

The Dialogue Meeting for Stakeholders in China on the Global Programme Action for the
Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

On 26 September 2006, All-China Environment Federation, in collaboration with Stakeholder Forum, hosted a dialogue meeting for stakeholders in China on the Global Programme Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. The meeting aimed to raise the awareness of stakeholders in China about the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities and the role of GPA, and provided space for stakeholders to discuss issues related to the pollution of the marine environment from land-based activities in China and proposed or ongoing solutions to these problems at the national level. At the same time, the meeting provided Chinese stakeholders with the opportunity to review the draft *Beijing Declaration on furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities* and provide input on how this declaration could be added to.

There were about 30 persons from 22 organizations, such as Division of Marine Environmental Protection of Department of Pollution Control of SEPA, Bureau of Fisheries Ministry of Agriculture, Global Village of Beijing, China National Offshore Oil Corporation, Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences, Chinese Society for Oceanography, Chinese Young Volunteers Association, Ocean Protection Commune, Chinese Hydraulic Engineering Society etc. and 10 medias including Xinhua Net, China Daily, Wenhui News and Guangming Daily, attending the meeting.

ACEF introduced the GPA and the upcoming Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-2) to all the participants.

According to the discussion in the meeting, all the participants recognized that in China the land-based activities, especially the industry pollution and urban waste, are the main sources of the pollution of the marine environment, which accounted for more than 80%. In order to protect the marine environment, the government is implementing many measures, including strengthening legislation of environment protection, forming zoning management system for coastal and marine area, and remedying land-based sources of pollution. Chinese NGOs and other groups are also actively involved in the protection activities. Producing the related cartoons for children, improving the conservation systems for migratory birds and other wildlife's habitats, conducting education on wetland ecosystem conservation etc. are examples of activities Chinese NGOs are carrying out presently.

Dialogue participants suggested that Chinese NGOs should undertake more activities to raise the awareness of the public about the protection of the marine environment and promote sustainable utilization of marine and coastal ecosystem. The two methods of promotion and education are emphasized in the discussion to make more people pay attention to the protection of the marine environment. What's more, it's necessary to provide a channel for the public to express their feelings and promote their requirements to be fulfilled.

As for the *Beijing Declaration on furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities*, all the meeting participants agreed with the items of Beijing Declaration and that it reflected the views of Chinese NGOs and other stakeholders to the protection of the marine environment. The participants also recognized the government's leading role in the protection of marine environment and the implementation of the GPA.

There are some points the meeting emphasized:

1. The key of the protection of the marine environment is to protect marine organism, so it's needed to stress the protection of marine organism in the Beijing Declaration. For example, in the item: "Recognizing the growing damage that those trends are causing to people and the environment, including pollution of marine ecosystems, loss of corals and wetlands, contamination of marine sources of human food and prejudice to the amenity of beaches and the health of bathing waters" it could be added some words such as "collapsing and extinction of large number of offshore living beings, degeneration of the marine ecology resources" to "the loss of corals and wetlands".
2. Proceeding from China's actual conditions, participants considered that the public participation is very important and fundamental and hoped to list this point in the Beijing Declaration in order to further promote the implementation of the GPA.