

**PRELIMINARY INDICATIVE
WORK PROGRAMME 2017 – 2020**

**FOR THE SECOND CYCLE OF THE REGULAR PROCESS FOR GLOBAL
REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF THE MARINE
ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING SOCIOECONOMIC ASPECTS**

PRESENTED BY THE CO-CHAIRS FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE BUREAU

Introduction

Following the completion of the first cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (the Regular Process) in 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations, through its resolution 70/235 of 23 December 2015 on “Oceans and the law of the sea”, welcomed with appreciation the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment (also known as “the Assessment” or “the First World Ocean Assessment”), approved its summary (document A/70/112), recognized the importance of the Assessment, including for the small island developing States, and decided to launch the second cycle of the Regular Process (paragraphs 266, 267 and 281).

The General Assembly recognized the importance of raising awareness of the Regular Process (paragraph 290) and of the First World Ocean Assessment (paragraph 273), and invited the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (“IOC-UNESCO”), the United Nations Environment Programme (“UNEP”), the International Maritime Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other competent United Nations specialized agencies, as appropriate, to continue to provide technical and scientific support to the Regular Process (paragraph 289).

In its resolution 70/235, the General Assembly requested the Bureau to continue the consideration of lessons learned from the first cycle of the Regular Process with a view to the implementation of the second cycle, including by inviting Member States, observers and other participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process (“the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole”), through the Co-Chairs, to contribute by sending their views in writing to the Bureau, and, convening one or more informal open meetings with Member States, observers and other participants in the Working Group, and to inform the Working Group at its seventh meeting of the views received and to circulate that information in advance of the seventh meeting of the Working Group (paragraph 282).

Pursuant to paragraph 283 of resolution 70/235, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene the seventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, from 3 to 9 August 2016, with a view to providing recommendations to the General Assembly on the follow-up to the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, the implementation of the second cycle of the Regular Process, including its budget and duration, and any adjustments that might be necessary in the light of lessons learned from the first cycle, including with regard to resource requirements, before the end of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, and taking into full consideration the discussions on lessons learned and the way forward.

The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to review the resource requirements for the second cycle and to report to Member States in advance of the seventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole (paragraph 285).

The follow-up to the first cycle of the Regular Process, in particular the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, the launch of the second cycle and the mandate established by the General Assembly provides the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, its Bureau and the Secretariat with a number of actions to undertake. The draft programme of work for the implementation of the second cycle of the Regular Process set out below is presented by the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in consultation with its Bureau, on the basis of the views expressed by the members of the Bureau, the views provided by participants in the Working Group through written submissions on the lessons learned from the first cycle of the Regular Process, the views expressed during the informal open meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole held on 6 May and 10 June 2016, and those expressed during the sixth meeting of the Working Group, held from 8 to 12 September 2015. An Abstract of those views was prepared by the secretariat, and is available on its website at: www.un.org/depts/los/rp. The aforementioned written submissions are also available on the same website.

The draft programme of work is intended to serve primarily as the basis upon which the Secretary-General will identify relevant resource requirements for the second cycle in advance of the seventh meeting of the Working Group.

Going forward, the draft programme of work for the implementation of the second cycle of the Regular Process, which can be read in conjunction with the Abstract, will be submitted to and considered by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process during its seventh meeting from 3 to 9 August 2016.

Goal

It is recalled that the General Assembly in resolution 64/71 decided that in the first cycle, the scope of the Regular Process would focus on establishing a baseline, while in subsequent cycles, the scope would extend to evaluating trends. During the consideration of lessons learned by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, this approach was reaffirmed. In particular, it is anticipated that the assessment(s) prepared during the second cycle should play a decisive supporting role for other United Nations processes, including the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly of Goal 14, “Conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, and marine resources for sustainable development”, as well as in its follow-up and review, while avoiding duplication and without prejudice to the competences of relevant United Nations bodies on this subject, and a supporting role for the process for 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 process, as well as for the processes under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (“UNFCCC Process”). It will also consider information on new discoveries and breakthroughs in knowledge since the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment. Overall, the outcome of the assessment(s) (prepared during the second cycle) should support policy development and decision-making at national, regional and global levels. In that regard, the General Assembly, in its resolution 70/235, recalled the importance of ensuring that assessments, such as those prepared under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Regular Process, support one another and avoid unnecessary duplication, and the importance of taking into account assessments at the regional level.

Duration of the second cycle

- The programme implications arising from the above mandate are based on a five-year second cycle with two principal outputs. The preliminary draft work programme summarizes the initial foreseen categories of activities related to these outputs, with the caveat that operationalizing the second cycle might require additional activities.

