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Overview

Oceans have emerged as a central priority for the Rio+20 Conference in the past year—Oceans are now emphasized by the highest-level UN officials leading the Rio+20 process, supported by 2/3 of countries and 100% of political groupings, and included in the Rio+20 zero draft in a significant way. Early in the Rio+20 process last year, only a small number of countries, including small island developing States (SIDS), were explicitly promoting oceans in the discussions of the UNCSD preparatory process. As well, countries were not able to reach consensus on a statement outlining priorities for oceans in the Rio+20 process during the UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea in June 2011. Since then, issues related to oceans, coasts, and small island developing States (SIDS) have continued to gain support and key priorities have emerged in this issue-area, due to significant mobilization around the ocean issues among countries, UN agencies, NGOs, and others.

The Global Ocean Forum has promoted and supported this mobilization of countries and leaders through policy analyses and recommendations, organizing ocean events during the negotiations, convening groups of countries to discuss priority ocean issues, and informing stakeholders about the Rio+20 process.

While oceans is already present in the zero draft in a significant way, the next few months will be crucial in achieving consensus on concrete actions on oceans, coasts, and small island developing States that will make a difference in addressing major issues of climate change, resource overexploitation, pollution, and biodiversity. This will require concerted effort on the part of countries and other members of the global ocean community, to ensure that concrete actions address gaps in implementation of UNCED and WSSD commitments on oceans, build on past successes, provide a roadmap for a blue-green economy, and catalyze the political will for timely, effective, and well-funded implementation.

Key dates in the Rio+20 negotiation process are noted in the news articles found below. Global Ocean Forum colleagues from around the world are urged to be active in this process, especially in supporting their own governments in promoting a significant outcome on oceans, coasts, and SIDS at Rio.

The Global Ocean Forum will be mobilizing a major ocean event at Rio+20. More about this in the next issue.

The Global Ocean Forum will be mobilizing a major ocean event at Rio+20; More about this in the next issue. Biliana Cicin-Sain, President, Global Ocean Forum

Initial Discussions on the Rio+20 Zero Draft Highlight the Need for More Action-Oriented Text

Governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil society have gathered in New York this week (January 25-27) for the first discussions on the zero draft for the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference. Oceans have taken a prominent role in these discussions with many governments and stakeholders calling for a stronger focus on oceans in the zero draft text, and especially for more action-oriented text on oceans, coasts, and marine resources.

Overall, however, delegations expressed relative disappointment with the zero draft text, noting that it lacks ambition and vision, it needs to be more concise and direct, and that it requires more action-oriented text and clearer policy goals. Much of the discussion has also focused on topics such as the potential development of a suite of sustainable development goals, proposals for a sustainable development council, the need to develop a compendium of commitments related to sustainable development, and the role of the private sector in the green economy. Some delegations also outlined the need for more consensus on what the Conference seeks to accomplish before delving into the zero draft text.

Despite articulating the need for much more work on the zero draft text, delegations expressed hopefulness for the Rio+20 Conference as a major opportunity to lead the world towards a sustainable future.

A summary of the discussions will be forthcoming in a later issue.

Oceans and Coasts a Key Area of Consensus at the 2nd Rio+20 Intersessional Meeting on December 15-16, 2011

The 2nd Intersessional meeting of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) was held at the UN Headquarters in New York from December 15-16, 2011. The meeting primarily addressed submissions by States, UN bodies, IGOs and Major Groups to the Rio+20 compilation document and aimed to provide guidance on the development of the “zero draft” of the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference.

While a variety of substantive issues and priority-areas were discussed, it was clear that oceans emerged as a strong priority for the Rio+20 Conference. It was also noted that oceans will be one of the key areas highlighted during the four day period between the third PrepCom meeting and the Rio+20 Conference (June 16-19), where there will be events focused on the role of civil society and the private sector in major Rio+20 issue-areas.

In his opening remarks, UN Undersecretary **Sha Zukang**, the Secretary-General of the Rio+20 Conference, emphasized that the magnitude of sustainable development challenges is daunting, particularly given new and emerging threats such as food insecurity, volatility in energy prices, global economic uncertainty and high unemployment. He summed up some of the general trends from the submissions to the Rio+20 compilation document, and singled out oceans as one of the key areas of commonality and an important priority area for action at Rio+20. He stated: “On oceans, proposals have been made, among others, for phasing out subsidies that encourage overfishing, for tougher measures to deter illegal fishing, for extending marine protected areas, and for cooperation to monitor ocean acidification.”

