

**1<sup>st</sup> DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION**

**DEVELOPING NATIONAL ACTION PLANS (NAPs)  
FOR THE COUNTRIES OF THE GCLME**

**PART 1**

**REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND BEST  
PRACTICE**

**PROJECT/PROGRAMME - GPRAF04004 BL 11D8**

*Combating living resources depletion and coastal area degradation in the Guinea Current Large Marine  
Ecosystem through Ecosystem-based regional actions*

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## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of the assignment

The overall purpose of the assignment is to guide the process to translate the GCLME Strategic Action Plan (SAP) into National Action Plans (NAPs). The NAPs are expected to set out the specific actions in terms of national legislation, policy, and planning that need to be implemented nationally by each country in an approach harmonized with the other countries concerned to achieve the SAP's goals.

In each country, and in accordance with the international agreements embodied in the SAP, each NAP should serve as the overarching framework for the sustainable management of coastal and marine environmental resources at the country level.

The NAP to be developed for each of the sixteen GCLME countries should incorporate pertinent proposed policy and legal, reforms, investment actions and economic instruments already identified in other existing national action plans (e.g. National Plans of Action on Land Based Activities (NPA-LBAs), National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP), Fisheries Management Plan, Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM) Plan, NPOAs on sharks etc.) so as to ensure an integrated approach while avoiding duplication.

Each NAP is to be adopted and endorsed by the relevant laws of each member country of the GCLME and will represent the principal framework for implementation of the SAP at the national level. Successful implementation of the NAPs will therefore result in achievement of the objectives of the SAP.

In order to help guide the NAP formulation and implementation processes the following principal documents are to be generated:

- Comprehensive guidelines for the preparation of NAPs for GEF IW projects based on international best practice
- Format for the preparation of specific projects to be presented at a donors' conference for funding in 2010
- Guidelines on the identification of baseline and incremental processes and costs (according to funding principles of the GEF)
- Work plan and milestones for the development of the NAPs – this is to be developed in full consultation with the GCLME countries
- Guidelines to monitor environmental status (including definition of baseline and quantify pressure relief) – important technical guidance on how to monitor environmental benefits delivered through NAP implementation

### Main challenges

#### **Producing guidelines for NAP formulation in GEF IW projects**

The assignment to formulate guidelines for NAP elaboration for GEF IW projects involves a number of interrelated challenges:

#### For the guidelines themselves

- There are no existing authoritative guidelines on NAP formulation for GEF IW programmes despite the long-felt need for such guidelines (see e.g. Wang 2003) – the IGCC / GCLME will be breaking new ground in developing such guidelines
- The objective to produce GEF IW guidelines of general application beyond GCLME is admirable but necessitates looking well beyond the GCLME itself
- With 16 states with widely differing contexts, priorities, capacities and resources, there is a particular challenge in producing guidelines for NAP formulation that are workable for all countries
- The guidelines must allow for uneven experience and capacity across the countries and help them best identify and build on their respective strengths while taking measures to address any capacity weaknesses

#### For NAP formulation for GEF IW projects

- There are few working examples of NAPs under SAPs operating around the world and still fewer available articles, evaluations or reviews of experience or best practice in elaborating and implementing NAPs
- There exist significant differences in actual or recommended approach to NAP elaboration, the most fundamental of which is whether NAPs should be formulated before, during or after the SAP (the initial view appears to have been that NAPs are formulated first (based on the TDA) and constitute the building blocks for the SAP (as was done for the Caspian Sea) but the latter view and practice has been to formulate NAPs after the SAP)
- In several GEF IW LME projects, the preparation of NAPs was planned but never implemented (e.g. BCLME) or not proposed as a specific activity of the supporting GEF project (e.g. CCLME, ASCLME) – before formulating guidelines it is important to understand why NAPs have been neglected in some cases

