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Report of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas on its ninth session

(London, 26-28 July 2000)

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Matters brought to the attention of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development	1-24	2
II. Summary of discussions	25-140	5
A. Opening of the session	25-26	5
B. Agenda, timetable and documentation	27	5
C. Updating activities of the organizations represented in the Subcommittee	28-39	5
D. United Nations Atlas of the Oceans	40-59	6
E. Status of implementation of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA).	60-69	8
F. Status of implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA)	70-83	9
G. Results of the first meeting of the United Nations Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs (UNICPOLOS), 30 May - 2 June, 2000, New York	84-99	11
H. Ten-year review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21: reporting and participation	100-104	13
I. Making the Subcommittee more transparent, effective and responsive: follow-up to CSD decision 7/1 and UNGA res. 54/33	105-109	14
J. Review of for the joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP)	110-123	14
K. Other matters	124-138	16
L. Adoption of the report of the Subcommittee and closure of the session	139-140	18
Annexes		
I. List of participants		19
II. Agenda		20
III. Provisional timetable for reporting		21

I. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Atlas of the Oceans

1. Significant progress has been achieved in the development of the UN Atlas of the Oceans. Co-operation Agreements between Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Agencies forming the Core Group are essentially completed. FAO furthermore signed co-operation agreements with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (USA) and the Head of Department of Navigation and Oceanography. (Russia). Software development for managing the Atlas in a web environment is continuing satisfactorily; the first version of Atlas is running on the intranet.
2. Positive discussions have also been held with Blackwell Scientific Publications about the publication of the CD. Furthermore, the National Geographic has suggested alternatives for CD distribution that do not require major publishers and this is in the process of being investigated for feasibility. The SOCA agreed that all options should be pursued
3. The Subcommittee welcomed and agreed to the request that Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity become a Member of the Atlas Core Group.

Status of implementation of the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA)

4. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction the progress made in the implementation of Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA).
5. With regard to the preparation of the 2001 GPA intergovernmental review meeting, the members of Subcommittee agreed that as a minimum, a list of UN projects relevant to the GPA should be available (the UN Atlas could be the vehicle to compile this information). FAO, as the lead agency for the Atlas, has already developed a programme function which will allow UN agencies and organizations to input information on projects in the Atlas Portal. Information on GPA-related projects can be inserted in the section of the Atlas dealing with land-based activities (the structure of which is being developed by UNEP). For this purpose, each agency will input its own information under the supervision of UNEP-GPA. The Atlas could be demonstrated at the 2001 GPA intergovernmental review meeting. A final report on the contributions of UN agencies and organizations in the implementation of the GPA to the review meeting will be prepared by the GPA Coordination Office and submitted for clearance to SOCA members by August 2001. Further possible contributions by the agencies to the 2001 GPA intergovernmental review meeting will be discussed at the next SOCA meeting, planned for January 2001.
6. The Subcommittee noted that in relation to the GPA clearing-house mechanism, the further development and maintenance of the prototypes for various "pollutant source category nodes" require continued support from the relevant UN agencies, both in financial and human resources. Most members of the SOCA felt that this development is possible only if extra-budgetary resources were forthcoming, as contributions/support to the GPA clearing-house did not feature in the regular work programmes of the agencies. To achieve the latter, the respective governing bodies need to give the agencies the mandate to perform clearing-house functions in support of the GPA.

Results of the first meeting of the United Nations Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), 30 May - 2 June 2000, New York

7. The SOCA Chairman invited one of the Co-chairpersons of the new UN Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), Mr. Alan Simcock, to brief the Subcommittee at its ninth session on the results and developments of the first UNICPOLOS meeting held in May 2000. Following the briefing, the Subcommittee had an exchange of views on the several issues and different informal recommendations discussed

in the first UNICPOLOS meeting, in particular, in relation to possible requests to the UN system from the UN General Assembly. These possible requests are expected to invite the Subcommittee and its constituent members to undertake specific activities involving their responsibilities and mandates.

8. In his summary Mr Simcock indicated that consensus has been reached at the UNICPOLOS meeting that thirteen issues deserve attention by the General Assembly. Among these issues, those that intimately concern SOCA broadly involve: The need for capacity-building in developing countries, and especially the least developed countries; The importance of marine science for fisheries management; and How to implement effectively Part XIII (Marine scientific research) and Part XIV (Development and transfer of marine technology) of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

9. Considering the strong possibility that the need for capacity-building in developing countries, and especially the least developed countries will be one of the main areas of focus at the 2nd UNICPOLOS meeting, the Subcommittee decided to carry out a scoping activity, taking into account the present on-going efforts in this area. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) representative agreed to lead this activity.

10. The Sub committee considered the relevance of the regional setting for improving coordination among different UN programmes addressing different aspects of coastal and ocean management and with the purpose of exploring new ways to integrate the work of the agencies, including the development of ecosystem approaches to fisheries management and integrated coastal management.

11. As a first step in this direction it was agreed that a paper centered around ecosystem based management in fisheries would be jointly developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to be presented at the 3rd *Global meeting of the regional Seas Conventions*, organized by UNEP in Monaco from the 6 to the 9 of November 2000 and at the 2nd *Meeting of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations* convened by FAO next January 2001.

12. Considering also the strong support received at the 1st UNICPOLOS meeting for the proposal to discuss marine science and related matters at the 2nd UNICPOLOS Meeting in 2001, the SOCA Chair will prepare a draft plan for the preparation of a comprehensive report of ongoing research activities in Ocean Sciences and related services jointly with the partner organizations of the UN system and other appropriate international NGO's with the view of making it available for the next consultative process and by taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission's (IOC) resolution EC-XXXIII.16, on the UNICPOLOS process, adopted at the 33rd Session of its Executive Council (June 2000).

Ten-year review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21: reporting and participation

13. The Subcommittee considered the current state of preparations for the 10 year review of implementation of Agenda 21 which will take place in 2002, including preliminary proposals for intergovernmental and interagency activities.

14. SOCA members expressed some concern regarding the large number of reporting requirements on similar issues over the coming months, including inputs to the UN Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) for the Secretary General's report to the General Assembly through the 2nd meeting of UNICPOLOS, report on implementation of the GPA as well as for Rio+10. A flow chart of reports due and tentative due dates was prepared during the meeting and is attached to this report (annex III). The Subcommittee agreed that aligning various reporting requirements is highly desirable and requested its Chairman to raise this issue at the 17th session of IACSD in September.

15. Regarding the response to the UN Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs' (DESA) request for comments on the draft Rio+10 reporting format, it was agreed that the Chairman of SOCA would send a reply on behalf of the Subcommittee with the following points:

- (a) SOCA members felt the strategic objectives of the 2002 event had yet to be defined and thus the kind of inputs needed to facilitate the intergovernmental process (including the preparatory process) were unclear.
- (b) SOCA was willing to contribute to the official report requested by DESA, although the very short (3-5 pages) Secretary General's report on oceans that has been proposed was considered inadequate to give a useful picture, even as a snapshot, of the whole oceans arena.
- (c) In addition, SOCA felt it was essential that its own input to Rio+10 as well as the review process itself take into consideration a number of planned and possible new initiatives on oceans (e.g. FAO/Iceland Conference on Fisheries in the Ecosystems and a NGO-organized Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10, both planned for late 2001).
- (d) Consequently, SOCA is considering to make a broad contribution to the 2002 review and will discuss this further at its next session in early 2001.

