Summary of discussions of the first regional Workshop of the first round of workshops held under the auspices of the United Nations in support of the second cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects

Lisbon, Portugal, 14– 15 September 2017

I. Overview

The present document provides a summary of the discussions and information emanating from the first regional Workshop of the first round of workshops in support of the second cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (Regular Process), covering the region of the North Atlantic, the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea. The Workshop was held in Lisbon, Portugal from 14 to 15 September 2017.

The information provided in the present summary synthesizes the discussions, presentations, as well as the Co-Chairs' and Joint Coordinators' remarks at the Workshop under the following overarching topics: available assessments and sources of information; proposed structure of the second world ocean assessment; additional topics for inclusion in the second world ocean assessment; priorities in the Workshop region; how to make the second world ocean assessment most helpful to policy-makers in the region; supporting contributions to the preparation of the second world ocean assessment; capacity-building needs, including for the conduct of integrated assessments; and operational considerations with respect to the second cycle of the Regular Process. The annexes to the present summary of discussions provide other details of the Workshop and its outcomes, including the agenda and list of participants.

II. Background

The programme of work for the period 2017-2020 for the second cycle of the Regular Process, developed by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process[1] and endorsed by the General Assembly,[2] includes in the activities for 2017 the holding of the first round of regional workshops to support the development of the assessment and facilitate outreach, awareness-raising and capacity-building, through, *inter alia*, the identification and collection of data, the identification/scoping of regional priorities and the wider dissemination of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment – World Ocean Assessment I (WOA I).[3] The workshops will also foster a wider geographical representation in the appointment of experts to the Pool of Experts. Subsequently, the Group of Experts of the Regular Process developed the "Guidelines for the first round of Workshops in 2017 to Assist the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects" for the first round of regional workshops. The Guidelines provide for, *inter alia*, the purpose, objectives, participants and outputs of the workshops, as well as for the various operational and administrative considerations on their implementation.

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[1] See the attachment to A/71/362.

[2] See General Assembly resolution 71/257, paragraph 299.

[3] See paragraph 8 (h) of the Programme of Work 2017-2020, attachment to A/71/362.

In accordance with the Guidelines, the objectives of the first round of workshops are to:

(a) Provide an opportunity to present the main conclusions of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment – World Ocean Assessment I (WOA I);

(b) Enable participants to put forward their views on the scope and structure that should be adopted for the assessment to be prepared in the second cycle of the Regular Process, which is to be completed by the end of 2020. Given that the General Assembly decided that the first cycle of the Regular Process should focus on establishing a baseline, and that subsequent cycles should extend to establishing trends, the workshops should in particular aim to conclude:

(i) What aspects of the ocean are most relevant to include in the assessment to be made in the second cycle, and the extent to which it is possible to establish trends in relation to them;

(ii) How the establishment of such trends can most effectively be done in the different oceanic regions in a standard manner;

(iii) How the existence of trends can in the future be evaluated;

(iv) How risks in relation to the various aspects of the ocean can be evaluated, taking into account regional interests and differences;

(v) What regional priorities should be addressed in the preparation of the assessment of the second cycle, bearing in mind the global ocean policy agenda;

(c) Promote capacity-building within the region for which each workshop is held, so as to assist in creating the abilities to contribute from the region to the production of the assessment. In particular, the workshops should consider what steps might be taken to improve abilities to carry out integrated assessments within the region;

(d) Explore what increased cooperation or coordination between processes already under way in the region could assist in providing the information required for the assessment;

(e) Consider how assessments produced by the Regular Process can be structured, so as to help policy-makers most effectively with their tasks; and

(f) Consider how to improve arrangements for networking between experts and organizations taking part in each workshop, and between the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, the Group of Experts, the Pool of Experts, the National Focal Points and the secretariat of the Regular Process.

III. Conduct of the Workshop

The Workshop was held under the auspices of the United Nations, represented by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs, which also serves as the secretariat for the Regular Process, and hosted by the

Government of Portugal. It was held in the facilities of the Lisbon Ocenario with the support of the Oceano Azul Foundation.

The Workshop was conducted in accordance with the draft agenda (Annex 1), with the exception that under item 3 of the agenda, a presentation on WOA I, was delivered by Mr. Alan Simcock (Joint Coordinator of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) instead of Mr. Renison Ruwa (Joint Coordinator of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process, Kenya) who arrived shortly thereafter due to flight delays. Furthermore, participants did not break-out into working groups but rather opted to consider the issues under item 8 in plenary. The decision to proceed in this manner was unanimous, and adopted in the interest of ensuring that the discussions would benefit from a wide representation and diversity of disciplines.

