



**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE GLOBAL
CONFERENCE ON OCEANS, COASTS, AND
ISLANDS: MOBILIZING FOR
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS
MADE AT THE 2002 WORLD SUMMIT ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:
12-14 NOVEMBER 2003**

The Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands: Mobilizing for Implementation of the Commitments Made at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) took place from 12-14 November 2003 at United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) headquarters in Paris, France. Informal group meetings and workshops convened from 10-11 November 2003.

The Global Conference was organized by the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, which was created by an informal WSSD coordinating group in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002. Comprised of individuals from governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Global Forum serves as a platform for cross-sectoral information sharing and dialogue on issues affecting oceans, coasts and islands, with the goal of attaining sustainable development in these areas.

During the three day Conference, approximately 250 participants representing governments, IGOs, NGOs, academia and civil society met in Plenary, roundtable and working group sessions to examine the WSSD commitments on oceans, coasts and islands and strategies for achieving implementation of the global oceans agenda, which includes mobilizing private sector involvement and involving small island developing States (SIDS). Outcomes from the Global Conference will be included in a Co-Chairs report, containing WSSD implementation perspectives, progress initiatives and summaries of papers presented at the Conference.

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL
MANAGEMENT OF OCEANS, COASTS AND ISLANDS**

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, was the first major international gathering to address issues related to sustainable development at the global level. UNCED participants

adopted Agenda 21, a plan for achieving sustainable development in the 21st century. Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 called for new and integrated approaches to sustainable development of oceans and coasts, and the Rio Principles on environment and development introduced the precautionary principle as a component of new approaches to ocean-related agreements.

POST-UNCED AGREEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES: Since UNCED, significant progress has been made in the development of legislation, agreements and programmes of action at the international level. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) entered into force in 1994, providing an overall framework for other ocean-related agreements. The United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Jakarta Mandate on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity (Jakarta Mandate) and the United Nations Agreement on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (Fish Stocks Agreement) were all adopted in 1995. UNEP's Regional Seas Programme has continued to guide the process of regional cooperation, and the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States has contributed to an overall strengthening of issues related to SIDS on the political agenda.

Numerous efforts in capacity building and integrated coastal management (ICM) have also been undertaken at national and local levels, including the creation of policy frameworks and establishment of protected areas and conservation projects. Investments by the private sector in partnership with governments, advances in technology and scientific research, and NGO efforts to raise public awareness have all contributed to the evolution of sustainable development and management of coastal and marine areas.

WSSD PREPARATIONS AND OUTCOMES: The WSSD convened from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. A number of meetings prior to the WSSD contributed to putting oceans, coasts and islands issues on the agenda.

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The November 2001 GPA Intergovernmental Review Meeting brought together high-level government officials from 98 countries, international financial institutions, international organizations, UN agencies and NGOs in Montreal, Canada, where participants adopted the Montreal Declaration, which provided input to the WSSD.

The Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10, held in December 2001 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France, assessed the status of oceans and coasts and progress achieved over the last decade, identified continuing and new challenges, and set the groundwork for the inclusion of an oceans perspective at the WSSD.

The WSSD adopted two "Type I" outcomes - the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPI) and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. The JPI is a framework for action containing chapters on poverty eradication, consumption and production, natural resources, globalization, health and SIDS. It also contains a number of commitments on oceans, coasts and islands, including: controlling illegal fishing by 2004; managing fishery capacity by 2005; applying the ecosystem approach to marine areas by 2010; and establishing a network of marine protected areas (MPAs) by 2012.

In addition to the "Type I" outcomes, approximately 280 "Type II" outcomes – non-negotiated partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society aimed at implementing Agenda 21 – were announced prior to or during the WSSD, several of which were in the area of water and sanitation. These partnership initiatives supplement the WSSD's negotiated agreements and represent a considerable amount of funding for implementation.

Following the WSSD, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/57/262, which calls for, *inter alia*, a 10-year comprehensive review of the Barbados Programme of Action at a high-level international meeting, to be held in Mauritius in August 2004.

POST-WSSD MEETINGS: International discussions on oceans, coasts and islands issues have continued in a number of fora since the WSSD. These include the 3rd World Water Forum, which met in March 2003 in Kyoto, Osaka and Shiga, Japan. Delegates to that meeting adopted a Ministerial Declaration and launched a Portfolio of Water Actions. The Declaration, *inter alia*, declares that water is a driving force for sustainable development and emphasizes that Ministers should ensure good governance with a stronger focus on community-based approaches addressing equity, mobilize private and public financing, and identify and develop public-private partnerships, while ensuring the necessary public control and legal frameworks to protect public interests.

In preparation for the 2004 International Conference on Small Island Developing States, three regional meetings convened during the second half of 2003. The Pacific Island Countries met in Samoa in August 2003, the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and the South China Sea (AIMS) Island Countries gathered in September 2003 in Cape Verde, and the Caribbean region met in October 2003 in Trinidad and Tobago. Delegates at these meetings discussed, *inter alia*, achievements and constraints that are particular to each region, how to improve regional cooperation, and emerging issues such as human security concerns, including drug trade, crime, terrorism and food and

water. The results of these regional meetings will form the basis for discussion at the interregional preparatory meeting to be held in Nassau, Bahamas, in January 2003.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

The Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands commenced on Wednesday, 12 November 2003. It was co-chaired by Biliiana Cicin-Sain, Director of the University of Delaware's Center for Marine Policy, Patricio Bernal, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), and Veerle Vanderweerd, UNEP-GPA Director.