16. The Subcommittee agreed that, in case the route suggested by DESA is to be taken, each SOCA member will provide a half-page report highlighting their contributions as sub-task managers. The Chair will send a request for inputs on October 10, following the deadline for comments by Task Managers of 10 August and after the 17th session of the IACSD. SOCA members are expected to submit their contributions to the Chair by 1 December 2000. The deadline for the final input to DESA is 1 February 2001 [changed after the SOCA meeting from 1 March].

Making SOCA more transparent, effective and responsive: follow-up to CSD decision 7/1 and UNGA res. 54/33

17. SOCA has recently published a SOCA brochure describing the responsibilities tasks and achievements of the Subcommittee. The brochure was widely distributed at the 1st UNICPOLOS meeting in New York and also at the 33rd Executive Council of UNESCO/IOC in Paris, and a wider distribution will follow.

18. SOCA hosted a side event at the first meeting of UNICPOLOS and presented information on the activities of the Subcommittee. The UN Atlas, among other initiatives, was presented at this event. The Atlas was also highlighted during the Information Technology Fair held at UN Headquarters in conjunction with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meeting (5–28 July 2000).

Review of the joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP)

19. At its seventh session, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) called upon the Sponsoring Organizations of GESAMP (IMO, FAO, UNESCO/IOC, WMO, WHO, IAEA, UNEP and UN DOALOS) to review its methods of work with a view to improving its effectiveness and inclusiveness, whilst maintaining its status as a source of agreed independent advice.

20. A comprehensive review of the memorandum of understanding on GESAMP, including its functions and operational procedures, took place in August 1999.

21. In March 2000, the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. K. Topfer, recommended that an evaluation of the productivity and efficiency of GESAMP together with its operational procedures be carried out by at least two experts, one representing governments and one representing the scientific community.

22. In May 2000, the GESAMP Intersecretariat Meeting agreed in principle that an independent and thorough evaluation was necessary, and that all the necessary arrangements for this evaluation should be done by the Administrative Secretariat of GESAMP (i.e. IMO). An evaluation team of five experts has been proposed. It will consist of: two scientists (one from a developed country and one from a developing country) to be identified by the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR); two governmental experts to be recommended by the Co-chairpersons of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea

(UNICPOLOS); and an additional expert who has been an ex-member or ex-chairman of GESAMP. The evaluation is expected to be completed by the end of 2000 on a cost-sharing basis between the sponsoring Organizations of GESAMP.

23. The process is the subject of ongoing communications between the Secretary-General of IMO and the Executive Heads of the other Sponsoring Organizations of GESAMP.

Tenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas

24. The Subcommittee agreed to recommend to IACSD that its tenth session be held at UNESCO/IOC Headquarters in Paris from 9-11 January 2001.

II. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

A. Opening of the session

25. The Subcommittee expressed appreciation to Mr Oleg Khalimonov, Director, Marine Environmental Division of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), for the excellent arrangements made to host the ninth session of SOCA at the IMO Headquarters in London. The Subcommittee noted that Mr. Khalimonov would very shortly be retiring as Director, MED in IMO and wished him well in his forthcoming endeavours. It also welcomed the presence of Mr. Koji Sekimizu as IMO's new representative on SOCA.

26. Mr Khalimonov welcomed the members of the Subcommittee and provided information on the local arrangements.

B. Agenda, timetable and documentation

27. The Chair introduced the draft agenda, documentation and a proposed timetable for the session. The list of participants is contained in the annex I and the adopted Agenda in annex II.

C. Updating activities of the organizations represented in the Subcommittee

28. As regards updating background information, all the members of the ACC SOCA presented short summaries of on-going activities and recent events in their Organizations that are relevant to the Subcommittee.

29. The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) informed the participants that Mr Mark Malloch Brown is the new Administrator and the new upstream focus of the Organization is on policy and institutional support to developing countries. The Bureau for Development Politics (BDP) will become decentralized and serve country offices and do some strategic work. Fifty BDP policy experts will be out posted (7 in the field of environment). The Sustainable Energy and Environment Division (SEED) budget is being cut 80%. The SEED will become the Environmentally Sustainable Development Group. GEF/UNDP is intact.

30. A list of UNDP projects was distributed to the Subcommittee. The web site ([http:// siocam.sdn.undp.org](http://siocam.sdn.undp.org)) for the Strategic Initiative for Ocean and Coastal Management (SIOCAM) was brought to the attention of the members. SIOCAM is a Global Project of UNDP which may be of interest to the wider ocean and coastal management community. Its web site is a virtual framework for SIOCAM to achieve its objective of enhancing the capabilities of existing and future ocean and coastal management projects through the systematic identification, documentation and sharing of best practices and lessons learned. Web products include: Integrated Convention Management table; Manual for Assessing Coastal Management; and Programme Advisors Note. The Projects include: Train-Sea-Coast; Global Ballast Management; Mercury and POPS.

31. The SOCA members were informed further that a Global Environmental Facility (GEF) sponsored International Waters Conference will be held in Budapest in Oct 2000. Finally, a brochure on Train- X course development and sharing network was distributed.

32. The representative of the UN Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) informed SOCA that it is preparing the final version of the output document of the UN Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS) in close co-operation with the two Co-Chairpersons of the Process.. It is expected to be formally circulated by end of August 2000.

33. DOALOS has continued to develop its TRAIN-SEA-COAST programme. The programme is considered one of the most effective training mechanisms in integrated coastal zone management and other ocean related activities. It has established 16 course development units in several regions world wide in close co-operation with academic institutions in the respective regions. The programme is in the process of establishing three new course development units at the University of Kiel in Germany, the Black Sea University in Constanza in Romania and the University of Alicante in Spain.

34. DOALOS is preparing for the next session of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf during the last week of August 2000. The Commission has announced that it is ready to receive submissions from coastal States that intend to establish the outer limits of their continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles.

35. DOALOS has started preparations for the discussion of the item "Oceans and the Law of the Sea" during the next session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The discussions will lead to the adoption of a resolution of the General Assembly which may be expected to contain the recommendations of the UNICPOLOS, made at its first meeting in May 2000.

36. The representative of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) updated his Agency's activities. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction that the second Transition Planning Meeting for the Joint WMO-IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Meteorology (J-COMM) took place in Paris in June 2000. The Meeting succeeded in preparing a final proposal for J-COMM's structure, the terms of reference of its working groups, as well as the provisional agenda for J-COMM-I, which is to take place in June 2001 in Iceland. The Subcommittee was also informed about WMO/Ocean Affairs Division's continuing capacity building efforts to obtain meteorological and oceanographic data from ships through, among others, its series of International Regional Workshops for Port Meteorological Offices. The next workshop will take place in November 2000 in Cape Town (South Africa) for English speaking countries of Africa.

37. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction that WMO is giving continued support to the UN Atlas as one of the core agencies and is presently examining the working agreement to be established with FAO on contributions to the UN Atlas.

38. The Representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) informed SOCA on some programmatic changes in the Agency involving results based programming format and centralizing environment related activities into a dedicated programme. A review of highlights of recent events in the Monaco laboratory was also provided.

39. Information was also provided by the representatives of IMO, FAO, UNIDO, UNEP, UN/DESA, UNESCO, CBD, UNEP/GIWA and World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Moving on a suggestion by the Coordinator of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) Office, the Subcommittee decided that, starting at its next session, participants should provide before each SOCA session short written summaries that update their activities.

D. United Nations Atlas of the Oceans

40. In the role of lead agency for this joint project of the Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas, the representative of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported briefly on the administrative matters related to

the Project, the progress achieved with the UN agencies, the outcome of the 2nd meeting of the UN Atlas Technical Committee, and the state of development of the UN Atlas software.

41. In 1997 preparatory activities for the Ocean Atlas commenced with support in the amount of USD 75,000 provided by FAO, IOC, UNEP, IAEA and UNEP. Of these funds USD 9,169 are still kept in reserve. UNFIP funding to the Atlas Project (GCP/INT/749/FIP), with a duration of November 1999-November 2001, provided USD 500,000 of which by July 2000 USD 86,000 have been spent or committed. The participating Agencies pledged additional support to the order of USD 690,000. NOAA supports the Project's management with about USD 390,000.

42. Co-operation Agreements have been signed between FAO and IMO, IOC and UNEP. Agreements between FAO and IAEA and WMO are under preparation. FAO furthermore signed co-operation agreements with NOAA (USA) and the Head Department of Navigation and Oceanography (HDNO) of the Russian Federation. The representative of WMO informed the Subcommittee that WMO will shortly finalize the agreement concerning the UN Atlas.

43. A presentation on the Atlas was made by the Project Manager, who provided an overview of the structure, the assignments to the UN agencies and organizations and arrangements for collaboration, as well as of the current status and future plans. Several similar presentations have recently been made, for example, at the side events hosted by SOCA at the first meeting of UNICPOLOS (New York, 30 May - 2 June 2000) and at the ECOSOC meeting (New York, 5-28 July 2000). The availability of electronic copies of these presentations was pointed out.

44. The Subcommittee agreed to invite the other participating agencies (WTO (Tourism), UNDP, WHO, UNCHS, DOALOS, World Bank) to appoint a point of contact to co-ordinate their involvement in the Project.

45. At the second co-ordination meeting of the Technical Committee (TC) that took place in Rome 13-15 June 2000, progress of each agency and of the overall project was reviewed. The TC members were also provided hands-on training in inputting materials to the software. A report of the meeting is available at the SOCA web site (<http://ioc.unesco.org/soca>).

46. Software development for managing the Atlas in a web environment is continuing satisfactorily. Passwords were issued to members of the TC on 28 June 2000. The software is now being populated by the TC with materials from the UN agencies and collaborators.

47. Several discussions have been held with National Geographic (NG) on the use of its maps and documents, on the use of its map software and on the possibility of their publishing of the CD. It is expected that NG will collaborate at some level. Positive discussions have also been held with Blackwell Scientific Publications about the publication of the CD. Furthermore, NG has suggested alternatives for CD distribution that do not require major publishers and this is in the process of being investigated for feasibility. The SOCA agreed that all options should be pursued

48. The prototype web Portal software (The Community Directory Server, CDS) as it presently stands, was also demonstrated. The Committee noted that the prototype was operational since June 28 2000 and that Core Agencies has started inputting information starting with the topic tree. It was noted that there was some delay in this first inputting sequence which should have been terminated on 15 July 2000.

49. The Committee was also informed of the successful completion of prototype tests of Atlas maps by HDNO (Russia).

50. The representative of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) requested that CBD become a Member of the Atlas Core Group. The Subcommittee welcomed and agreed to the request, indicating that CBD will henceforth be considered as a member of the Technical Committee as well.

51. In the ensuing discussion, the representatives of CBD and UN/DESA pointed out the need to ensure proper representation of issues related to biodiversity especially in relation to coral reefs, and micro-organisms. The representative of UNEP indicated the need for the proper representation of regional seas programs and conventions

of relevance to the ocean. Some other members of the Subcommittee stressed the need to address trends in and spatial of distributions of oceanographic variables / parameters and indicators.

52. Regarding the indicators issue, the representative of UNDP pointed out that in a similar exercise the Second World Water Forum (March, 2000, The Hague) had welcomed the proposal of the ACC Sub-Committee on Water Resources to prepare a World Water Development Report every two years to, *inter alia*, establish and monitor indicators related to freshwater. In a similar manner the Subcommittee might anticipate a mandate from UNICPOLOS to SOCA to establish and monitor indicators on oceans and coasts. SOCA might try to develop a synthetic (but easily understandable) indicator for oceans and coastal areas. In particular, the annual UNDP Human Development Index database could serve as an indicator in matters related to poverty reduction and the development of sustainable livelihood.

53. The representative of FAO indicated to the Subcommittee that the Atlas web site is connected to the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLRAM) web site in relation to the biodiversity of coral reefs. As regards micro-organisms a decision needs to be made regarding the issues involved and related policy matters. The indicators involve policy issues and will be covered by the Atlas but, each agency has to do its homework and contribute; for this coverage will require a substantial effort. In fact, the partial integration and coordination of UN Agencies' information process with the UN Atlas development process is needed to create the synergy that would make the Atlas sustainable.

54. The representative of UNEP inquired about the type of "units" (e.g. Large Marine Ecosystems (LME), UNEP Regional Seas) that are planned to be used in delineating geographic regions. It was pointed out in response that this issue constituted a major difficulty, yet to be resolved, for nearly each participating agency has its own identification of regions.

55. The representative of WMO pointed out the need for making available (e.g. on the Web) key information about the Atlas, including the formal mandate, its objectives, the process and respective roles etc. This information is, in particular, needed in relation to identification of responsibilities to the Atlas development within each Agency. The Subcommittee agreed that such information should be made available at the Atlas web site.

56. The problems of copyright issues as related to linking with other web sites was raised. It was underlined that the present accepted premise regarding this matter was that (a) every party keeps the copyright of its information; (b) the Atlas information can be used by anyone for non commercial purposes; (c) non public information should not appear on the Atlas.

57. The issue of linkage between oceans and inland watersheds was raised by the representative of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The Subcommittee agreed that this was a very important issue, initially considered in the Atlas but put aside for pragmatic reasons. It was noted that GPA and GIWA provided a link between oceans and inland waters and that the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources would need to be involved to broaden the UN Atlas to cover inland waters. The Subcommittee agreed that, for pragmatic reasons, the Atlas should proceed as planned until the "proof of concept" could be made.

