

# Independent and in-depth evaluation of GESAMP



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**IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/WMO/WHO/IAEA/UN/UNEP  
Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects  
of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP)**



**INDEPENDENT AND IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF  
GESAMP**

**REPORT OF THE EVALUATION TEAM**

**July 2001**

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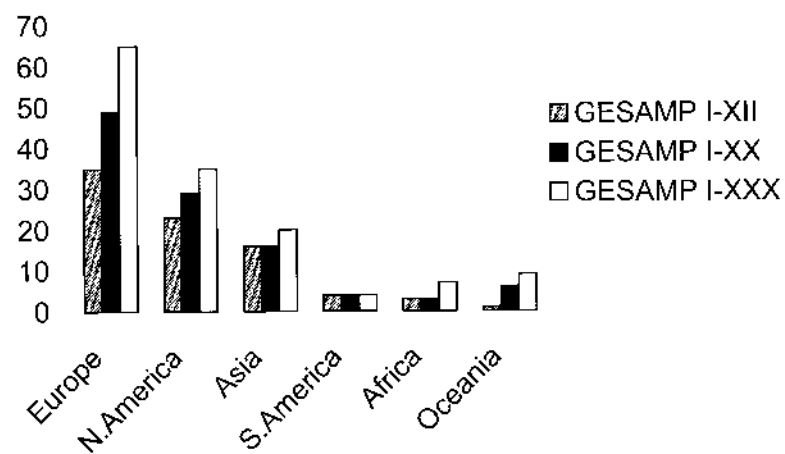
GESAMP is an advisory body consisting of specialized experts nominated by the Sponsoring Agencies (IMO, FAO, UNESCO-IOC, WMO, WHO, IAEA, UN, UNEP). Its principal task is to provide scientific advice concerning the prevention, reduction and control of the degradation of the marine environment to the Sponsoring Agencies.

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Running Total Number of GESAMP Members by Region

REGION	GESAMP I-XII	GESAMP I-XX	GESAMP I-XXX
Europe	35	49	65
North America	23	29	35
Asia	16	16	20
South America (incl. Central America)	4	4	4
Africa (incl. the Middle East)	3	3	7
Oceania	1	6	9



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2000, the eight United Nations sponsoring agencies of the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), established in 1969, agreed to carry out an independent and in-depth evaluation of the achievements of GESAMP, its impact, scope, working methods and future role. This report contains the recommendations of the GESAMP Evaluation Team (ET) established to carry out this evaluation, which consisted of four independent scientists.

The GESAMP Evaluation Team concluded that the United Nations, its member States and other organisations require an effective, efficient and independent group to provide advice on issues relating to marine environmental protection and management and sustainable development of marine resources and amenities based on sound scientific principles.

The GESAMP Evaluation Team strongly recommends that GESAMP be continued to play that role. However, major changes will be necessary in the structure of GESAMP, its operational procedures and products. These changes will be necessary for GESAMP to set priorities, examine issues more effectively, provide appropriate and timely advice, and to enhance its profile, visibility and responsiveness towards those requesting its advice and thus contribute to capacity building activities. In detailed recommendations, the GESAMP Evaluation Team gives the building blocks for a new structure for GESAMP.

London, July 2001

## ANNEX 4

### REGIONAL REPRESENTATION OF PAST AND PRESENT MEMBERSHIP OF GESAMP

1 During its thirty years of existence, 140 scientists have served as members of GESAMP. An additional 200+ have participated in GESAMP Working Groups. Scientists participating in GESAMP activities represent 50+ countries from every region of the world. Because GESAMP advice is influenced greatly by its members, it is useful to analyze the regional representation and tenure of the membership.

2 Nations from which GESAMP experts have come can be divided into six regions: Europe, North America, Mainland Asia (including former Soviet Union countries and Japan), South and Central America, Africa (including the Middle East) and Oceania (which includes Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, the Philippines and West Pacific island nations). The table overleaf shows the cumulative membership of GESAMP by these regions. From these data, it is clear that scientists from Europe and North America have always dominated GESAMP. During the first period, GESAMP I-XII (1969 - 1981), 70% of the experts were from these two regions. This has remained relatively constant with the present membership being 75% North American and European scientists.

3 Historically, the Southern Hemisphere has been the most under-represented. For example, there have been only four scientists from Central and South America (one each from Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil) who have served as GESAMP members. None from this region have served on GESAMP during the past 15 years. For both Africa and the Oceania region, there have been some recent improvements in their representation, but their combined percentage of GESAMP membership is still around 10%.

4 The average length of tenure of GESAMP members is about 3.5 years, and while this appears to match the maximum four year term specified in the Updated Memorandum of GESAMP of 1994, the fact is that most members serve only one or two years while a few serve much longer. For example, during the first twelve years of GESAMP, over two-thirds of the members served two years or less. The trend toward longer terms by fewer members continues with five of the present members having served for periods of 9, 13 (two), 14 and 16 years. Two other present members have served for six years, one for five years and four for four years. Only one of these long-term members is from an under-represented region.

