

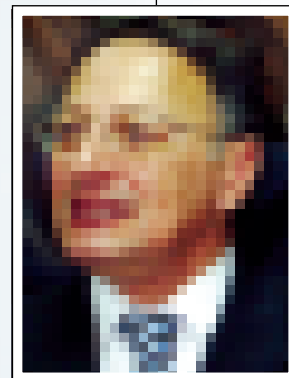
Welcome to the twenty third edition of the PERSGA Newsletter Al-Sanbouk. This issue comes following the success of PERSGA in the inauguration of the Marine Emergency Mutual Aid Centre (PERSGA/MEMAC) hosted by the Arab Republic of Egypt at Hurghadah.

It is well known that the Red Sea is famous for a globally important ecosystem - the coral reefs. The importance of coral reefs lies in the fact that it supports a variety of other forms of marine life, protects the shoreline, attracts tourism and diving activities in addition to its medical and pharmacological importance.

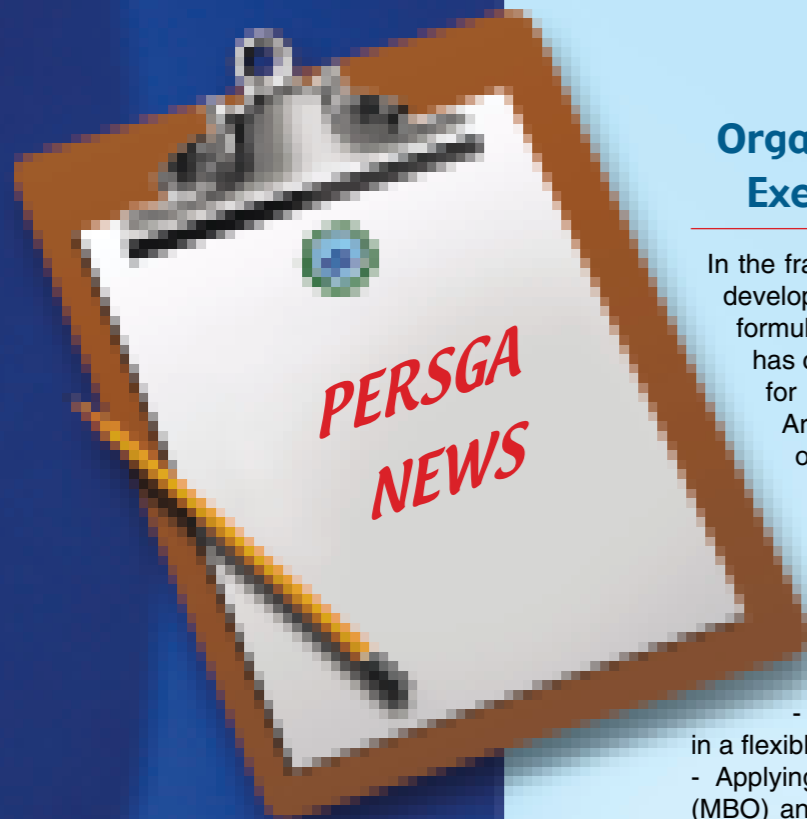
At the same time the semi-enclosed Red Sea is regarded as one of the busiest marine traffic connecting Europe with Africa and the Middle East recording 30% of the total oil tankers in the world crossing this Sea. Therefore, oil pollution resulting from potential marine accidents is possible. Such pollution may have serious impacts not only on the marine environment, but also on coastal investments and economic and social development of countries bordering the Red Sea. Consequently, PERSGA and its member countries have established the PERSGA/MEMAC to enhance regional cooperation in marine emergency cases in accordance with the Protocol Concerning Regional Cooperation in Combating Pollution by Oil and Other Harmful Substances in cases of Emergency.

The PERSGA/MEMAC has an important key role in enhancing capacities of the member countries and facilitating cooperation among them in combating pollution by oil and other harmful substances; such a role includes preparation and implementation of the Regional Action Plan for Contingency Planning, which has already been prepared with assistance from IMO, and also assisting countries in the preparation of their own national contingency plans.

In this regard, Egypt, as a host country, confirms its full and continuous support to PERSGA and PERSGA/MEMAC through an effective cooperation with all member countries; we are all aware of the importance of conserving the marine environment and the living resources it contains in the context of sustainable development for the welfare of citizens avoiding risks to marine environment and human health.



