



## WELCOME BY THE COORDINATOR

Welcome to the August edition of *GPA Outreach* Newsletter. As our loyal readers will no doubt be aware, we are now just eight weeks away from the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-2) of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities (GPA), taking place on 16-20 October 2006.

The IGR-2 will be organised into two segments: the first segment, involving government representatives and other stakeholders, will occupy the first three days of the session; the second, comprising Ministers and other high level representatives will take place on days four and five. The first segment will focus on the themes of national implementation in action; partnerships and mainstreaming the GPA; and building a common agenda. The results of the deliberations of the first three days of the session will be presented to the Ministerial/high level segment. In this issue, I would like to give you further information about this Ministerial/high-level segment.

The Ministerial segment will provide a forum for debate on a number of key issues related to the GPA as outlined in a draft Ministerial segment background paper prepared by UNEP/GPA Coordination Office and available at [www.gpa.unep.org](http://www.gpa.unep.org)

The Ministerial/high level segment background paper outlines the importance of oceans, coasts and islands, and their associated watersheds, and notes the large direct costs of coastal degradation to the economy and to society. The paper highlights the particular challenges of nutrient over-enrichment and changes in freshwater flows. In the context of international action, the paper argues that the principle issue facing the GPA is linking it effectively to major global development themes and thereby assisting countries in making the transition to the integrative approaches, which are key to realizing the necessary sustainable investments. This requires a paradigm shift towards the use of multisectoral, integrated management approaches, which ensure that within countries, responsibilities are shared between the country and international agencies so as to mainstream the environment agenda into the development agenda.

Finally, the background paper contends that an appropriate way forward for the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office is to operate as an "agent of change", to create the integrated processes, intellectual leadership and partnerships that are necessary to achieve the global goals and strategies in linked watershed, coast and ocean areas, and consequently across a significant portion of the earth. Based on this discussion, the paper proposes a number of key issues for discussion in the Ministerial/high level segment.

### Proposals for the Ministerial/High Level Discussions

Based on the outcomes of the first three days of the second session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting, Ministers and high level representatives may wish to deliberate and make recommendations regarding the Global Programme of Action as a catalytic, integrative and flexible instrument for the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands, and their associated watersheds, with a particular focus on:

- a. The strategic direction to be taken at the national level, in the period 2007–2011, to integrate and mainstream the Global Programme of Action into development planning, including domestic and international financing, and with appropriate regional and global frameworks;
- b. Means to strengthen Global Programme of Action implementation at the regional level, through the regional seas conventions and action plans, and other related mechanisms and partnerships;
- c. Specific national, regional and international action that representatives may wish to undertake to promote the Global Programme of Action as an effective and flexible instrument for furthering the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands, and their associated watersheds.

The Ministerial/high-level segment is expected to endorse a Beijing Declaration on furthering the implementation of the GPA. The Declaration is expected to focus on improving the implementation of the GPA through mainstreaming and integrating the GPA into international and national development planning, improving coastal and ocean governance, building partnerships and ensuring adequate financing.

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## GPA ISSUES: ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT

### Indicators for Assessing Progress

River basin management, coastal management and management of large marine ecosystems (LMEs) cannot independently solve many of the challenges posed by intensifying human activity and ecosystem change. Increasingly, human activities are causing changes in ecosystems that have transboundary consequences. For example, the pollutants that degrade human health and reduce the goods and services in estuaries and LMEs may originate from human activities far inland that are transported by rivers to the coast. On a planet dominated by the impacts of human activities, it is increasingly necessary to design and implement management programmes that address the complex linkages between marine systems, coastal regions and river basins. Transboundary management is complex and must span long time periods. It is therefore important to clearly define how success will be achieved and how progress will be assessed. Simplified methods are needed that offer an overview of the status of a given programme at a given time and can trace progress by a consistent set of indicators.

The challenges of addressing human activities within river basins and in coastal areas that effect the state of coastal and marine ecosystems is the subject of the Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, coordinated by UNEP. Initiated in 1995, this global programme assists nations in the development of National Plans of Action (NPAs) that address these linked issues and work to mitigate the impacts of human activities that reduce or threaten the goods and services that flow from coastal and marine ecosystems.