58. The representative of UNDP recommended that the Atlas should indicate what the UN agencies (including UNDP and WB) are doing in terms of projects. A similar suggestion was made by the representative of UN DOALOS. It was pointed out in response that linkages to web sites will not suffice for this type of information; each agency needs to provide input through Atlas TC.

59. The representative of IMO informed SOCA that his Agency has agreed to take on responsibility in providing relevant information under the topic "Transportation and Telecommunications", including the coordination of inputs from various agencies and organizations. Given the time table and work required for the Atlas, IMO is expected to hire a consultant to assist its in-house Atlas Group in developing relevant materials for input. In the meantime, IMO Atlas Group will start inputting the Atlas by the 3rd Quarter of the year 2000 with available materials from its web site and publications.

E. Status of implementation of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA)

60. This agenda item was introduced by the Co-ordinating Officer of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA), who represented the Scientific Director of GIWA at the session.
61. The main results from the first workshop carried out in the Baltic region with the objective of testing GIWA Assessment Methodology was presented. The Subcommittee was informed that the implementation of the GIWA Assessment Protocol after the methodology testing in the Baltic region and in the Gulf of Thailand will start with five pilot sub-regions, namely: Gulf of California; Brazil Current; Benguela Current; Red Sea; and Humboldt Current.
62. The testing period of GIWA has been expanded for further testing of GIWA Assessment Protocol and also the testing and consolidation of information management and the managerial design of the Project before it is implemented in the other sub-regions. This strategy is expected to increase the efficiency and reduce the need for later adjustments once the GIWA Assessment protocol is implemented in the remaining 55 GIWA sub-regions.
63. The current version of GIWA Assessment Protocol was briefly presented by taking into account the following components: scoping exercise for the environmental and socio-economic impacts and subsequent selection of the priority issues among the 22 GIWA Issues; detailed environmental and socio-economic impact assessment for the identified priority issues; and causal-chain analysis for the selected Issues.
64. The Subcommittee was informed that during the two workshops, the teams of senior experts in both Gulf of Thailand (June 26-30, 30 participants) and the Baltic Region (June 26-29, 20 participants) were asked to focus primarily on the Protocol applicability and workability, not only for their specific sub-regions, but also for the other 64 sub-regions comprised by GIWA project. Keeping this focus in mind, the protocol was then applied for the specific sub-region assessment. As a consequence, not only the Scoping exercise was carried out but also important contributions in terms of specific suggestions for the improvement of the Protocol itself were presented. The main results, constraints and suggestions derived from the testing in the Baltic Region, as well as the Scoping scoring were presented to the Subcommittee. The implementation of the second component of the Protocol will be completed for these regions during the follow-up meetings. Further meetings are planned, with reduced number of participants, for the third component of the protocol (Causal-Chain Analysis).
65. GIWA Methodology Task Team-MTT was approved by UNEP on June 2000 and will hold its first meeting on 16-18 September 2000.
66. In the ensuing discussion, the Subcommittee emphasized the need for better understanding of the ways that it can cooperate with GIWA. It is the understanding of SOCA that the GIWA project is a potentially valuable contribution to its own work in addressing marine and coastal issues and it has agreed to help facilitate GIWA's work, when possible, drawing on the relevant expertise of the United Nations system as represented among its members. The SOCA members reiterated that SOCA should not be construed as a review board and in dealing with some issues it may be more appropriate that they are dealt with on agency by agency and issue by issue basis.
67. The meeting agreed that one practical strategy for expediting the ways SOCA can assist GIWA would be to make available the GIWA methodology as well as the documents reporting the progress of GIWA implementation. The representative of GIWA informed SOCA that there is a new strategy for updating the GIWA website (www.giwa.net) and once this is done various documents will be available at the GIWA website with a regular updating procedure. In the new procedure, the draft versions of GIWA material will be available in the intranet and the final versions (public domain), will be available in the internet. Access to the GIWA intranet will be defined during the next days by the GIWA Core Team and the Subcommittee could be included for instance, in this group.
68. Members of the Subcommittee expressed their concern with regard to the input data planned to be carried out during GIWA detailed impact assessment; if the data is not set up on a regional basis, distortions are foreseen regarding the interpretation.
69. Other concerns expressed included assignment of priorities on environmental problems, and the absence of use of a hierarchy of sustainability indicators in assessment efforts. The representative of GIWA informed the Subcommittee that she will raise the comments and suggestions formulated by the Subcommittee to the GIWA Methodology Task Team during the first MTT meeting in September, 2000.

F. Status of implementation of the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA)

70. The Coordinator of the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) Coordination Office in The Hague, briefed the meeting on the major activities undertaken by the Coordination Office between January and June 2000 and described a series of issues awaiting recommendations of the Subcommittee.

71. The GPA Coordinator indicated that during the period of January-June 2000, focus was given to consolidating the new programme direction through:

1. Streamlining administrative procedures and soliciting financial support;
2. Making the necessary links/outreach with donor Governments, NGOs, Convention Secretariats, private sector and UN agencies;
3. Initiating the 2001 Intergovernmental Review Process on the implementation of the GPA by preparing, convening and following-up on the GPA Expert Group Meeting (The Hague, 26-28 April 2000);
4. Cooperation with the GEF; and
5. Further implementing the GPA Clearing-house mechanism and the Action Plan on Municipal Wastewater.

72. Detailed information on these topics can be found in the progress report submitted by the GPA Coordination Office to the meeting and placed on the SOCA web site (<http://ioc.unesco.org/soca>). The focus in the presentation of the GPA summary was on the preparation for the 2001 Intergovernmental Review Meeting, particularly on the reporting by the UN system and the development of concrete inputs to the 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review Meeting. In this regard, reference was made to the Conclusions from the Co-Chairs of the Expert Group Meeting held in The Hague on 26-28 April 2000, to prepare the 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review Meeting. The Meeting Report is available on the GPA web site (<http://www.gpa.unep.org/>).

73. Main objectives of the preparatory process for the 2001 Intergovernmental Review Meeting are to review progress on implementation of the GPA, share experiences and expertise, identify the barriers and opportunities and forward the implementation of the GPA, amongst others, through demonstration activities.

74. To ensure meaningful and effective reporting, the GPA Coordinator pointed out practical modalities, responsibilities and timetables. In this regard, attention was drawn to the document prepared for the April Meeting on World Bank projects of relevance to GPA in the Latin American countries (also available at the SOCA web site). The Coordinator proposed similar reports be prepared by all UN agencies, highlighting UN programmes, in selected countries, contributing to the implementation of the GPA. By combining the input of all agencies and other relevant partners (e.g. development banks), a useful tool and the necessary information needed to better integrate and align programmes implemented by UN agencies and others, in support of GPA can be provided to countries. This country-based compilation will also promote the view that programmes contributing to the protection of the coastal and marine environment are mutually supportive and better integrated.

