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## **Manila Declaration**

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**Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the  
Implementation of the Global Programme of Action  
for the Protection of the Marine Environment  
from Land-based Activities**

**Third session**

Manila, 25-27 January 2012

Item 4 of the agenda of the high-level segment\*

**Adoption of the ministerial declaration**

**Manila Declaration on Furthering the Implementation of the  
Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine  
Environment from Land-based Activities**

**Submission by the secretariat**

The annex to the present note sets out the Manila Declaration on Furthering the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, as submitted by the secretariat. It is presented without formal editing.

## Annex

### **Manila Declaration on Furthering the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities**

*We, the representatives of 65 Governments and the European Commission, with the valued support and concurrence of representatives of international financial institutions, international and regional organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, other stakeholders and major groups,*

*Having met* in Manila from 25 to 26 January 2012 at the third session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities,

*Recognizing* that all people depend on the oceans and coasts and their resources for their survival, health and well-being, that a substantial proportion of the world's population derives its food security and economic livelihood from the coastal environment and marine resources such as fisheries and shellfish from highly productive coastal and estuary zones,

*Recognizing* that marine and coastal ecosystems, in particular those of low-lying coastal areas and small island developing States, are vulnerable to rising sea levels, climate-related natural disasters and ocean acidification resulting from land-based activities,

*Acknowledging* the large increases of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus entering the world's environment as a result of human activity and noting the severity of the environmental problems caused by nutrient excess, including eutrophication of coastal waters and oxygen depletion, and the associated damage to ecosystems, biodiversity and coastal water quality,

*Noting* the rapid growth of urban areas on coasts and the fact that the major threats to the health, productivity and biodiversity of the marine environment result from human activities on land,

*Recognizing* that sewage and wastewater, persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals, oils (hydrocarbons), nutrients, sediments and marine litter, whether carried by rivers or discharged directly into coastal areas, take a severe toll on human health and well-being and on coastal and marine ecosystems and food and services they provide,

*Recognizing* that marine litter is a problem, that is global in scale and underestimated in impact and that it directly threatens coastal and marine habitats and species, economic growth, human health and safety, and societal values and that a significant portion of marine litter originates from land-based activities; that movement of litter and debris, exacerbated by storm events, have significant impacts on the marine environment, as do ship-based activities,

*Recognizing also* that the marine environment is threatened through, in particular, loss of marine biodiversity and marine ecosystems by physical alterations of the coastal zone, poor land use planning and socioeconomic pressures including destruction of habitats of vital importance to maintaining ecosystem health, as well as ecosystem goods and services provided by ecosystems such as coral reefs, coastal tidal flats, deltas, mangroves, seagrass beds and estuaries,

*Recognizing further* the intrinsic value, and links between marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems and human well-being and the need for integrated watershed and coastal management in efforts to achieve the effective sustainable management of land-based activities, including the incorporation of the value of ecosystem services into planning processes,

*Acknowledging* that the Global Programme of Action is an effective tool for integrating environmental concerns into development planning and strategies at the international, regional and national levels and that, as such, it contributes substantially to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

*Recognizing* the lack of capacities in science and technology and the need for integration of research, education, and extension advisory services, in particular of developing countries, as tools to build capacity to sustain the ability to address land-based activities that affect the marine environment,

*Recognizing* the importance of the existing Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in tackling the accelerating degradation of the world's oceans and coastal areas, and in this regard engaging concerned countries in comprehensive and specific actions on land-based sources and activities, and through integrated coastal zone management, among other things,

*Recognizing also* the important contributions of the regional seas programmes, the Global Environment Facility and international financial institutions in implementing the Global Programme of Action,

*Recognizing further* the achievements in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action over the period 2007-2011 and, in particular, the contribution of the Global Programme of Action Coordination Office in the Freshwater and Marine Ecosystems Branch of the United Nations Environment Programme's Division of Environmental Policy Implementation,

*Recognizing* the importance of improved coastal water quality and the need for improved monitoring to identify threats to the marine environment at the regional, national and local levels, as encouraged by the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including socio-economic aspects,

*Recognizing* that litter does not belong to the sea and therefore emphasizing the relevance of the Honolulu Commitment endorsed at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Marine Debris Conference, and the Honolulu Strategy,

*Recognizing also* the significant progress made by some countries in building both human and institutional capacity and developing legislative frameworks, environmental policies and market-based instruments in context of a proper regulatory framework that protects public interest for the sustainable management of fisheries, marine resources and the coastal environment,

*Emphasizing* also the need to support and enhance developing countries capacity to manage marine and coastal ecosystem sustainably in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building,

*Acknowledging* the important contribution of multi-stakeholder partnerships, including the importance of public-private partnerships, and United Nations inter-agency partnerships in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action and in the implementation of intergovernmental commitments to advance action on the Millennium Development Goals,

