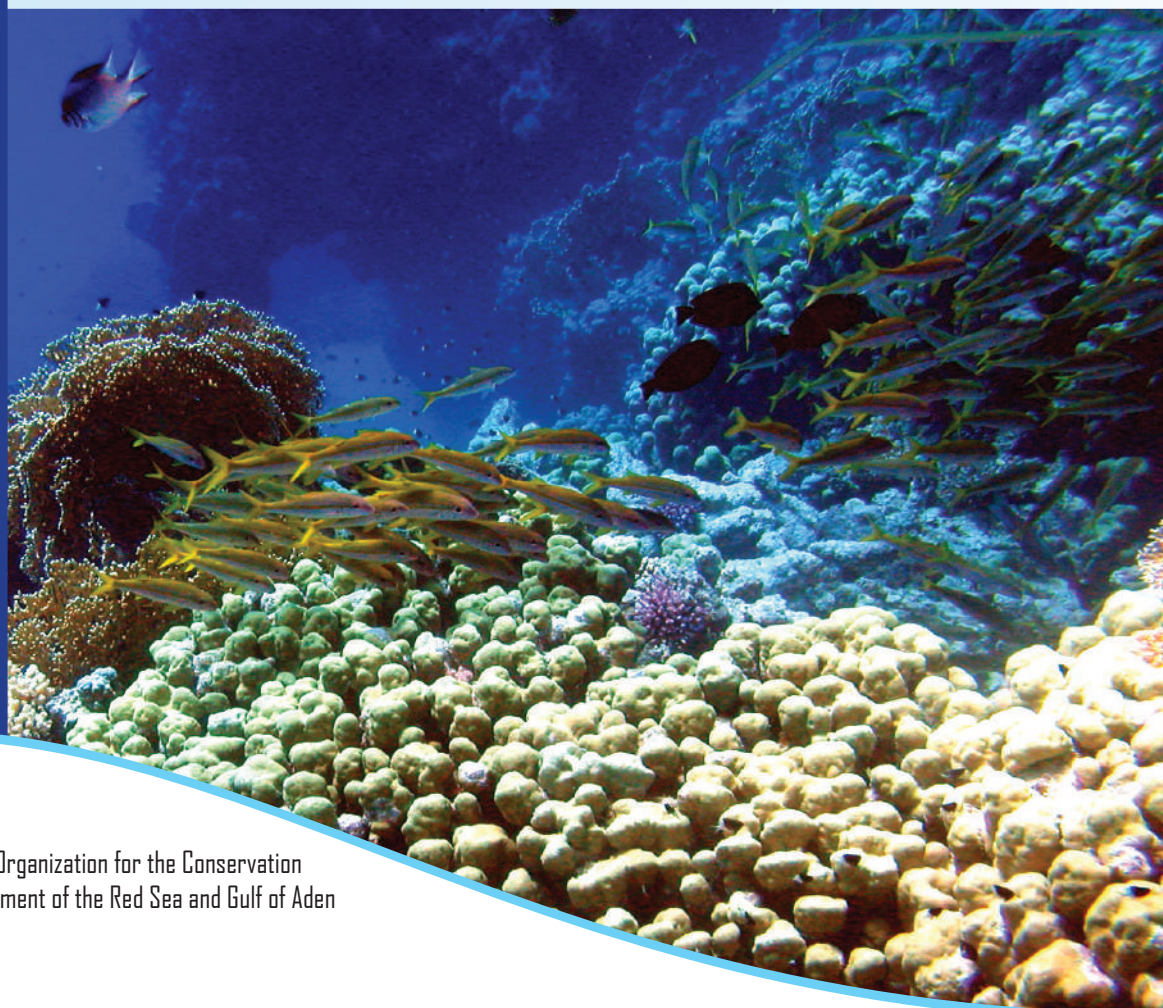


The Regional Organization for the Conservation
of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

PERSGA

Who we are
What we do

2013



The Regional Organization for the Conservation
of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

PERSGA scientists
conducting coral
reef survey





Mangrove nursery for habitat restoration,
PERSGA Demonstration Project

PERSGA

PERSGA is a regional intergovernmental organization dedicated to the conservation of the coastal and marine environments of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

PERSGA is governed by a council comprised of the ministers for environmental affairs from each of its seven member countries. The council holds biennial meetings to endorse budgets and work plans.

