

Oceans, Sustainability and Rio+20

Background and Overview

23 January 2012

Been asked to give a bit of history about the Rio process and provide some background information on next steps – as this is DCMC will do so from marine perspective

Before WW II RFMOs est to manage overexploited common fisheries resources in the North Atlantic, emphasis was on take, not conservation

Concern among governments and civil society about conservation of nature and natural resources led to creation of IUCN in 1948

1962 Rachel Carson Silent Spring, also wrote the Sea Around Us

1960s growing concerns, acid rain was acidifying lakes in northern areas, damaging buildings

1 Nov 1967 Arvid Pardo at UNGA calls for new regulatory system to ensure peace at sea, prevent further pollution and to protect ocean resources. Seabed to be common heritage of mankind. UNCLOS III grew out of this, led to adoption of UNCLOS in 1982, also that UNGA would have oversight of the ocean and law of the sea

1968 UNGA called for a Conference on the Human Environment

1970 first Earth Day

1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, 5 – 16 June, four years after UNGA authorized it. At first developing countries were skeptical, came to accept the concept of included development that was sustainable

Stockholm Conference outcomes included a declaration with 26 principles and 69 action recommendations. Principles of most interest to us include No 7 calling on States to take all possible steps to prevent pollution of the sea

No 3 noting the need to safeguard representative samples of natural ecosystems
 No 12 recognizing the requirements of developing states

Dec 1972 UNEP established by UNGA as a follow on to Stockholm Conference. Established as a Programme of the General Assembly and not as a UN Specialized Agency, outcomes include less independence, including budget, should UNEP be strengthened and if so, how?

1980 World Conservation Strategy released by IUCN, calls for a sustainable development to meet human needs and to address inequalities

1982 UNCLOS adopted Montego Bay 10 December

1983 World Commission on Environment and Development was established at the invitation of the UN Secretary-General and welcomed by the UNGA through resolution 38/161 of 19 December 1983. The Brundtland Commission report, entitled "Our Common Future" was delivered in 1987 and defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

1990 preparations begin for UNCED, the UN Conference on Environment and Development that was held in Rio de Janeiro UNGA adopted a resolution on 22 Dec 1989 (44/228) to establish a PrepCom, which met once in NY for organization, then four additional times in Nairobi, Geneva, NY to discuss substance. UNCED Sect established in Geneva (Conches)

1992 UNCED met in Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, 178 countries represented, 108 heads of state or government. More than 2,400 persons from some 1,000 NGOs attended the Rio conference, some 17,000 attended parallel NGO "92 Global Forum"

Participating world leaders adopted five major documents, agreement on language largely agreed before Rio at the PrepCom sessions.

The five documents were:

1. The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development with 27 principles
 To highlight a few

No 3 The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations

No 4 In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it.

No 6 The special situation and needs of developing countries, particularly the least developed and those most environmentally vulnerable, shall be given special priority. International actions in the field of environment and development should also address the interests and needs of all countries.

No 7 States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities.

No 10 Environmental issues best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens at relevant level, including appropriate access to information concerning the environment held by public authorities, opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States to facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.

No 13 on liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage, including within within their jurisdiction or control to areas beyond their jurisdiction.

No 15 the precautionary approach

No 16 polluter pays principle

No 17 Environmental impact assessment to be undertaken for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority.

2. Agenda 21 identified priority actions and guidelines:

Chapter 17 Protection of the Oceans, all Kinds of Seas, Including Enclosed & Semi-enclosed Seas, & Coastal Areas & the Protection, Rational Use & Development of their Living Resources

Commission for Sustainable Development to be established

3. Framework Convention on Climate Change

4. Convention on Biological Diversity

5. Statement of Principles on Forests

1997 19th UNGA Special Session (UNGASS) to Review the Implementation of Agenda 21, held in NY 23-27 July 1997, 53 Heads of State and Government, ministers and other high-level officials, addressed UNGA operating as a Committee of the Whole, produced a Statement of Commitment and a Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21.

2000 Millennium Development Goals adopted 8 goals for 2015
Goal 7 is to ensure environmental sustainability, there have been regular reports on progress, for oceans much focus on fisheries management, generally negative

2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg 26 Aug – 4 Sept to review progress in implementation of Rio outcomes.

Produced the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

JPOI included six paragraphs focused specifically on Oceans, seas, islands and coastal areas, some with specific targets, largely unmet:

- Promote implementation of chapter 17 of Agenda 21, provides program of action for achieving sustainable development of oceans, coastal areas and seas through integrated management and sustainable development of coastal areas, including exclusive economic zones
- Encourage by 2010 application of the ecosystem approach
- Maintain or restore fish stocks to MSY levels with aim of achieving this where possible not later than 2015
- Implement 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and International Plans of Action
- Eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and to over-capacity
- Develop and facilitate diverse approaches and tools, including ecosystem approach, elimination of destructive fishing practices, establishment of marine protected areas including representative networks by 2012 and time/area closures for the protection of nursery grounds and periods,
- Advance implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

1995 JPOI led to conference at which was negotiated the UN Fish Stocks Agreement

2010 Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity adopt the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 with the 20 Aichi Targets

Some examples:

Target 3 eliminate incentives and subsidies harmful to biodiversity

Target 6 By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants to be managed and harvested sustainably, applying ecosystem based approaches

Target 10 By 2015, human pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems affected by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized

Target 11 By 2020, at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effective MPAs

2010 UNGA adopts resolution 64/236 on 31 March, calls inter alia for The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) to be held in 2012 in Rio to mark 20th anniversary of UNCED and 10th anniversary of WSSD. Conference to be at high level, with heads of state and government. Expected outcome is a focused political document.

Objective is to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and address new and emerging challenges

Bureau includes eleven members, two from each UN voting region and Brazil as ex-officio member to steer preparatory process and organization of work

Secretariat within the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs headed by Conference Secretary-General Sha Zukang, and who is supported by two Executive Coordinators Elizabeth Thompson (former Minister of Environment of Barbados) and Ambassador Brice Lalonde (Former Minister of Environment of France) and special advisors from other parts of the UN

Preparatory Process to include three preparatory meetings, several intersessional meetings and informal-informal meetings.

Zero draft has now been issued as the Future We Want, based on input from countries, NGOs, IGOs. A product of the two Bureau co-chairs. Subject to negotiation. Some initial concerns expressed within the Bureau included:

- Draft has more emphasis on the environmental pillar than on the other two pillars. Social justice needs more attention.
- Draft should be more action-oriented and go beyond reaffirmation of past commitments.
- Draft is too long
- Draft should emphasize more good governance, rule of law, transparency, accountability, gender issues, the role of youth and education as means to achieving sustainable development.
- Draft should show more attention to all 27 Rio Principles

25 – 27 January 2012 initial discussion of the Zero Draft to be held in NY

19 – 23 March 2012 first round of informal-informals

26 – 27 March 2012 third intersessional meeting

Further informal-informals

Of course, States and others will consult directly with each other

Reminder: A focus on the three pillars of sustainable development and how they can be fully integrated

Outcome can be expected to be a political document, not a binding agreement