

E-Fora Dialogue Summary

Large Marine Ecosystem Theme

This is a synthesis of the initial period (March 22 – June 10 2005) of the LME electronic forum. 107 forum participants have exchanged 56 e-mails during this introductory period (leading to the 3rd GEF International Waters Conference). Our discussions have been dedicated to participant introductions, on developing learning priorities to be addressed during the coming two years of forum exchange, and preparing for the International Waters Conference in Salvador, Brazil. Initial thematic discussions have taken place on stakeholder participation, institutional arrangements and environmental valuation (exchange of references, what works and what does not). Four different training programmes were introduced with opportunities for participant participation.

Learning Priorities

- **Law, governance, institutional arrangements.**

6 participants have identified this topic as a learning priority

Robin Mahon [Caribbean LME]: 'The real problem lies within institutional arrangements and capacity to implement these at local, national and regional levels, rather than with lack of scientific information about the resources. Arrangements for both national and transboundary governance are also a major impediment, especially at the meta-level and at the institutional/process level. Owing to their primarily technical backgrounds, the majority of fisheries managers are not comfortable addressing these areas and will generally revert to solutions at the operational level.'

Marcelo Nilo [Humbolt LME]: 'I strongly believe that transboundary waters governance is one if not the most important issue on the viability of LME's projects. Where can I get more information?', 'I think that law/governance is a crucial element to every other problem identified.'

Mick O'Toole [Benguela Current LME]: "We are currently in the final stages of establishing an Interim Benguela Current Commission. We have established a regional initiative which is now acting as the primary marine science and technology arm of the BCLME programme as is undertaking several large contracts on transboundary fisheries resource monitoring and management."

- **LMEs in specific contexts** i.e. islands, enclosed/semi-enclosed water bodies, developing countries.

4 participants have identified this topic as a learning priority

Derek Staples [Bay of Bengal LME]: 'I have a keen interest in implementing sustainable development, especially in developing countries. I have been actively involved in developing the Bay of Bengal LME proposal for GEF and interested in how all the theory really works in poor, overcrowded and under-governed countries.'

LI Haiqing [Yellow Sea LME]: 'Can you send me any anything regarding marine environmental protection law region enclosed and semi-enclosed seas, like Black Sea, Baltic Sea, etc.?'

- **Public participation and stakeholder involvement**

4 participants have identified this topic as a learning priority

Marcelo Nilo [Humbolt LME]: 'Without public participation the projects fall apart in two months.'

Grace Ogolo [Guinea Current LME]: 'I'm interested in Public/Private participation and stakeholders' involvement.'

Anders Poulsen [Caspian Environment Programme]: 'One of the activities that we will undertake this year is to establish a Caspian EcoNet – a network of conservation practitioners and stakeholders, with the aim to establish transboundary cooperation, communication and learning within the region. This could almost be regarded as a regional pendant to the IW:LEARN initiative! We also intend to link up with international/global partners to benefit from other regional experiences.'

- **Project management**

4 participants have identified this topic as a learning priority

Robin Mahon [Caribbean LME]: 'We are just about to get going on the PDF-B phase of this project, so we are keen to learn from all the 'experienced heads' out there.', 'The challenge therefore seems to me to be how we create among those who will determine project directions an awareness of the full scope of issues and possible ways of addressing them. This is a big question, but one option would be to open up the institutional/governance issue early in the PDF-B through a workshop for major stakeholders. Doing that could serve to identify issues that are pursued during the PDF-B and keep them front and centre during TDA and SAP.'

Derek Staples [Bay of Bengal LME]: 'We have just completed out PDF-B for BOBLME. In hindsight we should have spent more time on project planning and less time on TDA and identifying issues.'

- **Coastal zone management (CZM) and Marine protected areas (MPAs)**

4 participants have identified this topic as a learning priority

Marea Hatzios [Senior Coastal and Marine Specialist, World Bank] 'I am interested in coastal zone management and MPAs as essential tools for marine ecosystem-based management, and the application of Strategic Environmental Assessment as a coastal planning tool for sustainable regional development, coral reef management as a system that exemplifies the need for an interlinkages approach-involving management of biodiversity, land degradation, climate change and international waters in some holistic way.'

- **Ballast water and Invasive species management**

3 participants have identified this topic as a learning priority

Jose Matheickal [GloBallast]: 'I have a keen interest in forging stronger links and strategic partnerships with the LME programmes and to mainstream and integrate ballast water management with other coastal and marine management programmes and into a broader effort to control invasive aquatic species at the LME level.'

Grace Ogolo [Guinea Current LME]: 'I have a very special interest in mangrove and alien invasive species.'

- **Economic valuation**

2 participants have identified this topic as a learning priority

Faumuina V.S.Pati Liu [Pacific LME??] 'We are really interested to get some information on economic valuation of environmental resources relevant to our Small Island situation (eg. methodologies, economic valuation systems etc). It is part of our capacity building program and we would greatly value any assistance from the experts.'