#### For the GCLME NAP processes in particular

- The NAPs are to be the “overarching framework for the management of coastal and marine environmental resources at the national level” and which have to be adopted nationally at the “highest level” (GCLME prodoc) – this sets the NAP at a high level, similar to or above national ICZM or ICAM plans, and presupposes a high degree of sector integration at the national level
- NAPs must form an “integral part of the SAP” – this implies that NAPs must not only be adopted at the national level but that they should also be approved by the other GCLME member countries (they can be considered as protocols to the SAP itself)
- NAPs should achieve consensus building through “broad stakeholder, intersectoral and interministerial processes” (GCLME prodoc) – this is a substantial challenge in any circumstances – consensus is often easier to achieve at the regional general level than at the national intersectoral and highly specific level – funding is likely to be a limiting factor to the extent of consultation possible, so that strategies will be needed to achieve the greatest consultation at the least cost

- At the same time as all the above, NAPs must truly “operationalise” the SAP at national level through very specific commitments to (regionally harmonized) policy, legal and institutional reforms, and key investments – this need is to some extent in conflict with the ambition that NAPs should also be the national overarching framework - a balance has to be struck between overarching authority, comprehensiveness and practical “operationality” – the same conflict is seen in the SAP itself – it is an overarching and authoritative negotiated document (binding 16 countries), but it is, by the same token, generic
- The SAP provides that national projects should address “strategic transboundary issues and the most urgent environmental concerns at the national level” which reflects that NAPs are to serve as the overarching plans at the national level (i.e. they are to address local as well as transboundary problems) implies the need for guidance on how NAP elaboration processes should identify urgent problems at the national level.
- The IGCC / GCLME SAP does contain measurable and quantifiable ecosystem targets and indicators (Annex III), although the linkages between those indicators and the generic actions by issue (Annex IV) are not explicit – the challenge for NAP formulation is for the countries to make the linkages between the actions they plan and the quantifiable indicators in the SAP and to monitor their respective impacts on the GCLME (while the IGCC will monitor the collective impact)
- The actions to be defined in the NAPs must be precisely quantified, realistically achievable actions that the countries can truly afford to undertake and commit themselves to doing in view of the limited level of outside funding likely to be available – in this respect it is important to highlight that, in the case of the GCLME, there will be severe constraints on the financial support that the project is able to offer in support of NAP formulation
- Some countries have already initiated NAP or NPA processes, which may necessitate adjustment and harmonisation (and therefore some “unpacking” of what has already been done and starting over again
- Careful attention must be given to defining actions offering the maximum impact with limited resources – “good value for money” – the countries must therefore be free to determine the strategies that are optimal for them to achieve the results that the SAP requires of them
- There exists some confusion within IGCC / GCLME countries between National Action Plans under the SAP and *National Plans of Action* for addressing Land-Based Activities (LBA) affecting the marine environment (in the GCLME project document the NAPs were intended to integrate the NPAs
- NAPs must be compatible with the complex array of international directives, treaties and multinational agreements variously affecting the GCLME countries (which may have evolved since the SAP) and the linkages must be made clear so that the NAPs serve as a tool enabling countries to monitor their progress in relation to these broader frameworks

### **Developing national projects to be undertaken under NAPs**

GCLME countries are expected to develop specific projects “investment” to be presented at a donors’ conference for funding in 2010. Particular challenges in relation to developing such projects are:

- Section 3.3 of the SAP provides substantive guidance on the nature of “investment actions” which countries are obliged to follow – the project template to be provided will be one means of ensuring compliance with SAP directives
- The projects must be attractive to stakeholders, governments and development partners alike while also fully relevant to SAP and national objectives
- NAPs and their associated projects must take account of the changing donor environment – the increasing level of international doubt over the utility of certain types of aid has had a destabilising effect on donor policy, with only certain forms of aid remaining acceptable to all development partners. The NAP formulators must be aware of these changes and focus investment on activities for which assistance is required within these categories.
- A particular challenge is that projects are anticipated to be primarily national within the context of a regional programme. Certain donors have a marked preference for regional initiatives – the projects will need to demonstrate clear regional linkages or even involve several (e.g. neighbouring) countries
- Projects must be explicitly linked to the measurable and quantifiable indicators of Annex III of the SAP and classifiable according to the issues and categories of activities recognised in Annex IV of the SAP (nothing should prevent projects being in multiple categories):
- Given that some funding is likely to be sought from the GEF, the national projects must be drawn up in accordance with GEF rules on incremental costs and co-finance, with a clear description of the baseline and the alternative course of action proposed.
- Where a contribution from GEF is solicited, particular attention must be paid to the evolving priorities of the GEF itself, both generally and in relation to International Waters in particular