The Workshop was chaired by Ms. Maria Bebianno of Portugal (member of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process). It was attended by the two Joint Coordinators of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process: Mr. Renison Ruwa and Mr. Alan Simcock. Participants also included representatives from the Governments of Malta, Portugal and Ukraine, and from intergovernmental regional scientific organizations, academic research institutes, and foundations (Annex 2, List of Participants). The United Nations was represented by the Secretary of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process and by the Programme Officer of the secretariat of the Regular Process. Overall, the Workshop was attended by seventeen participants, nine of whom were females.

The Workshop opened with welcoming remarks delivered on behalf of the Government of Portugal by Mr. Luis Cabaço (Deputy Political Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and on behalf of the Ocean Azul Foundation and the Lisbon Oceanarium by Mr. Tiago Pitta e Cunha (Chief Executive Officer of the Oceano Azul Foundation). The representative of the United Nations also delivered remarks.

Following these remarks, the secretariat of the Regular Process made an intervention on the current developments in global ocean policies and on the background to the Regular Process and its outputs. Mr. Alan Simcock, Joint Coordinator of the Group of Experts subsequently made a presentation on WOA I, in which he highlighted the fact that during the preparation of the first Assessment, there was no effective cooperation with regional intergovernmental organizations, including with regard to the nomination of experts to the Pool of Experts, but that the new mechanism for appointment of experts to the Pool for the second cycle aimed to address this issue. He also noted that prior website limitations inhibited effective communication with the members of the Pool of Experts, and that the designation of National Focal Points during the second cycle has helped this by providing a coordinating focal point that can liaise with relevant experts. Mr. Simcock also observed that the contributions to WOA I were marked by low participation and contributions (low motivation) and that during the second cycle, the expectation was that Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) in particular, and regional IGOs could also facilitate liaison with relevant experts, and that face-to-face meetings of writing teams would assist the drafting process. The need to balance and reflect the experience of developing countries, including regional composition of experts in the Pool of Experts, was noted.

Mr. Simcock then gave a presentation on the draft elements for discussion on the scope and structure of the assessment of the second cycle (draft elements), which was prepared by the Group of Experts. He noted that the ninth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole decided that one comprehensive assessment should be prepared. He also observed that the "cubist approach" to the information presented in WOA I resulted in less integration than desired and that the preparation of the second assessment would need a more integrated approach. The regional workshops were expected to contribute to determining how to do this. He introduced the draft Elements of the outline for the second assessment which were organized under the following sections: the ocean and its circulation; the food web; the coastal and shelf areas and the open ocean, and noted that the organization of content needed to be useful for policy-makers.

These presentations were followed by discussions under the various agenda items on existing or future assessments in the region, so as to identify how the assessment under the Regular Process can best build on these; the possible structure of the assessment of the second cycle; regional priorities for consideration in the preparation of the second assessment; how to make the assessment of the second cycle most helpful to policy-makers in the region, including with respect to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda); on possible steps which may be undertaken within the region to support contributions to the second assessment; on the capacity-building needs and opportunities relevant to the science-policy interface and how the activities undertaken during the second cycle of the Regular Process may contribute; on how capacities to achieve integrated assessments of the marine environment can be improved; and on what steps could be taken, either within the region or at a global level, to improve the information available for the assessment of the second cycle, and to improve the information available for future assessments.

The Workshop concluded with the Joint Coordinators presenting their summary of the main elements that have emerged from the Workshop, followed by closing remarks by the Chair of the Workshop and the Government of Portugal represented by Mr. Sergio Alves de Carvalho (Head of Unit in Charge of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The representatives from the secretariat of the Regular Process also made closing remarks on behalf of the United Nations.

IV. Summary of discussions

The discussions which took place under the various agenda items were largely cross-cutting in nature and provided an important source of information to be considered during the implementation of the second cycle of the Regular Process, in particular for the preparation of the second world ocean assessment. These discussions have been summarized below under various overarching cross-cutting themes.