OBJECTIVE

To ensure conservation and sustainable use of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden's coastal and marine resources.

VISION

The sustainable management and use of the coastal and marine resources of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

MISSION

To lead regional level actions to implement the Jeddah Convention in a sustained and cost effective manner, ensuring rational use of living and non-living marine and coastal resources in order to achieve optimal benefits for the present generation while maintaining the potential of the environment to satisfy the needs and aspirations of future generations.

MEMBER STATES & FOCAL POINTS

Member State	Focal Point
Djibouti	Ministère de l'Habitat, de l'Urbanisme, de l'Environnement et de l'Aménagement du Territoire (MHUEAT)
Egypt	Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs – Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)
Jordan	Ministry of Environment – Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA)
Saudi Arabia	Presidency of Meteorology and Environment (PME)
Somalia	Ministry of National Resources
Sudan	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Physical Development – High Council for Environment and Natural Resources (HCENR)
Yemen	Ministry of Water and Environment – Environment Protection Authority (EPA)

SECRETARIAT OFFICE

The Organization's daily affairs are managed by a secretariat run by a team of professionals and experts on marine ecosystems recruited from all member states. The secretariat performs the functions necessary for the management of the Jeddah Convention and its protocols, annexes and Action Plan. The headquarters of PERSGA are hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the city of Jeddah. An Emergency Mutual Aid Center (EMARSGA) is hosted by Egypt, in the city of Hurghada.

SECRETARY GENERAL

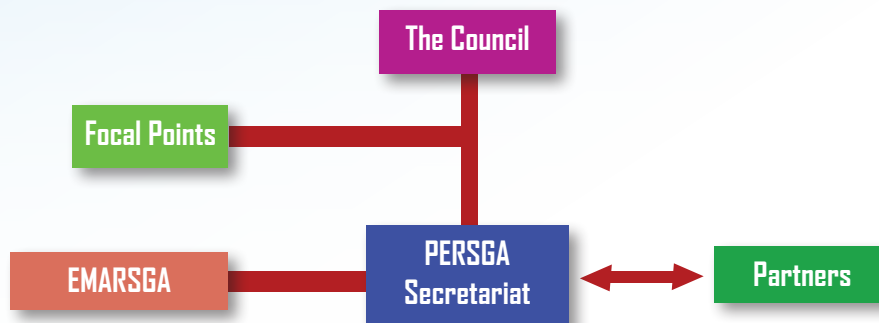
Prof. Ziad Abu Ghararah has been leading PERSGA since January 2005.



"Today, PERSGA must deal with a new era of challenges and threats confronting the environments of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden; it promises to continue addressing the most pressing conservation needs in the region with stronger dedication and greater wisdom."

Dr. Ziad Abu Ghararah

PERSGA ORGANOGRAM



JEDDAH CONVENTION

PERSGA is underpinned by a strong legal framework in the form of the Jeddah Convention, formally titled «Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment».

The Jeddah Convention expresses in clear terms the commitment and the political will of the governments of the region to manage the marine and coastal environments of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden through joint coordinated activities.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

PERSGA's origins can be traced back to the early 1970s when ALECSO – Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization initiated a programme for the protection of the environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

ALECSO, with the assistance of UNESCO, convened a meeting in Bremerhaven, Germany in 1974 where initial ideas for an interdisciplinary research programme were discussed. Subsequent meetings identified key regional concerns and proposed a plan of activity, which gave rise to PERSGA – Programme for the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. An interim secretariat was established in Cairo to implement this programme under the auspices of ALECSO. The secretariat moved to Jeddah in 1980.