### **Other challenges of the assignment**

The remaining challenges of the assignment are relatively technical.

- Guidelines on the identification of baseline and incremental processes and costs – the challenge here is to collect the most up to date GEF guidance and thinking on the definitions of baseline and incremental costs and processes and to compile best international practice and techniques to make “incremental costs analysis” (ICA) as clear and simple to apply as possible by the countries themselves.
- Work plan and milestones for the development of the NAPs – the main challenge will be to ensure that country experts are fully cognisant of the practicalities involved in NAP formulation and to ensure their full engagement in determining the common milestones and work plan.
- Guidelines to monitor environmental status (including definition of baseline and quantify pressure relief) – the main challenge here will be to ensure national experts are able to identify the linkages between SAP objectives, activity categories, NAP activities and quantifiable environmental indicators and how to monitor these during NAP implementation.

### **Purpose of the review**

The purpose of the review is to identify international best practice relevant to:

- Preparing guidelines for national environmental plans of various kinds (the general structure of guidelines, the layout and presentation, the style of communication etc.)
- The processes to be adopted at national level for the development of NAPs in the context of GEF IW programmes, and LMEs in particular (to include the definition of workplans and milestones)
- The contents of the NAPs themselves
- The elaboration of proposals for national projects to be supported as part of NAP implementation
- identification of baseline and incremental processes and costs (according to funding principles of the GEF)
- Guidelines to monitor environmental status (including definition of baseline and quantify pressure relief)

The review is particularly intended to provide national experts for the NPAs with insights about the NAP process they are to conduct.

## METHOD

The method used comprised the following steps:

- Identify the various categories of plans, strategies, guidelines and other similar documents of potential relevance to the development of National Action Plans for an LME and to the other products required
- Undertake targeted research relevant to the formulation of national action plans and similar documents on the searches and structured research in order to obtain the relevant documents and prepare an inventory thereof
- Specifically consult the GEF IW Learn Website) on NAPs and related issues
- Contact expert individuals with relevant experience by telephone or e-mail in order to pose particular questions about lessons learned and best practice
- Review the documents and information obtained in order to extract lessons learned and international best practice, including emerging trends in the formulation of national plans and strategies

## RESULTS

### Documents reviewed

In total, we obtained and reviewed a diverse assemblage of over 100 action plans, strategies, sets of guidelines and other relevant documents (see Annex 1). The following documents stand out as particularly relevant:

Task / product	Especially useful documents
Using the best format for guidelines	UNEP/GPA, 2006. Protecting coastal and marine environment from impacts of land-based activities: A guide for national action. The Hague, 2006. UNDP guidelines on formulating National Climate Adaptation

