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Second round of regional workshops in support of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (Regular Process)

North Atlantic, the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea region: the first of two regional workshops will be held in Valletta, Malta (2-3 July 2018)

Background

The Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, was established by the General Assembly following the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa (General Assembly resolution 57/141).

The Regular Process is recognized as the global mechanism for reviewing the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects, on a continual and systematic basis. It provides regular assessments at the global and supra-regional levels and an integrated view of environmental, economic and social aspects. Such assessments are intended to support informed decision-making and thus contribute to managing human activities that affect the oceans and seas in a sustainable manner, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other applicable international instruments and initiatives.

The first cycle of the Regular Process ended in 2015, culminating in the release of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment or the first World Ocean Assessment, which is available on the website of the Division at http://www.un.org/depts/los/global_reporting/WOA_RegProcess.htm.

The programme of work for the period 2017-2020 for the second cycle of the Regular Process provides for two main outputs of the second cycle (2016 to 2020) namely, the preparation of a second world ocean assessment and Regular Process support to other ongoing ocean-related processes.

While the first World Ocean Assessment provided a baseline study of the state of the world's oceans, the second world ocean assessment will extend to evaluating trends and identifying gaps.

Regional workshops in support of the Regular Process

In accordance with the programme of work for the period 2017-2020 for the second cycle of the Regular Process, two rounds of regional workshops will be held in support of the second cycle. A first round of five regional workshops was held in 2017. This first round of workshops helped raise awareness about and receive feedback on the first World Ocean Assessment, informed the scoping and preparation phases of the second world ocean assessment and generated interest from the scientific community. The summaries of discussions for these workshops are available at: <http://www.un.org/depts/los/rp>.

The second round of regional workshops in support of the second cycle of the Regular Process, which is intended to support the development of the second world ocean assessment by enabling the collection of regional-level data and enabling relevant members of writing teams to meet, is scheduled

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to begin in the second half of 2018. According to the Guidelines for the second round of workshops,¹ the second round of regional workshops will also be organized under the auspices of the United Nations, in coordination with the secretariat of the Regular Process, represented by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations (the “Division”) and with the assistance of members of the Group of Experts and Pool of Experts, as appropriate.

The first of two regional workshops to be hosted for the North Atlantic, the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea region, will be held at the University of Malta Valletta Campus in St Paul’s Street, Valletta, Malta from 2 to 3 July 2018. A second regional workshop for this region will be held in Ukraine later this year. Information on this other workshop will be forthcoming. It is noted that, in order to focus the discussions at the two workshops, participation in each workshop would not involve experts from the entire region. Accordingly, such participation would be decided by the Group of Experts of the Regular Process, in consultation with the Secretariat and with the hosts during the process of development and finalization of the agenda for each workshop taking into consideration the thematic and geographical scope of the workshop.

All documents concerning the workshop in Malta will be made available on the website of the Division in due course at: <http://www.un.org/depts/los/rp>. Member States of the United Nations, members of United Nations specialized agencies and relevant organizations, bodies, funds or programmes within the United Nations system, shall be entitled to participate up to the number of available places. Relevant regional intergovernmental organizations are encouraged to participate, including regional seas organizations, regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, relevant regional intergovernmental marine science organizations and intergovernmental organizations and arrangements undertaking work in relation to large marine ecosystems. Relevant non-governmental organizations specified in the Guidelines may request an invitation to participate.

¹ Available at http://www.un.org/depts/los/global_reporting/10th_adhoc_2018/Elements.pdf.