Many States and political groups highlighted the importance of addressing ocean and coastal issues at the Rio+20 Conference. **Monaco** discussed the importance of a blue economy and highlighted, in particular, the need to pursue marine renewable energy resources. **Monaco** also noted the discussions of their recent workshop on *Sustainable Oceans in the Context of Green Economy and Poverty Eradication* as an important step on the road to building a strong ocean outcome at Rio+20. **Australia** stated that “oceans are the lifeblood of our planet and need our attention at Rio+20,” noting that the preservation of marine biodiversity was a high priority and oceans are crucial for the livelihoods of millions of people, especially those residing in small island developing States (SIDS). **Iceland** emphasized that “firstly, economic prosperity and food security is dependent on healthy oceans.” **New Zealand, on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum**, stressed the importance of achieving ocean-related goals, such as establishing global networks of marine protected areas, as well as the need for action on ocean acidification, marine pollution, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. **Papua New Guinea, on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)** focused on the need to enable the development aspiration of SIDS, including through means to ensure that SIDS enjoy the social and economic benefits of their own marine resources, reduce overfishing and destructive fishing practices, and address climate and ocean issues, including ocean acidification. **Nepal, on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)**, stressed the importance of sustainable use of marine resources. **Chile** stressed the need for stronger and sustained efforts to protect vulnerable coastal areas. The **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** added that a blue economy was part of the green economy for SIDS. **Brazil** noted that oceans would be highlighted as a major topic during the thematic days between the third PrepCom and the Rio+20 Conference. Brazil also stressed the need for Sustainable Development Goals that will determine the areas where national and international cooperation efforts need to be concentrated with a view to fostering sustainable development and taking equity among nations into due consideration. Oceans and coastal issues were also highlighted by the **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)** as well as a number of other major groups and organizations in their statements as well.

By the conclusion of the meeting, the structure and format of the Rio+20 zero draft became clearer. States and major groups supported a single, action-oriented political document focused on the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes from the WSSD, and containing a set of actions specifying actors, timeframes and how to proceed with implementation followed by accountability on commitments, whether voluntary or negotiated. Rio+20 Secretary-General **Sha Zukang** noted that there is broad agreement for the green economy concept to be inclusive, focus on poverty eradication poverty, and promote sustainable development while allowing flexibility for national policy within agreed principles. Sha also stated that there is an emerging consensus that the green economy should be supported by capacity building for developing countries, and supported by a platform for sharing experiences and best practices.

Rio+20 Zero Draft Document Strongly Emphasizes Oceans, Coasts, and Small Island States

On January 10, 2012, the Rio+20 Secretariat released the zero draft document entitled, “The Future We Want,” which provides a foundation for the negotiations of the final outcome of the Rio+20 Conference. The Rio+20 zero draft document is available here:

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?page=view&type=12&nr=324&menu=23>

Oceans, coasts, and small island developing States (SIDS) were strongly emphasized in the zero draft document, which includes a section specifically focused on oceans and SIDS (paragraphs 78-86) covering many of the major issues discussed during the preparatory process, including illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing, ocean acidification, and issues related to marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).

On the Regular Process for the Global Marine Assessment, the document contains text calling for the integration of the first global integrated assessment of the state of the marine environment (to be completed by 2014) into national, regional and global oceans policy. The zero draft also calls for the implementation of an international observing network for ocean acidification and capacity building and mobilization of resources for investment in treatment of human wastes and wastewater and to develop a global action plan to combat marine litter and pollution. The document also calls for reaffirming existing agreements, such as the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, highlighting the special needs of SIDS to develop sustainably. On sustainable fisheries, the zero draft includes calls to combat overfishing by implementing science based management plans, and reducing Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, particularly through implementation of tools such as the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. On areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), the zero draft includes text calling for the creation of a negotiating process for a new Implementation Agreement to the UN Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to address issues related to marine biodiversity in ABNJ.

