



Bahrain Action Plan for Marine World Heritage

Identifying Priorities and enhancing the role of the World Heritage Convention in the IUCN WCPA Marine Global Plan of Action for MPAs in our Oceans and Seas



Global and Regional Workshop Report, hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain, February 2009, organised by UNESCO and IUCN WCPA Marine



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Back cover photo: Southern elephant seal, *Mirounga leonina*, Peninsula Valdez World Heritage Site, Patagonia, Argentina, Tilman Jaeger

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Foreword

We live in an ocean world. Over 70% of the surface of Earth is ocean and more than 95% if you measure the habitable space by volume. Our oceans are the life blood of our planet – they contain the bulk of the water, process essential gasses, removing carbon dioxide, and produce life-giving oxygen. They contain the least explored areas on earth and habitats that exist nowhere else, be it the underwater sulphur volcanoes in the Pacific, or the communities around deep sea thermal vents that gain their energy from chemical reactions rather than the sun. Every week we expand our knowledge as new species are discovered.

In the past decade or so we have only begun to better recognise the variety and beauty of our marine world, but also the essential role it plays, unseen, day-on-day, in keeping our world functioning. We have come to recognise that it is under ever increasing pressures. The World Heritage Convention is a high profile global conservation agreement that can both recognise the outstanding importance and quality of our marine habitats, and act as a global mechanism to secure their conservation. Marine World Heritage properties are our flagship sites. They show the world the importance and variety of marine habitats, as well as encouraging nations to do more to protect other areas in waters under their control.

The challenge is that the Convention has not been applied to anywhere near its full potential in the marine environment. Indeed out of the 911 existing heritage properties about 49 are protected in full or partly for their marine values. In addition areas of ocean beyond the jurisdiction of any individual countries cover half the surface of the Earth – a vast area with World Heritage values that currently goes unrecognised and unprotected. Though the Convention cannot be applied to international waters, there is no reason why the methodology for identifying areas with Outstanding Universal Value, recognized by 186 signatory parties to the Convention, cannot be used as a model to help prioritize efforts. It was against this background that the Kingdom of Bahrain joined forces with UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and IUCN's World Commission of Protected Areas to support the scaling up of action on marine World Heritage. The results of the subsequent workshop have shaped the Bahrain Action Plan.

We commend this plan to you as a major vehicle for expanding and accelerating the recognition the World Heritage Convention can give to our oceans and seas and the amazing wildlife and distinctive habitats that they contain.

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Executive Summary

During the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, 2002, most countries of the world committed to establishing representative networks of Marine Protected Areas by 2012. This was in recognition of the significant and degrading impacts that humanity was having on the oceans, and that MPAs are widely accepted as a key tool for securing biodiversity and societal and economic benefits.

Since that time two pivotal issues have come to the fore – first is that action by countries is lagging well behind what is needed to establish MPA networks by 2012, and second is that our oceans and seas are under considerably more pressures and stresses than when the original decision was taken.

The World Heritage Convention is a principal protection mechanism available to recognise and protect the very best marine sites around the globe. Countries are struggling to establish sufficient scale and variety of sites to reflect the 70% of our planet that is ocean. A focussed effort is now needed to accelerate progress whilst maintaining the overarching goals and standards of the Convention.

A key step to targeted application of the Convention has now been made by the creation of the Bahrain Action Plan for marine World Heritage. The goals of the Bahrain Action Plan were three-fold:

- (a) Building greater capacity within the global WCPA marine network in helping deliver World Heritage related technical support;
- (b) Setting the stage for carrying out a global thematic review of marine World Heritage; and
- (c) Carrying out a review of marine World Heritage in the Arab Region.

The plan outlines five actions on:

- (1) capacity building;
- (2) delivery of new marine protected areas with potential World Heritage values;
- (3) improving networking;
- (4) improving marine protected area data and visibility; and
- (5) developing an IUCN Thematic study on marine World Heritage.

The following pages set out the background to the Action Plan, and identify the steps needed in the next two years to achieve improved recognition and protection of Outstanding Universal Value in our oceans and seas.

It is hoped that this renewed impetus being given to marine World Heritage, combined with strong new partnerships developing at global and regional levels will encourage, assist and support nations to use the Convention to better recognise their outstanding marine areas.

Introduction

Protected areas provide the most significant, front-line response to the global extinction crisis and currently cover 12% of the Earth's land surface. These special places face many significant challenges, from direct degradation due to human pressures, lack of political support, lack of sustainable financing, and to climate change impacts.

The World Heritage Convention provides a unique framework for securing the conservation of almost 200 of the world's most important natural places recognized by the Convention as being of Outstanding Universal Value. They include many of the 'household names' of conservation such as the Serengeti, Ngorongoro, Galapagos Islands, Grand Canyon and Great Barrier Reef. The total area of natural World Heritage properties is almost 1.8 million km² – around 8% of protected areas worldwide.

One of the key challenges of the Convention is to expand its application to our oceans and seas. The world's oceans, covering 70% of Earth's surface, contain rich, largely unexplored, undersea worlds from the sea surface to an average depth of 3,790 meters. Currently, it is estimated that only about 0.8% of Earth's coastal and marine areas have any form of protected status, and only 0.01% of the global marine area is reserved as "no-take", fully protected from extractive uses. While the number and extension of marine protected areas (MPAs) is growing, progress has been slow, even as countries strive to meet the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) target on establishment of representative networks of MPAs, consistent with international law and based on scientific information, by 2012¹.

Of the multiple and overlapping conventions increasingly involved in marine conservation, the World Heritage Convention and its Marine Programme provide a comprehensive policy and conservation framework for safeguarding the world's most outstanding and biologically diverse marine areas. Successful application of the Convention in support of marine protection combines legislation with action and local and national pride, and operates at multiple spatial scales, on an international level down to the grassroots level.

There are, however, significant challenges to achieve effective application of the Convention to our oceans and seas. Progress is far behind what might be expected by comparison to terrestrial protected areas. Of the existing 911 World Heritage properties, 207 are listed for their natural values of which just 49 are protected for their marine biodiversity values. In addition to this there are major challenges to exchange of experience and information across the existing properties, effective management of their Outstanding Universal Value and ecological integrity, and issues concerning the adequacy of information on marine World Heritage properties as a basis for public visibility and decision making.

Tackling these issues and developing a road map to scale-up the application of the World Heritage Convention to marine areas has accordingly become an increasingly significant global priority. As the Advisory Body to the World Heritage Convention for natural heritage, IUCN places the importance of achieving greater use of the Convention to protect our oceans and seas alongside the importance of finding ways to secure conservation of wildlife and habitats on the High Seas, areas of ocean beyond the jurisdiction of any individual country. The global Plan of Action for IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (Laffoley, 2008) establishes renewed and enhanced action on marine World Heritage as one of the essential measures now needed alongside protection of wildlife and habitats on the High Seas.

It was against this background that the Kingdom of Bahrain in cooperation with UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas hosted a workshop from 23 to 26 February 2009. The goals of the workshop were three-fold:

- (a) Building greater capacity within the global WCPA Marine network in helping deliver World Heritage related technical support;
- (b) Carrying out global thematic review of marine World Heritage;
- (c) Carrying out a review of marine World Heritage in the Arab Region.

1. World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg set a target to establish marine protected areas and networks by 2012. A/CONF.199/20 chapter 32(c)

The focus was to build on previous analyses of inadequacies and imperatives of the Convention with regard to the marine environment and to develop a clear road map of actions. The road map, when implemented, would significantly move the world community closer to more effective application of the World Heritage Convention in the marine environment. The roadmap is called the Bahrain Plan of Action for Marine World Heritage.

1. Background to the Bahrain workshop

1.1. Early progress on marine World Heritage

In 1996, IUCN's Natural Heritage Program began to prepare a global strategy for Natural World Heritage properties. Towards this goal a working paper on wetlands was prepared with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and support of Australia's Department of Environment. This paper also benefited from consultations with the professional staff based at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat². The working paper provided a global overview of the coverage of existing World Heritage properties with wetland and marine values in 1997. Potential wetland and marine areas which might merit future nomination to the World Heritage List were also proposed.