	Plans International transboundary cooperation – some best practice guidelines GEF IW Guidelines on Annual Project Performance Template
<b>Identifying the optimal processes for elaboration of NAPs</b>	UNEP/GPA, 2006. Protecting coastal and marine environment from impacts of land-based activities: A guide for national action. The Hague, 2006. Handbook on Governance and Socioeconomics of LMEs (NOAA) Lessons Learned Reporting on Stakeholder Involvement – WIOLab
<b>Ensuring successful implementation of NAPs (future or actual)</b>	UNEP/GPA, 2006. Protecting coastal and marine environment from impacts of land-based activities: A guide for national action. The Hague, 2006. ‘European Commission GPP Training Tool kit – ppt pres.’ Toolkit developed for the European Commission by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, 2008
<b>Defining the contents of NAPs</b>	UNEP/GPA, 2006. Protecting coastal and marine environment from impacts of land-based activities: A guide for national action. The Hague, 2006. Caspian Sea national action plans (NCAPs) Australia’s National Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities Eastern African Marine Ecoregion - Action Plan for Tanzania - 2004-2008
<b>Elaborating workplans and milestones for NAPs</b>	Caspian Ecosystem Programme (CEP) evaluations (Holland 2002; Fenton 2007).
<b>Defining the format and contents of investment projects</b>	GCLME SAP guidelines CCLME Demonstration project structure PRCM Project documents
<b>Guidelines and format on identifying baseline and incremental processes and costs</b>	GEF website and various guidelines GEF IW guidelines Examples of incremental cost analyses in recent GEF IW documents of high quality
<b>Guidelines for monitoring environmental status</b>	LME Modular Approach (various guides, articles and presentations on the LME approach) UNEP/GPA, 2006. Protecting coastal and marine environment from impacts of land-based activities: A guide for national action. The Hague, 2006.

Overall, we found the UNEP/LPA manual on protecting the marine environment from land-based sources to be the most comprehensive and useful single document for the purposes of the present assignment, although it focuses on countries primarily individually, rather than in the context of an LME or broader regional plan and does not cover the full breadth of issues covered in an LME programme. Many other documentary sources were also useful, and direct consultation with expert practitioners proved to be highly invaluable.

### **Best practice on the format of guidelines for national action plans**

We found several examples of guidelines on how to prepare national action plans and other documents, the most useful of which were the UNEP guidelines on how to develop National Plans of Action for LBAs. The UNDP guidelines on preparing national action plans for climate change adaptation were also helpful. The UNDP guidelines adopt a tabular approach in which the elements



of the plan are helpfully arranged vertically on the left hand side and guidance notes are provided opposite, but the content of the guide was felt to be a little too concise, much of the technical content being placed in annexes. The UNEP guidelines are presented in the form of a technical manual and we found this to be more helpful. In the Caspian Sea project, brief guidelines were issued to countries for NAP preparation but despite contacting the project were not obtainable. After experimenting with the manual approach, we found the tabular format to be more useful.

## **Best practice on processes for the development of NAPs in the context of GEF IW programmes**

### **Planning principles**

There is a myriad of literature and experience on the principles of planning processes of general relevance to the development of any national action plan. At the highest level, environmental planning processes are founded on principles of “good governance”. In 2006 the UN Economic & Social Council reviewed the various definitions of “governance” and “good governance” and picked out the following concise definitions:

- “Governance” refers to the process whereby societies or organisations make important decisions, determine whom they involve and how they render account (Canadian Institute of Governance, 2002)
- “Good governance” has four major components – *legitimacy* (government should have consent of the governed), *accountability* (ensuring transparency, responsibility, freedom of media), *competence* (effective policy making, implementation and service delivery) and *respect for law and human rights* (DfID, UK)

In the context of national developmental or environmental planning, additional dimensions emerge, notably:

- *Participation* – the specific requirement that stakeholders should participate in decision making processes
- *Subsidiarity* – the principle that responsibility should be delegated to the appropriate level
- *Adaptation* – the principle that governance should be adaptable, not rigid, and include a learning process
- *Partnership* – includes public-private partnership and co-management and highlights the need for an action plan to interlink with other plans

Virtually all guidelines and published documents on environmental planning highlight the *precautionary principle* which may be considered a principle of good environmental governance. In practice, countries find and develop their own definitions in different contexts and no one definition should be considered appropriate. GCLME countries are of course free to agree on a definition for the purposes of the guidelines.

### **Planning processes**

***Planning is cyclical and iterative*** – planning processes should follow the iterative programme planning cycle of Preparation – Target setting – Developing an Action Plan – Implementing the Action Plan – Monitoring progress and reporting (see figure below).