TABLE 2

**Papers Derived from GESAMP Reports and Studies That Received at Least One Citation**

Index	Science Index Citations	Social Science Index Citations
Duce, R.A., P.S. Liss, <i>et al.</i> 1991. The atmospheric input of trace species to the world ocean. <u>Global Biogeochemical Cycles</u> , 5, 193-259.	233	0
Owens, N.J.P., J.N. Galloway and R.A. Duce. 1992. Episodic atmospheric nitrogen deposition to oligotrophic oceans. <u>Nature</u> , 357, 3397-3399.	55	0
Gray, J.S., D. Calamari, R. Duce, J.E. Portmann, P.G. Wells and H.L. Windom. 1991. Scientifically based strategies for marine environmental protection and management. <u>Mar. Pollut. Bull.</u> , 22, 432-440.	22	21
Windom, H. 1992. Contamination of the marine environment from land-based sources. <u>Mar. Pollut. Bull.</u> , 25, 32-36.	17	15
Gray, J.S. 1997. Marine biodiversity: patterns, threats and conservation needs. <u>Biodiversity and Conservation</u> , 6, 153-175.	17	0
Gray, J.S. 1992. Biological and ecological effects of marine pollutants and their detection. <u>Mar. Pollut. Bull.</u> , 25, 48-.	12	0
Liss, P.S. and R.A. Duce, eds. 1997. <u>The Sea Surface and Global Change</u> . Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, UK. 519pp.	5	0
Windom, H. 1991. GESAMP – Two Decades of Accomplishments. IMO. London. 40pp.	5	0
Howells, G., D. Calamari, J.S. Gray and P.G. Wells. 1990. An analytical approach to assessment of long-term effects of low levels of contaminants in the marine environment. <u>Mar. Pollut. Bull.</u> , 21, 371-375.	4	0
Khalimonov, O. 1995. Report on GESAMP and its role for the protection and sustainable development of the marine environment. <u>Ocean and Coastal Management</u> , 29, 297-302.	1	0
Wells, P.G. and J.M. Bowers, eds. 1992. Progress and Trends in Marine Environmental Protection. <u>Mar. Pollut. Bull.</u> , 25, 1-119.	1	0
Wells, P.G., T. Höfer and M. Nauke. 1999. Evaluating the hazards of harmful substances carried by ships: the role of GESAMP and its EHS Working Group. <u>The Science of the Total Environment</u> , 237/238, 329-350.	1	0
Huber, M.E. <i>et al.</i> 1999. Oceans at risk. <u>Mar. Pollut. Bull.</u> , 38, 435-438.	1	0

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) is an advisory body of independent experts which has provided advice to its eight sponsoring agencies (FAO, IAEA, IMO, UN, UNEP, UNESCO-IOC, WHO and WMO) for over three decades. During the first two decades of its existence its activities were predominantly on scientific aspects of marine "pollution". During the past decade, however, its scope was considerably broadened to include matters pertaining to marine environmental protection and management.

1.2 As stated in the "Updated Memorandum of GESAMP" of 1994, the mandate of GESAMP is:

- (i) to provide advice relating to the scientific aspects of marine environmental protection and,
- (ii) to prepare periodic reviews and assessments of the state of the marine environment and to identify problems and areas requiring special attention.

1.3 In March 2000, the Executive Director of UNEP, one of the sponsoring United Nations organisations of GESAMP, proposed that an in-depth and independent evaluation of GESAMP and its operational procedures be undertaken prior to formulating proposals for a possible new United Nations Memorandum of Understanding on GESAMP. The other seven sponsoring agencies of GESAMP agreed to this proposal in May 2000 and the GESAMP Intersecretariat established an Evaluation Team. The composition and details of the Evaluation Team and its terms of reference are given in Annex 1 to this report.

### Evaluation process

1.4 In late January 2001, the GESAMP Evaluation Team (ET) held its first meeting. At this meeting it agreed upon the information required to meet its needs and decided that, in addition to the review of GESAMP documents, the obtaining of information from selected groups involved with GESAMP through the use of questionnaires would be an expedient mechanism. It also agreed that, where possible, the information obtained from the questionnaires should be augmented by personal interviews with selected individual representatives of the groups. This included interviews with all of the Technical Secretaries. The present Chair of GESAMP, who attended all Evaluation Team meetings as an observer, also helped the ET in its efforts.

1.5 In addition to the Technical Secretaries of the sponsoring agencies, questionnaires were sent to recent members of GESAMP, chairmen of GESAMP Working Groups, libraries on GESAMP's mailing lists and "users" of GESAMP advice (mailing lists for this latter group were provided by the Technical Secretaries). In total 934 questionnaires were sent out.

- 1.6 During April-May and July 2001, the ET held two additional meetings. Between the first (January) and second meetings the ET reviewed the information provided in the returns from the questionnaires sent to the Technical Secretaries, Members and the Working Group Chairs. As they travelled to London for the second meeting, members of the ET interviewed each of the Technical Secretaries and GESAMP's Administrative Secretary to follow-up their responses to the questionnaire. Much of the second meeting was devoted to comparing and compiling the findings of the ET members, discussions on the current status of and ways to improve GESAMP based on the data gathered at that time, and to drafting a framework for its report. The final meeting was used to develop a list of recommendations and to draft this final report, which was completed by correspondence.

Copies of all correspondence, minutes of meetings and replies to questionnaires are held by the Administrative Secretary of GESAMP at IMO and are open to scrutiny.

#### Issues examined

- 1.7 Of the many issues/questions that were discussed and debated at the Evaluation Team meetings, the key ones were:
- How has GESAMP performed over the years?
  - Has it fulfilled its goals and objectives of providing independent and cross-sectorial advice to its sponsoring agencies, stakeholders (customers in the broadest sense), other United Nations agencies, member States and non-governmental organisations?
  - Is GESAMP addressing the needs of a rapidly changing world which is witnessing significant advances in information technology and major shifts in societal needs, marine science, technology and policies?
  - Is there a need for GESAMP or similar expert group under the United Nations umbrella?
  - How, if there is a requirement for such a group, should it continue to serve its stakeholders effectively and make its products more visible?

TABLE 1

GESAMP Report Citation Index Citations

GESAMP Reports and Studies No.	Science Index Citations	Social Science Index Citations
1	2	1
2	2	
5	2	1
6	5	1
7	1	1
9	1	
11	2	
12	1	
13	1	
14	1	
15	1	
16	4	2
17	6	
19	2	
20	1	
22	3	
28	8	
30	5	1
31	1	
32	24	
33	1	
34	5	
35	5	
37	1	
38	21	
39	68	23
40	1	
42	3	
43	1	
45	6	2
46	3	
47	3	
48	2	
50	24	
51	2	
52	12	1
54	1	
55	10	1
57	7	
58	6	
59	7	
61	13	
62	1	
63	1	
65	3	
66	5	
68	1	
(Citations for unspecified reports in 1993 & 1997)	2	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>34</b>



## ANNEX 3

SCIENCE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE CITATIONS  
FOR GESAMP REPORTS AND STUDIES

1 Shown overleaf are two tables, which list respectively the number of citations given in both the Science Citation Index and the Social Science Citation Index for all GESAMP Reports and Studies (Table 1) and for articles/books since 1990 that were derived from GESAMP Reports and Studies (Table 2).

