

Draft recommendations to the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly, for consideration for submission under the agenda item entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”, on the launch of the Second World Ocean Assessment and progress in the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process

1. *Reiterates* the need to strengthen the regular scientific assessment of the state of the marine environment in order to enhance the scientific basis for policymaking;
2. *Reaffirms* the principles guiding the Regular Process and its objective and scope, recalls the crucial importance of the Regular Process for ongoing ocean-related intergovernmental processes and its possible inputs, including for the 2030 Agenda, 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, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, among other relevant processes, and notes the importance of continuing support and cooperation between the activities of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and those of the Regular Process;
3. *Recalls* the importance of ensuring that assessments, such as those included in the Global Sustainable Development Report and 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 also recalls the importance of compatibility and synergies between such assessments and assessments at the regional level;
4. *Recalls* that the Regular Process shall be overseen and guided by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole and that the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole shall facilitate the delivery of the outputs of the third cycle as outlined in the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process, and endorses the recommendations adopted by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole at its fifteenth meeting on the launch of the second *World Ocean Assessment* and progress in the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process;
5. *Recognizes* the importance of raising awareness of the second *World Ocean Assessment* and the Regular Process, and welcomes the launch of the second *World Ocean Assessment* on 21 April 2021 as well as other activities undertaken to raise awareness of the second *World Ocean Assessment* and the Regular Process;
6. *Recognizes* with appreciation the important role of the Co-Chairs and the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in putting into practice the decisions and guidance of the Ad Hoc Working Group during the intersessional period, requests the Bureau to continue to provide oversight of the delivery of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process, and recognizes the support provided by the secretariat in that regard;

7. *Takes note of* the terms of reference for national focal points and for focal points of intergovernmental entities developed by the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in accordance with the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process;
8. *Invites* States that have not yet done so to designate national focal points to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process and beyond;
9. *Invites* the secretariats of relevant United Nations specialized agencies, programmes, funds and bodies and the secretariats of related organizations and conventions to designate focal points to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle and beyond;
10. *Invites* the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Meteorological Organization and relevant United Nations system organizations, bodies, funds and programmes, as appropriate, to assist in the implementation of the third cycle of the Regular Process;
11. *Invites* relevant intergovernmental organizations to contribute, as appropriate, to the activities of the third cycle;
12. *Welcomes* the constitution of the Group of Experts for the third cycle of the Regular Process, which currently consists of 21 members, and notes with appreciation the work being carried out by the members of the Group of Experts in the implementation of the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process;
13. *Recalls* that the Group of Experts for the third cycle of the Regular Process shall comprise a maximum of 25 experts, with no more than five experts per regional group, and encourages regional groups that have appointed less than five experts to continue to appoint experts to the Group of Experts, taking into account the need to ensure adequate expertise, gender balance and geographical distribution;
14. *Notes* the endorsement by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of the terms of reference and working methods of the Group of Experts for the third cycle of the Regular Process, developed by the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in accordance with the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process and revised during the fifteenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole;
15. *Takes note of* the mechanism to establish the Pool of Experts for the third cycle of the Regular Process, developed by the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole in accordance with the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process and revised during the fifteenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, encourages the appointment of experts to the Pool of Experts in accordance with the mechanism, and requests the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole to provide oversight of the establishment of the Pool of Experts;

16. *Recognizes* the need for early preparation of regional workshops as outlined in the programme of work for the third cycle of the Regular Process, and invites States to consider hosting such workshops and inform the secretariat of their intent as early as possible;

17. *Urges* States, international financial institutions, donor agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and natural and juridical persons to make financial contributions to the voluntary trust fund and to make other contributions to the Regular Process;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to convene, in 2022, up to two meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of no more than two days total duration for each meeting, one in the first half of 2022 and another in the second half of 2022;