***Plans are not an end in themselves -***

**Let's not ask** "do we have a NAP document?" (i.e. it is not an end in itself)

**Let's ask** "How effective are we in tackling the sustainable management of coastal and marine environmental resources at the country level?"

"How effective are we in addressing SAP targets?"

"How can our actions be continuously improved to be more successful?" (i.e. how can we learn as we go along?)

"What concrete and affordable steps are realistic to tackle SAP targets of the major transboundary (thus the country) issues?"

"What can we do at the national level (concrete actions) and what is required on the ground at the local level?"

**Other useful formulations of best practice on NAP formulation**

We searched the most relevant documents for helpful formulations of best practice, and selected the following:

Guidance on NAP processes:

"NAPs must truly "operationalise" the SAP at national level through very specific commitments to (regionally harmonized) policy, legal and institutional reforms, and key investments" (Andy Hudson, UNDP, pers. comm.).

The UNEP manual for LBAs indicates that plan elaboration should generate the following:

- **Awareness and understanding** of the value, benefits and vulnerability of coastal and marine environments (and resources)
- A **flexible mechanism** for identifying (criteria) and addressing **priority** problems through **partnerships** and **consensus** amongst **stakeholders** (ie **participation**)
- **Realistic affordable activities** that address specific causes of degradation or threats need to be **identified, financed and implemented** – showing positive results (**strong indicators**)
- **Mobilization of resources and partners** – **Private Sector** included
- **Strengthen** the Public Sector to effectively respond to causes of degradation and ensure sustainability of activities undertaken
- **Enhance** existing environmental, financial, institutional, legislation and regulation **frameworks**
- **Mobilization of funds** should be kept in mind at all stages of a NAP process as a vital requirement for success.

- **Participation** is required at all levels and stages of the process (development to implementation) for success.

The NOAA handbook on the socio-economics and governance of LMEs highlights the following:

- The process should lead to **concrete action**
- **Commitment** should be secured to enable implementation – political, institutional, financial, personal (= “enabling environment”)
- **Linkages** should be built vertically, horizontally, geographically, stakeholder groups – mainstreaming
- **A tailor made framework** should be used
- **Stakeholder involvement** is ensured - ownership, legitimacy, consensus, trust, respect

Guidance for developing realistic action plans:

For plans to be realistic, the plan must consider the following:

- Strong assessment (problems / constraints and opportunities for action)
- Prioritisation for step-by-step implementation
- Precautionary and inter-generational equity (and gender)
- Affordable financing
- Built-in learning process
- transparent operational plans
- outreach and communication
- conflict resolution mechanisms
- monitoring, evaluation and revision
- capacity building

Specific guidance on how to secure adequate commitment:

We identified the following best practice on securing commitment:

- **Continuity in leadership** (for long term decision making and implementation of actions – ie: no drastic change of focus over time relating to resources sustainable management)
- **Absence of corruption**
- **Access to information** (this relates to all indicators: economic, social, environmental...)
- **Effective communication** (information, awareness...)
- **Science sharing** – sound and accessible databases (from local to regional to international)
- **Participation at all levels** (across society and at different stages: planning and decision making)
- **Effective legislation and justice** (this involves justice from issues on land/property legal to more specific enforcement of the NAP interventions)
- **Effective and non-conflicting laws, regulations and policies** (relating to the environment)
- **Affordable access to utilities**
- **Monetary stability** and strong system
- **Consistent and fair rules for investments**, transparent tax laws

Achieving successful implementation:

For specifically achieving successful implementation of the plan, the following guidance is relevant (this needs to be borne in mind during NAP formulation). Some of these have already been cited above.