*Eng. Magid Elias
State Minister For Environmental
Affairs, Egypt.*



Organizational Development and Executive By-laws for PERSGA

In the framework of its efforts to keep abreast with new developments in management, and the need to formulate executive by-laws for its system, PERSGA has concluded a contract with the Arab Organization for Administrative Development (ARADO) - an Arab League affiliated organization - with the objective of formulating the executive by-laws.

On this basis, systems for human resources, procurement, administration and finance have been compiled in one volume to reduce transaction cost through grouping of integrated activities.

The main objectives of the organizational improvement and update are as follows:

- Benefiting from the principle of division of labor in a flexible and integral manner;
- Applying the concept of Management by Objectives (MBO) and achieving effective control over performance of activities and operations in PERSGA;
- Applying the philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) on PERSGA's organizational functions;
- Setting the strategic objectives of the Organization and defining the job description of the staff at all administrative and technical levels;
- Maintaining the development efforts and assimilation of potential changes and its impact on the long term survival of PERSGA;
- Increasing PERSGA adaptability to the emerging changes in the environment at the regional and international levels.

Update of the PERSGA Website

PERSGA is currently improving and updating its website including the existing database. The intention is to facilitate its usage (such as the use of library database, GIS, and workshops database) and to enhance the interaction between PERSGA and its member states. This step is expected to be completed in early 2007.



New Headquarter for PERSGA

In its endeavor to support PERSGA as the host country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is allocating a building composed of three floors for PERSGA within its new premises in Jeddah. This initiative has been supported by HRH Prince Turki Bin Naser Bin Abdulaziz, the President of the Presidency for Meteorology and Environment (PME).

New Sites for NGOs

In cooperation with IW: LEARN, PERSGA is currently creating new websites for NGOs in the region that participate in its activities and lack websites. This activity is being carried out using "Toolkit" developed by IW: LEARN.



National Plan for Environmental Management in Sudan

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the government of the Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Army in the South, has not only ended Africa's longest civil war, but has ushered in new opportunities for national reconciliation, healing, reconstruction and development. In this context, the Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources (HCENR) in Sudan and in cooperation with the federal line ministries of the Government of National Unity and the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife Conservation and Tourism of the Government of Southern Sudan is preparing a National Plan for Environmental Management (NPEM). The plan is sponsored by the Nile Transboundary Environment Action Project (NTEAP), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the European Commission (EC).

The conceptual approach is based in bringing institutions concerned with environment and natural resources together to establish a national forum for highlighting national and regional environmental issues facing Sudan now, and to encourage technical discussion and public debate on these issues in order to prepare an Environmental Management Plan for Post Conflict Sudan that illustrates the shared vision of all partners and highlights important and priority actions.

The workshop was held in the Friendship Hall in Khartoum from 18-20 July, 2006 and was attended by a large number of participants coming from the various States of Sudan in addition to international organizations such as PERSGA, World Bank, UNEP and EC. In this forum PERSGA presented a paper entitled "Partnership in Sustainable Development in the Red Sea- Coast of Sudan".

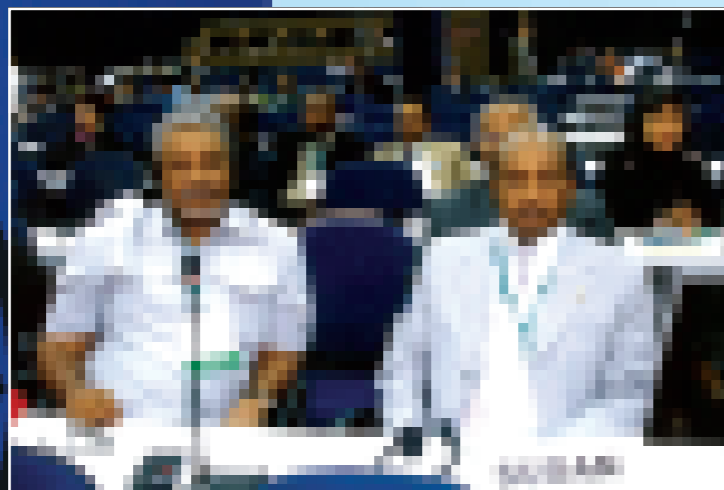
Seven sessions were held during the 3 days forum with an average of 120 participants in each session, where 32 presentations were delivered, and the topics ranged from Desertification and sand encroachment around the River Nile to Marine Management in the Red Sea.

