



MEDWAVES

Magazine of the Mediterranean Action Plan / 55

A photograph of waves crashing onto a pebbly beach. The water is white with foam, and the pebbles are small and brownish. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

The sea deserves our voice

Highlights of the 14th Meeting of the
Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention



UNEP

A sense of ownership

The Mediterranean is one of the world's most culturally and ecologically diverse regions. Its rich and favourable climate has made it a magnet for settlement, and something like one-third of all international tourism gravitates to its shores.

It is also a special sea with unique challenges. It joins the coastlines of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, making it politically, economically and geographically complex.

Thirty years ago the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) was born, helping to foster a UNEP Regional Seas Programme that now encompasses 18 regions and more than 140 coastal states and territories.

The initiatives of MAP have served as a beacon to many of the other Regional Seas. It has guided their agendas, playing a key role in establishing more than 120 protected areas and in creating four action plans to protect endangered species. It has forged strong links with other regional bodies including the UN Economic Commission for Europe, the UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Its legal authority, the Barcelona Convention, has served as a model for other such regional agreements.

Much of MAP's work would not have been possible without financial investment from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The GEF has helped MAP bolster efforts around the sea to promote *national* ownership of the Action Plan and Barcelona Convention. Such ownership is vital for the long term success of Regional Seas everywhere.

Klaus Toepfer, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UNEP



Morje potrebuje naš glas
The sea deserves our voice
LOGO OF COP14

MAGAZINE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

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MAP at the crossroads

The Portoroz conference in November 2005 gave me the pleasure, for the first time since becoming MAP Coordinator, of addressing the Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. I am happy to report that Portoroz proved to be an important crossroads for MAP on its 30th anniversary.

Its importance is partly due to the significant results achieved in the two years preceding the 14th CP meeting.

The amended Barcelona Convention and the New Prevention and Emergency Protocol entered into force in 2004. A Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development was prepared. MAP and the European Commission agreed on a Joint Work Programme. The GEF Project for the determination of priority actions for the further elaboration and implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Mediterranean was successfully completed and the new GEF Strategic Partnership was approved.

Since the Contracting Parties meeting in Catania, National Action Plans to address land-based sources of pollution have been prepared by all Mediterranean countries. The Strategy for the implementation of the New Prevention and Emergency Protocol has been finalized. The Report on Environment and Development has been published.

Progress has continued to be made in the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for Biodiversity. A draft text of an ICAM Protocol has been prepared. The valuations of MAP, ERS/RAC and CP/RAC have been carried out and a Mediterranean Environment Award has been organized.

Mechanisms for the implementation of other provisions of the Barcelona Convention continued to be developed, including those dealing with liability and compensation, compliance and reporting.



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MAP COORDINATOR PAUL MIFSUD

At the same time partnerships continued to be developed and strengthened in particular with the European Commission as well as with other regional and global programmes and organizations including other UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs.

This brought us to Portoroz with many important issues settled. The Contracting Parties were able to discuss the programme of work for the next biennium as endorsed by the meeting of MAP Focal Points. But the Ministerial segment also tackled four important topics:

The first is the future orientation of MAP. The views expressed during the discussion formed the basis of the terms of reference for the extraordinary meeting which will lead to the development of a new Vision and Strategic Direction for the next decade. This will enable MAP to be in a position to respond to the challenge of sustainable development in the Mediterranean taking into account recent developments at the international sub-regional and regional levels especially those within the EU. I have in mind in particular the Marine Strategy and the new EC initiative to de-pollute the Mediterranean by 2020.

Second, following the development of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development which was presented to the meeting for endorsement, the major challenge in the coming years will be its implementation in particular at the national level. Even though it is a framework and non-binding strategy, the Portoroz meeting nevertheless gave strong political support towards the implementation of the strategy's objectives, orientations and proposed actions.

Third, Portoroz endorsed the National Action Plans to address pollution from land-based sources. This was very important in view of the new Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem which has been approved by the GEF Secretariat.

The last item on the agenda of the Ministerial segment dealt with a biodiversity issue. Portoroz saw approval of proposals for coordinated initiatives to safeguard the Mediterranean monk seal as a rare species which is on the verge of extinction.

Finally, the meeting adopted the Portoroz Declaration, providing strategic objectives for the adoption of the MSSD, implementation of the NAPs, the future orientation of MAP and the conservation of the monk seal.