Following an opening session of high-level ministerial perspectives on implementing WSSD commitments, participants met in Plenary to hear presentations on WSSD implementation at the regional level and on SIDS issues pertaining to the upcoming meeting in Mauritius in 2004. On Thursday, 13 November, participants discussed NGO and foundation perspectives on WSSD implementation and challenges and opportunities in meeting WSSD objectives on oceans, coasts and SIDS. They also met in working groups to discuss several WSSD targets, including: marine pollution, fisheries, SIDS, biodiversity and marine protected areas (MPAs), and enhanced UN coherence. On Friday, 14 November, participants met in Plenary to hear presentations on targeting development assistance, private sector perspectives, options for a global oceans fund, generating public support and emerging issues. They also heard reports from each of the working groups and from the pre-conference meeting. Special addresses were also made throughout the three-day conference on a range of topics, including: challenges to the global oceans environment, the Law of the Sea, the international oceans regime, the global water agenda, and achieving WSSD objectives at the regional level. The following report summarizes the Conference's proceedings.

OPENING SESSION

On Wednesday, 12 November, Co-Chair Bernal welcomed delegates to the Global Conference. He said the Conference is an open platform bringing together a wide range of stakeholders committed to oceans, coasts and islands issues, and expressed hope that participants would further support and add value to implementing relevant targets agreed on at the WSSD.

Co-Chair Cicin-Sain said the Conference seeks to operationalize strategies and form "alliances" among governments, IGOs and NGOs to advance the WSSD targets. David Osborn, UNEP-GPA, said WSSD targets are not self-implementing and work needs to be done for them to be met. He added that the Conference needs to find ways to link with other international processes addressing water issues.

PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WSSD COMMITMENTS: MINISTERIAL PERSPECTIVES

On Wednesday morning, 12 November, Magnus Johannesson, Secretary-General, Ministry of Environment, Iceland, chaired a session for ministerial-level leaders from ocean and coastal nations to discuss initiatives taken to implement the WSSD commitments at the national and international levels.

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Roselyne Bachelot-Narquin, French Minister of Ecology and Sustainable Development, noted a chapter on oceans in France's 2003 Development Strategy, which focuses on marine assessment, scientific research and the need to work within the framework of the water and habitats directives of the European Union (EU). She said France would create "sea highways" for safer transportation, develop a strategy for marine biodiversity preservation, adopt an integrated approach to oceans management, and create a monitoring programme. She called for the creation of new tools to address threats faced by coasts and fisheries and the preservation of oceans for future generations.

Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, noted that oceans, coasts and islands issues are adequately represented in the JPI and through various WSSD partnership initiatives, and said oceans issues should be linked with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly the fight against poverty, and the work of the Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD). He also called for Conference participants to work towards a common implementing programme.

José Luis Arnaut, Ministerial Assistant to the Portuguese Prime Minister, highlighted Portugal's commitment to developing its national ocean policy and stressed the importance of cooperation at the national and international levels to achieve good oceans governance. He noted Portugal's support for the JPI's action to increase scientific and technical collaboration in marine science, and to establish by 2004 a process for global assessment and reporting on the state of the marine environment.

Sun Zhihui, Deputy Administrator, State Oceanic Administration of China, said China was working towards achieving marine sustainable development and highlighted: the promulgation of China Oceans Agenda 21, legislation on fisheries and marine environmental protection, and the establishment of MPAs and of a national marine zoning scheme. He said that future efforts to achieve WSSD targets would include adopting an integrated approach, improving the marine legal system, setting up a monitoring system, and enhancing regional cooperation.

William Brennan, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Affairs, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), discussed US progress in implementing the WSSD targets. On adopting an ecosystem-based approach by 2010, he noted the development of a large marine ecosystems (LMEs) network and Global Environment Facility (GEF) sponsored projects. On the promotion of integrated coastal management at the national level, he mentioned the White Water to Blue Water (WW2BW) initiative. On the goal of systematic geographic observation, he cited the sharing of satellite data with developing countries. He underscored the need for regional and international cooperation and coordination to achieve WSSD goals.

Harsh Gupta, Government Secretary, Indian Department of Ocean Development, focused on India's efforts to implement WSSD commitments through a network of marine research centers. He said India is leading the process of establishing the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Regional Alliance for the Indian Ocean, which will

play an important role in ocean, coastal and climatic data management and satellite applications, and highlighted India's 2015 Perspective Plan for ocean development.

Daniel McDougall, Director-General, Canadian Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans, noted the strong congruence between national initiatives and WSSD commitments, including Canada's recent ratification of UNCLOS. He also noted that the ecosystem-based approach to ICM and promotion of sustainable development are strong components of Canada's national oceans policy. McDougall added that the policy takes into consideration economic and social components, including indigenous knowledge, in the decision-making process and is working closely with local coastal communities.

Lord Julian Hunt, Chairman, Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS), stressed the importance of working within the framework of existing regional conventions and the need for greater private sector involvement. He said sub-Saharan Africa and the Arctic regions share similar environmental threats, including climate change, loss of biological diversity and pollution.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WSSD COMMITMENTS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

On Wednesday morning and afternoon, 12 November, Phil Burgess, UN Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), chaired a session on implementing WSSD commitments at the regional level. Chair Burgess said the nature of oceans problems lends itself to regional solutions and that regional cooperation is key to addressing problems on the high seas.

David Osborn presented on UNEP's Regional Seas Programme, noting the valuable role it can play in realizing WSSD and MDG commitments. He said the Regional Seas Programme can assist in promoting ocean monitoring and assessment and can be used as a platform for the coordinated implementation of multilateral environment agreements (MEAs), such as the CBD.

Kenneth Sherman, Supervisory Research Oceanographer, US National Marine Fisheries Service, presented on the LME network approach to WSSD targets. He said the goals of reducing pollution, the adoption of an ecosystem approach by 2010, and the designation of a network of MPAs by 2012 were achievable, whereas the restoration of fisheries by 2015 would present more difficulties. Sherman stressed the need for scientific assessment in LMEs and welcomed GEF support for marine protection.

Olle Hagstrom, Environment Directorate General, European Commission (EC), explained that the European Marine Strategy adopts a new integrated management approach that includes all stakeholders. He highlighted some of the Strategy's features, including: collaboration with other regional conventions, the application of the precautionary and the polluter pays principles, and good governance.