The notable text on oceans and coasts in the zero draft is due to the great efforts of governments and civil society organization thus far in the preparatory process. It is critical, however, that the ocean community continues to highlight the importance of oceans in sustainable development to ensure that the final Rio+20 outcome includes strong, action-oriented provisions for oceans and coasts. We urge governments and civil society organizations to continue to push for a strong oceans outcome in the remaining meetings of the Rio+20 preparatory process, which are as follow:

Initial discussion on the zero draft of the outcome document

January 25-27, 2012

New York

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=409&menu=46>

First round of ‘informal-informal’ negotiations on the zero draft

March 19-23, 2012

New York

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=411&menu=46>

3rd Intersessional meeting of the UNCSD

UN Secretariat

March 26-27, 2012

New York

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=46&menu=46>

3rd Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the UNCSD (PrepCom 3)

June 13-15, 2012

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=49&menu=46>

Rio+20 Thematic Days

June 16-19, 2012

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference)

June 20-22, 2012

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.html>

Global Ocean Forum Side Event—Oceans at Rio+20

On December 15, 2011, The Global Ocean Forum organized a side event, “Oceans at Rio+20” at the 2nd Intersessional Meeting of the Rio+20 process at the UN Headquarters in New York. Over 60 representatives from governments, IGOs, NGOs, and academia attended the event, focused on advancing discussions on oceans and coasts in the Rio+20 Conference, especially in the context of a Rio+20 outcome.

Biliana Cicin-Sain, President of the Global Ocean Forum, opened the meeting with a presentation of the Global Ocean Forum report, *Oceans at Rio+20*, (<http://www.globaloceans.org/sites/udel.edu.globaloceans/files/Rio20SummaryReport.pdf>) which assesses progress to date on the implementation of the ocean-related goals and commitments of UNCED and the WSSD and outlines recommendations for the Rio+20 process. Dr. Cicin-Sain highlighted recommendations for the following issue-areas: oceans and climate, integrated ocean governance at national, regional and global levels, capacity building, small island developing States (SIDS), and the blue economy (presentation available at: <http://www.globaloceans.org/sites/udel.edu.globaloceans/files/GOF-Recommendations-OceansAndCoasts-Rio20.pdf>). She noted the need for improved measurement of progress made and the need to fill notable implementation gaps on previous commitments. She also reviewed some of the Global Ocean Forum’s related activities, including the recent convening of the Oceans Day at Durban at the UNFCCC COP 17 in Durban, South Africa (Summary by the Earth Negotiations Bulletin <http://www.globaloceans.org/sites/udel.edu.globaloceans/files/OceansDayAtDurban-ENBSummary.pdf>), a workshop on “Oceans at Rio+20” (Workshop summary http://www.globaloceans.org/sites/udel.edu.globaloceans/files/September12_Workshop_Summary.pdf), and the formation of the “Rio+20 Friends of the Ocean” (Friends of the Ocean blog-- <http://globaloceanforum.org/>). Dr. Cicin-Sain then focused on the Global Ocean Forum’s work on analyzing oceans in the submissions to the Rio+20 Compilation Document, which showed over half of all Member States (now 66% as indicated in the Global Ocean Forum’s revised analysis), and all political groups and regional preparatory meeting outcomes mentioned ocean or coastal issues in their submissions, indicating a strong consensus on the need for a strong oceans outcome from the Rio+20 Conference. Key areas of commonality that have emerged from this analysis include: supporting coastal adaptation and disaster risk management for climate change, eliminating IUU fishing and harmful fishing subsidies, and meeting previous commitments for capacity building. Dr. Cicin-Sain’s presentation can be found here: <http://www.globaloceans.org/sites/udel.edu.globaloceans/files/Dec15UNCSDIntersessionalPowerpoint.ppt>.

Luke Daunivalu, Deputy Permanent Representative of Fiji to the UN, highlighted the particular importance of oceans in sustainable development for the Pacific small island developing States (SIDS). Oceans are crucial to economic development of SIDS, as 97% of Pacific SIDS’ national resources lie in their exclusive economic

zones (EEZs). For this region, the ocean separates the nations geographically, but also inextricably links them together, making cooperation in the sustainable management of marine resources an essential aspect of sustainable development for Pacific SIDS. Challenges regarding the management of overexploited fish stocks were discussed, including the need to eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, the elimination of destructive fishing practices, high seas management, and the need to ensure that the benefits from fishing and use of natural resources accrue to the SIDS. Mr. Daunivalu outlined the three major priorities of the Pacific SIDS for oceans at the Rio+20 Conference: meeting the development aspirations of Pacific SIDS by increasing the benefits realized by SIDS of marine resources in their EEZs; the need for States to commit to eliminating IUU fishing, and rebuilding of stocks, using a strong, science-based approach and addressing the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification on ocean health. Mr. Daunivalu stressed the need for governments to renew political will to fulfill existing commitments.