75. It is realized that this country focused reporting might not be possible for all countries of the world. In line with the recommendations of the Expert Group, SOCA may wish to decide to concentrate the reporting on a selected number of geographically distributed countries.

76. Important in this regard is also to align this reporting exercise with other reporting requirements, e.g. for the General Assembly, for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), and for Rio +10. The Subcommittee should develop a system to avoid duplication and make one reporting exercise useful to the others. Maybe DOALOS, with its experience in UN wide reporting, could play a key role in this regard or even take a lead role.

77. The second issue raised by the GPA Coordinator pertained to concrete input by UN organizations to the 2001 Intergovernmental Review Meeting in the form of pilot projects that demonstrate concrete progress in any of the four following areas: Binding and Non-Binding Agreements; Voluntary action; Finance and Economic instruments; and Capacity-building. SOCA might wish to identify, which ongoing projects could be used as examples of concrete progress or innovative approaches in any of these four areas. Subject to discussion and

agreement, it was proposed that SOCA identify such innovative examples in particular with regard to the thematic areas (c) Finance and Economic instruments and (d) Capacity-building.

78. The GPA Coordination Office drew the attention of the members of the SOCA on the draft guidelines on municipal wastewater, which were distributed to over 400 experts and institutions for review, and requested the relevant agencies for their review and comments. UNDP expressed its interest to be associated with the action plan on municipal wastewater, jointly developed and implemented by UNEP, WHO, Habitat and Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC).

79. The above proposals are, of course, on top of the ongoing cooperation SOCA has in developing the GPA Clearing-House. In order that its usefulness can be demonstrated at the 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review Meeting, it may be worth discussing the manner in which SOCA could further facilitate the establishment of full-fledged versions of several of the source-category nodes.

80. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction the progress made in the implementation of GPA.

81. With regard to the preparation of the 2001 GPA intergovernmental review meeting, the members of Subcommittee agreed that:

1. As a minimum, a list of UN projects relevant to the GPA should be available (the UN Atlas could be the vehicle to compile this information). FAO, as the lead agency for the Atlas, has already developed a programme function which will allow UN agencies and organizations to input information on projects in the Atlas Portal. Information on GPA-related projects can be inserted in the section of the Atlas dealing with land-based activities (the structure of which is being developed by UNEP). For this purpose, each agency will input its own information under the supervision of UNEP-GPA. The Atlas could be demonstrated at the 2001 GPA intergovernmental review meeting.
2. With regard to reporting on progress in the implementation of the GPA, it was agreed that the GPA Coordination Office will prepare, by October 2000, a first draft report, based on the existing country-based compilations (available from the World Bank and UNDP). This draft report will be reviewed by all members of SOCA by December 2000 and thereafter used in the national and regional preparatory processes for the 2001 GPA intergovernmental review meeting. Given the constraints in time and resources, it was agreed that the report will only cover 12 countries. The final report on the contributions of UN agencies to the implementation of the GPA will be prepared by the GPA Coordination Office and submitted for clearance to the agencies by August 2001.
3. Further possible contributions by the Agencies to the 2001 GPA intergovernmental review meeting, e.g in the form of a SOCA session at the meeting, will be discussed at the next SOCA meeting, planned for January 2001.

82. The Subcommittee agreed that aligning various reporting requirements is highly desirable and asked the Chair to raise this issue in the 17th session of IACSD.

83. The Subcommittee further noted that in relation to the GPA clearing-house mechanism, the development of the prototypes for various "pollutant source category nodes" by the respective agencies was acknowledged by the GPA Coordination Office. These prototypes will come on line in the second half of 2000. The further development of these nodes and their maintenance will require continued support from the relevant UN agencies, both in financial and human resources. Most members of the SOCA felt that the nodes could only be further developed and maintained if extra-budgetary resources were forthcoming, as contributions/support to the GPA clearing-house did not feature in the regular workprogrammes of the agencies. To achieve the latter, the respective governing bodies need to give the agencies the mandate to perform clearing-house functions in support of the GPA. This is a lengthy process that requires coordination between the different ministries representing governments at different agencies. Further coordination and cooperation with the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources was stressed, as the agencies' representatives to this subcommittee, in some cases, were responsible for the development of the GPA clearing-house, instead of the agencies' divisions represented at the SOCA.

G. Results of the first meeting of the United Nations Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), 30 May-2 June 2000, New York

84. The first meeting of the UN Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS) was held at UN Headquarters from 30 May-2 June 2000. UNICPOLOS was established by General Assembly resolution 54/33 of November 1999 to facilitate the review by the Assembly, in an effective and constructive manner, of developments in ocean affairs by considering the Secretary-General's report on oceans and the law of the sea and by suggesting particular issues to be considered by the General Assembly, with an emphasis on identifying areas where coordination and cooperation at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels should be enhanced.

85. The SOCA Chairman invited one of the Co-chairpersons of the UNICPOLOS, Mr. Alan Simcock, to brief the Subcommittee at its ninth session on the results and developments of the UNICPOLOS meeting held in May 2000. Following the briefing the Sub-Committee had an exchange of views on the several issues and different informal recommendations discussed in the first UNICPOLOS meeting, in particular, in relation to possible requests from the U.N. General Assembly. These possible requests are expected to invite the Sub-committee or its constituent agencies and organizations to undertake specific activities involving their responsibilities and mandates.

86. In his summary Mr Simcock indicated that the first UNICPOLOS meeting focused on two areas: "Responsible fisheries and illegal, unregulated and unreported fisheries: Moving from principles to implementation"; and "Economic and social impacts of marine pollution and degradation, especially in coastal areas: International aspects of combating them". Consensus was reached at the meeting that thirteen issues deserve attention by the General Assembly. In addition, in the area of international coordination and cooperation, there was a one-half day "exchange of views" with the Chairman and other members of the ACC/SOCA.

87. Among these issues, those that intimately concern SOCA broadly involve: The need for capacity-building in developing countries, and especially the least developed countries; The importance of marine science for fisheries management; and How to implement effectively Part XIII (Marine scientific research) and Part XIV (Development and transfer of marine technology) of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

88. Mr Simcock further pointed out that there was a broad support for including marine science as an area of focus for the second UNICPOLOS meeting but there were other suggestions in this connection that included: Capacity building; Crimes at sea; Development and transfer of marine technology; Implementation of IMO and International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions; Marine protected areas; Strengthening regional fisheries organizations; and Strengthening regional seas programmes.

89. Drawing attention to the importance of marine science for fisheries management, Mr Simcock pointed out that, at the regional level, there are two pillars: fisheries on one side and the environment on the other. Integration is a necessity and one way of moving forward in this direction, as identified by UNICPOLOS, could be through regional workshops organized by SOCA with the aim of identifying in each region issues, actions needed for better understanding of these issues and access to appropriate knowledge.

90. Mr Simcock commended the presence of the SOCA Chair at the meeting and the briefing provided to the participants on the Subcommittee's activities. This should be a regular feature of the UNICPOLOS meetings in the future.

