



GLOBAL FORUM

on oceans, coasts and islands

Newsletter

REMINDER: Deadline for sending expressions of interest to write papers or participate on panels for the Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands (November 10-14, 2003, at UNESCO, Paris) is June 15, 2003. Requests for side events should be made by August 1, 2003.

**Vol. 1 No. 2
May 23, 2003**

In This Issue

CSD-11 Outcomes: Articles

- CSD Results...2
- Decision on SIDS...3

Global Forum Panel at the CSD-11

- Panel Summary...5
- Articles:
 - The Road to Mauritius...6
 - Global Marine Assessment...8

Water Forum Outcomes

- Outcomes...9
- Linking Freshwater to Coastal Management...11

Opinion

- Protection of Shallow Water Ecosystems in International Waters...13

Forthcoming Meetings/ Deadlines/Other Announcements

- 4th UNICPOLOS in June...14
- Biodiversity Conference in Australia...15
- Coastal Module of GOOS...15

About Us...16

Editorial

In this issue, we cover the decisions reached at the eleventh meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-11) in April/May 2003, the first session of the CSD following the World Summit on Sustainable Development. As discussed by Ronneberg in this issue, decisions were made on the preparatory process to review the Barbados Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), leading up to the international meeting in Mauritius in August 2004. This summit, ten years after the 1994 Barbados summit (called for at the 1992 Earth Summit), will review progress (or lack thereof) in the past decade on all matters related to environment and development in SIDS. Of prime concern will be matters related to the oceans and coastal areas under the control of SIDS. The 43 small island developing States involved in AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States) are the stewards of a very large portion of the world's oceans, and are developing innovative strategies for the protection and sustainable use of these areas, such as the coordinated regional ocean policy for the Pacific islands currently under preparation. We urge the widest possible participation and the support of governments, NGOs, international organizations, and donors, of the SIDS preparatory process toward Mauritius to ensure the sustainable development of these states and of the oceans that surround them.

CSD-11 also made important decisions on CSD's mode of operation and future program for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, setting forth a 2-year cycle of review and laying out a schedule for review of the major targets set at Johannesburg (described by Rogers in this issue). It is disappointing that Oceans and Seas, Marine Resources, and SIDS are not scheduled for review by CSD until 2014-2015. This decision makes it even more important that other formal and informal ocean-related fora involve focused discussion and analysis of important issues related to oceans, coasts, and islands—e.g., the Mauritius 2004 process, the UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea (scheduled for June 2-6, 2003 and also covered in this issue), and informal venues such as the Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands in November of this year.

The next meeting of the CSD, in 2004-2005, however, will address, as the first issue for review, Water and Sanitation. This represents an important opportunity for the oceans, coasts, and islands communities to reinforce the connections between freshwater and coasts and oceans. While the concept of embracing upstream inland areas and river basins as part of integrated coastal management (ICM)—“from hilltops to oceans”—has been part and parcel of the ICM paradigm, it has not been put into effect often. Progress on making this linkage explicit and providing guidance on how to do it was made at the World Water Forum, held in Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka, Japan this March and involving over 24,000 participants, as covered in this issue.

In this issue, we also inaugurate an Opinion section, featuring an Opinion article advocating special protection of shallow water ecosystems in international waters. Opinion articles from all perspectives are kindly invited. Please contact the editors for more information.

Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain
Editor-in-Chief

The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, created following the WSSD in Johannesburg in September 2002, aims to advance the interests of oceans - incorporating 72% of the Earth; coasts - the home of 50% of the world's population; and islands - 43 of the world's nations are small island developing states which are especially dependent on the oceans. The Forum is composed of individuals from governments, intergovernmental and international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (environmental, scientific/technical, industry, foundations) with the common goal of achieving the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands.

Co-Chairs

Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain, Director
CSMP/University of Delaware
bcs@udel.edu

Dr. Patricio A. Bernal, Executive Secretary
IOC/UNESCO
p.bernal@unesco.org

Dr. Veerle Vandeweerd, Coordinator
UNEP/GPA Coordination Office
v.vandeweerd@unep.nl

CSD-11 OUTCOMES

ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-11) April 28–May 9, 2003; UN Headquarters, New York

Anne H. Rogers
UN Division for Sustainable Development
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) held its eleventh session at UN Headquarters in New York from 28 April–9 May 2003. As the first CSD session since the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in August–September 2002 in Johannesburg, the main focus of CSD-11 was to decide on the future programme, organisation and methods of work of the CSD for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). In addition, there was a Plenary discussion and negotiation of a draft decision on preparations for the International Meeting on SIDS to be held in Mauritius in 2004 (see separate article by E. Ronneberg, this issue).

The session began with a three day High-level Segment, chaired by CSD-11 Chairman Mohammed Valli Moosa, Minister for Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa. Over forty Ministers, senior officials of UN agencies and organisations, and senior representatives of NGOs and other major groups, participated in the High-level Segment, which included three interactive ministerial roundtables on the theme “Priority actions and commitments to implement the outcomes of the WSSD”. Five regional implementation forums and a multi-stakeholder dialogue also took place during CSD’s first week. In addition, a “Partnership Fair” and a Learning Centre were new initiatives held throughout the two week session.

The second week was devoted to negotiating the future organisation, programme and methods of work of the CSD, based on various proposals submitted by delegations, groups of delegations, the Chair and the Secretary-General in his Report to the session [E/CN.17/2003/2]. The Secretary-General’s Report and other background documents, as well as the final outcomes of the session, are available on the CSD website: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd>.

Following late-night and even all-night meetings of two Working Groups and several informal contact groups set up by the Chairman, on Friday, 9 May the Commission unanimously approved a draft resolution entitled “Agenda 21 and JPOI Implementation Track: Future Programme, Organisation and Methods of Work of the Commission”. CSD’s future work is to be organised into two-year *implementation cycles*, consisting of a *Review Session* (to be held in April/May of the first year of the cycle for 2–3 weeks) followed by a *Policy Session* (April/May of the second year, preceded by an *Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting* in New York for one week in February/March). UN Regional Commissions are invited to organise *regional implementation meetings*, preferably before the CSD Review Sessions.

The focus of the negotiations concerned the elaboration and timetable of a multi-year programme of work for CSD, which is set forth in the Annex to the draft resolution. Somewhat unexpectedly, agreement was reached for seven two-year cycles, stretching out to 2016/17, when an overall appraisal of implementation of Agenda 21, Rio+5 and the JPOI is scheduled. Twelve “**cross-cutting**” issues—poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, globalization, health, SIDS, Africa, other regional

initiatives, means of implementation, institutional framework for sustainable development, gender equality, and education—are to be addressed in every cycle and for every relevant issue, action and commitment. The Thematic Clusters agreed for each two-year cycle are as follows:

2004/2005:	Water; Sanitation; Human Settlements
2006/2007:	Energy for Sustainable Development; Industrial Development; Air Pollution/Atmosphere; Climate Change
2008/2009:	Agriculture; Rural Development; Land; Drought; Desertification; Africa
2010/2011:	Transport; Chemicals; Waste Management; Mining; A 10-Year Framework of programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns
2012/2013:	Forests; Biodiversity; Biotechnology; Tourism; Mountains
2014/2015:	Oceans and Seas; Marine Resources; SIDS; Disaster Management and Vulnerability
2016/2017:	Overall appraisal of implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

A note on oceans: It may seem surprising that CSD members chose not to address oceans issues for another ten years, especially in light of the considerable attention this sector received during the WSSD process. CSD delegates who negotiated the future programme of work, however, noted that the JPOI’s targets and goals for oceans generally have deadlines in the 2010–2015 period, except for those with earlier deadlines that are the specific responsibility of another UN body (e.g., FAO, UNEP/GPA, CBD) or, like the global marine assessment process, will be decided by the UN General Assembly this Fall. Furthermore, the criteria that were considered for the selection of priority themes for future sessions—including coherence, manageability, added value, timing of other international events relevant to the issue and “homelessness”, or lack of a dedicated UN body dealing with the subject—also contributed to the decision to postpone oceans issues, since it was felt by Governments that the UN Informal Consultative Process provides a venue for annual discussions of the issues.

