



The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands

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Global Oceans Conference in Hanoi Urges International Attention to Ocean/Climate Issues

Ocean leaders participating at the 4th Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands *Advancing Ecosystem Management and Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management in the Context of Climate Change*, April 7-11, 2008, Hanoi, Vietnam urged the international community to focus on the relationship between oceans and climate change and the predicted profound effects on ecosystems and coastal populations around the world, especially among the poorest people on Earth and in small island developing States.

The conference underlined that ocean and coastal managers are at the frontline of climate changes. The climate issues that ocean and coastal leaders around the world will need to face will ineradicably change the nature of ocean and coastal management, introducing increased uncertainty, the need to incorporate climate change planning into all existing management processes, the need to develop and apply new tools related to vulnerability assessment, and the need to make difficult choices in what in many cases will be “no win” situations, involving adverse impacts to vulnerable ecosystems and communities.

Conference participants underlined that we must begin addressing climate change effects now, including altering coastal development that is already in the pipeline--we don't have the luxury of waiting 10 years before we consider the implications and before we act. In particular, conference participants adopted the following agenda for action for the Global Forum to pursue in the next phase:

1. Put ocean/climate issues in the climate negotiations and vice versa
2. Understand and develop policy responses to global ocean changes (ocean warming, ocean acidification, changes in currents, changes in polar regions, etc.)
3. Address the “climate divide” and promote international commitments and funding mechanisms to respond to the differential effects of climate change on different regions and peoples
4. Encourage a wide range of adaptation efforts
5. Properly manage mitigation efforts that use the oceans
 - Carbon storage and sequestration
 - Iron fertilization
6. Encourage alternative forms of energy using the oceans (wind power, tides, currents)

The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, created at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in September 2002, aims to advance the interests of oceans – incorporating 72% of the Earth; coasts – the home of 50% of the world's population; and islands – 44 of the world's nations are island developing states which are especially dependent on the oceans. The forum is composed of individuals from governments, intergovernmental and international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (environmental, scientific/technical, industry, and foundations) with the common goal of encouraging the sustainable development of oceans, coasts and islands.

Organized by the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands and the Government of Vietnam, the conference brought together 439 ocean and coastal leaders from 62 countries, representing all sectors, including governments, intergovernmental and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the business community, ocean donors, and scientific institutions.

The conference focused especially on assessing the progress that has been achieved (or lack thereof) on the global oceans targets established by the world's political leaders at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development: Achieving ecosystem-based and integrated ocean and coastal management by 2010, reducing marine biodiversity loss by 2010, establishing networks of marine protected areas by 2012, and restoring fishery stocks by 2015, among others.

An extensive preparatory process involving twelve multinational Working Groups (involving 254 ocean experts from 72 countries representing all sectors and regions of the world) was mobilized to prepare analyses and specific policy recommendations to the 4th Global Conference. The Policy Briefs (listed below) and other Conference outcomes are available at the Global Forum website www.globaloceans.org. Interviews with key conference participants are available at **GOC2008YouTubeChannel: <http://www.youtube.com/globaloceans2008>**

Policy Briefs

- Ecosystem Management and Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management and Indicators for Progress
- Large Marine Ecosystems
- Marine Biodiversity and Networks of Marine Protected Areas
- Linking the Management of Freshwater, Oceans, and Coasts
- Fisheries and Aquaculture—Sustainability and Governance
- Maritime Transport
- Governance of Marine Ecosystems and Uses in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
- Climate, Oceans, and Security
- Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy
- Compliance and Enforcement
- Capacity Building
- Public Education and Outreach

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