In addition to the 1997 paper on Wetland and Marine Protected Areas on the World Heritage List, the background to the Bahrain meeting on marine World Heritage, held in February 2009, can be traced back to a UNESCO/NOAA/IUCN/United Nations Foundation workshop held in Hanoi, Vietnam in 2002. The Hanoi workshop identified and recommended to States Parties of the World Heritage Convention more than 100 marine, coastal and small island areas with high biological diversity in the tropical realm. As follow-up to Hanoi three pilot projects were developed with national and international partners to promote serial and trans-boundary approaches: the Southern Caribbean Islands (Venezuela, Netherlands Antilles); Central Pacific Islands and Atolls (Kiribati, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, and US areas); and Marine Conservation Corridor in the Eastern Pacific (Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica).

In 2003, a one-day workshop was held in conjunction with the World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, for site managers and experts to discuss the development of a World Heritage Marine Site Manager's Network.

The following year a US\$ 3.135 million United Nations Foundation /Global Conservation Fund supported project was initiated by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Conservation International in the Eastern Tropical Pacific at existing and proposed marine World Heritage properties in Ecuador, Colombia, Costa Rica and Panama (Galápagos Islands, Cocos Island National Park, Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection, Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary as well as Las Baulas Marine National Park). In the framework of the project, on-going support was provided to the Governments of Colombia and Panama to prepare their World Heritage nominations as well as for project document writing and project management. Additionally, a marine policy workshop was held in Paris to further develop the marine approach under the Convention.

1.2. Creation and development of the UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme

In 2005, the World Heritage Committee established the UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme at the 29th session of the Committee held in 2005 in South Africa³. The Marine Programme provides an important contribution to achieve the five Strategic Objectives of the World Heritage Convention set out in the Budapest Declaration of 2002⁴.

The long-term vision for the World Heritage Marine Programme is that

“All marine areas of “Outstanding Universal Value” will be inscribed as World Heritage thus leading to a better protection of marine biodiversity and associated cultural, spiritual, and economic values . All marine World Heritage properties will be exemplary models of effective and results-based management benefiting coastal communities and biodiversity [for present and future generations] around the world⁵.”

2. Thorsell, J 1997 Working Paper 2: A Global Overview of Wetland and Marine Protected Areas on the World Heritage List. IUCN

3. World Heritage Committee Decision 29 COM 5. Further information available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-programme>

4. WHC.07 /31.COM /13A Evaluation of the results of the implementation of the Strategic Objectives of the Committee Document P.3 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/31COM/documents/>

5. UNESCO World Heritage Centre Marine Programme's Five Year Business Plan: Saving Marine Areas of Outstanding Universal Value. Draft.

The overall goal of the Marine Programme is effective conservation of existing and potential marine and coastal protected areas of outstanding universal value. In particular, the Marine Programme aims at:

- (a) Assisting States Parties with new nominations or extensions to existing properties. The Programme contributes to the development of a credible World Heritage List that is balanced and representative both geographically and with regard to types of marine ecosystems;
- (b) Providing support to site management through capacity building and the promotion of management effectiveness (best practices), fundraising, establishment of strategic partnerships and networking;
- (c) Increasing awareness of the World Heritage Convention as an international legal instrument for achieving conservation of marine ecosystems of Outstanding Universal Value.

Categories of 'marine World Heritage' for the purposes of this programme are:

- (a) Properties for which marine values have been the principal reason for inscription as World Heritage;
- (b) Properties, which are terrestrial, but which also have a marine protected area attached to the World Heritage Property;
- (c) Properties that have only coastal components with no marine protected areas attached; and
- (d) Properties that have been inscribed for cultural heritage criteria but could potentially be inscribed as mixed properties to include a natural marine component.

1.3. Outputs of the World Heritage Marine Programme

- 1.3.1. Since its inception, the World Heritage Marine Programme has focussed both on assistance to States Parties for site nomination and capacity building for sites already inscribed on the World Heritage List. Regional working meetings were organized in the Caribbean and Pacific to enhance understanding of the role of the World Heritage Convention and the protection of ocean areas of Outstanding Universal Value. Particular attention was given to the potential of serial and transboundary nominations. Specific projects, such as the Eastern Tropical Seascape Project (ETPS), among others, were instrumental in new site nominations and provided specific technical support toward effective site management and conservation. The World Heritage Marine Programme has received financial contribution from the Governments of Finland, France, Italy, and the Netherlands. Funding has also been secured through the United Nations Foundation, the Global Conservation Fund, WCPA-Marine, MacArthur Foundation, and the World Heritage, among others.
- 1.3.2. Since 2005, ten new sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage List for their marine and coastal values, including Shiretoko, Japan (2005), Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California (2005), Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection (2005), Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary, Columbia (2006), High Coast/Kvarken Archipelago, Sweden (extension) (2006), Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef Diversity and Associated Ecosystems, France (2008), Socotra Archipelago, Yemen (2008), and the Wadden Sea, The Netherlands/Germany (2009) (serial, transboundary site) Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, United States of America; and Phoenix Islands World Heritage Area, Kiribati. Additionally, 49 sites have been inscribed on the Tentative World Heritage List.
- 1.3.3. Recently, a new 3-year partnership has been formed with luxury watch maker Jaeger- LeCoultre and the International Herald Tribune. This partnership generates both financial support for the further development of the World Heritage Marine Programme and an outreach campaign through which marine World Heritage sites are featured in full-page advertisements in both the online and printed versions of the International Herald Tribune⁶.
- 1.3.4. The World Heritage Marine Programme works closely with a variety of agencies and organisations both within and outside UNESCO. Organisations within UNESCO include World Heritage Centre's regional desks, the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme, the World Heritage Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Programme, the International Oceanographic Commission (IOC), Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB) and the Division of Science Policy & Sustainable Development. Outside UNESCO collaborations include IUCN (including the Programme on

6. For further information consult: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/526/>

Protected areas and the Global Marine Programme) and its WCPA network, the Convention on Biological Diversity, Conservation International, the Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund, among others.

1.3.5. The World Heritage Marine Programme is currently revising its strategy to further improve implementation of the goals and objectives mentioned above

1.4. 'Our Sea of Islands' initiative

1.4.1. In 2007, collaboration between NOAA and UNESCO's World Heritage Centre resulted in the meeting "Our Sea of Islands" for Oceania, on marine managed areas and World Heritage. This meeting was convened in response to a recommendation from the Hanoi workshop to provide training in the Pacific region on the Convention and nomination process. The main obstacles identified during the Hanoi workshop to advance nominations of (marine) World Heritage Sites in the Pacific region included:

- (a) Lack of knowledge on the nomination process (most Pacific countries are new States Parties to the Convention);
- (b) Existing guidelines are not necessarily geared to the Pacific context;
- (c) Lack of knowledge on the implications of World Heritage listing, which leads to unwillingness to commit;
- (d) Lack of sufficient management and/or legal protection of potential World Heritage marine areas; and
- (e) Limited institutional capacity to prepare nominations.

1.4.2. The 2007 meeting addressed these challenges by:

- (a) Providing information on the World Heritage nomination process, requirements and implications;
- (b) Sharing examples and lessons learnt on the use of the World Heritage Convention in the Pacific region;
- (c) Discussing ways and means to better adapt nomination requirements to the specific situation in the Pacific (e.g. cultural and spiritual linkages) and gathering recommendations to the World Heritage Committee to this end for submission to the World Heritage Committee.

1.5. The Bahrain Action Plan

1.5.1. It was against this background and the urgent need to maintain momentum that IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas identified the scaling-up of marine activities under the Convention as a global priority in its Plan of Action.

1.5.2. To provide further input to this priority, the Kingdom of Bahrain, in cooperation with UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and IUCN's WCPA Marine, convened the workshop on marine World Heritage from 23-26 February 2009. A list of attendees is provided in Annex 1, with supporting documentation and presentations at the following link <http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/549>

2. An Arabian Seas regional focus

The Arabian Seas region is under-represented in natural World Heritage. However, the international conservation community and the general public recognise many particular and distinctive marine ecosystems and biodiversity values within the region. There is strong interest in furthering marine World Heritage in the region and, also, the Arab Seas region has several enabling attributes to support the establishment of marine protected area networks including regional organisations and conventions.

