

The INTERNATIONAL OCEAN INSTITUTE IOInforma 0215

Contents

- The **Third Training Programme on the Sustainable Development & Governance Of The Caspian Sea** 2nd – 13th March 2015 was successfully held in Turkmenistan: REPORT
- The **Special Workshop for Directors of IOI Centres** was held in Malta on 19th – 20th March 2015, organised by the International Ocean Institute HQ: REPORT

Third Training Programme on the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & GOVERNANCE OF THE CASPIAN SEA *Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan, 2nd – 13th March 2015*

Organised by the State Enterprise on Caspian Sea Issues at the President of Turkmenistan, and the International Ocean Institute, as part of the IOI's Global Capacity Building Programme



Class of 2015 with Dr Awni Behnam, Honorary President, IOI and lecturer; and A Vassallo, Managing Director IOI HQ and Course Director.

Following on the success of the first two courses held in 2013 and 2014, the third IOI Training Programme dedicated to issues of Sustainable Development and Governance of the Caspian Sea was organised in Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan in early March 2015. The training forms an important component of IOI's capacity building programmes on ocean governance and the co-founding partners with IOI on this course are the State Enterprise on Caspian Sea Issues at the President of Turkmenistan (SECS).

The training programme was formally opened on the 2nd March with a welcome speech by Awni Behnam, Honorary President of IOI, and member of faculty with leading expertise on governance issues. The course was directed for the first week by Antonella Vassallo, Managing Director at IOI HQ and, in the second week, by Iouri Oliounine, former IOI Governing Board member.



The training programme was attended by 16 participants from the countries around the regional sea – Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, IR Iran, and Russia – all having different backgrounds in issues of Caspian Sea management, research, operational and policy undertakings and this provided a rich seam of experience for the project work undertaken during the course. The participants were selected following nomination by their respective governments; in the case of non-Turkmen participants the invitations were coordinated via the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs in each country following an official invitation issued by the Government of Turkmenistan. This ensured that the calibre of the nominated participants was in line with the policy requirements of each country.

PROGRAMME AND STRUCTURE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

The opening and closing ceremonies and the programme lectures were held in the conference facilities of the Hotel Arzuw in the touristic resort of Awaza in Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan. The course ran from the 2nd to the 13th March with an intensive programme of lectures, class work and a field visit spread over these eleven days. The programme was structured in three main modules and a practical application, namely:

- **Module 1 – OCEANS AND SEAS, GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS** which covered issues of governance, legislation and also the issues specific to the Caspian Sea legal regime as well as the international principles on which good governance is based.
- **Module 2 – MANAGING OUR RELATIONS WITH THE OCEANS AND SEAS;** in this module, tools for the management of sustainability and marine matters were introduced with topical examples of case studies relevant to the Caspian states. Experts presented lectures on the principles of sustainable development, maritime spatial planning, and also planning and decision support tools for the ocean and coastal manager amongst others. Each session was followed by a hands-on exercise by the class where the principles introduced were applied in themed exercises which fed into the final course work.
- **Module 3 - GOVERNANCE FOR THE CASPIAN SEA.** In this final part, the specific topics of Caspian regional governance framework were presented by experts from the region, with the Caspian Sea presented as a sea of challenges to be met but also of immense opportunities for the surrounding countries. The group exercise entitled CASPIAN SEA: VISION 2025 was a key part of this module and allowed the application of the lessons learnt in the preceding days. **Practical exercise: CASPIAN SEA: VISION 2025 in Module 3** Exercise leaders: Dr Awni Behnam and Dr Parvin Farshchi, with additional support from the Course Directors.



Above: the class during Dr Behnam's lecture on Governance.



COURSE FACULTY AND LECTURES

The faculty commissioned by IOI was composed of a diverse selection of experts, many of whom were already partners with IOI on other IOI Courses. The faculty expertise reflected also the general plan of the programme in that the first two modules were based on theoretical and general principles of ocean governance and included international and Caspian Sea case studies while the final part of the programme, Module 3, focussed intensely on the issues of the Caspian Sea and the littoral countries and lectures were given by faculty members from the Region.

As well as traditional lectures, the course programme included a field trip to the coastal area of Turkmenbashi and the hands-on projects where the participants were expected to apply their knowledge to specific scenarios which allowed the class to use their new knowledge and experience the multidisciplinary approach to decision making in Caspian matters.

The training programme reached its practical culmination in the work of the class groups on the “Caspian Sea: Vision 2025”. The class was divided into three groups at the beginning of the programme and each group given a topic for which they were asked to formulate and present a series of possible scenarios/roadmaps for the management of issues pertaining to the Caspian Sea, to culminate in the year 2025, with the aim of achieving sustainable development and consolidated cooperation in the region. The groups had to apply the lessons/techniques/tools learnt during the training programme as well as their personal experiences on the Caspian Sea issues to give final presentations from each designated working group on the set topics. The exercise allowed the participants of the course to investigate and propose innovative solutions to current problems of the Caspian Sea and encouraged them to seize the opportunities available to create new structures and partnerships based on the best practice experiences of other regions in response to the region’s perceived needs.