A. Consideration of the available and ongoing assessments and sources of information

Workshop participants were invited to provide information on the various assessments and sources of information within the Workshop region which may be

of relevance to the preparation of the second world ocean assessment. Some participants made presentations on the work which they are undertaking in the Workshop region and which may be of relevance to the Regular Process. The representative from the Commission (Successor to the Oslo and Paris Commissions) made a presentation on the Intermediate Assessment 2017 of the OSPAR Regional Assessment of the North-East Atlantic. The representative from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) presented on the structure and mandate and activities of ICES. The representative of the Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM) intervened on the work of the Commission and indicated that many of its outputs could be of relevance to the preparation of the next assessment. The representative of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) presented on the structure and mandate and activities of IPBES. The delegate from Ukraine intervened to underline the importance of cooperation for the undertaking of comprehensive assessments. Presentations made available for distribution will be posted on the Regular Process homepage (www.un.org/depts/los/rp) in due course.

There was general consensus that specific sources of information within the region could be identified once the structure of the assessment was agreed upon by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole. Furthermore, it was noted that there was an abundance of data and information available in the region, and participants from regional scientific Commissions –CIESM, ICES, OSPAR indicated that their organizations may be in a position to assist in the identification of their most relevant outputs (thematic papers, white papers, regional assessments, etc.) to the preparation of the second world ocean assessment. The following other sources were identified: peer review papers, data from international projects, the initial assessments as undertaken under the European Union Marine Strategy Framework Directive (EU-MSFD), experimental data from research surveys; State of the Marine Environment of the Black Sea 2010 to 2014; MSFD intermediate Assessment comprising the 27 stand-alone assessments; regular assessments of Bulgaria and Romania; fish stock assessments (200 stocks covered); IPBES Global Assessment; annual national reports to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean adopted in 1995 (Barcelona Convention); EU-MSFD initial assessments of Ukraine and Georgia (coming in 2018-2019); reports from two Ukrainian national projects; and the Ukrainian Council on Marine Research.

The second round of workshops to be held in 2018 was also seen as providing an important opportunity for the gathering of necessary data and information, as well as to serve as a mechanism through which the identified data and information needs of the second cycle may be widely disseminated throughout the scientific community.

A participant noted that subregional assessments could only be effectively undertaken with the full cooperation of each State within the area of research, and this condition was sometimes lacking. Furthermore, it was noted that cooperation and coordination between processes already underway in the region (e.g. MSFD and Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) with related Good Environmental Status (GES)) is important and could also assist in providing information relevant to the next assessment.

B. Consideration of the proposed structure and focus of the second world ocean assessment

While several points were raised throughout the discussions with respect to the possible structure of the next assessment, it was generally agreed that the proposed structure was sufficiently comprehensive and integrated to be adjusted as required without major structural revision. It was however noted that each region may have different priorities and that it will be important for the assessment to consider the interconnectivity of the issues, including across geographic scales so as not to omit these at the global level. It was also noted that there can be significant challenges with respect to the availability and compatibility of data and assessments undertaken at various geographic scales, thus limiting the possibility of aggregating results to form a global assessment. The comparison of indicators from various assessments being conducted at all geographic scales was proposed as a possible way to mitigate this issue. The consideration of such indicators was also seen as a way to assess the availability of data which would be of relevance in the preparation of the assessment.

In finalizing the structure of the assessment, it was also generally agreed that the Group of Experts of the Regular Process should carefully consider its intended audience, and avoid adapting outputs for users as a post factum exercise which is seen to be resource intensive and not very effective.

The Sustainable Development Goals were seen as an important framework in this regard, including possible use of future assessments in providing data and integrated information on the indicators of the Goal's targets, as well as contributing to the identification of potentially relevant new indicators. Similarly, the work pursuant to Assembly resolution 69/292 on the development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction should also be carefully considered so as to ensure that the structure of the assessment provides relevant data and information to policy-makers, including in the context of the possible intergovernmental conference to consider a potential new agreement in this regard, and the eventual implementation of such an agreement.

It was also noted that there are a number of standardized regional approaches for the preparation of assessments which could be considered in structuring the assessment, including those used within the Regional Seas and that of the EU-MSFD. The use of common approaches was seen as providing a framework for stronger integration of data and information between the national, regional and global levels, as well as an opportunity for reinforcing of assessments between these geographic scales. It was proposed that such complementarity would also serve to reinforce the relevance of assessments to decision-making processes at each level.

Furthermore, while the assessment is to focus on trends based on the first World Ocean Assessment findings, it should also consider the fast-changing dynamics of current and future trends, including through modelling and scenarios, as well as indirect drivers and their interactions. The development of scenarios for specific ocean uses was seen as important decision-making support tools, but would require significant specialised expertise and may need to be developed over several cycles of the Regular Process.

