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Opening Opportunities for Cooperation Frameworks on the Environment Among Lusophone Countries



Abstract: The workshop, “Seas of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP)” constituted a historic meeting where high-level representatives of the CPLP Member States discussed, for the first time, the sustainable management of oceans; prioritized common major issues on oceans management; and identified avenues for cross-national collaboration to address these issues. The participants drew up an action plan for enhanced cooperation among member states, including the holding of a high-level officials workshop for awareness raising on oceans management in Brazil. This experience demonstrates that it is possible to have cooperative initiatives formed among developing nations as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues such as The Ocean Policy Summit. There is a resulting strong sentiment among the participants to continue sharing information and to take action on the issues discussed and recommendations put forward regarding all aspects of the topics addressed, including areas on which further work is needed. However, for this experience to happen, a lead country, with substantial interest and experience in the issues being addressed and resources to make things happen is needed. This experience is important to GEF and to its transboundary water resources management initiatives for the valuable model it presents of South-South cooperation on environmental issues.

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Opening Opportunities for Cooperation Frameworks on the Environment Among Lusophone Countries

Experience of the GEF - sponsored

GEF/UNEP: Fostering a Global Dialogue on Oceans, Coasts, and SIDS, and on Freshwater-Coastal-Marine Interlinkages ("Global Ocean Forum")

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Aiming to foster global south-to-south and south-to-north dialogue, through the Global Ocean Forum, this GEF-MSP project serves as a multistakeholder forum for cross-sectoral discussion, policy analyses, and mobilization of knowledge and other resources to achieve the full implementation of international agreements related to oceans, coasts, and small island developing States (SIDS). The project brings together leading ocean, coastal, and SIDS experts from governments, intergovernmental and international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, private sector, and academic and scientific institutions.

The project collaborates with developing countries, SIDS, and countries with economies in transition to

- ◆ promote the implementation of intergovernmental commitments and agreements on oceans, including the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA);
- ◆ carry out multi-sectoral dialogues and policy analyses, public outreach and cross-learning between Large Marine Ecosystems experiences and coastal and ocean management experiences;
- ◆ raise awareness of and promote the implementation of integrated national ocean policies and ecosystem-based approaches to large marine ecosystems as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development, especially in SIDS countries;
- ◆ and work to improve interlinkages between freshwater, coastal and oceans issues in association with global freshwater institutions.

THE EXPERIENCE

The project organized *The Ocean Policy Summit, an International Conference on Integrated Ocean Policy: National and Regional Experiences, Prospects, and Emerging Practices*, from on October 10-14, 2005, in Lisbon, Portugal, along with the Government of Portugal, and other partners around the world. Support also came from the GEF, the Nippon Foundation in Japan, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Luso-American Development Foundation and the Gulbenkian Foundation in Portugal, among others. The conference brought together 218 key national level officials, regional organizations, UN agencies, scholars specializing in national ocean policy, donors, nongovernmental organizations, and industry from 53 nations to examine the growing experience around the world with the formulation and implementation of integrated ocean policies at national and regional levels, with the intent of drawing lessons and suggesting emerging best practices.

During the summit, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) organized the first-ever workshop on *The Seas of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries*, to identify the common needs of its member states (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and East Timor) in the development of national ocean policies as a major strategy for strengthening their national economies as well as their external relations. The CPLP's members states' Exclusive Economic Zones comprise approximately 10 million square kilometres. For centuries their maritime histories have been closely related to the oceans, rendering their oceans as a major cultural and socio-economic asset.

The workshop constituted a historic meeting where high level representatives of the CPLP Member States discussed, for the first time, the

sustainable management of oceans; prioritized major common issues on oceans management; and identified avenues for cross-national collaboration to address these issues. The participants drew up an action plan for enhanced cooperation among member states, including the holding of a high-level officials workshop for raising awareness on oceans management.