It is also worth noting that a footnote attached to the 4th, 5th and 6th CSD cycles (from 2010–2015) allows for the Commission to revise the schedule, should it so decide.

The draft resolution of CSD will be submitted to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for final adoption this summer (Geneva, July 2003).

For further information on these topics, contact: Anne Rogers, Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York (rogersa@un.org).

CSD-11 OUTCOMES

SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES: A SPECIAL CASE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

Mr. Espen Ronneberg
Inter-regional Advisor for Small Island Developing States
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The disadvantages and vulnerabilities faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have made sustainable development a unique challenge for the island states themselves and the international community at large. Since UNCED in 1992, SIDS and islands supporting small communities have been considered “a special case both for environment and development.” Indeed, it is widely recognized that their ecological fragility, their small size, limited resources and isolation from markets have not allowed SIDS to take advantage of globalization processes, causing major set-backs to their socio-economic development. Moreover, the effects of global warming, the uncontrolled growth of mass international tourism and the increased frequency of natural disasters have further impacted on islands environments, aggravating water and energy shortages and exacerbating biodiversity losses and habitat degradation.

The sustainable development of SIDS is explicitly addressed through the Barbados Programme of Action, a blueprint adopted by the General Assembly at the recommendation of the Barbados Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS in 1994. The relevance of the “special needs” of SIDS was again stressed in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agreed by the Millennium Summit in September 2000.

The 43 Member States and Observers of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) were very successful participants at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). SIDS have an entire stand-alone chapter in the Plan of Implementation. It reiterates the need to take the necessary action to overcome constraints hindering SIDS’ sustainable development. Some specific adverse factors and their interplay, whose combined effects have negatively affected SIDS economies and exponentially accelerated damages to their environments and societies, are sought to be addressed. The Plan of Implementation promotes initiatives, programmes and mechanisms that can practically and effectively assist SIDS in their struggle for sustainable development. When specific mechanisms targeted at SIDS are not yet available, like in the case of disaster prevention, risk management or other environmental emergencies, the Plan of implementation calls for further assistance and resources in support of local communities and national and regional organizations to plan for and face those events.

SIDS are now re-directing their focus on the next steps in making sustainable development a reality, by building on the experiences from the Barbados conference and strengthening their understanding of key cross-cutting issues. Of particular importance is the agreement at WSSD on a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme in 2004, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Barbados conference. An international meeting will be convened in Mauritius in 2004.

(Continued on p.4)

Decision taken by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development at its 11th Session (New York, 28th April to 9th May 2003), on Preparations for the International Meeting to Review Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The CSD reached agreement on the preparatory process for the International Meeting to review the Barbados Programme of Action on Friday May 9, 2003. The decision is based on the General Assembly resolution, the work done at Johannesburg and the debate which was held on May 5, 2003. The CSD will at its twelfth session in 2004, undertake a three-day preparatory meeting for the international meeting. This meeting will be provided with a synthesis report from the Secretary General on the basis of various reports from the national level and regional preparations. Donors are also encouraged to provide information on their current and planned activities in support of sustainable development in SIDS.

The decision emphasizes the importance of the fullest national preparations, and in this regard urges financial support to ensure that these are produced in time. The reports will be disseminated by means of SIDSNet.

The decision also notes the convening of the regional preparatory meetings, which will be held as follows:

1. Pacific SIDS, to be held in Apia, Samoa from 4 to 8 August 2003;
2. Caribbean SIDS, to be held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago from 18 to 22 August 2003; and for the
3. Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas SIDS to be held in Praia, Cape Verde from 1 to 5 September 2003,

In addition there will be an inter-regional preparatory meeting, with ministerial participation, for all SIDS, to be held in Nassau, Bahamas from 26 to 30 January 2004.

The concern raised by many SIDS that the implementation to date has been largely by SIDS themselves is recognized through the call on international agencies to support regional initiatives and to collaborate closely in partnership with the regional organizations and institutions. The coordinating role of the SIDS Unit is also emphasized.

Furthermore, the need for full and effective participation by SIDS, non-self-governing SIDS and major groups, is given attention in the provisions for voluntary funding and from budgetary savings that are available.

CSD-11 OUTCOMES

The focus of the review is expected to be on implementation and avoid as far as possible the protracted negotiations that have become the hallmark of the last decade. To ensure that the review contributes positively to both the progress of SIDS issues at the international level as well as the implementation of sustainable development at national and local levels, the preparations will need to adopt a clear set of goals and focus on an achievable set of outputs over the next two years. The information gathered during the preparatory process should be presented in a clear and factual manner with a concomitant discussion that focuses especially on the facts on the ground and the lessons learned. This should lead to proposals for practical and pragmatic next steps to ensure that the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action is carried forward, re-emphasizing its validity.

At the national level, the next 12-18 months will need to be focused extensively on national engagement in the implementation of the Summit outcomes and preparations for the review. This can build on the momentum generated through the preparations for WSSD. At the regional level there is already considerable experience with the coordination of and preparations for an event of this kind. It is important to identify how this event can focus on delivering benefits at the national level and how existing regional arrangements can be better recognized and supported at the international level.

Inter-regional preparations will depend at the international level on effective planning and preparations by the AOSIS Missions in New York and the engagement of key regional organizations. It will be important for early guidance on the scope and possible outputs for the preparations to be considered and agreed inter-regionally. Similarly, agreement at an inter-regional level will be important before the international Preparatory Committee convenes in April/May 2004. Inter-regional Expert groups will be used to focus attention and present options to address specific issues for SIDS, in cooperation with other organizations.

At the international level there will be two key meetings; the Preparatory Committee that will be convened under the auspices of the Commission on Sustainable Development (April/May 2004) and the International Meeting itself in Mauritius 2004 (preferred timing is August).

There is no doubt that 2003 and 2004 will be exciting and eventful years in the international discussion on the sustainable development of SIDS.

For more information please contact: Mr. Espen Ronneberg, SIDS Unit, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, Two United Nations Plaza, DC2-2082, New York, NY 10017. E-mail: ronneberg@un.org

GLOBAL FORUM PANEL AT CSD-11

An oceans side event at CSD-11 entitled: *Towards Implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation: Oceans, Coasts and Islands*, held on April 30 and organized by the Global Forum, attracted about 90 participants from various government, intergovernmental and international organizations (IOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Major points covered included:

Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain, Director of the Center for the Study of Marine Policy, University of Delaware reviewed the results of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) related to oceans, coasts, and islands, acknowledging the important role played by the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in reaching global agreement on these issues. She discussed the origins and activities of the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, and invited participation in the Global Conference (November 2003 at UNESCO in Paris) (details in issue #1 of this newsletter (http://www.udel.edu/CMS/csmg/globaloceans/pdf/NewsletterIssue_1.pdf)).

Ambassador Enele S. Sopoaga (Tuvalu), Vice Chairperson of AOSIS spoke on *The Importance of the Barbados + 10 Assessment for Small Island Developing States*. His remarks may be found in a separate article in this issue.