Policy relevance and scope

Output I: First Global Integrated Marine Assessment Handbook(s) for Policy-Makers (January to May 2017)

- From January to May 2017, it is envisaged that the Group of Experts would conduct a paired review of the contents of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, and identify key elements of the Assessment as they may relate to intergovernmental processes, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Goals and targets, the Preparatory Committee established by 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 (“BBNJ Prep Com”), and the UNFCCC Process. The output, which would be submitted to the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, would be in the form of a process-specific handbook(s) for policy-makers, which could also be useful to other global processes, such as the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, and the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources for Sustainable Development (Fiji, June 2017).

Output II: World Ocean Assessment(s) (January 2017 to December 2020)

- The second output, preparation of which will overlap in timeline with the first outcome, would be the production of the assessment(s). Preparation of the assessment(s) would begin in January 2017 with a scoping exercise, which would also utilize information from the production of the handbook(s) for policy-makers, including from the analysis and identification of gaps and needs in scientific assessments as related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the BBNJ Prep Com and the UNFCCC Process. Workshops will be used during this phase to, *inter alia*, help identify regional priorities (see “Capacity-building”, below).

Following the determination of scope and content of the assessment(s), it is envisaged that drafting will begin in early 2018, and that the assessment(s) would be finalized by late 2020.

The following initial activities are anticipated:

Establishment of Group of Experts

- Pursuant to paragraph 287 of General Assembly resolution 70/235, the Secretary-General was requested to invite the Chairs of the regional groups to constitute a Group of Experts, ensuring adequate expertise and geographical distribution, comprising a maximum of 25 experts, with no more than five experts per regional group, for the duration of the second cycle of the Regular Process, taking into account the desirability of some degree of continuity, and in accordance with the terms of reference of the Group of Experts of the Regular Process.
- This process is currently underway, and the experts nominated thus far have been invited to participate in the seventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole. A table of the nominations received thus far is attached as Annex I.

Appointment and composition of pool of experts

- It is noted that the establishment of a pool of experts for the second cycle was not addressed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/235 (and may need to be considered by it during its seventy-first session).
- It is necessary to adopt transparent and effective modalities for the appointment of the experts for the pool of experts. In that regard, the establishment of national focal points is suggested, who could not only facilitate the appointment process, but could also be the contact points during the course of the second-cycle for further information collection with regard to the preparation of the assessment(s) and its/their dissemination once completed and published. The national focal points would work closely with States as well as with the secretariat. The engagement of United Nations agencies and other bodies involved in the preparation of assessments could also be considered to provide support to this process.
- From January 2017, national focal points could be nominated and then established by May 2017, in order to, inter alia, facilitate the establishment of the pool of experts. With the definition of the scope and modalities for the assessment(s) of the second cycle starting in January 2017 through to February 2018, it is envisioned that a pool with adequate diversity in both geographic representation and expertise will be convened by early 2018, once the scope and modalities for the assessment(s) are agreed upon. Subsequently, it is thus expected that the writing teams would be constituted, in early 2018. A clear and transparent process will be put in place for the establishment of such teams, including the selection of lead authors, guidelines, and clear and achievable timeframes.
- In this regard, there is a need for a communications system between the secretariat, the Co-Chairs and the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, the pool of experts and the Group of Experts, as well as with the national focal points (see “Communications” below).

Preparation of outputs, including data sources and review process

- From January to May 2017, the Group of Experts is expected to prepare the handbook(s) for policy-makers for each of the global processes identified, as well as related promotional materials. It is anticipated that the development of the handbook(s) will be completed on the basis of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment by members of

the Group of Experts, with the possible assistance of some of the authors of the Assessment.

- This work will also serve to inform the analysis and identification of gaps and needs in scientific assessments, including socioeconomic aspects, which will be undertaken by the Group of Experts in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the BBNJ Prep Com and the UNFCCC Process. Based on this work, the proposed scope and content of the assessment(s) will be prepared and submitted to the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole.
- The secretariat of the Regular Process will continue to compile on a regular basis a list of recent and ongoing global and regional assessments.
- It is expected that the members of the Group of Experts and the secretariat will have access to a wide range of scientific journals and commercial databases to provide information and check references. It may be necessary, however, to purchase access rights/subscriptions for certain members who do not enjoy such access through their institutions.
- There is a need for adequate integration and the consistent assessment of trends in various regions of the world. In this regard, the members of the writing teams may consider keeping a common electronic record of the trends they uncover in the various assessments they draw upon, taking into account data quality control.
- There is a need for a web-based system to facilitate the review and revision of draft chapters of the assessment(s), which would include both software, and work from the secretariat to assist with maintenance and administration. Some examples of systems currently available include Slack and Google Docs; the Group of Experts will need to determine the appropriate choice based on their agreed-upon methods of work. These resources would help ensure, inter alia, consistency in the review process across chapters.
- Sufficient time will be allocated for the review process and an effective tool to enable contributors to provide their feedback, including through improving communication between all parties involved, will be developed.
- Copy-editing, copy-right management, printing, translation, and editing will be required, as well as printing of the outcomes of the second cycle.

