertise needed for each topic to be addressed in the assessment(s), to facilitate the identification of potential members of writing teams, including the nomination of additional experts to the Pool of Experts to fill the gaps in the needed expertise. The proposed scope of the assessment(s) and annotated outline(s) will be finalized with input from the regional workshops and potential members of writing teams and submitted for approval by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in early 2023. The list of writing teams would be finalized for approval by the Bureau in the first half of 2023. In association with the outline, the Group of Experts will also develop guidelines for developing chapters and subchapters, which will also provide any limitations on chapter/sub-chapter content (e.g. scope, word limits, formats).

18. It is envisaged that the drafting of the assessment(s) will begin in the first half of 2023 and will be supported through regional workshops, in-person and web-based meetings of the writing teams and a common online collaboration platform. A zero draft(s) of the assessment(s) are expected to be completed for review by mid-2024. To fully realize the potential of regional workshops in, inter alia, sensitizing stakeholders to the Regular Process, collecting data and information, supporting scoping exercise and the drafting of the assessment(s), as well as building capacity, steps will be taken to ensure timely identification of hosts and participants for regional workshops to be held during the third cycle.

19. The review process for the assessment(s) is an essential element to reinforce the science-policy interface embodied in the Regular Process, which will also help ensure the accuracy, legitimacy and policy-relevance of the assessment(s). The review process for the assessment(s) of the third cycle will continue adopting the multi-stage approach and will consist of a peer review of the assessment(s), and a review by competent intergovernmental organizations, followed by a review by States. Guidelines on the identification of peer-reviewers and modalities for each stage of the review process will be developed and submitted for approval by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in the second half of 2022.

20. The assessment(s) will be finalized and submitted for consideration by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole and then the General Assembly by late 2025. The finalized assessment(s), after going through copy-editing, copyright management and translation, will be

made available in all six official languages of the United Nations. The assessment(s) will be published and disseminated mainly by electronic format with a limited number of printed copies.

21. The following activities will be undertaken during the third cycle:
  - (a) The enhancement of working methods and the communications and collaborative document management systems necessary;
  - (b) The strengthening of the mechanism to establish the Pool of Experts for the third cycle, including the process to nominate and appoint experts to the Pool of Experts;
  - (c) The establishment of the Pool of Experts, including through confirmation of the interest of individuals who served in the Pool of Experts of the second cycle, and the nomination and appointment of additional experts to the pool;
  - (d) The evaluation, enhancement and maintenance of the database of members of the Pool of Experts;
  - (e) The evaluation, enhancement and maintenance of the database of recent and ongoing global and regional assessments;
  - (f) The scoping exercise for the assessment(s);
  - (g) The development of annotated outline(s);
  - (h) The constitution of writing teams and development of guidelines;
  - (i) The planning and organization of regional workshops to support [the scoping exercise,] the preparation of the preliminary annotated outline(s), the collection of information and the preparation of assessment(s);
  - (j) The holding of in-person and web-based meetings of the writing teams;
  - (k) Obtaining subscriptions to scientific publications and databases, as identified by the Group of Experts;
  - (l) The preparation of draft assessment(s), including an editing and review process, to, among other things, ensure the securing of copyright and conformity with United Nations standards, including determining the need for and/or responding to requests for disclaimers;
  - (m) The establishment of the modalities of the review process of the assessment(s) which will be a multi-stage review process consisting of a peer review of the assessment(s), a review by competent intergovernmental organizations, and a review by States;
  - (n) The conduct of the review process;
  - (o) A review of comments received by the Group of Experts and a final review by States and their approval;
  - (p) The finalization of assessment(s) for digital and print publication, including copy-editing, translation and the dissemination of the assessment(s).

## **Activities related to the achievement of output II - Regular Process support for and interaction with other ocean-related intergovernmental processes**

22. A series of brief documents will be developed by the Group of Experts outlining specific policy-relevant information from the second world ocean assessment as they may relate to and support other ocean-related intergovernmental processes. Relevant ocean-related intergovernmental processes will be consulted to ensure that the brief documents are tailored to the requests and needs of these processes. Briefings and side events will be held in the margins of the meetings of these processes to present the brief documents so as to support and interact with these processes.