The importance of considering cumulative effects was highlighted, including, for example, the effects of climate change on food webs and fisheries (displacement of population ranges). Furthermore, the cross-cutting nature of resilience to major environmental changes and disasters was seen as an important element to be considered in the assessment.

The consideration of top predators in a distinct section (currently suggested in Part 3.8) of the assessment was seen as important since they have cascading impacts on marine food webs and appear increasingly vulnerable to a common set of new stressors, such as suffocation following plastic ingestion, ship strikes, entanglement (including in lost and abandoned fishing gear), marine debris, submarine noise, bioaccumulation of contaminants, by-catch etc. It was also suggested, with regard to the food web, that top predators should be allocated separate sections, namely on marine mammals and seabirds, given that there are assessments on these already with indicators.

Another issue suggested as worth considering was the impact of capture fisheries on seamounts, but also the impact of surface water biodiversity on seamounts.

Coastal communities were also seen as important to consider in the structure of the assessment. In this regard, it was noted that these should be examined from the perspective of impacts they may have on the marine environment, as stakeholders in the management of oceanic activities, and with respect to adaptation measures of coastal populations to ecological and climatic change.

C. Consideration of additional topics for inclusion in the second world ocean assessment

Various global topics to consider for possible inclusion in the second world ocean assessment were identified throughout the Workshop proceedings. The global, as well as cross-cutting nature of many of these topics were noted, and it was agreed that additional consideration of these topics will be required (including through subsequent workshops) to ascertain how best to incorporate them if they are to be included in the assessment. The interrelationship between many of these topics was also recognized as an important factor in their consideration. These topics included the following:

- Marine geological processes and their impacts; perhaps to be considered in Parts 4 and 5 (“Coastal and Shelf Seas” and “Open Ocean”) and inclusion of ocean atmosphere interactions;
- Seamounts and their biota; perhaps to be considered as cross-cutting in the second assessment;
- Hydrates, hydrothermal vents and cold water seeps;
- Gas hydroids (like methane hydrates) and their potential effects on further contributing to climate change;
- Threats of submarine landslides on submarine cables;
- Microbes, viruses, plankton and genetic biodiversity;
- Effects of sea-ice on oceans, including related populations (e.g. polar bears);
- Water quality (including nutrient and toxicant pollution from various sources, e.g. atmosphere, rivers, coastal zone);
- Bottom sediment quality (including toxicant pollution);
- Sediment biota;

- Non-native species, including the interconnectivity of ocean basins;
- Extinction of species;
- Jellyfish blooms, including the potential future situation of more gelatinous masses than fish biomass;
- Impacts of deep sea-mining, including on genetic resources;
- Cold water corals;
- Effects of underwater noise, and its impacts including on other taxa, and not only on marine mammals;
- Military activities (part of which also include underwater noise issues) in the oceans, including their transboundary effects;
- Human health (as a cross-cutting issue – increased risk of pathogenicity, e.g. due to ballast water), including bioaccumulation, bio-magnification and the effects of some contaminants like endocrine disruptors, as well as socioeconomic impacts;[4]
- Co-management tools based on participation of fishers;
- Area-based management tools, including vulnerability maps (e.g. to coastal surges, floods, coastal erosion, etc.);
- Area-based management is included in Part 4 ("Coastal and Shelf areas"), and could also be included when considering areas within the open ocean which may fall under such management, particularly in light of the discussions within the context of General Assembly resolution 69/292: *Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.*
- Food security linked to diversity;
- Carbon sequestration and anaerobic oxidation;
- The dismantling of ships and its impact on the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects;
- Consideration of relevant outcomes of the Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) process under the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Carbon capture, including in view of the vertical migration of certain fish (e.g., bristle fish); and
- Highly migratory species included in Annex I to UNCLOS.

D. Consideration of priorities in the Workshop region

Participants provided the following topics as current regional priorities for the Workshop region which may be of relevance to other regions and might warrant consideration in the context of the preparation of the second world ocean assessment:

- Following the EU MSFD structure with division into the chemical and physical parameters, pressures and impacts and economic and social analysis;
- The identification of stressors within the region which arise from gaps in the regional and global management frameworks;
- Nutrients and toxins (riverine and atmospheric sources);
- Ecosystem services provided by fish stocks, including those provided by introduced species;

[4] It was noted that the OECD publication Ocean Economy in 2030 may be a relevant source of information in scoping this issue.

