

GPA IGR-2 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2006

On Tuesday morning, delegates at GPA IGR-2 met in Plenary to hear reports from Monday's three breakout sessions on the way forward with National Programmes of Action. Throughout the rest of the day, 19 partnership workshops were held. The Beijing Declaration working group met at lunchtime and in the evening.

Editor's note: IISD Reporting Services was unable to attend four workshops: Seeking solutions to integrating stakeholders to achieve sustainable freshwater and coastal management at the local and national level in the wider Caribbean; Challenge of linking freshwater and coastal management; China-Africa, China-Arabic partnership for environmental cooperation; and Demonstration of an integrated freshwater to oceans management approach for the Xiamen-Zhangzhou-LongYan region of Fujian Province.

PLENARY

REPORT FROM MONDAY: This plenary session was chaired by Vice-Chair Lucia Ana Varga (Romania). Dagmara Berbalk (Germany) summarized the outcomes of the group on mainstreaming the GPA into national development planning discussions. She said the group had underscored the importance of: political will; evaluation of the economic benefits of GPA implementation; linkage with poverty and food security issues; participatory approaches; monitoring and evaluation; and use of regional ties.

Magnús Jóhannesson (Iceland) summarized the outcomes of the group on financing the implementation of the GPA. He said the group had stressed the need for: an enabling environment; civil society participation; evaluation of the costs of inaction; strategic partnerships with industry and donors; capacity building; environmental financing by regional banks; and revolving or community-based funds.

Elizabeth Thompson (Barbados) reviewed the outcomes of the group on strengthening national legislative and institutional frameworks, which facilitate the implementation of the GPA. She said the group stressed the need to: incorporate the concept of integrated freshwater and coastal water management; ensure the highest level of engagement and commitment; and strengthen compliance and enforcement.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates highlighted the marine environmental impacts of armed conflicts, and levying households to pay for domestic pollution.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PARTNERSHIPS DAY: Veerle Vandeweerd, Coordinator, UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, introduced the partnerships day and outlined its objectives.

PARTNERSHIP WORKSHOPS

INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE GLOBAL OCEANS AGENDA: This workshop was co-chaired by Manuel Cira, World Ocean Network, and Ram Boojh, Center for Environment Education, India. Participants viewed a film on oil spills and the marine environment and heard a presentation on the Beijing Aquarium's public awareness efforts. Discussion focused on: linking the World Ocean Network with GPA activities; informing the Network's local contacts; funding awareness raising efforts; and establishing a fund for civil society initiatives.

OCEANS LIBRARY: Workshop Chair Jan Haspeslagh, Flanders Marine Institute, noted the aim to create a partnership between the Oceans Library and the GPA. Delegates heard presentations on: existing library networks; the establishment of regional and international library alliances; achievements of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Ocean Data and Information Network for Africa; the Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts database; open access publishing and repositories; and the Integrated Marine Information System. Discussions focused on furthering dialogue on a potential Oceans Library and GPA partnership.

PLANNING INSTRUMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS):

This workshop was chaired by Charles Arden-Clarke, UNEP. Presentations focused on: achieving profitable and sustainable tourism in the frameworks of integrated coastal management (ICM) and island systems management; and assessing the associated social, economic and ecological footprints. Participants discussed: establishing partnerships among SIDS, as well as among SIDS, NGOs and UNEP; quantifying and limiting tourism's ecological footprint; adapting models to individual SIDS' situations; and promoting sustainable tourism among consumers.

AN INFORMATION PORTAL ON WASTE MANAGEMENT FOR SIDS:

This workshop was chaired by Patricia Aquino, Caribbean Environmental Health Institute. Participants heard presentations on: waste management experiences in Barbados and Mauritius; a regional perspective from Caribbean SIDS; POPs in South Pacific SIDS; and UNEP's waste management activities in SIDS. Discussion focused on: disseminating best practices among SIDS; locally-adapted public awareness raising; adopting a lifecycle approach; and linking solid and liquid waste and marine litter management.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL WATERS IN GEF: MAINSTREAMING GPA IN TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS AND IN LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS (LMEs):

This workshop was chaired by Dann Sklarow, International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resource Network. Participants heard presentations on the operation of the GEF Danube-Black Sea Basin Strategic Partnership for Nutrient Reduction, and the World Bank project in Romania for

agricultural pollution control, which was undertaken under the Partnership. Participants discussed: scaling up of pilot projects; diffuse sources of nutrients; coordination of GEF projects with bilateral assistance; and incentives for farmers' participation in nutrient reduction projects. Participants heard presentations on East Asia's LMEs, and its two components: the UNDP/GEF Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia project, and the World Bank/GEF Partnership Investment Fund for Pollution Reduction in LMEs in East Asia. The Hai River Basin Integrated Water Resources and Environment Management Demonstration Project (China) was introduced. Discussion focused on: slow regional progress on WSSD's target on access to sanitation; the need for substantial investments; cooperation with the private sector; removal of investment barriers; and replication.

MARINE LITTER – A GLOBAL CHALLENGE: This workshop was chaired by Jennifer Winston, US. Participants heard presentations on the Ocean Conservancy's international coastal clean-up initiative, Australia's responses to marine litter, and the Marine Litter Activities under the North-West Pacific Action Plan. Discussion focused on: national versus regional approaches to marine litter; linkages with solid waste management; awareness raising; and financing and enforcement mechanisms.