Cristelle Pratt, Oceans and Islands Programme Manager, South Pacific Applied Geo Science Commission (SOPAC), highlighted the development of a Pacific Islands regional oceans policy. Aware of the long-term threats facing the 22 Pacific Islands, covering some 38.5 million sq. km. of ocean, she said a successful regional oceans policy requires strong regional collaboration and partnerships.

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Gunnar Palsson, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland, introduced the work of the Arctic Council, a high-level regional forum for addressing Arctic issues. He noted the Council's development of a strategic plan for the Arctic marine environment, which is based on an integrated ecosystem approach. He added that the strategic plan focuses on ocean management as well as coastal zone and river issues.

Chua Thia-Eng, Director, Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), presented on WSSD implementation in East Asia. He highlighted several regional ICM activities, including seafront improvements, coastal clean-ups and LME management, and a regional policy and management framework adopted by 12 East Asian countries, which addresses various sustainable development strategies and major WSSD concerns related to coasts and oceans. He added that regional cooperation is key to the regional framework's success.

Margaret Hayes, Director of Oceans Affairs, US Department of State, stated that the WW2BW initiative provides a catalyst for good governance, new resources, training and the promotion of sound environmental practices. She explained that the initiative included all stakeholders and that the upcoming meeting of regional partners would provide an opportunity for: education, training, partnership development, regional cooperation, and the participation of civil society and private actors in ecosystem management.

Harry Coccossis, University of Thessaly, Greece, noted threats facing the Mediterranean coast and said ICM can serve as a coherent framework to organize remedial actions. He explained the need for a new ICM tool for the Mediterranean, stressing the need to include all stakeholders, and announced the adoption by regional ministers of a negotiable framework protocol for ICM.

Iouri Oliounine, Executive Director, International Ocean Institute (IOI), described the integrated approach adopted by the UNEP Caspian Sea environment programme, which deals with environmental threats to the Caspian Basin. He mentioned the IOI's work on capacity building and awareness raising and the recent adoption of a framework convention on the protection of the Caspian environment. Noting the low level of regional cooperation, Oliounine called for the development of partnerships and the effective and coordinated use of existing funds in the region.

Margarita Astrálaga, Americas Regional Coordinator, Ramsar Convention Secretariat, gave an overview of the Convention's work since WSSD, noting an increase in the designation of new protected wetland sites. On WSSD implementation, she said Ramsar had adopted resolutions at its last Conference of the Parties (COP) to assist countries to incorporate wetland issues into integrated coastal zone management.

SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES: THE ISSUES IN MAURITIUS 2004

On Wednesday evening, 12 November, Diane Quarless, SIDS Unit, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), chaired a session on problems faced by SIDS in meeting WSSD targets and timetables, and discussed issues for the ten-year implementation review of the Barbados Programme of Action, which will take place in Mauritius in 2004. Chair Quarless said the Mauritius meeting offers

SIDS the opportunity to develop a more integrated approach to sustainable development strategies, particularly for ocean and marine policies.

Nirmal Jivan Shah, Chief Executive, Nature Seychelles, gave examples of eco-tourism initiatives in the Seychelles to illustrate ways to achieve the WSSD target of developing community-based initiatives on sustainable tourism in SIDS by 2004. He stressed the importance of preserving culture and marine biodiversity, and how local communities and businesses can benefit from such initiatives. Jadish Koonjul, Chair, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), noted many constraints SIDS face due to their smallness, remoteness and vulnerability to natural disasters. He emphasized that SIDS need to, *inter alia*: develop ICM policies; establish new institutional and administrative arrangements to implement these policies; develop legal frameworks for fishery management; strengthen regional capacity; develop national and regional action plans; and ensure the implementation of international agreements, such as UNCLOS.

Robin Mahon, University of the West Indies, Barbados, addressed ways to improve the structure and operation of small fisheries departments in SIDS. Noting that most SIDS fisheries departments were modeled on conventional large fisheries departments, he called for modifying their structure by focusing on people-based approaches, coordination and planning, and increased accountability and transparency. Arthur Dahl, Director, Global Islands Network, identified key issues in SIDS to be addressed at Mauritius 2004, including the need for: SIDS specific solutions; overcoming access issues through information technology development; and preservation of traditional knowledge.

Tiare Holms, Assistant Director, Palau Conservation Society, presented on a community survey carried out in Palau in 2002, identifying eight areas of concern: economic development; eroding traditional values; increase in foreign laborers; healthcare; education; good governance; environment; and crime and substance abuse. She said sustainable development should begin with local communities, noting that local communities in Palau were responsible for establishing and managing most of the country's protected areas.

Pynee Chellapermal, Director, Mauritius Center for Documentation, Research and Training on the South-West Indian Ocean, identified the main challenges facing SIDS, including: trade liberalization, climate change, ICM, sustainable tourism, and the environmental impact of military activities. Herman Belmar, Bequia Community High School, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, stressed the need to develop wise practices for beaches and marine ecosystems. He emphasized the important contribution of youth in preserving the marine and coastal environment.

Following the session, Conference Co-Chair Cicin-Sain announced that the Global Forum's first Leadership Award would be given to Judge Tuiloma Neroni Slade, former AOSIS Chair and Permanent Representative of Samoa to the UN, and currently a judge on the International Criminal Court in The Hague, for his contributions to SIDS and advancing oceans issues on the international agenda.

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NGO AND FOUNDATION PERSPECTIVES ON WSSD IMPLEMENTATION

On Thursday morning, 13 November, NGOs and foundations reported on their WSSD implementation initiatives. The session was chaired by Lynne Hale, Marine Initiative Director, The Nature Conservancy. Chair Hale highlighted the important role of NGOs in implementing WSSD goals, especially in the areas of advocacy, transparency, accountability and capacity building.

