

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Institutional Framework

The “new GESAMP” as a whole is an integrated mechanism (Figure 1) that includes:

- GESAMP itself, i.e. the sitting group of experts, which provides overall scientific guidance, perspective, and oversight;
- Working groups, composed of both members of GESAMP and other experts selected from the GESAMP pool, that execute the individual projects that make up most of the substantive work programme;
- UN sponsoring organizations, under whose auspices and imprimatur the mechanism as a whole resides;
- Partner organizations, which may include governments, inter-governmental organizations, regional bodies, scientific bodies, and international NGOs, that co-sponsor specific GESAMP projects; and
- Supporting organizations, which provide financial or other support to GESAMP but are not actively involved in the design or execution of projects.

3.1.1 UN Sponsoring Organizations

Each UN sponsoring organization appoints a Technical Secretary for GESAMP. Together the Technical Secretaries form an Executive Board, which along with the Chair and Vice-Chair of GESAMP meets as the Executive Committee. Day-to-day administration and management of GESAMP will largely be performed by the GESAMP Office. The primary



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roles of the Executive Board will be to provide policy direction and technical guidance to the Office and advocacy and liaison within the sponsoring organizations. The Executive Board will also nominate the Chair and Vice-Chair and review candidates for the Senior Officer, who will be in charge of the GESAMP Office. The Executive Committee will develop GESAMP's budget and work plan, appoint GESAMP members, and generally supervise the activities of the Office. Technical Secretaries will also have responsibilities in connection with the sponsorship of working groups and other GESAMP-related activities of their individual organizations.

3.1.2 Partner Organizations

GESAMP will actively seek to work in partnership with other organizations, *inter alia* through co-sponsorship of working groups and other activities. Governments and organizations may initiate partnerships, for example by proposing potential work for GESAMP through the GESAMP Office. The preferred arrangement for partnership activities will be to use the GESAMP structure and to produce products under the GESAMP banner, with partner organizations as full and equal co-sponsors. If a working group is co-sponsored by both GESAMP



sponsoring organizations and external partner organizations, for example, it is preferred that working group members be selected from the GESAMP pool and the output published in *GESAMP Reports and Studies*. Partner organizations would act equally with the relevant UN sponsoring organizations in the selection of working group members, development of terms of reference and work plan, etc., and receive full recognition as equal co-sponsors of the working group. It is recognised that such an arrangement may not always be acceptable to all parties, and partnership arrangements will be developed on a case-by-case basis. The primary considerations for GESAMP in establishing partnerships will be making GESAMP's activities inclusive and safeguarding the scientific credibility and independence of GESAMP's advice.

3.1.3 Supporting Organizations

Individuals or organizations may wish to support GESAMP's work while not actively participating in it through contributions to the GESAMP Trust Fund or by other means. Supporters will be prominently identified on the GESAMP web site and promotional materials.

3.2 GESAMP Office

A dedicated GESAMP Office will be established to centralise GESAMP's administration and management, thereby reducing duplication and increasing efficiency and transparency. The Office will also have important new functions needed to increase GESAMP's effectiveness. In particular, the Office will provide a single "shop front", a focal point for interactions with governments and external organizations. It will also promote and disseminate GESAMP's products and capabilities to make them more visible to users, and develop an active fund-raising program. The Office will operate under the direction of the Executive Committee.

3.3 Outputs

3.3.1 Formal Outputs

To date *GESAMP Reports and Studies* have been the primary formal outputs of GESAMP. These include reports of GESAMP sessions and in-depth scientific studies and assessments of a range of topics related to marine environmental protection. The latter are prepared by working groups and formally approved by GESAMP. *GESAMP Reports and Studies* will be continued, but to provide greater flexibility, raise GESAMP's profile, and better meet user needs the new GESAMP will expand its range of formal outputs. These will follow standardized style guidelines to ensure a colourful, reader-friendly format and a uniform image for GESAMP products.