PERSGA was established as the Regional Organization in September 1995 under the umbrella of the Arab League. Its creation was formally announced in the Cairo Declaration at the first Council Meeting in Egypt attended by all the parties to the Jeddah Convention.

THE RSGA REGION

The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Region (RSGA) is internationally recognized for the variety and value of its coastal and marine environments in addition to its strategic, economic and social significance to the region.

The most significant threats to the long-term stability of the marine ecosystem stem from the increase in the human population living in the coastal zone and the rapid rise in economic growth resulting in considerable pressure on the environment.

Threats such as marine pollution, depletion of marine resources and overfishing are trans-boundary in nature. Regional cooperation is required to define causes, effects and management actions.

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES

PERSGA implements a number of programmes and activities for the conservation of marine and coastal environments.



The Launching Ceremony of the Strategic Action Programme, Jeddah 1998



On the occasion of the inauguration of EMARSGA, Hurghada 2006



Ninth Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, Jeddah 2007

Protection from Land-based Activities

There is increasing international concern regarding the impact on the marine environment of activities that take place on land, particularly in coastal and river catchment areas. PERSGA, in cooperation with the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (UNEP/GPA), has implemented an analogous Regional Programme of Action (RPA). The RPA includes several measures such as capacity building, fieldwork surveys, and the development of National Programmes of Action for the member countries. These activities have contributed to the implementation of the Regional Protocol Concerning the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, which was signed in September 2005.



