



STATEMENT

of the International Conference on “50 Years of Education and Awareness Raising for Shaping the Future of the Oceans and Coasts”,

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 27-30 April, 2010

<http://www.ioc50.ru/cd/>

An International Conference on “50 Years of Education and Awareness Raising for Shaping the Future of the Oceans and Coasts” took place in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 27-30 April 2010. The objectives of the Conference were to establish a platform for the exchange of views on sustainable education and training methods in marine related areas, to develop ways for meeting new challenges and increasing effectiveness of education and training, stimulate and examine practical opportunities for cooperation.

Almost 200 experts from 27 Member States contributed to the discussions and took part in the formulation of the recommendations for putting into practice ideas presented by the participants.

We, participants of the Conference,

- Realizing that new environmental challenges facing the humankind, such as related to climate change, loss of biodiversity, food reduction, degradation of coastal areas require more and better educated people with rich environmental knowledge to plan, manage and govern the sustainable use of ecosystem services at all levels in order to understand consequences of political and administrative actions;
- Having reviewed the experience gained during tens of years by the organizations of the UN family and non-governmental organizations working in the area of marine science and services and in capacity development to meet new challenge and responsibilities from global to stakeholders levels;
- Striving to make education and awareness raising programmes more effective in meeting the internationally agreed sustainable development goals including those contained in Agenda 21, MDGs Declaration and Decade on Education for Sustainable Development that are related to marine environment;
- Emphasizing that political stability, financial support and enthusiasm of educators is a prerequisite for success and that the focus should be placed on curriculum development, public awareness and partnerships at all levels;
- Recognizing that violent disruption of the Earth’s natural environment is the consequence of our actions that causes of millions of displaced people in the world, and that changes in behavior of the public at large is related to the level of its awareness of the problems and of the political will to see the changes happened;
- Recognizing further that marine research, environmental education and training can be substantially strengthened and made effective if they are recognized as part of the sustainable coastal and ocean development efforts of programmes supported by policy, legislative and coordinating mechanisms;
- Affirming that the development of innovative technologies for the collection of observations, for presenting and exchange of information, and for connecting people around the world has opened the door for adding new approaches to traditional educational methods and for close co-operation between teachers, scholars, scientists, socio-economists in the formulation of relevant educational programmes;
- Noting that effective application of new approaches in capacity development will require number of high quality human resources, facilities and infrastructure;
- Being of common opinion that despite the inadequacy of UN and international efforts due to severe limitation of financial resources, the sufficient support should be given to education and awareness raising because of their high importance to the society

Recommend that:

Present and Future of Education and Training and the Role of International Organizations in this Process

- **St.Petersburg Conference is considered as a starting point for setting a regular forum to discuss specifically capacity building issues, exchange views on the progress achieved and for defining new steps.** The use of the experience of WMO in arranging similar forums is recommended;
- existing co-operative mechanisms of UN on marine issues, such as UN Oceans, include the issues of education and awareness raising in their agendas for discussion as a stepping point for a long term dialogue for future actions, based on open, practical and transparent collaborative approach;
- a working group be established with representatives from relevant international organizations to guide the process of achieving sustainable development by creating a joint vision and pathways for the implementation at various levels. It will be a long-term process and may include such approaches as learning by doing training through research, establishment of dialogue and trust;
- all organizations which share the same commitments and sense of urgency regarding the impending crisis of the oceans, should work together for mutual benefit, through wide exchange of information on capacity development efforts and educational programmes and establishing synergies between cooperative programmes;
- international organizations develop training goals/standards, training methods, regulations, and help prepare the ground at the governmental level for capacity development in environmental knowledge, education and sciences, including bringing such education into school curriculum;
- capacity development strategy at different scales should include environmental education at all levels and public awareness campaign, as the priority issues which will help to gain proper support for sustainable development of human, institutional and organizational resources. Educational, scientific and academic communities should be key players in this process;
- there is a need for paradigms shift in the concept, approach and methods in addressing sustainable management of coasts and oceans by adopting a policy and management framework that allows the integration of institutional, legal, financing information and human capacity requirements in the planning and management process so as to overcome interagency conflicts and strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of comprehensive and integrated management;
- current government institutions in environmental education and training, which are at present rather disciplinary and sector focus, are improved, expanded, adjusted or restructured to promote target-oriented, well coordinated multidisciplinary educational and training programmes to address common and priority issues of the nation;
- there is a need for targeted educational and training programmes to be integrated into an overall environmental management or coastal and ocean management framework with appropriate curriculum design. This would not only contribute to the usefulness and effectiveness of the products but also enhance the quality of training largely through practical orientations;
- educational establishments at all levels and media organizations will educate more effectively about the issue of the ocean governance and safety involving such programmes of UNESCO as primary, youth and women education, vocational education and education for all;
- available structures such as MPAs, Biosphere Reserves, World Heritage and Ramsar sites as well as UNESCO Chairs and Associated Schools and NGOs networks are used for increasing scientific capabilities especially in developing countries for strengthening public environmental knowledge;
- a network of regional Centers of Excellency in marine education and training is increased to cover all continents;
- educational programmes propose practical approaches to respond to real local, national, regional and global priority needs and to help in shaping environmental and socio-economic policies taking into account cultural and political setting;

