

GPA Outreach



GLOBAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT FROM LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES

IGR-2 Outcomes
Issue 8

WELCOME BY THE COORDINATOR



By Dr. Veerle Vandeweerd
GPA Coordinator

The Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) was more than an obligatory review. It was organised in response to requests from governments and other stakeholders to come together to discuss in concrete terms what could be done to advance the implementation of the GPA based on the experiences so far. Furthermore, Governments and other stakeholders wanted to participate in deciding the priorities for the GPA for the next 5 years.

Everyone was hoping to come away from Beijing with a renewed commitment to addressing the issues that pose a serious threat to the health and viability of coastal and marine areas in particular, sewage, nutrient loading and marine litter. A strong call to address freshwater and coastal/ocean management in an integrated way was expected. That is what we got, in no uncertain terms.

By all accounts, the Second Intergovernmental Review meeting of the GPA was a great success and demonstrates a growing momentum to address land-based sources of marine pollution through the GPA. Over 600 participants, representing more than 104 countries, discussed problems encountered and lessons learned.

Facts About the GPA:

- The GPA was adopted by 108 Governments and the European Commission in 1995.
- It targets major threats to the health, productivity and biodiversity of the marine and coastal environment resulting from human activities on land.
- The GPA proposes an integrated, multi-sectoral approach based on commitment to action at local, national, regional and global levels.
- It is an important global mechanism that explicitly addresses the linkages between freshwater, coastal and marine environments.

They examined how a multi-stakeholder, multi-partner approach can be a principal tool to further the global implementation of the GPA,

and they identified practical solutions that can be replicated in other countries and at the regional and global levels. The Ministerial/High-level segment aimed at forwarding the implementation of the GPA in a concrete and practical manner. It was innovative in its configuration. Roundtables generated constructive and interactive discussion, enriched by the mixture of participant countries. Most of the dialogue focused on the sharing of experiences at the national level and how to continue to use the GPA as a flexible instrument to foster the protection of oceans, coasts and their associated watersheds.

In terms of key results, the meeting endorsed a new strategic direction for the GPA with greater emphasis on national and local-level action. This was supported by a call for creating sustainable financial mechanisms and for promoting the economic valuation of goods and services provided by oceans, coasts and watersheds. In addition, the need for integrated approaches was stressed in particular linking freshwater and coastal management, as well as linking GPA implementation and poverty reduction-focused development strategies. These messages are included in the Beijing Declaration adopted at the meeting. It also outlines commitments and actions for Governments and the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office over the next five years.

This means that the GPA remains a flexible instrument for furthering the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands and their associated watersheds. It also means that we have the support to implement the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office Programme of Work for 2007-2011, which focuses on mainstreaming and integration of the GPA into national development planning.

Photo of Dr. Veerle Vandeweerd courtesy of IISD Reporting Services

This special edition of GPA Outreach is produced by Stakeholder Forum and the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, with support from the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. GPA Outreach is a monthly newsletter to support the preparatory work for the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-2) of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, held in Beijing, China on 16-20 October 2007.



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IGR-2 KEY OUTPUTS

Beijing Declaration

The Beijing Declaration marks a new strategic direction for the GPA as Governments endorsed an approach with greater emphasis on national and local-level action supported by a call for creating sustainable financial mechanisms, economic valuation of goods and services provided by oceans, coasts and watersheds, local participation and integrated approaches in particular linking freshwater and coastal management. Also, the interlinkages between GPA implementation and poverty reduction-focused development strategies is clearly stated, as well as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation's targets for implementing the ecosystem approach and integrated water resource management activities. The Beijing Declaration outlines specific actions and commitments of Governments at the national, regional and global level. It also endorses the Programme of Work for the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office and, amongst others, request UNEP to convene the third intergovernmental review meeting in 2011.

Implementation the GPA in the global environment context

Participants agreed that the GPA must remain responsive to new developments in the international agenda and welcomed the document "Guidance to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action: 2007-2011". Since the adoption of the GPA ten years ago, many important developments have taken place. The Programme of Action needs to be consistent with the evolving international environment and sustainable development agendas. The Guidance Document demonstrates that the GPA remains a valuable tool to achieve the goals and targets established by the international community in recent years for the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands. The Guidance Document provides assistance to Governments and other stakeholders on how to address these new developments while continuing to ensure coherence, mutual reinforcement and consistency with emerging issues in the international environmental context.

