

The Regional Scale of Ocean Governance Facing the Ecosystem

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Abstract

The paper aims at focusing on the prospect of diffusing management patterns on the regional (multi-national) scale. In this view, first the conceptual approach to how "regional scale" and "ocean region" may be intended is presented, and the different approaches to management according to whether the ocean is sub-divided into marine areas or regions are discussed. Then attention shifts to ocean regions, considering how they may be designed by referring to the ecosystem. The attempts, due to the use of Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) concept, and those due to conventions and approaches from UN inter-governmental organisations, are considered to see how the ecosystem can achieve a key role for ocean governance. On the basis of the political approach designed by the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, focus is centred on the role of the geographical coverage of the regional action plans, and its consistency with the need to carry out efficient ecosystem management is discussed. Analysis is associated with that of the approach to the regional scale of ocean management from the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (adopted in 1982, and came into force in 1994). As a conclusion, a set of concepts and principles are presented with the aim of designing possible bases for policy implementation to the regional approach to the ocean assuming the ocean ecosystem as the main reference component of the ocean system.