



Regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects

World Ocean Assessment I



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Issues to be covered

- Origins of the Regular Process
- Establishment of the Regular Process
- Organization now in place
- Activities now under way



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Origins of the Regular Process

- From the 1992 Earth Summit on, it was clear that the world needs improved coordination of actions at global level of the oceans
- Such improved coordination needs an integrated assessment as the start of the policy cycle
- The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development recommended a regular assessment process
- The UN General Assembly endorsed a regular process in December 2002



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Overall Objective

To “review the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, on a continual and systematic basis by providing regular assessments at the global and supraregional levels and an integrated view of environmental, economic and social aspects.”

“Such assessments would support informed decision-making, and thus contribute to managing in a sustainable manner human activities that affect the oceans and seas, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other applicable international instruments and initiatives.”



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From endorsement to start-up

- An international workshop in 2004 considered modalities
- The UN General Assembly agreed in December 2004 that the output should be, by 2014:
 - Assessment on agreed priority cross-cutting thematic issues, such as food security
 - an integrated assessment of the oceans
 - a baseline for future global assessments
- A second international workshop in 2005 considered a start-up phase
- The UN General Assembly in 2006 reaffirmed the aims and initiated the Start-Up Phase – the Assessment of Assessments (AoA)



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From start-up to the first cycle (1)

- The AoA Start-Up Phase examined 1000+ regional and thematic assessments in 2007 - 2009.
- Recommendations on the way forward:
 - Management board
 - Partly full-time Expert Panel,
 - Integrated Secretariat
- In 2009 the UN General Assembly endorsed
 - Objective, Scope and Principles of the Regular Process
 - Production of a First Integrated Assessment by 2014



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From start-up to the first cycle (2)

The UN General Assembly agreed in December 2010

- Ad Hoc Working Group to oversee and guide the Regular Process
- DOALOS to be Secretariat
- Technical and scientific support from UNEP, IOC, FAO, IMO and other specialist agencies
- a Group of Experts of Regular Process (GOERP)
- Group of Experts to provide a Set of Options
- Re-emphasis of goal of First Global Integrated Marine Assessment by 2014



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From start-up to the first cycle (3)

Ad Hoc Working Group considered the Set of Options from GOERP in February 2011 and agreed:

- the need for regional workshops
- the need for a pool of experts to help GOERP

and in June 2011 agreed:

- Guidelines for Workshops
- Criteria for members of the pool of experts
- (subject to review) terms of reference and working methods for GOERP



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From start-up to the first cycle (4)

In April 2012, the AHWGW agreed, and in December 2012 the General Assembly endorsed:

- Terms of Reference and Methods of Work
- Outline of the Global Oceans Assessment I

In December 2012, the Bureau of the AHWGW approved the Guidance for Contributors



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From start-up to the first cycle (5)

- Workshops (Santiago, Sanya, Brussels, Miami, Brisbane, *South Atlantic, Indian Ocean*)
- Nominations to the Pool of Experts
- Assignment of tasks of drafting, commenting on, and reviewing Working Papers



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Scope

“The scope of the regular process is global and supraregional, encompassing the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, both current and foreseeable.”



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Focus

UNGA endorsed in resolution 64/71, and reaffirmed in resolution 65/37, the recommendations of the AHWGW that the output of the first cycle of the Regular Process (by 2014) should be:

- an integrated assessment of the oceans
- agreed priority cross-cutting thematic issues such as food security
- a baseline for future global assessments.



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Organizing an integrated assessment

The oceans and seas are manifold. There are at least three possible bases for organization:

- Human activities affecting the marine environment (*best for such activities*)
- Habitats (*best for biodiversity questions*)
- Ecosystem services (*best for fundamental processes*)

Conclusion – draw on the strengths of all three



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Outline

- I. Summary for decision-makers
- II. The Oceans and their context
- III. Ecosystem Services
- IV. Cross-cutting question – food security
- V. Other human activities
- VI. Biodiversity and habitats
- VII. Overall evaluations



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Context

- 1. Ocean, life and the planet**
- 2. Mandate, sources, and method of work**



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Non-provisioning Ecosystem Services

- Hydrological cycle
 - sea level, salinity, nutrients, heat transport
- Sea/air interaction
 - air quality, meteorological events, acidification
- Primary production
 - distribution, causes and effects, surface layer
- Aesthetic, religious and spiritual ecosystem services



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Non-provisioning Ecosystem Services - the Human Dimension

- Hydrological cycle
 - Sea level – *El Niño* etc
- Sea/air interaction
 - Coal-burning - Storms, tsunamis etc
- Primary production
 - Resilience of the food web
- Aesthetic, religious and spiritual ecosystem services



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Food - social and economic dimension

- Dependence on the oceans and seas for food
- Inter-regional dependencies
- Potential contribution of living marine resources to food security
- Human health and food from the sea
- Employment in fisheries and aquaculture: numbers, pay, safety
- Fisheries and social structure
- Who benefits from what fisheries areas?
- International distribution of fisheries benefits
- Economic activity dependent on fisheries and aquaculture



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Which human activities?

Which activities to examine?

1. Is the activity important for the world's economies or for human society?
2. Could the activity threaten marine ecologies?



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Human activities – what to look at?

For each of 14 activities, look at

- The nature and magnitude of the human activity
- Socioeconomic aspects of the human activities
- Pathways from the human activity to its environmental impacts
- Major ecosystem impacts;
- Integration of environmental and socioeconomic trends;
- Environmental, economic and social influences on trends;
- Capacity building gaps.



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The 14 activities

- Shipping
- Ports
- Submarine cables and pipelines
- Coastal, riverine and atmospheric inputs from land
- Offshore hydrocarbon industries
- Other marine-based energy industries
- Offshore mining industries
- Solid waste disposal
- Marine debris
- Land/sea physical interaction
- Tourism and recreation
- Desalinisation
- Use of marine genetic resources
- Marine scientific research



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Biodiversity & Habitats

- Not feasible to look at everything
- What is important for a **global assessment?**
 - Ecosystems already identified as of global concern – (but not just EBSAs and VMEs)
 - Migratory species moving between regions
 - Other species and habitats meeting criteria for global concern
- Develop criteria for global concern and identify other species and habitats on that basis



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Groups of Species

- Marine Mammals
- Marine Reptiles
- Seabirds
- Sharks and other elasmobranchs
- Tuna and billfish



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Habitats

- **Cold-water corals**
- **Warm-water corals**
- **Estuaries and deltas**
- **Open-ocean Deep-sea Biomass**
- **Hydrothermal vents and cold seeps**
- **High latitude ice**
- **Kelp forests and sea grass**
- **Mangroves**
- **Salt marshes**
- **Sargasso Sea**
- **Seamounts and other submarine geological features potentially threatened by disturbance**



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Overall evaluations

- What can we say about the overall human impact on the seas?
 - baseline for comparison in future Assessments
- How do we value the benefits from the oceans and seas for humans?
 - baseline for comparison in future Assessments



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Capacity Building

- Capacity-building is an essential part of the Regular Process
- Not just capacity to carry out assessments, but also to benefit from the use of the marine environment
- To identify capacity-building gaps, not needs
- Special steps need to assess such gaps



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Capacity building for integrated assessment

- All regions of the world need to build their capacities to carry out integrated assessments
- We are all learning as we do it
- Integration will be an important part of guidance for contributors



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**We have nineteen months to
complete it!**