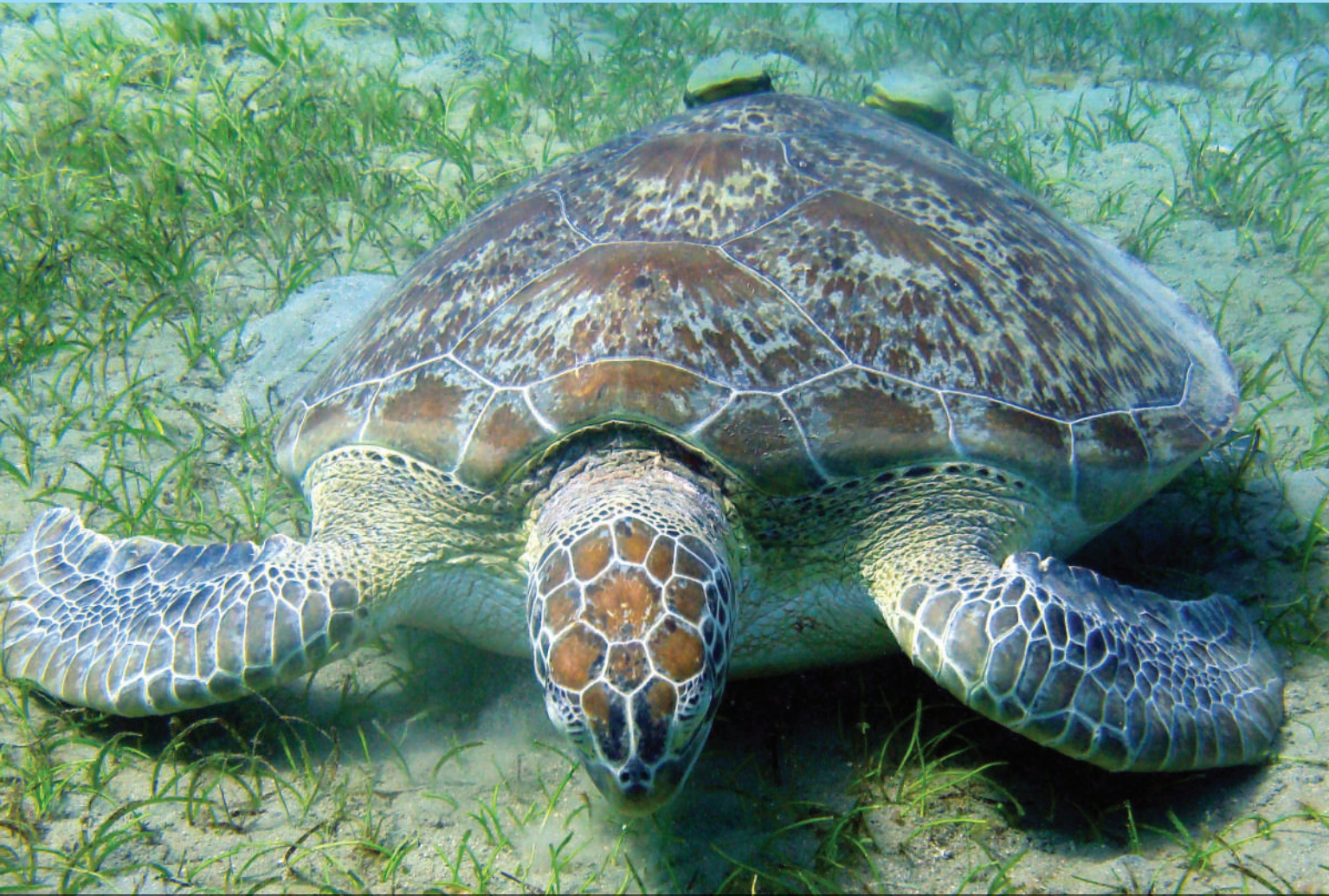
Beach cleaning
activity, Yemen



On-the-Ground Projects

These projects are of limited size but generate quick results. They are important in terms of providing positive, direct impacts on the lives of local communities in coastal areas. The projects are proposed by member states every one or two years, and are implemented by PERSGA with the participation of government agencies and national NGOs. The objectives of these projects are to contribute towards economic and social development, poverty reduction, and the introduction of new knowledge and new technologies for the region. The On-the-Ground projects have taken various forms such as the installation of mooring buoys at diving and fishing sites in the vicinity of Jeddah; the preparation of a learning portfolio "Education for Sustainable Development" in Aqaba; a project to develop ecotourism based on mangroves in Egypt; and the establishment of oil pollution combating centers in Yemen, Sudan and Djibouti.

Biodiversity and Marine Protected Areas



This programme implements the Protocol Concerning the Conservation of Biodiversity and the Establishment of a Network of Protected Areas in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. The protocol was signed in September 2005 to maintain the safety and integrity of ecosystems, conserve biodiversity and protect threatened species, critical habitats and sites of importance in the region. The programme builds regional capacities and implements plans related to the management of important natural habitats such as coral reefs, mangroves and sea grasses and key species such as turtles, birds and marine mammals.



Pollution monitoring training – air quality sampling



Field training for regional experts

Environmental Monitoring Programme

Chemical analysis of fish for pollution monitoring



The Regional Environmental Monitoring Programme (REMP) provides data on the status of seawater from a variety of locations in the region. A number of chemical and biophysical parameters are measured and data are analyzed at the PERSGA Information Center. Any patterns of change recorded in the reports on the status of the regional marine environment facilitate the required decision-taking process at both national and regional levels. The REMP works closely with other regional programmes to investigate and correlate any changes in biophysical and chemical parameters with changes to habitats or in socioeconomic conditions. The programme also runs technical training courses in sampling and analysis to develop human resources and raise technical capacity within the region.



Raising awareness of the value of the marine environment with our youth, Egypt



Beach cleanup preparations, Sudan



Environmental education in schools, Saudi Arabia



Results from a beach cleaning activity

Training Programme

PERSGA organizes an annual training programme to raise the skills and abilities of professionals from the region and the wider Arab world working in professions related to the coastal and marine environment. Courses and training workshops are held every year, topics being selected to suit the needs of PERSGA and the environmental authorities in the region. The participants at these training courses are nominated by the concerned ministries and authorities in their respective countries in coordination with the PERSGA Focal Points. However, interested candidates from member countries working in the private sector can participate in the training programme for a small fee.

