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**Progress Report on the implementation of the Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2013 – 2016
(as of October 2015)**

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Chapter 1: Implementation of the RSSD (2013-2016) by UNEP

Analysis of the implementation of the RSSD (2013-2016) by UNEP

UNEP made a significant contribution to achieve the Regional Seas Strategic Directions (2013-2016) with regards to the Strategy 1 (*Effectively apply an ecosystem approach in the management of the marine and coastal environment*) and the Strategy 2 (*Strengthen capacities at the regional level and national level on marine and coastal governance*). These two strategies are closely related to the activities of the UNEP Programme of Work (PoW) and thus the contributions towards the strategic goals were smoothly made.

On Strategy 4 (Support the provision of tools to decouple economic growth from environmental pressures in the marine and coastal environment by promoting resource efficiency and productivity) various activities are ongoing at UNEP developing tools and methods in order to promote Green Economy. However, there are opportunities for UNEP to create further collaboration with the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) particularly to implement the concept in the oceans. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sustainable production and consumption patterns have been emphasized and thus the realization of Green Economy will continue to be important.

UNEP has also contributed to the achievement of the Strategy 5 (*Strengthen coordination and build necessary capacities at the regional and national levels to improve global knowledge and trends on the status of the marine environment, contribution to the World Ocean Assessment*), providing technical as well as financial supports to the workshops and to the Expert Group. The summary of the regular process has been produced¹. As a spinoff of the process, Nairobi Convention has produced the first report on the State of the marine environment in the region. The regular process has, therefore, developed regional capacities to monitor the status of the oceans.

On the other hand, UNEP has made limited progresses on the implementation of the Strategy 3 (*Strengthen capacities at the regional level and national level on marine and coastal environment*) and 6 (*Strengthen collaboration mechanisms with relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), UN Agencies and International Financial Institutions (IFIs)*). Particularly, it has been difficult to secure financial resources for the RSCAPs (3.4). Further efforts are needed to foster partnerships with MEAs and other international organizations to increase visibility of the Regional Seas Programme and to attract future funding. However, the secretariats also need to develop their own strategies to achieve financial as well as institutional sustainability.

Due to the lack of clear targets and indicators for the strategies, it is difficult to assess the overall level of achievements UNEP has made toward the RSSD (2013-2016). Furthermore, it is not clear to the extent which UNEP was able to use these strategies to implement its work as the PoW is the principal guiding document for the implementation of its activities. For the future RSSDs, therefore, it is recommended to set explicit targets to encourage commitments towards the implementation both by UNEP and RSCAPs.

¹ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/112

Implementation of the each action item by UNEP

1. Effectively apply an ecosystem approach in the management of the marine and coastal environment

1.1 Identify areas/indicators related to Sustainable Development Goal on oceans.

Significant efforts have been made to link indicators used by the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Regional Seas Indicators Working group. It is expected that the RSCAPs will be able to provide technical assistance to the member countries to monitor the indicators related to the oceans particularly on the SDG Goal 14.

Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
Technical Workshop on Selecting Indicators for the State of Regional Seas (Geneva, 30 June – 2 July 2014)	The workshop confirmed important principles for choosing indicators and recommended to establish a regional seas indicator working group to develop an indicator toolbox ² .	30 June – 02 July 2014
Publication “Measuring Success – Indicators for Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans”	The publication was submitted to UNEP SDG Task Force and Inter-Agency SDG indicators working group. It was also presented to ICP on Sustainable Development and Oceans in May 2015.	Dec 2014
Launching of the Regional Seas Indicator Working Group, 23 October 2015, Istanbul	Based on the recommendations from the 2014 technical workshop, UNEP would like to launch regional seas indicator working group, and the results of the working group should be provided to the continuing discussion on the SDG indicators ³ .	October 2015
Sustainable Development Goals: SDG 14 (Oceans) follow-up and preparatory input: Proposed indicator included target 14c as ‘additional indicator’ for consideration by UNGA: “Number of countries implementing either legally or programmatically the provisions set out in Regional Seas protocols and ratification and implementation of the ILO Maritime and Fisheries Conventions”.	If adopted, RSCAPs may utilize its relevant systems for monitoring and reporting on management and governance of the marine and coastal environment, incl.(a) compliance committees reviewing implementation of regional agreements within their mandates, (b) mandatory reporting on the state of the marine and coastal environment of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans at 3-5	August 2015 ⁴

² http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/globalmeetings/Indicator_RS_meeting/indicator_workshop.asp

³ <http://www.unep.org/ecosystemmanagement/water/regionalseas40/40YearsofAction/IndicatorRRSMeeting-2015/tabid/1060470/Default.aspx>

⁴ <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/index.html>

	year cycles.	
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1.2 Build capacities on application of EBM principles at the Regional/National level

UNEP has been emphasizing the implementation of EBM. A number of projects for EBM have been carried out at regional and national levels. For example, capacity building activities have been conducted with CPPS and CEP. UNEP and SPREP are also working on an on-going project on cost-benefit analysis for ecosystem-based adaptation. On the other hand, several policy guideline and guiding materials have been produced. The RSCAPs are encouraged to use the publications to conduct capacitation activities at their regions.

Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
Regional capacity building workshop on EBM conducted in specific regions, including preparation of site-level EBM pilot projects	Regional EBM Capacity Building workshops held in in collaboration between UNEP/DEPI-CPPS (14-18 Oct 2013 in Lima, Peru) to provide decision makers and planners across relevant sectors from the governments of the Lima Convention Region (Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile) with tools and skills to develop and implement ecosystem-based approaches for coastal management. EBM pilot project concepts were prepared for each country, partly followed under the IOC/UNESCO SPINCAM project on indicators for coastal zone management	Oct 2013
Guidance on governing Marine Protected Areas – building resilience through diversity	A governance framework with a set of guiding principles has been developed to assist analyzing and combining different governance aspects in the planning and implementation of MPAs. The framework is informed by 20 MPA case studies from the field. The framework and principles are discussed in the peer-reviewed paper ⁵ . Follow-up work is ongoing to develop a practical guidance resource on MPA governance to be launched spring 2016 ('Guidance on MPA governance – resilience through diversity')	Sept 2013

⁵ E.M. De Santo, O. Vestergaard , P.J.S. Jones , W. Qiu: An empirical framework for deconstructing the realities of governing marine protected areas, Marine Policy 41, 2013.

<p>The report "Pacific Integrated Island Management: Principles, Case Studies and Lessons Learned published.</p>	<p>The report Pacific Integrated Island Management (IIM): Principles, Case Studies and Lessons Learned was prepared through collaboration between SPREP, UNEP Wildlife Conservation Society, Alluvium Consulting, Edith Cowan University, Sustainable Island Innovations and Hodge Environmental, and presented during the 9th Pacific Island Nature Conservation Conference in early December 2013 as well as at the 3rd SIDS conference in September 2014. IIM is a planning process that recognizes the importance of integrated management that operates at the scale at which biological, social and physical processes occur on small islands. IIM calls for sustainable and adaptive management of natural resources through coordinated networks of institutions and communities that bridge habitats (e.g. land-sea) and stakeholders (e.g. communities, business, industry, government) with the common goals of maintaining ecosystem services and securing human health and well-being. Based on analysis of 15 case studies sourced from Pacific islands and covering a range of island environments, habitats and vulnerabilities, as well as varying development and governance contexts, the report presents ten best practice principles for IIM and synthesizes lessons learned. The report is accompanied by a brief policy outreach document⁶ and the work was also published in a peer reviewed journal⁷.</p>	<p>Dec 2013</p>
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⁶ <http://www.sprep.org/publications/pacific-integrated-island-management-principles-case-studies-and-lessons-learned>

⁷ Jupiter SD, Jenkins AP, Lee Long WJ, Maxwell SL, Carruthers TJB, Hodge KB, Govan H, Tamelander J and Watson JEM 2014: Principles for integrated island management in the tropical Pacific. *Pacific Conservation Biology* 20(2) 193 – 205.

Report on the mangrove ecosystem services was prepared and launched.	The publication “The Importance of Mangroves to People: A Call to Action” was published and launched in October 2014. The publication presented a set of recommendations for global action, including establishment of a global mangrove commission and of a global mangrove fund. Based on the recommendations, UNEP, IUCN, Ramsar Convention and CBD are developing a global mangrove initiative (provisional title), and once it is fully developed, regional seas conventions and action plans are invited to participate in and contribute to this initiative.	October 2014
UNEP-LifeWeb: “Broad-scale Marine Spatial Planning for transboundary marine mammal management in Caribbean and Southeast and Northeast Pacific”	Key results: (a) Regional capacity and networking among govt. planners in 26 participating countries enhanced on broad-scale marine spatial planning ; (b) Regional expert consultations, data collation and review undertaken to map marine mammal distribution, essential habitats, and human impacts; (c) Management plan developed for Silverbank Humpback Sanctuary, Dominican Republic; (d) Transboundary scenarios developed on marine mammal protected areas in East Caribbean; (e) Policy advice and outreach on transboundary management and governance developed and disseminated.	July 2010 – Dec 2014
UNEP-LifeWeb: Saving Monk Seal Population from Extinction, pilot work at the Cap Blanc Peninsula and surrounding areas. Mauritania	Key results: (a) Special Areas of Conservation for the monk seal (SACMS) other suitable monk seal	Jan 2011- Dec 2014

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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_11709