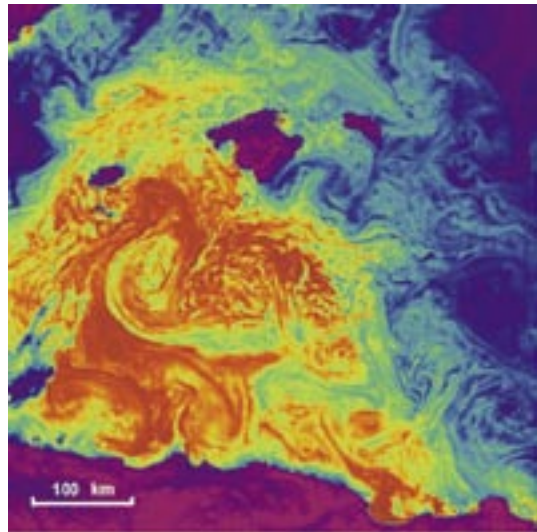
3.3.1.1 GESAMP Reports and Studies

GESAMP's major thematic studies will continue to be published as *GESAMP Reports and Studies*. They will be conducted by working groups in accordance with a comprehensive project brief prepared at the inception of each study. All reports will be externally peer-reviewed, reviewed and approved by GESAMP, professionally edited, and published in an attractive, reader-friendly format. Their release will be adequately publicised, and their results presented to appropriate international fora such as intergovernmental meetings and scientific conferences. It is intended that *GESAMP Reports and Studies* or papers based on them will also be published in the open scientific literature under the personal names of the authors, but with their GESAMP origin prominently identified.

The cost of report printing and distribution is high, particularly with the improved publication standards (especially colour printing). Presently



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each agency maintains a separate mailing list, and central distribution by the GESAMP Office should eliminate some duplication and reduce postage costs through bulk mailing. The Office will also replace the distribution of printed copies with electronic distribution as much as possible. Printed reports will continue to be distributed free as required for the sponsoring organizations to meet their obligations to their constituencies. Otherwise, printed copies will be sent free to developing-country recipients and on a cost-recovery basis to recipients in developed countries.

3.3.1.2 Annual Report of the Chair

The Chair of GESAMP will prepare a succinct annual report summarising GESAMP's major achievements, conclusions and recommendations, and future work plan, with new products such as the *Overview of Marine Assessment Activities* and *GESAMP Statements* (see below) attached. The *Annual Report of the Chair* will be delivered in writing to the Executive



Heads of the sponsoring organizations, ICP, CSD, the UN Secretary-General, and all GESAMP partner and supporting organizations. The Chair will regularly present the report to meetings of the ICP and the governing bodies of the sponsoring organizations. The Chair would also report to any new coordinating mechanism that might be created as recommended by ICP²¹.

3.3.1.3 Overview of Marine Assessment Activities

GESAMP will prepare a biennial overview of the marine environmental monitoring, assessment, and related activities of the sponsoring organizations and other international organizations. The *Overviews* will include advice on how these activities might be improved and better coordinated. The primary users will be the sponsoring organizations and other intergovernmental organizations and processes. Their intended use is to help organizations reduce duplication of effort and unhealthy competition, improve coordination and cooperation, and identify important gaps. The *Overviews* will be included in the

Annual Report of the Chair. They will be widely circulated for comment and will require GESAMP's approval, generally by correspondence, prior to release.

3.3.1.4 GESAMP Statements

GESAMP will periodically issue consensus statements on issues regarding the degradation of the marine environment. Regular *GESAMP Statements on New and Emerging Issues* will be produced in fulfilment of GESAMP's function 5 through a small, standing working group of GESAMP members led by the Chair of GESAMP. Prompt advice in response to significant events involving risks to human health and marine ecosystems will be delivered in *GESAMP Statements* prepared by *ad hoc* task teams. *GESAMP Statements* will not be externally peer-reviewed, but experts in the GESAMP pool will be invited to comment on them prior to release.

3.3.1.5 Reports to GESAMP

GESAMP sometimes forms task teams or correspondence groups to investigate an issue of interest to ascertain its current status and/or scope for potential work for GESAMP. These groups may include members of GESAMP, its working groups, or other members of the pool of experts. The groups generally work by correspondence and report the results of their investigations back to GESAMP. Such reports provide valuable background information on marine environmental issues, but in the past have been published solely as Annexes to reports of GESAMP

²¹Report of the third meeting of ICP (2002, doc. A/57/80), paras. 48-49, relating to the discontinuation of ACC-SOCA.

sessions. To disseminate the information more widely, and make GESAMP's work more transparent, these reports will be published electronically in a new series, *Reports to GESAMP*. *Reports to GESAMP* are primarily intended for use by GESAMP itself but they will also be of interest to governments, sponsoring organizations, and the scientific community.

