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Regional Seas and the Convention on Biological Diversity

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The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans share common concern for the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. The CBD Secretariat and the Coordinating Units of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans agreed on the need for a multi-year plan of action for implementing the CBD programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and, more specifically, its targets, in the framework of the 2010 biodiversity target, the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation and other global targets such as the Millennium Development Goals.

In 1995, at the second meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties, the Ministerial Segment reached a global consensus on the importance of marine and coastal biological diversity, known as the "Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity." Building on this consensus, the Parties to the CBD adopted in 1998 a programme of work that was reviewed and updated in 2004, focusing on the development and implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management, the sustainable use of living resources, the establishment and maintenance of marine and coastal protected areas, the development and implementation of sustainable mariculture, and the prevention, introduction and mitigation of impacts of invasive alien species. The CBD Conference of the Parties called for collaboration with Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in a number of decisions, including at its last meeting in Curitiba, Brazil, March 2006. The CBD Secretariat has already established cooperation *inter alia* with the Cartagena Convention in the Caribbean and the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean.

In the context of the 2010 target adopted by the CBD Conference of the Parties in 2002 and endorsed the same year by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, implementation of the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity has to be undertaken having in mind the specific targets for marine and coastal biodiversity adopted by the seventh and eighth meetings of the CBD Conference of the Parties. The implementation of this programme of work will be reviewed in depth in 2010.

The Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans provide unique platforms for the regional and synergistic implementation of programmes and activities related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) dealing with marine issues. They play a major role in the promotion of the Jakarta Mandate and the implementation of the CBD programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity at the regional level. The Strategic Directions of the Regional Seas Programme (2004-2007) adopted in 2003 call for an increase in the role of Regional Seas to serve as platforms for developing common regional objectives, promoting synergies and coordinating the regional implementation of relevant MEAs, including the biodiversity-related Conventions (CBD, CMS, CITES, WHC, and the Ramsar Convention), as a contribution to the sustainable development of coastal and marine areas.

The elements of the CBD programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity provide an appropriate overall framework for developing a multi-year programme or plan of action with joint activities for the Parties to the CBD and the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plan, including the CBD Secretariat and the Coordinating Units of the Regional Seas Programme.

Joint activities between the Parties to the CBD (and its Secretariat) and to the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (and their Coordinating Units) could then be considered around actions to be taken to:

- (a) Achieve the 2010 target and the WSSD 2012 target on marine protected areas networks. Success in achieving the targets will require the development and/or strengthening of capacities and adequate financial resources;
- (b) Monitor progress towards the 2010 target and the specific targets for marine and coastal biodiversity. Methodologies (including indicators) for assessments and databases will have to be set in place, and needed technology transferred and/or adapted to local or regional conditions;
- (c) Ensure proper reporting of data/information by harmonizing reporting and exchanging information, and promote communication, education and public awareness on marine and coastal areas matters
- (d) Contribute to the organisation of forthcoming events in the context of the CBD, to enhance awareness and prepare the decisions of the ninth meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties on issues of relevance to marine and coastal biodiversity.

Mechanisms should be set in place to facilitate and monitor progress made in the implementation of the joint activities.