

*Translated from Spanish*

## **Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations**

### **ONU01789**

The Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and has the honour to refer to communication DOALOS/STUDY/2007 of 22 January 2007 requesting the opinions of States pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/222 on oceans and the law of the sea.

In order to ensure implementation of the provisions of that resolution, the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations has the honour to transmit the







**Scope**

Natural resources are now so depleted and damaged that conservation, restoration, prevention and protection strategies are needed, as evidenced by the joint efforts undertaken by various governmental bodies. The sole purpose of those efforts is to improve the situation and allow for the sustainable use of resources in Mexico.

**Outcomes**

There have been 62 vessel inspections; 1,703 water quality assessments; 5,180 seminars and practical workshops on ecological awareness-raising and education for military and civilian personnel; 3,493 meetings with Governments with a view to preventing pollution; 23,910 inspection and monitoring operations covering a total area of 522,050.2 kilometres; and 50,583 maritime operations covering a total of 743,080.18 nautical miles.

**4. Studies on maritime dynamics, water circulation and marine currents****Introduction and objectives**

The ocean is a source of food, chemicals and energy, and it plays an important role in shipping and recreational activities. The constant movement of water owing to waves, tides, currents and winds must therefore be taken into consideration in the context of marine construction works and navigation and in efforts to combat accidental spills of oil and other harmful substances. Furthermore, the heat capacity of water has a considerable influence on climatic conditions, and hydro-meteorological events have a significant effect on human activities.

In light of the foregoing, and given that the primary function of the Navy Secretariat is to protect and monitor our seas and coastline by means of maritime units that travel great distances along our shores in order to carry out their mandated tasks, the Directorate for Oceanography of DIGAOHM is planning to document ocean dynamics along our coastline. The primary objective is to obtain a clear description of the oceans that is sufficiently quantitative to give an overview of and, where necessary, to predict with some degree of certainty oceanic behaviour. The information will be made available to the Command for the purpose of decision-making, to operative inspection and monitoring units and to the wider scientific community.

**Scope**

The Atlas of Dynamics in the Territorial Sea and Coastal Zones of Mexico is a compilation of the data obtained from studies conducted by oceanographic institutes and stations on board oceanographic vessels belonging to the Mexican Navy over a four-year period (1997-2000).

These data are presented in the form of interpretative maps illustrating the horizontal and vertical distribution of a number of physical variables, such as temperature, salinity and density, recorded in different coastal regions, which supply

usefulness of the information obtained. The latter is entered into a database used to draw up tactical maps. Currently, every institute and station is continuing to conduct oceanic characterization studies and, in some cases, individualized local information about our seas and coasts has been obtained.

### **Outcomes**

The data obtained during oceanographic surveys carried out between 1997 and 2000 was used to create the Atlas of Dynamics in the Territorial Sea and Coastal Zones of Mexico. Copies of the Atlas were sent to local authorities and to the various inspection and monitoring units so that they could consult it and use it for decision-making purposes.

The Atlas is on sale at the Directorate for Hydrography of the Navy Secretariat.

## **5. Study to evaluate seawater quality in ports and bays along the coast of Mexico throughout the year**

### **Introduction and objectives**

In recent decades, environmental problems have been aggravated by industrialization and urban population growth in the main coastal ports of the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. This has led the Federal Government to accord greater priority to national policies on the environment, particularly in those regions that currently play a crucial role in the economic and social development of coastal systems for the purposes of food production (fisheries and aquaculture), transportation, port construction and administration, extraction and transformation industries and, more recently, urban expansion and the development of tourism.

None of the coastal ecosystems of the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea are currently immune to the effects of human activity. Pollution levels have risen above the maximum permissible limits provided for in domestic legislation.

Accordingly, as part of its scheduled activities, the High Command of the Navy Secretariat, through the Directorate for Oceanography of DIGAOHM, proposed a study on marine pollution in Mexico. That study began in 1997 and, from the outset, was designed to help identify and address that problem at the regional and national levels.