Today, 30 years after the Barcelona Convention launched the Mediterranean Action Plan, 21 countries of the basin and the European Community are Contracting Parties. The fact that after three decades this process is still going strong is an achievement in itself. MAP has shown that the countries in the Mediterranean region can work together for the benefit of the region. It shows that the environment can serve as a unifying factor to take concerted action on common concerns. Every effort should be made to sustain this process, to enhance MAP's political clout, to make it more effective and relevant for the countries in the region and to strengthen the sense of friendship and cooperation that have always characterized the relationships within MAP.

*Paul Mifsud,
MAP Coordinator*



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“...after three decades the MAP process is still going strong”

A new chapter of cooperation

The visionary initiative to establish the Mediterranean Action Plan and its thirty-year tradition no doubt represent a bright and important segment of the history we share. All the coastal states of the Mediterranean have united to preserve the healthy marine sources which are the foundation of regional economy and bear significant cultural implications (in the material, social and intellectual sense).

Regrettably, the maritime and coastal regions are more and more exposed to extensive changes due to increasing pressures and influences of sector-oriented development. The quality of life is decreasing to the detriment of all who live there. The above trends lead to the conclusion that the actual role which the Mediterranean Action Plan plays in the implementation of the Mediterranean states development policy needs to be strengthened. Without the Mediterranean Action Plan the state of marine environment and the coastal regions would surely be in a poorer and degraded state.

The fact is that the role of MAP is actually determined by the action of its members, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. It is us, gathered here at the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Portoroz, who are responsible for improving the previous approaches and practices.

Slovenia believes that consultation, co-operation and harmonization of development plans are the only way to achieve sustainable development paying attention to the use of common marine resources. Co-operation and comprehensive development plans at the sub-regional level are of key importance for the general development and progress of the region.

During its biennial presidency, Slovenia will therefore strive to strengthen co-operation at all levels in order to achieve sustainable development in the Mediterranean. We see great opportunities in looking for the synergies in the field of comprehensive marine resource management. The quality of work done so far and the materials drafted in the framework of the UNEP/MAP process as well as the European Union programmes enable us to achieve those goals. Therefore, I believe that the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention taking place upon the 30th anniversary of UNEP/MAP and the EU summit coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which is taking place at the end of November in Barcelona could be more than a mere coincidence. It is us, gathered here in Portoroz, who are responsible for the development breakthrough which will improve the quality of life at the Mediterranean coasts for us and for the future generations. I hope that the Portoroz Declaration will reflect the spirit for the necessary action.

*Excerpt from address by
H.E. Mr Janez Podobnik,
Minister of the Environment and
Spatial Planning, Republic of Slovenia*



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H.E. MR JANEZ PODOBNIK



DR VEERLE VANDEWEERD

Bringing Regional Seas into the 21st century

The Regional Seas can be proud of many achievements in the last 30 years, with the Mediterranean Region being a shining example. But there are challenges indeed. For quite some time the Regional Seas Programme was the pearl on the crown of UNEP [...] Let us be honest. Regional Seas, though having spearheaded the early stages of UNEP's development, have not always been at the cutting edge of UNEP's growth: environment for development. That is the crossroad we are at now: how to bring the Regional Seas into the 21st century, move it beyond the strictly environmental field into the sustainable development arena, without aiming at being all encompassing, and, by the very nature of being all encompassing, be so dispersed and diluted that no real impacts are achieved.

MAP has started the process some years ago. And hopefully the ministerial discussions at this meeting, based on the documentation available, will give a major push forward to – what we call "bringing the Regional Seas into the 21st century." [...]

Despite the achievement of MAP and the other actors in the region, despite the great strides in environmental management made in all countries bordering the Sea, pollution levels are still high and coastal degradation continues. To address this, the EU launched a laudable initiative with the goal to de-pollute the Mediterranean by 2020. A great and most needed initiative, costly without doubt. MAP and its Secretariat could and should contribute to this initiative in a proactive and effective manner. One of the ways forward seems to be obvious; building on the achievement of MED POL. Discussions are ongoing in the GEF to start a new Strategic Partnership with a major focus on investments for pollution abatement – partnership with an Investment fund of over US\$75 million, with the potential to leverage over US\$225 million in concrete investments. The new GEF project is about rehabilitating the Med Ecosystem, harnessing the strength of all partners to do so.

The MAP Secretariat will need to play an active role in this project development and implementation, including the brokering of regional partnerships. MAP, just as all Regional Seas, has, in their cooperation with the GEF, to move beyond transboundary diagnostic analysis and strategic action planning to being a real partner in investment and action [...]

