

Third cycle of the Regular Process

Outcomes of the third cycle

- Assessment(s) will need to be produced. In determining the scope and focus of this/these assessment(s), the Group of Experts, the Bureau and the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, could consider the following questions in particular:
 - Should there be another global integrated assessment or should the next assessment(s) have a more limited focus, e.g. a thematic assessment(s)?
 - Can the outcomes of the third cycle be made more relevant to policy-makers by linking to global, regional, or sub-regional objectives, in particular the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, in a more direct manner?
 - How will overlaps with e.g., the IPCC, IPBES and GEO assessments be avoided, and how can synergies among these processes be further strengthened?
 - How can approaches and lessons learned from the above-mentioned processes help inform the organization of the third cycle of the Regular Process?
- Technical abstracts of the second world ocean assessment – should these be produced as was done for WOA I or should another, briefer type of document for the benefit of policy-makers be produced e.g., a brief (5 to 10 pages) document outlining specific policy-relevant information from the second world ocean assessment.
- A coherent programme to support capacity-building
 - The development of this programme was recommended at the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole (31 August to 4 September 2009) and it was also listed as one of the possible ways forward in the outcome document from the Multi-stakeholder dialogue and capacity-building partnership event (24 to 25 January 2019).
 - Its focus should primarily be on integrated assessments.
 - It could e.g., take the form of a clearing-house mechanism, providing information and matching needs and available programmes related to integrated assessments.

Building-blocks:

i) Lessons-learned from the second cycle of the Regular process

- A dedicated process/exercise to review the second cycle of the Regular Process and its outcomes would help inform, inter alia, the structure, funding and programme of work of the third cycle. Such a process would benefit from the input of participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole, Intergovernmental organizations, Non-governmental organizations, National Focal Points, the Group of Experts, the Pool of Experts and the secretariat.

ii) An outreach and engagement strategy

- The outcome document from the Multi-stakeholder dialogue and capacity-building partnership event (24 to 25 January 2019) lists the need to develop communication strategies for different targeted audiences.
- The need to improve communication, as well as to make greater efforts for outreach and awareness-raising were also among the lessons learned from the first cycle of the Regular Process.
- These aims could all be addressed in an outreach and engagement strategy.
- The primary aims of such a strategy would be to improve communication with stakeholders within the context of the Regular Process, and reaching and engaging policy-makers, organizations, academia, schools and the general public in the Regular Process.
- The briefs for policy-makers mentioned above could be a part of such a strategy.
- The regional workshops (see below) could also be a part of such a strategy.

iii) Regional workshops

- Regional workshops are expected to assist in reinforcing the capacity of States to participate in the Regular Process, undertake and/or participate in assessments, and more generally reinforce the science-policy interface. They are also expected to foster a wider geographical representation and a range of expertise in the appointment of experts to the Pool of Experts of the Regular Process, as well as facilitate the collection of regional-level data and information for the future integrated assessment(s).
- Building on the successes and lessons learned from the first and second cycles, how should the regional workshops for the third cycle be structured?

iv) Interaction between the Regular Process and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)

- The third cycle of the Regular Process would coincide with the first five years of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).
- The deliverables of the third cycle of the Regular Process should be aligned with, and feed into the Decade.
- The trends that the second world ocean assessment will evaluate and the gaps it will identify could inform the planning for major activities of the Decade. The Decade could then assist in concentrating efforts to further the knowledge in those areas of ocean science where gaps currently exist, therefore contributing to the next integrated assessment. The Decade could also provide an opportunity to support the Regular Process in strengthening the science-policy interface. Therefore, the Decade and the Regular Process would mutually benefit from cooperation and synergies with each other.
- The implementation plan for the Decade will be considered by the UN General Assembly in 2020, at the same time as the consideration of the second world ocean assessment and the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole for

- the third cycle, so there is a need to ensure coordination and synergies between the two processes. To ensure this, involving the IOC High-level Steering group for the Decade in the planning process for the third cycle would be important.
- The 20th meeting of the Informal Consultative Process (10-14 June 2019), whose topic of focus was “Ocean Science and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development” presented another opportunity to raise the importance of decision-making based on the best available science and the important role of the Regular Process in that regard.

v) The Regular Process and other UN bodies and processes

During the third cycle, the Regular Process would also need to consider discussions held in other UN processes, including the following:

- The Intergovernmental Conference on 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 General Assembly;
- The UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea;
- The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
- The 2020 High-Level UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 to be held in Portugal and its outcomes.