91. In the ensuing discussion, SOCA members indicated that what has been identified as priority at the UNICPOLOS meetings should also be made priority at the Governing Bodies of each of the relevant agencies/organizations. This is crucial in relation to the allocation of appropriate resources. The representative of FAO further indicated that there will be a major meeting in Iceland in late 2001 on fisheries which constitutes a major attempt to integrate fisheries and environmental issues.

92. The representative of UNEP informed the meeting that the possible roles that can be played by the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in the UNICPOLOS Process is one of the Agenda items for the coming Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans to be held in Monaco in 6-10 November 2000.

93. The SOCA Chair informed the meeting of the resolution adopted at the 33rd Executive Council of IOC, in June 2000, which instructed the Executive Secretary to initiate the development of a clearinghouse mechanism for ocean sciences and invited Member States to actively contribute and participate in the discussions on Oceans and the Law of the Sea during the 55th Session of the UN General Assembly and in the next UNICPOLOS Process in 2001. The representative of FAO suggested that the ONE FISH fisheries science web site software could be used jointly by other agencies with FAO in the development of a clearinghouse mechanism for ocean sciences.

94. The discussion continued after the departure of Mr Simcock.

95. The representative of DOALOS expressed the need for early preparations by the relevant organizations in anticipation of the possible 55th General Assembly decisions based on UNICPOLOS recommendations. He informed the meeting that a letter is expected to be issued in about mid – November 2000 asking for contributions from the Agencies to the Secretary General's Report on Oceans and the Law of the Sea. Contributions are expected by 15 January 2001 so as to finalize the report by the end of March 2001 for distribution for the 2nd UNICPOLOS meeting expected to take place at the end of April, 2001.

96. Considering the strong possibility of the need for capacity-building in developing countries, and especially the least developed countries being one of the main areas of focus at the 2nd UNICPOLOS meeting, the Subcommittee, decided to carry out a scoping activity, taking into account the present on going efforts in this area. The UNDP representative agreed to lead this activity, requesting information from the members of SOCA in September 2000 with a deadline for submissions in November 2000.

97. The Subcommittee considered the relevance of the regional setting for improving coordination among different UN programmes addressing different aspects of Coastal and Ocean Management and with the purpose of exploring new ways to integrate the work of the agencies, including the development of ecosystem approaches to fisheries management and integrated coastal management.

98. As a first step towards improving the interface between environmental and fisheries institutions, it was agreed to address the issue both at the 3rd Global meeting of the regional Seas Conventions, organized by UNEP in Monaco from the 6 to the 9 of November 2000 and at the the 2nd Meeting of FAO and Non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies and Arrangements to be convened by FAO at its Headquarters in Rome on 22 and 23 February 2001. For the purpose, a meeting paper could be developed jointly by FAO and UNEP to be used at both meetings to get a first reaction and suggestions of the two constituencies confronted with the issue. In an attempt to ensure a pragmatic debate, it was suggested that the paper examine the problem in relation to a specific requirement such as the need to manage fisheries in the ecosystem, a subject central to the FAO-Iceland Conference on "Fisheries in the Ecosystem" in Reykjavik in September 2001.

99. As regards the strong support received at the 1st UNICPOLOS meeting for the proposal to discuss marine science and related matters at the 2nd UNICPOLOS Meeting in 2001, the SOCA Chair will prepare a draft plan for the preparation of a comprehensive report of ongoing research activities in Ocean Sciences and related services jointly with the partner organizations of the UN system and other appropriate international NGO's with the view of making it available for the next consultative process and by taking into account the IOC resolution EC-XXXIII.16 adopted at the 33rd Session of the Executive Council.

H. Ten-year review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21: reporting and participation

100. The representative of the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) briefed the Subcommittee on the current state of preparation for the 10 year review of implementation of Agenda 21 which will take place in 2002, including preliminary proposals for intergovernmental and interagency activities. A number of informal documents prepared by DESA, as well as the Report of the Secretary-General on measures taken in the UN system to accelerate progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further implementation of Agenda 21 (A/55/78-E/2000/56) were distributed for background information.

101. The recent 8th session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) (April 2000) had recommended a number of ideas for consideration of the ECOSOC and the 55th session of the UN General Assembly, which would decide the agenda, possible main themes, timing and venue of the 2002 event. CSD decision 8/1 recommended that the General Assembly consider organizing the 2002 review as a “summit-level event to be held outside UN Headquarters, preferably in a developing country”. Proposals are currently being discussed at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for CSD-10, which would serve as the preparatory body for Rio+10, to become an open-ended committee of the whole for this purpose, and to commence its work immediately after the close of CSD-9 in Spring 2001. Unfortunately, it emerged that the dates being considered for this first session of CSD-10 (30 April-4 May 2001), were the same as those being proposed to the General Assembly for the second meeting of UNICPOLOS).

102. Interagency preparation had begun to be discussed at the January 2000 meeting of IACSD. The next meeting of IACSD (Geneva 18-19 Sept. 2000) would decide on modalities and deadlines for reporting by Task Managers, based on a proposal sent by DESA to all Task Managers, including SOCA, and IACSD members in mid-July. Comments on this proposal, which would require SOCA to submit a report on oceans and seas, including references to SIDS, by 1 March 2001 (subsequently changed to 1 February 2001), must be sent to UN/DESA by 10 August 2000 for inclusion in a revised proposal to IACSD in September. The Subcommittee as Task Manager for Chapter 17, as well as individual agencies, were urged to make their views known by this deadline.

103. During the ensuing discussion, SOCA members expressed some concern regarding the large number of reporting requirements on similar issues over the coming months, including inputs to UN/DOALOS for the Secretary General’s report to the GA through UNICPOLOS-2, and reports on implementation of the GPA as well as for Rio+10. A flow chart of reports due and tentative due dates was prepared during the meeting and is attached to this report (annex III). After considerable discussion on how SOCA would respond to UN/DESA’s request for comments on the draft Rio+10 reporting format, it was agreed that the Chairman of SOCA would send a reply on behalf of the Subcommittee with the following points:

- 1) SOCA members felt the strategic objectives of the 2002 event had yet to be defined and thus the kind of inputs needed to facilitate the intergovernmental process (including the preparatory process) were unclear.
- 2) SOCA was willing to contribute to the official report requested by DESA, although the very short (3-5 pages) Secretary General’s report on oceans that has been proposed was considered inadequate to give a useful picture, even as a snapshot, of the whole oceans arena.
- 3) In addition, SOCA felt it was essential that its own input to Rio+10 as well as the review process itself take into consideration a number of planned and possible new initiatives on oceans (e.g. FAO/Iceland Conference on Fisheries in the Ecosystems and a NGO-organized global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10, both planned for late 2001).
- 4) Consequently, SOCA is considering to make a broad contribution to the 2002 review and will discuss this further at its next session planned for January 2001.