Peter Bryant, Endangered Seas Programme Deputy Director, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), outlined WWF's international marine activities, which include: helping establish MPA networks; improving MPA management; combating illegal activities in MPAs; developing sustainable financing for MPAs; building political will at the local, regional and international levels; and working with industry and governments to address threats to marine ecosystems. He also stressed the need to address the creation of high seas MPAs.

Matthew Hatchwell, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) European Coordinator, said WCS was working in Madagascar to improve ICM through: developing partnerships between local communities, government ministries, NGOs and other marine stakeholders; resolving conflicts between traditional and commercial fishermen; developing MPAs; and focusing on biodiversity conservation, particularly large marine species.

Xavier Pastor, Vice-President for European Oceans and Seas, Oceana, said his organization is focusing on the following issues: banning trawling; placing observers on fishing vessels to monitor by-catch; regulating cruise ships; and reforming EU fishing policy to ban illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing.

Carl Lundin, Marine Program Director, IUCN-the World Conservation Union, said IUCN is focusing its attention on: the ecosystem approach; destructive fishing practices; and management tools for MPAs and fisheries. He stressed the need to make ecosystem management more operational, build ocean governance, and reform the fisheries regime.

Hiroshi Terashima, Executive Director, Japanese Ship & Ocean Foundation, made suggestions for implementing WSSD targets, including: promoting global conferences on oceans and coasts; researching policy formulation; promoting regional initiatives; enhancing cooperation between ocean policy research centers; and establishing national cross-cutting agencies for ocean affairs.

François Bailet, Deputy Executive Director, IOI, identified lack of capacity building as a major obstacle for WSSD implementation, but said that NGOs can play an important role in: gathering and disseminating information; involving civil society; contributing to policy; developing programmes; and mobilizing new and addition sources of funding.

Sylvia Earle, Executive Director of Global Marine Programs, Conservation International, stressed the need for NGOs and foundations to invest in protecting the marine environment, particularly in developing MPAs and reforming fisheries, and suggested the creation of a global oceans fund.

In an ensuing discussion, several presenters cited political will as a major obstacle for WSSD implementation. One participant noted the lack of NGO ocean coalitions, while another stressed the importance of seeking public support for ocean issues.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN MEETING THE WSSD SUBSTANTIVE OBJECTIVES

On Thursday morning and afternoon, 13 November, delegates participated in a discussion chaired by Patricio Bernal on substantive WSSD objectives on oceans, coasts and islands.

CROSS-SECTORAL ASPECTS: Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management: Biliana Cicin-Sain stressed the need to: concentrate on institutional development in ocean and coastal management in regions where little ICM activity exists, such as in SIDS and Africa; develop links between ICM, freshwater and human settlements; include oceans in national sustainable development programmes; and develop a strategy for capacity building in ocean and coastal management. She also noted a lack of financing and work on systematic and independent evaluation and indicators on performance and outcomes.

Magnus Ngoile, Director General, Tanzanian National Environment Management Council, linked ocean and coastal governance to poverty alleviation and health issues, noting that ICM and WSSD goals need to be translated into local activities.

Eduardo Marone, IOI Executive Director, called for revising the concept of sustainable development based on advances in scientific research.

Ecosystem Approaches: Michael O'Toole, Chief Technical Advisor, United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Bengula Current LME Program, said the adoption of the precautionary and polluter pays principles and transparent and participatory management are important for LME management. Louise Heaps, Director, WWF-UK Marine Programme, said the ecosystem approach should be adaptive and based on good scientific knowledge, the precautionary and polluter pays principles, and awareness. She noted the existence of many tools to implement the ecosystem approach and called for a long-term vision, strategic planning and political will. Lawrence Juda, Department of Marine Affairs, University of Rhode Island, noted the need to develop widely accepted governance measures for advancing ecosystem-based management.

FISHERIES: Serge Garcia, Director, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Fisheries Resources Division, described FAO's work on sustainable fisheries and progress in IUU fishing, biological diversity, fishing capacity management, by-catch reduction, collaboration with CITES and the GEF, institutional building and international collaboration. He called for increased financial resources, access to information, representation of all stakeholders in fisheries management, and the development of an efficient monitoring and assessment programme. Alastair MacFarlane, General Manager, New Zealand Seafood Industry Council Ltd., said the WSSD target on IUU fishing was unrealistic and could only be met through collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO).

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Jorge Varela, Legal Advisor, South American Oceans and Antarctica Office, Oceana, underscored the importance of eliminating fishing subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and the need for coordination between the FAO and the WTO. Grant Trebble, Coordinator, African Marine and Coastal Resource Over-Exploitation Prevention Strategy (AMCROPS), stressed the need for Africa to develop a regional network on environmental conservation policies, trans-national MPAs and sustainable fishing practices. Hance Smith, School of Earth, Ocean and Planetary Science, Cardiff University, noted that fisheries management depends on flexible setting of regional management priorities.

SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES: Jagdish Koonjul noted that emerging issues such as capacity building, AIDS, SARS, security and international trade will be discussed at Barbados +10 in Mauritius in 2004, and hoped participants would adopt a plan for further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action with practical time-bound targets. Diane Quarless highlighted several SIDS priorities, including ensuring environmental sustainability, strengthening regional fisheries organizations and regional capacity in scientific areas, addressing sustainable tourism and waste management, and promoting alternative energies.

John Low, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, stressed the need to strengthen regional institutions and develop a sustainable development strategy for the Pacific. Clive Wilkinson, Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, cited several problems SIDS have in implementing MEAs, including: limited capacity to handle numerous complex conventions; excessive reporting requirements; lack of integrated national structures; and lack of financial, technical and human resources.

Several participants stressed the lack of capacity and need to harmonize reporting requirements. One participant added that SIDS should spend more time "implementing, not reporting." Responding to a question on how UN agencies could assist SIDS, Quarless said SIDS need an integrated, institutional support structure focused on regional institutions.

BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION AND MARINE

PROTECTED AREAS: Charles Ehler, Vice-Chair, IUCN-World Commission on MPAs, said IUCN's Global Strategy was developed to reach the WSSD target of building a representative network of MPAs by 2012 and focused on: building a common language; an improved scientific information base; a management framework; financial resources; regional implementation; performance measures; and awareness.

Camille Mageau, Director, Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans, underlined the importance of the scale of MPAs and called for the use of other tools such as the ecosystem approach or the elimination of destructive fishing practices to conserve marine biodiversity. Daniel Laffoley, Marine Conservation Director, English Nature, presented a study on the link between the marine and coastal protected areas of the CBD and MPAs and called for the establishment of high seas MPAs.

Serge Garcia said marine reserves are potentially useful in achieving WSSD goals, but noted that they are contested by many fishery scientists and the fishing community.

A number of participants called for the creation of a legal framework for the establishment of high seas MPAs.

PROTECTION FROM MARINE POLLUTION: David Osborn noted that UNEP-GPA is working to help countries develop national programmes of action (NPA) by 2006. Magnus Johannesson said the GPA is a useful tool for improving ocean governance and complements the freshwater management and sanitation goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. Noting that Iceland adopted an NPA in 2001, he said countries should integrate NPAs with sustainable development strategies.

Dandu Pughic, International Maritime Organization (IMO), highlighted several IMO activities focused on marine pollution protection, including two WSSD partnerships - Ballast Water Management and the Marine Electronic Highway. He also noted the GloBallast project that assists developing countries reduce the transfer of invasive aquatic species.

ACHIEVING ENHANCED UN COHERENCE: Toward an Effective, Transparent and Regular Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism: Eckhard Hein, UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, announced the creation of an Oceans and Coastal Areas Network (OCAN) to replace the abolished Sub-Committee of Oceans and Coastal Areas. Gunnar Kullenberg, former IOC Executive Director, called for OCAN to be open, transparent, well financed and accepted by governments. Charlotte de Fontaubert, IUCN Consultant, underscored the role of NGOs in capacity building, reaching local communities, scientific research and policy-making. A participant suggested that OCAN should report to UNICPOLOS to enhance transparency.

Towards a Global Marine Assessment by 2004: Louise de la Fayette, UN Department of Ocean Affairs, said the establishment of a Global Marine Assessment (GMA), endorsed by the UNGA, would provide a scientific basis for sound decision making. Salif Diop, UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment, stressed the need for regional and developing country involvement in the GMA process. Alan Simcock, OSPAR Commission Executive Secretary, stressed the need to focus on regional agreements, process and transparency in developing a GMA. Patricio Bernal said regional governance is crucial to establishing a GMA. Christian Lefebvre, Director, Genova Aquarium, presented on a survey indicating that museums, aquariums and scientific centers can play a role in increasing public involvement in ocean issues.

MARINE SCIENCE AND OBSERVATION: Peter Burbridge, International Project Office of the Land-Ocean Interactions in the Coastal Zone (LOICZ), the Netherlands, explained how LOICZ seeks to integrate social, economic and natural sciences into policy, planning and management of oceans and coasts. Tony Knapp, Co-Chair, Coastal Ocean Observations Panel (COOP), stressed the importance of collaboration with regional organizations. Johannes Guddal, Co-President, Joint World Meteorological Organization/IOC Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology, said the Marine Impact on Low-land Agriculture Commission focuses on climate forecasts for better planning of agricultural activities in the Indian Ocean.

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TARGETING DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO MEET WSSD GOALS

On Friday morning, November 14, Phil Reynolds, Consultant and former UNDP Global Waters Programme Director, chaired a session on the current status of funding for oceans, coasts and SIDS. He stated that a significant increase in funding will be needed to achieve WSSD goals.

Alfred Duda, Senior Advisor, International Waters, GEF, noted that the GEF invests significant amounts in ocean-related projects, and stressed the need for phasing-out damaging agricultural and fisheries subsidies and for finance ministers in developing countries to focus on oceans issues. François le Gall, World Bank, recognized that fisheries can play a central role in the Bank's mandates of poverty reduction, economic growth and sustainability. Noting that fisheries are in danger of collapse, he said the Bank is drafting a new fisheries programme that focuses on the entire ecosystem, governance, political will and the establishment of a clear institutional framework.

Julian Benn, Development Cooperation Directorate, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), introduced a statistical database used to monitor bilateral and multilateral aid flows, including statistical reporting on fisheries and biodiversity conservation projects. Kent Blom, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), stressed the need for an inter-agency mechanism for ocean and coastal issues. Noting Sweden's long-term commitment to oceans issues, he highlighted SIDA's new marine initiative. Magnus Ngoile, speaking on behalf of Ali Mohamed, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), said the creation of NEPAD represented a new beginning for development in Africa based on local ownership, accountability and partnerships, and highlighted NEPAD's coastal and marine priority area as key in fighting poverty.

One participant added that the success of NEPAD's coastal and marine area will be based on capacity building, while another urged the GEF to move from pilot projects to strategic action programmes. One participant expressed concern that World Bank funding for fisheries was on the decline and suggested that credits be linked to good practices. There were also calls for more aid to developing countries to improve negotiating skills with the donor community, and the need for the poorest countries to receive assistance in developing environmental quality objectives.

PRIVATE SECTOR PERSPECTIVES ON WSSD IMPLEMENTATION AND THE GLOBAL OCEANS AGENDA

On Friday morning, November 14, Paul Holthus, Executive Director, US Marine Aquarium Council, chaired a session on the role of industry in achieving the WSSD goals. He explained how his organization works to transform consumer perceptions of oceans issues to change business practices and called for innovative partnerships.