23. The Regular Process will continue to support ongoing ocean-related intergovernmental processes and other activities to be developed, which may include outreach and awareness-raising activities. Joint activities will be identified and implemented together with IOC-UNESCO with a view to ensuring synergies between the third cycle of the Regular Process and the Decade. Coordination and cooperation with the secretariats of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes will be strengthened and maintained on a regular basis, including through the UN-Oceans.

24. The following activities will be undertaken during the third cycle:

- (a) The enhancement of working methods and the communications and collaborative document management systems necessary;
- (b) The preparation of the outline(s) of the brief documents;
- (c) The review and approval of the outline(s);
- (d) The preparation of the brief documents, including an editing and review process, among other things, to ensure the securing of copyright and conformity with United Nations standards, including determining the need for and/or responding to requests for disclaimers;
- (e) The consideration and finalization of the brief documents;
- (f) The translation, digital and print publication and dissemination of the brief document(s).
- (g) The preparation and holding of briefings or presentations to be held in the margins of events of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes.
- (h) The preparation of outreach and awareness-raising material on the Regular Process to be shared with stakeholders of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes.
- (i) The participation by members of the Group of Experts, of the Bureau or the secretariat of the Regular Process in that capacity in meetings and proceedings of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes;
- (j) The establishment of mechanisms to strengthen and maintain on a regular basis coordination and cooperation with the secretariats of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes, including through the UN-Oceans;

(k) The identification and implementation of other activities to support and interact with other ocean-related intergovernmental processes.

### **Activities related to the achievement of output III - Capacity-building**

25. To deliver understanding and skills training on the science-policy interface, five regional workshops will be held from 2022 to 2023, with one each for the following regions: the North Pacific; the South Pacific; the Indian Ocean (including the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal), the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and the ROPME/RECOFI area<sup>1</sup>; the North Atlantic, the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea; and the South Atlantic (between the African and American coasts) and the wider Caribbean<sup>2</sup>. Some of these three-day regional workshops might be held back-to-back with the regional workshops in support of the implementation of the third cycle of the Regular Process if it is so agreed with the host Governments. Participants to these workshops will include representatives of the scientific community, the policy community (policymakers, managers, etc.) and stakeholders representing ocean users, at regional and national levels.

26. Specific workshop objectives and desired outcomes will be developed according to regional needs in consultation with the relevant organizations. Workshop agendas will generally include, inter alia, presentations by partners on: theory and practice related to the ocean science-policy interface; the interrelation between ocean governance and the ocean science-policy interface; the application of an integrated approach in the science-policy interface; the links between the science-policy interface and the society including ocean users; the role of citizen science and traditional, indigenous and local knowledge; methodologies for evaluating the effectiveness of the science-policy interface and identifying gaps and needs; best practices and lessons learned in strengthening the ocean science-policy interface. The sessions will also include interactive discussions on the challenges, opportunities, best practices and lessons learned for strengthening the ocean science-policy interface and on the application of an integrated approach. Particular focus will be given to empowering the ocean data value chain from marine scientific research to integrated ocean governance, drawing upon relevant initiatives under the framework of the Decade. Each workshop will produce a summary of discussions which, along with electronic versions of presentations and other resource materials, will be made available on the Regular Process website and through other measures identified in the outreach and engagement strategy.

27. A two-day international symposium on strengthening the ocean science-policy interface will be held in 2023. This will be a focused and interactive knowledge-sharing event drawing

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) Member States: Bahrain, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) Members: Bahrain, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

<sup>2</sup> Separate workshops will not be held for the Arctic Ocean or the Southern Ocean. Instead, the relevant international bodies and forums for those areas (in particular, the Antarctic Treaty System and the Arctic Council) will be invited to contribute their views on the issues relevant to the workshops.



upon the outcomes of the regional workshops and identifying future needs and directions for further building of capacity relating to the science-policy interface. Participants will include representatives of scientific and policy communities at all levels, including States and intergovernmental organizations with competence in the ocean science-policy interface, as well as relevant non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders. The event will provide opportunity to share lessons learned on the strengthening of the science-policy interface for ocean governance at the global level, on the empowerment of data value chain, the links between the science-policy interface and society including ocean users, the role of citizen science and traditional, indigenous and local knowledge, as well as identifying common approaches, priorities and potential avenues of collaboration. In this regard, the symposium will provide a unique opportunity for the sharing of information between scientific platforms operating at all levels, thereby fostering a common understanding of approaches and priorities, a reduction in the duplication of efforts, and will reinforce collaboration. A summary will be produced at the end of the international symposium with highlights of the discussions. The proceedings of the international symposium, papers submitted by panellists on their presentations, will be made available to the public through the website of the Regular Process.