Programme for the Management of Living Marine Resources

PERSGA confronts the challenge of living marine resources management using the ecosystem approach. This programme implements global fisheries initiatives in coordination with specialized international authorities such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The programme seeks to coordinate the laws, regulations and national action plans that govern and manage marine fisheries within the region. Training courses are held to build institutional and human capacities in the fields of data collection and the analysis of marine fisheries statistics.



Installation of mooring buoys, Jeddah

Environmental Education and Communication Programme

The Environmental Education and Communication programme implements PERSGA's "Environmental education strategy for sustainable development in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden". This is made up of several complementary elements targeted toward users of the coastal and marine environment, children and youth, and the policy and decision makers. In particular the strategy emphasizes the dissemination of information about conservation, sustainable use, and the importance of the ecological services that the marine and coastal environments provide to the people of the region. The document also contains a detailed action plan that can be used to initiate projects at the regional or national level. Given the critical importance of childhood learning, PERSGA facilitates environmental education in schools and trains teachers on methods to promote understanding and appreciation of the marine environment through classroom activities. PERSGA participates in national, regional and international efforts that use education to promote sustainable development.



Preparations for underwater survey, Djibouti

■ MILESTONE DATES

- Sep. 1995** | Declaration of the establishment of PERSGA
- Oct. 1995** | Regional Conference on Sustainable Use of the Marine Environments of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (Sea to Sea 1)
- Dec. 1998** | Signature on the documents of the Strategic Action Programme for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
- Jul. 2003** | Introduction and application of new international navigation maps showing traffic separation routes in the southern Red Sea
- Dec. 2004** | Second Regional Conference on Sustainable Use of the Marine Environments of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (Sea to Sea 2)
- Sep. 2005** | Signature on the Protocol Concerning the Conservation of Biodiversity and Establishment of a Network of Protected Areas in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
- Dec. 2005** | Signature on the Regional Protocol Concerning the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
- May. 2006** | Inauguration of the Emergency Mutual Aid Center (EMARSGA)
- Oct. 2007** | Invitation to the Ninth International Meeting of Regional Seas Secretariats in Jeddah hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Jul. 2009** | Signature on the Protocol Concerning Technical Cooperation and the Transfer of Experts, Technicians, Equipment and Materials in Emergency Cases in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
- Nov. 2011** | PERSGA joins the UNFCCC as observer
- Nov. 2013** | Signature on the documents of the Strategic Ecosystem Management of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden project