3.3.1.6 User- and Project-Specific Outputs

GESAMP may produce other outputs tailored to the special requirements of particular users, projects, or programmes. A prominent example of this is the chemical hazard evaluations produced by the standing working group on the Evaluation of the Hazards of Harmful Substances Carried by Ships. Other examples might include peer review of the work of other bodies or the development of training materials or handbooks. The nature of such outputs and method of producing them will be determined *ad hoc*.

3.3.1.7 Annual Business Report

The GESAMP Office will prepare an annual report of GESAMP's activities and accomplishments including a performance audit of activities against their project briefs, financial statement, and updated marketing and work plans. The *Annual Business Report* is intended primarily for internal use by the GESAMP Office and GESAMP's sponsoring and partner organizations for "corporate governance" and in attracting clients and financial support. It will also be posted on the GESAMP



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web site and delivered to governments and organizations upon request.

3.3.2 Informal Outputs

GESAMP may make contributions to the protection and sustainable use of the marine environment in addition to the formal outputs described above. Past examples include GESAMP's participation in preparatory expert meetings for the development of UNCED Agenda 21 and the representation of GESAMP on the Steering Group of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA). More recently, GESAMP has participated in meetings to study the feasibility of conducting regular assessments of the marine environment²².



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²²Reykjavik, Iceland (12-14 September 2001), Bremen, Germany (18-20 March 2002), Paris, France (8-9 September 2003) and New York, USA (23-26 March 2004).



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3.4 Participation and Membership

3.4.1 GESAMP Pool of Experts

The primary mechanism for participation in GESAMP will be its pool of experts, from which members of GESAMP and its working groups will be recruited. Pool experts who are not current members of GESAMP or its working groups will have opportunities to participate by providing peer reviews, bringing new and emerging issues to GESAMP's attention, and commenting upon draft *GESAMP Statements*. Pool experts may also be invited to serve on *ad hoc* task teams.

The GESAMP Office will establish and maintain the pool as a database of expertise. Nominations to the pool may be made by the sponsoring and other UN organizations, their Member States, regional organizations, international scientific bodies and non-governmental organizations, and sitting members of GESAMP. To

foster broad participation and publicise the re-organization of GESAMP, the GESAMP Office and sponsoring organizations will actively solicit nominations. Criteria for inclusion of experts in the pool are:

- Postgraduate degree or equivalent experience in a relevant discipline;
- Recognition and excellence in field of expertise;
- Willingness to declare any conflicts of interest;
- Ability to serve in an independent, individual capacity; and
- Willingness to serve on a voluntary basis.

Pool experts will be briefed on GESAMP's background and operations, receive electronic copies of GESAMP products, and be regularly updated on current GESAMP activities via an electronic mailing list and dedicated area of the GESAMP web site.

The participation of pool experts in GESAMP's work will actively engage a large number of scientists from governments, non-governmental organizations, and industry, enhancing GESAMP's interactions with these groups. These ongoing interactions will not only raise the profile of GESAMP and its products, but also enhance the capacity of pool experts to contribute to GESAMP, and to scientific advisory processes in general. The pool will also greatly broaden the expertise available to GESAMP and increase its ability to respond rapidly to pressing issues.

3.4.2 GESAMP Members

GESAMP itself will consist of 25-30 experts nominated by the Executive Board from the GESAMP pool, largely on the basis of their scientific credentials and experience. The duties of GESAMP members are to:

- Participate in the sessions of GESAMP; and
- Contribute to the intersessional work of GESAMP including reviewing terms of reference, project briefs, and draft reports, contributing to consensus statements and the identification of emerging issues, and participating in *ad hoc* task teams, correspondence groups, and working groups as appropriate.

The first consideration in nominating experts to GESAMP will be to maintain the necessary disciplinary composition (a) to service the current work plan and (b) to maintain broad multi-disciplinarity so that GESAMP's advice remains balanced and policy-relevant.