2.1. Enabling context

2.1.1. Within the Arabian Seas region complementary actions are being developed to improve the application of the World Heritage Convention and to assist in the establishment of marine protected areas with potential Outstanding Universal Value. Two key players in these activities are the regional organisations: the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA), and the Regional Organization for Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME).

2.1.2. The member states PERSGA are Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan⁷. The Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment (Jeddah Convention) 1982 provides the legal foundation for PERSGA. The member States of ROPME are Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Since its establishment in 1978, ROPME has provided technical coordination to the Kuwait Action Plan (KAP) and assisted its member states in the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, including environmental assessment, environmental management, public awareness and training.

2.1.3. Marine conservation activities in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (RSGA) region have included: establishing marine protected areas; capacity building and developing management experience; expanding the scientific understanding of some species and ecosystems; and improving safety measures for maritime transport. The Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden was executed by PERSGA with GEF support, and largely through a diverse set of training, workshops, surveys, and action plan development to deal with the various threats facing the coastal and marine environments in the region.

2.2. Marine World Heritage and potential Outstanding Universal Value

2.2.1. The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden contain unique coastal and marine environments. While the Red Sea is famous for its globally important repository of marine biodiversity, represented by clear waters, an extraordinary system of coral reefs and their associated fauna and flora, the Gulf of Aden, being influenced by nutrient rich upwelling waters, is known for prodigious fishery production⁸.

2.2.2. Marine and coastal habitats in ROPME Sea Area (RSA) are extremely variable and support a large variety of productive marine ecosystems. Furthermore, the coastal and marine habitats found in the RSA, categorized into benthic deep and shallow subtidal habitats, intertidal habitats, rocky shores, sand shores, and mud shores. The interaction of the physical factors in RSA produces a severe regime for the marine biota of the region, especially the intertidal zones, so that diversity is lower within the inner part of the sea area than in the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean in general.

2.2.3. The existing MPAs do not fully represent the range of regionally significant and representative habitats and species (mangroves, turtle nesting and feeding, breeding seabirds). Therefore it is likely that the potential Outstanding Universal Value of marine heritage in the region has not been

7. PERSGA. 2006. State of the Marine Environment, Report for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. PERSGA, Jeddah.

8. PERSGA ;Abuzinada A. H, Joubert, E. and Krupp, F 2000 Proceedings of an international symposium on: The Extent and Impact of Coral Bleaching in the Arabian Region. National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development, published 2005 Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

identified or protected and regional tentative lists could be incomplete.

2.2.4. Additional MPAs are needed to fill these gaps. Information gaps prevent an assessment of the current status of some species (breeding seabirds, marine mammals, and marine turtles) and the distribution and status of many habitats (sabkha, saltmarsh, sandy shores, rocky shores, seagrass in some countries, and subtidal soft substrata).

2.3. Data and Information

2.3.1. A manual of standard survey methods for key habitats and key species in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region has been produced⁹. Baseline data on key habitats and species has been collected to produce ecosystem status reports and increase knowledge of RSGA corals, coral communities, and reefs.

2.3.2. In the PERSGA region MPA survey data has been entered into a regional GIS. Site-specific master plans, with management guidelines, have been written for some of the existing MPAs with the involvement and participation of local stakeholders. A large number of managers, rangers, and scientists have been trained (via workshops and on-the-job training) in MPA management, field surveys, and monitoring techniques.

Further research, training and preparation and implementation of management plans are needed.

2.4. Planning and Policy

2.4.1. The Protocol Concerning the Conservation of Biological Biodiversity and the Establishment of Protected Areas by PERSGA members, December 2005, provides a regionally coordinated approach to conservation. A Regional Master Plan for the Regional Network of Marine Protected Areas has been produced and progress is occurring towards the complete establishment of the RSGA Regional Network of marine protected areas.

2.4.2. The protocol provides for: the protection and conservation of species; the protection of selected marine and coastal areas; the application of a common management framework throughout the region (including integrated coastal area management; environmental impact assessment; restoration of ecosystems and populations of species; criteria for selection of additional protected areas); specific measures (such as access to genetic resources and technology exchange); and an institutional framework for national implementation and oversight of the Protocol.

2.4.3. Initiatives to protect the environment at the national level have depended mainly on command and control mechanisms, particularly legislation. The main avenues for the implementation of environmental policy in the region have been national institutions coordinating environmental management and enforcing laws (e.g. ministries, general directorates and the environment protection councils or departments) and the setting of standards and norms through legislation.

2.4.4. Recognizing the need for collective action to control pollution to protect the degradation of the marine environment, the countries of the ROPME adopted in 1978 the Kuwait Regional Convention, the Marine Emergency Protocol, and the Action Plan.

2.5. Capacity Building

2.5.1. There is limited technical capacity and experience in the region in MPA management. Some countries lack the necessary pool of experts to provide the knowledge, training and skills necessary for management. Much of the existing capability is in Egypt, where there is the best example of a fully functional MPA in the region.

2.5.2. There is a region-wide need to strengthen surveillance and enforcement in MPAs. Gaps in existing MPA distribution need to be filled and some habitats are not currently protected within existing MPA networks.

9. http://www.persga.org/Files/Publications/Technical/TS/TS10_SSM_for_Key_Habitat.pdf

2.6. Potential for MPA networks

- 2.6.1. Though the situation varies between the countries, the general underlying impediments to effective management include poorly developed national environmental legislation: lack of funding (for research, management, monitoring, surveillance and enforcement); the need to strengthen the political will to implement management; and insufficient scientific expertise and experience in marine environmental management. Furthermore, there has been limited use of community-based monitoring.
- 2.6.2. The coastal zones and adjacent marine habitats in the ROPME region are potentially the sites of extreme resource use conflicts, including over-exploitation, mismanagement and pollution from human activities causing environmental degradation. The Kuwait Convention requires the Contracting Parties to take all necessary measures to protect the marine and coastal areas and to prevent, reduce, and combat pollution of the sea areas from the potential sources of pollution. The Convention does not only provide a legal framework for preserving coastal and marine ecosystems, but also suggest that nations will be giving increasing attention to conserving coastal and marine living resources.
- 2.6.3. Marine and coastal habitats may be protected through national or regional policies for the establishment of protected areas. The success of these policies depends on the existence of appropriate legal frameworks, general acceptance by local inhabitants, the delineation of areas so that they can be treated more or less as self-contained units, and an effective and well supported managerial system.
- 2.6.4. Coastal habitats are often susceptible to mismanagement of activities in upland areas. The most serious threat is habitat destruction through the replacement of entire habitats by settlements, harbours, and other human constructions, by cropland, grazing land, and plantations, and by mines and quarries.

Designation of coastal and marine protected areas would therefore help maintain ecosystem integrity and productivity and safeguard essential ecological processes by controlling activities that disrupt them or that physically damage the environment. It would also help conserve biological (genetic) diversity and protect ecosystems that are critical and unique.

2.7. Networks

- 2.7.1. PERSGA initiatives have highlighted that an ecosystem approach to conservation and management is most appropriate to ensure long-term sustainability of the region's critical habitats and populations of globally important species. This would be achieved by establishing an integrated regional network of MPAs supported by effective integrated management and planning. Twelve MPAs were selected for the regional network of MPAs and to be representative of the RSGA region's biogeography (and include representative habitat types and species as well as bird and turtle nesting sites, and seagrass beds used by dugong), and include feeding, breeding and roosting sites, larval sources and sinks, and migratory routes of key biota. In total, 75 MPAs have been established or recommended for the RSGA. Cultural heritage is also under consideration.
- 2.7.2. Each of the MPAs at the RSGA region is at a different stage of establishment and implementation. Their progress towards establishment and implementation of day-to-day management should be monitored for future state of the environment reports as indicators of the effectiveness of management.
- 2.7.3. The Regional Network includes sites in each country that are regionally significant and representative. National networks of MPAs are also required in each country to ensure representation of all levels of marine environmental diversity throughout the RSGA.
- 2.7.4. PERSGA is striving to integrate current research and monitoring into global initiatives such as the ICRI, GCRMN, and IUCN, as well as the ongoing research and monitoring of PERSGA member states. These initiatives could benefit from a coordinated approach with ROPME.
- 2.7.5. The region illustrates much potential to develop MPA networks and assess potential marine World Heritage nomination through the potential leadership of two regional organisations of PERSGA and ROPME. These organisations already play a key role in regional policy implementation and research. However, the actions proposed also indicate the potential for increased management

effectiveness in existing MPAs. Further data sharing and compilation could provide the support needed to develop nomination dossier proposals. Communicating the benefits from increased designation of MPAs in this region, such as the maintenance of bio-productivity of fisheries, could also aid conservation efforts in the region. Continued fish production means continued livelihood for fisherman and for other fishing industry and hence means continued social, cultural, and economical stability.