Various experts were commissioned to do situation assessment and identification of environmental issues through

background papers which were presented in this forum in order to map out the process, trigger discussion on major environmental issues and provide broad recommendations for addressing the identified issues. The Secretariat of the forum will embark on consolidating the output of the first forum and formulate a National Plan for Environmental Management to be presented at a second national forum expected to be held in September 2006 for endorsement.



National
Activities



On-the-ground Projects

The PERSGA Framework and Operational Programme 2006 - 2011 comprised the on-the-ground projects aiming at enhancing social and economic effects of marine and coastal conservation, particularly in terms of poverty alleviation and public participation and good governance.

The programme was included in the Framework on the basis of PERSGA's experience in public participation projects carried out during the implementation of the SAP.

Planning and management of coastal zone in Aseer area

The project aims to formulate ICZM strategy in Aseer area to achieve sustainable development. The strategy can be summarized in knowing the state of the marine environment, protection of coastal areas from land-based activities, definition of buffer zone and access to the sea, identification of social and environmental requirements for coastal projects to be implemented during the following ten years, establishment of integrated database that can be used by stakeholders in planning and coastal development to achieve sustainable development.

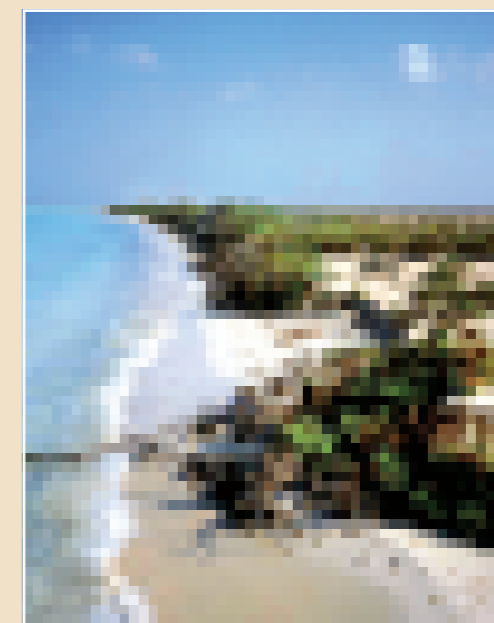
The project will be implemented in the following four phases:

Phase 1: includes:

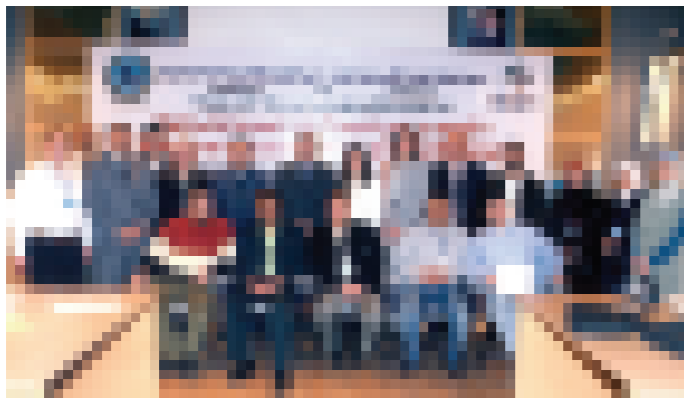
- o Comprehensive electronic survey of the coastal area using satellite images and incorporating the topographic data into the GIS;
- o Analysis of threats facing the coastal area including dredging, land-filling or pollution from land-based activities;
- o Identification of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas;
- o Implementation of a field survey for verification of data and documentation within the electronic database;

Phase 2: includes organization of meetings and training courses for private and public sectors to enhance environmental awareness and understand the concept of planning and management of coastal areas.

Phase 3: includes the preparation of a preliminary report on the state of coastal areas in the light of incorporated data and the preparation of a draft plan for coastal area planning and management. Phase 4: preparation of an atlas containing the available information about the area and a list of current and future projects with identification of implementation requirements. This will be followed by completion of the database with final outputs and corporation in an electronic network that can be used in future coastal development activities, oil combating and assessment of environmental damage in coastal areas of Aseer.