Meetings (Working Group, Bureau, Group of Experts and engagement of pool of experts)

- One calendar meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole is held annually, with flexibility to hold additional meetings as necessary.
- The Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, in putting into practice the decisions and guidance of the Working Group during the intersessional period, will need to have regular meetings throughout the year in order to continue oversight of the progress of work.
- Further, it is anticipated that there may be need for non-calendar, open informal meetings at United Nations Headquarters convened by the Bureau during the second cycle.

- In order to facilitate their work, the Group of Experts (a total of 25 individuals), would need to have periodic meetings in order to develop their work plan and work on the assessment(s). In that regard, it is projected that a minimum of two meetings of the Group of Experts per year would be held. It is envisioned that a first meeting of the Group of Experts would be held in April 2017, and another possibly in conjunction with the capacity-building partnership event / stakeholder dialogue (see below: Capacity-building). Members of the Group of Experts will require support for travel and daily subsistence allowance to attend the meetings, particularly for those members from developing States.
- With regard to the writing teams, it is anticipated that a minimum of two meetings of the writing teams to prepare and finalize the assessment(s) would be needed (venue could be New York or other locations). In addition to these meetings, internet communications and teleconferences can further support communication between and among writing teams.

Capacity-building (including workshops, briefings, inventories)

- The second cycle will involve developing and delivering programmes to facilitate the catalysing of needs-based capacity-building initiatives with information resources and funding partners, and the compilation and maintenance of a capacity-building inventory including through interactive content on the Regular Process web-portal; developing and delivering regional workshops including through partnerships, fundraising, follow-up to workshops including through development and maintenance of virtual community of practice, publications and substantive Regular Process web-portal content.
- Regional workshops in support of the Regular Process have been considered useful, including as an axis for capacity-building. During the second cycle, they could be a mechanism for awareness-raising and follow-up to the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, including in relation to capacity-building needs and opportunities. The workshops could also facilitate the scoping for regional priorities for the assessment(s) of the second cycle.
- It is envisaged that for the second cycle, a maximum of two rounds of five regional workshops could be held, including so as to inform the scoping and preparation phases of the assessment(s). It will be important to start holding the workshops in early 2017, and complete a first round of five regional workshops by early 2018 so as to inform the scoping of the assessment(s), raise awareness and provide information and receive feedback on the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, and generate interest from the scientific community. The second round of workshops will then be held so as to, *inter alia*, inform the collection of regional-level information and data for the preparation of the assessment(s). This second round of workshops should be completed in late 2018, given that drafting of the assessment(s) would be in the early stages, having begun in early 2018.
- Between the two rounds of workshops, in order to build support from partners and coordinate efforts, a capacity-building partnership event could be held in conjunction with a stakeholder dialogue, which would also include civil society.
- Apart from the secretariat and relevant members of the pool of experts, it will also be important that the members of the Group of Experts attend the workshops.

Cooperation and interaction with other bodies

- The continued engagement and support of other bodies is seen as important, including so as to facilitate the provision of information relevant to the preparation of assessment(s) and with respect to assisting with outreach activities across their constituencies. In particular, United Nations agencies, such as IOC-UNESCO and UNEP, will continue to play a central supporting role during the second cycle, including with regard to capacity-building. Substantive capacity-building activities will be needed to fill in gaps in data and accommodate needs in scientific assessment methodologies, including with respect to standardization of data collection and storage, assessment methodologies, as well as data quality control. Otherwise such gaps will continue to create obstacles for future assessment(s).
- Other relevant bodies, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Food and Agricultural Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labour Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the International Seabed Authority, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations World Tourism Organization, the World Meteorological Organization, and the World Bank, could also be important partners.
- Firm commitments and inputs to the Regular Process and its second cycle would be needed from the relevant United Nations agencies and programmes. The secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, as appropriate, would coordinate these efforts. It is projected that a number of coordination meetings with relevant stakeholders will need to be held.
- A specific training programme to support the implementation of the second cycle could be developed in collaboration with IOC-UNESCO and UNEP.
- It is foreseen that the secretariat would also participate in a number of intergovernmental meetings in order to promote the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, provide updates on the second cycle and its products, and establish areas of cooperation in the development and implementation of the second cycle. Such meetings could also include the participation of members of the Group of Experts, the Co-Chairs, and the Joint-Coordinators, as appropriate.