3. The Bahrain Action Plan for Marine World Heritage 2009 – 2014

3.1. Structure and focus of the Action Plan

The key issue which the Bahrain 2009 workshop tackled was the underlying reasons for the apparent gap between interest in better protection of our oceans and seas, and a paucity of actions being taken under the World Heritage Convention. It became apparent during workshop discussions that there is no single measure that, if implemented, could have sufficient impact to move the process forward.

What became apparent is that three aspects are hindering greater progress:

- (a) **Existing information is not sufficient and visible** – there is simply insufficient information available, accessible and highly visible both on existing marine World Heritage sites and also on how to move forward the nomination of new sites
- (b) **Guidance for, and articulation of, arguments for marine World Heritage needs strengthening** – leading on from the first point, those materials that do exist need to provide better guidance, especially on how to articulate the arguments on meeting the World Heritage criteria for Outstanding Universal Value and conditions of integrity that are needed to underpin future proposals by States Parties.
- (c) **Need to bridge the gap between knowledge to support marine World Heritage nominations and information already available on MPAs** – In addition to specific guidance on World Heritage, there is a greater need for better dissemination of existing information on marine protected areas to help with the creation of new and effective management of existing marine World Heritage properties.

In light of these concerns the workshop developed a suite of actions to tackle these concerns, which form the backbone of the Bahrain Action Plan for marine World Heritage. In summary the actions focus on:

- (a) **Capacity building** – more and better informed policy-makers, advisors and managers can lead to more effective and faster implementation of the World Heritage Convention in marine areas;
- (b) **Progress toward new marine protected areas with potential World Heritage values** - reviewing Tentative Lists and providing access to relevant studies can improve and accelerate nominations made by States Parties;
- (c) **Improving networking** – more effective and efficient networking across regions and the world, where best practice and knowledge is exchanged can help accelerate a successful nomination process;
- (d) **Improving MPA data and visibility** – better data and greater visibility of that information will provide a solid basis for improved decision-making and better articulation of the underlying arguments for Outstanding Universal Value for new nominations in marine areas;
- (e) **Production of a thematic study on marine areas with potential Outstanding Universal Value** – recognition of the fact that implementation of the World Heritage Convention in marine areas can be accelerated by fit-for-purpose guidance to assist States Parties to the Convention with the nomination process.

Each of these five areas is considered in more detail below. Some of the steps are simple whilst others may take more concerted action. In developing this framework, it is acknowledged that the division into the five areas is idealised and that in reality an action identified in one area may overlap significantly with another area. However, the framework does provide a coherent overview of the types of actions that,

if implemented en masse, can improve application of the World Heritage Convention in marine areas significantly.

3.2. Actions for improved Capacity building

- 3.2.1. Research and Analysis: To target capacity building appropriately in each region, a regional assessment is required to determine target groups, their specific needs, and the mechanisms that will meet those needs in the most cost-effective manner. Since this varies considerably from region to region, these assessments should be a priority activity of the capacity building effort.
- 3.2.2. Regional capacity building workshops: The participants in the Bahrain Meeting recognized the importance that regional capacity building workshops have already played, and could continue to play in the future. Key priorities for future workshops were identified as not just building scientific capacity but also the political capacity needed to move the marine World Heritage agenda forwards. A plain language and step-wise approach for achieving marine World Heritage (in the form of a simple document) was advocated (perhaps by updating the current marine brochure). Attention should also be given to the infrastructural needs within the regions and ensuring that key institutions that could potentially support World Heritage site managers are brought into the process from an early stage.
- 3.2.3. Opportunities with training and missions:
- (a) An excellent way in which to augment regional capacity is by encouraging regional experts and those learning about the World Heritage process to accompany senior experts as they undertake evaluation missions. Whilst this approach has a limited capacity, dependent on the number of sites IUCN independently evaluates in a given year and the funding available for this, it has the benefit of immersing key individuals in marine World Heritage to the degree that it should dramatically grow their individual capacity. Broader evaluation training could complement such activities for a wider audience.
 - (b) The process of monitoring existing properties and taking part in missions or other forms of support offers opportunities for experts to gain a deeper understanding of the Convention. Activities such as the development of retrospective statements of Outstanding Universal Value or supporting States Parties in the periodic reporting process are also a potential forum for experts to develop the necessary understanding of the Convention to support successful nomination of properties and improved management.
- 3.2.4. Regional training centres: Where feasible, encourage the identification of appropriate training centres for collaboration and strengthening of existing training centre partnerships¹⁰ to support management of existing marine World Heritage properties, whilst encouraging the development of new nominations by States Parties to the Convention. These Centres, in turn, should be part of a network of training institutions that use approved World Heritage Training Modules and are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.
- 3.2.5. Mentoring Programmes: Mentoring programmes, which pair experienced and novice World Heritage site managers and policy makers, have proven effective in enhancing the management of existing World Heritage Properties and in guiding the preparation of nominations. Indeed, in some instances mentoring programmes can be more cost effective than workshops, because they result in advice and learning that is tailored to specific locations and contexts. Mentoring programmes could be a part of the work of Regional Training Centres, but where appropriate, could also be run by regional IUCN and/or UNESCO Offices.
- 3.2.6. Training Sites: In many regions there may be scope for designating existing World Heritage Properties as training sites, so that training activities are linked to on-the-ground experiences and realities. These sites might also be coordinated with regional training institutions and the mentoring programme to take advantage of synergies and gain maximum effect.

10. List of UNESCO recognized centers and those working with IUCN and ICCROM are available from the World Heritage Centre

3.3. Actions for improved identification of new marine protected areas with potential Outstanding Universal Values

- 3.3.1. Reviewing Tentative Lists and regional MPAs: Assisting States Parties develop their tentative lists from which nominations are made is critical to producing quality proposals. The World Heritage Centre, together with IUCN, plays an important role by holding workshops to support the regional harmonization of tentative lists. The synthesis of coordinated regional lists is a strong basis from which States Parties can launch their nomination processes.
- 3.3.2. Toolkits and web-based resources for guidance: There are many existing studies and World Heritage nomination dossiers that can inform the development of dossiers for new sites. Some excellent web sites also exist such as, for example, the one developed by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. It would be extremely useful to bring such information together to provide a central resource.
- 3.3.3. Thematic Review: See 4.6 and Annex 3 later in this report.
- 3.3.4. Supporting studies: The workshop concluded that a greater understanding of the role of marine ecosystems in providing goods and services would be an excellent initiative to strengthen arguments that can improve application of the World Heritage Convention in marine areas. A clearer understanding of the goods and services protected within MPAs can provide site managers with stronger arguments to support the World Heritage nomination process, which represents a significant investment of time and resources. Such a study on marine ecosystem services should build on work that has already been done in this regards, and should focus not only on marine World Heritage but on a broader articulation of goods and services of marine ecosystems¹¹.
- 3.3.5. Communication Strategy
- (a) We need to move from a mainly ad hoc communications strategy to one that plays to the strengths of marine World Heritage, ensuring representation at key meetings in a systematic and planned way. The International Marine Protected Area Congress (IMPAC) was identified amongst other global meetings as an excellent and regular (every 4 years) platform from which to achieve a more consistent profile and to promote activities in support of enhanced implementation of the World Heritage Convention in marine areas.
 - (b) The implementation of the World Heritage Convention provides excellent opportunities for reaching out to States Parties with clear and simple messages on current gaps in marine World Heritage, and how they can best assist in filling those gaps.
- 3.3.6. Cultural Heritage: From the marine perspective, not only is there a need to bring together effective guidance on marine ecosystem issues but also the need to ensure that guidance is available in an appropriate form on cultural issues. This is because marine environments are often shaped by cultural uses close to shore or indeed contain outstanding examples of cultural activities from both the recent and distant past. Therefore increased guidance on marine cultural and spiritual values from the World Heritage Committee's advisory body International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and on cultural seascapes could enhance the nomination process for future marine properties.
- 3.3.7. Exploring new applications of the Convention
- (a) The reality of application of the World Heritage Convention is that it currently can be applied to just half the world's surface. The remaining 50% is covered by the High Seas, areas of ocean beyond the responsibility of any individual country, which remain unprotected. The High Seas do have features of potential Outstanding Universal Value that are found nowhere else on earth. In the coming years mechanisms will be found to protect the wildlife, habitats and value of the High Seas. To 'future-proof' the Convention it is therefore critical that actions now commence to consider what might be protected in the open ocean and deep sea beyond national jurisdiction so that when mechanisms are identified, there is information available of how the Convention can play a similar role to the one it has played for areas currently under its jurisdiction. The workshop concluded that this could, at this time, be achieved by a background paper that explored these issues whilst respecting the current