- Operational aspects of the plans must be transparent
- There must be outreach and communication
- Conflict Resolution mechanisms need to be included
- There must be regular monitoring, evaluation and revision
- Capacity building must be included in the plan
- Flexible and cyclical approach

### **Practical experience of NAP processes in LMEs**

The Caspian Ecosystem Programme (CEP) appears to offer the single greatest body of collective practical experience on NAP formulation and implementation for an LME, but in a somewhat specific context. In that case, the NAPs (known as National Caspian Action Plans or NCAPs) were prepared on the basis of the TDA before the SAP. The timetable was as follows:

- 1998-2000 - Preliminary TDA leading to the formation of the Caspian Environment Programme (CEP) and the formulation and approval of a GEF as well as an EU Project under the CEP umbrella
- 2000-2004 - TDA/CAP/SAP process leading to the TDA in 2003, NCAPs in 2004 and SAP more or less at same time. The TDA was used to develop the TOR for the NCAPs. SAP and NCAP preparation interacted and the final SAP made references to NCAPs.
- 2004-2008 - Updating process. During this round the TDA came after the Updated NCAPs due to delays. The SAP was also updated and repackaged as the Tehran Convention Strategic Caspian Action Plan.

In 2002/3 the CEP project developed TORs for the NAPs and Guidelines on how to develop them. For each country a NAP Development Workshop was organised. An Intersectoral Experts' Team was established and led by a Lead National Consultant which had the NAPs developed and subjected to National Forum prior to finalisation. By 2004 there were four NAPs which were approved at fairly high national levels.

It should also be noted that the Caspian is an enclosed single ecosystem involving only 5 close neighbour countries placed around the water body, whereas GCLME is a very much larger and open ended area with countries arranged linearly along its edge, offering less opportunity for interaction, especially for the countries at opposite ends.

Nonetheless, some key lessons were learned from CEP relevant to the NAP process for all water bodies, most notably:

- The critical importance of involving economic and planning ministry authorities in the development of the NAPs (helps to avoid generating mere environmental "wish lists")
- The need to specify in detail the institutional mechanisms, the resources to be mobilised (in particular finance) and the human capacities available for implementation
- In order to avoid "action plan fatigue" and for more efficient use of resources, it is essential to develop the plan in concert with existing plans and to ensure linkages and integration with these other plans

(Hamidreza Ghaffarzadeh, CEP, pers. comms).

The last point is very important – the GCLME NAPs should not attempt to impose themselves over and above other national plans, but must fully consult and integrate with them. Ultimately, this is a surer way to an authoritative national action plan for the marine and coastal environment.

NAPs are definitely beneficial - NCAPs engendered a new sense of “Caspian-ness” in each of the countries (or in Russia’s case, the three regions bordering the Caspian). The NCAPs helped to overcome the inertia caused by the complexity and scale of issues facing the region and demystifying just what the countries could do at the national level (Holland 2002).

## **Best practice on the contents of the NAPs themselves**

### GCLME SAP directives:

The GCLME SAP specifies the following contents for the NAPs:

- Policy actions
- Legislative/regulatory actions
- Institutional strengthening actions
- Investment actions
- Scientific investigation actions
- Data management actions

It is to be noted that the focus of the GCLME SAP is on the obligatory categories of actions to be included in the plan, but does not mention other content countries are likely to require in a national plan, such as the preliminaries (context, process of elaboration, justification, constraints, organizational structures, M&E, financing mechanisms, communication etc.).

### Published reviews of NAPs:

Wang (2003) suggested the four main sections of a NAP as:

- Explaining constraints to national action
- Identify ongoing & planned activities relevant to the identified issues
- Define the specific action for each identified issue
- Describe the implications for the proposed actions by different sectors

...although does not present an actual template to illustrate the recommendation.

### Practical experience of NAP contents

The Caspian Sea NAPs offer the most complete example of practice as regards the contents and structure of the NAP documents. The format used for the Caspian was developed in 2002 and successfully applied. Project evaluations concluded that the NAPs had been a major contributor to success of the Caspian Sea project (Holland 2002; Fenton & Griffin 2007). When the plans were updated in 2008, the same structure was retained, indicating that project coordinators and countries had both found it satisfactory. The format used is also fully consistent with applicable GEF principles. An expert responsible for their development would retain the same content, but require more detail

on parties to be involved, institutional arrangements, resource mobilisation and integration with other plans (cf. *supra*).