Programme for Adaptation to the Impacts of Climate Change

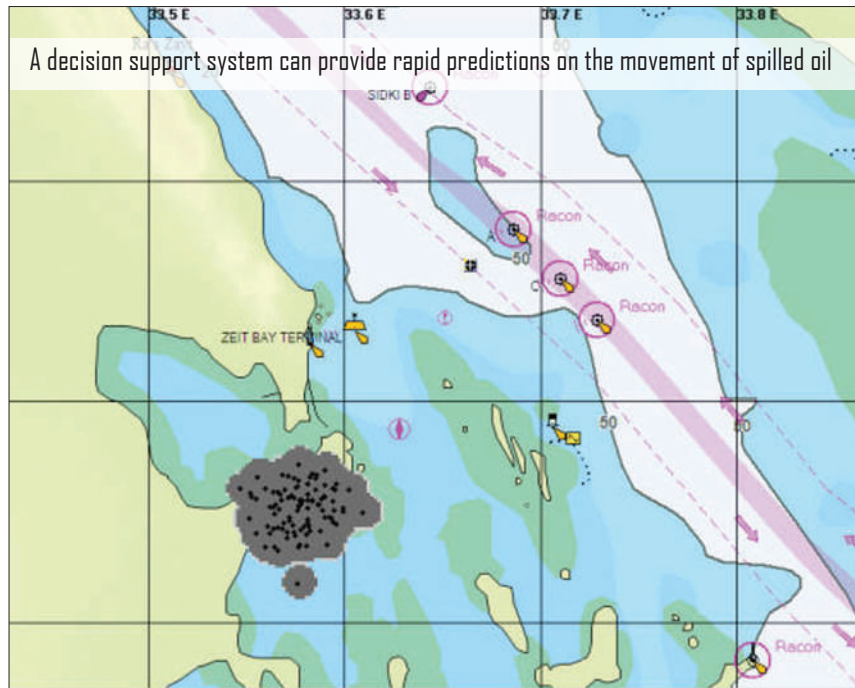
This is a regional initiative that aims to implement an integrated regional adaptation strategy and programme in coordination with national strategies and plans. Its framework components include procedures and measures for coastal and marine environments. These components are mainstreamed in PERSGA's core programmes to facilitate their application. They form an integrated regional plan through which the vulnerabilities of coastal and marine environments, natural resources and economic development can be assessed, and plans for adaptation can be developed. The main focal areas of PERSGA's adaptation strategy include coastal vulnerability assessment and monitoring; strengthening regional capacity for observation of climate change; coastal risk assessment and management; promotion of institutional and human capacities to implement adaptation plans; facilitating access to information for decision-makers, stakeholders and relevant authorities; and support for the adoption of ecosystem-based adaptation measures.

The Marine Emergency Mutual Aid Center (EMARSGA)



In 1982, the member states signed the Protocol for Regional Cooperation in Combating Pollution by Oil and Other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency. Subsequently, as part of the implementation of this protocol, PERSGA established the Emergency Mutual Aid Center for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (EMARSGA) in Hurghada. The Center was officially inaugurated on May 20, 2006 and is hosted by the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs, Arab Republic of Egypt. The Center coordinates regional efforts among the member states to deal with marine pollution incidents. To achieve

its objectives the Center is supported by the Protocol Concerning Technical Cooperation and the Transfer of Experts, Technicians, Equipment and Materials in Cases of Emergency, which was signed in July 2009. The Center maintains an information base with details of emergency centers and available equipment, lists of experts and specialists from the countries of the region, and records of pollution events. It maintains modern electronic and hard copies of all relevant navigation maps.



The Center encourages member states to develop and continually update national emergency plans and organizes regional training to strengthen capacity for combating pollution incidents. It manages a sophisticated computer modeling system that simulates the expected direction and spread of pollution from spills.



Training workshop at EMARSGA

PERSGA Publications

Since its inception, PERSGA has regularly prepared publications for a wide range of audiences including academics, researchers, government policy makers, field workers and members of the public interested in marine environmental affairs. Scientific documents cover subjects such as regional species and habitat surveys, reports on turtles, seabirds, coral reefs and mangroves. Thematic publications inform the reader about issues such as integrated coastal zone management, economic valuation of marine resources, and accident compensation. Management documents include PERSGA's Project Management Manual and a number of Regional Action Plans to maintain biodiversity through conservation of valuable habitats and species. Outreach and awareness materials include leaflets, brochures and learning materials for schools. PERSGA also acts as the depository for the legal documents that form the framework of the organization and which define its mandate and responsibilities. Copies of these documents are available from PERSGA in hard copy or from the website.



Regional and International Partners



The World Bank



United Nations Environment Programme



Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



International Maritime Organization



Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission



Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



United Nations Industrial Development Organization



Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment



United Nations Development Program



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment



King Abdullah University of Science and Technology



CEDARE
Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe



United Nations Environment Programme, Mediterranean Action Plan



King Abdulaziz University



International Hydrographic Organization



For more information, please contact :

The Regional Organization for the Conservation
of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

P. O. Box 53662 Jeddah 21583 – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Phone +966 12 657 3224 Fax +966 12 652 1901

E-mail: information@persga.org

Website: www.persga.org