11. Ecosystem Services e.g. reports and research in some World Heritage properties have quantified the value, particularly tourism value, e.g. in Australia.

jurisdiction of the Convention to areas within States Parties control. For example, a 'shadow list' of High Seas areas that have features of potential Outstanding Universal Value could be developed. Such list could spur progress, both in the form of independent agreements amongst the key range States as in the Convention on Migratory Species and the United Nations Convention Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to enhance cooperation, consistent with international law, as well as justification for further consideration of mechanisms to extend the World Heritage Convention to cover areas beyond national jurisdiction. Consideration of where these features might be found has already started and can be seen by the evolving field of deep sea research and publications¹².

- (b) Alongside High Seas issues it was also felt that further exploration, in a similar vein, could be turned to how the Convention might interface with other international instruments and institutions. Collaboration and integration on policy, monitoring, reporting and management offers the potential to reduce efforts at the site level rather than increase site managers' workloads when implementing international instruments in marine areas. Instruments can offer benefits in terms of capacity building, networks of experts and States Parties focal points. International instruments of relevance include: Ramsar Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity and its Programme of Works on Protected Areas (CBD POWPA), Convention on Conservation of Antarctic Living Marine Resources (CCAMLR) and the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty regarding Environmental Protection, the International Seabed Authority, the Migratory Species Convention, the regional seas conventions and agreements (e.g., OSPAR, Cartagena, Nairobi), International Maritime Organisation (and designation of Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas), among others.

3.4. Actions for improved networking

3.4.1. Regional Fora and updates

3.4.2. Improved networking is critical to achieving greater progress with effective management of marine World Heritage sites. In many instances, lack of progress is due as much to ineffective networking as to gaps in knowledge. Thus, significant improvements in the nomination of new properties and in management of existing properties could be realized through regular networking within and between regions. For example, it was noted during the workshop that much better use could be made of the existing Middle East Biodiversity Network for networking with respect to marine protected areas.

3.4.3. Focal points for networking : Effective networking is also hindered by simply not knowing who to contact in other countries of the region. A pre-requisite should be to ensure that at a regional scale a clear line of communication is provided across the countries involved with marine World Heritage to support effective networking. It is also important to ensure that lines of communication include contacts for representatives of International Conventions, UN Agencies and Regional Agencies - such as Convention on Biological Diversity, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, UNEP, PERSGA, ROPME and organisations such as IUCN, ICOMOS, ICCROM and others.

3.4.4. Social Networking for Marine Protected Area Managers: Whilst developing networks can support more effective management of marine World Heritage sites, the way relationships and communications between those involved in the day-to-day work of managing protected areas develop is also important. Marine Protected Area social networks can be improved by ensuring that those working in existing MPAs are aware of and are in contact with peers in their region and broader networks. Networks such as IUCN WCPA – Marine, and other international networks are critically important to pass information and lessons learned between site managers, States Parties, and the broader marine conservation community. This might include guidance to help develop an effective regional or national nomination process, and to respond to unexpected or complex management issues that need urgent consideration and action.

3.4.5. Websites and IT resources to help make work easier: As mentioned elsewhere in this Action Plan, bringing together web-based resources into one place will invariably help countries and experts find guidance and supporting information. Key materials should be available in English, Spanish and French, as a minimum, and within regions, in the predominate language – e.g. Arabic for the Arabian Seas region.

12. UNESCO. 2009. Global Open Oceans and Deep Seabed (GOODS) – Biogeographic Classification. Paris, UNESCO-IOC. (IOC Technical Series, 84.)

3.5. Actions for improving marine protected area data and its use

- 3.5.1. States Parties, site managers and relevant agencies should be encouraged and supported to update information on MPAs in their area of expertise using existing mechanisms such as the United Nations World Database on Protected Areas and Protect Planet Ocean web portal, among others.
- 3.5.2. In 2009 it is amazing to think that as a global community we still cannot produce an accurate map of ocean protection or indeed have a good inventory of why each MPA has been established, who manages the site, and the degree of management effectiveness. An urgent global priority which this Action Plan supports is the need for accurate information on marine World Heritage properties and more broadly MPAs. Such information can assist in providing compelling arguments in support of new site nominations but can also identify where strategic gaps in coverage exist and are a priority to be filled by future nominations. A key step for the Action Plan is therefore for those connected to specific properties to review and update the information on their site held by the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA¹³) so we rapidly move to a position of far more accurate information on marine protected areas worldwide.
- 3.5.3. Data sharing and support: Data management and handling is fundamental to the World Heritage process –for individual MPAs (whether for nomination or ongoing management) and also at the network scale. Current data handling and sharing is not good, hence the uncertainty on the status of marine World Heritage; both total area of protection and degree of protection are uncertain. Two approaches to address these limitations include using existing international initiatives and collaborating to reduce costs. States Parties and organisations should make the most of current capacity and institutional arrangements, such as the United Nations World Database on Protected Areas and Protect Planet Ocean¹⁴ partnership being developed with UNEP WCMC¹⁵ and through existing platforms hosted by international organisations and partnerships^{16,17}. The extent of the limited progress on MPA data sharing is evident by the lack of maps and other overarching sources showing the extent of marine biodiversity protection. Also, recognising that funding data management is difficult at the regional or country levels, developing partnerships for mutual benefit based on exchange of data or capacity or use of existing tools can reduce costs related to data management.
- 3.5.4. Gaining access to existing studies on MPAs: Whilst many documents that can help provide information on MPAs exist in the public domain, there are some notable exceptions that are critical to future progress. Foremost amongst these are 'MPA feasibility studies' that could help inform a strategy for further development of the marine World Heritage. Agencies and NGOs ensure that such reports are available through internet-based conservation resource tools.

3.6. Development of an IUCN thematic study on marine World Heritage

One of the main themes for discussion during the Bahrain Meeting was on how to best enhance application of the World Heritage Convention in our oceans and seas. Guidance on this could help increase the number of successful nominations and thus significantly add to the current series of marine sites. Relevant guidance that already exists is not easily available in an accessible format or found in one location. An IUCN thematic study on marine areas with Outstanding Universal Value could help to pull together the disparate information and tools on areas of exceptional value in marine areas and how to protect them. This study will constitute a fundamental element of the Bahrain Action Plan. The nature and content of such a study were considered in detail at the Bahrain workshop. An outline for the study was developed and presented in Annex 3.

- 3.6.1. A thematic study on marine World Heritage should be completed by 2011 for presentation to the World Heritage Committee. Alongside this work, progress should also be initiated on preparing the guidance for the conducting a global analysis for marine World Heritage, a requirement of the nomination dossier, before 2011.

