

United Nations Environment Programme

Report of the twenty-second session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

3-7 February 2003

Annex

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT
FORUM AT ITS TWENTY-SECOND SESSION

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IV

Coral reefs

The Governing Council,

Recalling its decisions 18/33 of 26 May 1995, 19/15 of 7 February 1997 and 20/21 of 4 February 1999,

Recalling in particular its decision 21/12 of 9 February 2001,

Noting that while the reports of surveys of the status of the health of the world's coral reefs, including the work of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, the Coral Reef Degradation in the Indian Ocean project and Reef Check indicate a slow recovery on many of the world's most damaged coral reefs, from both anthropogenic and natural impacts, there is generally a continuing decline in coral reef health, particularly with respect to fish and shellfish stocks and continuing vulnerability as a result of human activities,

Acknowledging the pioneering and continuing role of the International Coral Reef Initiative both in raising awareness of the decline of coral reefs and in initiating action to address that decline, including through recent regional workshops in Cebu, Philippines, Maputo and Cancun, Mexico,

Anxious to ensure that the United Nations Environment Programme makes optimal use of its scientific and technical resources in coral reef work,

Underscoring the need to address the problems faced by developing countries with regard to the impacts of coral reef degradation on vulnerable coastal communities and their subsistence,

Recognizing the progress made in strengthening the International Coral Reef Action Network partnership, and its initial progress in implementing coral reef management action since the main phase of the project commenced in June 2001,

Noting with approval that the expansion of the International Coral Reef Action Network as a type two partnership to embrace the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment, the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Marine Environment of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme was announced during the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Considering that the success of the International Coral Reef Action Network relies on a close working relationship and lasting cooperation with civil society, particularly the tourism and fisheries industries, and their international organizations,

Noting that many Governing Council member countries are parties to multilateral environmental agreements as well as to the International Coral Reef Initiative, and recognizing the need to improve coordination of work programmes related to coral reefs under those agreements,

1. Extends the scope of its decision 21/12 to cover the period 2003-2004;
2. Requests the Executive Director to provide continued support to the International Coral Reef Initiative to enhance its development and impact;

3. Requests the Executive Director to provide support to the International Coral Reef Action Network, one of the operational networks of the International Coral Reef Initiative, noting its expansion at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to three additional tropical seas containing coral communities, and to promote the participation of industries in the Network;
4. Welcomes the growing role of the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre as a centre of excellence for coral reefs, hosting the United Nations Environment Programme Coral Reef Unit and maintaining its role in supporting the coordinating unit for the International Coral Reef Action Network;
5. Supports the realization of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development¹ in respect to coral reefs;
6. Requests the Executive Director to continue giving effect to Governing Council decision 21/12, paragraphs 6¹⁶ and 7,¹⁷ and encourages the engagement of international financing institutions in this process;
7. Requests the Executive Director to submit a progress report on the conservation and sustainable use of coral reefs to the Governing Council at its twenty-third session.

V

Marine safety and protection of the marine environment from accidental pollution

The Governing Council,

Recalling its decision 21/28 of 9 February 2001, in which the Council requested the Executive Director to support the establishment of a joint International Maritime Organization/United Nations Environment Programme forum on emergency response to marine pollution,

Aware of the concerns of the international community regarding marine safety and protection of the marine environment from accidental pollution and the need to strengthen the safety conditions of maritime transport,

Acknowledging the commitment made in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,¹ urging the International Maritime Organization to consider stronger mechanisms to secure implementation of its instruments by flag States,

Deeply concerned that the maritime transport of certain substances still poses important risks for the marine and coastal environment as evidenced by the recent accident off the Spanish coast,

Reaffirming the importance of the speedy implementation of the legal commitments contained in multilateral environmental and maritime transport agreements,

1. Invites the International Maritime Organization to actively review international regulations regarding single-hull tankers, especially those involved in the transport of heavy fuel oil, and to consider their more timely phasing out, to the degree that this is possible, with a view to reducing serious risk to the environment;

2. Highlights the need to promote the adequate protection of the marine areas and coastal zones that fulfil the criteria for the designation of particularly sensitive sea areas and advocates the furthering of the process of designating those areas in the framework of the International Maritime Organization;