Alastair MacFarlane noted that the fisheries sector is not vertically integrated and called for a rights based co-management of fisheries with the collaboration of fishermen and fisheries departments. Pietro Parravano, World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers, highlighted key elements for sustainable fisheries, including: financial

support to developing nations for effective enforcement; application of the ecosystem approach; science-based fisheries management; and collaboration between the fisheries sector and the WTO.

Dierk Peters, Fish Sustainability Initiative, Unilever Frozen Foods Europe, stressed Unilver's commitment to fish sustainability to secure a long-term supply base and meet consumer expectations. He added that the company is working towards ensuring that all its fish come from sustainable sources by 2005. Eugenio Yunis, Director of Sustainable Development Tourism, World Tourism Organization, presented on the role of the tourist industry in implementing WSSD coastal initiatives. He noted the importance for the private sector to move towards a more sustainable approach to tourism operations through financial investments, environmental legislation, and designation of MPAs. He highlighted several World Tourism Organization initiatives related to coastal areas, including an international network for the sustainable management of coastal destinations; creating indicators of sustainability in tourism; and a manual on congestion management for heavily visited destinations. Suzanne Pleydell, Professional Association of Diver Instructors (PADI), highlighted PADI's Aquatic World Awareness Responsibility and Education (AWARE) project, which focuses on conserving the underwater environment through education, advocacy and awareness campaigns.

OPTIONS FOR A GLOBAL OCEANS FUND

On Friday morning, 14 November, Veerle Vandeweerd and Biliانا Cicin-Sain co-chaired a session on funding mechanisms for fulfilling WSSD commitments and the creation of a global oceans fund. Scott Smith, Marine Initiative, The Nature Conservancy, listed five key considerations in developing funding strategies: develop realistic resource needs based on results to be achieved; examine ways to share and spread costs; identify needs, characteristics and appropriate mechanisms; design credible and accountable management processes; and adapt strategies based on experience and results-based measures. Indumathie Hewawasam, Steering Committee, Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, described constraints in accessing existing funding sources for ocean projects and called for the creation of a targeted, flexible and quick disbursing fund based on shorter planning cycles and political will.

GENERATING AND MAINTAINING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR OCEANS, COASTS AND ISLANDS

On Friday afternoon, 14 November, Philippe Vallette, General Manager, French National Sealife Center (NAUSICAA), chaired a session on generating public support for oceans issues.

Peter Neil, South Street Seaport Museum, USA, introduced the World Oceans Observatory, a web-based interactive network of ocean information. Stressing that oceans are an integrated social system, he said the observatory serves as an information exchange and educational tool for students. Ram Boojh, Coordinator, Centre for Environment Education, presented on environmental education. Noting the lack of ocean awareness in India, he stressed the need to develop a marine environment education curriculum. He also highlighted the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development as an opportunity to reaffirm WSSD commitments.

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Leonard Sonnenschein, St. Louis Children's Aquarium, US, underlined the important role aquatic institutions play in increasing ocean awareness, particularly in educating children. John Bennet, Bennet and Associates, stressed the need to strengthen capacities for organizations to better communicate oceans issues to the public. He highlighted the Religion, Science and the Environment Symposium, which brings together leading scientists, religious figures, government officials and journalists to examine water issues.

Cécile Gaspar, Dolphin Quest, highlighted the creation of the World Ocean Network, whose objective is to coordinate activities for ocean preservation. The Network's activities include field actions, such as environmental petition signing campaigns, and the promotion of World Ocean Day. Martin Jones, Reef Museum, Australia, traced the history of Australian environmental policy vis-à-vis the Great Barrier Reef, noting strong federal government legislation and enforcement mechanisms to ensure protection.

Responding to a question on the success of public awareness activities, Chair Vallette said regular surveys help with assessment. One participant noted the important role of high-level institutions and television programmes in promoting environmental education.

EMERGING ISSUES

On Friday afternoon, November 14, David VanderZwaag, Dalhousie University Law School, Canada, chaired a session on emerging issues. Dona Petrachenko, Regional Director General, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada, presented on the outcomes of a workshop on high seas biodiversity that took place in Australia last June. She listed the threats to high seas biodiversity and called for further discussion of these issues, stressing the creation of high seas MPAs.

Kristina Gjerde, High Seas MPA Project Coordinator, IUCN, noted that 64% of the world's oceans lie beyond national jurisdiction and stressed the need for the development of a legal regime for the conservation of biodiversity in the high seas. Charlotte Breide, High Seas programme, WWF-International, presented on WWF's Grand Banks Pilot Project, which constitutes a pilot area for the legal regime of high seas MPAs.

Louise de la Fayette noted the legal gap in the regime of biodiversity in the high seas and listed existing legal instruments and institutions that could be used for its governance, including the CBD and the International Seabed Authority. Awni Bahnam, IOI President, said the means to eliminate open registries and enhance flag state controls include strengthening port state controls and enhancing civil society participation and political will. Phil Burgess noted governance, high seas MPAs, the global marine assessment, and IUU fishing as emerging issues on the UNICPOLOS agenda. Lee Kimball, Independent Consultant, called for urgent action on high seas bottom trawling and enhanced control of flag states of their vessels on the high seas.

SPECIAL ADDRESSES

Throughout the three-day conference, keynote addresses were delivered by ocean affairs experts on several issues, including: challenges to the global oceans environment; status and prospects of the

Law of the Sea; challenges to the international ocean regime; organizing for the global water agenda; and achieving WSSD objectives at the regional level.

On Wednesday morning, 12 November, Sylvie Earle, Executive Director of Global Marine Programs, Conservation International, presented a special address on the challenges to the global oceans environment. She underscored the significance of oceans for life on earth and outlined the challenges facing the global oceans environment. Calling for a constant review of the state of the marine environment, she listed the following current threats: loss of wildlife, fisheries depletion, degradation of coral reefs, and lack of awareness on ocean issues. She urged participants to take action to stop the destruction of sea mounts, reform fisheries, create a network of MPAs, assess marine biodiversity and achieve the WSSD targets.

