

## **GC Decision adopted by the Governing Council at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session**

### *Global assessment of the state of the marine environment*

#### The Governing Council,

Recalling its decision 21/13 of 9 February 2001, by which the Executive Director in cooperation with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other appropriate United Nations organizations, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Regional Seas Programme, was requested to explore the feasibility of establishing a regular process for assessing the state of the marine environment, with active involvement by Governments and regional agreements, building on ongoing assessment programmes,

Noting that the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development called, in its paragraph 36 (b), for the establishment by 2004 of “a regular process under the United Nations for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, both current and foreseeable, building on existing regional assessments”,

Noting that the state of the marine environment is significantly affected by activities in coastal areas,

Welcoming the fact that outcomes of the consultations organized by the United Nations Environment Programme in response to Governing Council decision 21/13, in particular the consultative meetings held in Reykjavik and Bremen, Federal Republic of Germany, on 12 to 14 September 2001 and 18 to 20 March 2002 respectively, have contributed significantly to the target set out in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Welcoming the decision of the General Assembly under its resolution 57/141 of 12 December 2002 on Oceans and the law of the sea, to establish “a regular process under the United Nations for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects both current and foreseeable, building on existing regional assessments”,

Further welcoming the request to the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with Member States, relevant organizations and agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Maritime Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization and the World Meteorological Organization, and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, other competent intergovernmental organizations and relevant non-governmental organizations, “to prepare proposals on modalities for a regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, drawing, inter alia, upon the work of the United Nations Environment Programme pursuant to Governing

Council decision 21/13, and taking into account the recently completed review of the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection, and to submit those proposals to the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly for its consideration and decision, including on the convening of a possible intergovernmental meeting”;

Considering the need to link science and policy-making and in that context to promote intergovernmental cooperation, mobilize the scientific community and foster inter-agency cooperation in support of a regular process for reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment,

Stressing that consideration should be given to the need to ensure that sustainable capacity-building in developing countries is established as an integrated part of the assessment process as identified in the consultation process,

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on the global assessment of the marine environment (UNEP/GC.22/2 and Add.5.),

1. Requests the Executive Director to make the necessary arrangements for the active participation and appropriate contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme to the preparatory process for the establishment of a regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment as called for in General Assembly resolution 57/141;
2. Calls on the Executive Director to identify existing United Nations Environment Programme marine assessment budgetary and programmatic resources that can be applied to support the regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment;
3. Urges regional seas programmes and other regional seas agreements to participate and contribute as appropriate to the process called for in General Assembly resolution 57/141;
4. Requests the Executive Director to report to the Secretary-General in 2003 as well as to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eighth special session on the United Nations Environment Programme's contribution to the regular process called for in General Assembly resolution 57/141;
5. Authorizes the Executive Director to seek extrabudgetary resources, including through the establishment of a trust fund, to support the participation of developing countries in a regular process for reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment;
6. Urges Governments to contribute to the trust fund, once established;
7. Calls upon Governments to focus particular attention on coastal areas in collaboration with appropriate regional institutions involved in the coastal areas.