The range of disciplines represented in GESAMP should notionally include:

- Marine chemistry/geochemistry
- Physical oceanography
- Ecotoxicology
- Risk assessment and communication
- Air-sea interactions/atmospheric science
- Biological oceanography/marine ecology
- Coastal geomorphology
- Coastal/offshore engineering
- Coastal management
- Waste management
- Environmental impact assessment and monitoring
- Environmental/resource economics, including ecosystem valuation
- Fisheries/aquaculture
- Marine regulatory/institutional policy
- International environmental law/ law of the sea
- Public health



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GESAMP members will also be nominated so as to maintain geographic and gender balance. All members will be treated equally within GESAMP regardless of their background.

GESAMP members are expected to act in their individual capacities and not as representatives of their home institutions, governments, or associations. They must be willing to serve on a *pro bono* basis, and be willing and able to work intersessionally on routine GESAMP matters via electronic and conventional correspondence. GESAMP members must be prepared to declare any conflicts of interest that may arise in connection with their GESAMP responsibilities. The maximum continuous term of membership will be four years, unless at the conclusion of his/her term an expert is elected to a further 2-year term as Chair or Vice-Chair.

3.4.3 Working Group Members

Working group members are experts in disciplines required for the completion of the working group's terms of reference, collectively representing both breadth and depth of expertise. Generally, about three-quarters of working group members should not be current members of GESAMP.

The duties of working group members are to contribute to fulfilling the working group's terms of reference under the leadership of the working group Chair and according to the working group's work plan. This may involve attending working group meetings, work by correspondence, or both. Working group Chairs have the additional duties of coordinating the working group with support from the GESAMP Office, delivering working group reports in an acceptable form, and presenting the products of the working group to sessions of GESAMP and international fora as appropriate.

In most cases working group members serve *pro bono*, but members or their employers may sometimes be compensated for their time and effort. This will depend upon the nature of the work and be decided on a project-by-project basis at the outset of each project.

Working group members will generally be selected for geographic and gender balance, though a lack of geographic balance may be justified if the work has a particular regional focus. Working groups will in principle include members of the identified key user groups for the working group's product(s). All members of a working

group will be treated equally regardless of their background.

3.5 Financial Summary

The GESAMP Office will manage GESAMP’s finances according to UN standards and procedures on behalf of all sponsoring organizations and under the oversight of the Executive Committee. Finances will be managed as a Trust Fund for core activities including regular functions and individual project accounts for “on-request” functions. An overhead charge will be paid from project funds to the Trust Fund to cover project support

services. A summary 3-year budget for core activities (i.e. excluding on-request projects) is shown in Table 1. This represents a notional budget for the immediate, full implementation of the strategic vision for the New GESAMP presented herein. It is important to recognise, however, that the vision has been developed primarily as a tool for planning and strategic thinking. The New GESAMP is likely to be implemented over time and, because of pragmatic considerations and changing circumstances, not necessarily exactly as described in this strategic vision.

TABLE 1. GESAMP CORE ACTIVITIES EXPENDITURE BUDGET (USD)

	Annual		3-year	
	Cash	In-Kind	Cash	In-Kind
GESAMP Office - Staffing	230 000	85 000 ^{a)}	690 000	85 000
GESAMP Office - Operations	140 000	40 000	420 000	120 000
GESAMP Sessions	120 000	0	360 000	0
Travel & Support for Chair/Co-Chair	60 000	0	180 000	0
Web Site & PR Startup	50 000	0	150 000	0
GESAMP Core Activities Total	600 000	125 000	1 800 000	205 000

^{a)} Year 1 only



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This strategic vision for the New GESAMP, "Science for Sustainable Oceans", sets out the path which GESAMP intends to take when providing authoritative, independent, interdisciplinary, scientific advice to organizations and Governments to support the protection and sustainable use of the marine environment. It explains why GESAMP is needed as an interagency organ of the United Nations system, how GESAMP plans to engage with the users of its advice and the broader scientific community, how it achieves a more professional business approach to planning, management, work methods and delivery of its advice. It also informs on the organizational relationships in the New GESAMP, its output, participation and membership and gives a summarized 3-year budget for full implementation of this strategic vision.