28. As part of the capacity-building programme, activities will also be carried out to raise awareness of the importance of the science-policy interface for integrated ocean governance and the capacity imperatives of the science-policy interface. Using platforms such as the website of the Regular Process, presentations by DOALOS and relevant partners, and public communication tools, these activities will facilitate continuous exchange of information and knowledge among the multiple stakeholders of the community of practice. Particular attention will be placed on sharing information regarding capacity-building needs and opportunities on strengthening the ocean science-policy interface, including best practices and lessons learned. These initiatives will reflect the information collected through the regional workshops and other activities undertaken under the Regular Process, as well as those provided by the States and stakeholders. It will also keep the general public informed of the progress and outputs of the capacity-building programme, and how these can be used to reinforce the science-policy interface.

29. The following activities will be undertaken during the third cycle:

- (a) The planning and organization of regional workshops on capacity-building, and the preparation of summaries of discussions;
- (b) The dissemination of information collected through the regional workshops, including the summaries of discussions, presentations and other resource materials;
- (c) The planning and organization of the international symposium, and the preparation of a summary with highlights of the discussions;
- (d) The dissemination of information collected through the international symposium;
- (e) The establishment of working methods and an online collaboration platform to facilitate continuous exchange of information and knowledge among the multiple

stakeholders of the community of practice and of the Regular Process, as well as to promote ocean literacy;

(f) The planning and implementation of public engagement activities on capacity-building.

(g) The implementation of other ongoing capacity-building activities to support the Regular Process, including the compilation and maintenance of a capacity-building inventory, fundraising for the Regular Process special scholarship fund and the implementation of the special scholarship;

(h) The continuous evaluation of the implementation of the capacity-building programme and other capacity-building activities.

### **Activities related to the overall implementation of the third cycle**

30. The Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole will oversee the implementation of the third cycle of the Regular Process and provide the needed guidance. The Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole will be having up to eight meetings during the third cycle.

31. The Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, in putting into practice the decisions and guidance of the Working Group during the intersessional period, will have regular meetings throughout the year in order to oversee the progress of work.

32. National Focal Points designated by States will continue to play an important role in facilitating the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle. States that had designated National Focal Points during the second cycle will be contacted at the beginning of the third cycle to ascertain whether such designations will be extended to the third cycle and beyond. States that wish to designate new National Focal Points or have not designated any National Focal Points will be invited to designate National Focal Points as soon as possible. The terms of reference for National Focal Points will be reviewed and revised as appropriate at the beginning of the third cycle. The secretariats of relevant United Nations specialized agencies, programmes, funds and bodies and the secretariats of related organizations and conventions will also be invited to designate focal points to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle. Terms of reference for such focal points will be developed at the beginning of the third cycle. Starting from the third cycle, the designation of focal points, including National Focal Points and focal points for relevant United Nations specialized agencies, programmes, funds and bodies and the secretariats of related organizations and conventions, will be continuous rather than specific to one cycle.

33. A Group of Experts will be established for the duration of the third cycle to carry out the assessment(s). It will be composed of a maximum of 25 experts, with no more than five experts from each regional group, taking into due account of the need for adequate expertise, geographical distribution and gender balance as well as the desirability of some degree of continuity. In the case that a regional group nominates less than five experts, other regional groups may be invited by the Bureau to nominate additional experts in consultation with this

regional group. Upon its establishment, the Group of Experts will develop the terms of reference and working methods of the Group of Experts for the third cycle. It is projected that a total of seven in-person meetings of the Group of Experts will be held during the third cycle, with frequent web-based meetings in between.

