

**Name of the Partnership/Initiative**

The H<sub>2</sub>O (Hilltops-2-Oceans) Partnership:  
Working Together to Protect Coastal and Marine Environments

**Expected date of initiation:** 1 January 2003

**Expected date of completion:** 31 December 2006

**Partners Involved:**

Governments: Contracting Parties to Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, particularly the Caribbean, East Africa and South Asia; Partners in the Sub Saharan Africa Process. Support from donors expected to be announced at WSSD.

Intergovernmental organizations: UNEP, UNESCO-IOC

Major groups: Private sector organizations dealing with municipal wastewater and finance.

Center for the Study of Marine Policy, University of Delaware

DHI-UCC/Water

Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) International

Oceana

Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future

Other:

*Leading Partner:*

Name of the contact person/focal point: Dr Veerle Vandeweerd

Address: P.O. Box 16227, 2500 BE, The Hague, The Netherlands

Phone: +31 70 3114461

Fax: +31 70 345 6648

E-mail: v.vandeweerd@unep.nl

**Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative**

Please provide a brief description:

*Overall objectives*

At the commencement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world's coastal and marine regions remain a primary resource for humanity. Although coastal lands encompass only fifteen percent of the planet's surface they contain nearly half of the world's people and a concentration of the most productive, biologically diverse ecosystems. By mid century, the proportion of people living in coastal regions is expected to increase to 75%. This concentration of population among diverse ecosystems poses a significant challenge for both current and future generations. It highlights the need for urgent action to realise ecologically sustainable development in the coastal zone and to protect marine resources.

The need for urgent action, and the fact that approximately 80% of the pollution load in the oceans originates from land-based activities, led 108 governments and the European Commission to develop in 1995 the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA). The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was tasked as Secretariat.

The GPA calls for “sustainable, pragmatic and integrated environmental management approaches and processes, such as integrated coastal area management, harmonized, as appropriate, with river basin management and land-use plans.” This call was reaffirmed at the first Intergovernmental Review of the GPA, held in Montreal, Canada, November 2001. In the Montreal Declaration, governments committed to “Taking appropriate action at the national and regional levels to strengthen institutional cooperation between, *inter alia*, river-basin authorities, port authorities and coastal zone managers, and to incorporate coastal management considerations into relevant legislation and regulations pertaining to watershed management in particular transboundary watersheds”.

**The H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership aims to further the environmental, economic and social importance of oceans, coasts, and islands, and to facilitate the realization of the Montreal commitment by governments to mitigate water pollution and resource degradation from the hilltops to the oceans.**

The overall objectives of the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership include:

- To facilitate recognition by Governments and the international community of the basic linkages between the freshwater and marine environments and that since action must be taken on land to reduce, remediate and prevent pollution and degradation of the coastal and marine environment, closer collaboration and partnership between river basin authorities and coastal managers is needed.
- To assist countries and regions in making better use of existing domestic resources and in raising new and additional financing, particularly within the context of the regional seas
- To assist countries and regions in evaluating alternative options for funding projects that address priority problems of river, coastal and marine pollution.
- To assist Governments and intergovernmental organisations to identify opportunities for effective partnerships, including through the establishment of specific cooperation activities, alliances and networks with financial institutions such as the Bretton Woods institutions and the regional development banks.
- To assist the public sector in involving the private sector and the civil society in addressing priority problems of river, coastal and marine pollution.
- To involve civil society further in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action

#### *Wastewater Emission Targets (WET)*

Municipal wastewater emissions are one of the most significant threats to sustainable coastal development worldwide. Their effects are usually localized, but they are a major source of coastal and marine contamination in all regions and therefore a global issue. Pathogenic organisms, for example, in domestic wastewater-contaminated marine and estuarine waters cause massive transmissions of infectious diseases to bathers and consumers of raw and undercooked shellfish with a global economic impact recently estimated at \$10 billion per year (GESAMP, 2001). In addition to pathogens, chemicals and nutrients in municipal waste cause health and environmental problems.