- Toxic algae, harmful algal blooms (HABs);
- Decline of marine mammals and sea-birds, and impact on marine food webs overall;
- Marine litter and debris, and their effects on biota;
- Development of scenario driven assessments;
- Additional data on the morphological characteristics and the biodiversity of the deep-sea, including the pressures on these;
- Additional data on the effects of sediments on the benthos, some of which host anaerobic methane oxidation by bacteria thereby calcifying into dolomite sheets and crusts (substrates);
- Ocean warming and its relation to currents and circulation, as well as extreme weather events;
- Ocean warming and acidification;
- Tourism and related marine biodiversity and socioeconomic impacts;
- Benefits the oceans can bring to society, beyond seafood, for example biotechnology;
- Fish stocks studies, noting sub-regional diversity which cannot be simply derived from regional or global trends;
- Fish stocks studies on apex predators as indicator species, and biomass as abundance indicator;
- Deep-sea processes and ecosystems, particularly extreme ecosystems;
- Coastal erosion;
- Resilience to natural occurrences and early warning systems;
- Research on highly migratory marine species as very vulnerable to global threats issues (plastics, lost and abandoned gear, ship strikes, submarine noise, etc.) and the development of a related indicator;
- Seagrasses, mangroves and coral reefs as carbon sinks –'blue carbon';
- Denitrification and anammox processes, and the effect of climate change on these processes; and
- Reinforcement of ocean observation networks, international cooperation in data management and open access to data.

E. Consideration of how to make the second world ocean assessment most helpful to policy-makers in the region

In addition to the points summarized above in the context of the proposed structure of the second world ocean assessment, and recognizing that the assessment must be policy-relevant but not policy-prescriptive, the present section summarizes additional relevant points raised during the course of the Workshop relating to how to make the second world ocean assessment more relevant to policy-makers in the region.

It was noted that the use of a database-driven reporting system for the second world ocean assessment, making use of a dynamic online database which is updated by users as new data becomes available, could be used in addition to a static assessment. This approach would allow policy-makers to generate customized reports drawing upon the latest information available on the topics of interest. The importance of a dynamic approach to the preparation and presentation of assessments was further underlined by the observation that the oceans are changing rapidly and while some knowledge gaps may have diminished, new lacunae, including with respect to requirements on policy-making, need to be discovered.

The multitude of informational sources for policy-makers was noted and the corresponding importance of providing policy-makers with the best available, latest scientific information in an easily assimilated format was highlighted by many participants. In this respect, the use of fact sheets of 1,000 words or less, containing a 50-word key message was proposed as very effective. Additionally, the use of maps and diagrams to convey trends and conclusions, particularly in the summary section of the assessment, was generally agreed to be important, since visualization renders data more comprehensible. It was also seen as important that the summary is not only an abridged version of the assessment, but also provides relevant key messages to policy-makers and their work within the various regional and global ocean intergovernmental processes.

It was also noted that while there may be lacunae in the science, policy-makers toned to be provided with open and transparent assessments, based on the best and latest available science, and perhaps highlighting further gaps in science for supplementary consideration. It was generally agreed that the precautionary approach should be applied particularly in data deficient information.

The use of scenarios to inform current management frameworks was proposed to be of high relevance to policy-makers, including with respect to specific issues under active consideration by regional and global decision-making processes. Examples provided in this regard included climate change scenarios demonstrating the various costs of non-participation, as well as scenarios regarding the maximization of the fisheries sector contributions to food security. Similarly, the preparation of issue specific options sheets for policy-makers was proposed as a means to reinforce the uptake of science by policy-making processes. It was further indicated that the assessment's relevance would be only increased if its major findings could be presented in a dynamic manner, adapting to the needs of its users over time as opposed to reporting against a static matrix of issues.

The blue growth perspective was also proposed as an important and relevant axis of analysis for policy-makers. In this respect, it was proposed that assessments of ocean uses should not only consider the pressures, but also the benefits derived from sustainable uses. Blue carbon sequestration was highlighted as a possible example for the Workshop region.