Education for sustainability



This Programme will contribute to PERSGA efforts in protecting coastal and marine resources and to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of coastal education and capacity building initiatives. The Programme will study and evaluate experiences in management and community education to identify the critical success factors associated with management and change outcomes in coastal management. Furthermore, a major output of the Programme is the development of an indicator tool for coastal management education and capacity building. The indicator tool will assist in promoting good practice and assessing how current initiatives are aligned with the objectives of the Jeddah Convention and the PERSGA Operational Framework.

As a result of deep discussions between PERSGA and the PERSGA Focal Point in Jordan decision has been made to implement the pilot phase of the PERSGA Programme on Education for Sustainability (EFS) in Jordan-Aqaba under the framework of the PERSGA On-ground national activities.

The following activities will be conducted:

- 1- Establish a national experts team on EFS;
- 2- Production of educational materials (manual for teachers, trainer guide, an interactive website)
- 3- Implement the whole-school sustainability approach in selected schools;
- 4- Design and implement a professional development programme for teachers;
- 5- Conduct assessment survey (pre-assessment and final assessment).

Resources and partnerships: The programme will benefit from a number of nationwide initiatives; particularly the following initiatives and resources:

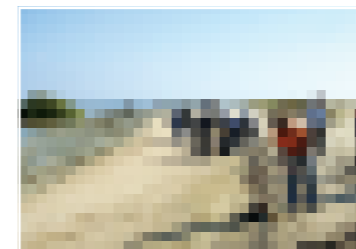
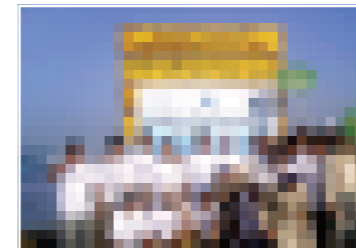
- 1- Draft International implementation scheme for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014);5
- 2- The Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES);
- 3- The "Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit" developed by Dr Rosalyn McKeown - University of Tennessee-USA.. The programme was initiated by holding a national training workshop in Aqaba Marine National Park on EFS attended by the PERSGA Secretary General and the Commissioner for Environment in ASIZA.

Assessment of the state of sea cucumber

A PERSGA representative carried out a mission to Yemen to discuss with the PERSGA Focal Point and relevant authorities a national project proposal to be implemented in Yemen in the framework of PERSGA projects and activities for 2007.

Representatives of the following ministries and institutions were met during the mission: Ministry of Water and Electricity; Ministry of Fish Wealth; Environmental Protection Authority; Public Corporation for Maritime Affairs; Faculty of Marine Science and Environment; and Marine Science Research Centre-Hodeidah.

There was some sort of consensus with regard to the selection of sea cucumber assessment as a priority. Since sea cucumbers are overfished for export, it was agreed that the on-the-ground project in Yemen will include the assessment of the status of sea cucumber with a management plan to be implemented by PERSGA in coordination with Environmental Protection Authority and the Ministry of Fish Wealth on the national level. Preparations are underway for commencing the project.



PERSGA countries participate in the Red Sea and Gulf Aden Campaign

The Red Sea and Gulf Aden Campaign in 2006 coincided with the "International Day for Cleaning the Coasts". In this context PERSGA prepared a poster with the slogan: "Clean Coasts - No Litter" and distributed it to member states.

Countries of the region participated in cleaning the coasts from marine litter as part of celebrating the Red Sea Environment Day.

PERSGA Supports Sudan for implementing its ICZM Plan

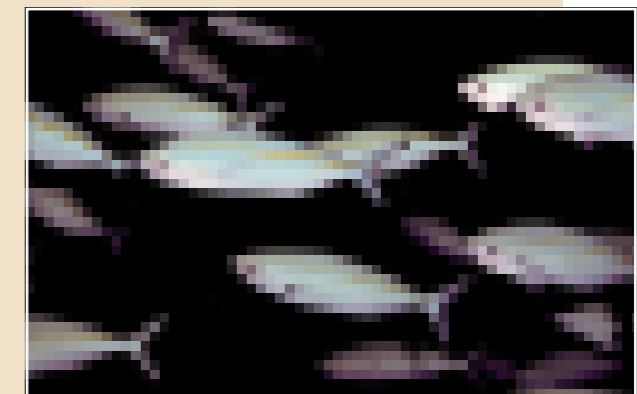
Following its efforts in capacity building activities in Sudan including the preparation of ICZM Plan, PERSGA is implementing a joint project as an initiative to begin the implementation process of the ICZM in Sudan.