34. A timetable and implementation plan for the third cycle will be developed in 2021. This plan will include important milestones for all outputs planned during the third cycle.

35. The following priority activities will be undertaken throughout the third cycle:

- (a) The establishment of working methods for the third cycle;
- (b) The establishment of communications protocols and collaborative systems necessary;
- (c) The holding of the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, including one calendar meeting each year and additional meetings as necessary;
- (d) The holding of regular meetings of the Bureau;
- (e) The establishment of focal points and development of terms of reference and working methods of the focal points;
- (f) The holding of web-based meetings of the focal points as necessary;
- (g) The establishment of the Group of Experts and development of terms of reference and working methods of the Group of Experts;
- (h) The evaluation, enhancement and maintenance of the database of members of the Group of Experts;
- (i) The holding of in-person and web-based meetings of the Group of Experts;
- (j) Regular communication with the Bureau, the focal points and the Group of Experts;
- (k) The development of a timetable and implementation plan for the third cycle;
- (l) The management of the Regular Process voluntary trust fund.

### **Activities related to outreach and engagement**

36. The need to improve communication, as well as to enhance outreach and awareness-raising, particularly to reach and engage policymakers, organizations, academia, schools and the general public was among the lessons learned from the first and second cycles of the Regular Process. During the third cycle, an outreach and engagement strategy will be developed and implemented. The primary aims of such a strategy would be to improve communication with stakeholders in the context of the Regular Process and to reach and engage policymakers, organizations, academia, schools and the general public in the Regular Process. Some activities related to the achievement of outputs II and III, such as the preparation of brief documents outlining policy-relevant information from the second world ocean assessment, facilitating continuous exchange of information and knowledge among the multiple stakeholders of the

community of practice and of the Regular Process, as well as promoting ocean literacy, could be part of such a strategy.

37. As part of the strategy, outreach and awareness-raising will continue to be pursued through a number of activities, including the holding of briefings and side events, the development and distribution of promotional material, regular communication with focal points, as well as participation in other ocean-related intergovernmental processes to promote the activities and outputs of the Regular Process and to promote synergies and opportunities for cooperation and coordination to support the implementation of the third cycle. Such a strategy will also outline actions for improving the website of the Regular Process, various online databases and the use of new, innovative and effective ways of communication.

38. Efforts will also be made to further integrate multilingualism in the implementation of the third cycle. The major products from the achievement of outputs I and II of the third cycle will be made available in all six official languages of the United Nations. The website of the Regular Process will be made available in the working languages of the secretariat (English and French).

39. The following priority activities will be undertaken during the third cycle:

- (a) The development of the outreach and engagement strategy which aims to improve communication with stakeholders in the context of the Regular Process and to reach out to and engage policymakers, organizations, academia, schools and the general public in the Regular Process;
- (b) The review and approval of the outreach and engagement strategy;
- (c) The implementation of the outreach and engagement strategy;
- (d) The maintenance of the website of the Regular Process;
- (e) The development of a French version of the website of the Regular Process;
- (e) The evaluation of the implementation of the outreach and engagement strategy.

#### **Activities related to evaluation and planning**

40. A dedicated lessons learned exercise will be carried out to review the third cycle of the Regular Process and its outcomes with a view to informing, inter alia, the structure, funding and programme of work of the fourth cycle. Bearing in mind that the preference of the General Assembly was for there to be no gap between the second and third cycle, and that the preparations for the third cycle therefore had to take place during the second cycle, it is assumed that the preparations for the fourth cycle would take place during the third cycle, if Member States so decide. Participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, focal points, the Group of Experts, the Pool of Experts and the secretariat will be invited to provide input for this exercise.