Mr. Manuel Dengo, Chief of Water, Natural Resources, and SIDS Branch of UN/DESA, reported on preparations for the international meeting in Mauritius in 2004 to review the Barbados Programme of Action, focusing, in particular, on DESA's conduct of a survey which has been sent to all SIDS countries to examine issues not covered in the national reports presented at the Johannesburg meeting and allowing for the involvement of all stakeholders. The questionnaire examines specifically the relevant sections of the Barbados Programme of Action, such as socio-economics, national frameworks for sustainable development, progress made and impediments encountered, and areas that require further emphasis.

Mr. Werner Obermeyer, Programme Officer, UNEP New York office, made a presentation on *Implementing WSSD Commitments: Focus on Abating Marine Pollution and Ensuring the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States*. He emphasized the strategic importance of SIDS to UNEP on account of their geographic isolation and economic disadvantages. He talked about the decisions taken during the UNEP 22nd Governing Council meeting towards advancing the protection of the marine environment and contributing to the sustainable development policies of SIDS. For the Mauritius meeting, he reported that UNEP is working internally by establishing a plan focused on policy development, support for Regional governments and civil society, outreach programmes and enhanced programme delivery to raise awareness of environmental issues critical to sustainable development.

Dr. Louise de La Fayette, Principal Legal Officer, Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, discussed the recommendation of the WSSD for the initiation of a regular process of reporting and assessment of the global marine environment (see separate article).

Ambassador Mary Beth West, U.S. Department of State, speaking on the WSSD Type II Partnership Initiative *White Water to Blue Water Initiative*, said the initiative seeks to stimulate partnerships that would promote integrated watershed and marine ecosystems-based management in support of sustainable development. The initiative is expected to act as a catalyst for improving collaboration among governments, international organizations, NGOs and the private sector; enhance existing partnerships and promote new ones; carry out training and build capacity; and promote best practices. The initiative is currently undertaking consultations in the wider Caribbean, the initial focus of the initiative, which intends to expand into the South Pacific and Africa regions. The initiative involves three stages: 1) Pre-conference stage involving the setting up of the steering committee, the international visitor teams, etc.; 2) A conference in Miami designed to identify and form future partnerships; and 3) A post-conference phase during which it is hoped that programmes on the ground would blossom to develop integrated management programmes in the Region. The Miami Partnership Conference planned for 2004 will be highlighting integrated watershed management, marine ecosystem-based management, and sustainable tourism and shipping as the conference themes.

Dr. Krista Singleton-Cambage, Assistant Director of the Marine and International Section of Environment Australia spoke on Australia's WSSD Type II Partnerships which are designed to cover a range of ocean and coastal issues at global, regional and sub-regional levels. Among the initiatives are the High Seas Biodiversity Conference to be held in June 2003 (covered in this issue), a coral reefs and fisheries network, and implementation of the Regional Oceans Policy in collaboration with other Pacific countries. Dr. Singleton-Cambage also discussed other initiatives including conservation of wetland habitats of importance to migratory birds; accelerating implementation of the FAO International Plan of Action on illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing; establishing the FAO Timor Seas experts forum to look at the sustainable management of the FAO Timor Seas; establishment of a new water and coastal resources management facility to be opened to developing countries; and the Global Ocean Data Assimilation Experiment established by Australia along with other partners to collect and analyze data for the marine environment.

Mr. Manuel Cira of NAUSICAA (French National Sea Experience Centre) spoke on the topic *Acting together for the Future of the Blue Planet: Raising Public Awareness on Oceans, Coasts and Islands*. He highlighted the importance of aquaria, museums and zoos as tools for raising awareness and educating the public on issues of conservation and biodiversity. Towards this end, NAUSICAA has developed an information module on oceans, a draft of which will be presented on June 8, the World Ocean Day, in Paris, Rome and Washington. NAUSICAA is also supporting the campaign for the official designation of June 8 as the World Ocean Day. A passport for "citizens of the ocean" is also being created, and holders will become ambassadors of the sea in helping to spread information and take part in conservation and environmental management actions.

GLOBAL FORUM PANEL AT CSD-11

Dr. Ellen Pikitch, Director of Ocean Strategy at the Wildlife Conservation Society (based in New York), focused on three commitments relevant to fisheries: restoration of depleted fish populations to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yields by the year 2015, establishment of a global network on marine protected areas by 2012 and application of the ecosystem approach to managing marine areas by 2010. Although there are internationally recognized targets and reference points for fisheries assessments, there are a number of challenges such as lack of data and fisheries monitoring systems, and inadequate capacity to perform the needed quantitative assessment of fisheries. She indicated that although several nations have shown commitment to maintain sustainable fish population levels, there have been spectacular collapses of fisheries around the world. In her view, it is imperative to remove perverse subsidies that enhance over-exploitation and over-capacity while providing positive incentives to sustain fisheries. Some of the positive incentives to consider, in Dr. Pikitch's view are:

- To ensure that all fishing activities within national waters are conducted under an allocation system that provides tenure to identifiable groups of domestic fishers;
- To empower consumers to use marine resources sustainably by strengthening and implementing verifiable third party certification systems for sustainably produced marine products, similar to that of the Marine Stewardship Council; and
- Managing offshore fishing rights to provide equitable benefits within a country.

Dr. Alfredo Guillet of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spoke on *Partnership Collaboration for Poverty Alleviation in Islands with High Biodiversity Value: Galapagos and Socotra Archipelagos*. Dr. Guillet discussed a partnership model emerging from a Type II initiative that was presented in Johannesburg involving two biodiversity flagship archipelagos of the Galapagos in Ecuador and the Pacific Ocean and Socotra in the so-called Yemen Indian Ocean. Islands with high biodiversity value typically face unique problems that attract considerable international support for the conservation of their biodiversity but very little support for the development of their human inhabitants. This can result in conflicts between the interests of residents and conservation activities. As demand for development increases, biodiversity comes under increasing danger. A lack of institutional capacity for systemic management compounds the risk resulting from the excessive number of tourists, uncontrolled fishing, and air and water pollution both at sea and on land. Furthermore, the current lack of involvement of communities in the planning and management of use and conservation of natural resources has led to generally low levels of awareness of the linkages between conservation of ecosystems as resources and the generation of concrete and sustainable development opportunities. The main objective of this partnership is therefore to contribute to the consolidation of relevant institutional capacities in systemic cross-sectoral planning and management of sustainable development, while promoting linkages and information exchange between institutional development and administration as well as boosting capacity provided to local communities, NGOs and the general public.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BARBADOS + 10 ASSESSMENT FOR SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Ambassador Enele S. Sopoaga (Tuvalu)
Vice-Chairperson, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

AOSIS places great importance on the holistic discussions on oceans at the United Nations and as a group we are amongst those advocating a more holistic consideration of ocean issues beyond the purely legalistic basis. Our group was in favor of comprehensive discussion of ocean issues that would capture the essence of oceans as the lifeline of all islands and coastal communities.

Recognition was needed that in many key areas, discussions were not based on experiences of SIDS or on admission of our increasing vulnerabilities in economic, social and environmental aspects of ocean management and governance. Furthermore, these discussions seldom recognized that our countries are a network of small and diverse ecosystems. For this reason, SIDS need to adopt a more integrated approach to confronting challenges and approaching solutions, an approach that is also recommended to other concerned countries. Hence, the results of the Johannesburg Summit on ocean issues were meaningful as a recognition that AOSIS has called for and the need for such a holistic approach appears to have been heeded for which the group is very thankful.