2 As can be seen in Table 1, the total number of citations for GESAMP Reports from the Science Citation Index was 288 and from the Social Science Citation Index was 34. Note that some of the citations in those two indices overlapped, i.e., the same article that cited the GESAMP report was listed in both indices. There have been only seven reports that have had 10 or more citations. (The Citation Indices go back to a period before GESAMP began.) By far the largest number of citations, both from the Science Citation Index and the Social Science Citation Index, was for the State of the Marine Environment report published in 1990. For science citations the top seven were as follows:

Science Citations	Reports & Studies	
68	No.39	The State of the Marine Environment (1990)
24	No.32	Land-Sea Boundary Flux of Contaminants: Contributions from Rivers (1987)
24	No.50	Impact of Oil & Related Chemicals & Wastes on the Marine Environment (1993)
21	No.38	Atmospheric Input of Trace Species to the World Ocean (1989)
13	No.61	The Contributions of Science to Integrated Coastal Management (1996)
12	No.52	Anthropogenic Influences on Sediment Discharge to the Coastal Zone and Environmental Consequences (1993)
10	No.54	Guidelines for Marine Environmental Assessments (1994)

3 Table 2 presents the citations for those articles and/or books that have been published since 1990 and that have at least one citation listed. Note that by far the greatest number of citations (233) was for a paper derived from GESAMP Reports and Studies No.38, which was also one of the most highly cited GESAMP reports. 233 citations is a very high number indeed. The *Nature* paper by Owens *et al.* also had a very acceptable 55 citations and several others had between 15 and 25 citations.

## 2 CURRENT STATUS

2.1 As indicated above, the ET reviewed the results of completed questionnaires from the Technical Secretaries of the sponsoring agencies, from the Chair and Vice-Chair of GESAMP, Chairmen of Working Groups and Members of GESAMP and from users, including libraries, conducted interviews with selected individuals and reviewed a number of documents related to GESAMP, including its recent (past 10 years) Reports and Studies. Annex 2 provides a short analysis of the responses received to the questionnaire and a brief synopsis of some pertinent answers. The ET deliberated on the results of the questionnaires and the other sources of information to arrive at the following view of the current status of GESAMP.

## Achievements

2.2 Feedback from questionnaires and interviews indicate many user groups have held GESAMP opinions and advice in great esteem throughout its existence. One of these is the marine science community at large as evidenced by the citation of many of GESAMP Reports and Studies in peer reviewed literature and the publication of scientific articles that were largely based on the outcomes of GESAMP Working Groups. An overview of the number of these citations is given in Annex 3 to this report. The world shipping industry (owners and shippers) use the work of GESAMP Working Group 1 (started in 1974) in evaluating and re-evaluating the hazard profiles of the substances carried by ships on a daily basis. Its work is an important ongoing contribution to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL 73/78) and the related documents of the IBC (International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk) and IMDG (International Maritime Dangerous Goods) Codes. Numerous GESAMP Reports and Studies on effects of pollution on, and contamination of, biota have provided advice to member States of FAO, WHO and UNEP regarding the safety and security of marine ecosystems. Other GESAMP Reports and Studies have provided ongoing advice on the transport and fate of contaminants in the marine environment and approaches to predicting these. Whilst this advice has served the clients of virtually all of the sponsoring agencies, it has not always been used to its full potential and the reasons for this will be outlined later.

2.3 The periodic assessment of the state of the marine environment has been a high-profile activity of GESAMP which has had considerable impact. Of special note are GESAMP's contributions to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) based on its 1990 "State of the Marine Environment Report". This formed the basis for GESAMP's participation in preparatory, expert meetings on land-based sources and other activities and reports, which supported the development of UNCED Agenda 21. It is likely that recent work of GESAMP, notably Reports and Studies No.70, "A Sea of Troubles", and No.71 "Protecting the Oceans from Land-Based Activities", could potentially be useful in the follow-up to UNCED and the "Rio + 10" Conference being prepared for 2002.

- 2.4 It is clear that the greatest recognition of GESAMP's work has been in relation to its global assessments of threats to the marine environment. However, expectations have not been in the area of marine environmental policy and management. Nonetheless, reports by GESAMP, of which there are approximately 40 resulting from the efforts of specific Working Groups, are generally held in high regard by United Nations agencies, as shown in the recent reference to the latest GESAMP Reports and Studies No.70 in the introduction of the Report to the Fifty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

#### **Operating methods**

- 2.5 The work of GESAMP is in response, primarily, to requests forwarded to it by the Technical Secretariat. ET had assumed that these requests represented the needs of member States of one or more of the sponsoring agencies and originated from their member nations. In the opinion of the ET, however, there is no documentation to support this. Instead, it appears to the ET, based on responses to the questionnaires and interviews, that the requests made to GESAMP for advice are more for support of the individual Technical Secretaries to meet the programme needs of the sponsoring agencies. Occasionally, topics to be considered by GESAMP are proposed by GESAMP members themselves, but this is rare. Regardless of this, it is clear that the final products of GESAMP are used in different ways by the different sponsoring agencies. It could be inferred from the above that the member States are unaware of GESAMP and GESAMP's products and hence are unaware of their potential to them.
- 2.6 GESAMP accomplishes its goals primarily through the efforts of Working Groups for which the Technical Secretaries provide the provisional Terms of Reference (ToR). These are then discussed by GESAMP members at their annual meeting and are amended as necessary for clarification. This, along with the review of existing Working Groups' progress and final reports are the major tasks considered at the annual meeting. The ET could find no evidence that potential user groups were engaged in this overall process.
- 2.7 Once a Working Group is established, there appears to be no formalized procedure or mechanism to ensure that the Working Group has sufficient resources to support adequate participation of experts in conducting the tasks laid out in its ToR. Some Working Groups operate on a "shoestring" (particularly those proposed by GESAMP members) with perhaps only one sponsoring agency providing support. Others are supported for several meetings of numerous experts. However, much of the support may be provided by one or two of the sponsoring agencies. The quality of the end product, however, does not necessarily match the financial support. The ET found, on review of a sampling of GESAMP Reports and Studies, that often those based on a single, focused meeting produced the better product. This also appears to be supported by an independent assessment of scientific citations (see Annex 3 to this report).