#### The Ecosystem Approach

The ecosystem approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. It is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organization which encompass the essential processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognizes that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems.

*Ecosystem based management: Indicators for assessing progress* is a document being prepared for IGR-2 that presents a framework for a sequence of indicators that can be used to mark the advance to more sustainable forms of development at the ecosystem level. This framework identifies the critical outcomes associated with a sequence of accomplishments associated with planning, implementation of



a plan of action and the achievement of goals that can be used to gauge progress on that path. It offers a framework for disaggregating the goal of sustainable development into a sequence of tangible levels of achievement. The focus is on outcomes rather than management processes. Sets of indicators are offered that can be used to assess progress in integrated management of river basins, coasts or large marine ecosystems and in programmes that link across these systems. The indicators are organized into a framework composed of four Orders of Outcomes. The First Order is achieved by assembling the enabling conditions for the sustained practice of ecosystem-based management. The First Order culminates in negotiating commitments to implement a plan of action directed at a set of priority management issues. The implementation of a plan of action is addressed in the Second Order, as changes occur in the behaviour of institutions and relevant user groups, and the programme succeeds in generating the funds required to sustain a programme over the long term. The Third Order marks the achievement of the specific societal and environmental quality goals that prompted the entire effort.

In ecosystems that are much altered by human activities the achievement of a sequence of Third Order goals over long time periods typically marks the path to sustainable forms of development. This Orders of Outcomes framework is applied to assess progress on issues that integrate across management of coasts and river basins. *Ecosystem based management: Indicators for assessing progress* also identifies major lessons that have emerged from coastal and water resources management. It offers guidance on the design and conduct of ecosystem-based management initiatives that address both the impacts of human activities and the need to sustain or restore the goods and services that are generated by healthy ecosystems. Please see <http://www.gpa.unep.org> for further information.

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## PHYSICAL ALTERATION AND DESTRUCTION OF HABITATS

The Physical Alteration and Destruction of Habitats (PADH) was identified as a priority issue in the 1995 Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA). The objectives of the PADH programme are:

- to safeguard ecosystem function and maintain coastal habitats which are of major socio-economic and ecological interest, and
- to where practicable restore marine and coastal habitats.

These objectives are to be achieved in large part through the formulation, adoption and implementation of programmes for integrated coastal management (ICM) in accordance with Agenda 21, Chapter 17 of the Rio Declaration of 1992.

Recognition of the link between PADH and ICM programmes has proved to be important since large investments in ICM programs have been made by national governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, national and international NGOs and, in some cases, the private sector. Today ICM programmes at a range of spatial scales are underway in nearly 100 nations representing all world regions. In many of the most well established national ICM programmes the physical alteration of coastlines and their associated habitats has been either the top priority issue or one of the priority issues addressed.

The UNEP/GPA Coordination Office PADH programme focuses on the impact of major infrastructure work on the coastal and marine environment from the legal, economic and scientific perspectives, particularly as they relate to tourism, aquaculture, mining and the development of ports and harbours. Land use planning and construction in coastal zones has been a priority focus area as little has been done in this area though considerable environmental damage occurs during construction (see <http://padh.gpa.unep.org/>). Key Principles for minimizing physical alteration of coastal areas, destruction of habitats and sediment mobilisation have been formulated to increase awareness and build consensus amongst national governments, industry and business associations, the UN and intergovernmental bodies. Various agencies have endorsed these key principles: in the case of those for ports and harbours, the International Navigation Organisation (PIANC) and private sector institutions, such as the International Association of Ports and Harbour (IAPH), the International Association of Dredging Companies (IADC) and the Central Dredging Association (CEDA); and in the case of principles for Tourism development, the UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the UN World

Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). Key principles for aquaculture are being put together in a joint effort with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA), the World Bank and the World Wild Life Fund (WWF). A set of Guiding Principles for shrimp aquaculture have also been developed and were endorsed in February 2006 by the Governing Council of NACA, and is scheduled for endorsement by FAO in September. The implementation of these principles take place at the national level through their incorporation in various sectoral policies and through the initiation of pilot projects within the framework of National Programmes of Action (NPA) for the protection of the coastal and marine environment.