AOSIS is now at a critical stage where commitments, promises and fine words should now be translated into actions, and this will become a major substantial matter for the UN and CSD. Under the General Assembly, AOSIS has the UNICPOLOS process going and it is essential that CSD now complement that effort. This can be done through the streamlining of work programmes and agendas, and above all, through improved coordination among UN agencies and departments, and between national authorities and organizations.

In 2004, the international community will meet in Mauritius to review the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS. We look forward to welcoming you all there. You can rest assured that oceans are likely to be very high on our agenda and we expect to develop strategic actions on oceans in the coming months.

Already a great deal of cooperation on ocean issues exists among SIDS and some of the regions are already moving forward with regional policies and action plans on oceans. Others in the group are considering sustainable development frameworks for their surrounding seas as well. Marine Protected Areas have been established in many countries and more are being considered in the context of national sustainable development strategies.

The preparatory process for the Mauritius meeting in 2004 will allow for further opportunities to discuss ocean issues with experts. To ensure the widest possible consensus among SIDS



and the rest of the international community, it is essential that there is transparency and the fullest possible representation of AOSIS members in relevant meetings.

There are examples of regional ocean policies that have been developed and I want to touch on the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy because it is a very important example of how SIDS are committed to dealing with issues of oceans and islands systems of the world. The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy originated from the recommendations from a workshop on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 that was held in Tonga in 1999. The outcomes of that workshop were later endorsed in the same year by leaders of all Pacific Island member countries that articulated the need for developing a regional integrated ocean policy with the overriding objective of ensuring the sustainability of ocean resources.

A regional ocean policy has not been formally implemented in any other part of the world; therefore to a large extent the Pacific Region will be setting the international trend in this regard. The idea of a regional ocean policy, however, is not new. The existing regional institutions supported by large conventions provided a framework for such a policy. The possible advantages foreseen in a regional ocean policy for the Pacific region are:

- Consolidation of current achievements of regional institutions
- Assistance to regional organizations in developing compatible and transparent oceans programs, and providing international leadership
- Provision of a highly effective framework for assessing and managing high-cost managerial technologies and infrastructure for ocean governance
- Avoidance of duplication of efforts
- Avoidance of politically and economically damaging demarcation or disputes
- Attracting donor funding on the basis of coordinated policies and longer term focus
- Assistance with improvement in capacity and confidence building
- Provision of a robust and consensual agreed reference point for developing national ocean policy
- Provision of a robust and consensual agreed reference point for developing and presenting regional positions at the international level

The appointed marine-sector working group of the regional organizations in the Pacific has prepared the Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy document for endorsement by the Forum leaders. The policy was prepared in consultation with key stakeholders in the region including the Pacific Island countries themselves and territories to ensure their commitment and endorsement of the policy.

The Pacific Regional Oceans Policy presents a vision for a healthy oceans that sustain the livelihoods and aspirations of Pacific island communities. The principal goal is to:

- Ensure future sustainable use of oceans and resources
- Promote stewardship and ownership
- Articulate the following principles:
 - Improving understanding of the oceans
 - Sustainably managing oceans resource use
 - Maintaining the health of oceans
 - Promoting the peaceful use of oceans
 - Creating partnerships
 - Promoting cooperation

The policy provides the basis for the harmonization that strengthens national and regional actions in relation to oceans and coastal resources. We see the critical importance here of developing and maintaining linkages among all issues of sustainable development relating to oceans.

A related and important activity to developing the Pacific Regional Oceans Policy is the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum being developed and planned for early next year to further advance dialogue and consultations among Pacific island countries and other interested parties. Participants at CSD-11, funding agencies and development partners are invited to the forum.

GLOBAL FORUM PANEL AT CSD-11

GLOBAL MARINE ASSESSMENT AND AGENDA FOR THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS

Dr. Louise de La Fayette

UN Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UN/DOALOS)

Global Marine Assessment

One of the recommendations of the WSSD was the initiation of a regular process of reporting and assessment of the global marine environment. This recommendation was discussed at the General Assembly during the negotiations for the annual omnibus resolution on oceans and the Law of the Sea and agreed to in paragraph 45 of Resolution 85/141. This Resolution called upon the Secretary General to prepare proposals on modalities for the regular process of global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, in collaboration with other UN agencies and organizations and relevant NGOs.

There is currently a process of consulting these groups on their views on modalities for the Global Marine Assessment (GMA) programme. Unfortunately, very few responses have been received so far and I wish to use this CSD-11 forum to appeal to the relevant groups for their inputs within the next two weeks. The non-response by some organizations was perhaps because they did not know about the GMA programme. The GMA is a proposal for the assessment of the marine environment of all the oceans; it would investigate the physical state and threats, and the socio-economic impacts of the threats of oceans to coastal communities. The purpose of this assessment would be to provide information for policy makers in government and regional organizations and global institutions, to enable them take decisions and form their integrated ocean policy for the purpose of sustainable development of the oceans.

The history and background to the GMA go as far back as the Law of the Sea Convention, which deals with provisions for monitoring the state of the oceans and assess the impact of any planned projects. It also assesses the state of marine resources, especially fisheries. Following this is Agenda 21, Chapter 17, which talks about establishing regular reviews of the marine environment and developmental issues.

The initial impetus for the current initiative came from a proposal by Iceland in the UNEP Governing Council meeting in 2001. UNEP took up this idea and convened two meetings in Reykjavic and later in Bremen. The former meeting decided that such a global marine assessment was desirable and useful and the latter meeting considered some proposals for modalities for carrying out the assessment. The issue was brought up at the Informal Consultative Process last year for discussion and the reports presented to the preparatory committee of the WSSD for adoption and tabling at the General Assembly for resolution. Information about the meetings on the GMA can be accessed from the UNEP website at <http://www.unep.org/DEWA/water/MarineAssessment/meetings.htm>.

Since then, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre has initiated a survey to find out what assessments were already being done because one of the principles accepted was that there should be no new institutions created and that GMA should build upon existing ones.

The survey, which was published in January 2003, concluded that although there was considerable information currently available, it was scattered, inadequate and had many gaps, in particular with regards to information on the marine environment of SIDS, the high seas and deep oceans. This also applied to the relationship between freshwater and marine resources.

There are assessments currently going on under various regional seas programmes but there is lack of uniformity in the modalities, information and data collection, and these need to be harmonized before global assessment can be done.

Many developing countries lack the capacity to assess their marine environments; hence GMA would also have to evolve a certain amount of capacity building in developing countries, including SIDS.

Presently, more proposals on how to conduct global marine assessment are being expected as mentioned earlier. A number of states have indicated their preparedness to discuss the issue at the upcoming meeting of the consultative process during the first week of June. The next stage is the preparation of a report to the General Assembly. Some states are calling for an intergovernmental meeting at the beginning of 2004 to establish the details.

United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea

The General Assembly decided to establish a new consultative process, which would consider all issues and developments relating to the oceans and the Law of the Sea each year and also to make recommendations to the General Assembly on certain issues. Initially, the consultative process was to go for three years and this came to an end in 2002, but the General Assembly in its Resolution 85/141 decided to continue it. The fourth consultative meeting will take place in the first week of June 2003. All states, regional economic organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and NGOs in consultative status with the UN are invited. The focal areas chosen by the General Assembly for this year are: "safety of navigation; for example, capacity-building for the preparation of nautical charts; and protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems". Background information on the Consultative Process is available on the DOALOS website at http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm.

This year special reports will be presented to inform the Process of developments since the first meeting regarding the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, and FAO actions to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing. Finally, recommendations will be submitted to the General Assembly on issues to be considered during the debate on the resolution on ocean affairs and the law of the sea.