#### **Summary of Responses from the Library Customers of GESAMP**

Libraries wished to continue to receive GESAMP publications as hard copy not as downloadable documents from the web. Generally, they did not have a record of how many times GESAMP publications were accessed by library users.

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### Summary of Responses from Technical Secretaries, GESAMP Members, Working Group Chairs and Members

This information was used as the basis for the findings in the introduction of the report and the summary of the questionnaires resulted in many pages of text which have not been included in this report for reasons of economy in terms of space and cost. However, all this information is available for scrutiny at IMO.

### Summary of Responses from Customers of GESAMP (data obtained from mailing lists of sponsoring agencies)

The following is a summary of the comments received back from the customer questionnaires which formed part of the basis of the recommendations given earlier. Only a summary of the salient points from the questionnaires is given here; all copies of the returned questionnaires are also available for scrutiny at IMO.

*The questionnaire was sent to organisations who were on GESAMP mailing lists and who would have been expected to be aware of GESAMP.*

The organisations contacted covered all of the following activities: Chemicals, Marine Environment, Coastal, Deep Ocean, Human Health, Radioactivity, Aquaculture, Waste Disposal, Tanker Cargoes, Marine Environmental Protection, Micro-Organisms, Fisheries

	YES	NO
Are you aware of GESAMP and the service it performs?	75%	25%
Have you had reason to use GESAMP advice?	50%	50%
Do you know how to contact GESAMP?	66%	34%
Do you use the GESAMP Web site?	35%	65%
Does GESAMP have a high profile image?	50%	50%
Do you feel that GESAMP's image needs to be changed?	66%	34%

Words used by those answering NO to the above question included: bureaucratic, academic and impractical. Overall, however, organisations indicated that they did not have a clear image of what GESAMP does.

Almost all the respondents acknowledged the value of GESAMP's advice being independent, which was regarded as an important issue.

In addition, 57 respondents wished to learn more about GESAMP's work. The fact that customers were contacted as part of this evaluation has stimulated a renewed interest.

Many answers were textual in content and were difficult to analyse in tabular form but helped the ET to develop their ideas.

2.8 During the intersessional period between annual meetings, GESAMP activities are generally restricted to Working Group meetings. Based on the 1994 Intersecretariat Memorandum, the Officers of GESAMP (i.e., its Chair and Vice-Chair) have no defined duties during this period, their main role being to conduct the annual meeting with the Vice-Chair who normally succeeds the Chair after two years. Any meetings attended or promotional activities carried out by the Chair or Vice-Chair during this period are done in addition to their other duties and on a voluntary basis.

2.9 During the intersessional period, the Intersecretariat have limited time and resources for GESAMP activities such as promotion of existing work and any other administrative/marketing tasks such as maintaining mailing lists (for example, mailing lists were found to be out of date and had significant overlap with other sponsoring agencies). This limited time is spent in setting up Working Group meetings or preparing for the Intersecretariat or GESAMP meetings.

Similarly, it became apparent from the interviews with and responses to the questionnaires from the Technical Secretaries that, in many cases, the sponsoring agencies assign a low priority to their GESAMP activities. This is reflected in these individuals having a large number of other responsibilities and spending less than 10% of their time (several less than 5%) on GESAMP activities annually. This lack of available time has led to the Technical Secretaries being unable to effectively promote GESAMP within their own agencies and member States and to provide timely and effective management of GESAMP. In all cases, the work of the Technical Secretaries in relation to GESAMP is "a side job".

### Financial arrangements

2.10 In principle, the participation of members in annual GESAMP meetings and experts in Working Groups is largely voluntary with only travel and expenses covered by the sponsoring agencies. As pointed out in paragraph 2.7, the amount of financial assistance will vary according to the level of support obtained from the Technical Secretaries of GESAMP.

2.11 From consultation with the Technical Secretaries, it is apparent that GESAMP is not integrated into their organisational structure, and therefore no specific budget is allocated for ongoing GESAMP activities. Instead, each Technical Secretary "finds", from within the budget of their programme, the funds to support GESAMP work as and when required. Clearly, the interest of the individual Technical Secretary dictates the amount of support each agency brings to GESAMP.

2.12 Such ad hoc arrangements make the availability of funds uncertain and variable from year to year. This has made the operations and management of GESAMP less effective and less efficient. For example, this has resulted in a lower number of experts being sponsored to attend meetings, delays in setting up and conducting meetings of Working Groups, publishing reports etc. The perception of the ET is that in recent years, there has been a general decline in

the support available to GESAMP, but the reasons for this are not documented. This, however, appears to be reflected in the smaller attendance of experts at the annual meetings and the financial commitment to limited specific Working Groups. The team felt the major reasons for this are the general tightening of budgets ("zero nominal growth" policies) and the turn over in the makeup of the Intersecretariat. At the present time, three of the Technical Secretaries are about to retire and several others have only recently come "on board". This change in makeup of the Intersecretariat, and based on the findings given earlier of time pressures, may result in changing priorities and lack of continuity which could be interpreted as a change in interest and/or enthusiasm for GESAMP work.

- 2.13 In addition, following on from the above and also related to operating methods, an area that gave cause for concern and that impinges on the sustainability of GESAMP funding is that during the transition of an agency's Technical Secretary, there appears to be a lack of a formal hand-over procedure to bring the new Secretary "up to speed".