13. The WDPA is a joint project of UNEP and IUCN, produced by UNEP-WCMC and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas working with governments and collaborating NGOs. <http://www.wdpa.org/Default.aspx>

14. The interactive Marine Protected Area pages, a joint partnership <http://impas.protectplanetoocean.org/>

15. The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) is a collaboration between the United Nations Environment Programme, the world's foremost intergovernmental environmental organization, and WCMC 2000, a UK-based charity. <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/about/WCMC/>

16. The List of World Heritage, hosted by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list>

17. The Ramsar Sites Information Service, developed by Wetlands International <http://ramsar.wetlands.org/>

3.6.2. The purpose of a thematic study on marine World Heritage properties is to advise States Parties on:

- (a) The coastal and marine ecosystem/biodiversity values and marine cultural landscapes already represented on the World Heritage List and the potential and priorities for further future recognition of marine ecosystems and biodiversity on the World Heritage List in relation to the relevant World Heritage criteria.
- (b) The requirements for integrity and management that should apply to marine protected areas on the World Heritage List, and more widely. (i.e., Standards of protection, management in relation to the requirements of World Heritage set out in the Operational Guidelines to the World Heritage Convention).
- (c) The geographical scope of the study will be global, including, but not limited to, the areas under jurisdiction of UNESCO Member States. Some limited attention should be given to high seas in anticipation of mechanisms for the protection of high seas biodiversity that might become available in the future. Such information could also inform the World Heritage Convention about Outstanding Universal Value of the High Seas and explore opportunities for its protection.

3.6.3. The thematic scope of the study will be on natural values including:

- (a) Coastal and marine wetlands,
- (b) Marine sites of particular importance for their ecological and biodiversity values,
- (c) Protection of poorly understood marine regions such as deep sea ecosystems.

It will include cultural aspects where these are in association/coincide with the natural values, but overall the exercise is to develop the thematic review to improve application of the Convention to natural values.

3.6.4. The Thematic Study report will summarise:

- (a) A conceptual framework for the identification of marine seascapes, ecosystems and biodiversity with potential outstanding value. Additionally, the list should also include geological processes in marine environments
- (b) A review of marine seascapes and marine protected areas already included in the World Heritage List as being of Outstanding Universal Value, and placed, together with relevant tentative list sites, within the conceptual framework developed above.
- (c) Recommendations for the principal remaining gaps of marine seascapes, ecosystems and biodiversity within the World Heritage List.
- (d) Recommendations about the principal factors required for marine protected sites in relation to the requirements of integrity and management on the World Heritage List, and consideration of the application of the IUCN Categories for Protected Areas, with particular attention to acceptable activities in MPAs
- (e) Guidance will be required on the preparation of comparative analyses and Statements of Outstanding Universal Value.
- (f) A section should be included which explains other opportunities for further support to the conservation of marine World Heritage sites from international instruments, such as the designation of Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas through the International Maritime Organisation and related oil spill compensation programmes.
- (g) An introduction to applying the World Heritage Convention methodology to identifying properties of OUV to the high seas, for discussion purposes.

3.6.5. A draft table of contents for the thematic study was developed during the Bahrain Workshop, as a key element of the Action Plan, and is set out in Annex 3.

4. Performance indicators and the 5 Strategic Objectives of the World Heritage Convention

In progressing the Bahrain Action Plan for marine World Heritage it is important to understand how it will not only accelerate application of the Convention to our oceans and seas, but also how it fits with the overall objectives of the Convention and the World Heritage Marine programme.

The World Heritage Convention has 5 Strategic Objectives – the 5 Cs - credibility, conservation, capacity building, communication, and community. These objectives represent recommended performance indicators to monitor progress in the implementation of the Bahrain Action Plan.

4.1. The 5 Strategic Objectives (5Cs)

The Bahrain Action Plan has the same 5 Strategic Objectives (5 Cs):

- 1) **Credibility:** by contributing to the implementation of the Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage list¹⁸ through actions that will support studies for potential serial and trans-boundary marine World Heritage nominations in underrepresented regions and promote the interconnected nature of marine ecosystems and to maintain or restore their integrity;
- 2) **Conservation:** by championing actions to support appropriate nominations, improve the management of existing properties through effective use of best practice, sharing information and knowledge on MPAs and marine ecosystems; and by mobilising adequate investment of human and financial resources for the recognition and effective management of the most important marine properties of Outstanding Universal Value.
- 3) **Capacity building:** by supporting the development of improved networking and joint learning among marine site managers;
- 4) **Communication:** by significantly raising awareness of the World Heritage Convention as a marine conservation instrument among public, partner organisations and institutions as well as private sector and through web site development for the World Heritage Marine Programme and IUCN WCPA - Marine.
- 5) **Community:** enhance the role of communities in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Particularly communities should be involved in the preparation of nominations, development of management plans, as well as in the protection and management of properties¹⁹. For world heritage, marine cultural landscapes, sometimes referred to as seascapes outside the Convention, are also important. Traditional and local knowledge can also be a useful tool to aid both design and management of marine protected areas.

4.2. The 3 performance indicators

The World Heritage Marine programme has three performance measures that link to the overall aims of the Convention:

18. Operational Guidelines paragraph 55. The Global Strategy is designed to identify and fill the major gaps in the World Heritage List by encouraging increased membership to the Convention, the development of Tentative Lists and nominations of properties for inscription on the World Heritage List (see <http://whc.unesco.org/en/globalstrategy>). First adopted at the 18th Session of the Committee, Phuket 1994.

19. WHC.07 /31.COM /13A Evaluation of the results of the implementation of the Strategic Objectives of the Committee Document P.3 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/31COM/documents/>

- 1) **Increasing the credibility** of the World Heritage List by ensuring protection for underrepresented marine values;
- 2) **Increasing the conservation** of existing and proposed marine World Heritage sites through development of strategic partnerships;
- 3) **Building capacity** to manage existing and proposed marine World Heritage sites through networking and sharing;

To these the workshop recommends adding performance indicators that include communication and community:

- (a) Monitoring, promoting and communicating progress towards expanded and increased effectively managed marine World heritage areas;
- (b) Collaborating and recognising community knowledge, management role and values.

The Bahrain Action Plan by its very design directly supports these performance measures much in the same way as it underpins implementation of the 5C's of the Convention as a whole. The relationship between the 5C's of the Convention and the individual steps in the Bahrain Action Plan is set out in Annex 4.

5. Conclusion and Next Steps

The World Heritage Convention provides a unique framework for ensuring that marine areas of Outstanding Universal Value are protected. The Bahrain workshop convened key experts to guide actions to improve management and support the inscription of new marine World Heritage sites.

This Action Plan adds impetus and structure to safeguarding marine World Heritage. The key will be to engage partner organisations and individuals and to maintain momentum created in Bahrain. The World Heritage Marine programme has a critical role to play and the actions in this report can guide the programme's work. Equally, IUCN has a critical role to play, not just by conducting the thematic study, but also by emphasising marine World Heritage with its member organisations and networks of experts.

Conservation initiatives such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and Regional Fisheries Management Organisations can also help generate the conditions to put in place many of the actions set out in this plan. However, none of this will have full impact unless the global marine community as a whole and society more broadly, from the individual MPA manager to the Heads of State, recognise the urgency and importance of better protecting our oceans and seas for us and future generations. The Bahrain Meeting should be seen as a turning point, the opportunity for key experts and individuals to come together to ensure that the very best places in our ocean world are recognised through the World Heritage Convention.

This attention to the expansion of marine networks does not however, negate the importance of improving the management effectiveness of existing marine World Heritage properties and considering the strengthening and/ or recognition of marine values within existing properties.

The need to ensure management effectiveness and sufficient protection in all marine protected areas whether World Heritage, other international and national designations cannot be overstated. That resource extraction occurs in significant portions of existing marine World Heritage offers the potential to increase protection but also to suggest higher levels of protection of marine resources than is actually the case.

It is hoped that this plan will play a key role in achieving the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) target on establishment of representative networks of MPAs by 2012 for the conservation of biodiversity in our oceans and ensure the preservation of natural marine heritage for future generations.

Glossary

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBD POWPA	Convention on Biological Diversity Programme of Works on Protected Areas
CCAMLR	Convention on Conservation of Antarctic Living Marine Resources
CI	Conservation International
ETPS	Eastern Tropical Seascape Project
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IMPAC	International Marine Protected Area Congress
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KAP	Kuwait Action Plan
MAB	Man and the Biosphere Programme
MPA	Marine Protected Area.
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
PERSGA	Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
Property	term used to refer to a cultural or natural area listed under the World Heritage Convention
Ramsar	Convention on Wetlands
ROPME	Regional Organization for Protection of the Marine Environment
RSA	ROPME Sea Area
RSGA	Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SIDS	World Heritage Small Islands Developing States Programme
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNCLOS	United National Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WCPA	IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre

ANNEX 1

List of Participants of the Bahrain Action Plan for Marine World Heritage Workshop, 23-26 February 2009

Organisation	Region	Position	Surname	First Name	Email	Country
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ANNEX 2

Arabian Seas Regional Context for establishing marine protected areas with potential World Heritage values

2.1. Enabling context

Within the Arabian Seas region complementary actions are being developed to improve the implementation of the Marine Programme activities and the establishment of marine protected areas with potential Outstanding Universal Value. Two key players in these activities are the regional organisations: The Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA), and the Regional Organization for Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME).