Partnership approach key to success

An entire day of IGR-2 was devoted to discussing existing partnerships and to launching new partnerships. Over 25 workshops and side-events were held.

The workshop presentations and debates illustrated that multi-stakeholder partnerships provide flexible frameworks for addressing competing uses of coastal and marine resources. Partnerships are critical tools to further the implementation of the GPA, as they facilitate flexible financing arrangements, they support replication and up-scaling of successful practices, they are instrumental to increase awareness on coastal and marine issues, and they can promote new paradigms such as on the natural linkages between freshwater and coastal and marine management.

The central characteristic of partnerships that successfully mainstream the objectives of the GPA is clarity of purpose, or a common goal. They should have unambiguous assignments of specific responsibilities to relevant partners, as well as clear performance objectives with measurable indicators and targets for which they are accountable. Successful partnerships inspire participants to explore synergies and generate new ideas. They remain simple in their delivery, despite complex and multi-dimensional problems.

The participants emphasized that the development of targeted and robust partnerships is key to the successful implementation of the GPA, at national, regional and global levels. In this regard, the UNEP/GPA Coordination

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*Breakout group on strengthening legislative and institutional frameworks
Photo courtesy of IISD Reporting Services*

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Office can and should play a very effective role in brokering and supporting partnerships at global and regional levels.



Photo courtesy of IISD Reporting Services

Stakeholder submission

Stakeholders and Major Groups were active in the preparations for IGR-2 and during the IGR-2 meeting itself. A Stakeholder Submission was submitted to IGR-2 and is included in the IGR-2 meeting report. The Stakeholder submission is based on the premise that stakeholders recognize that progress has been made in implementing the GPA, though in many places programmes are incomplete or are not being implemented with sufficient vigour to prevent further deterioration. The submission suggests that the GPA provides a unique opportunity to secure high-level political commitment to a more determined programme of action at national and international levels.

The stakeholder submission includes specific actions for stakeholder and major groups to consider, as well as action for Governments to further promote the implementation of the GPA. For example, the stakeholder submission asserts that the establishment of targets, timetables and commitments of appropriate resources are critical to the delivery of the GPA and the preservation of the coastal and marine environment. The submission also states that stakeholders believe that their involvement in all stages in the development and implementation of strategies at national and local levels is vital, taking full advantage of their knowledge, experience and skills. Further, the National Programmes of Action should be

based upon extensive consultation with stakeholders, should include measures to raise awareness and understanding of the issues and problems, should comprise development of the capacity of groups and the public to play their parts in influencing decision-making processes and proposing and implementing solutions.

A new programme of work

Building on a review of the accomplishments in GPA implementation from 2002 to 2006, participants fully recognised the benefits and value of the GPA as a flexible international instrument for environmental management of coasts oceans and their associated watersheds. Implementing the GPA significantly contributes to achieving the various goals and targets set by the international community. Governments also renewed their support to the catalytic role of the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office in furthering the implementation of the GPA by endorsing the Programme of Work for the office for the period 2007-2011.

Text from: *Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities: Key outcomes of the 2nd intergovernmental review of the Global Programme of Action*, UNEP/GPA Coordination Office

Further Resources on the IGR-2

Further information on the IGR-2, including the IGR-2 meeting report and IGR-2 key outputs, is available at www.gpa.unep.org

Daily coverage of the IGR-2 and the Earth Negotiations Bulletin Final Report was provided by IISD Reporting Services and is available at www.iisd.ca/oceans/igr2/

Further information on stakeholder engagement during the IGR-2 and the preparatory process is available at www.stakeholderforum.org/gpa.html

Issues of GPA Outreach are available at www.stakeholderforum.org/gpa.html and www.gpa.unep.org. GPA Outreach is a monthly newsletter produced during the preparatory process of the IGR-2 to raise awareness about the GPA and IGR-2.