In this context the following activities were carried out:

- (1) Roundtable: The PERSGA delegation organized and conducted a roundtable "Partnership for Sustainable Development in the Red Sea Coast of Sudan (PSDCS)" during March 26-27. Almost 27 participants representing different stakeholders participated in this event including Red Sea State, Wildlife Administration, Red Sea University, Marine Environmental Protection Administration (MEPA), ACORD Society Sudan, Sudanese Environmental Protection Society-Red Sea Branch, Socioeconomic Initiative, as well as spokespeople for various environmental-related projects being conducted in Sudan, such as the Mangrove Rehabilitation Project, ICZM Study Project, in addition to African Parks, the Cousteau Society, and UNESCO World Heritage Marine Programme (WMHP).

The Roundtable discussed the following issues:

- The urgent actions required for the implementation of the ICZM Plan;
 - An operational five year programme for the implementation of the ICZM Plan as a tool for sustainable development; and
 - Potential partnerships and resources mobilization.
- (2) Translating its commitment into actions, PERSGA moved forward in the implementation of the recommendation of the Roundtable, which were endorsed by H.E the Wally and his Deputy. PERSGA provided the technical assistance to the State to conduct the following immediate actions:



- 1- to integrate the ICZM plan into the new constitution of the RSS;
 - 2- to obtain the official adoption of the ICZM from both the Federal and Central Governments;
 - 3- the establishment of the National ICZM Council;
 - 4- the establishment of the Secretariat of the ICZM Council;
 - 5- The establishment of the ICZM Council's technical Committees;
 - 6- Advocate the Plan among senior decision makers in the RSS;
 - 7- Prepare the operational programme of the ICZM Plan;
- (3) PERSGA in collaboration with the Cousteau Society (CS) and the World Bank (WB) prepared a GEF proposal which translates the operational programme of the ICZM Plan into clear actions on the ground. PERSGA will continue working with the WB and the CS to establish international partnerships for the implementation of the proposal.



The Main Article

Official inauguration of the PERSGA/MEMAC

On 20 May 2006 Hurghadah (Egypt) witnessed a remarkable event: the official inauguration of the Marine Emergency Mutual Aid Centre (PERSGA/MEMAC). The inauguration ceremony was initiated by HE Eng. Magid Elias, the Egyptian State Minister for Environmental Affairs accompanied by HRH Prince Turki Bin Nasir Bin Abdulaziz, President of PME in Saudi Arabia. At their reception was Prof. Ziad Abu Ghararah, the PERSGA Secretary General and the Director and Deputy Director of the PERSGA/MEMAC.

The inauguration ceremony was witnessed by HE Bakr Rashidi (the Governor of the Red Sea Governorate), Eng. Mahmoud Shidaiwa (Chairman of EPA representing the Ministry of Water and Environment in Yemen), HE Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Awadi (Executive Secretary of ROPME), Mr. Miguel Palomares (IMO representative), and representatives from Jordan and Sudan in addition to a number of officials in EEAA and the Red Sea Governorate.

Prof. Abu Ghararah was the first speaker who expressed his thanks to Egypt for hosting the Centre which was a product of continued cooperation between PERSGA and its member states. He indicated that PERSGA will continue its support to member states to enhance their capabilities in responding to oil incidents and that the inauguration of the centre is only a first step in the list of tasks the centre will carry out such as organization of workshops, training courses or provision of information systems that will assist countries in emergency cases.

He mentioned that the idea of establishing this centre was initiated during the signing of the Protocol Concerning Regional Cooperation in Combating Pollution by Oil and Other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency in 1982. Further, a meeting at Alexandria in 1989 decided that this centre would be set up at Hurgada, Egypt

which was adopted by the PERSGA Council in November 2000. Since then, PERSGA carried out capacity building activities in oil spill responses either through the organization of a number of workshops and training courses or through the provision of technical assistance for the preparation of national contingency plans. In this context and in collaboration with IMO, PERSGA has prepared a Regional Plan for Contingency Planning which was subsequently adopted by member countries. The Plan will facilitate coordination, capacity building, and will activate the role of the PERSGA/MEMAC to be followed by establishment of response centres connected to the Centre.

