

International Ocean Institute

May I take this opportunity to express support to the policy proposed in the draft document. The IOI has experience in contributing to the World Water Assessment Programme and will be interested and ready to share this experience in the GMA efforts.

The IOI network will be capable of contributing to the assessment of the marine environment in several areas:

Training and Capacity building; the IOI has a quarter century experience in providing cost effective training and capacity building programs in all areas of science and policy. The IOI Network has a proven track record of delivering thematic short courses on a multitude of topics. This capacity can be focused on the GMA in response to training and capacity building needs at all levels both during the initial phase and the subsequent ones.

Furthermore, the IOI Ocean Governance Training Programs could dedicate a certain number of contact hours to GMA training as part of its comprehensive Ocean Governance curriculum. This activity, as well as the delivery of IOI GMA thematic courses to be delivered at a regional and national level, would largely satisfy the requirement for a "permanent feature of the GMA .which is structured according to each region's needs."

Consultations with Stakeholders through the initial phase and beyond; through the IOI international presence and well established network, we are able to provide cost effective linkages between all constituents at all levels so as to assist in ensuring that the GMA is not only properly established but remains relevant to policy making. Working through our operational centers at the national and local levels, through our well established channels of communication with the UN System and many of the intergovernmental international and regional bodies, we can bring to the GMA a high degree of "ground truthing" in a credible and cost effective manner.

Implications of coastal and habitat degradation for human health, well being and safety; the IOI network gained a reputation in providing advice to the Governments on regional capacity building and security (e.g. for the Mediterranean and Caspian Seas), in organizing Workshops and Conferences on coastal areas integrated management, eco-tourism and risk assessment. The IOI will be able to contribute to assessing the present state of coral reefs and economic and social benefits that the marine and coastal environment provides to society.

To sum up we are waiting eagerly for a final document and expect that the cooperation between UN and IOI will be extended to the GMA activities. I noted with satisfaction a recommendation of the Group of Experts to call on "national governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to nominate potential peer reviewers to the GMA secretariat" (par. 42) The IOI Network will be happy to support the programme by providing our knowledge and experience for the assessment.

Sincerely Yours,

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