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IGR-2: USEFUL DEPARTURES



By Thomas L. Laughlin
IGR-2 Rapporteur

The Second Intergovernmental Review meeting employed several techniques aimed at maximizing the focus on concrete action outcomes and meaningful involvement of policy-level officials in discussions with their counterparts. These techniques included:

Building Consensus Early and Often—The preparatory process, which included a formal multilateral meeting and a series of informal meetings, developed the draft Beijing Declaration and other meeting documents to the point where they required only limited consideration at IGR-2. In addition to intergovernmental meetings, the GPA office employed a network of “Friends of the GPA” to review and perfect emerging documents. The group met by teleconference approximately once a month in the year prior to the meeting. In addition, the GPA held stakeholder consultations in both Europe and North America. These preparatory steps provided the Beijing meeting with well-developed documents on which consensus was near complete. During the meeting itself, consensus was further encouraged by using the first portion of each day to allow a senior meeting participant to summarize the work of the previous day. These oral reports assisted participants in developing a common understanding of the status and nature of the emerging final report and other products of the meeting. This left time for other events to occur, such as ministerial discussions and fostering partnerships.

Partnership Day—The entire second day of the meeting was devoted to breakout sessions focused on specific project partnerships which implement the GPA. One effect of this departure from the usual emphasis on meeting

documents was to provide several opportunities for meeting participants to learn about practical programs which are successfully addressing the issue of land-based marine degradation. A second important aspect was to provide the chance for many meeting participants to interact – multiplying several fold the number who would otherwise have taken the floor if IGR-2 had only been conducted in plenary session. A third benefit of partnership day was that many participants actually joined partnerships or spawned new ones on the basis of the information received.



What to do with a Minister?—An oft heard complaint by those who support participation by ministers at multilateral meetings is

the lack of meaningful “work”. Traditionally, governments have addressed this problem by setting up informal bilateral discussions on the margins of the meeting. IGR-2 sought-and succeeded – in providing an opportunity for ministers to actively discuss policy-level topics in a round table setting. Each table had a chair and rapporteur. The GPA provided background materials and discussion topics and questions to enrich the debate. Each group was asked to report back to a ministerial-level plenary session on the final day. This approach was widely praised by the ministers in their final session. Discussions were described as open and spontaneous. The Executive Director of UNEP suggested that, perhaps, it would become known as the “Beijing Process” and used in future ministerial meetings on various topics.



Photos: Left, Partnership Workshop on Advancing JPOI Targets on Ecosystem Management and in Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management Through the GPA. Above, Ministerial roundtable chaired by Jamaica. All photos courtesy of IISD Reporting Services.

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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE IGR-2

Engaging Stakeholders in the IGR-2 and Preparatory Process

In the run-up to the IGR-2, a series of consultations were organised by the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office to gather feedback on various agenda items of IGR-2. A number of partners and organisations offered their support to this process. To this end, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future, with the support of the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, partnered with the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office to conduct stakeholder consultations in preparation for the IGR-2. The purpose of these dialogues was to enable a broad range of local, national, and regional stakeholders to share their positions and experiences on protection of the marine environment in advance of the IGR-2.



Consultation in Stockholm

Stakeholder Forum hosted regional stakeholder consultations on the GPA in collaboration with the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office. Events were held at the World Water Forum in Mexico City, the World Water Week in Stockholm, and in Beijing China.

Further consultation meetings were held in London and New York to prepare specific inputs to the Informal Preparatory Meeting for the IGR-2. The Informal Preparatory Meeting was held on 27-28 June 2006 in Paris, France. Some 50 representatives from 23 countries attended the meeting to advance the preparation of the draft official documents for IGR-2 and to seek guidance on some of the issues to be addressed during the Ministerial Segment of IGR-2. The consultation meetings in New York and London brought together Major Groups and other stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, trade unions, women, and youth. The purpose of the meetings was to develop stakeholder inputs to the IGR-2 Preparatory Meeting, including specific amendments to the draft Beijing Declaration. Felix Dodds, Executive Director of the Stakeholder Forum, attended the Preparatory Meeting to represent these stakeholder inputs. A summary of this position is available at www.stakeholderforum.org/gpa.html

From 19-30 June, Stakeholder Forum and the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office also hosted an online dialogue on the theme of *Our Expanding Urban Coast: A Threat to the Marine Environment and Human Health*. The online

dialogue aimed to raise awareness of the GPA and to collect stakeholder experiences, lessons learned and best practices. Over 120 people from more than 40 countries signed up to the online dialogue to explore the links between the marine environment, coastal urbanization and Integrated Management Approaches, Physical Alteration and Destruction of Habitat, and Nutrients.