104. The Subcommittee agreed that, in case the route suggested by DESA is to be taken, each SOCA member will provide a half-page report highlighting their contributions as sub-task managers. The Chair will request inputs on October 10, following consultations by 10 August and after the 17th session of IACSD. The SOCA members are expected to submit their contributions to the Chair by 1 December 2000. The deadline for the final input to DESA is 1 February 2001.

I. Making SOCA more transparent, effective and responsive: follow-up to CSD decision 7/1 and UNGA res. 54/33

105. The Chair introduced this agenda item. He referred to the recently published SOCA brochure provided to the meeting. The brochure has been widely distributed at the 1st UNICPOLOS meeting and also at the 33rd Executive Council of IOC. Additional copies will be provided shortly to the members of the Subcommittee.

106. To date both the web site (<http://ioc.unesco.org/soca>) and the brochure have received positive responses.

107. SOCA hosted a side event at the first meeting of UNICPOLOS and presented information on the activities of the Subcommittee. The UN Atlas, *inter alia*, was presented at this event and also at the Information Technology Fair held in conjunction with the ECOSOC meeting (New York, 5-28 July 2000).

108. The Subcommittee was pleased with the results of the preparation and production of an explanatory brochure describing the responsibilities, tasks and achievements of SOCA. It expressed its thanks to all contributors, to the IOC Secretariat in general, and to Mr. Umit Unluata (UNESCO/IOC) in particular for this excellent publication. It was agreed that the brochure should be given the widest possible distribution.

109. The Subcommittee decided that the reports and various documents submitted to SOCA be placed at its web site. The members further requested that the documents circulated to them be accompanied by a short explanatory note indicating pertinent sections of the documents.

J. Review of the joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP)

110. The representative of IMO, who serves as the Administrative Secretary of the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution (GESAMP), a joint interagency advisory group sponsored by IMO, FAO, UNESCO/IOC, WMO, WHO, IAEA, UNEP and UN DOALOS briefed the Subcommittee on recent developments concerning the Group.

111. GESAMP was established in 1969 in response to a request by the United Nations Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). ACC noted that organizations within the United Nations System should, in order to avoid duplication of efforts, together develop a mechanism for interdisciplinary consideration of marine pollution problems.

112. Since its foundation over 30 years ago, GESAMP has provided about fifty scientific studies, including a wide range of hazard and risk assessments, monitoring programmes and marine environmental quality reviews and guidelines.

113. At its seventh session, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development called upon the Sponsoring Organizations of GESAMP to review its methods of work with a view to improving its effectiveness and inclusiveness, whilst maintaining its status as a source of agreed independent advice.

114. Since 1992 the Sponsoring Organizations have reviewed the memorandum on GESAMP including its functions and operational procedures several times; the last comprehensive review took place in August 1999.

115. In March 2000, the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. K. Topfer, recommended that an evaluation of the productivity and efficiency of GESAMP together with its operational procedures be carried out by at least two experts, one representing governments and one representing the scientific community.

116. The intersecretariat coordinating group for GESAMP, comprising the Administrative Secretary and the Technical Secretaries from the Sponsoring Organizations, as well as its Chairman and Vice-Chairman, met on 21 and 22 May 2000 to consider in detail the UNEP proposal, taking into account a further note from UNEP submitted to this Intersecretariat Meeting requesting that: all the Sponsoring Organizations of GESAMP agree in principle that an independent and thorough evaluation was necessary; and that all the necessary arrangements for this evaluation should be done by the Administrative Secretariat of GESAMP (i.e. IMO).

117. An evaluation team of five experts was proposed by the GESAMP Intersecretariat Meeting in May 2000. It will consist of: two scientists (one from a developed country and one from a developing country) to be identified by the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR); two governmental experts (also one from a developed country and one from a developing country) to be recommended by the Co-chairpersons of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS); and an additional expert who has been an ex-member or ex-chairman of GESAMP.

118. The Intersecretariat group expressed its view that the evaluation should be completed by the end of 2000. Regarding the costs for the evaluation process, the range of estimates spanned from US\$ 60,000 to 80,000. These would have to be shared among the sponsoring Organizations of GESAMP.

119. The following tentative evaluation tasks have been agreed:

1. Role and function of GESAMP;
 - Review of the original concept of GESAMP: purpose and structure;
 - Requests to review GESAMP's modus operandi: origin and reasons; and
 - The draft update of GESAMP's operational procedures in 1999.
2. Achievements and impact
 - Transparency of GESAMP and its mechanism;
 - The independence of GESAMP's advice and its impact on the sponsoring organization;
 - Transmission of GESAMP advice to governments; and
 - Impact on national policies and responses from governments
3. The development of a new mechanism
 - The financial viability of GESAMP;
 - The role of GESAMP's secretariat, chair and vice-chair; and
 - The role of government-nominated experts in GESAMP.

120. The above recommendations and decisions are the subject of ongoing communications between the Secretary-General of IMO and the Executive Heads of the other Sponsoring Organizations of GESAMP.

121. So far positive responses have been received from IOC and IAEA. The representative of FAO informed the Subcommittee that his agency will support the review and the formal letter to this effect will be sent shortly to the Administrative Secretary. The representative of UN DOALOS has informed IMO that a positive reply from the UN Secretary-General is to follow shortly; he indicated that the UN is waiting for the identification of funds requested and prefers to support a single expert as compared to contribution to a common pool.

122. After completion of the evaluation of GESAMP, its Sponsoring Agencies will decide whether there is still a need for GESAMP and how it fits in with other international science organizations such as ICES, PICES, IGBP, SCOPE, ICSU, etc. It will also determine whether the modus operandi of GESAMP, as reviewed in 1999, is appropriate to fulfill the needs of its Sponsoring Organizations for future years.

123. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction the recommendations and decisions of the GESAMP Intersecretariat Meeting and urged the sponsoring agencies that have not responded to the Administrative Secretary to do so at the earliest possible date.

K. Other matters

Piracy and armed robbery against ships

124. The first sub-item considered under this agenda item was concerned with the acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships. The issue was brought before the Subcommittee because "*at its recent seventy-second session (17 to 26 May 2000), IMO's Maritime Safety Committee, while acknowledging the positive action of the UN General Assembly and being appreciative of its support, was of the opinion that there might be additional assistance which could be provided from other bodies within the United Nations system which would ensure that seafarers and ships could safely and peacefully engage in international maritime activities*". It therefore asked the Secretary General of IMO to "*bring the matter to the attention of the United Nations for such additional action as it might deem appropriate*". The matter was subsequently brought by the Secretary of ACC to the attention of SOCA.

125. Mr G. S. Singhata, the Senior Technical Officer of IMO's Maritime Safety Division provided a generic background on piracy. There has been a continuous increase in the number of incidences since 1994. A noticeable decrease in the number of incidences occurred after each IMO mission to the region that has been affected. The areas most affected over the period of most recent review (1 April-30 June 2000) were the South East Asian waters and South Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, South America and the Malaca Strait. Most of the attacks were reported in port areas while the ships were at anchor or on berth . In several of the incidents reported, the crews were violently attacked by individuals or groups of two to ten persons carrying guns or knives. During the period under review, seven crew members were assaulted and injured and seventeen crew members were forced out of their ship, which has been reported missing. In one case, armed robbers are suspected to have jammed communications thus disrupting the provision of assistance. The total number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships so far reported to the Organization is 1,803, an increase of 52 since 31 March 2000.