The Government of Brazil subsequently hosted a Ministerial-level workshop for the CPLP, held in Brasilia on May 24-26, 2006, which resulted in a Framework of Cooperation on the Environment among CPLP Member States. The framework represents a renewal of the commitments made by the CPLP to multilateral environmental agreements, particularly the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, the CPLP Framework of Cooperation on the Environment gives priority to the implementation of existing institutional arrangements already in place, particularly in respect to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, the UNEP Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, and the GEF International Waters Programme.

The workshop participants agreed that a fruitful cooperation among CPLP nations could be achieved in the areas noted below with different countries taking responsibility for serving as the lead on the issue:

- ◆ Biodiversity
- ◆ Combating Desertification and Mitigation of the Effects of Drought
- ◆ Ecotourism
- ◆ Environmental Education
- ◆ Ocean and Coastal Management
- ◆ Waste Management
- ◆ Integrated Water Resources Management
- ◆ Climate Change and Renewable Energies.

Within these areas, the Cooperation Framework calls for Member States to:

- a) Consolidate and strengthen the efforts of CPLP Members States in the implementation of environmental programs aimed at sustainable development;
- b) Develop priority initiatives that engage all sectors of society in the implementation of sustainable development activities;

- c) Promote the implementation of sustainable development models based on sound policies, science and technology, environmental conservation, quality of life, and on the available resources, social, economic, environmental and political context of each country;
- d) Contribute to the identification and prioritization of financial mechanisms for the effective implementation of this framework, and facilitate the transfer, access and development of technologies and knowledge among Member States;
- e) Identify proposals of cooperation and lines of convergence to maximize efforts with other regions, such as the Environmental Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), in order to exchange experiences and to promote new opportunities of cooperation;
- f) Stimulate actions that open up the dissemination of information and communication of environmental initiatives, as well as strengthen the education and awareness among human populations on environmental issues;
- g) Involve the private sector, civil society and academic sector in research and development for the sustainable development of the environment, especially in nature protection and development and use of clean technologies; and
- h) Strengthen cooperation with International and Intergovernmental Organizations and Specialized Agencies of the United Nations

The Framework will be implemented in various ways, including:

- a) Exchange of information;
- b) Professional enhancement, through training courses, student exchange and academic programs;
- c) Strengthening of environmental management programs;
- d) Implementation of joint projects in each of the thematic areas included in this Framework;
- e) Exchange of technicians, consultants and researchers;
- f) Organization of seminars, symposia and conferences; and
- g) Provision of equipment and other necessary materials for the accomplishment of specific projects.

Implementation of the Framework is already underway with a specific two-year agreement

with funding between Brazil and Cape Verde to provide support for Cape Verde in capacity building, training, methodologies, and publications related to integrated management of coastal shores and to oil spill prevention. Discussions are underway, as well, between the Government of Norway and the Government of Brazil for further support of a tri-partite collaboration and technical assistance among Brazil, Cape Verde, and Norway.

RESULTS AND LEARNING

This experience demonstrates that it is possible to have cooperative initiatives formed among developing nations as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues such as The Ocean Policy Summit. Meetings such as this, where intergovernmental, governmental, NGOs, scientists, and civil society participants meet to address specific issues provide opportunities where discussions are held in a cooperative environment for dialogue and joint work. There is a resulting strong sentiment among the participants to continue sharing information and to take action on the issues discussed and recommendations put forward regarding all aspects of the topics addressed, including areas on which further work is needed.

REPLICATION

However, for this experience to happen, a lead country, with substantial interest and experience in the issues being addressed and resources to make things happen, such as Brazil, has to step up and organize follow-on activities, for instance the Ministerial-level workshop, which was needed in order to consolidate the high-level attention and subsequent cooperation on the issues. Additionally, this cooperative effort takes advantage of a common language, accumulated assets and experience, and combined political will among the member States.

SIGNIFICANCE

This experience is important to GEF and to its transboundary water resources management initiatives for the valuable model it presents of South-South cooperation on environmental issues. The water bodies need not be adjacent for the countries to come together under joint initiatives. Common issues, shared aspirations and catalytic resources are what it took for the CPLP Framework of Cooperation to happen.

REFERENCES

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KEYWORDS

- ◆ Multi-stakeholder dialogue
- ◆ South-South cooperation
- ◆ Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries

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