On Wednesday evening, Tullio Teves, Judge, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), presented on the status and prospects of the Law of the Sea. He said UNCLOS represents a major success of codification of international law and mentioned the adoption of additional agreements since its signature. Teves explained that UNCLOS entrusted new functions to existing organizations and established new ones such as the International Seabed Authority and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (ITLOS). He stressed the strength of UNCLOS's dispute settlement mechanism, underlined how UNCLOS had confined unilateral actions by States, and explained how cooperation had been used to address emerging issues such as the legal regime of biodiversity of the high seas.

Following Teves' address, Jon Van Dyke, University of Hawaii Law School, US, presented on challenges facing the international ocean regime, focusing on the evolving balance between navigational freedoms and protection of the marine environment. Citing several international cases, he noted that coastal states are increasingly taking unilateral and precautionary initiatives against illegal fishing and commercial and military vessels to protect their coastal environments and security interests.

On Thursday morning, 13 November, Emilio Gabbrielli, Executive Secretary, Global Water Partnership (GWP), discussed the global water agenda. He described how the GWP supports countries in the sustainable development of their water resources through integrated water resources management. Explaining that the GWP works through a network of partnerships, he noted its associated programmes on gender, groundwater, flood management and river basin management. He said coastal management is an integral part of fresh water management.

On Friday morning, 14 November, Alan Simcock, Executive Secretary, Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR), addressed the regional implementation of WSSD objectives, including: encouraging the application by 2010 of the ecosystem approach; promoting ICM; and strengthening regional cooperation and inter-regional coordination. He noted the need for regions to develop shared views on spatial planning and management and improve working methods, especially in monitoring and assessment, and MPA development. Simcock said OSPAR is working on ecological quality objectives and reduction

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targets for hazardous substances, eutrophication, radioactive substances, and offshore pollution. He added that regional cooperation can improve integrated assessment and capacity building in marine science, information and management.

PRE-CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

On Friday evening, 14 November, participants presented several outcomes from the Global Conference's pre-conference, held from 10-11 November 2003. The pre-conference was organized prior to the Global Conference to allow participants to informally discuss oceans-related WSSD commitments and to identify key issues for further in-depth deliberation at the Conference. Topics included informal partnership initiatives, capacity building, coral reef management, ICM, national ocean policies, public awareness, SIDS, LME, and the formulation of an African Coastal Zone Forum.

Participants reaffirmed the need to fulfill global ICM targets formulated in preparation for the WSSD. They also noted the importance of institutional capacity and financial resources for ICM, and ICM's role in achieving poverty alleviation.

Pre-conference discussions concluded that the LME approach provides a platform for focused assessments and monitoring efforts in support of management aimed at the long-term productivity of marine habitats and sustainable utilization of marine resources.

On national oceans policy, participants stressed the need to: incorporate integrated management planning within national policies; develop legislative guidelines from strengthening national legal regimes; create networks of ocean policy practitioners; and develop a global oceans policy.

On building public support, participants proposed: organizing a network of communicators and educators to implement concrete action plans for oceans, coasts and islands; mobilizing educational organizations to reach large audiences; mobilizing all stakeholders on World Ocean Day and other events; and seeking funds to design international education activities and campaigns.

On capacity building, participants noted the need for: a critical mass of ICM managers and professional; enhanced ICM capacity building at the national level; and a focus on capacity utilization and enhancement.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

On Thursday evening, 13 November, participants met in working groups to address several WSSD commitments on cross-sectoral issues, fisheries, SIDS, biodiversity and MPAs, and enhanced UN coherence. On Friday evening, 14 November, working group chairs presented their groups' recommendations.

Chair Tom Laughlin presented the cross-sectoral working group's outcomes. He noted the importance of involving high-level political actors for identifying priorities and mobilizing funding support for partnerships, and said that partnerships can provide an opportunity to apply the ecosystem approach to meet the 2010 WSSD target. The group also highlighted linking freshwater and coastal and marine water partnerships based on the ecosystem approach as a priority.

Fisheries working group chair Serge Garcia presented the group's recommendations, including the need to: identify and eliminate harmful subsidies; develop equitable eco-labeling systems; enhance public awareness about sustainable fisheries; increase bilateral and international cooperation on highly migratory fisheries and shared stocks; develop national ocean policy with integrated fisheries policies within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ); and implement an ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

The SIDS working group, chaired by Diane Quarless, focused on Barbados +10 preparations, discussing the need to address: institution strengthening; capacity building; the role of civil society; information dissemination; youth involvement; and inter-agency collaboration.

Chair Clive Wilkinson presented the recommendations of the working group on biodiversity, MPAs and coral reefs. Recommendations included: urging countries and organizations to adopt integrated approaches to reverse the decline of coral reef biodiversity through the development of MPA networks and long-term sustainable funding mechanisms; identifying existing transboundary tools for addressing biodiversity conservation and MPA network goals; working with stakeholders to promote the development of environmentally friendly technologies; and promoting dialogue between sustainable fisheries and biodiversity communities.

The group that discussed enhanced UN coherence, chaired by Patricio Bernal, stressed the importance of effective coordination between UN agencies, secretariats and relevant MEAs, and with bilateral and multilateral financial organizations. The group also highlighted the creation of OCAN.

CLOSING SESSION

On Friday evening, 14 November, Gunnar Kullenberg underlined the importance of regional cooperation, political will, and public society participation and awareness for the improvement of oceans governance. Jon Van Dyke called for the promotion of political will and awareness on oceans issues and suggested the creation of a UN High Commissioner for Oceans. Magnus Ngoile stressed the support needed by developing countries in developing models for achieving the sustainable management of oceans.

