

## **The Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socio-Economic Aspects**

### Terms of Reference for National Focal Points

#### **Scope and Objectives**

1. Within the framework of the programme of work for the period 2017-2020 of the second cycle of the Regular Process, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/257 of 23 December 2016 on “Oceans and the Law of the Sea” (paragraph 299), States are invited to designate, by 31 May 2017, national focal points to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work for the period 2017-2020 for the second cycle of the Regular Process, in particular with respect to the nomination process for additional experts to the Pool of Experts, the swift communication between the scientific community, the Group of Experts, the Pool of Experts, the Bureau and the secretariat of the Regular Process and awareness-raising (see paragraph 312 of resolution 71/257).
2. In this regard, the National Focal Points (NFPs) would facilitate the nomination of experts to the Pool of Experts, strengthen and promote coordination and the exchange and dissemination of information with the national scientific community of a State and with other stakeholders, including in order to share ongoing and planned activities at the national level, share experiences, best practices, tools and methodologies and lessons learned in oceans related matters relevant to the Regular Process.
3. The NFPs will also be an important interlocutor in awareness-raising and capacity-building activities envisaged under the programme of work for the period 2017-2020, including with regard to regional workshops. These regional workshops will serve to, *inter alia*, raise awareness, provide information, and receive feedback on the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment (World Ocean Assessment 1), generate interest from the scientific community, contribute to capacity-building and inform the scoping and preparation phases and the collection of regional-level information and data for the preparation of the assessment(s) of the second cycle.

#### **Criteria**

4. Given the importance of establishing a clear, single focal point for communication with each State taking part in the Regular Process, the NFP should work in an appropriate national authority or institution, or in the Permanent Mission in New York. In making their nominations to the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, which serves as the secretariat of the Regular Process, States may wish to consider professionals working in any of the main disciplines in the social, economic and environmental sciences, in particular those with experience in the science-policy interface in ocean/marine affairs, and with due regard to the need for gender balance.

## **Mandate**

5. The National Focal Points will:
  - a) Facilitate and expedite the nomination process of experts to the Pool of Experts and ensure transparency and efficacy by reaching out to all relevant national scientific entities to nominate suitably qualified experts to contribute to the preparation of the assessment(s);
  - b) Facilitate a more effective nomination process for experts at the national level in order to avoid delays in appointing experts to the Pool and to ensure their continued engagement in the process;
  - c) Liaise and collaborate as appropriate with the extensive network of National Focal Points of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (of UNESCO) to, inter alia, mobilize the national scientific community to assist with the nomination of Experts to the Pool;
  - d) Ensure that contact details for themselves and the experts nominated by their State to the Pool of Experts are kept up-to-date on the databases maintained by the secretariat of the Regular Process;
  - e) Facilitate the speedy dissemination of reports, background information and exchange of information on matters relevant to the Regular Process within their States;
  - f) Assist with identification of participants for regional workshops and the organization of such workshops as required;
  - g) Raise awareness about the World Ocean Assessment 1 and future assessment(s);
  - h) Contribute to the identification of and provide information on capacity-building needs and/or opportunities;
  - i) Exchange information on national initiatives including on recent and ongoing assessments and other processes relevant to the Regular Process;
  - j) Ensure swift communication between the national scientific community, the Group of Experts, the Pool of Experts, the Bureau and the secretariat on matters relevant to the Regular Process;
  - k) Respond to requests from the Group of Experts, the Bureau and the secretariat of the Regular Process;

## **Modalities of Work**

### **6. Focal Point**

The secretariat for the Regular Process (the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea), will be the focal point for National Focal Points, and in that capacity will:

- a) Communicate with the Permanent Missions regarding the nomination process for the Pool of Experts, with copies to National Focal Points;
- b) Liaise with National Focal Points, share information on developments related to the outputs of the Regular Process, collect information from National Focal Points relevant to the nomination of experts for the Pool of Experts and to the preparation of assessment(s) and update the Group of Experts, Co-Chairs and the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the information received;
- c) Convene regular information-sharing web meetings, and/or, prepare periodic communications to update National Focal Points on progress in the preparation of the assessment(s);
- d) Keep the Joint Coordinators of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process informed of significant exchanges with National Focal Points.

### **7. Meetings**

- a) The secretariat for the Regular Process will hold regular virtual meetings as needed with National Focal Points, including, as appropriate, in conjunction with the Bureau and/or the Group of Experts, and will endeavor to make maximum use of electronic communication and information management and conduct intersessional work by electronic means such as Skype and webex.
- b) Communications between National Focal Points, the secretariat of the Regular Process and the Group of Experts should be transmitted through a database that they will be able to access electronically through the Regular Process website.