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The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), through its Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) has followed closely the developments leading to the recommendation to establish a regular process for global marine assessments (GMA), since the inception of the discussion at CSD-7 in 1999. From CSD-7, through the technical workshops in Reykjavik (2001) and Bremen (2002); and finally the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, we have participated in all the relevant discussions leading to the WSSD and subsequent GA decisions to establish a GMA process by 2004. DESA, therefore, is fully supportive of this goal as well as the excellent preparatory work DOALOS has undertaken in response to GA resolutions 57/141 and 58/240. As you know, the senior officer for ocean issues in DESA/DSD, Ms. Anne Rogers, also participated in the Paris inter-agency consultations on the GMA your office organized last September and she attended as an observer the Group of

Mr. Vladimir V. Golitsyn, Director  
Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea  
Office of Legal Affairs (Room DC2-0450)  
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Experts meeting convened by DOALOS this past March. As a partner with DOALOS in the substantive servicing of the GA Consultative Process on oceans, DESA/DSD looks forward to a full discussion of the draft document by member States and other stakeholders at its 5<sup>th</sup> meeting this coming June.

With regard to specific issues related to the development of the GMA process, it should be noted that, by nature of our mandates, DESA and the CSD will be more users of such assessments rather than producers, and therefore we will leave it to the experts in marine science to advise member States of the implications of the various options and conceptual frameworks discussed in the draft document. But with respect to the specific issues to be addressed by the GMA, we would like to highlight the point made by the WSSD in its Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (paragraph 36 b) and repeated in GA resolution 57/141 (paragraph 45) that the process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment should include "*socio-economic aspects, both current and foreseeable, building on existing regional assessments*". Admittedly, this is a very large mandate, and an expansion of the scope of much if not all of the currently existing marine assessment work. However, its importance is, we feel, critical to the value of the GMA process.

It therefore seems to us that the draft report could indicate more clearly how socio-economic aspects would be addressed. For example, in the section "Framework and Process", a footnote to paragraph 8 explains that throughout the report, the term "scientific" includes both the natural and social sciences. We would like to suggest an expansion on the socio-economic aspects in the text itself. In paragraph 16, the list of "topical assessments" does include 'Review of methodologies for the socio-economic valuation of marine ecosystem services', however, this is indicated as only a possible issue, and is also not the overall socio-economic view intended by the GMA decision. We do note that "economic and social benefits and uses" is included as one of four general and overlapping themes listed in paragraph 22 (Conceptual Framework), but feel the importance given to this by member States at the WSSD and the GA requires more consideration earlier in the document.

DESA would be able to provide further comments after the discussions of the GMA International Workshop next month. We look forward to this review and to further collaboration on this important project.

JoAnné DiSano  
Director  
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