F. Consideration of supporting contributions to the preparation of the second world ocean assessment

With respect to cooperation and coordination between various processes of the Workshop region and the Regular Process, it was agreed that regional entities could provide feedback on major changes and trends which have taken place in the region since the first World Ocean Assessment (2010). This could take the form of a spreadsheet enumerating the major findings of the WOA I, which could be circulated to each organization of the region for comments on their potential contributions.[5] It was also proposed that if further data was required, *ad hoc* consultations could be initiated to identify possible sources within the region, including through the member States of regional organizations. It was also proposed

[5] For example, ICES (Ecosystem Approach Working Group), CIESM Monograph Series (50 issues), MSC (white papers), OSPAR (intermediate assessment on status and trends) and Seascape (MIDAS).

that focal points within the regional scientific organizations could be identified so as to facilitate these processes. It was agreed that if such focal points were designated, the Joint Coordinators of the Group of Experts and the secretariat of the Regular Process would be notified. It was noted that a modality for regional assessments to feed into the preparation of the second assessment also needed to be developed/put in place.

It was also generally agreed that a structured sharing of information on research programmes could serve to mitigate the lack of knowledge of available data and information in the regions. This was deemed particularly important in the case of new and emerging fields of research, such as deep-sea research in the Atlantic Ocean. It was further noted that the careful selection of experts for the Pool of Experts could also serve to mitigate this issue. The use of the second round of workshops in 2018, was also seen as important in this respect, as it would provide an opportunity for the Experts to clearly define their data and information needs and seek collaboration to facilitate obtaining these. The issue of confidentiality of data was also raised as a possible obstacle to the full consideration of certain issues.

It was indicated that it would be difficult to mitigate situations in which data and information in the Workshop region are completely lacking to support the preparation of the assessment. The incongruence of research agendas and timelines, as well as the uncertainty regarding the structure and content of future assessment(s) undertaken under the Regular Process were seen as the principal obstacles. Nonetheless, it was proposed that in the short and medium term, it would be possible to provide meaningful contributions to the assessment, including through the provision of data and information on major oceanic parameters and pressures existing in the region. It was however noted that it would be important to ensure that the integrity of data sets be maintained when adapting these sets for alternative purposes, and further that their sources must always be clearly identified. In the longer term, and with clarity as to the scope and structure of future assessment(s), certain scientific programmes may be in a position to incorporate the data and information needs of the assessment(s) in their programmes of research.

G. Considerations of capacity-building needs and opportunities, including for the conduct of integrated assessments

The global nature of many ocean issues necessitates responses by all States, individually and collectively. Thus, the building of capacity to address imbalances in regional capacities was seen as critical. It was recalled that WOA I provided information on various regional capacity needs, and that new needs will be identified throughout the second cycle of the Regular Process, including during the regional workshops. It was also noted that the efficiency of the science-policy interface is often compromised by a lack of uptake of relevant scientific information by policy-making processes due to limited awareness of the relevance of the information to these processes. This condition was seen to be the limiting factor in the potential impacts of the outputs of the second cycle of the Regular Process.

It was proposed that capacity-building initiatives must not only target the scientific and technical aspects, but also reinforce the ability of scientists and other stakeholders to conduct assessments including to gather, analyze and present to policy-makers relevant data and information. Furthermore, the capacity of the

policy-makers must also be reinforced so that they are better able to request and assimilate relevant data and information throughout policy-making and management cycles. It was proposed that opportunities could be provided for structured dialogues between scientists and policy-makers so as to reinforce their respective understanding and knowledge of each other's needs. The establishment of a community of practice was also seen as important, including for the provision of examples of best practices and innovative approaches. Such initiatives must be well advertised and can be principally web-based, although reinforced with in-person events. The need for resource mobilization for the purchase of scientific equipment, establishing the minimal required capacity to stimulate research activity at the corresponding level and development of a network for regular marine monitoring in those poor/under-equipped sub-regions, and to acquire necessary data, was also proposed as an important capacity-need of the region.

It was noted that in order to attract funding for the development of a special scholarship fund to support training programmes for developing countries pursuant to paragraph 183 of General Assembly resolution 64/71 (12 March 2010), it would be necessary to identify the scope and structure of such a scholarship. In this regard, it was proposed that opportunities should be provided to scientists and policy-makers to interact and learn from each other. The assignment of young scientists to writing teams of assessments was provided as a very successful example, as was the provision of internships for policy-makers within scientific institutions. The extension of opportunities to young professionals and students of non-traditional but related disciplines was seen as important, for example in the fields of information technology, political science, and communications. It was noted that the emerging function of "science manager" and "science-policy official" must also be recognized, and opportunities provided for these disciplines to develop in the academic and professional spheres. The importance of sensitizing the media to the science-policy interface cannot be underestimated, and it was noted that media outlets often have science attachés which could be included in capacity-building events and programmes.