- 2.1.1. The member states of the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA) are Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. The key achievement of the PERSGA initiative was the signing of the Jeddah Convention (1982), its Marine Emergency Protocol, and the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. The Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment (Jeddah Convention) 1982 provides the legal foundation for PERSGA. The Secretariat of the Organization was formally established in Jeddah following the Cairo Declaration of September 1995.
- 2.1.2. The member States of the Regional Organization for Protection of the Marine Environment are Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Since its establishment in 1978, ROPME has provided technical coordination to the Kuwait Action Plan (KAP) and assisted its eight member states of Gulf region in the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, and projects, including environmental assessment and environmental management, and public awareness and training.
- 2.1.3. Since the Jeddah Convention and establishment of PERSGA, marine conservation activities in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (RSGA) region have included: establishing marine protected areas; capacity building and developing management experience; expanding the scientific understanding of some species and ecosystems; and improving safety measures for maritime transport. The Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, is executed by PERSGA with GEF support, and largely through a diverse set of training, workshops, surveys, and action plan development to deal with the various threats facing the coastal and marine environments in the region.

2.2. Marine Heritage and potential Outstanding Universal Value

- 2.2.1. The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden contain unique coastal and marine environments. While the Red Sea is famous for its globally important repository of marine biodiversity, represented by the extraordinary system of coral reefs and their associated fauna and flora, the Gulf of Aden, being influenced by nutrient rich upwelling waters, is known for prodigious fishery production.
- 2.2.2. Deep and coastal habitats in ROPME Sea Area (RSA) are extremely variable and support a large variety of productive marine ecosystem. Furthermore, the coastal and marine habitats found in the RSA, categorized into benthic deep and shallow subtidal habitats, intertidal habitats, rocky shores, sand shores, and mud shores. The interaction of the physical factors in RSA produces a severe regime for the marine biota of the region, especially the intertidal zones, so that diversity is lower within the inner part of the sea area than in the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean in general
- 2.2.3. The existing MPA's do not fully represent the range of regionally significant and representative habitats and species (mangroves, turtle nesting and feeding, breeding seabirds). Therefore it is likely that the potential Outstanding Universal Value of marine heritage in the region has not been identified or protected and regional tentative lists could be incomplete.

2.2.4. Additional MPAs are needed to fill these gaps. Information gaps prevent an assessment of the current status of some species (breeding seabirds, marine mammals, marine turtles) and the distribution and status of many habitats (sabkha, saltmarsh, sandy shores, rocky shores, seagrass in some countries, and subtidal soft substrata).

2.3. Information

2.3.1. A manual of standard survey methods for key habitats and key species in the RSGA has been produced. Baseline data on key habitats and species (coral reefs, mangroves, seabirds, turtles) has been collected to produce ecosystem status reports and increase knowledge of RSGA corals, coral communities, and reefs. Regional Action plans (following regional surveys) were developed for corals, mangroves, turtles, and breeding seabirds and are being implemented nationally via national action plans.

2.3.2. In the PERSGA region survey design guidelines for MPA's have been prepared and ecological and socio-economic surveys have been completed in some of the region's MPA's. All MPA survey data has been entered into a regional GIS. Site-specific master plans, with management guidelines, have been written for some of the existing MPA's with the involvement and participation of local stakeholders. A large number of managers, rangers, and scientists have been trained (via workshops and on-the-job training) in MPA management, field surveys, and monitoring techniques. There has been an international, regional, and national exchange of experience.

2.4. Planning and Policy

2.4.1. Among few other protocols, the signing of the Protocol Concerning the Conservation of Biological Biodiversity and the Establishment of Protected Areas by PERSGA member states in December 2005 provided a regionally coordinated approach to conservation. A Regional Master Plan for the Regional Network of Marine Protected Areas has been produced and a progress is occurring towards the complete establishment of the RSGA Regional Network of marine protected areas.

2.4.2. The protocol provides for: the protection and conservation of species; the protection of selected marine and coastal areas; the application of a common management framework throughout the region (including integrated coastal area management; environmental impact assessment; restoration of ecosystems and populations of species; criteria for selection of additional protected areas); specific measures (such as access to genetic resources and technology exchange); and an institutional framework for national implementation and oversight of the Protocol.

2.4.3. Initiatives to protect the environment at the national level have depended mainly on command and control mechanisms, particularly legislation. The main avenues for the implementation of environmental policy in the region have been national institutions coordinating environmental management and enforcing laws (e.g. ministries, general directorates and the environment protection councils or departments) and the setting of standards and norms through legislation.

2.4.4. Realizing the need for collective action to control pollution to protect the degradation of the marine environment, the countries of the ROPME adopted in 1978 the Kuwait Regional Convention, the Marine Emergency Protocol, and the Action Plan. Three other protocols were signed during 1990s and these protocols are expected to further reinforce the efforts towards prevention and control of marine pollution and to help setting up relevant national policies.

2.5. Capacity Building

2.5.1. There is limited technical capacity and experience in the region in MPA management. Some countries lack the necessary pool of experts to provide the knowledge, training and skills necessary for management. Much of the existing capability is in Egypt, where there is the best example of a fully functional MPA in the region. Lack of surveillance and enforcement in MPA's is widespread. There are also gaps in existing MPA distribution and some habitats are not currently protected.

2.6. Potential for MPA networks

- 2.6.1. Though the situation varies between the countries, the general underlying impediments to effective management include poorly developed national environmental legislation: lack of funding (for research, management, monitoring, surveillance and enforcement); the need to strengthen the political will to implement management; and insufficient scientific expertise and experience in marine environmental management. Furthermore, there has been limited use of community-based monitoring.
- 2.6.2. The coastal zones and adjacent marine habitats in the ROPME region are potentially the sites of extreme resources conflicts, including over-exploitation, mismanagement and pollution from human activities causing environmental degradation. The Kuwait Convention requires the Contracting Parties to take all necessary measures to protect the marine and coastal areas and to prevent, reduce, and combat pollution of the sea areas from the potential sources. Articles of this Convention not only provides a legal framework for preserving coastal and marine ecosystems, but also suggest that nations will be giving increasing attention to conserving coastal and marine living resources.
- 2.6.3. In line with above obligations, marine and coastal habitats may be protected through national or regional policies for the establishment of protected areas. The success of these policies depends on the existence of appropriate legal frameworks, general acceptance by local inhabitants, the delineation of areas so that they can be treated more or less as self-contained units, and an effective and well supported managerial system.
- 2.6.4. Coastal habitats are often susceptible to mismanagement of activities in upland areas. The most serious threat is habitat destruction through: The replacement of entire habitats by settlements, harbours, and other human constructions, by cropland, grazing land, and plantations, and by mines and quarries. The impact of destructive activities include: dams (blocking spawning migrations, drowning habitats, and altering chemical and thermal conditions); drainage, channelization and flood control; pollution and solid waste disposal (from domestic agricultural, industrial, and mining sources); overuse of groundwater aquifers (for domestic, agricultural, and industrial purposes); removal of materials (such as vegetation, gravel, and stones) for timber, fuel, construction, and so on; dredging and dumping; and Erosion and siltation.
- 2.6.5. Designation of coastal and marine protected areas would therefore help maintain ecosystem integrity and productivity and safeguard essential ecological processes by controlling activities that disrupt them or that physically damage the environment. It would also help conserve biological (genetic) diversity and protect ecosystems that are critical and unique.