3rd World Water Forum Outcomes

OUTCOMES FROM THE 3RD WORLD WATER FORUM Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka, Japan March 16-23, 2003

Dr. Miriam Balgos
Center for the Study of Marine Policy

The 3rd World Water Forum attracted some 24,000 participants from 182 countries who attended 351 sessions on 38 interlocking water themes. The Forum focused on the need for balancing increasing human requirements for adequate water supplies and improved health and sanitation with food production, transportation, energy and environmental needs, as well as on the imperative for more effective governance, improved capacity and adequate financing.

The World Water Forum consisted of three elements: 1) a forum that provided the opportunity for policy makers, academic experts, technology experts, people from private industries, and those from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), to meet under one roof and discuss solutions to future water-related issues; 2) a Ministerial Conference that convened Ministers dealing with water-related issues to discuss the global water crisis and to work towards the framing and adoption of a political declaration concerning water-related issues; and 3) a Water Fair, consisting of a series of water-related events, that was held before, and during the period of the 3rd World Water Forum to raise awareness and interest among the general public, and to raise the level of motivation for concrete solutions. The Forum produced three major outcomes: 1) the Forum Statement; 2) the Ministerial Declaration; and 3) the Portfolio of Water Actions, briefly described in the following paragraphs.

Forum Outcomes

A. Preliminary Forum Statement

Components

An 8-page Preliminary Forum Statement issued by the Forum's Organizing Committee on March 21, 2003, contained issues, actions, commitments and recommendations that participants to the Forum pledged to support and carry through in order to achieve a safe and secure water future for all. Among the issues specifically addressed are 1) safe clean water for all; 2) water governance; 3) capacity building; 4) financing; 5) participation; and 6) regional issues. The key issues cited indicated the need for demand-side as well as supply-side management, with emphasis on the latter. Regarding governance, there is a need for wide adoption of the integrated water resources management approach and for national governments to make water a priority. The need for community-based management, and for various forms of partnerships ensuring inclusiveness is unquestioned. Planning and implementing water projects require greater efficiency and better financial management, especially in regions

where there is increasing water demand due to increased human populations such as Asia and the Pacific.

A new approach that has attracted much attention and discussion in the Water Forum is virtual water trade. "Virtual water" — the amount of water needed to create goods — is a new concept that is gaining strong ground among the water-scarce countries to determine their agricultural and industrial production strategies. "When you consume one kilogram of grain, you are also consuming 1,000 litres of water needed to grow that grain; when you consume a kilogram of beef you are consuming 13,000 litres of water needed to produce that amount of meat, and this is the hidden or virtual water," explained Daniel Zimmer, Director of the World Water Council, in his presentation at the session on "Virtual Water Trade and Geopolitics" at the Water Forum. The amount of "virtual water" that people consume everyday varies by region, depending on people's diet. In Asia, people consume an average of 1,400 litres of 'virtual water' a day, while in Europe and North America, people consume about 4000 litres. About 70 per cent of all water used by humans goes into food production. A widespread consciousness of "virtual water" consumption can inform decision-making at all levels in improving the management of water resources. Countries that opt to be net importers of "virtual water," as opposed to real water, can relieve pressure on their own water resources.

The Statement recorded more than 100 commitments reached during the Forum in support of major actions that are deemed needed in addressing key issues, namely, 1) creating global awareness and political support; 2) building bridges; and 3) local actions. The climate change theme accounted for more than 20 commitments, and the gender issues elicited 13 commitments. Some of the global agreements included:

- Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of Japan: Establish the International Flood Network (IFNet) for flood mitigation at the global stages. IFNet will launch the "Global Flood Warning System" project that will create precipitation maps all over the world every 3 hours.
- The World Water Council: Develop and implement with a consortium of International financial institutions, UN agencies, international non-governmental organizations, and research institutions a program aiming at identifying and highlighting the benefits brought by sound water management, and providing governments with appropriate tools and analysis so that they may be considered in priority setting, planning, development, management, and budgeting for the water sector.
- UN-HABITAT and Asian Development Bank (ADB): Create a program to build the capacity of Asian cities to secure and manage pro-poor investments and to help the region meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of halving, by 2015, the proportion of people without safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

3rd World Water Forum Outcomes

- UNESCO and the World Water Council: Promote, develop and support the establishment and operation of an independent, easily accessible facility that can help solve problems related to trans-boundary waters.
- WWC, UNESCO-IHE, FAO, KIP, IFPRI, IWMI and SOAS: Continue their efforts and to lobby for financial support to develop a better understanding of Virtual Water, and to provide governments with information and tools to consciously utilize virtual water trade as an effective way to promote water saving and make it an integral part of government's water, food and environmental policies.
- A consortium of organizations (GWP, NRC, FAO, WWC, IWA, WMO, UNEP, IUCN, UNESCO, UNDP, WB, ISDR): Continue building bridges between the climate and water sector, and develop activities to better cope with climate impacts, through an "International Water and Climate Alliance."
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Establish a Community Water Initiative, aimed at building on the power of the local community to solve water and sanitation challenges by providing innovative communities with small grants to expand and improve their solutions to the water and sanitation crisis.
- The indigenous participants of the 3rd World Water Forum: Form a network on water issues that will strengthen the voice of indigenous people generally, and help empower local communities struggling to protect their water rights, through the Indigenous Peoples Kyoto Water Declaration.
- The Water and Sanitation Program (World Bank): Fund national capacity building projects for monitoring of Millennium Development Goals.
- Pricewaterhouse Coopers, UN Water and Care International: Establish a Global Water Initiative, to bring a substantial contribution to the Millennium Development Goals, that will start with a pilot project in Africa supported by the French Government, with results by the end of the year 2003.

Details of water commitments may be accessed from the 3WWF website, along with information on regional, national and other commitments (<http://www.world.water-forum3.com/2003/eng/secretariat/0322-3.html>).

Environmental Elements and the Freshwater-Oceans Link

Environmental concerns are mentioned throughout the preliminary forum statement. The preamble sets the environmental tone of the Statement by citing the Ministerial Declaration of the 2nd World Water Forum in The Hague, 2000, which identified protecting ecosystems along with meeting basic water needs, securing food supply, sharing water resources, managing risks, valuing water and governing water wisely as the

key challenges for the future. This tone is made explicit in two recommendations set forth in the Forum Statement (2 & 4), which recommends wider application of integrated, adaptive, ecosystem, basin or watershed, and demand-side management approaches, which take into consideration societal as well as ecological goals. Recommendation 2 specifically mentions implementation of environmental flows for downstream ecosystems and users, although there is no explicit mention of the need to consider the impacts of upstream activities to marine ecosystems and resources and vice versa.

B. Ministerial Declaration

Key Features

The Ministerial Declaration, adopted on March 23, 2003 by Ministers and Heads of Delegation assembled in Kyoto, Japan, is composed of a General Policy and five key themes: 1) Water resources management and benefit sharing; 2) Safe drinking water and sanitation; 3) Water for food and rural development; 4) Water pollution prevention and ecosystem conservation; and 5) Disaster mitigation and risk management. The Declaration reiterates the WSSD target of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015. A noteworthy feature in the Declaration is the identification of specific roles for each major group of players, e.g., who develops water efficiency plans, who equips countries to be able to do so, who should participate in the planning process, etc.

Financing is one of the important aspects stressed in the General Policy as needed for the water initiatives to succeed. The strategies recommended are to prioritize water issues and to reflect these priorities in national development plans; adopt cost-recovery approaches and the "polluter-pays" principle; promote efficiency and effectiveness; and encourage public-private partnerships.