However, in the CEP, the NAPs were prepared based on the TDA and before the SAP (an interim evaluation of the CEP suggested that it would have been better to formulate the SAP first - Holland 2002). This has implications for both the process of plan elaboration and the contents of the finished plan. As a result, several of the Caspian NAPs sections must be relocated under different (more introductory) titles in the NAP contents structure - for example, mechanisms for action (which concerns institutional arrangements for implementation) are presented prior to strategies (objectives & activities) for two reasons: 1. the SAP structure must be followed; 2. best practice indicates that presenting mechanisms first will actually make it easier for responsible entities to implement the strategy, and has the effect of putting responsibility (and therefore serious commitment) up front.

The NAP-then-SAP approach seems more advantageous in building the necessary country buy-in. (ASCLME is following this approach.)

- The SAP-then-NAP approach definitely can assist developing a sense of regional solidarity and give clearer guidance to each country re: areas of focus for SAP. (BCLME is following this approach.)

- But, the best practice, in my opinion, lies somewhere between. i.e., NAP and SAP developments happen somewhat concurrently, giving room for each process to influence each other. Thus, I value the pre-NAP or pre-SAP consultation process through conducting CCA based on the available knowledge (either in the form of TDA or just some expert knowledge in those stakeholders' brain and experience) and get some feel that what can/should/cannot be included in the final SAP and NAPs from early stage. (Okavango River is somewhat practicing this. Their SAP and NAPs development are progressing at the same time, and draft SAP and NAPs will be available almost at the same time.)

One practice that I would avoid is finalizing the SAP without any preliminary form of NAPs (BCLME falls in this category, but as you said, because the project was so successful in nurturing strong regional solidarity (and it is only three countries), this won't pose a serious problem.) Lake Tanganyika project didn't produce separate NAPs when it assisted the 4 countries to produce and endorse its SAP (2000); but it did include mini-NAPs in the SAP from which a full NAP can be easily developed. This made the L. Tanganyika SAP as a very practical and implementable document (compared to L. Chad SAP.)

In the Caspian region the NAPs (which were based on the TDA, and elaborated before the SAP, had the following contents:

- **Introduction** (objectives; connections of NAP to TDA-SAP and regional investment projects; method used for developing the NAP; national status of NAP (means of endorsement & implementation); process of revision)
- **National conditions** (political, institutional, legislative & socio-economic situation and future development prospects; country social, institutional & financial capacity)
- **The importance of the LME for the country** (economic activities in relation to the LME; potential of LME to contribute to national development; economic, social & environmental significance)
- **Main problems and root causes** (reflects the TDA, from a national perspective, which is the technical basis of the NAP)

- **Strategy and measures** (core of the NAP – criteria for ranking causes and determining strategies & measures; long term strategies & urgent measures)
- **Potential obstacles and ways of overcoming** (political, institutional, socio-economic, human resources, technology & financial obstacles)
- **Resources attraction strategy** (financial resources needed for implementation, how to secure them)
- **Mechanisms for action** (organizational structures for implementation, M&E, transparency, accountability & public awareness)

An evaluation the NCAPs highlighted the importance of:

- a comprehensive assessment of issues
- assessment of the human, institutional and financial resources required to undertake the interventions
- proper consideration for the time-scales required
- Need for indicators to monitor impact
- Need for reflection on the structure for inter-sectoral co-ordination required to achieve the interventions effectively.

The same evaluation recommended that NAPs should:

1. Define clearly the scope of interventions;
2. Prioritise interventions adequately;
3. Identify institutional responsibilities to achieve interventions, and where inter-sectoral coordination is required;
4. Break-down interventions into short-, medium-, and long-term activities;
5. Assess resources (financial and human) required to undertake interventions, and detail on the source of funding; and
6. Provide indicators to monitor effectiveness and impact of interventions.