2.7. Networks

- 2.7.1. PERSGA initiatives have highlighted that an ecosystem approach to conservation and management is most appropriate to ensure long-term sustainability of the region's critical habitats and populations of globally important species. This would be achieved by establishing an integrated regional network of MPA's supported by effective integrated management and planning. Twelve MPA's were selected for the regional network of MPA's and to be representative of the RSGA region's biogeography (and include representative habitat types and species as well as bird and turtle nesting sites, and seagrass beds used by dugong), and include feeding, breeding and roosting sites, larval sources and sinks, and migratory routes of key biota. In total, 75 MPA's have been established or recommended for the RSGA. Cultural heritage is also under consideration.
- 2.7.2 Each of the MPA's at the RSGA region is at a different stage of establishment and implementation. Their progress towards establishment and implementation of day-to-day management should be monitored for future state of the environment reports as indicators of the effectiveness of management. The Regional Network includes sites in each country that are regionally significant and representative. National networks of MPA's are also required in each country to ensure representation of all levels of marine environmental diversity throughout the RSGA.
- 2.7.3. PERSGA is striving to integrate current research and monitoring into global initiatives such as the ICRI, GCRMN, and IUCN, as well as the ongoing research and monitoring of PERSGA member states.

Benefits for the region from increased designation of MPA's include the maintenance of bio-productivity for fisheries. Continued fish production means continued livelihood for fisherman and for other fishing industry and hence means continued social, cultural, and economical stability.

Annex 3.

IUCN Thematic Study on marine areas as World Heritage Sites:

Draft list of contents

3.1. Introduction

- Roles e.g. State Party, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, WCPA, IUCN PPA
- What role does/ can World Heritage Convention play as a tool for marine conservation?
- Other international designations for protected areas (Ramsar, MAB, Geoparks)

3.2. Scope of the Thematic Study

- Natural values
- Global Framework of marine protected areas (and context for World Heritage)
- Eco-regions (relevant systems?)
- Technical framework for gap analysis and in marine areas/ Regional Gaps
- Explain criteria in context of marine (case studies). Thresholds for marine World Heritage
- Existing World Heritage and Tentative List Analysis, prioritisation, gaps MPAs and World Heritage
- Extension and re-nomination of existing properties
- How to deal with coastal zone?
- How to deal with islands (remote versus intensively developed)?

3.3. Outstanding Universal Value and Integrity

- Distinctiveness and other criteria (see guidelines for evaluators and develop further for marine context)
- Statements of Outstanding Universal Value (refer to guidelines on retrospective statements and IUCN nominations guidelines)
- Global Comparative analysis- how to do this?

3.4. Key marine features and their potential Universal Outstanding Value

- Mixed properties
- vii - marine Phenomenon
 - Persistent oceanographic phenomenon – gyres, fronts, upwellings
 - Seasonal aggregations e.g. spawning aggregations e.g. sea snakes, marine mammals, sharks.....
 - Waves/ tides ...
- viii - marine Geology
 - Hydrothermal vents, sea mounts, fracture zones/ marine trenches
 - Topographical feature representation and links to biodiversity
 - Coastal processes
 - land/ water interfaces (especially re integrity)
 - Wave energy/ tidal action
- ix - marine Ecosystems and processes
 - Sea grass beds
 - Connectivity
 - Upwellings
 - Fresh water marine springs
 - Coastal sabkha (salt flat)
 - Role of terrestrial and

- x - marine Biodiversity
 - Endangered species
 - Fresh water marine springs and oyster beds
 - Sediment plain communities, deep sea communities
 - geological

3.5. Requirements for integrity

- Wholeness
- Completeness
- Design/ buffer zones
- Role of local community
- Threats

3.6. Protection and Management

- Legal framework (include IUCN PA categories)
- Site management & effectiveness
- Monitoring
- Risk management

3.7. Alternatives to World Heritage inscription

3.8. Global Comparative Analysis in marine areas (proving OUV-I/ justifying inscription)

3.9. Planned/ future detailed thematic marine studies

- IUCN World Heritage Thematic Study on fisheries?
- IUCN World Heritage Regional Thematic Study
- Arabian Seas region

3.10. Publications/ Academic Studies

3.11. Expertise

- Oceanographers
- Marine ecologists
- Cultural experts/ anthropologists for where natural marine values coincide with such interests

The report will summarise:

- A conceptual framework for the identification of marine seascapes, ecosystems and biodiversity. This should be devised with reference to appropriate classifications of marine ecosystems, but kept at a reasonably high level to avoid constructing a series based on very fine distinctions.
- A review of marine seascapes and marine protected areas already included in the World Heritage List as being of Outstanding Universal Value, and placed, together with relevant tentative list sites, within the conceptual framework developed in (a). IUCN's reports on previous marine biodiversity, and the decisions of Committee in relation to marine properties should be reviewed as part of this exercise.
- Recommendations for the principal remaining gaps, at a conceptual level, of marine seascapes, ecosystems and biodiversity within the World Heritage List.
- Recommendations at an overview level of the principal factors required for marine protected areas in relation to the requirements of integrity and management on the World Heritage List.
- A short list, maximum of 3-5 properties per region– but ideally fewer – of the priority sites with potential for World Heritage Listing as marine properties of Outstanding Universal Value. The existing tentative lists of States Parties to the World Heritage List should be reviewed as part of this process. However the scope of recommendations should not be limited to properties included on the existing tentative list. IUCN notes that it would ideally wish to have a view that could lead towards the potential 'completion' of World Heritage listing of marine properties, and that advice to States Parties on sites on tentative lists that may be unlikely candidates would be helpful to guide these sites towards consideration of alternative or complementary means of listing including national mechanisms, or Conservation International's seascapes, Man and Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar Sites or UNESCO Geoparks.
- Expectations for the levels of integrity and the quality of conservation, education and visitor management (and its documentation and monitoring) for World Heritage marine properties. This may serve as an exemplar for the management of marine areas more generally including advice relevant to Geoparks, and to national and regionally recognised protected areas which are significant marine areas.
- A section should be included to guide States Parties on the preparation of comparative analyses.
- A section should be prepared to guide States Parties on the preparation of Statements of Outstanding Universal Value.
- A section should be included which explains other opportunities for further support to the conservation of MPAS from international instruments such as the designation of Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas through the International Maritime Organisation and oil spill compensation programmes.
- An introduction to applying the World Heritage Convention methodology to identifying properties of OUV to the high seas, for discussion purposes.

Summary information in tables and diagrams is strongly encouraged. This report should be prepared for the 2011 meeting of the World Heritage Committee, which will require a first draft by April, 2010, and completed manuscripts by February, 2011

Annex 4.

Relationship between the 5 Strategic Objectives of the World Heritage Convention and specific steps recommended in the Bahrain Action Plan.

The current Strategic Objectives (also referred to as “the 5 Cs”) are the following:

1. Strengthen the Credibility of the World Heritage List: Filling the gap in the marine areas, finding a way to address the 50% of the high seas
2. Ensure the effective Conservation of World Heritage Properties: Management effectiveness, Levels of protection and no-take
3. Promote the development of effective Capacity-building in States Parties; Networking between States Parties and site managers.
4. Increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through Communication; using existing platforms
5. Enhance the role of Communities in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention: Identification of Outstanding Universal Value, design and management of MPAs

In 2002 the World Heritage Committee revised its Strategic Objectives (Decision 31 COM 13) . The Budapest Declaration on World Heritage (2002) is available at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/budapestdeclaration>

1. Actions for Capacity Building

1.1	Research & Analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>
1.2	Regional capacity building workshops		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>
1.3	Opportunities with training and missions		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.4	Regional training centres		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.5	Mentoring programs		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.6	Training Sites		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Actions for delivery of new marine protected areas with potential World Heritage values

2.1	Reviewing Tentative Lists and regional MPAs	<input type="radio"/>				<input type="radio"/>
2.2	Toolkits and web-based resources for guidance		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
2.3	Thematic Review	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
2.4	Supporting studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
2.5	Communication Strategy		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
2.6	Cultural Heritage	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.7	Expanding the application of the Convention	<input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Action for improving Networking

3.1	Regional Fora and updates		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2	Focal points for networking		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
3.3	Social Networking for MPA managers			<input type="radio"/>		
3.4	Websites and IT resources as aids for work	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		

4. Actions for improving MPA data and its use

4.1	Sharing and updating data quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.2	Mapping boundaries and management zones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/>
4.3	Data sharing and support		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
4.4	Gaining access to existing MPA studies	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
4.5	Improving MPA data and its use					
4.6	Development of the IUCN thematic study on marine World Heritage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