Stakeholder Forum also published a monthly online newsletter in collaboration with the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, *GPA Outreach*, to inform stakeholders of the latest developments in the preparatory process for the IGR-2 and provide background information on GPA related issues. *GPA Outreach* is available at www.gpa.unep.org and www.stakeholderforum.org/gpa.html

Stakeholders at the IGR-2

As a result of the consultation process, Major Groups and other stakeholders were able to effectively influence the outcomes of IGR-2. Building on stakeholder consultations held during the preparatory process of the IGR-2, stakeholders prepared a submission for inclusion in the report of the meeting. The submission emphasised stakeholder concern with the state of the marine environment, and outlined stakeholder commitments to furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. It called on governments and other bodies to take specific actions to realize their commitments made under the Global Programme of Action. The stakeholder submission was presented to the Chairman by Dr. Awni Behnam, International Ocean Institute, during the Ministerial Segment. Stakeholders influenced the political outcomes of the IGR-2, with stakeholders directly contributing nearly 20% of the text of the amended Beijing Declaration. Many stakeholder suggestions incorporated into the final document, including commitments to:

- Improve scientific understanding and environmental education;
- Promote the involvement and participation of local and regional authorities, communities and other relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of programmes of action and strategies;
- Develop and implement national plans of action for the GPA in close coordination with the national integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans, as set forth in the JPOI.

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STAKEHOLDER REFLECTIONS ON THE IGR-2



*Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain
Co-Chair and Head of Secretariat,
Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and
Islands*

The IGR-2 was successful in that it accomplished what it set out to achieve as a keystone meeting among the major actors of GPA to review the implementation of the GPA and plan the way forward; the outcome documents of the meeting attest to this. However, the real measure of success will be in whether or not the steps it sets in motion will facilitate the accomplishment of GPA's main goal—to address land-based sources of marine pollution. The level of achievement of this goal will invariably be concomitant with the level of resources that governments and other major actors will be willing to commit. Partnerships with stakeholders are among the key actions that should be encouraged in order to focus the application of limited resources to the implementation of common priority approaches.

The Global Forum will move forward in supporting the GPA in achieving its goals of directly addressing the linkages among freshwater, coastal, and marine environments. A major purpose of the GPA is to explicitly link the National Programmes of Action under GPA to other integrated coastal and ocean management (ICM) initiatives and to integrated water resources management (IWRM) initiatives, and to forward the achievement of ecosystem approaches to meet the 2010 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation target. The Global Forum-GPA Partnership featured at the IGR-2 on Partnerships Day will support GPA in achieving these objectives. Additionally, within the framework of the Global Forum's GEF Medium-sized Project on *Fostering a Global Dialogue on Oceans, Coasts, and SIDS, and on Freshwater-Coastal-Marine Interlinkages*, the Global Forum is developing a program of collaboration with the Global Water Partnership, the DHI Water Group, Denmark, and the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Water and Environment (UCC-Water) to carry out concrete activities to establish linkages in the integrated management of freshwater and oceans and coasts. A first step is ongoing work on the Global Water Partnership's IWRM Tool Box to strengthen the integrated ocean and coastal management tools available for both IWRM and integrated ocean and coastal management users.



*Dr. Awni Behnam
President, International Ocean Institute*

IGR-2 provided a valuable opportunity for stakeholders to express their concern with the state of marine environment and the growing threat of land-based sources of pollution. While stakeholders recognised that some progress has been made in the implementation of the GPA, they pointed out that progress itself has brought new challenges.

Stakeholders recognised their vital role in making a difference and the contribution they could make to furthering the implementation of the GPA, particularly through partnerships that are adequately resourced. Stakeholders expressed determination to provide leadership by example, though their own actions to support of a sustainable marine environment—whether by innovation, coherence of actions and activities, community based approaches or adherence to precautionary and participatory principles at all levels.



Stakeholders strongly believed that at IGR-2 allowed the international community to take the high ground to a better future and meaningful dialogue. Nurturing a culture of partnership and cooperation that is inclusive of all stakeholders could provide many of the solutions stakeholders regarded as essential in an effective governance architecture and fuller implementation of the GPA. In this regards, stakeholders at the IGR-2 called on governments to further the implementation of the GPA by implementing and enforcing commitments embodied in multilateral environmental agreements, facilitating capacity and institution building, intensifying related training and education, ensuring inclusiveness and participatory approaches, and promoting the ecosystem principle.

