



The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands

Reports from the Third Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands

January 23-28, 2006, UNESCO, Paris

OCEAN DONORS ROUNDTABLE

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On January 23, 2006, the second meeting of the Ocean Donors Roundtable, hosted by the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, and chaired by David Freestone of the World Bank, was held in conjunction with the Third Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France. This second meeting of the Ocean Donors Roundtable built on the discussions held during the first Roundtable meeting which was held on October 10, 2005 in Lisbon, Portugal, as a parallel event of The Ocean Policy Summit (TOPS) 2005: The International Conference on Integrated Ocean Policy: National and Regional Experiences, Prospects, and Emerging Practices.

Participants in the second meeting included: Jens Ambsdorf, Lighthouse Foundation; Yves Auffret, Maritime Policy Task Force, European Commission; Ezio Bussioletti, Permanent Representative of Italy to UNESCO; Biliiana Cicin-Sain, University of Delaware and Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands; Federico Cinquepalmi, Ministry for Environment and Territory, Italy; Christophe Du Castel, Secretariat du FFEM-AFD (French GEF); Al Duda, GEF; Marea Hatzios, World Bank; Arlo Hemphill, Conservation International; Indumathie Hewawasam, World Bank; Paul Holthus, Marine Aquarium Council; Andrew Hudson, UNDP; Tom Laughlin, U.S. NOAA; Carl Lundin, IUCN;

Gerald Miles, Nature Conservancy; Ellen Pikitch, Pew Institute for Ocean Science; Yumiko Tanaka, Ocean Policy Research Foundation; Chua Thia-Eng, PEMSEA; Cees van de Guchte, UNEP/GPA; and Christy Loper, NOAA (session rapporteur).

Meeting Outcomes:

1. All recognized the importance of awareness raising of ocean issues and felt there was room for collaboration and sharing of experience in this area and its contribution to resource mobilization.
2. The Group encouraged the Forum to complete a comprehensive directory of the organizations which finance ocean, coastal and small island developing states (SIDS) issues.
3. The Group recognized an important need for the sharing of information about funding activities in the Oceans, including priorities and programmes as well as lessons learned, both successes and failures. This could be through a list serve (which would need to include more bodies than those attending the current meeting) or even a facilitated website, perhaps constructed around or in conjunction with the Global Forum website.
4. There was recognition that the major priorities of the international Ocean Agenda had been already set by legal and political instruments to which states were

parties (Law of the Sea Convention; U.N. Fish Stocks Agreement, MDGs, WSSD JPOI, etc). For many present, particularly those from the public sector, there would be value in the monitoring and more systematic collection of information regarding national efforts to meet of these targets. Given that the next assessment of ocean WSSD targets would not be until the CSD in 2014 this was regarded by many as a useful activity, which might be modeled on the work of the World Water Forum, to be undertaken under the auspices of the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands.

Substance of the Discussion:

The group noted that the purpose of Roundtable should be to expand the scale of funding for ocean issues. The group reviewed the report of the previous Ocean Donors Roundtable in Lisbon and discussed some of its main findings.

The group discussed a possible on-going role for such a group and its possible comparative advantage as the only meeting of donors, from both the public and private sector, directed at oceans, coasts and SIDS. It was recognized that although donor agencies may have innovative approaches to financing, they are not agenda setters, but responsive to the global agenda which has been set and to which governments are committed (e.g., MDGs, WSSD JPOI), and donors should bear this agenda in mind.

Some thought that a meeting of donors might be a useful forum for discussing innovative financing ideas—although such a meeting might need to be organized

slightly differently. A number of ideas, issues and approaches were raised.

It was noted that in the capacity building session, there are many needs that are not being met. For example, a serious hurdle in many countries comes about when there are multiple problems that need to be addressed. Governments will inevitably prioritize healthcare, roads, HIV/AIDS, etc. above ocean and coastal issues. Awareness raising is needed to illustrate the importance of ocean issues in this competitive environment.

Some argued that funders might consider financing a more settled “secretariat”-type function to support the Global Forum to ensure continuity and to help sustainability. One of the activities of such a function might include monitoring the implementation of goals that are already on the table. Ideas were expressed on the way this might be done or whether it would be appropriate.

Sharing of information between funders was seen as an important and highly useful activity, whether through a list server or website. Not only information about financing but also about country programmes. The view was expressed that the status of established goals and targets, and their implementation across the world was important for financiers to know where the bottlenecks are and how they might be addressed.

The group felt that future donors meetings might be more appropriately timed at the end of the Conferences after priorities had been discussed and set on major issues, so as to be able to reflect on the findings of the meeting.