

Financing the implementation of regional seas conventions and action plans

A guide for national action



**Regional
Seas**

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Foreword

The Regional Seas Programme (RSP), launched in 1974 in the wake of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, aims to address the accelerating degradation of the world's oceans and coastal areas through the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environment. At present, there are 18 regional programmes, six of which are directly administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP www.unep.org/regionalseas).

The global Regional Seas Programme coordinated by UNEP is facilitating the enhancement of sustainable financing within the RSPs. This responds to one of the six global RS strategic directions agreed upon and endorsed by the chairpersons or their representatives of the Conference of the Parties and Intergovernmental Bodies of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, at their 6th Global Meeting in Istanbul, Turkey in 2004. These strategic directions aim at strengthening the programme at the global level, while continuing to implement the work programmes of the individual RSPs.

At their 7th Global Meeting in Helsinki, Finland in 2005, the RSPs discussed the challenges of sustainable financing with particular focus on financing at the level of the secretariat, the programme itself and at the national level. The substantial increase in funding necessary to reach the goals of the RSPs in the sustainable management and conservation of their marine and coastal environment requires the involvement of all member countries in close cooperation with international partners and donors. In addition, short-term funding through grants, donors, and subsidies will be essential until the necessary level of sustainable, long-term financing has been established.

This report addresses the financing process as a whole: how to determine financing needs, how to choose the plan that best fits these needs, as well as the challenges Regional Seas Programmes will face while moving forward with the next phase of activities. Since programme implementation will largely be at the national level, this report will focus on domestic resource mobilization and national action plan implementation through National Programmes of Action within the framework of the Global Programme of Action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities (GPA). The RSPs provide a policy framework for the regional implementation of the GPA. The report identifies some international and regional examples as well as introduces methods, tools, economic instruments and mechanisms that can assist the Regional Seas Programmes, their secretariats and member countries in creating a larger pool of long-term sustainable financing. It is our hope that this report will provide options for regions and their countries to systematically address the financial constraints that they are facing in the sustainable management and conservation of the marine and coastal environment.

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