

Concept note  
**Ocean management: opportunities, challenges and experience**

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), in cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), welcomes you to the seminar *Ocean management: opportunities, challenges and experience* on 22 October in Oslo, Norway.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this note is to guide the discussions at the seminar and ensure that they are useful for policy-makers in small island developing states (SIDS). The goal of the seminar is to exchange experience and knowledge to enable us to use the oceans more sustainably and to promote sustainable development and economic growth in SIDS.

**Rationale**

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 14.2 is for states to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems by 2020. The indicator is the proportion of exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches. Integrated ocean management is an approach based on the recognition that sustainable use, protection and ecosystem health are all vital for the development of a sustainable ocean economy.

Recent reports, in particular the 2016 OECD report *The Ocean Economy in 2030*, call for integrated ocean management to be strengthened in order to realise the full potential of the ocean economy. It will benefit all of us if we can pool our experience of ocean management and discuss the problems we are facing and possible solutions at international, regional and national level.

**Norway's integrated ocean management plans**

Since 2006, Norway has developed integrated management plans for all of its ocean areas. Management plans for Norway's part of three Large Marine Ecosystems have been presented in the form of white papers and are updated and revised at intervals. Each management plan is underpinned by reports with input from all relevant agencies and institutions that form a factual basis for developing the plan. All documents and all scientific advice are made public during management plan processes, and everyone is invited to comment on them. Civil society, the private sector and scientists all provide input. The management plans also apply marine spatial planning as a tool. The relevant ministries retain responsibility for implementing measures set out in the management plans that are relevant for their sectors.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to ocean management. Ecosystems are diverse and require tailored management. However, some of the principles used in the Norwegian model may be relevant to other governments as well. Likewise, experience gained by SIDS may be relevant to other large ocean nations.

**Structure of the seminar**

Integrated ocean management can be an important tool in achieving the SDG Target 14.2 and contributing to more sustainable use of the oceans. International cooperation is essential if we are to move forward in this area. To encourage this, we have organised a series of keynote addresses, presentations and debates divided into three separate thematic sessions. The speakers are ministers

and officials from SIDS, representatives of multilateral institutions and regional organisations, experts and Norwegian officials.

### **Session 1 - The role of knowledge and science in ocean and coastal zone management**

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Knowledge-based actions and policies must be the basis for sustainable management of the oceans. It is less than 11 years until all the SDG targets are to be met. The development of resource management policy will need to be speeded up and rules enforced more strictly. It is vital to base management on the best available scientific knowledge. The time-consuming nature of scientific work and a lack of data-sharing may hinder adaptation and development at the necessary speed. Are there ways of speeding up scientific processes and sharing more data and information to facilitate sustainable development and management of the ocean?

### **Session 2 – Lessons learned and best practice on integrated regional ocean management. A government perspective**

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Governments are responsible for implementing and enforcing management regimes to the benefit of their citizens. Some countries have only limited capacity to implement and enforce comprehensive ocean management regimes. Regional organisations therefore have a key role to play in influencing policy and advancing scientific understanding. How can these processes be improved to benefit the ocean and those dependent on it?

SIDS are facing severe climate-induced threats and specific challenges that will require a variety of solutions. Although there are many differences, there are also similarities between Norway and SIDS, particularly the fact that we can all be called large ocean nations. Does Norway have practical and operational experience that may be useful to other countries?

### **Session 3 – Integrated ocean and coastal zone management - the key to promoting sustainable ocean industries. A business perspective**

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SIDS have comparatively large ocean territories and abundant natural resources and can therefore play a key role in climate change mitigation, improving ocean health and productivity and delivering sustainable development and economic growth.

All stakeholders, including businesses, have a role to play in achieving the SDGs, and it is in their interests to do so. Furthermore, governments and donors do not have sufficient financial capital to complete the SDG process without the involvement of the private sector. How can the private sector play a fuller part, and how can SIDS governments create the enabling environment that businesses need?