The general feedback was that GESAMP did not operate in a business-like manner appropriate to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### Membership

- 2.14 The past and present membership of GESAMP reads like a "Who's Who" of marine environmental quality scientists, but is mostly restricted to North America and Europe. Annex 4 summarizes the regional representation of the past and present membership of GESAMP and shows clearly the dominance of European and North American scientists. With regard to GESAMP Working Groups, the participation of scientists from other regions of the world is only marginally better.
- 2.15 Regarding the tenure of GESAMP members, little regard appears to be paid to the four-year term prescribed in the Intersecretariat Memorandum of 1994. Presently there are many members who have served over six years and several who have served 10-16 years.
- 2.16 Expertise of past and present GESAMP members is weighted heavily toward natural sciences. It has been recognized clearly by GESAMP for some time that there is a need to bring in expertise on marine policy and management and social sciences to address the needs of the member states of sponsoring agencies. As pointed out in the Introduction, in 1993, GESAMP was changed from the "Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution" to the "Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection", but there appears to have been very little change in the membership make-up to reflect this shift in emphasis.
- 2.17 Based on the questionnaire returns and interviews, respondents rate the need to expand the expertise of GESAMP to include social sciences, marine policy and management as amongst the highest priorities. The GESAMP members also felt that more involvement of user groups' representatives is needed to

#### ANNEX 2

##### ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRES AND BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF PERTINENT ANSWERS

	TECHNICAL SECRETARIES OF GESAMP	MEMBERS GESAMP	WG CHAIRMEN GESAMP	WG MEMBERS GESAMP	LIBRARIES	IAEA	UNITED NATIONS
QUESTIONNAIRES SENT	8	33	10	59	49	109	46
RESPONSES RECEIVED	8	20	4	18	24	6	4
PERCENTAGE	100%	60%	40%	30%	49%	5.5%	8.7%

	MEPC	I.C. SCIENTIFIC GROUP	UNEP	IMO	IOC	WHO	WMO	FAO	OTHER
QUESTIONNAIRES SENT	127	29	381	55	25	No contacts provided	3	Library contacts selected	-
RESPONSES RECEIVED	17	8	18	10	2	1	-	-	7
PERCENTAGE	13.4%	27%	4.7%	18%	8%	-	-	-	-

### Composition of the Evaluation Team

The Evaluation Team consisted of the following members:

- 1 **Mr. Keith Bradley**, (Hazardous Cargoes Adviser, Maritime and Coastguard Agency in the United Kingdom), Chair of the Evaluation Team, Government nominated expert.
- 2 **Dr. Julie Hall**, (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research in New Zealand), nominated through the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR).
- 3 **Prof. S. Krishnaswami**, (Physical Research Laboratory Navrangpura in India), nominated through the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR).
- 4 **Dr. Herb Windom**, (Professor, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography in the United States), nominated as the scientific expert, who in the past has been a member of GESAMP.

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ensure that the products of GESAMP are more targeted. Interestingly, the Technical Secretaries generally did not express a strong view on this.

### Visibility

- 2.18 The feedback from questionnaires and interviews strongly indicated that there is concern regarding the visibility of GESAMP. Its visibility in the global arena is poor, with the result that its message is only reaching a limited audience. Also, no central location for GESAMP activities exists. Specific comments included:
- Access to the GESAMP web site is not a direct and user-friendly process and access to GESAMP reports via the web site is limited. In some cases the link to the GESAMP site is difficult to find
  - A frequent response to the user questionnaire was that they wished to know more about GESAMP, but there does not exist a simple promotional document that can be used by all the agencies to describe GESAMP and what it does
- 2.19 All of the ET members, who came from different backgrounds, shared the opinion based on their individual experiences and review of the results of the questionnaires, that many groups and individuals that should be aware of GESAMP had little or no knowledge of it. Generally knowledge of GESAMP is restricted to the sponsoring agencies, members of GESAMP and its Working Groups. GESAMP was found to lack not only identity but also the high profile commensurate with a body giving independent advice to the world's decision makers in the marine environment protection arena.

### Government involvement in GESAMP activities

- 2.20 Currently government involvement in GESAMP is variable, from none to governments compensating the employers of independent experts for their hours, although it should be stressed that GESAMP experts also give far in excess of these hours with their voluntary contributions.
- 2.21 Feedback from questionnaires and interviews highlighted the need for government involvement in order for them to feel part of the GESAMP process and to be able to contribute expertise and finance. However, the independence of government nominated experts was questioned.

The issue the ET had to address was the need for greater government involvement whilst ensuring, and this was comprehensively stated by users, that the independence of its advice was maintained.

### GESAMP Reports and Studies

- 2.22 The ET reviewed a random selection of GESAMP Reports and Studies prepared over the past decade. Most appeared to provide useful information directed at the assessment of a particular concern.

2.23 In the development of the reports, there appears to have been no consistent procedure followed and no common format used. For example, some had executive summaries while others did not. From the feedback, other criticisms received are as follows:

- they are quite technical and not reader-friendly; perhaps only useful to other scientists
- they can have a long gestation period from conception to publishing
- their visibility is low

## ANNEX 1

### TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

#### Terms of Reference for the evaluation of GESAMP

The evaluation of GESAMP should include:

1. A review of the GESAMP achievements and impact/use and benefits of its reports;
2. A review of the scope of the scientific advice provided by GESAMP, including its policy relevance and the need to include social and economic dimensions (including public health) in its work;
3. Thorough consultations with GESAMP and non-GESAMP experts as well as selected key governments, GESAMP sponsoring agencies and other interested relevant governmental and non- governmental organisations;
4. An examination of GESAMP's *modus operandi*, including a review of composition, methods of works, role and functions;
5. Examination of the financial arrangements and sponsorship of GESAMP;
6. A review of the independence of the scientific advice given by GESAMP to the sponsoring United Nations agencies and the contribution of GESAMP to each agency's work programme;
7. Consideration of the procedures of transmitting the GESAMP reports to wider audiences, including governments;
8. A review of the role of the GESAMP Secretariat (Administrative Secretary, Technical Secretaries) and that of the Chair and Vice Chairpersons;
9. Consideration of the desirability and possible involvement in GESAMP activities of government nominated experts;
10. Review of the linkages between the various GESAMP assessment exercises and the assessments undertaken by other agencies;
11. Recommendations and Proposals for any changes, as necessary and appropriate, taking into account the requirements and expectations of GESAMP from each of its Sponsors; and
12. Establishment of periodical evaluations of the achievements and shortcomings of GESAMP by independent reviewer(s).

- Give wide publicity to reports. Publish the Executive Summary in suitable journals (e.g., Marine Pollution Bulletin, EOS, etc.), in newsletters of GESAMP and other sponsoring organisations, and as forthcoming attractions on the GESAMP Web-site
  - Additionally, publish the reports in an electronic form and make them accessible to users via the Web site. (Use a front-sheet form to collect data on those accessing the report)
  - Launch the publications with press releases and, if appropriate, at suitable meetings/conferences/assemblies
  - Publish reports or papers prepared by GESAMP Working Groups in peer reviewed journals and books
  - Request users for evaluation of publications – e.g., report card
- 3.28 To put the above recommendations into operation the Chair/Vice-Chair/GESAMP Office must plan the whole process, identify potential reviewers, decide on the languages in which the report has to be printed and the numbers required, as well as budget the expenses.
- 3.29 GESAMP Reports and Studies should continue to be distributed free of charge.