The latter strategy provoked a debate between advocates of privatization and defenders of pure public sector provision of water services as to how the public and private sectors can best cooperate to bring better access and quality of water to people of all socio-economic levels. What is encouraging is that the public and private sectors seem to have a mutual understanding that they need each other although they do not always agree on the mode of cooperation.

In the management of water resources, supply-side management policies, e.g., development and deployment of non-conventional water resources, were balanced by demand-side management policies, e.g., promote reduction in losses from distribution systems and the use of cost-effective measures. The Declaration acknowledges the potential of local or indigenous technology in developing efficient and low-cost water systems. Another noteworthy feature is the recognition of hydropower as a renewable and clean energy source provided it is tapped in "an environmentally sustainable and socially equitable manner."

3rd World Water Forum Outcomes

A prominent feature of the Ministerial Declaration are the references to equity and fairness in the proposed measures. Equity in sharing benefits with due regard to pro-poor and gender perspectives in water policies is emphasized in the General Policy statements while the provisions in the sections on Water Resources Management and Benefit Sharing, Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, and Water for Food and Rural Development are targeted to assist the interests of the poor and the low-income bracket of the population or give due consideration to social equity.

A system for implementation and review was mentioned in the General Policy statements indicating recognition of the necessity for countries to better coordinate monitoring and assessment systems at the local, basin, and national levels, with the development of relevant national indicators, where appropriate, and to build capacity to implement the systems.

Environmental Elements and Links to Oceans and Marine Ecosystems

All five key themes of the Declaration incorporate environmental considerations. However, it is in the Water Pollution Prevention and Ecosystem Conservation theme that environmental concerns are firmly articulated. The integrated perspective is apparent in the inclusion of watersheds, ecosystems including rivers, wetlands, forests and soils, and the entire water cycle, into management considerations. The mention of wetlands and their protection in the document is the only explicit indication of figuring in downstream ecosystems and resources, specifically coastal and oceanic ecosystems, into water management strategies.

C. Portfolio of Water Actions

A total of 422 actions were submitted from 36 countries and 16 international organizations covering the themes of 1) Water Resources Management and Benefit Sharing; 2) Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation; 3) Water for Food and Rural Development; 4) Water Pollution Prevention and Ecosystem Conservation; and 5) Disaster Mitigation and Risk Management. Overall, most of the actions involve water resources management and benefit sharing, and safe drinking water and sanitation. A full list of water actions may be viewed from the Water Forum website at this location <http://www.world.water-forum3.com/jp/mc/pwa_list.pdf>.

Conclusion

Overall, the 3rd World Water Forum outcomes represent a robust set of implementation targets and plans addressing the challenges, complexities and uncertainties in water resources management.

References

3rd World Water Forum Concludes 100 New Commitments Made. March 23, 2003. Available: <http://www.world.water-forum3.com/2003/eng/topics/topics0323-02.html>

3rd World Water Forum Shiga-Kyoto-Osaka Planning Coordination Committee. Available: http://www.kkr.mlit.go.jp/water/e_yokoso/yokoso.html

List of "Portfolio of Water Actions". March 2003. Available: http://www.world.water-forum3.com/jp/mc/pwa_list.pdf

Ministerial Declaration. March 23, 2003. Available: http://www.world.water-forum3.com/jp/mc/md_final.pdf

Preliminary Forum Statement. March 21, 2003. Available: http://www.world.water-forum3.com/2003/eng/secretariat/files/Preliminary_SFS.pdf

Regarding the Portfolio of Water Actions (PWA). March 2003. Available: http://www.world.water-forum3.com/jp/mc/pwa_info_e.pdf

Roberts, J. 2003. A Delicate Balance: Bringing the public and private sectors together for better water supply and management is proving a challenge. Water Forum Shimbun 1(3):4-5.

Venkataramani, G. Nations opting for virtual water trade. March 2003. Available: http://www.thecyberhood.net/Residents_enter_here/private/news_flash/nations_opting_for_virtual_water.htm

Linking Freshwater to Coastal Management at the World Water Forum

Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain
Center for the Study of Marine Policy

While the links between freshwater and water downstream in coasts and oceans were not addressed explicitly by the Ministerial Declaration emanating from the World Water Forum, a number of panels at the Forum emphasized these linkages and paved new ground in detailing how these linkages might be addressed. In particular, two panels, one organized by the Institute for Ocean Policy, Ship and Ocean Foundation (Japan), and a second panel organized by UNESCO, examined in detail the science underlying the entire water cycle—from hilltops to oceans. A third session, organized by UNEP/GPA and by the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Water (Denmark), examined specific case studies of linking watershed management, river basin management, and coastal management, through a nested governance approach, drawing lessons from these experiences on obstacles faced and successes achieved.

In this panel, Martin Adriaanse (UNEP/GPA) and Niels Ipsen (UCC-Water) presented draft guidelines for linking freshwater management to coastal and ocean management. These are reproduced here with the goal of encouraging dialogue between the freshwater and ocean communities.

3rd World Water Forum Outcomes

Draft Guidance on Linking Integrated Coastal Area and River-basin Management

10 Guiding Principles for Policy and Decision Makers

1. **Identify the shared issues** for river basin, coastal area and marine environment.

River basin management is focused on its own specific issues, as is the management of the coastal area and marine environment. Some of these issues are common to river and coast and necessitate an integrated approach.

2. Prioritize the shared issues and **assess the need for and benefits** of integrated management of river basin and coastal area. Also assess the constraints of an integrated approach and **define goals** of the management initiative.

Integrated management is complex because river basins and coastal zones have different communities and separate management structures. The needs and benefits of integration should be explicit as well as the constraints that prohibit an integrated approach. Defined goals for the short and long term should be realistic, as unrealistic goals risk a loss of credibility.

3. **Analyze cause and effect relations** for the identified issues in the river catchment and coastal area.

Pressures and driving forces behind the shared issues should be analysed, as well as the impacts on environmental or socio-economic conditions. The potential for environmental change and societal response should be explored. For shared issues the causes, effects and possible solutions may involve river basin and coastal area in a complex manner, making an integrated approach a prerequisite.

4. Define the **problem area** for the integrated approach and **identify the stakeholders** relevant to the issues, causes and effects.

As Integrated Management of River-basin and Coastal Area (ICARM) builds on the good practices of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), the focus of the integrated river-coast management should in principle be on the missing link for the shared issues. Each issue defines its own problem area and each problem area defines its own relevant stakeholders

5. Secure **political commitment** as an absolute prerequisite for appropriate integrated management.

Build broad political commitment for the integrated management of shared issues for river and coast. This is a pre-condition for effective involvement of relevant stakeholders in dialogues and planning processes. This is especially needed to harmonise separate institutional

responsibilities, legislation, regulations and management structures for river basins and coastal areas.

6. **Involve all stakeholders** from the very beginning to secure their commitment.

Involve relevant stakeholders in a dialogue process from the identification and prioritisation of issues to the analysis for management planning and decision making. Special attention should be given to stakeholders interests and concerns and to moderate and building consensus in the dialogues.

7. Establish a **common knowledge and information platform** as a major tool for participatory planning processes.

Lack of information is a key impediment to public participation. Sometimes information is abundant, but scattered and access is lacking. A knowledge platform should be specific to the socio-economic conditions of the region and should optimally provide for transparency of information.

8. Facilitate **knowledge and awareness raising** at all relevant levels to create optimal conditions for a participatory approach.

Awareness raising on freshwater-coast interactions and knowledge building about the benefits of integrated management are needed to create an involved general public and build support for positive institutional, legislative and regulatory change.

