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Items 4 (b) and (c) of the provisional agenda\*

**Policy issues:**

**Emerging policy issues**

**Coordination and cooperation within and outside  
the United Nations, including non-governmental  
organizations**

**REGIONAL SEAS CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS: STATUS REPORT**

**Note by the Executive Director**

The present note contains a summary of progress made and activities carried out by the Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme since the twenty-first session of the Governing Council, together with a description of new strategic elements under the Programme which will form the basis for its future programme of work. The note also contains brief summaries of activities carried out during the last two years under various regional seas conventions and action plans. The text of the note has been reproduced without formal editing.

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\* UNEP/GC.22/1

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#### A. Background

The main objectives of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAP) are promoting sustainable development and integrated management of coastal areas and associated river basins; promoting the implementation of technical, institutional administrative and legal measures for the protection of the coastal and marine environment; and facilitating the monitoring and assessment of the coastal and marine environment.

#### B. Global Activities

**Global Meetings of RSCAP** - The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Global Meetings of RSCAP were held in Monaco (November 2000) and Montreal (November 2001) respectively. **Regional Seas input to WSSD** - As part of UNEP's preparations for WSSD, UNEP's Regional Seas Programme (RSP) has organised a Consultative Meeting of Coordinators (New York, April 2002)

#### C. Activities related to Specific Regional Seas Programmes

With reference to relevant decisions of the 21st Governing Council substantial progress was made in the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP), the Antigua Convention (NEP – Northeast Pacific Action Plan), the Cartagena Convention (Wider Caribbean), the Barcelona Convention (Mediterranean), the Nairobi Convention (Eastern Africa), Abidjan Convention (West and Central Africa), the Lima Convention (Southeast Pacific), the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and the ROPME Sea Area.

#### D. Horizontal cooperation among Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans

Twinning arrangements were agreed between the Nairobi Convention and the Helsinki Commission, the Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) and the West and Central African Action Plan (WACAF), the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP). Possible areas of cooperation will be explored between the Wider Caribbean and the Northeast Pacific.

#### E. Collaboration with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

Relevant MEAs have participated in RSCAP Global Meetings which provide a forum for collaboration and joint programming.

#### F. Collaboration on cross cutting issues

UNEP's Regional Seas Programme (RSP) has been contributing to the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) Project and the implementation of the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) programme of action. Work is being carried out together with the WCMC on the Global Atlas on Marine Mammals.

#### G. Cooperation with other UNEP Programmes

Close cooperation has been achieved with UNEP Programmes relating the global assessment of the state of the marine environment and the development and implementation of UNEP's Water Policy and Strategy. The RSP and the Regional Offices have improved and broaden their support to mutual activities.

#### H. Partnerships with International Organizations

A joint "IMO/UNEP Forum on regional arrangements in emergency response to marine pollution" was held in London (30 September to 2 October 2002). *Collaboration with FAO*: UNEP's RSP has been promoting the use of the ecosystem-based approach, as a management tool. The document "Ecosystem-based management of fisheries: Opportunities and challenges for coordination between Marine Regional Fishery

bodies and Regional Seas Conventions ” was published. *Collaboration with UNESCO-IOC*: UNEP’s RSCAP participate in the IOC-GOOS (Global Oceans Observation System) programmes and the IOC-WESTPAC assisted UNEP in organizing NOWPAP activities.

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