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Capacity building in ocean science in Developing Countries: Outcomes of the
consultative process for multi-fund financing and their implementation

by

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The global ocean is vital to human existence. The economic growth of most developing States depends largely on the resources in the ocean and their sustainable management. Hence the Law of the Sea Convention is an appropriate framework to ensure the sustainable management of the ocean and the resources. Effective management of the ocean requires adequate knowledge and understanding of the natural processes, interactions between the ocean, land and man. Such knowledge requires scientific tools which can be enhanced in developing countries through capacity building.

Capacity development is the process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies increase their ability to understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner. Sustainable management of the oceans and coasts in developing countries require basic ingredients that will build capacity of scientists, coastal managers, and communities to work in harmony with the ocean. However, many of the initiatives that address capacity needs in ocean science in developing countries, such initiatives have not achieved much success. Reasons for this include:

- Lack of participatory process to define country needs and priorities for technical

assessments and individuals involved in the programme

programmes of action. Many capacity development programmes are duplicated by many countries. This is because of a general lack of coordination between national programmes and a desire to retain their national and institutional identities in capacity development programmes.

- Lack of programmes to respond to new longer-term challenges rather than immediate problems. Many international capacity building programmes lack sustainability in the longer term.
- Absolute reliance on imported skills and resources with less attention to local or

national resources to build international capacity building programmes

the available knowledge and expertise. Even when such expertise is used, they are not involved in policy and managerial levels

national governments to provide food, shelter and health facilities to their citizens have led to a neglect of capacity building programmes. Though many national governments

One of the main objectives for the establishment of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP) in 1990 was to identify areas where coordination and cooperation at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels should be

science can be enhanced especially through effective interagency cooperation and coordination. The past nine sessions of the ICP have discussed various issues that have to do with the sustainability of the ocean within the context of the Law of The Sea Convention

development world should be one that will build indigenous capacity but also develop and improve national, sub-regional and regional capacities and capabilities for sustainable ocean and coastal area development with the involvement of the non-governmental sectors. Hence, the coordination and cooperation of all agencies with mandate for the ocean is particularly important if capacity building in ocean science is to be achieved. The ICP has a basic role to play in this context