The problems associated with wastewater management are inseparably linked with the issue of sanitation. For example, the Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report, released by the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), found that 2.4 billion people are not served with improved sanitation. In such areas, sewage flows directly into groundwater, streams, rivers, lakes and eventually coastal systems. Streams and rivers also direct solid waste to the coastal zone where it accumulates along the coastal fringe. In order to adequately protect the coastal and marine environment, it is clearly evident that sanitation must be improved and integrated with appropriate water supply and wastewater management. Even in areas where adequate sanitation services are currently provided, frequently there is inadequate attention given to reducing or treating the volume of wastewater entering the marine environment, and this problem must be addressed.

The pressing need to improve public health and realise the objectives of the GPA was reaffirmed at the first Intergovernmental Review of the GPA. In particular, the Montreal meeting welcomed the Strategic Action Plan on Municipal Wastewater developed by the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office in cooperation with the WHO, the WSSCC, and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

The Strategic Action Plan on Municipal Wastewater aims to promote concrete action at the local and national levels to address sewage as one of the major source categories impacting the coastal and marine environment. It incorporates a normative component to promote global consensus on best practices and procedures to address municipal wastewater, thus setting the standard in the approach to municipal wastewater management. It also incorporates a demonstration component, regional partnership fora to exchange expertise and experiences on best practices and procedures, and a component on capacity building through pilot projects and training.

The normative component of the Strategic Action Plan on Municipal Wastewater, while non-binding and restricted to the provision of guidance, reflects in part the international responsibility codified in Article 207(4) of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which reads:

*4. States, acting especially through competent international organizations or diplomatic conference, shall endeavour to establish global and regional rules, standards and recommended practices and procedures to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the marine environment from land-based sources, taking into account characteristic regional features, the economic capacity of developing States and their need for economic development. Such rules, standards and recommended practices and procedures shall be re-examined from time to time as necessary.*

Consistent with UNCLOS, the WET component of the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership seeks to move beyond the provision of guidance to a process of determining and achieving global, regional and national Wastewater Emission Targets to be reached within one generation's lifetime.

Objectives of the WET component the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership include:

- To facilitate recognition by Governments of the threats to human health, marine and freshwater resources and ecosystem integrity caused by increasing emissions of untreated wastewater into groundwater, freshwater, estuaries or coastal and marine areas
- To promote the development and realisation of internationally agreed targets for action pertaining to wastewater emissions, recognising the principle of common but differentiated responsibility
- To explore the application of global or regional economic instruments, such as water markets, pollution reduction trading mechanisms, and multi-stakeholder water funds.

#### *National Programmes of Action (NPA)*

The sustainable development and protection of marine and coastal environment/resources is a challenge that demands multi-stakeholder and transectoral approaches, as well as the better and/or alternative use of domestic funding. A positive way to face this challenge, is through the elaboration and implementation of national programmes of action for the protection of the marine and coastal environment from land-based activities and sources. The development of a national programme of action should be a long-term iterative process that feeds into national development plans and priorities. It should assist countries in marshalling resources for addressing problems at all levels - from impacts on local communities and populations to issues of a transboundary nature. It should not only be based on environmental considerations, but also on socio-economic needs and circumstances.

Action at the national level should build upon existing national priorities, policies and development plans. The underlying causes as well as the complex linkages between the sources of environmental degradation

and threats, mean that these must respond to the uniquely specific circumstances and priorities of each country. Each country must select the approach that best suits geographic characteristics, political, institutional and regulatory frameworks, best available science and technology, current assessments, inventories and data.

National action to protect the marine environment from land-based activities should incorporate strategic and adequately resourced programmes that are integrated with national development strategies.

