

**THIRD GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON OCEANS, COASTS, AND ISLANDS**  
January 23-28, 2006  
UNESCO, Paris

**Working Group on  
Perspectives on Global Oceans Stewardship:  
Improving High Seas Governance**

**Terms of Reference**

Working Groups are being organized for the major themes to be considered at the Third Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands. The Working Groups are intended to:

--bring together the range of perspectives needed to consider the issue/theme, insuring good cross-sector representation of experts from developing and SIDS countries, developed countries, the government sector, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, private sector, scientific groups;

--examine the major issues involved on the topic with the aim of summarizing the findings and making recommendations for specific next steps that should be taken by the international community on the topic, indicating the international venues/processes that should be targeted;

-- provide multi-stakeholder input to the discussions of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group established by the UN General Assembly to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction;

--as appropriate and feasible, the Working Group may attempt to reach cross-group consensus on the issue. Alternatively, the Working Group may focus largely on providing information to the global oceans community on the dimensions of the issue, areas of agreement and disagreement among stakeholders, and policy options for addressing/resolving the issue.

--Working Groups are invited to:

--organize and prepare short papers (approximately two pages) on the issues with discussion of policy implications for distribution in the conference packets (these should be available by January 1, 2006);

--make recommendations on the make-up of the conference panels addressing the issue;

--help organize and provide guidance for conducting structured multistakeholder dialogues on the issue during the global conference. The structured dialogues will use the short paper(s) as a starting document, and work to reach consensus on recommended next steps and/or implementation plans. The Working Group Co-chairs (with the

assistance of a Rapporteur), will oversee the drafting of a summary statement on the issue for consideration in the final session of the global conference;

--help insure follow-up from the working group and global conference deliberations following the global conference.

Each Working Group will name co-chairs, one from a developing country, one from a developed country.

### **Scope**

The High Seas Governance Working Group will address the gaps in international policy framework regarding high seas governance (marine issues in areas beyond national jurisdiction) with emphasis on issues related to marine bioprospecting and issues related to protection of sensitive resources and habitats in the high seas. To do so, the Working Group will coordinate preparations of a Conference panel and two subsequent parallel multistakeholder dialogue sessions.

The Panel will deal with the theme on An Ecosystem Approach to High Seas; it will provide an overview of high seas and deep seabed-related issues, followed by presentations organized in two focal areas: bioprospecting in the deep seabed; and high seas fisheries governance. Presentations under both focal areas should address, as appropriate, science and technology aspects, private sector involvement and perspectives, and policy/legal aspects of the issues under consideration.

The multistakeholder dialogue sessions will focus on: 1) bioprospecting in the deep seabed, and 2) high seas fisheries governance. The Working Group will develop a structure for such dialogue sessions following a broad set of guidelines for Working Groups from the Conference organizers.

### **Presentations**

All potential Working Group members are invited to express an interest in participating in the Working Group and contributing short papers within the January 1, 2006 deadline. Among the Working Group members the Conference Organizers request suggestions of potential Panel speakers, as well as potential leaders of the Dialogue Sessions. This will not preclude members from expressing an interest in playing different roles. All members of the Working Group should feel free to contribute short papers or other relevant documentation, regardless of whether or not they will intervene as speakers (but within the same deadline indicated above).

### **Co-Chairs**

Alfonso Ascencio, Mexico (Permanent Mission to the United Nations) (also Panel Co-Chair)  
Salvatore Arico, UNESCO (also Panel Co-Chair)

### **Potential Working Group Members**

Members have been recommended on their expert capacity in the following areas:

#### ***Policy/Legal sector***

*Scientific sector*

*Private sector*

*Government sector*

*Non-governmental sector*

*Intergovernmental sector*

For a list of the High Seas Working Group members, please see: [link to High Seas main page]

**Administrative Support**

The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands will provide the requisite administrative support for the Working Group effort (Lindsey Williams, [lcw@udel.edu](mailto:lcw@udel.edu)).