Marijana Mance Kowalsky, Director, Directorate for International Relations and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning, and Construction, Croatia discussed the importance of preserving coastal resources for Mediterranean countries, where the pressures of population growth, coastal development, and the transportation sector are major challenges to coastal management. Ms. Kowalsky discussed the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol to the Barcelona Convention, which came into force in 2011 and lays out an open and participatory framework for ensuring cross-sectoral management of coastal areas in the Mediterranean, including the formulation and development of integrated coastal strategies, as well as land-use strategies, plans and programs. It also calls for the formulation of Environmental Impact Assessments for public and private projects which affect the coastal zone. The Mediterranean model may serve as a good model to be replicated in other regional seas contexts.

Andrew Hudson, Head, Water and Ocean Governance Programme, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), discussed the importance of strategic approaches to leveraging climate change financing mechanisms. Dr. Hudson presented guidebooks recently produced by UNDP aimed at assisting developing countries in utilizing existing policy instruments to access and utilize climate funding mechanisms countries. Financial resources required to transform economies and address climate change impacts are becoming available through international public funds, carbon markets, and climate equity funds. Many of the current funds available been provided through the private sector, and the share of private funds for development assistance is increasing. Dr. Hudson noted that new approaches are needed to leverage scarce public funds to attract more private financing, as well as new ways to identify, pool, and blend these public and private resources.

Habiba Gitay, Senior Environmental Specialist, Environment Department, The World Bank, discussed the enhanced focus that the World Bank is putting on oceans, as a major priority of Robert Zoellick, President of the World Bank. Dr. Gitay discussed a forthcoming World Bank initiative related to oceans, which will provide both analytic and financial support for oceans in sustainable development, and will be presented prior to the Rio+20 Conference in June 2012. Dr. Gitay noted that the World Bank was focusing more on areas such as comprehensive solid waste management, the need for public/private partnerships to engage civil society, address knowledge gaps, and provide human capital and financing, and the need for ecosystem valuation, including the assessment of national capital, indicators, and scaled-up financial mechanisms. Following the presentations by the panel, the open discussion period included comments on the role of local groups, NGOs, and partnerships in the achievement of sustainable development goals and implementation, including how goals and new initiatives will translate to on the ground action.

Matt Gianni of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition posed a question to the panel on the added value of the Rio+20 process, including further consideration of an implementation agreement for marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).

Luke Daunivalu noted that for the Pacific SIDS, the Rio+20 process serves as a valuable opportunity to catalyze political will to implement the previously agreed-upon goals and commitments emanating from the 1992 UNCED and the 2002 WSSD.

Of particular concern in the discussion were the implementation gaps and the need to build capacity for implementation. **Marcos Mauricio Toba, Permanent Mission of Brazil to the UN**, noted that, as a major crosscutting issue, capacity development will be an essential requirement to meet existing, and any future, commitments.

Gustavo Fonseca of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) noted that the oceans are becoming an increasingly important part of the GEF portfolio, and that there have been 5 new GEF initiatives related to oceans, totaling \$188 million in financing, as well as an additional \$1.5 billion in co-financing. Mr. Fonseca noted that these initiatives were country-driven, providing evidence of government support for the importance of ocean resources to development. Discussing implementation, **Kate Brown, Global Island Partnership (GLISPA)**, noted that there have been some successes regarding implementation and that, while it is important to recognize the gaps, it is also critical to recognize, replicate, and scale up successful initiatives. Participants also stressed that ecological arguments alone are insufficient and that economic and social rationale must also be demonstrated.

Finally, **Michele Ameri, UN Division on Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (DOALOS)**, noted upcoming meetings on the lead up to Rio+20, including the third Intergovernmental Review Meeting (IGR-3) on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Landbased Activities (January 25-27, 2012), the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS) (May 29-June 1, 2012), and the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea that can serve to draw attention to ocean issues.

Global Ocean Forum Analysis Indicates Over 2/3 of Countries and All Political Groups support a Strong Oceans Outcome at Rio+20

As noted in our December 2011 issue of *Global Forum News*, the Global Ocean Forum has conducted an analysis of the submissions to the Rio+20 Compilation document, which form the basis for the zero draft negotiating document for the Rio+20 Conference.

The Global Ocean Forum has updated this analysis examining how many countries and political groupings referred to oceans in their submissions. The revised analysis, which now takes into account new submissions since the December 2011 analysis, found that 66% of all Member States and all political groups and regional preparatory outcomes addressed oceans or ocean-related information in their submissions to the Rio+20 process. The revised analysis is available here: <http://www.globaloceans.org/sites/udel.edu.globaloceans/files/Analysis-Input-to-Rio20-CompilationDocument.pdf>.