ESTABLISHING A LONDON CONVENTION AND PROTOCOL, GPA AND REGIONAL SEAS PARTNERSHIP: This workshop was chaired by Ellik Adler, UNEP Regional Seas Programme. Participants heard presentations on synergies among the GPA, the Regional Seas Conventions and the London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter; the London Convention and Protocol's status and orientation; South Africa's experience in implementing these instruments; and dumping activities in the Mediterranean. Discussions focused on avoiding duplication of efforts and reporting requirements.

WHITE WATER TO BLUE WATER – A MODEL FOR PARTNERSHIP BUILDING IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND: This workshop was chaired by David Balton, US. Presentations focused on lessons learned from the White Water to Blue Water initiative, including the importance of: resource mobilization; education and awareness raising; a balance between socioeconomic and ecosystem considerations; engagement of all stakeholders, including governments and the private sector; cooperation among different sectors; and integration of diverse needs. Participants called for minimal bureaucracy, and technical and financial support.

COOPERATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE: PACIFIC SIDS PARTNERSHIPS ON WASTEWATER AND RECYCLING INITIATIVES: This workshop was chaired by Conchita Taitano, Guam Environmental Protection Agency. It focused on the Pacific Islands Regional Recycling Initiative, which aims to develop and implement sustainable waste management by, *inter alia*: maximizing communication and advocacy; identifying funding through partners; providing a portal for information and guidance; and involving NGOs and the private sector. Participants discussed extending the Pacific experience to other regions, and optimizing cooperation with UN and regional institutions.

UNEP/GEF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN LME: IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREED ACTIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND ITS COASTAL AREAS: This workshop was chaired by Paul Mifsud, Mediterranean Action Plan. Presenters described the partnership and two current regional strategic action plans, and explained that the partnership's objectives are to protect the environmental resources of the Mediterranean, and to establish an investment fund. The discussion focused on: ecosystem-based management; the need for increased funding and stronger institutions; a project replication strategy; and the involvement of civil society, especially the private sector.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GPA: PARTNERSHIPS IN INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL AND MARINE AREAS: This workshop was chaired by Adrian Ross, Regional Programme on Partnerships in Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA). Presentations were made on local governments' role in developing and replicating ICM, with the Batangas Bay, Philippines, Danang, Vietnam, and Xiamen, China, as examples. Discussion focused on: the need to apply the PEMSEA model; capacity building; market-based approaches versus sustainability in the region; and the involvement of stakeholders in ICM implementation.

MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER AND SANITATION: This workshop was chaired by Zhenshang Zhang, UN-Habitat. Participants heard presentations on: activities of an existing UN sanitation and wastewater partnership; fighting poverty through wastewater management and successful rehabilitation activities of the Seine River basin; wastewater as a valuable resource; and using vertiver grass for wastewater purification and erosion control in Tanzania. Discussion focused on: technology training of municipality wastewater managers; local control measures for wastewater dumping in Tanzania; public awareness; and the increasing global wastewater problem.

OCEANS TRAINING: SYNERGIES IN CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH MULTI-PARTNER COLLABORATION: This workshop was chaired by Vladimir Golitsyn, UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS). Participants heard presentations on training activities by members of a new partnership that includes UNDOALOS, UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, International Ocean Institute, GEF's International Waters Learn Mission, Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, and Train-Sea-Coast GPA. Discussion focused on: functional mechanisms of the partnership; addressing country training needs and material availability; working with local universities to certify courses for academic credit; and participation in the partnership.

ADVANCING JPOI TARGETS ON ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND IN INTEGRATED COASTAL AND OCEAN MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE GPA: GLOBAL REPORTING AND CASE STUDIES: This workshop was chaired by Biliana Cicin-Sain, Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands. Participants heard presentations on challenges in implementing ecosystem management, building on the 16 Regional LME projects, advancing freshwater to oceans management in SIDS, South-South cooperation, and meeting the challenge of connecting freshwater to oceans management. Discussion focused on the need to: track progress in implementing the WSSD targets and MDGs on ecosystem and ocean management; assist nations in linking the various programmes on oceans and freshwater environments; and address SIDS' capacity-building needs.

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LBA PROTOCOLS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE REGIONAL SEAS CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS: This workshop was co-chaired by Rejoice Mabudafhasi, South Africa, and Abubakar Rajabu, Tanzania. Participants heard presentations on land-based activities (LBA) protocols globally, Mediterranean experience in implementing an LBA protocol, GPA implementation by the Helsinki Commission, and the development of a Caribbean LBA protocol.

IN THE CORRIDORS

On Tuesday night, positive signals were emanating from the room where the drafters of the Beijing Declaration were hard at work, prodded on by their Mexican Chair. Apparently, headway was made in finalizing a text that would be acceptable to ministers, well in time for their arrival on Thursday. The group seemed to be in agreement on issues of direct concern to the subject matter of the GPA IGR-2, though, as many expected, positions polarized over the reference to climate change. As to the few other remaining sticking points, such as the application of the ecosystem approach, one would hope it is more a question of finding proper language than arguing the principle.