As the GPA looks to the future there are major opportunities for a careful review of the progress that has been made in habitat protection and restoration in a wide range of settings. At the global scale the destruction of critically important habitats is continuing and in some cases even accelerating. There is an urgent need to identify what factors enable, and what factors resist, the changes in human behaviour at the societal and institutional scales that lead to positive outcomes. The Second Intergovernmental Review (IGR-2) meeting of the GPA offers the opportunities for discussing them further to chart the way forward for the implementation of a plan of action and the achievement of goals that integrate across the human and environmental dimensions of ecosystem health. Such methods can play a central role in increasing the impact of investments in the many plans and programmes that are contributing to protection and restoration of habitats.

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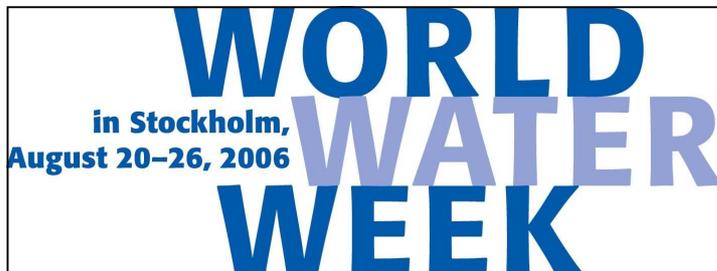


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## STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

August 20-26 is World Water Week in Stockholm. The aim of the World Water Week is to serve, on an annual basis, as the main arena for an exchange of views and experiences between members of the scientific, business, policy and civil society communities in order to advance efforts related to water, the environment, livelihoods and poverty reduction. The World Water Week in Stockholm:

- Builds capacity for different professions to act and to affect positive change by facilitating for them an increased knowledge and a deeper understanding of the links between water-society-environment-economy
- Promotes partnerships and alliances between individuals and organisations from different fields of expertise in an inspiring atmosphere which offers ample opportunity for making new contacts and strengthening existing relationships
- Reviews the implementation of actions, commitments and decisions in international processes and by different stakeholders in response to the challenges.



The theme for the World Water Week is *Beyond the River – Sharing Benefits and Responsibilities*. Human activities, policies and natural systems form a complex web and the theme reflects that what happens in society and through policy has implications far beyond the river, the people and the sector with which political decisions and activities are associated. Similarly, links between land, water, ecosystems and other natural resources provide opportunities and challenges for appraising collaboration, technological improvement, development and management.<sup>1</sup>

In our efforts to approach water management in an integrated and holistic manner, we must remember the intrinsic links that exist between freshwater and oceans. Oceans have become the final destination for municipal sewage and solid waste, litter, chemical discharges from factories, fertilizer run-off and other pollution, much of which is transported to oceans by streams and rivers. The effects of this pollution are detrimental for the biodiversity and productivity of estuaries and near-shore coastal waters. The health, well-being, and in some cases the very survival of coastal populations depend largely

upon the health and maintenance of the coastal ecosystems. As the only intergovernmental programme that addresses the inter-linkages between freshwater and the coastal environment, the GPA has an important role to play.

At World Water Week in Stockholm, Stakeholder Forum, in collaboration with the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, is organising two events that serve not only as preparatory stakeholder consultation events for the IGR-2, but also to raise awareness about the GPA.

### Developing Solutions to Protect the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities: Stakeholder Consultation

Tuesday 22 August, 2006  
Evening Session (17:15-18:45)  
Folkets Hus, Room 300

This side event will bring together stakeholders from around the world to discuss issues threatening the marine environment and the livelihoods of coastal communities. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to review the advance copy of the Beijing Declaration and prepare a stakeholder position on furthering the implementation of the GPA. Stakeholder Forum's work in the run-up to the IGR-2 will build on the outcomes of this and previous meetings, as it works with stakeholders to develop an input to the upcoming IGR-2. The outcomes of this side-event will be available on the Stakeholder Forum website.