(Source: Holland 2002)

## **Proposals for national projects**

There are very many examples of proposals for national projects within the context of GEF IW programmes, including demonstration projects (used in GEF IW foundation / capacity building programmes), SAP implementation projects (demonstration or pilot projects) as used in regional programmes such as the BCLME and projects as used in more mature GEF strategic partnership programmes (which can be demonstrations, pilots or investment projects). The general rules of best practice in project proposal writing (including the use of logical frameworks and verifiable indicators) are well established. We focused on best practice relating to projects within LME programmes, particularly those relating to SAP implementation or strategic partnerships (demonstration, pilot or investment projects) and involving some degree of GEF support. We found the process and format used for the CCLME project preparation to be particularly useful, although requiring adaptation. We also found the experience of the PRCM programme in West Africa useful, because of its relative success in raising funds from donors, partly resulting from an attractive choice of project themes.

## **Identification of baseline and incremental processes and costs**

The GEF rules on incremental costs are well established but continue to be refined. The identification of baseline and incremental processes and costs requires specialist knowledge of the sphere of intervention. Thus, we focussed on recent best practice in GEF IW LME programmes in the light of current GEF practice and strategic priorities, which narrows the field considerably. Again, we found the CCLME experience a useful example, since it is recent and had to address substantial revisions to GEF IW strategic priorities and a tightening up of GEF rules with regard to what could be considered as incremental.

### **Monitoring environmental status**

Environmental monitoring within the context of national action plans is well established, including in plans or strategies addressing land based activities (LBAs), biodiversity, fisheries, coastal area management, POPs etc. We found that the UNEP LBA manual offered the most helpful treatment of environmental monitoring, while not covering fisheries. The BCLME programme represents the cutting edge scientifically with regard to the assessment and prediction of LMEs, but relates to a dynamic, upwelling system not representative of all LMEs or other international water bodies. The

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Developing NAP development guidelines for GEF IW projects in general is a significant challenge given the relative lack of published information of the experience of NAP formulation and the varying approaches that have been taken by projects, including in some cases apparent abandonment of the NAPs. There is good evidence, however, that NAPs are highly beneficial and there appears to be an emerging view that NAPs are better developed after the SAP, or at least in close coordination with the SAP.

The particular challenges of developing NAPs for the GCLME countries include the large number and diversity of countries, their linear arrangement along the ecosystem edge, the ambitious target set by the project that they should be “overarching national plans” yet also highly specific and operational, the need to identify clear linkages with transboundary issues and indicators and the anticipated shortage of funding for their elaboration and implementation.

The challenges to developing national investment projects include the general difficulty of obtaining donor funding in a changing donor environment (including from the GEF), the need for substantial matching country contributions and the need to link projects adequately to the SAP and its indicators. Other challenges to the assignment concern ensuring the application of the best recent techniques (in incremental cost analysis and designing environmental monitoring frameworks).

After extensive review, a relatively small number of existing documents and reports provide the majority of useful information on best practice. Consultation with international experts and consideration of project evaluations has been especially helpful, reflecting the absence of published reviews. The UNEP handbook on protecting the coastal and marine environment from land based activities proved a particularly useful general reference.

The key recommendations to emerge on best practice for SAP formulation included adopting the correct set of overarching principles and using cyclical and dynamic planning processes. Plans should not be seen as an end in themselves, but as a manifestation of the process to ensure sustainable management of marine and coastal resources. Apart from the usual ingredients of planning processes (assessment, participation, setting realistic objectives etc.) there emerged a particular emphasis on the need to involve economics and planning authorities, the critical importance of



institutional mechanisms and linkages (with other plans) and ensuring well defined and adequate resource mobilisation.

The contents of NAPs should adequately reflect the NAP process and be comprehensive, although the precise arrangement of sections is not critical. However, the plans should rigorously link activities to the SAP and its indicators. Adequate technical assessment of issues, resources, time planning, indicators and intersectoral coordination mechanisms are particularly important.

The formulation of national projects must be rigorously in accordance with the SAP objectives and indicators, but must also be made as attractive as possible to donors.

## **Annex 1 – References Consulted**

See separate excel file.