- increase of sea-related professions is required by encouraging links between educational institutions, researchers and seafarers to commit a common policy and strategy, women and youth are empowered to be engaged more fully in the protection of the marine environment and sustainable use of ocean resources;
- legal agreements and rules created at different levels and targeted to the implementation of effective capacity development are enforced, and the mechanisms to monitor their implementation are established;

Modern Methods of Education and Their Effective Application - a multidimensional interdisciplinary approach in capacity development is implemented involving stakeholders at all levels;

- a mechanism is implemented which will help end-users of training, to order relevant training and educational materials available on the Meteo website (www.metted.ucar.edu) to be received via EUMETCAST Broadcast. This will provide valuable resources to many developing countries with limited Internet access. IOC is invited providing a platform for promoting this service through the website and networking services, such as face book;
- an equivalent to WMO 258 “Guidelines for the Education and training of personnel in Meteorology and operational meteorology”, i.e. a reference document that outline basic academic requirements and operational competencies, is considered for the development by JCOMM of IOC and WMO to support to introduction of a quality management framework (QMF) for the accreditation of lectures and courses;
- national educational establishments and administration at all levels accept distant learning as valid developing mechanism recognizing however the need for monitoring the results and assessing its impact, and multiple interoperable distant learning and Moodle and synchronous training are widely used;
- the following actions are taken to improve and increase the flow of information and communication on environmental education issues through Internet, other digital means of communication and media:
 - (i) databases at local, national and regional levels on education projects and stakeholders are created;
 - (ii) inventories of various marine and coastal related vocational training programmes, free Academic/Degree distant learning courses/modules, of school/public information training materials and of digital libraries are developed by relevant organizations and made electronically available;
 - (iii) organization of an international information center on capacity development programmes is considered as an opportunity for successful implementation of the above mentioned tasks;
- adequate curricular to train administrative and research staff is developed through close interaction between users and curriculum and lessons producers in order to make educational materials user-friendly, and short (1-2 weeks) and medium (6-10 weeks) term courses to train practitioners, administrators and decision makers are organized in order to strengthen public and administrative knowledge especially in developing countries;
- training materials must draw on data and research at many levels, using relevant examples and build on local/regional expertise, and be relevant and up-to-date;
- educational models are designed utilizing new tools of learning, information dissemination and knowledge transfer;
- efforts are made to increase educational and training opportunities for training of policy and decision makers especially at the local levels as well as for marine resource planners and managers;
- exchange visits of students to other countries to learn a different scientific, cultural and governmental attitude is facilitated to help them better choose best practices for resolving their own problems.

Management and Funding of Educational and Training Processes

- environmental education and training is integrated as a part of global, regional, national and sub-national programmes so as to be included in national/sub-national policy agenda and financial priority;
- multi-source financing should be an approach to solicit educational and training programmes including such sustainable mechanisms as endowment funds and green funds, as well as other mechanisms including the use of fees for ecosystem services, public-private partnerships and cost-sharing mechanisms with the collaborators and networks;
- public financial resources are used for marine science research, technology and skill training in transboundary areas, including the development of ocean energy, marine bioscience and ecosystem research, high sea and polar research, etc., and on the projects having commercial and human being profits;
- existing web sites which list funding opportunities like the one established in 2008 by IOC for EC funding, should be continuously updated, experience of IOC in organizing courses for training people in writing project proposals for funding should be widely promoted, and training sessions on how to obtain and manage international funding opportunities be regularly organized;
- there is a need for new partnerships with the private sector such as tourism and insurance industries, and for long-term commitments which can be provided by some international organizations;
- there is a need to explore, expand and develop innovative environmentally friendly technologies including those on observation, modeling and forecasting that will lead to commercialization of products and services.

Awareness Raising to Foster Climate for Capacity Development

- in order to create awareness, dedicated proactive actions should be orchestrated at local, national and regional levels, towards general public, schoolchildren and universities, as well as administrators, policy makers and politicians, and the media with the use of existing networks and establishing news ones;
- a multi-stakeholder campaign is launched and global strategy developed addressing education and awareness raising issues using the experience of the World Ocean Network in mobilizing general public worldwide and of the IOI in the formulation of the Waves of Change programme;
- awareness of varied use and protection of coast and the sea among children, youth, general public and decision makers is heighten through stepping up awareness raising and training programmes;
- media is mobilized to create a passion for the sea among people and to focus public attention on the critical challenges facing the marine environment, art and entertainment communities are inspired to help building the story for the Oceans;
- more future journalists and writers are motivated making the ocean issues as the subject of their future and becoming marine/coastal environment communicators and promoters;
- study and preservation of marine common heritage through MPAs is promoted as a way to increase public interest and improve its awarene;

We commend national agencies and international organizations in contributing to the Conference and call on them to commit resources for increasing their efforts in capacity building, education and training, and awareness raising.

We invite the organizers of the Conference to bring the statement of the Conference as a framework for action and a tool to enable us to work together, to appropriate international organizations and agencies for the consideration of recommendations and their implementation, as appropriate, and they will become an input to the annual report of the UN Secretary General on oceans and the law of the sea.

We unite behind a common understanding of problems and of the need for coordination processes without which significant opportunities will be lost.

We are all in agreement that the time to mobilize is now!