



European Environment Agency



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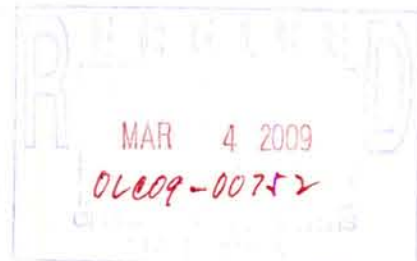
Reg. EEA 2009/D/237

Subject: Oceans and the law of the sea

Dear Ms O'Brien,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the report of the Secretary-General on the impacts of the Informal Consultative Process (ICP), and on issues relating to the implementation of the outcomes of the ICP.

As you may be aware, the European Environment Agency (EEA) has not actively participated in ICP sessions. However, we recognize the ICP as an important forum at the global level for states, international organizations, NGOs and representatives of civil society to discuss issues related to ocean governance and feed their views into the annual resolutions on ocean affairs from UNGA. We also appreciate the role it has taken in bringing particular issues forward and, in particular, for preparing the ground for improved implementation of such issues. In this regard, you should be informed by this letter that I co-chair the Scientific Expert group and the UN Assessment of Assessment (AoA) for the marine environment, which will be included in this year's UNGA resolution on oceans and I believe may be debated at the ICP. If UNGA decides to launch a regular process for assessing the world's oceans and the AoA proposes, then the links between EEA and UN will be much clearer through our role in the European marine assessments.



Regarding EEA's core activities, we work with the European Commission, European Union (EU) Member States and European regional sea conventions to support certain aspects of European marine assessments that will gather importance in the near future as the 2008 EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive is implemented. This Directive transposes the ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities, discussed at the ICP in 2006, into EU legislation. It makes the assessment of European regional seas and the elaboration of programmes of measures to achieve "good environmental status" by 2020 a mandatory task for all Member States.

We wish you all the best for the preparation of the documents to the ICP.

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