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Agenda item 17

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EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(a) Relations with the United Nations and the specialized agencies

Report on the fourteenth meeting of UN-Oceans

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document reports on the fourteenth meeting of UN-Oceans, which was hosted at IMO Headquarters on 20 March 2015

Strategic direction: 1.1, 1.3

High-level action: 1.1.1, 1.3.1

Planned output: 1.1.1.1, 1.3.1.1

Action to be taken: Paragraph 9

Related document: United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/68/70

Introduction

1 UN-Oceans is an inter-agency mechanism that seeks to enhance the coordination, coherence and effectiveness of competent organizations of the United Nations system and the International Seabed Authority, in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the respective competences of each of its participating organizations and the mandates and priorities approved by their respective governing bodies.

2 In 2013, following discussions between the Member States as well as the participating organizations, new terms of reference were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (resolution A/RES/68/70, annex). Through these new terms of reference, the Legal Counsel/Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea was designated as the focal point of UN-Oceans.

3 Currently, UN-Oceans is carrying out a review of the mandates and activities of each of the member organizations, with a view to further improve the cooperation and coordination of activities.

Annual meeting of UN-Oceans

4 At the invitation of the Secretary-General, UN-Oceans held its annual face-to-face meeting at IMO Headquarters, on 20 March 2015. This was the first meeting held outside New York since the adoption of the new terms of reference for the group in 2013. It was attended by 12 United Nations agencies, with three agencies participating by teleconference.

5 The meeting was co-hosted by IMO's Marine Environment Division (MED) and the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS), and chaired by the Director of MED. Following opening remarks by the Secretary-General, the UN-Oceans members discussed various items, among which were: the ongoing development of the inventory of mandates and activities of UN-Ocean members; the website of UN-Oceans; and contributions to the report of the UN Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea. To facilitate the discussion of the next steps to be taken in the development of the inventory of mandates and activities, UN-Oceans members presented case studies of ongoing and possible future joint activities.

6 Members also discussed the topic of focus of the sixteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP-16), entitled "Oceans and sustainable development: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, environmental, social and economic", and the contribution that UN-Oceans, as a coordination mechanism, provides to the three dimensions of sustainable development in the context of oceans and sustainable development.

7 A report of this meeting and other activities carried out by UN-Oceans was delivered by DOALOS, as the UN-Oceans focal point, to ICP-16, held in New York from 6 to 10 April 2015. The full report of the meeting held at IMO will be available on the UN-Oceans website, www.unoceans.org, in due course.

8 The report of the outcome of ICP-16, which is currently being finalized by DOALOS, will be submitted to the twenty-eighth extraordinary session of the Council in November 2015.

Action requested of the Council

9 The Council is invited to consider the information provided in this document and to comment, as it may deem appropriate.