De-pollution has to stretch all the way from the hilltops to the oceans and starts on land. End of pipe solutions will no longer bring the required effect. Applying ecosystem approaches to management of human activities is one of the pillars of the EU Marine Strategy, a strategy to which the MAP Secretariat contributed. Translating this strategy into action is the challenge ahead [...]

The global Regional Seas Programme is looking to this region for leadership, for moving the global Regional Seas Programme into the next phase. We realize that there are many challenges but also many opportunities. If this region does not succeed, which region can succeed?

We need a clear vision, shared by all actors in the region. We need to define our limits and boundaries and focus on targeted interventions. We need to use and develop the strength of the MAP, including as a policy forum, to come to joint action.

MAP 30 years ago was the flagship programme of UNEP. I invite you to become the flagship programme again.

Excerpt of address by Dr Veerle Vandeweerd, Head of the UNEP Regional Seas Programme and UNEP/GPA Coordinator, on behalf of Dr Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP

Italy's commitment to MAP

The biennium of Italian Presidency of the Barcelona Convention has been crucial in raising awareness among the Contracting Parties on the need of strengthening technological innovation and international environmental cooperation, by involving the business community, local communities, multilateral financial institutions and civil society, aiming at "sustainable" economic growth in Southern-Mediterranean Countries. [...]

We need to be flexible and capable of adapting the MAP to a multilateral context which is always in evolution: from the new initiative proposed by the EC on the depollution of the Mediterranean by 2020, to the GEF initiative Strategic partnership opportunities. There is consequently the necessity of MAP to join forces and establish partnership with other key institutions in the region such as the GEF, World Bank and EC.

The Italian Government has already begun working in this way trying to promote, both in the multilateral fora and bilaterally, the concept of partnership between national and international public institutions and private businesses. [...]

We have faced the challenge being conscious that Italy, as a G8 member Country, has major and more burdensome duties than the Southern-Mediterranean Countries. And we have chosen the principle of responsible solidarity as our guideline. This requires concrete actions to be put in place for the transfer of knowledge and for the strengthening of local governance capacity in the management of natural resources and the environment. In other words, we have committed ourselves to jointly create projects for long-term development. In conclusion I hope these days will allow further and tangible progress in achieving sustainable development in the Region.

*Excerpt from address by
Dr Corrado Clini, Director General, Ministry for the
Environment and Territory, Italy, in his capacity as outgoing
President of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties*



INFO/RAC

DR CORRADO CLINI



H.E. MR JANEZ PODOBNIK
WITH MINISTERS AND
OTHER HEADS OF
DELEGATIONS AND
ORGANIZATIONS ATTENDING
THE CONTRACTING PARTIES
MEETING IN PORTOROZ

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The Portoroz Declaration

The Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), meeting in Portoroz, Slovenia, from 8 to 11 November 2005, in the framework of the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), *Recalling* that the Mediterranean Action Plan was approved in 1975 by the Governments of the Mediterranean States and the European Community to assist Mediterranean Governments to assess and control marine pollution, to formulate their national environment policies, to improve the ability of governments to identify better options for alternative patterns of development and to make better and rational use of resources;

Recognizing the valuable contribution that the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols have made to improving the quality of the marine environment and promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean;

Recognizing that over the last three decades MAP has been a significant instrument for change and progress concerning environmental matters in the Mediterranean;

Recalling the entry into force in 2004 of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the amended Barcelona Convention) and the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (the Prevention and Emergency Protocol);

Recalling that there should be a synergy between the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and other MAP components, on the one hand, and the forthcoming European Strategy for the Conservation and Protection of the Marine Environment and the European Union Maritime Policy, on the other hand;

Moreover, recognizing the valuable work undertaken by the MAP Secretariat, the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and the MAP components, in particular the Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC), and recognizing the contributions from NGOs and civil society throughout the preparatory process of the MSSD;

Taking note of the outcomes and proposals of the Tenth Meeting of the MCSD (Athens, June 2005), in particular the finalized text of the MSSD and the Athens Charter; *Reaffirming* the necessity for achieving sustainable development at regional, national and local levels in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Mediterranean Declaration for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and the Catania Declaration;

Noting with satisfaction the recognition by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, through the Second Conference of Ministers of the Environment (Athens, July 2002) and the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Luxembourg, May 2005) of the importance of the MCSD and the MSSD for mainstreaming sustainable development throughout the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership;

Convinced that promoting sustainable development is a vital necessity to meet development challenges in the Mediterranean region;

Convinced also that the elaboration and implementation of sustainable development strategies are necessary steps for promoting equity, shared prosperity and stability by enhancing the value of Mediterranean assets, reducing disparities, changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns, ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources and improving governance at all levels;