#### **D. Secretariat activities relating to the Regular Process**

41. As the secretariat of the Regular Process, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, of the Office of Legal Affairs, supports the activities undertaken within the Regular Process and the implementation of its outputs. During the third cycle, the secretariat will be required to perform, among other things, the following functions:

(a) The discharge of the secretariat functions for the overall implementation of the third cycle, including:

(i) Providing assistance, including administrative services, to delegations, the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, the Bureau, members of the Group of Experts, members of the Pool of Experts and the focal points, and technical support for all virtual meetings, the use of the online collaborative platforms and the use of relevant databases;

(ii) Supporting the planning and organization of the third cycle, including the development of a timetable and implementation plan for the third cycle and the development of terms of reference and working methods for the Group of Experts and focal points;

(iii) Planning, organization and servicing the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working of the Whole, the Bureau and the Group of Experts, either in-person or web-based, including departmental coordination, the preparation of agendas, documents and background materials, notetaking and drafting of summaries and meeting reports;

(iv) Coordinating the work of the various bodies of the Regular Process and support regular communication and the sharing of information, including through the preparation of correspondence and information materials, the maintenance of relevant contact lists, databases and the website of the Regular Process;

(v) Holding inter-agency cooperation and coordination meetings, either in-person or online;

(vi) The administration of the Regular Process voluntary trust fund, including fundraising, donor engagement, the management of contributions, the disbursement of funds and travel management and reporting.

(vii) Conducting activities related to outreach and engagement, including the development and implementation of the outreach and engagement strategy, and the support for the evaluation of its implementation;

(viii) Support for the conduct of the lessons learned exercise to review the third cycle and its outcomes.

(b) The provision of secretariat support for activities related to output I, including:

(i) Providing assistance to the Ad Hoc Working Group, the Bureau and the Group of Experts related to the establishment and constitution of the Pool of Experts, including the development of the mechanism, the list of expertise, communications and guidance to States, intergovernmental organizations and

potential members, and the evaluation, enhancement and maintenance of the database of the Pool of Experts.

(ii) Providing support to the Group of Experts related to the scoping exercise for Output I: assessment(s), including by providing support for the use of the online collaboration platform and through the planning, providing assistance in organizing and holding of regional webinars;

(iii) Providing support to the Group of Experts related to the constitution of the writing teams and the coordination of their work, including the development of the annotated outline and the drafting process;

(iv) Providing support for the regional workshops, including the scheduling, planning and organization of workshops, preparing relevant documents and negotiating necessary agreements with the organizers and hosts, providing travel support and substantive servicing, preparing reports and conducting necessary follow-up.

(v) Providing support for the review process(es) of the assessment(s), including the development of modalities for the review process(es) and their implementation, as well as providing a substantive review of the assessment;

(vi) Providing support for the finalization and dissemination of the assessment, including through editing, formatting, translation, and publication. (c) The provision of secretariat support for activities related to output II, including:

(i) Providing support to the Group of Experts for the drafting of the brief documents prepared as part of Output II, including by substantively reviewing the documents, supporting the editing and review process and managing the formatting, translation, publication and dissemination of the documents;

(ii) Planning, organizing and substantively servicing briefings, presentations or side events to be held in the margins of, or during, the meetings of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes;

(iii) Preparing information material on the Regular Process to be shared with stakeholders of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes;

(iv) Facilitating the participation in ocean-related intergovernmental processes by members of the Group of Experts or the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on behalf of the Regular Process, including the preparation of presentations, background notes or speeches, upon request;

(v) Planning, organizing and holding meetings with the secretariats of other ocean-related intergovernmental processes in order to strengthen coordination and cooperation, including through UN-Oceans, and coordinating activities resulting from such meetings;

(d) The provision of secretariat support for activities related to output III, including:

- (i) Developing and implementing the capacity-building programme, in collaboration with Member States, IGOs and other stakeholders, including planning, coordination, the further development of activities, and evaluation of the programme;
- (ii) Planning, organizing and substantively servicing the capacity-building workshops, including by preparing relevant documents and negotiating agreements, providing travel support, preparing reports and conducting necessary follow-up and disseminating information collected.
- (iii) Planning, organizing and substantively servicing the international symposium, including by providing travel support, preparing reports and disseminating information collected;
- (iv) Providing support for the establishment of the community of practice, including related to working methods, collaboration platforms and the development of systems for continuous exchange of knowledge and information;
- (v) Implementing other ongoing capacity-building activities to support the Regular Process, including public engagement activities, the compilation and maintenance of the capacity-building inventory, fundraising for the Regular Process special scholarship fund and the development and implementation of the special scholarship programme;