

## **United Nations Environment Programme-European Commission 2018 Roadmap on Healthy, Productive and Resilient Oceans**

### **I. BACKGROUND**

Based on the Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations Environment Programme and European Commission, the UN Environment and the European Commission signed the first Roadmap in December 2016 for joint priorities to be implemented in 2017 for Healthy and Productive Oceans. The activities and milestones in 2017 Roadmap were implemented and the current roadmap builds on the 2017 Roadmap and lays out the cooperation actions between the two organisations foreseen for 2018.

The European Commission and UN Environment have continued to pool their efforts and resources to jointly support high level policy events particularly follow-up to the UN Ocean Conference in June 2017, Our Ocean Conference in October 2017, as well as the second and third sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly, particularly their resolutions related to oceans, commitments and implementation of the activities of the Regional Seas Conventions aiming to facilitate the implementation of the ocean-related Agenda 2030.

The 2018 Roadmap presents specific objectives and milestones for collaboration of the United Nations Environment Programme and the European Commission on the path to healthy, productive and resilient oceans. Activities under this Roadmap contribute to the implementation of the Joint Communication on the International Ocean Governance of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

### **II. PROPOSED ROAD MAP for 2018**

The cooperation between the two organisations aims to facilitate the implementation of the ocean-related targets in Agenda 2030, in particular achievements of Good Environmental Status for healthy and productive oceans based on the Ecosystem Approach.

The immediate objective is:

*To create enabling conditions for and support the United Nations member States in their effort to achieve Ocean-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.*

#### **The Partnership have four objectives:**

1. Setting objectives and related indicators for Ocean related Sustainable Development Goals;
2. Reinforcing Regional Ocean Governance to achieve healthy, productive and resilient oceans;
3. Support healthy marine and coastal ecosystems; and
4. Address land-based sources to combat marine pollution.

Strategic Objective 1: Setting objectives and related indicators for Ocean related Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Environment urges the Regional Seas programmes to set regional objectives and indicators in association with the Sustainable Development Goals related to Oceans<sup>1</sup>. UN Environment and the European Commission are developing guidelines for the ocean related regional organisations, like the regional seas programmes to review and follow-up the Sustainable Development Goals. In this effort, the aim of the Objective is to assist the member countries and parties to the regional seas programmes/conventions in setting clear and measurable objectives and indicators.

**Proposed milestones in the roadmap:**

- Delivery of guidelines for regional follow-up and review of the ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals (June 2018) to be launched at the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (March 2019, Kenya);
- Development of case studies of regional targets and indicators<sup>2</sup>;
- Presentation and discussion of the regional follow-up and review guidelines at the global regional seas meeting (September 2018); and
- Delivery of regional seas indicators manual, which is linked with the regional follow-up and review (June 2018) and launched at the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (March 2019, Kenya).

Strategic Objective 2. Reinforcing Regional Ocean Governance to achieve healthy, productive and resilient oceans

This Strategic Objective aims at reinforcing the existing mechanisms for the regional seas conventions and action plans. The United Nations Environment Programme and the European Commission produced a report<sup>3</sup>, highlighting a need to move towards cross sectoral cooperation and policy coherence in order to effectively implement the relevant Sustainable Development Goals in a synergistic manner. Before starting such cross-sectoral cooperation effort, the effectiveness of decision making and implementation of legal instruments and action plans under the programme will need to be enhanced.

**Proposed milestones in the roadmap:**

- Presentation of the cross sectoral cooperation case studies at the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organisations and Regional Fisheries Bodies at the European Parliament (April 2018);

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<sup>1</sup> Moving to Strategy and Action: Regional Seas Outlook for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

[http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/20866/RS\\_SDG\\_outlook\\_covered.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/20866/RS_SDG_outlook_covered.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

<sup>2</sup> This include those related to European Union Marine Framework Strategy Directive (June 2018) and the European Commission study on post 2020 Biodiversity targets;

<sup>3</sup> Realizing Integrated Regional Oceans Governance: Summary of case studies on regional cross-sectoral institutional cooperation and policy coherence

[https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/21692/realizing\\_integrated\\_reg\\_oceans\\_governance.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/21692/realizing_integrated_reg_oceans_governance.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

- Presentation of the materials on the regional seas programmes at the Global Dialogue meeting (April 2018);
- Finalization of effective outputs of the 2017 Ocean Conference commitment to Regional Cooperation (Sept 2018);
- Joint commitment at Our Ocean Conference in Bali (October 2018);
- In addition to already ongoing support mechanisms (Barcelona), further development of a new European Union support to the Regional Sea Conventions covering the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (Carthage, Abidjan, Nairobi and Nouméa).

### Strategic Objective 3: Support healthy marine and coastal ecosystems

The objective of this strategic cooperation area is to create capacity for conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystems, which can in turn contribute to sustainable fisheries.

Furthermore, the two organisations will provide necessary input to the post 2020 discussion under the Convention on Biological Diversity from the marine biodiversity perspective.

The topics of cooperation within this Objective may include, but not necessarily limited to: networks of the marine protected areas and their managers, coral reefs and other ecosystems affected by climate change, blue carbon and ecosystems and conservation financing.

#### **Proposed milestones in the roadmap:**

- Dissemination of the results of the European Commission funded Trans-Atlantic network of marine protected areas managers and move towards inter-regional networks of Marine Protected Areas (September 2018) at the annual regional seas coordination meeting;
- European Commission participation in UN Oceans Forum (July 2018) organized under the partnership by UN Environment-UN Conference on Trade and Development, Food and Agriculture;
- Discussion between the UN Environment Programme and the Commission on the Forum-related policies, to be started at the UN Oceans Forum;
- Presentation of UN Environment project on marine spatial planning for the Adriatic as well as the European Commission project on the same subject at the global regional seas meetings
- Distribution of information on area-based management tools for SDG achievement at the Convention on Biological Diversity workshop on Aichi Target 11 (February 2018) and submit the results to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (July 2018) and Conference of the Parties (October 2018), with possible joint organization of side events on this (July and October 2018);
- Joint coral reef event at the Our Oceans Conference (October 2018) and related communication on coral reefs; and
- European Commission participation in the UN Environment organized workshop on marine and coastal ecosystem service valuation.

#### Strategic Objective 4. Addressing land-based sources of marine pollution

At the pollution-focused session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (December 2017), stakeholders committed to the necessary action. The aim of this component is to provide necessary joint input to the review processes that are expected in 2018.

#### **Proposed milestones in the roadmap:**

- Support to the continued action of the regional seas programmes on this issue through their Land-based sources of pollution protocols and related action plans;
- Organization of an event at the Ad-hoc Expert Working Group on microplastics and marine litter (November 2018) on plastic economy;
- European Commission participation in the UN Environment implemented Global Environment Facility funded project 'Towards an International Nitrogen Management System';
- Continue raising awareness toward halting the discharge of untreated or partially treated wastewater, as a primary cause of nutrient, microbeads and chemical loading, to the marine environment;
- Exchange and cooperate on reducing plastic waste and marine litter activities; and
- Continue collaboration on the awareness - raising initiatives, following the successful past cooperation, in particular in the area of curbing plastic pollution and marine litter, further involving network of European aquariums.