Objectives of the NPA component the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership include:

- To assist developing countries to prepare and implement realistic and feasible National Programmes of Action; in consultations with all relevant stakeholders; to address priority concerns; and to identify activities and key stakeholders, feasible options for interventions, costing and responsibilities.
- To assist developing countries to adopt at the appropriate decision making level, realistic, concrete actions plans including targets, and measures, costed plans for interventions with corresponding institutional responsibilities and timetables.
- To assist all countries to take the necessary action at the local and/or national level to adopt, finance and implement their respective action programmes, including the necessary legal, regulatory, institutional changes, the allocation of domestic resources, the soliciting of external funding and capacity building activities.

\*\*\*\*\*

Please also provide a brief description of the relationship of the Partnership/Initiative with the objectives of Agenda 21 as well as relevant goals and objectives of the United Nation Millennium Declaration:

Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 calls upon coastal States to formulate and implement integrated coastal area management (Part A) and to protect the marine environment (Part B). Since the 1992 Earth Summit, there has been significant progress made in these areas, yet much more remains to be done. In 1993 there were 59 nations engaged in Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICM) initiatives at national and/or local levels, in 2000, 98 nations were working in this area. Similarly, in 1995, the GPA was adopted by 108 Governments and the European Commission. The H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership seeks to build upon the positive momentum and eliminate further obstacles to implementing Chapter 17.

Further, the WET component of the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership also focuses on public, resource and environmental health. Health and development are intimately interconnected. Chapter 6 of Agenda 21 states that the health and well-being of all urban dwellers must be improved so that they can contribute to economic and social development. Much more needs to be done to protect human health and mitigate pollution resulting from the discharge of untreated wastewater.

The Millennium Declaration states that we must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoiled by human activities, and whose resources would be insufficient for their needs. Goals of the Millennium Declaration include:

- stopping the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies; and
- halving, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water.

These goals apply from the hilltops to the oceans and the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership will contribute to their achievement.

**Expected results:**

Please provide a brief description:

*Overall Results*

- A review of alternative and feasible practices and procedures to implement integrated coastal area and river-basin management, with a strong focus on municipal wastewater;
- Two to three regional pilot projects per region addressing integrated coastal area and river-basin management, with a strong focus on municipal wastewater.
- National demonstration projects (addressing finance, technology, institutions, management, partnerships).
- Overview of alternative funding mechanisms for national action;
- Feasibility and pre-investment studies;
- Public-private partnership meetings;
- Increased Capacity for negotiated public-private partnerships and contracts between appropriate partners;
- Input to the Third World Water Forum (Kyoto, 2003).

*Specific results of the WET component:*

- Guidelines for decision-making, containing key principles and comprehensive checklists for practices and procedures covering all aspects of the management cycle for municipal wastewater;
- A knowledge database on municipal wastewater in the GPA Clearing House Mechanism;
- Regional compendiums of best practices and alternative approaches to institutional, managerial, technological and financial issues as they relate to municipal wastewater;
- A programme of multilateral negotiations for establishing Wastewater Emission Targets
- A multilateral binding instrument or series of integrated regionally binding agreements on the reduction of emissions of untreated wastewater

*Specific results of the NPA component:*

- Up to 40 new national programmes of action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities
- Up to 4 enhanced national programmes of action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities, adopted and budgeted at appropriate local and national policy levels

**Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:**

1. Worldwide endorsement of the UNEP/WHO/Habitat/WSSCC Guidance on Wastewater by 2003;
2. Full implementation by 2004 of the GPA Strategic Action Plan on Municipal Wastewater, including the completion of practical guidance for addressing sewage, the ongoing identification of best-practices, and the implementation of replicable pilot projects.
3. A multilateral binding instrument or series of integrated regionally binding agreements by December 2005 that determines sanitation and wastewater emission targets for parties based on 2000 levels.
4. A global total of no less than 40 adopted and budgeted national programmes of action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities by 2006;
5. Measurable reduction in discharges of untreated wastewater at local and/ or national levels.