With respect to integrated assessments, it was noted that while their undertaking is policy-driven, there was no standardized approach for the conduct of such assessments. There are often different approaches adopted depending on the issues of interest to policy-makers, for example how to calculate cost-benefit approaches to trade-offs which are very specific to the decision-making contexts. In this respect, it was also noted that the relative value of oceans is culturally rooted, and the assessment of nature's intangible contribution to humankind is an emerging and very complex discipline which must be reinforced.

The issue of data availability, quality and compatibility to undertake integrated assessments was also highlighted as a challenge. Additionally, while data sets may exist, they are often in proprietary formats. Much work remains to be done in this respect, and data transparency projects are emerging to address these issues amongst others. Conversely, it was noted that marine sciences produce an enormous volume of heterogeneous data which is impossible to digest and synthesize in a timely manner, thus creating an information bottleneck. It was noted that information is not knowledge, and knowledge is not wisdom.

H. Operational considerations with respect to the second cycle of the Regular Process

It was noted that face-to-face meetings of the Group of Experts and of the writing teams will be essential for the good conduct of the second cycle, and that funding must also be provided for the participation of Experts from developed States in these meetings. With respect to the diversity of disciplines required to conduct a truly integrated assessment, it was proposed that the nomination process for the Pool of Experts should specifically target social scientists, and not only natural scientists. Furthermore, it was noted that the nomination process should be clearly and openly advertised, otherwise it becomes a barrier to experts wishing to contribute. This was seen as particularly the case for experts which have not traditionally been engaged in, or may have little familiarity with, the Regular Process, including those in the field of socioeconomics.

The importance in minimizing duplication in research and data requirements between processes, including those at the international level was underscored. Thus synergies between processes should be established so that data requirements are clear to all and experts are not asked to duplicate their efforts across processes. The importance of reinforcing or establishing synergies between processes was also underlined with regard to ensuring the widest possible dissemination of assessments, as well as their effective use by policy-makers and scientists. Such synergies were also seen as important mechanisms through which the Regular Process can build on the work of other processes, e.g. the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports and assessments on cryosphere, and vice-versa, building on best available science.

The selection of the highest quality of experts was seen as important in the establishment of the outputs of the second cycle of the Regular Process. The active participation of experts in meetings of other processes was proposed as important for the reinforcement of the relevance of the Regular Process and so as to foster synergies between the preparation of respective assessments.

It was noted that the effective communication on the Regular Process and its outputs could be greatly enhanced through the engagement of a communications professional, as well as through tools such as a periodic newsletter. The development and implementation of a communications plan was proposed as necessary to accompany the second cycle of the Regular Process, and it was noted that such a function is a standard mandate of other processes operating at national, regional and global levels.

The adoption of online collaborative tools was seen as essential for the effective sharing of data and information within the scientific community, including with respect to contributions to the work of the Regular Process. It was noted that free and low cost online collaborative resources are increasingly standard tools used by the scientific community. Online databases were also seen as a necessary tool for the dissemination of information, including with respect to the expertise required to contribute to the preparation of assessments.

The establishment of National Focal Points was seen as a positive development, including with respect to addressing relevant lessons learned from the first cycle of the Regular Process, and with respect to the nomination of Experts to the Group of Experts, the dissemination of information within national scientific and policy-

making spheres, and the provision of information to the Group of Experts on available data at the national and sub-regional levels. Given the diversity and complexity of ocean issues, and the fragmentation of decision-making across governance structures, it was noted that National Focal Points must have a wide understanding of the diversity of issues and strong access to all stakeholders. The critical importance of avoiding the filtering of information through sectoral National Focal Points was underlined as central to the success of undertaking a truly integrated assessment.

ANNEX 1: Draft agenda

REGULAR PROCESS FOR THE GLOBAL REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING SOCIOECONOMIC ASPECTS

Workshop to support the Regular Process: Lisbon, September 14 -15 2017

(North Atlantic, Baltic Sea, Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and North Sea)

DRAFT AGENDA

First day – Thursday 14 September 2017

1. Welcome addresses.
2. Adoption of agenda for the Workshop.
3. Presentation by Dr Renison Ruwa (Joint Coordinator of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process) of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment – World Ocean Assessment I, and discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the Assessment.
4. Presentation by a representative of the secretariat of the Regular Process on current developments in global ocean policies.
5. Presentation by Alan Simcock (Joint Coordinator of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process) of a document on the possible structure of the assessment or assessments to be prepared under the Regular Process in the second cycle, running until the end of 2020.
6. Review of assessments that have been carried out in the North Atlantic, the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the North Sea since 2012 and that are proposed to be carried out within the region in the period 2017 – 2020, in order to identify how the assessment(s) under the Regular Process can best build on them.

