

A Manual for
Regional Seas
on the **Ecosystem Approach** to
Managing Human Activities
Affecting the Marine
Environment

Questions

- Would the Regional Seas find a “Manual on the Ecosystem Approach” helpful?
- Does the initial sketch cover the right issues?
- How can we best develop such a manual?

Why a Manual?

- The Johannesburg Summit commitments
- Need for a common understanding
- Need to share successful approaches
- Need to share outcomes

What could a manual give?

- **A framework for thought**

= *we know that we share a common approach in avoiding gaps and overlaps*

- **Confirmation of essential tasks**

= *a tool for persuading others of the importance of those needs*

- **A tool-box of techniques**

= *to save us each having to re-invent the wheel*

Questions for a manual?

- Why adopt the ecosystem approach?
- What is the ecosystem approach?
- Who needs to be involved and how to organise them?
- How to specify the content of an ecosystem approach?
- How to analyse the ecosystem?
- How to analyse human activities?
- How to integrate the whole picture?

Background

- Longstanding concern with commercial fisheries and pollution
- AGENDA 21 emphasised need for integration
- Protecting biodiversity added a new focus
- Integration is not enough – need for a common frame of reference

How to get a common framework?

- Action has to be sectoral:
 - UN Convention on the Law of the Sea sets up sectoral machinery
 - National structures are sectoral
 - Management of human activities is sectoral
- Nevertheless, the sea is one environment
 - How do we integrate and show that we are integrating everything?

Johannesburg commitments

- “to encourage the application by 2010 of the ecosystem approach”
- “to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination”
- “to promote integrated, multidisciplinary and multisectoral coastal and ocean management”

What does the ecosystem approach give that we cannot get elsewhere?

Our goal is a healthy and sustainable ecosystem

- *We need a method to see whether we are achieving this*
- *We need a method to relate all the different human impacts to each other and to the environment*
- *We need methods to evaluate what is happening in the different environmental compartments*

What does this mean?

A systematic, cyclical approach in accordance with the CBD principles:

- An assessment of the status of the region to identify the problems
- Review of what is being done at global, regional and national levels as it affects the region
- Measuring that against what needs doing
- Developing and implementing strategies to meet those needs
- Collecting and evaluating information

Leading back into

- An assessment of the status....

How to specify what this means for a region?

- Different challenges will mean different details
- Need to be able to relate these to each other
- Examples and conceptual framework
(enabling different regional formulations to be related to each other)

Who needs to be involved?

- Many sectors – fisheries, shipping, land-based impacts, biodiversity conservation etc
- Many regulatory levels – global, regional, national, local
- Many aspects – Users, States, Science, Public Interest Groups, International Organisations

Bringing these together

Organisation –

- *helping different bodies work together*

Procedure –

- *enabling different bodies to make their particular inputs*

Secretariat collaboration –

- *building bridges between different bodies*

Building capacities -

- *the essential foundation*

How to visualise the ecosystem approach?

- Ecosystems have a natural variability
- We cannot specify a single state for any ecosystem
- We need to concentrate on the “envelope” within which we can be reasonably confident that the ecosystem is healthy and sustainable

How to envisage this ecosystem envelope?
The allium analogue



Analysing the ecosystems

Techniques for the different trophic levels:

Phytoplankton

Zooplankton

Macrophytes (large seaweeds)

Benthic fauna (inc shellfish)

Fish and other swimming fauna

Reptiles - Sea Birds - Marine Mammals

Analysing the human activities

Fisheries

- Shipping

Minerals extraction

- Tourism

Coastal protection

- Wind power

Cables/Pipelines

Land-based discharges

Etc Etc Etc

What is to analyse?

The three legs of the Sustainable Development tripod:

- Environment
- Social
- Economic

Successes in looking at ALL these?

How can we build capacities to do so?

How to write such a Manual?

- You have an initial sketch
- Develop a first draft on the basis of this and your comments – by Feb 2008
- Comment on that draft – ? by Aug 2008
- Revise draft – by end 2008 (or 10th RSM)
- Publish – by UNEP and who else?

We all want an ecosystem approach.
Will a manual help? What should it cover?
How do we write it?

