

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 23 April 2020
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Online meeting

Background Document for Agenda Item 2:

Draft decision for the IGR for the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

This note serves as a background document for consideration under Agenda Item 2: Draft decision for the IGR for the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. A first draft was presented and discussed during the subcommittee meeting on 27 February 2020. It has been revised, following the guidance from member States provided at the meeting of the subcommittee on 27 February 2020, and written inputs submitted to the Secretariat after that meeting.

Accordingly, the following substantive changes have been made:

In the preambular section, relevant changes are referring paragraphs 3 and 4 respectively, aiming to adequately describe the process and milestones that contributed to the development of this draft decision.

In the operative section, paragraph 2 was amended to provide specific reference to the relevant SDGs, and paragraph 4 includes a new reference to UNEP's Programme of Work and Budget.

The substantive relevant changes made in the draft are marked as **bold underlined**.

Member States are invited to further consider this revised version of the draft decision with a view to reach broad consensus, in view of final consideration at an Intergovernmental Review Meeting which is planned to take place in conjunction with the 7th meeting of the annual subcommittee, scheduled for 12-16 October 2020.

Draft decision to be adopted by an Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) Developed by the Secretariat of UNEP based on guidance and written inputs by member States

[Preambular section]

1. **Recognizing** that maintaining a high-quality coastal and marine environment provides ecosystem functions and services in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in particular Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources);
2. **Recalling** that the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) was created to counter the impact of land-based activities on the marine environment, and that the GPA was adopted by 108 Governments, and the European Commission at an intergovernmental conference convened in Washington, D.C., in 1995¹;
3. **Further recalling** that Intergovernmental Review Meetings of the GPA have been organized in Montreal (2001), Beijing (2006), Manila (2012) and Bali (2018), whereby governments with the participation of stakeholders met to review the status of the implementation of the GPA and decide on the actions to be taken to strengthen its implementation;
4. **Further recalling** the Bali Declaration² on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities adopted at the Fourth IGR held in Bali, Indonesia, 31 October - 1 November 2018 **in which it was agreed to work on the function, form and implications including legal, budgetary and organizational) of the GPA, including the future of the intergovernmental review process and the work currently coordinated by the Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action;**
5. **Noting with appreciation the regional consultations on the future of the GPA held by the Secretariat in 2019 and 2020, as well as the related briefings to the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);**
6. **Also noting with appreciation** that UNEP has hosted the GPA Coordination Office since its establishment and the work of the office on preventing land-based sources of marine pollution on the global level through demonstration projects, policy recommendations, research, capacity-building and awareness raising activities, as well as the valuable role of its three global partnerships, the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management, and the Global Wastewater Initiative, for which the GPA Coordination Office **provides the Secretariat functions;**
7. **Recognizing** that the general objectives and activities of the GPA remain relevant to the mission of UNEP and form part of its Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work, as well as to several resolutions adopted by the UN Environmental Assembly;³

¹ <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/1995-gpa.pdf>

² <https://papersmart.unon.org/igr-meeting/sites/default/files/k1900652.pdf#overlay-context=working-docs>

³ Marine plastic debris and microplastics (UNEP/EA.1/Res.6); Oceans and seas (UNEP/EA.2/Res.10); Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11); Sustainable coral reefs management (UNEP/EA.2/Res.12); Environment and health (UNEP/EA.3/Res.4); Managing soil pollution to achieve sustainable development (UNEP/EA.3/Res.6); Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res.7); Preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally (UNEP/EA.3/Res.8); Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems (UNEP/EA.3/Res.10); Marine Plastic

[Operative section]

1. **Decides** to hold no further meetings of the periodic Intergovernmental Review (IGR) of the Global Programme of Action.
2. **Recognizes** the continued relevance and valuable role of the three global partnerships in tackling land-based pollution established under the framework of the GPA, namely the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management and the Global Wastewater Initiative, as tools that contribute to the implementation of the **relevant SDG targets, in particular SDG targets 6.a , (including) SDG 6.3, and SDG 14.1**, and calls upon all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other relevant regional and international organizations, the private sector, the academia, civil society, non-governmental organizations, individuals, and other relevant stakeholders to support its activities;
3. **Invites** the Executive Director of UNEP, as appropriate and subject to available resources, to continue to support the general objectives of the GPA and its three global partnerships to tackling land-based pollution within the framework of the UNEP Programme of Work and Budget and to maintain and strengthen UNEP's capacity to support Member States in implementing and reporting on national, regional and global programmes to address land-based sources of marine pollution;
4. **Invites** the UN Environment Assembly to continue to review the progress on prevention of land-based sources of marine pollution **in the context of the implementation of UNEPs Programme of Work and Budget and where relevant to consider the results of scientific assessments and reports on** emerging issues that contribute to achieve high-quality coastal and marine environments in line with the SDGs and relevant mandates and resolutions of the Environment Assembly;
5. **Invites** the UN Environment Assembly at its fifth session to take note of this decision and to include it in its report to the UN General Assembly.

-The rationale behind this SDG target 6.a that we would like to put forward, in the context of addressing land-based sources of pollution within the framework of the GPA, is to emphasize on the critical role that expansion of the international cooperation and capacity building support to Developing Countries in water management can play by reducing pollution from wastewater, at Regional Global levels.

-For further background information, kindly click the link below:

<https://www.sdg6monitoring.org/indicators/target-6a/>

Litter and Microplastics (UNEP/EA.4/Res.6); Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (UNEP/EA.4/Res.11); Sustainable Nitrogen Management (UNEP/EA.4/Res.12); and Implementation Plan "Towards a Pollution-free Planet" (UNEP/EA.4/Res.6);