Photo: Dr Awni Behnam delivering stakeholder statement to the Ministerial segment of the IGR-2. Photo courtesy of IISD Reporting Services.



STAKEHOLDER REFLECTIONS ON THE IGR-2



*By P.J. Puntenney
Environmental & Human Systems
Management*



*By Felix Dodds
Executive Director
Stakeholder Forum*

GPA IRG-2: Education and Sustainable Systems

The Second Intergovernmental Review meeting of the GPA aimed to build eco-effectiveness, through strengthening countries' capacities to manage and prevent marine degradation from land-based activities. The nature of marine pollution is such that integrating education in its many forms and mainstreaming stakeholder engagement became essential to the outcomes of the IRG-2.

During Day 1 of the IGR-2 an emphasis was placed upon the value of education and sustainability in furthering implementation of the GPA. Delegates in the informal working group on the Beijing Declaration were also reminded about the global importance of the UN DESD to the GPA IGR-2. The recommendations were met with a very positive response that helped shape the outcomes throughout the week and the final draft of the Beijing Declaration.

Local Impacts, Global Responsibilities

A one-page list of recommendations for integrating education into the Beijing Declaration was circulated among key delegates on Day 2 and Day 3. A policy briefing on Eco-effectiveness and linking knowledge with action appeared in the Wednesday issue of *GPA Outreach*. During the Ministerial segment of Day 4, Dr Awni Behnam, International Ocean Institute, on behalf of Major Groups and other stakeholders, presented the stakeholder submission to the Chairman for inclusion in the report of the meeting. He expressed concern over the current state of the marine environment, and called on governments to further the implementation of the GPA through a number of actions. The final outcome was the inclusion of education and sustainability in the Beijing Declaration.

Agenda 21 recognised that one of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision-making. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation committed governments to facilitate participation at all levels in support of policy and decision-making related to water resources management and project implementation.

With regards to the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities, Major Groups and other stakeholders have a critical role to play in furthering the implementation of the GPA. For example, in addressing urban sanitation issues in coastal zones it is critical to involve all local stakeholders in reviewing the problems and coming up with common solutions. In doing so, the ideas and social capital of stakeholders can be drawn upon to support implementation of agreed programmes.

Through the work of Stakeholder Forum in collaboration with the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, Major Groups and other stakeholders were able to make their voices heard at the IGR-2. This was demonstrated by the fact that Major Groups and other stakeholders contributed nearly 20% of the text of the amended Beijing Declaration, the political outcome of the GPA. Stakeholders also piloted a new and innovative approach to inputting views into the GPA intergovernmental reviews: a single stakeholder submission to the IGR-2 calling governments to honour their commitments made under the GPA.

The IGR-2 provided a useful starting point for furthering engagement of stakeholders in the work of the GPA. It is clear, however, that if the potential of stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of the GPA is to be realized, stakeholders must be further engaged in processes at the global level. Doing so will make a significant contribution to developing positive and lasting results for managing the impacts of land-based activities on the marine environment.

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GPA EVENT AT GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) and the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA, held in Beijing China on 16-20 October 2006, will be of relevance to the discussions of the GC-24/GMEF.

The Beijing Declaration and IGR-2 outcomes will be presented to the GC-24/GMEF for endorsement as valuable contributions to the implementation of Agenda 21 and other internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

The GC-24/GMEF will review the UNEP Water Policy and Strategy. The GPA is featured in both the strategy for oceans and coasts, and the freshwater strategy.

In light of this, the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Stakeholder Forum are convening a side-event at the 24th UNEP GC/GMEF.

In bringing together Government and civil society representatives, the side-event will:

- Review and promote the outcomes of the IGR-2;
- Highlight contribution of the GPA in UNEP's water policy and strategy for UNEP, as the only intergovernmental programme that addresses the inter-linkages between freshwater and the coastal environment;
- Discuss the way forward for the GPA beyond the IGR-2.

Outcomes of Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA

When: Tuesday, 6 February

Time: 10am-11am

Where: Green Room

Hosted by: UNEP/GPA Coordination Office, UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Stakeholder Forum

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

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