

## **Advancing the global oceans agenda to 2016**

Cicin-Sain BILIANA

This presentation will review progress on the global World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and Millennium Development Goals, as they relate to the oceans and coasts, as well as highlight the importance of putting climate on the oceans agenda and vice versa and emphasize the need to move toward ecosystem-based management of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, which represent 64% of the ocean. The results reported are drawn from the work of the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands in outlining the major ocean and coastal issues countries will need to face in the period to 2016 and the 4<sup>o</sup>Global Oceans Conference held in Hanoi, Vietnam, in April 2008. The WSSD goals encourage the application of the ecosystem approach by 2010 and promote integrated coastal and ocean management (ICM). To date, over 100 countries have established ICM programs and between 20 to 30 countries are developing or are implementing integrated national ocean policies covering the Exclusive Economic Zone. Eighteen GEF-funded Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) projects in the world's large marine ecosystem areas are either approved or in the preparation stage. Small island developing States (SIDS) are making progress with a high level of ratification on international environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (100%) and the Law of the Sea (93%). However, many SIDS need to develop specific institutions or processes to implement cross-cutting approaches to planning and management of oceans and coasts, including addressing the impacts of climate change. Fisheries face continued pressure: 76% of all global fish stocks are fished at or beyond their Biological limits. There needs to be a continued focus on reform of Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs); illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing; fishing overcapacity; and development of guidelines and legal frameworks for aquaculture. The WSSD goals call for a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 and the establishment of marine protected areas, including representative networks by, 2012. The status of many marine species is not known, due to a lack of data; however, the Global Marine Species Assessment (GMSA), a joint effort of IUCN/SSC with Conservation International and other partners, seeks to ensure that the conservation status of every marine vertebrate species and of selected invertebrates and plants is reviewed, with a target of 20,000 species assessed by 2012. Based on data from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) 3rd National Reports, 81.8% of reporting coastal countries have designated MPAs and 92.9% have plans to develop new MPAs. There continues to be a disconnect between the freshwater and coastal/ocean communities. The WSSD goal to develop integrated water resource management (IWRM) plans by 2005 has seen progress. Comparing 53 countries participating in the 2005 Global Water Partnership Survey and the 2007 UN Water Survey, the percentage of countries having plans completed or under implementation rose from 21% to 38%. Over 60 countries are in the process of developing, or have finalized, their respective National Programmes of Action (NPA) to control land-based activities, although the extent of implementation is uncertain. The oceans play a significant role in regulating the global climate and moderating weather systems around the world. Changes in climate can have a profound impact on the functioning of ocean, coastal and island ecosystems. The impact of climate change on developing nations, especially IDS, is significant and the implications of these potential effects range from changes in ocean chemistry and forecasted sea level rise (9cm to 88cm) to impacts on ecosystems, human health, and the displacement of coastal peoples. The need to address these issues in the oceans community is a vital first step in combating the potentially devastating effects of climate change with specific attention to the developing world and SIDS.