9. Create an **enabling environment** for the management of river and coast to achieve sustainable solutions at national, river basin, and local level.

Governments should be challenged to set integrated policies and legislation that constitute the 'rules of the game' and enable all stakeholders to play their respective roles in the context of a joint management of river basin and coastal area.

10. Encourage coastal and freshwater management **institutions to make arrangements** for an integrated management of catchment and coastal zones.

Integrated management does not necessarily imply the integration of institutions. However, it requires coordinated, strategic, administrative and institutional cooperation at local, national and international levels, through the establishment of basin committees, or other cooperative bodies to address the practical issues of integrated management of river basin and coastal area.

Drafted by Martin Adriannse, UNEP/ Global Programme of Action (GPA) (m.adriannse@unep.nl) and Niels Ipsen, UNEP Collaborating Centre on Water and Environment, Denmark) (nhi@dhi.dk)

OPINION

CALL FOR PROTECTION OF ALL CORAL REEF, SEAGRASS, AND SHALLOW WATER ECOSYSTEMS IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS

Dr. Thomas J. Goreau
President, Global Coral Reef Alliance

The Global Coral Reef Alliance calls for immediate international agreements to protect all shallow water ecosystems in International Waters, especially coral reefs and seagrasses.

Coral reef and seagrass ecosystems, among the most productive, biodiverse, and economically important marine ecosystems, are confined to shallow water (generally less than 100 m depth), because of their need for light. While almost all of them are found near coastlines of continents and islands, and therefore lie within national Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), coral reef, seagrass, and other shallow water ecosystems can also be found in the high seas on shallow submerged banks and seamounts. These ecosystems in international waters have no protection of any kind, nevertheless they are disproportionately important, and urgently need to be protected.

Recently an international call to protect deep sea ecosystems and seamounts has been made to the United Nations and the Law of the Sea Conference by a group of marine scientists and conservationists coordinated by Matt Gianni of the Greenpeace Oceans campaign. Deep sea species are highly diverse, but are vulnerable because they are often extremely slow growing, and are increasingly being targeted by industrial fishing fleets as shallow water species are being fished out. We strongly support these important conservation efforts aimed at protecting deep sea fauna, but it is important to also focus on protection of shallow water ecosystems in the high seas. Like deep sea ecosystems they are totally unprotected from destructive fishing methods and over-harvesting, but they may be even more in peril because of several unique characteristics.

- 1) Shallow water ecosystems in the high seas are extremely rare and virtually all are very small areas, occupying only a very tiny fraction of the ocean surface.
- 2) Despite their small size these ecosystems are of incredible biological importance because they are the only stepping stones by which shallow water organisms can migrate across oceans and colonize new areas if climate changes.
- 3) They are central to maintaining gene flow of shallow water species across oceans, maintaining the genetic identity of species and the genetic diversity, which is essential for adaptation to changing environmental conditions, such as global climate change and pollution.
- 4) Shallow water ecosystems are essential nursery areas and refuges for coral reef and other shallow water fish species that may form part of economically important straddling stocks.
- 5) Shallow water seagrasses and reef areas are essential feeding habitats for many endangered species of turtles, and important breeding or calving grounds for endangered whales and dolphins.
- 6) These ecosystems are of global importance because they are highly productive and export large amounts of seagrass detritus to surrounding deep ocean sediments, acting as a sink for carbon dioxide and source of oxygen.

- 7) Shallow water ecosystems in International Waters are highly vulnerable because they are easily accessible and lines and trawling gear can be quickly lowered to them, making them much more profitable to exploit than deep sea ecosystems where it takes hours to raise and lower gear.
- 8) They are easily found because the most productive areas can be seen from boats, planes, or satellite images, and even the deeper ones where the bottom may not be visible from the surface may be easily located from changes in water color and wave patterns.
- 9) Shallow water ecosystems have much higher biomass than deep-sea ecosystems, providing larger catches, and giving a strong incentive for overharvesting. For example the Saya de Malha Banks in the Indian Ocean has been extensively trawled in the past by industrial fishing fleets from the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and East Asia, and has become an important fishing area for Mauritius as fish stocks within the Mauritius EEZ have sharply declined. The Fish catches of Mauritius and Seychelles could collapse further if this important nursery area that restocks their EEZ zones is not protected.

The issue to protect deep sea ecosystems and seamounts will be carried forward at the next meeting of the UN GA's Informal Consultative Process on oceans, which will take place 2-6 June 2003 in New York, which will be in a position to make a recommendation for further action by the UN General Assembly in 2003. A process within the UN system has begun that will require a lot of effort to ensure that the outcome of this biodiversity in the deep sea and on the high seas.

The Global Coral Reef Alliance urges over 100 countries, for whom coral reefs are the major source of marine biodiversity, fisheries, tourism, sand supplies, and coastal protection, to take steps to ensure that the forthcoming UN negotiations also make specific recommendations to protect all shallow ecosystems in the high seas which may be extremely important sources of genetic diversity for the living resources within their EEZs.

The Global Coral Reef Alliance, Sun and Sea, and the Lighthouse Foundation have recently issued a report on the Saya de Malha Banks calling for special international protection for them, as the largest seagrass and coral reef ecosystem in International Waters in the Indian Ocean, and perhaps in the world. For the full, illustrated report on Saya de Malha, please go to: <http://globalcoral.org/SAYA%20REPORT.pdf>. For more information on sustainable development and protection of ocean resources in the face of global ocean change please go to: <http://www.globalcoral.org/World%20Summit%20on%20Sustainable%20Development.htm>.

Dr. Thomas J. Goreau
President, Global Coral Reef Alliance
37 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139, USA
Tel: 1-617-864-0433; Fax: 1-617-864-4226
Email: goreau@bestweb.net

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOURTH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA New York, 2-6 June, 2003

The Fourth Meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea will be held in New York between 2-6 June, 2003. The UN General Assembly (GA) recently reaffirmed the important contribution of the Consultative Process to developments relating to ocean affairs and the Law of the Sea and called for a continuation of the Consultative Process for a further three years (GA Resolution 57/141, February 2003).

After three dynamic and productive years under the strong co-chairship of Ambassador Tuiloma Neroni Slade of Samoa and Mr. Alan Simcock of United Kingdom, the Consultative Process will continue under the guidance of two new co-chairpersons: Ambassador Felipe H. Paolillo (Uruguay) and Mr. Philip D. Burgess (Australia). The Fourth meeting will be organized around two broad issues: (a) protecting vulnerable ecosystems; and (b) safety of navigation. Specific aspects for discussion include:

Protecting vulnerable ecosystems:

- What are the key threats to the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems and what further global and regional coordination and cooperation is needed to reduce these threats?
- Do we have adequate information and knowledge about these ecosystems and the threats to them? What can be done to ensure there is sufficient and accessible information for all decision makers and users of the marine environment?
- What are the key management approaches and tools to protect vulnerable marine and coastal ecosystems?
- What international cooperation or coordination is required to assist States to ensure the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems?

Safety of navigation:

- What capacity building is required for the production, updating and standardization of nautical charts? How can States obtain assistance in producing accurate charts of waters within their jurisdiction? What are some recent examples of assistance to States for the production of such charts?
- What are global and regional organizations doing to enhance the safety of navigation?
- What are some examples of the relationship between the safety of navigation and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems, including recent developments regarding the transportation of dangerous goods?

A report of the fourth Meeting will be posted on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea at www.un.org/Depts/los.

