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Regional Oceans Governance

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Draft

Context of the paper

The development of regional governance for the protection of the environment is unquestionably a cornerstone of international environmental policies. With regard to marine and coastal issues, this regional ocean governance has mainly been taking place through: (i) Regional Seas Programmes, many of them supported or coordinated by UNEP and now involving over 140 States; (ii) Regional Fisheries Bodies, placed under the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) umbrella; and (iii) Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) mechanisms, including GEF-supported projects. Based on a similar geographical approach, these regional mechanisms however raise concerns concerning their coordination and efficiency and possibly overlap in what they aim to achieve.

Objectives of the paper

The objective of this paper is to review the regional mechanisms for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, identifying their legal, institutional and scientific foundations, exploring their respective mandates and highlighting their successes and challenges. A particular attention is paid to the collaboration established between these regional mechanisms. This analysis leads to identify options for making the regional system more coherent, effective and efficient, including by strengthening the existing institutions and enhancing their collaboration.

Status of the paper

This paper is a draft paper which will be completed, further developed and refined in the coming weeks. Its preliminary conclusions will be presented for discussion during the 15th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans on 1st October 2013 in Montego Bay, Jamaica. All interested experts are kindly invited to review the document and provide their comments to Takehiro Nakamura: takehiro.nakamura@unep.org and Rossana Silva: rossana.silva@unep.org.

Discussion at the 15th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans

The draft document is under development, but it is submitted to the discussion of the Global Regional Seas Meeting. Based on the draft, it is suggested the following items be discussed among the regional seas conventions and action plans:

1. Based on the conclusions of the draft report, what measures would the regional seas programme like to pursue to reinforce its governance framework and institutional arrangement and capacity?
2. There are some examples of cooperation between regional seas and regional fishery management organisations (such as OSPAR and NEAFC, MAP and GFCM, Nairobi Convention and SWIOFC, etc.). Can these models easily be adapted to address emerging needs of cooperation between regional seas and regional fishery bodies?
3. What would be a practical process for regional seas to develop cooperative arrangements with regional fishery bodies and LME institutional mechanism?

Draft

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