Participants in the workshop are requested to be prepared to make short presentations on the assessments with which they have been concerned.

7. Establishment of break-out groups.

The purpose of the break-out groups is to enable as many people as possible to contribute to the discussion. The membership of the break-out groups could be by area or by discipline.

Lunch-break

8. Break-out groups meet to discuss:
   (a) Possible structures of the assessment(s) of the second cycle;
   (b) Regional priorities for the assessment(s) of the second cycle;
   (c) How to make the assessment(s) of the second cycle most helpful to policy-makers in the region with their tasks, including implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Second day – Friday 15 September

9. Report-back session for the break-out groups and discussion of their conclusions.
10. Consideration of what steps might be taken within the region in the period 2017 – 2020 to support contributions to the assessment(s) under the Regular Process in the second cycle. This consideration will be broken down into separate discussions of:

   (a) What increased cooperation or coordination between processes already under way in the region could assist in providing the information required for such assessment(s);
   (b) What can be done in relation to issues on which relevant data and/or information is known

to be available for the region or parts of it, but where it has not been fed into any assessment;

(c) What can be done to provide data and/or information by 2020 on issues relevant to the region where data and/or information are currently lacking;

(d) How to improve arrangements for networking between experts and organizations taking part in each workshop, and the Group of Experts and the secretariat of the Regular Process.

Lunch-break

11. The secretariat of the Regular Process will present information and material relevant to the database on capacity-building needs and opportunities and to the Capacity-Building Partnership Event and Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, as well as the identification of best practices and the role of the workshops and participants therein in awareness-raising and outreach.

12. Consideration of how capacities to achieve integrated assessments of the marine environment can be improved.

Participants in the workshop are requested to be prepared to make short presentations on their ideas.

13. Consideration of what steps could be taken, either within the region or at a global level:

(a) To improve the information available for the assessment(s) of the second cycle;

(b) To improve the information available for future assessments.

Participants in the workshop are requested to take account of the information gaps identified in World Ocean Assessment I in formulating ideas on these questions.

14. Oral presentation by the Chair and the Joint Coordinators of the main elements that have emerged from the workshop.

15. Closure of the Workshop.

ANNEX 2: List of Participants

#	TITLE	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNTRY / ORGANIZATION
1	Mr.	Alan	Simcock	UK / Joint Group of Experts of the Regular Process
2	Ms.	Carmen	Mifsud	Malta / Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion (and Environment Resource Authority)
3	Mr.	Frederic	Briand	Canada / Mediterranean Science Commission – CIESM
4	Mr.	Helder Marques	da Silva	Portugal / DOP – Institute of Marine Research
5	Ms.	Isabel	Sousa Pinto	Portugal / CIIMAR and University of Porto, CLA, IPBES, ECA, Regional Assessment
6	Ms.	Jennifer	Godwin	UK / OSPAR
7	Ms.	Laura	Giuliano	Italy / Mediterranean Science Commission - CIESM
8	Mr.	Luis	Menezes Pinheiro	Portugal / CESAM, University of Aveiro, and Portuguese Committee for the IOC
9	Ms.	Maria Teresa	Cabrita	Portugal / Programa Polar Portugues (PROPOLAR)
10	Ms.	Patricia	Lito	Portugal / CESAM, University of Aveiro
11	Ms.	Raquel	Ribeiro	Portugal / Ocean Programme, Foundation for Science and Technology
12	Mr.	Renison	Ruwa	Kenya / Joint Coordinator / Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
13	Mr.	Sergio	Carvalho	Portugal / Ministry of Foreign Affairs
14	Mr.	Sergiy	Medinets	Ukrain / Odessa National I. I. Mechnikov University of Ministry of Education and Science
15	Ms.	Susana	Salvador	OSPAR
16	Mr.	Francois	Bailet	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, United Nations Office of Legal Affairs
17	Ms.	Vita	Onwuasoanya	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, United Nations Office of Legal Affairs