#### **Review of GESAMP**

- 3.30 GESAMP has just undergone a major review of its mechanisms and management systems. Like all evolving organisations GESAMP will require regular reviews of its structure, goals and objectives.

**ET recommends that the GESAMP office produces a review report against its objectives and plans each year and submits the report to the GESAMP committee for approval.**

Then an external team, when appropriate, would be established and carry out its own review based on the methods used and developed by the ET.

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### **3 WAY FORWARD: RECOMMENDATIONS**

The first section of the report outlined the findings of the ET through interviews, questionnaires and discussions. This section identifies the issues, our recommendations for addressing the issues and the benefits.

We strongly believe our recommendations would result in GESAMP becoming the world's first choice for marine environment protection advice and guidance and would meet the needs and requirements of the vast majority of respondents contacted during this review.

**In summary, our key recommendations are that:**

- 1. GESAMP be continued**
- 2. Major changes be effected in GESAMP's structure, operational procedures and products**
- 3. A "GESAMP Office" be created which would perform all the administrative and organisational tasks for GESAMP**
- 4. GESAMP's profile and visibility be increased through an overall promotional and marketing plan, to be updated on an annual basis**
- 5. A closer link with and increased involvement of governments in the GESAMP process be developed, without jeopardizing the independent nature of GESAMP's advice**
- 6. GESAMP be operated more efficiently and effectively, with agreed budgets**
- 7. More work be done intersessionally by correspondence**
- 8. Chair and Vice-Chair become part of GESAMP management, and be given additional responsibilities**
- 9. Modifications be made to the selection and rotation of GESAMP's membership and that of its Working Groups**
- 10. GESAMP's activities be made more transparent**
- 11. GESAMP's products be more user/reader friendly, uniform in image, and produced timely and efficiently**

- 3.1 The ET, supported by the evidence from the questionnaires and interviews, is of the opinion that the United Nations, its member States and several other organisations require an effective, efficient and independent group to provide advice on issues relating to marine environmental protection and management and sustainable development of marine resources and amenities based on sound scientific principles. GESAMP is currently the only available inter-agency mechanism to provide such advice, particularly on those issues related to cross-sectorial problems of interest to sponsoring agencies.

**The ET strongly recommends that GESAMP be continued.**

- 3.2 Having recommended for the continuation of GESAMP,

**The ET also recommends major changes in GESAMP's structure, operational procedures and products.**

These changes will ensure that GESAMP sets priorities, examines issues more effectively, provides appropriate and timely advice and enhances its profile and visibility among its users. This would also improve the efficiency of GESAMP's operations and its ability to respond to users groups in a timely and business-like manner.

What follows are the ET's recommendations on how these can be achieved.

**Goals and objectives of GESAMP**

- 3.3 The first step in this direction is to redefine the goals and objectives of GESAMP as an independent, cross-sectorial and interactive advice provider on marine environmental protection and management. Marine environmental protection and management is a vast subject covering a number of disciplines. It is difficult, with the current expertise of GESAMP, to address issues from all these disciplines in a true multi-disciplinary way. Recognizing this, the ET suggests that during its immediate future, the focus of GESAMP activities should be on topics on which it has developed expertise over the years. The ET also suggests that GESAMP interacts much more closely with its users and assists them with implementing its advice.
- 3.4 The Goals of GESAMP should therefore be to:
- .1 Provide advice on the development of guidelines for marine environmental protection and assist in framing policies pertaining to marine environmental protection and management;
  - .2 Provide regular assessment of the state of marine environmental protection and identify emerging critical areas/issues in marine environmental protection;
  - .3 Assist governments/users in implementing GESAMP's advice through interactions with national/regional groups and thus contribute to capacity building programmes; and

- The customers and users of the intended advice/project should be consulted in the formulation of the ToR for the Working Group
- The Working Group should be encouraged to interact with the users and other interested groups throughout the project

**Tenure of GESAMP and Working Group members**

- 3.25 The tenure of GESAMP members should be a single four-year term, unless the member is elected to become Chair/Vice-Chair, in which case the tenure may be extended by two years. Under no circumstances should these periods of tenure be extended. In order to maintain continuity, the rotation of the membership should be set up so that only approximately one quarter of the members rotate in any one year. Working Group members should be selected for the duration of the activity of the Working Group.

**Improve GESAMP's publications and their visibility**

- 3.26 Over the years GESAMP has produced good scientific reports on the issues addressed. Although many of these reports have been well received internationally by scientists and some user groups, their visibility and profile has been low and so have not enhanced GESAMP's standing.

**The ET recommends that GESAMP products be more user/reader friendly, uniform in image and be produced timely and efficiently.**

- 3.27 It is suggested that GESAMP should:
- Expediently produce colourful and reader-friendly reports without compromising the scientific and technical aspects of issues being addressed
  - When producing a report, the WG Chair may request additional resources through the GESAMP office to meet deadlines, if necessary
  - Establish a standard format for all reports
  - Peer review all reports. The reviewers should include the user group to ensure that the advice is presented in language which can be easily understood by the target user group and therefore is more likely to be applied. To save time, reports for review may be sent out at the same time as they are sent to GESAMP members. All these should be co-ordinated through the GESAMP Office
  - Include an Executive Summary and clear recommendations in all reports, which can be used by customers



3.22 The experts nominated to this pool will need to be:

- Active in their field
- Able to provide independent opinions
- Willing to serve on a voluntary basis
- Prepared to declare any conflicts of interest

3.23 To select the members of GESAMP, the GESAMP Office should shortlist potential members from the pool, considering the balance of the following:

- Field of expertise
- Geographic location
- Gender

However, the balance of expertise required will vary over time and be dependant on the work plan of GESAMP. Consideration must also be given to inclusion of members from developing countries that meet the selection criteria. The final selection of members should be made in consultation with the sponsoring organisations and the Chair and Vice-Chair of GESAMP. GESAMP should have a total membership of between 20 and 25 and all members, regardless of the nominating body, would be equal members and would have their expenses for attending meetings paid for by the sponsoring organisations.