Communications (external and internal, including engagement of pool of experts, writing teams)

- Continued engagement and support of other organizations, including in the provision of information and outreach, in particular from IOC-UNESCO and UNEP, will be important during the second cycle.
- Effective communications, including with the Group of Experts, the pool of experts and the writing teams are crucial to the success of the second cycle of the Regular Process. Communications systems must be well organized and user friendly. It is imperative to ensure timely and sustained meaningful engagement of the pool of experts as of their appointment. The secretariat will thus engage in the development and deployment of a communications strategy to raise awareness of the function and methods of work of the

pool of experts; and the development and maintenance of a dedicated component of the Regular Process web portal for the members of the pool of experts and the members of the writing teams.

- The secretariat, which hosts the webpage for the Regular Process, will also develop a web portal to provide for functions, such as editorial review and management, awareness-raising and outreach, and provide access to online-databases (e.g. on available assessments, capacity-building needs and opportunities).

Outreach and awareness-raising

- Apart from awareness-raising, the web portal will also be an important tool in outreach, including through establishing links with the websites of partner organizations, to broaden the influence of the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment and future assessment(s).
- Briefings and multimedia materials will be developed and delivered for delegations, stakeholders and the press on the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment and the outcomes of the second cycle.
- States and intergovernmental organizations could consider establishing focal points to facilitate outreach, awareness-raising and communication between the scientific community, the Group of Experts, the pool of experts, the Bureau and the secretariat.

Secretariat

- The secretariat function is discharged by the Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (“the Division”) of the United Nations Secretariat. The functions of the secretariat are presently covered by the regular budget of the United Nations Secretariat.
- During the second cycle, the Division will, *inter alia*, fulfil the secretariat functions for the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group, the Bureau, the Group of Experts, and the pool of experts. It will also establish partnerships with relevant stakeholders, develop, deliver and follow-up on regional workshops; undertake outreach and awareness-raising campaigns, including by making presentations at intergovernmental and other meetings; develop and maintain a Regular Process web-portal; and provide substantive and technical support, e.g., communications, in the establishment and implementation of the second cycle, including in the preparation and publication of assessment(s).
- The Division will also continue to administer the Regular Process Trust Fund, including fund-raising, donor engagement and relation management, contribution agreement formulation and implementation, reporting, disbursement and travel management.

ANNEX I

Experts nominated for the Group of Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/235 for the second cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects

African States		
Candidate	Nationality	Specialty
Mr. Essam Yassin Mohammed	Eritrea	Development economics, environmental economics, fisheries
Mr. Renison Ruwa	Kenya	Reef ecology, aquaculture and fisheries, integrated coastal zone management
Ms. L. Ylénia Randrianarisoa	Madagascar	Environmental and development economics, natural resource governance
Mr. Osman Keh Kamara	Sierra Leone	Oceans law and policy, international law, economic policy
Mr. Joshua Tuhumwire	Uganda	Geology (mineral prospecting)
Asia-Pacific States		
Candidate	Nationality	Specialty
Ms. Juying Wang	People's Republic of China	Marine chemistry
Ms. Sanae Chiba	Japan	Fisheries, human ecology, marine biology, plankton
Ms. Hilconida P. Calumpong	Philippines	Botany, biology, medical technology
Mr. Chul Park	Republic of Korea	Marine biology, oceanography, plankton ecology
Mr. Thanh Ca Vu	Viet Nam	Oceanography, coastal engineering, environmental engineering
Eastern Europe States		
Mr. Tymon Przemyslaw Zielinski	Poland	Oceanology, oceanography, atmosphere
Latin America and Caribbean States		
Mr. Enrique Marschoff	Argentina	Biological sciences (euphausiid larvae distribution), Antarctic marine living resources.
Western Europe and Other States		
Candidate	Nationality	Specialty
Mr. David Smith	Australia	Fisheries, fish biology, oceans and atmosphere
Ms. Anastasia Strati	Greece	Marine law and policy, international law, cultural heritage
Ms. Maria Joao Bebiano	Portugal	Marine pollution, ecotoxicology, environmental chemistry
Mr. Alan Simcock	United Kingdom	Environmental policy, climate change, sustainable development, ecology
Ms. Michelle McClure	United States of America	Ecology, evolutionary biology, fisheries