

SOUTH ASIAN SEAS PROGRAMME

Agenda Item 5 (b)

PROGRAMME AREA: Marine Litter Management in the South Asian Seas Region

OBJECTIVE:

Development of a Framework for Marine Litter Management in the South Asian Seas Region

A) BACKGROUND

1. The Governing Council decision 22/2 IIIA on the United Nations Environment Programme/ Regional Seas Programme, called for the utilization of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans as a platform for the regional implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and global programmes and initiatives. According to the resolution on "Oceans and the Law of the Sea" (A/59/L.22 adopted as resolution 59/25), in paragraph 92, the sixth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, which took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 6 to 10 June 2005 organised its discussions around the issues of abandoned fishing gear and related marine debris. The eighth special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, held in Jeju, Republic of Korea, from 29 to 31 March 2004, at its 6th plenary meeting on 31 March, adopted the decision SS.VIII/4 on Waste Management, on the basis of drafts approved and submitted by the Committee of the Whole.
2. Within the above mentioned context, and within the context of UNEP's support to the South Asia Seas Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), Secretariat to the South Asian Seas Regional Seas Programme (SAS), bearing in mind that marine litter is a priority activity for both the SAS and UNEP's Regional Seas Programme, UNEP supported the SAS Secretariat for the development of Regional Activity on Marine Litter in the South Asian Seas.

B. OBJECTIVE

3. The objective of this activity was to assist in the environmental protection and sustainable management and development of the South Asian Seas region through the development of a regional activity on marine litter.

C. ACTIVITIES

4. A MOU was entered into between UNEP and SACEP, and under the terms of this MoU, SACEP in consultation with the UNEP Regional Seas Coordinating Office (RSCO), the following activities were undertaken

Activity A - Preparation of a Review Document on Marine Litter in the South Asian Seas Region, on both the national and regional levels, which will include, among others: collection of information and review of existing institutional arrangements; data and information on marine litter in the marine and coastal environment; legal and administrative instruments; programmes and initiatives; identification of gaps and needs in coverage of marine litter management; and proposals for changes and recommendations.

Such review document should be based on national reports (preferably based on standard questionnaires) and their compilation and other available documents and information, such as relevant scientific papers and other sources and literature.

Activity B - Development of proposal(s) for national and regional monitoring and assessment programmes, including the development of appropriate methodologies, to assess quantities, compositions, distribution patterns and trends of marine litter in the South Asian Seas region. The

methodologies suggested should preferably be based on successful experiences gained in other regions.

Activity C – Organisation of a regional meeting of national authorities and experts on marine litter in order to assess the regional situation, discuss the products of Activity A and B above, and discuss the draft framework document “Regional Activity on Marine Litter in the South Asian Seas” (Activity E below).

Activity D – Organization of the participation of the South Asian Seas countries in a Regional Beach Clean Up Day, within the framework of the International Coastal Cleanup 2006 and 2007 Campaign

Activity E - Preparation of a Framework Document 'Regional Activity on Marine Litter in the South Asian Seas'. This document should include, among others, the strategic approach, a costed programme of work, potential regional and international partners, a list of operational activities and recommended sources for funding.

The Framework Document once agreed upon by the Member countries will be formally presented to the 4th IMM of SAS for adoption.

5. The draft Framework Document “Regional Activity on Marine Litter in South Asian Seas” should include, amongst others, and when feasible, the following elements:

- Programme of enhancement of national/regional legal and administrative instruments; national/regional programmes and initiatives; and national/regional institutional arrangements;
- Programme of implementation of regional and national monitoring programmes including suggested methodologies;
- Development of regional and national strategies on integrated management of marine litter (including regional guidelines for the wise management of marine and coastal litter);
- Recommended programmes of co-operation with the civil society (private sector, NGOs and the scientific community). Programmes to develop partnerships, voluntary agreements and cooperation with major stakeholders (e.g., shipping industry, tourism industry, fisheries, manufacturers of plastics, waste managers/services, local authorities, municipalities and communities, NGOs and general public);
- Development of campaigns and /or permanent services for the cleaning and collecting of solid wastes that pollute coastal and marine areas; Demonstrations through awareness-raising campaigns in selected destinations and with selected stakeholders;
- Participation, as the South Asian Seas region in the annual International Coastal Cleanup Campaigns (September of every year);
- Development of 'responsible citizenship' guidelines for different sectors and target audiences, in particular: children and students, tourists, municipal authorities and local communities, shipping companies, ship and smaller vessels crews; commercial and recreation fishing vessels, and other identified target groups;
- Public awareness and education campaigns through the preparation of brochures in various languages, the use of the media, etc.;
- Development of professional sectorial guidelines for the wise management of marine litter (e.g., tourism, boating, diving, cruise lines, fisheries, coastal construction);
- Plans for the improvement of port reception facilities and services for garbage collection from the shipping and fishing industries;

- Development and improvement of waste management policies and systems;
- Identification and approach to potential funding sources (including Governments) for various components and activities of the Regional Activity on Marine Litter in the South Asian Seas; and
- Development of strategies and approaches for funding high cost initiatives (such as port reception facilities, landfills, fisheries, etc.). These should include approaches to the World Bank, Regional Investment Bank, Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other international financing institutions.

D. PRESENT STATUS

As per the project, 500 copies of the publication titled Marine Litter in the South Asian Seas Region were printed. This document is in two parts. Part one contains a Review of Marine Litter in the SAS Region whilst part two spells out the Framework for Marine Litter Management in the SAS Region. The printed report has been widely distributed in the region and to all relevant agencies, including other Regional Seas Secretariats.

Under this project the Indian Coast Guard was assigned the task prepare video film on the International Coastal Cleanup Day activity 2007 in India. This film is now ready for release and a copy will be made available to the member countries shortly

With the assistance of the member governments and through a Regional Consultant and National Consultants from each of the member countries, the above activities were successfully concluded, The SAS Secretariat will formally present as envisaged, the Framework Document' "Regional Activity on Marine Litter in the South Asian Seas" for consideration adoption by the 4th Intergovernmental Ministerial Meeting.

Pending formal approved SAS Secretariat has identified 4 project areas, namely, a) Capacity Building (Training and Awareness); b) Beach Clean Up – An Approach to Control and Manage Coastal Litter in the SAS Region; c) Creation of Port Reception Facilities;; d) Solid Waste Management in The SAS Region for Marine Litter Management, to develop specific project proposals based on the framework document and seeks the support from United Nations Organisations and donor communities for support in the implementation of the same. The outline of these project proposals is spelt out in the envisaged work programme for 2008 – 2009.