#### **Operational procedures for Working Groups**

3.24 Working Groups are central to the performance of GESAMP and have generally done an excellent job in meeting the ToR supplied to them. The ET took note of concerns expressed at the apparent lack of a formalised procedure or mechanism for Working Group operations.

**The ET recommends that operational procedures be developed for the Working Groups. These should include the provision of suitable multidisciplinary and independent expertise and lead towards transparent, efficient and timely results.**

Other important elements of the operational procedure should be:

- Working Group members should be selected from the GESAMP pool of experts, using the same methods and criteria as for GESAMP members
- They should be treated equally within GESAMP, irrespective of their background (academic, industrial, NGO, government, etc)
- A project plan with timetable and achievable milestones should be completed through consultation with the Chair, customers and Technical Secretaries, to ensure that everyone knows the cost and completion date of the project (including the publishing of the report)

4 Review approaches to the management and sustainability of marine resources in relation to pollution and other forms of habitat alterations.

3.5 To achieve these goals, GESAMP should be engaged continuously in the:

- Identification and scientific assessment of marine environment pollution issues and their social and economic impacts and measures for control and prevention
- Assessment of potential effects of marine pollutants on habitats/ecosystems and public health including impact/response evaluations and recommendation of appropriate management solutions

#### **Creation of a GESAMP Office**

3.6 In order to address the issues regarding the profile and visibility of GESAMP, which are key to ensuring the future success of GESAMP, a single co-ordination point is required. This would also co-ordinate the promotion and management of GESAMP that is currently spread amongst the eight Technical Secretaries in the sponsoring agencies, avoid duplication and ensure inter-agency communication.

**The ET recommends that a “GESAMP Office” be created. The GESAMP Office would perform all the administrative and organisational tasks for GESAMP.**

3.7 It would act as a nucleus and provide a focal point for GESAMP activities, play a key role in the promotion of GESAMP and provide an efficient and cost effective management centre for GESAMP.

It is essential that GESAMP has a focal point through which external organisations can identify and contact it. This would complement, co-ordinate and enhance existing contacts as governments would be clear on how to contact GESAMP and that their requests were being dealt with in a business-like manner through a central coordinating point.

Efficiency gains would be achieved through avoiding the present duplications of effort and through focusing GESAMP's efforts on those marine environment protection issues that need to be addressed.

This Office would be housed in one of the sponsoring agencies and would be devoted entirely to the promotion and management of GESAMP. It would however need to have the necessary support arrangements (personnel/logistics/funds) to carry out GESAMP activities.

- 3.8 The responsibilities of the GESAMP Office would include:
- Liaising with and providing overall accountability to the sponsoring agencies either through a Technical Secretary or contact point(s) in each agency
  - Promoting GESAMP activities to customers and potential users including soliciting issues to be addressed by GESAMP
  - Promoting the profile and visibility of GESAMP through, for example, the development of GESAMP products (Web-site, brochures, newsletters, reports) and their dissemination (press releases, presentation at meetings/seminars/assemblies, mailing list)
  - Marketing of GESAMP including product development, evaluation and utilization
  - Identifying and pursuing potential sources of funding for GESAMP activities
  - Preparation of GESAMP budget
  - Preparation of annual reports of GESAMP activities and their respective budgets

**Increase profile and visibility of GESAMP**

- 3.9 The overwhelming response from the questionnaires identified the lack of profile and visibility of GESAMP as a key issue that must be addressed to ensure the future success of GESAMP.

**To increase GESAMP's profile and visibility, the ET recommends that there must be an overall promotional and marketing plan for GESAMP, which is updated on an annual basis.**

This plan would be drafted by the GESAMP Office and developed in consultation with the sponsoring agencies and GESAMP members. It will also be important that in the initial planning of each GESAMP activity the promotion, marketing and capacity building issues be considered. Increasing GESAMP's visibility would enable it to connect better with the sponsoring agencies, member States, GESAMP customers and a wide range of potential users. This would have benefits of potential increased funding for GESAMP through agencies, member states and other organisations wishing to be involved with a high profile, successful business-like body.

**The ET recommends that their employers be compensated for their time i.e., two to three months per year.**

This would also assist in enhancing their commitment and accountability.

With more of their time devoted to GESAMP issues, the Chair and Vice-Chair would be available to co-ordinate GESAMP's response on issues requiring prompt attention, perhaps by convening small groups to deal with such situations, thus enabling GESAMP to provide rapid advice. This would have the added benefit of enhancing GESAMP's visibility and profile.

**Modify the procedures to select members for GESAMP and its Working Groups**

- 3.20 To address the issues raised during this review with regard to the membership of GESAMP such as:

- Membership is perceived to be an "old boys club"
- Length of service
- Balance of expertise
- Geographic distribution of members
- Gender bias
- Transparency
- Member state nominations

**The ET recommends the following modifications to the selection of GESAMP's membership and that of its Working Groups to address the issues raised above and ensure transparency.**

**Selection of GESAMP and Working Group members**

- 3.21 A database of a pool of experts should be developed and updated regularly by the GESAMP Office. This pool should cover a broad spectrum of fields of expertise including scientists, social scientists, economists, and specialists in management of marine ecosystems, public health and law, and give a brief CV. Nominations of individuals to this pool should come from sponsoring agencies, current members of GESAMP, governments, scientific bodies such as SCOR, SCOPE, IABO, and NGO's. In addition, people who were contacted during the review and expressed an interest should be included together with the option for application through the GESAMP office.

- Interact with customers to obtain their input on issues to be addressed by GESAMP, on proposed Terms of Reference of Working Groups and various recommendations and advice
- Provide the necessary advice and guidance to customers for implementing GESAMP recommendations

3.17 The possibility of organizing GESAMP meetings at different locations around the globe, depending on the issues and the potential to interact with customers, should be explored. This process would increase interactions with users and allow GESAMP to contribute to capacity building in various regions.

#### **Increase the roles of Chair/Vice-Chair**

3.18 The roles and responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-Chair of GESAMP are not clearly defined. Historically, their roles were mostly limited to conducting the annual meetings of GESAMP.