6. At least 20 % of coastal cities are implementing sustainable water supply and wastewater treatment systems by 2012, using alternative technological, infrastructure, managerial and financial approaches to the traditional large scale investments, paying due attention to operation and maintenance costs and to equitable water service pricing.

### **Coordination and Implementation mechanism**

Please provide a brief description of expected coordination/implementation mechanism of the Partnership/Initiative.

The H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership will be coordinated by the UNEP Coordination Office for the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

A Steering Committee comprising representatives from partner organizations and others will oversee the strategic direction of the WET component.

### **Arrangements for funding**

Please describe available and/or expected sources of funding for the implementation of the Partnership/Initiative (e.g. donor government(s); international organization(s)/financial institution(s); foundation(s); private sector; other major groups, etc.)

A budget of at least US\$7.275 million per year, in addition to resources forthcoming from national/local budgets, is required to implement the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership. These funds will be disbursed by the many participating organisations. The possibility of regional water funds for innovative and sustainable municipal waste water treatment should also be considered.

US\$8 million has been committed to the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership.

A total of US\$29.1 million is being discussed with partners for the period 2003 – 2006.

### **Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer**

Please include information if the Partnership/Initiative provides for training, informational support, institutional strengthening and/or other capacity building measures:

The H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership will:

- further support the development and use of the Integrated Coastal Management Global Web Service,
- further enhance the GPA Clearing House Mechanism
- assist in further developing and testing the UNEP guidelines for ICARM in demonstration projects;
- strengthen cooperation with relevant expert institutions such as DHI (Denmark) and RIKZ (Netherlands)
- develop and provide training courses/modules on wastewater management, eg. through the DOALAS Train-Sea-Coast programme and the UNESCO Institute for Water Education

Please also provide here a brief description of expected arrangements for technology transfer (if applicable).

Technology transfer will be conducted:

- Via the GPA Clearing House Mechanism
- Via training and pilot projects
- Via publications and outreach activities

**Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)**

Please provide a brief description:

The H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership objective of protecting the marine environment from land-based activities is closely aligned with regional initiatives such as UNEP's Regional Offices, Regional Seas Programme, the African Process for Protection of Coastal and Marine Environments and the Whitewater to Bluewater initiative proposed by the USA.

**Monitoring Arrangements**

Please describe expected arrangements for monitoring of progress in the implementation of Partnerships/Initiative after it will be launched at the WSSD:

(e.g. frequency/modalities of preparation of progress reports; electronic updates, news-letters, etc)

UNEP will report progress of the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership, including efforts to achieve a multilateral binding instrument or regionally binding instruments to the UNEP Governing Council.

Similarly, UNEP will report progress of the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership to the Intergovernmental Meetings / Conferences of Parties of the respective Regional Seas programmes

Reports on progress of the H<sub>2</sub>O Partnership will take place at World Water Forum 3 (2003) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Review of the GPA (2006). Further, countries will be invited to report on progress in the implementation of the GPA, including the development of National Programmes of Action, at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Review.

Regular updates will be provided on the GPA Clearing House Mechanism

**Other relevant information:**

Web-site (if available): [www.gpa.unep.org](http://www.gpa.unep.org)

***Name and contact information of the person filling in this table:***

<i>Name:</i>	David Osborn	Cees van de Guchte
<i>Position:</i>	Programme Officer	Senior Programme Officer
<i>Address:</i>	P.O. Box 16227, 2500 BE, The Hague, The Netherlands	P.O. Box 16227, 2500 BE, The Hague, The Netherlands
<i>Phone:</i>	+31 70 311 4473	+31 70 311 4464
<i>Fax:</i>	+31 70 345 6648	+31 70 345 6648
<i>E-mail:</i>	<a href="mailto:d.osborn@unep.nl">d.osborn@unep.nl</a>	<a href="mailto:c.vandeguchte@unep.nl">c.vandeguchte@unep.nl</a>