The training participants were each provided with a USB stick containing all the lectures and presentations given during the programme as PDF files for easy and speedy reference later on.

CLOSING CEREMONY AND AWARD OF CERTIFICATES

The programme came to an end with the successful group presentations for the “Caspian Sea: Vision 2025” and the official closing ceremony and award of the certificates was held immediately afterwards. All the class graduated with success and were given a certificate of participation during the ceremony that was presided over by Mr Murad Atajanov, Chairman, State Enterprise on Caspian Sea Issues at the President of Turkmenistan on behalf of the host country and Dr Iouri Oliouline, representing the IOI. An official lunch offered by the host country followed.

IOI ACKNOWLEDGES WITH GRATITUDE

Mr Murad Atajanov, Chairman of the State Enterprise on Caspian Sea Issues at the President of Turkmenistan, for spearheading the creation of this programme, for his unstinting support and belief in this training and for assisting with funding allocations; the programme faculty and the local secretariat, for the professional and excellent support and organisation.

Since its inception, issues of sound and sustainable practices contributing to ocean governance have been a major focus of IOI’s work in all areas from policy direction to capacity building and it is in this spirit that the training course provided by IOI in Turkmenistan was organised once again. It offered dedicated training on Caspian Sea governance and sustainability issues. Participating candidates were therefore nominated by the countries bordering the Caspian Sea on invitation of the official co-organisers in Turkmenistan ensuring that the nominated participants’ background was in line with the policy requirements of each country.

Special Workshop for Directors of IOI Centres

Malta, 19th – 20th March 2015

Organised by the International Ocean Institute HQ



From Top: the workshop participants during the presentation of the IOI Strategy; middle: active discussion and feedback from the invited directors, and, bottom: L-R: A Vassallo, M Yarhere, M Faghfour, P Leder, A Behnam.

Photos are credited to Gonzalo Garcia de Arboleya de la Quintana at IOI HQ.

During the Fifty Second Meeting of the Governing Board of the IOI, held in Malta on the 9th and 10th December 2014, the Board formally approved the Reform of the IOI Network Architecture and IOI Strategy. One of the key pillars of this new vision is the provision of IOI Training Programmes to provide training and education for capacity building to meet the crucial demand for knowledgeable future leaders in ocean governance. This would be done by maintaining the current portfolio of training programmes as well as by developing more courses in future. In order to commence the implementation of the new IOI strategy in earnest, several steps were already taken over 2015.

Thus, on behalf of IOI President Nicholas Gelpke, a number of directors of IOI centres assigned to support the IOI's global training programmes were invited to Malta on the 19th and 20th March for a specialised workshop. The workshop was chaired by Honorary President of the IOI, Awni Behnam, on behalf of President Gelpke, with the support of IOI Treasurer, Peter Leder, and IOI Managing Director, Antonella Vassallo. Present for the meeting were Werner Ekau, Chair, IOI Directors and Director, IOI Germany; Alejandro Gutierrez, Director, IOI Costa Rica; Lamiaa Muhammedin, Director, IOI Egypt; Mabel Yarhere, Director, IOI Nigeria; and Homeira Agah on behalf of Nasser Hadjizadeh Zaker, Director, IOI IR Iran. The Representative of the Government of Malta to the IOI Governing Board, Salvino Busuttil, and the IOI Vice President, Mahin Faghfour, were also present at the workshop as guests.

The stated aim and ultimate goals of this informative workshop were to inform about the recently adopted reforms and to establish a formal discussion with the IOI Centre Directors to re-define the new role of the IOI Centres, to collaboratively agree on a work programme that best serves the new IOI mission and goals, and to discuss the new terms of co-operation. The meeting was opened with a presentation of the IOI strategy by P Leder and a supporting presentation of the current and planned IOI training programmes by A Vassallo. Both presentations were well received and provided the basis for an open and collaborative discussion on how those present could form part of a cohesive and interlinked support to the IOI's global training programme. Other important issues such as the new roles of these IOI Centres, funding and means of communication and cooperation among them and the IOI Headquarters were also discussed. The directors would also be able to interact and connect with the IOI Alumni network in order to strengthen and empower this resource for the benefit of the global oceans.

The successful workshop laid the foundation for future actions of the IOI Centres and the IOI HQ in line with the recently approved IOI Strategy. It was also an opportunity for the Directors to discuss the main activities implemented by their respective Centres as well as to strengthen the internal relations among the Centres, the IOI alumni, and the IOI governance structure. Important outcomes of the workshop included a clearly defined road map with deadlines for deliverables and other important milestones for implementation over the next two years. Over the two days of friendly and frank discussions, strong foundations for future action and collaboration were laid which we all hope will bear rich fruit in future.