The Global Forum on Oceans Coasts and Islands at the UNICPOLOS Fourth Meeting

“Mobilizing for a Renewed Global Ocean Agenda”: Side Event, Thursday, June 5, 2003

The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands will host a side event at the fourth Meeting of UNICPOLOS on “Mobilizing for a Renewed Global Ocean Agenda.” The side event aims to contribute to the meeting by addressing the following issues on the agenda: protecting the marine environment and vulnerable ecosystems, integrated ocean management, and fisheries.

A panel of experts will present perspectives on the advancement of the global ocean agenda related to, in particular, threats to vulnerable marine ecosystems, management approaches and tools to protect vulnerable marine and coastal ecosystems, and international cooperation.

Invited panelists and presentation topics include:

Patricio Bernal, IOC/UNESCO, Chair

Veerle Vandeweerd, UNEP/GPA, “Protecting Vulnerable Ecosystems from Land-Based Activities: Integrated Management through the Global Programme of Action”

Tim Adams, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, “Towards an Integrated Regional Ocean Policy for the Pacific Islands”

Tullio Scovazzi, University of Milan - Bicocca, “New Directions in Marine Protected Areas: Opportunities at the Regional Sea Level”

Sian Pullen and Simon Cripps, WWF International, “Applying the Ecosystem Approach in Fisheries Policies to Protect Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems”

Marea Hatziolos, World Bank, “Conserving Coral Reefs: Science-based Management and Regional Cooperation”

Stefano Belfiore, CSMP/NOAA, “The Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands: Assessing Progress towards the Commitments of the World Summit on Sustainable Development”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORKSHOP ON THE GOVERNANCE OF HIGH SEAS BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION **Radisson-Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre, Cairns, Australia** **June 16-20, 2003**

Over 100 million species of life forms are known to inhabit the high seas and there are many more to be discovered. This marine life is little understood, and scientific knowledge to guide management is very limited. There are many examples of severe, and potentially irreversible, damage to the biodiversity and environment of the high seas under present management and jurisdictional arrangements.

These issues will be the focus of discussion in a major international conference on high seas biodiversity, which aims to advance practical action to improve the conservation and management of the biodiversity of the high seas and deep oceans (<http://www.ea.gov.au/coasts/international/highseas/>).

The Workshop specifically addresses the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation call to 'maintain the productivity and biodiversity of important and vulnerable marine and coastal areas...beyond national jurisdiction' (para. 31a). The expected workshop outcomes are:

1. To identify institutional gaps in the United Nations system which impede addressing the conservation of biodiversity of the high seas and deep oceans; and identify a range of approaches to reduce these gaps; and

2. To identify gaps in international governance arrangements, which impede addressing the conservation of biodiversity of the high seas and deep oceans; and identify a range of approaches to reduce these gaps.

This initiative is being undertaken in partnership with the following nations: UK, New Zealand, Canada, USA, and Cambodia; and non-government organizations including: WWF, IUCN, and IOI. All relevant intergovernmental organizations will be invited. Attendance at the Workshop will be by invitation and will be limited to 150 people. Practitioners who wish to attend the Workshop should inform the Secretariat as soon as possible. There will be no fees charged for registration or attendance.

The final day of the Program shifts "beyond biodiversity" to a one-day workshop on ecosystem based management of deep-sea activities titled "Beyond Biodiversity – Sustainable Management and Conservation of the Oceans using Ecosystem-based Management".

Philip Burgess
Director, Marine and International Section
Marine and Water Division, Environment Australia
GPO Box 787, CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel.: (02) 6274 1418; Fax: (02) 6274 1006
E-mail: philip.burgess@ea.gov.au

STRATEGY PLAN AVAILABLE FOR THE COASTAL MODULE OF GOOS

The "Integrated Strategic Design Plan for the Coastal Ocean Observations Module of the Global Ocean Observing System", GOOS Report No 125, is now available on the GOOS web site and can be accessed at the following URL:

<http://ioc.unesco.org/goos/docs/GOOS_125_COOP_Plan.pdf>. This design plan provides advice on how to start implementing GOOS in coastal seas and Exclusive Economic Zones. The report will be available in printed form in June 2003. The next step is to prepare advice on implementation, which is expected to be ready in 2004.

For complementary advice on implementing GOOS for climate and weather forecasting purposes and global scale ocean services, the interested readers are referred to GOOS

Report (http://ioc.unesco.org/goos/docs/GOOS_066_act_pl.htm), and to the publication "Observing the Oceans in the 21st Century" by Koblinksky, C.J., and Smith, N.R., 2001, available from the GODAE Project office, Bureau of Meteorology, P.O.Box 1289K, Melbourne, VIC 3001, Australia (n.smith@bom.gov.au).

Thorkild Aarup, PhD, Programme Specialist, Technical Secretary for the Coastal Ocean Observations Panel, GOOS Project Office
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO
1, rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15 France
Tel: + 33 (0) 145 684019; Fax: + 33 (0) 145 685812
Email: t.aarup@unesco.org

ABOUT US

The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands Newsletter (<http://www.udel.edu/CMS/csmp/globaloceans/>) covers:

- Major global news related to oceans, coasts, and islands
- Major developments in international negotiations and implementation of international agreements related to oceans, coasts, and islands
- Major news from Global Forum partners— international organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations, private sector
- Progress in the implementation of the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and the voluntary partnerships (Type II) created at the WSSD
- Regional and national-level news related to oceans, coasts, and islands of global significance
- Events, conferences, and major meetings related to oceans, coasts, and islands.

Contributions are invited in the following categories:

- Feature articles: Interpretative articles about developments related to oceans, coasts, and islands
- News reports from international organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations, private sector
- Reports about WSSD implementation and progress in WSSD partnership initiatives
- Summaries of reports and meetings
- Opinion section: Critical analyses of important issues related to oceans, coasts, and islands

The newsletter will be published on a bimonthly basis. This schedule may, at times, be altered to focus, in a timely manner, on an important international development. The newsletters will be archived as part of the Oceans, Coasts, and Islands website accessible at www.globaloceans.org, and also at icm.noaa.gov.

Potential contributors are kindly requested to follow the schedule noted below. Submissions will be evaluated by an editorial committee. Please note that some submissions may not be accepted due to appropriateness, timeliness, and space considerations.

Contributions to the Newsletter should be sent to Dr. Miriam Balgos, Center for the Study of Marine Policy, mbalgos@udel.edu, two weeks before each of the following publication dates:

Issue 3: July 15, 2003

Issue 4: September 15, 2003

Issue 5: November 1, 2003 (with final program for Global Conference)

Issue 6: December 15, 2003

The Global Forum Newsletter is prepared at the [Center for the Study of Marine Policy \(CSMP\)](#) at the University of Delaware. A multi-national team of researchers under the editorship of [Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain](#) manages the Newsletter, including [Dr. Miriam Balgos \(Philippines\)](#), lead editor, [Catherine Johnston \(U.S.\)](#), [Isabel Torres de Noronha \(Portugal\)](#), [Fernanda Pinheiro \(Brazil\)](#), [Deborah Freitas \(Brazil\)](#), [Bernice McLean \(South Africa\)](#), [Danielle Tesch \(U.S.\)](#), [Meredith Blaydes \(U.S.\)](#), [Stefano Belfiore \(Italy\)](#), [Jorge Gutierrez \(Mexico\)](#), and [Dr. John Blay \(Ghana\)](#). Funding and other forms of support are provided by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/UNESCO, UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, International Program Office/National Ocean Service, NOAA, the World Bank, and the Center for the Study of Marine Policy/University of Delaware.

We kindly request your involvement in making this newsletter a useful contribution in the global dialogue on oceans, coasts, and islands.