Co-Chairs Patricio Brenal, Veerle Vandeweerd and Biliiana Cicin-Sain thanked participants, UNESCO, the presenters of the working groups and the organizing committee for their work. The meeting came to a close at 7:41 pm.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

FIRST SOUTHEAST ASIA WATER FORUM: The Southeast Asia Water Forum will take place from 17-21 November 2003, in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The main theme of the Forum is to strengthen regional capacity through best practices in integrated water resources management. For more information contact: The Global Water Partnership's Southeast Asia Technical Advisory Committee (SEATAC) Secretariat; tel: +66-2-524-5558; fax: +66-2-524-5550; e-mail: gwp_seatac@ait.ac.th; Internet: <http://www.gwpseatac.org/>

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DEEP SEA 2003 CONFERENCE: The Deep Sea conference, to be held from 1-5 December 2003, in Queenstown, New Zealand, will provide a forum for experts to discuss issues relating to present and future needs for science, conservation and governance and management of the continental slope and deep seas. For more information contact: Ross Shotton; e-mail: ross.shotton@fao.org; Internet: <http://www.deepsea.govt.nz/index.aspx>

EAST ASIAN SEAS CONGRESS 2003: Organized by the GEF-UNDP-IMO Regional Programme on Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, the Congress will take place from 8-12 December 2003, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. For more information contact: Congress Secretariat; tel: +632-920-2211; fax: +632-926-9712; e-mail: congress@pemsea.org; Internet: http://pemsea.org/info%20center/big%20events/EAScongress2003_1.htm

ECA REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING: PAN-AFRICAN IMPLEMENTATION AND PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE ON WATER: This regional implementation meeting, hosted by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), will be held from 8-13 December 2003, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The conference will address the implication of the outcomes of the WSSD on regional water initiatives, as well as the continent's role in the implementation of the Summit's outcomes. For more information contact: Federica Pietracci, UN DSD/DESA; tel: +1-212-963-2803; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: pietracci@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/rim.htm>

30TH MEETING OF THE RAMSAR STANDING COMMITTEE: The Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands will meet from 12-16 January 2004, in Gland, Switzerland. For more information contact: Dwight Peck, Executive Assistant for Communications; tel: +41-22-999-0170; fax: +41-22-999-0169; e-mail: peck@ramsar.org; Internet: <http://ramsar.org/meetings.htm>

12TH OCEAN SCIENCES MEETING: This meeting, to be held from 26-30 January 2004, in Portland, Oregon, US, will focus on deep-sea corals and regulatory aspects of their protection. For more information contact: American Geophysical Union (AGU); tel: +1-202-777-7333; fax: +1-202-328-0566; e-mail: meetinginfo@agu.org; Internet: <http://www.agu.org/meetings/os04/>

2004 OCEAN RESEARCH CONFERENCE: This conference, co-sponsored by the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography, and the Oceanography Society, will convene from 15-20 February 2004, in Honolulu, Hawaii, US. It will provide a forum for researchers to highlight recent advances in aquatic sciences, including engineering, industrial, public policy and marine research. For more information contact: Denise Breitburg; tel: +1-410-586-9711; fax: +1-410-586-9705; e-mail: secretary@aslo.org; Internet: <http://www.aslo.org/forms/orc2004suggestions.html>

GLOBAL H2O PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE: The Global H2O Partnership Conference will be held from 11-14 May 2003, in Cairns, Australia, sponsored by UNEP and the Australian government.

For more information contact: Conference Secretariat; tel: +31-70-311-4467; fax: +31-70-345-664831; e-mail: h2o@unep.nl; Internet: <http://www.hilltops2oceans.org>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE – COASTAL ZONE CANADA 2004: This conference, to be held from 27-30 June 2004, in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, will focus on understanding, maintaining, managing and governing coastal ecosystems. For more information contact: Grant A. Gardner, Coastal Zone Canada 2004 Organizing Committee; tel: +1-709-737-8155; fax: +1-709-737-3316; e-mail: CZC2004@mun.ca; Internet: <http://www.czca-azcc.org/>

TENTH INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF SYMPOSIUM (ICRS): The symposium, to be held from 28 June 2004 - 2 July 2004, in Okinawa, Japan, will address the stability and degradation of coral reef ecosystems. For more information contact: Plando Japan Inc.; tel: +81-3-5470-4401; fax: +81-3-5470-4410; e-mail: icrs@plando.co.jp; Internet: <http://www.plando.co.jp/icrs2004/>

SEVENTH INTECOL INTERNATIONAL WETLANDS CONFERENCE: Organized by the International Association of Ecology (INTECOL), this conference will be held from 25-30 July 2004, in Utrecht, the Netherlands. For more information contact: Inge van Gaal, FBU Congress Bureau, Utrecht University; tel: +31-30-253-2728; fax: +31-30-253-5851; e-mail: intecol@fbu.uu.nl; Internet: <http://www.bio.uu.nl/intecol>

BARBADOS +10 INTER-REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING: The inter-regional SIDS preparatory meeting will be held from 26-30 January 2004 in Nassau, the Bahamas. For more information contact: Diane Quarless, UN Division on Sustainable Development, SIDS Unit; tel: +1-212-963-4135; fax: +1-917-367-3391; e-mail: Mauritius2004@sidsnet.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sids/sids.htm>

CSD ACTING AS THE PREPCOM FOR BARBADOS +10: This preparatory meeting, which will precede CSD-12, will meet from 14-16 April 2004 at UN Headquarters in New York, US. For more information contact: Diane Quarless, UN Division on Sustainable Development, SIDS Unit; tel: +1-212-963-4135; fax: +1-917-367-3391; e-mail: Mauritius2004@sidsnet.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sids/sids.htm>

BARBADOS +10: The ten-year review of implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action is to be held in Mauritius from 28 August to 3 September 2004. For more information contact: Diane Quarless, UN Division on Sustainable Development, SIDS Unit; tel: +1-212-963-4135; fax: +1-917-367-3391; e-mail: Mauritius2004@sidsnet.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sids/sids.htm>