As a follow up to the side-event on Tuesday, a second meeting will take place on Wednesday at World Water Week:

### African Stakeholder Consultation: Developing Solutions to Protect the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities in the African Context

Wednesday 23 August, 2006  
Lunch Session (12:15-13:15)  
Norra Latin, Room 255

This meeting will bring together stakeholders from Africa and those working on water issues in Africa to consider the GPA in the context of the African context.

For information on the outcomes of these events, please visit [www.stakeholderforum.org/gpa.html](http://www.stakeholderforum.org/gpa.html)

For more information about World Water Week in Stockholm, visit [www.worldwaterweek.org](http://www.worldwaterweek.org)

<sup>1</sup> [www.worldwaterweek.org](http://www.worldwaterweek.org)



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

21—26 August 2006	World Water Week Stockholm, Sweden. Organised by: Stockholm International Water Institute. Contact: <a href="mailto:sympos@siwi.org">sympos@siwi.org</a>
29—30 August 2006	Third GEF Assembly 2006 Cape Town, South Africa. Organised by: GEF Secretariat. Contact: <a href="mailto:assembly@theGEF.org">assembly@theGEF.org</a>
10—14 September 2006	World Water Congress Beijing, China. Organised by: International Water Association (IWA). Contact: <a href="mailto:water@iwahq.org.uk">water@iwahq.org.uk</a>
26—28 September 2006	Conference on Implementing the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Bergen, Norway. Organised by: the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Governments of Iceland and Norway
13—14 October 2006	8th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans Beijing, China. Organised by: UNEP Regional Seas Programme. Contact: <a href="mailto:a.muchai@unep.nl">a.muchai@unep.nl</a>
16—20 October 2006	The 2nd Intergovernmental Review (IGR-2) of the Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) Beijing, China. Organised by: UNEP/GPA Coordination Office. Contact: <a href="mailto:igr2@unep.nl">igr2@unep.nl</a>
27 November—1 December 2006	8th Meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP-8) to the Basel Convention Nairobi, Kenya. Organised by: Secretariat of the Basel Convention. Contact: <a href="mailto:sbc@unep.ch">sbc@unep.ch</a>
3—6 September 2007	10th International Rivers <i>symposium</i> and International Conference on Environment Flows Brisbane, Australia. Organised by: <i>Riversymposium</i> and the Nature Conservancy Contact: <a href="mailto:emily@riverfestival.com.au">emily@riverfestival.com.au</a>

## About Stakeholder Forum



Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future's mission is to inform, influence, promote, and advance the implementation of sustainable development. Stakeholder Forum fulfils this mission by developing and facilitating multi-stakeholder processes that engage stakeholders in the development and implementation of sustainable development policy. To support multi-stakeholder processes, Stakeholder Forum also undertakes activities related to capacity building, training, and policy development.

Stakeholder Forum is delighted to continue our partnership with UNEP GPA as we build toward the IGR-2. Stakeholder Forum is working with UNEP GPA to undertake outreach and conduct dialogue with stakeholders to ensure that the IGR-2 will gain from the experience and expertise of a broad range of stakeholders.

For more information visit [www.stakeholderforum.org](http://www.stakeholderforum.org)

## About UNEP/GPA



The GPA was adopted in 1995 by 108 Governments and the European Commission in response to the increasing threat to the marine environment from human activities on land. The GPA is designed to be a source of conceptual and practical guidance for national and/or regional authorities for devising and implementing sustained action to prevent, reduce, control and/or eliminate marine degradation from land-based activities.

The United Nations Environment Programme acts as the secretariat for the GPA. The UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, located in The Hague, The Netherlands supports the implementation of the GPA by: promoting and facilitating the implementation of the GPA at the national level and the regional and sub-regional level and playing a catalytic role with other organisations and institutions in the implementation of the GPA at the international level.

For more information please visit [www.gpa.unep.org](http://www.gpa.unep.org)

## CONTACTS

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- For further information about Stakeholder Forum or stakeholder dialogues in preparation for the IGR-2, please contact: [jpeer@stakeholderforum.org](mailto:jpeer@stakeholderforum.org). If you have been forwarded this newsletter and would like to subscribe to GPA Outreach, please email [jpeer@stakeholderforum.org](mailto:jpeer@stakeholderforum.org) to subscribe.