The study was conceived as a way of creating a repository of information that could be used to advise the unified command and the territorial authorities in the implementation of programmes and preventive measures to control marine pollution, prevent or mitigate the deterioration of ecosystems and introduce an environmental framework designed to support contingency programmes implemented by the Navy Secretariat.

It also aims to serve as a database that can be incorporated into an environmental information system on natural resources, thereby providing a means of essential technical and scientific support for the development of ecological regulations.

**Scope**

The Atlas of Marine Pollution in the Territorial Sea and Coastal Zones of Mexico was prepared using data obtained from studies conducted by the oceanographic institutes and stations on board oceanographic vessels belonging to

the tools to identify the marine species that fall into these categories and that are the object of illegal fishing, marketing or trafficking.

### **Scope**

This documentation lists species which have a temporary or permanent closed season on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea and in the Mexican Pacific, as well as those included in the categories of specially protected or endangered organisms, ranging from invertebrates to marine mammals, giving for each species the scientific name, the common name, the closed season dates and location and identifying characteristics. It also lists, where applicable, the marine species included in specially protected or endangered categories which are of economic interest to persons engaged in the illegal harvesting, trafficking or marketing of organisms or parts thereof. It includes a glossary of terms.

The goal is to take into account and enforce the existing legal provisions and to permit coordinated efforts by the government units dealing with the conservation, monitoring and utilization of natural resources with a view to adopting measures to protect and preserve marine stocks.

### **Outcome**

Publication of 250 copies of the Catalogue of Species which have a Temporary and Permanent Closed Season in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, 250 copies of the Catalogue of Species which have a Temporary and Permanent Closed Season in the Mexican Pacific and 600 copies of the Catalogue of Specially Protected and Endangered Species on Both Mexican Coasts, which were sent to the various units engaged in inspection and monitoring for consultation and application.

These are on sale at the Hydrography Directorate of the Navy Secretariat.

## **7. Ongoing red tide programme on the national coasts**

### **Introduction**

Red tide is a natural phenomenon characterized by an increase in the concentration of certain components of plankton. In favourable environmental conditions, there is a marked increase in phytoplankton organisms (dinoflagellates), known as bloom, which cause changes in water colour (red, yellow, green, brown or combinations of these) because they contain pigments.

This phenomenon is unpredictable: it occurs quite regularly in some sectors and occasionally in others.

Red tide phenomena are currently a public health problem not only in Mexico





In view of this, and since the extinction of these turtles would not only cause a species to disappear but would also affect the marine ecosystem in general, the Navy Secretariat considered it vitally important to take action to conserve and protect not only adult turtles but also turtle eggs and maturing turtles.

### **Outcomes**

Through local authorities and oceanographic institutes and stations, the Navy Secretariat is currently monitoring and inspecting Mexico's shores in order to assist the relevant units to protect the eggs during the mass arrivals of sea turtles. It also detects the harvesting and illegal trafficking of adult sea turtles and turtles at any stage of development (eggs, hatchlings, etc.). This information is centralized and a database has been created.

Mention should also be made of two turtle camps. The one at Cayo Arcas, Campeche, run by the staff of that institution, was declared to be a reference camp in 2005 by the Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources and is part of the National Committee for the Conservation and Protection of Sea Turtles in Campeche. The other camp (Priciatrabsub) is in Acapulco, Guerrero. As a result of all these activities, the existing legal framework has been strengthened and compliance improved, in order to conserve and preserve sea turtles and to combat the extinction of and illicit trafficking in this group of reptiles.

## **9. Biological collection of the Mexican Navy Secretariat**

### **Introduction and objectives**

A biological reference collection is a register of biological species recording the history and biodiversity of an area or region. Such data are currently extremely important. It



Guaymas, Sonora; Mazatlán, Sinaloa; San Blas, Nayarit; Salina Cruz, Oaxaca; and