126. Considering the importance of the issue, the Subcommittee decided to reconsider it within a regular agenda item at its next meeting so that sufficient time will be given to IMO to prepare a working document, specifically identifying, through consultations, how the Agencies represented in SOCA could be of assistance.

UNEP Regional Seas Programme / Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action plans

127. The Director of the UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions introduced this agenda item by giving a brief review of the Regional Seas Programme (RSP). The RSP was initiated in 1974 and has remained the central UNEP programme providing the major legal, administrative, substantive and financial framework for the implementation of Agenda 21, and its chapter 17 on oceans in particular. The regional seas programme is based on periodically revised action plans adopted by high-level intergovernmental meetings and implemented, in most cases, in the framework of legally binding regional seas conventions, under the authority of the respective contracting parties or intergovernmental meetings.

128. Currently, 14 regions are covered by adopted action plans and eleven of the action plans are supported by regional seas conventions. Whenever appropriate, the regional seas conventions and action plans have served as a main mechanism for implementing various ocean-related global initiatives and conventions. The more mature regional seas conventions have developed protocols complimentary to global conventions and agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Basel Convention, and the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA). The overall coordination provided by UNEP ensures that the activities of the regional seas conventions and action plans that it has helped negotiate, although implemented regionally, remain essentially global in nature.

129. A focal area of UNEP is the strengthening of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans. The Second Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, which took place in The Hague, 5-8 July 1999, has served as the blueprint for UNEP's ongoing efforts in the strengthening of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans. This will be followed-up in 6-10 November in Monaco by the Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action plans. This meeting of the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans has the following specific objectives:

- To channel more effectively UNEP programmatic support to the regional seas conventions and action plans, particularly in areas that are complimentary to UNEP's programme of work (1999 and 2000-2001);
- To promote horizontal ties among regional seas conventions and action plans;
- To strengthen the linkages between the regional seas conventions and action plans and the GPA through agreed upon concrete actions, particularly regarding the role of the secretariats in the implementation of the UNEP/GPA Strategic Action Plan on Sewage and the GPA Clearing-House;
- To strengthen the linkages between the regional seas conventions and action plans and other global conventions and agreements, specifically the CBD, CITES, the Global Plan of Action for Marine Mammals, the Basel Convention, the IMO Conventions and the Rotterdam Convention as well as the ongoing negotiations on POPs.
- To review follow-up to the recommendations of the Second Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans.

130. The meeting is not only a follow-up to the earlier meeting in the Hague but more importantly will involve strengthening of linkages with global conventions and agreements. It will also allow UNEP RSP to determine the ways to have its input to UNICPOLOS.

131. The Chair of the Subcommittee was invited by the representative of UNEP to chair the agenda item on UNICPOLOS.

132. The Subcommittee commended with interest UNEP's efforts towards revitalization and strengthening of the regional seas conventions and action plans.

133. The need for the RSP web site (www.unep.org/seas) being linked to the Atlas web site was stressed by several members.

134. The Subcommittee stressed (a) the need for adding an agenda item to the Monaco meeting on the integration of environmental and fisheries management issues and (b) the submission of a joint UNEP / FAO paper covering this arena in accordance with the decision of SOCA under the agenda item concerning UNICPOLOS.

135. It was also noted with interest by the Subcommittee that the draft provisional agenda for the Monaco meeting (distributed to participants) called for it to provide inputs for a paper on Oceans to be presented to the 21st session of UNEP's Governing Council in early 2001.

Matters related to the Convention on Biodiversity

136. The representative of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) drew the attention of the Subcommittee to decision V/3 of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD held in May 2000. The COP initiated work on coral reefs for a minimum of three years and invited relevant bodies to contribute to its implementation, in particular to take response measures to the phenomenon of coral bleaching. While inviting the SCBD to strengthen its collaboration with the secretariats of regional seas conventions and action plans, the COP invited relevant bodies and organizations, including in particular UNESCO, to continue contributing to the implementation of the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity.

137. The Subcommittee noted that the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) will hold its sixth meeting from 12 to 16 March 2001 and will consider a progress report on the implementation of the CBD programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity. The report will include brief information on how SOCA members are implementing activities supporting the implementation of the CBD programme of work. SBSTTA is expected to prepare advice for the COP including inter alia on the use of unsustainable fishing practices, the lack of use of marine and coastal protected areas in the context of management of marine and coastal living resources; and capacity-building for undertaking stock assessments and for economic evaluations. Some of these issues will be considered at the next meeting of UNICPOLOS.

138. The Subcommittee also noted that CBD established an ad hoc technical expert group on marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) that will prepare advice for the COP inter alia on the role of MCPAs on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity, taking into account the ecosystem approach.

L. Adoption of the report of the Subcommittee and closure of the session

139. The Subcommittee welcomed the invitation of its Chairman and agreed to recommend to IACSD that its tenth session would be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 9 to 11 January 2001. The Chairman reminded members that, in accordance with ACC guidelines, there would need to be an item on the agenda of SOCA's next session dealing with the election of a new Chair and Vice-Chair.

140. The ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas adopted the report on its ninth session.

Annex I

List of participants

Chairperson: P. Bernal

(Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

Vice-Chairperson: A. Rogers

(United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development)

Secretary: U. Unluata

(Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

United Nations, its entities and programmes

United Nations

I. Steiner
A. Rogers

United Nations Environment Programme

J. Illueca
V. Vandeweerd

United Nations Development Programme

P. Reynolds

Specialized Agencies and related organizations

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

S. Garcia
H. Naeve
J. Everett

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

P. Bernal

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

P. Bernal

World Meteorological Organization

F. Guzman

International Maritime Organization

O. Khalimonov
Mr Koji Sekimizu
Mr Du Dachang

International Atomic Energy Agency

H. Livingston

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

M. Moore

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

K.J. Mulongoy

Observers

Global International Water Assessment

M. Marques

World Conservation Monitoring Centre

E. Green

Annex II

Agenda

1. Opening of the session.
2. Agenda, timetable and documentation.
3. Updating activities of the organizations represented in the Subcommittee.
4. United Nations Atlas of the Oceans.
5. Status of implementation of the Global International Water Assessment (GIWA).
6. Status of implementation of the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA).
7. Results of the first meeting of the Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs (UNICPOLOS), 30 May - 2 June, New York.
8. Ten-year review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21: reporting and participation.
9. Making SOCA more transparent, effective and responsive: follow-up to CSD decision 7/1 and UNGA res. 54/33.
10. Review of for the joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP).
11. Matters to be brought to the attention of the sixteenth session of IACSD (18-19 September, 2000, Geneva).
12. Other matters.
13. Adoption of the report of the Subcommittee and closure of the session.