*Stressing* the importance of marine and coastal ecosystems and biodiversity to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, by identifying and addressing the underlying drivers of marine and coastal ecosystem loss and destruction, and improving the sustainable management of coastal and marine areas,

*Recalling* the 2009 Manado Declaration, UNEP Governing Council decision GC SS.XI/6 on Oceans and other global initiatives to tackle marine and coastal ecosystem loss and destruction and the need to achieve long term conservation, management and sustainable use of marine living resources and coastal habitats to, inter alia, increase climate resiliency, achieve global food security and reduce poverty,

*Acknowledging* the importance of the upcoming Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro on 20 to 22 June 2012.

1. *Stress the commitment* to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities at the international, regional and national levels as a flexible and effective tool for the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands, and for human health and well-being;

2. *Resolve to commit* to comprehensive, continuing and adaptive action within a framework of integrated coastal management relevant to respective national and regional priorities;

3. *Dedicate ourselves* to furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action with a focus on the identified priorities for the period 2012-2016 *and invite* additional efforts and adequate voluntary financial resources to expedite the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for 2012-2016;

4. *Decide* actively to engage ourselves and step up our efforts to develop guidance, strategies or policies on the sustainable use of nutrients so as to improve nutrient use efficiency with attendant economic benefits for all stakeholders, including farmers, and to mitigate negative environmental impacts through the development and implementation of national goals and plans over the period 2012-2016, as necessary;

5. *Decide* that the GPA Coordination Office in the period 2012-2016 should focus its work on nutrients, litter and wastewater as the three priority source categories for the GPA, using global multi-stakeholder partnerships; and request the Coordination Office to develop its activity plan on the basis of these strategic directions.

(a) *Decide* to support the further development of the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management and associated regional and national stakeholder partnerships, *as well as* their activities, including assessments as agreed by the partnership, and sharing of best practices using extension and advisory services for policy makers and farmers

(b) *Further decide* to work with all stakeholders concerned to find innovative solutions and initiatives to the marine litter problem, including by sharing best practices, technical information about capacity building, and legal, policy, community-based, economic and market-based means of preventing, reducing and managing marine litter, and *recommend* the establishment of a global partnership on marine litter;

(c) *Decide* to support the further development of the global partnership on wastewater and share among stakeholders information, lessons learned and best practices for wastewater management, including sound technologies that do not adversely affect the environment and biodiversity, and resource reduction, reuse and recycling approaches for the purposes of environmental protection, sanitation and human health, climate change and nutrient benefits so as to prompt coordinated action, and *encourage* new investments in wastewater management that meets these objectives

6. *Also decide* to consider using the GPA as a platform to promote delta management through delta and inter-delta cooperation schemes and to support a proposal to declare an international year of deltas in the near future;

7. *Decide* to improve cooperation and coordination at all levels to deal with issues related to oceans, coasts, islands and their associated watersheds, by applying integrated management such as “ridge to reef” approaches, including by involving stakeholders and developing innovative solutions to improve or resolve identified problems;

8. *Welcome* the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including socio-economic aspects, to strengthen the regular scientific assessment of the state of the marine environment in order to enhance the scientific basis for policy making at global, regional and national levels;

9. *Decide* to strengthen and promote the implementation of existing Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, and other relevant global and regional arrangements, agreements and programmes for the protection of the marine and coastal environment, with a view to further the implementation of the Global Programme of Action;

10. *Invite* United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, United Nations inter-agency groups, such as the coordination mechanism on ocean and coastal issues within the United Nations system (UN-Oceans) and the coordination mechanism on water resources (UN-Water), the United Nations Development Group and multilateral environmental agreements to strengthen the integration of the Global Programme of Action into their policies, plans and programmes, consistent with their mandates;

11. *Also invite* the Global Environment Facility, other global and regional financial institutions, development partners and donor countries, to make coordinated efforts to support countries, especially developing countries and countries with economy in transition, in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action through financial and technical support and capacity building;

12. *Express appreciation* for the efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme in supporting the Global Programme of Action Coordination Office and expediting the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, and welcome additional extrabudgetary resources to support UNEP’s work in this regard;

13. *Request* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to forward the present political declaration to the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development as a contribution by the GPA IGR-3 to the deliberations on sustainable development;

14. *Also request* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to convene the Fourth Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities in 2016 in collaboration with the relevant organizations and institutions, and to seek the support of the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in organizing the meeting;

15. *Decide* that governments provide technical and policy guidance to the GPA coordination office during the intersessional period of 2012-2016, as necessary;

16. *Express our gratitude and appreciation* to the Government and people of the Philippines for hosting the third session of the Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

Manila on 26 January 2012.