Prof. Abu Ghararah pointed out several activities carried out by PERSGA during the implementation of the SAP, with GEF support, including production of new Navigation Charts reflecting Traffic Separation Scheme in the southern Red Sea being effective since July 2003, establishment of a new Class 1 Navigation Aid on Hanish Al Kubra in Yemen, and provision of the PERSGA/MEMAC with necessary equipment, furniture and manpower. He also urged the staff of the Centre to ensure its effective role in building database regarding available oil spill

response equipment, facilities and expertise in the region, raising national skills to carry out necessary actions such as modeling and monitoring pollutants disbursements, preparation of sensitivity mapping, and provision of countries with technical assistance to prepare their national contingency planning.

Finally, Prof. Abu Ghararah expressed his thanks to Saudi Arabia, for its continuous support to PERSGA since it was established, and to HRH Prince Turki for attending the Inauguration Ceremony which is reflect his personal support to PERSGA.

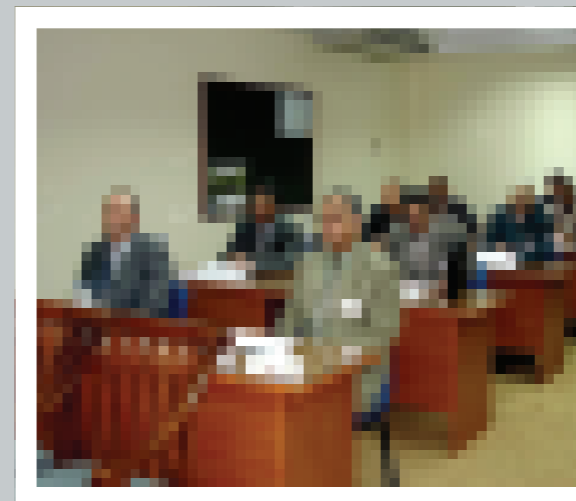
Mr. M. Palomares (IMO representative) also gave a short speech on behalf of IMO expressing his pleasure for the PERSGA/MEMAC inauguration which will enhance cooperation between PERSGA and IMO in implementing the Regional Action Plan for Contingency Planning indicating that IMO will continue supporting the Centre. The last speaker was HE the Egyptian State Minister for Environmental Affairs who welcomed the attendees and expressed his pleasure to host the PERSGA/MEMAC in Egypt. He pointed out the need for this Centre taking into consideration the threats to marine and coastal areas, their natural resources and to tourism, posed

by petroleum production and transportation and the great of numbers of ships calling to ports in the region. In this regard the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency has implemented effective polices that has reduced pollution through the control of municipal wastewater and industrial discharges into the sea, protection of coast lines and provision of solutions to problems associated with investment in coastal areas.

The Minister stressed that Egypt has been effectively participating in cooperation and coordination activities with PERSGA and its member states indicating hosting of the Centre in Hurgadah; they are keen in participation in all capacity building workshops and training in addition to exchange of information and visits with member countries in the framework of sustainable development concept for the benefit of all the citizens.

At the end of his speech, the Egyptian Minister confirmed that the Centre will play a very important role in enhancing cooperation and coordination and provision of technical assistance to the countries of the region. He thanked HRH Prince Turki for attending the PERSGA/MEMAC inauguration and all PERSGA staff for their remarkable efforts.

The PERSGA/MEMAC holds its first training workshop



The Marine Emergency Mutual Aid Centre (PERSGA/MEMAC) held a regional workshop on Contingency Planning and the Role of PERSGA/MEMAC (Hurghadah: 20-22 May 2006) in parallel with the inauguration of the PERSGA/MEMAC. More than 30 participants attended the workshop including leaders in ministers of environment, oil combating centres and petroleum companies in member countries in addition to IMO and the Arabic Academy for Marine Transport (AAMT). The workshop was characterized by a remarkable variety of attendees and presenters. Mr. Miguel Palomares (IMO representative) gave a presentation on the IMO classification of hazardous chemicals which exceeds the hazardous nature of pollution by oil; he explained various phases of formulating a guide for classifying these chemicals by IMO. Regarding responses to pollution by these hazardous materials he mentioned various appropriate methods that can be followed when the nature of the pollutant is identified.