#### **The ET recommends that these be changed in such a way that the Chair and Vice-Chair become part of GESAMP management, and that they be given additional responsibilities including:**

- Provide leadership to GESAMP in all aspects, representing and advocating GESAMP in various fora, making work plans, building linkages, etc.
- Serve as spokesperson of GESAMP and promote GESAMP's cause and activities at scientific and policy levels through presentation in seminars/meetings/assemblies
- Ensure GESAMP's advice is independent
- Be actively involved in planning GESAMP activities; budget preparation
- Market GESAMP actively through product development, evaluation and utilization
- Ensure the smooth functioning of GESAMP by providing timely advice on issues. This should include ongoing contacts with relevant programmes of sponsoring agencies; setting up of Working Groups, their Terms of Reference, report evaluation and approval. Interactions with customers in identifying issues for GESAMP, in developing Terms of Reference, recommendations and identification of potential peer reviewers

3.19 Presently, the Chair and Vice-Chair serve GESAMP on a voluntary basis. With the increased responsibilities assigned to them, they would have to spend a significant part of their time on GESAMP matters.

3.10 Suggestions to increase the profile and visibility of GESAMP included:

- Create an updated and improved "stand-alone" GESAMP Web-site, to provide detailed information about GESAMP membership, news/activities, achievements and products. All GESAMP publications should also be made available through the web
- The GESAMP Web-site should include links to the sponsoring agencies
- Publish a brief attractive brochure on GESAMP and its activities for general distribution at, for instance, seminars or in reply to enquiries about GESAMP
- Promote GESAMP activities through presentations/seminars/posters. The Chair and Vice-Chair of GESAMP should be encouraged to be more involved interessionally and present/promote GESAMP products at meetings and assemblies of the sponsoring agencies, international meetings of environmental protection agencies, NGOs, and scientific organisations
- Use press releases to promote GESAMP's major activities and products
- Review and update the customer and potential user mailing list. The new list should cover a broad spectrum of experts drawn from various fields and governmental/non-governmental organisations consistent with the redefined goals of GESAMP
- Establish links with related organisations such as international/national organisations that have programmes on environmental protection and monitoring, coastal zone studies/management, to exchange ideas/products and enhance GESAMP's visibility
- Create a GESAMP logo and stationery as a means to support its identity
- Participate in capacity building programmes, thus assisting governments, agencies, etc. in the application of GESAMP products
- Publish user friendly reports with an appropriate executive summary and encourage reports to be published in peer reviewed literature
- Periodic publication of GESAMP activities/reports in the open literature

#### **Increase government involvement in GESAMP activities**

3.11 One of the potential reasons for the under-utilization of GESAMP advice by the member States is the lack of their direct involvement in the GESAMP process. The evaluation has also shown that there is interest from governments to become more involved in GESAMP activities. It is important,

however, that an increase in government involvement in GESAMP does not jeopardize the independent nature of GESAMP advice.

**3.12 ET recommends avoiding under-utilization of GESAMP advice by developing closer links with and increasing the involvement of governments in the GESAMP process, without jeopardizing the independent nature of GESAMP's advice.**

This would be achieved through the following governments to:

- Nominate independent experts to the pool of potential GESAMP and Working Group members (see also the section "Selection of GESAMP and Working Group members" below)
- Identify and suggest issues to be addressed by GESAMP either via sponsoring agencies or the GESAMP Office
- Nominate and fund "observers" to attend GESAMP meetings
- Provide data and scientific knowledge to support GESAMP activities
- Host a GESAMP meeting
- Develop partnerships with GESAMP to facilitate capacity building activities

**Revise financial support arrangements**

3.13 It is evident from the responses to the questionnaires and discussions with the Technical Secretaries that the sponsoring agencies have made no specific budget provision for GESAMP activities on an ongoing basis. Hence, the funding appears to be on an ad hoc basis with the associated yearly variability and uncertainty, for what is potentially the world's premier source of independent marine environment protection advice.

**3.14 To ensure GESAMP operates more efficiently and effectively the ET recommends that all the sponsoring agencies include financial support for GESAMP as a line item in their budgets.**

This will ensure continued and committed basic support for GESAMP activities. Such a commitment is essential considering the recommendations of the ET for the establishment of a permanent GESAMP Office with a secretary and support facilities and enhanced promotional activities.

**The ET also recommends the following:**

- Commitment of financial support on a continuing basis. Support for GESAMP should be included as a line item in the budget of the

sponsoring agencies for planning purposes. This budget should cover at least the cost of running the GESAMP Office, i.e., salary of secretary as well as compensation for the time of the Chair/Vice-Chair (see also Chair/Vice-Chair section below), day-to-day administrative expenses, publication expenses, travel costs, GESAMP promotion expenses, GESAMP members meeting and basic support for GESAMP activities

- Encourage GESAMP to raise additional funds from sponsoring agencies and/or outside organisations (regional banks, World Bank) for addressing issues, formation and conducting of Working Group meetings, report preparation, etc.
- Evaluate GESAMP activities by auditing the planned activities against the budget recommended above

3.15 Seeking financial support from outside agencies has both advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side it might lead to increased funding, bring a wider range of topics for discussion, provide interactions with more groups of scientists, managers and user communities. The negative side is that the independent nature of GESAMP advice may be compromised. From feedback and discussions the ET felt that in seeking support from external organisations caution must be exercised not to undermine what is seen as one of GESAMP's strengths in the independent nature of its advice.

**Restructure meetings of GESAMP**

3.16 Currently the annual meetings of GESAMP transact business relating to the formulation of Working Groups, their Terms of Reference, discussion of issues needing GESAMP advice, and review and approval of GESAMP publications.

**The ET recommends that many of the above tasks should be carried out during the intersessional period by correspondence (post, fax or e-mail), thus speeding up the entire process.**

This would result in the annual meeting being used more effectively to develop work plans and promotional activities of GESAMP and as a forum to:

- Develop and review a work plan for GESAMP and review the current activities, progress and budget needs
- Discuss the means of promoting and marketing GESAMP, its services and products
- Identify emerging issues in marine environmental protection and the role GESAMP can play in addressing them