As a methodological note, please note that to determine which submissions contained this information, the terms “ocean,” “marine,” “coast,” and “fish” were searched in all documents. European Union countries that formally submitted as part of the EU were counted as individual Member States on the UNCSD website and in the analysis.

Common concerns included addressing the effects of climate change on coastal communities, the special needs of small island developing States (SIDS), loss of marine biodiversity, pressures on fisheries, the need for ocean related capacity development, and addressing marine pollution. For some States, proposals to improve the institutional framework for sustainable development included support for strengthening Regional Fishery

Management Organizations (RFMOs), and the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and the Barbados Plan of Implementation.

Pew Environment Group Releases Report on “What States Want from Rio+20”

The Pew Environment Group has also undertaken an analysis of State preferences for oceans in the Rio+20 and had recently released a report, “What States Want from Rio+20: The Ocean.” The report is an analysis of submissions from political groups and States on threats to the ocean and the ramifications for sustainable development. The Pew Environment Group has attempted to highlight commonalities and to offer recommendations to address these threats to ensure a healthy ocean for future generations. The report addresses the following issue-areas:

- Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (IUU Fishing)
- Destructive Fishing Practices
- Science-Based, Precautionary Management
- RFMO Accountability and Transparency
- Marine Biodiversity Conservation
- Harmful Fishing Subsidies

The report can be found here:

<http://www.pewenvironment.org/news-room/other-resources/what-states-want-from-rio20-the-ocean-85899367557>

The Government of Monaco Convenes Workshop on Sustainable Oceans, November 28-30, 2011

On November 28-30, 2011, the government of Monaco organized a workshop, “Sustainable Oceans in the Context of the Green Economy and Poverty Eradication,” focused on sustainable use of ocean resources in food security, renewable energy and tourism, aiming to promote and share best practices for the sustainable use of ocean resources, and to propose concrete political recommendations to the Rio+20 Conference. The Workshop gathered the highest level officials playing lead roles in the Rio+20 Conference, including the Secretary-General of the Rio+20 Conference, **H.E. Mr. Sha Zukang**, the two co-chairs of the Rio+20 Bureau, **H.E. Ambassador John Ashe**, Antigua and Barbuda and **H.E. Ambassador Kim Sook**, Korea, the Executive Coordinators of the UNCSD, **H.E. Brice Lalonde** and **H.E. Elizabeth Thompson**, as well as other high-level participants from governments, UN agencies, and civil society.

Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain delivered a presentation during the Workshop in which she discussed the outcomes of the Global Ocean Forum’s report on “Oceans at Rio+20,” which outlines key recommendations for meeting previously-made commitments and advancing the global oceans agenda through the Rio+20 process (Presentation available at: http://www.globaloceans.org/sites/udel.edu.globaloceans/files/B.Cicin-Sain_PPT-Monaco.ppt).

The Workshop outcome document, the “Monaco Message” (available here:

http://bemonaco2011.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65&Itemid=90http://bemonaco2011.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65&Itemid=90) examines the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of food security and safety, tourism, and energy, and also urges improvements to the global ocean governance framework through the initiation of an international agreement for marine areas beyond national jurisdiction and the establishment of a mechanism to achieve greater coherence with the UN system.

In the closing session, prior to the address by HSH Prince Albert II, Ambassador Brice Lalonde called attention to the usefulness of the Global Ocean Forum's report on *Oceans at the Rio+20* and the UN inter-agency report, *A Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability*, in addition to important events such as the Oceans Day at Durban at the UNFCCC COP 17 climate negotiations in the lead up to the Rio+20 Conference.

Workshop website: <http://bemonaco2011.org/>

Pre-Registration for the Rio+20 Conference Opens for Major Groups

Pre-registration for the Rio+20 Conference is now open for:

(1) NGOs and major groups that are currently in consultative status with ECOSOC as NGOs (including those on the roster through the list of the Commission on Sustainable Development); and

(2) NGOs and major groups that were accredited to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. Pre-registration is open until **May 20, 2012**.

NGOs and other Major groups' organizations that are **NOT** yet accredited to the United Nations and wish to participate in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Conference (Rio+20) will be offered a one time opportunity to become accredited to Rio+20. The deadline for accreditation of new groups is **February 20, 2012**. Once registration is approved, organizations can preregister representatives to the Rio+20 Conference until the general deadline of **May 20, 2012**.

Accreditation for new groups can be done here:

<http://esango.un.org/irene/?page=viewContent&nr=382&type=22&s=15>

Please visit the Rio+20 website for more information:

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?menu=90>

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