With regard to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), agree that,

1. The MSSD constitutes an opportunity for Mediterranean countries to achieve progress in environmental protection, as well as social, economic and cultural advancement in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region, as well as to the fulfilment of the commitments made by the Contracting Parties at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 and the MDGs,
2. The MSSD is a framework strategy which defines key challenges, principles, steps and actions to guide the promotion and implementation of sustainable development at the regional, subregional and national levels, as well as to rationalize regional and international cooperation and promote dynamic partnerships for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean region,
3. The MSSD does not concern only MAP and the Contracting Parties, but also all other actors and stakeholders from the private sector, civil society and other major groups, as well as relevant regional and international institutions; it provides an excellent opportunity to undertake coordinated efforts and achieve joint progress,



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The MSSD constitutes an opportunity for Mediterranean countries to achieve progress in environmental protection, as well as social, economic and cultural advancement in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region



The MSSD does not concern only MAP and the Contracting Parties, but also all other actors and stakeholders from the private sector, civil society and other major groups, as well as relevant regional and international institutions; it provides an excellent opportunity to undertake coordinated efforts and achieve joint progress

The MSSD constitutes an essential contribution to a proactive win-win scenario based on synergies, efficient management and cultural diversity for a codeveloped ecoregion and a shared destiny



The implementation of sustainable development strategies requires [...] the promotion of education for sustainable development, access to information, a multistakeholder participatory approach, the precautionary and polluter/user-pays principles, as well as common, shared but differentiated responsibility



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4. The MSSD is a flexible framework allowing for adaptation to major developments and the integration of determinant emerging issues,

5. The implementation of sustainable development strategies requires serious policy and institutional reforms together with the promotion of a dynamic culture of change, in particular concerning unsustainable production and consumption patterns,

6. The MSSD constitutes an essential contribution to a proactive win-win-win scenario based on synergies, efficient management and cultural diversity for a codeveloped ecoregion and a shared destiny,

7. The implementation of sustainable development strategies requires the application of various principles, including the satisfaction of the basic needs of all citizens, in line with the commitments of the Contracting Parties for the implementation of the MDGs, the promotion of education for sustainable development, access to information, a multistakeholder participatory approach, the precautionary and polluter/user-pays principles, as well as common, shared but differentiated responsibility,

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To adopt the MSSD and make the commitment to do their utmost to implement its objectives, orientations and proposed actions as appropriate,

2. To prepare and/or update the respective National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs), giving due consideration to the MSSD,

3. To integrate sustainable development principles in their development and other relevant policies and legislation, in particular through the adequate revision of legal frameworks and relevant policy reforms,

4. To mobilize and provide relevant adequate human, technical and financial means for the implementation of the MSSD and NSSDs,

5. To demonstrate their commitment to the implementation of the MSSD by promoting education for sustainable development in their education programmes.

6. To demonstrate clearly their commitment to implementing the MSSD through the identification and implementation of specific and relevant projects at the regional, subregional, national and local levels,

7. To renew their commitment to the implementation of the WSSD Mediterranean Type II Partnership Initiative and to propose or actively participate in the elaboration and implementation of partnership initiatives that correspond to the objectives, orientations and proposed actions of the MSSD and the respective NSSDs,

8. To promote consultation mechanisms and awareness-raising campaigns to ensure broader ownership and stronger support from the concerned actors, in particular the private sector and NGOs, in their implementation,

9. To evaluate progress in the implementation of the MSSD at the regional and national levels, using an adequate set of indicators, to revise the MSSD as appropriate, if necessary in two years, and to undertake an overall assessment and review of the MSSD after five years,

10. To request the partners, concerned actors and funding agencies at the regional, subregional and national levels to give due consideration to the MSSD's objectives, orientations and proposed actions in their cooperation programmes and to contribute actively to the implementation of the MSSD and NSSDs, and the elaboration of the latter, where necessary.

With regard to the National Action Plans (NAPs)

Concerned with the significant impact of land based pollution on the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment and its ecosystems;

Aware of the important contribution of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) adopted in 1997, the related National Action Plans (NAPs) and the process of the reduction of industrial pollution by Mediterranean countries to the implementation of the MSSD;

Reaffirming the compatibility and concurrence of the SAP's targets with those of the EU Marine Strategy, the related EU directives and international Conventions;

Recognizing the necessity to involve all concerned stakeholders, including civil society and NGOs, in the implementation of the SAP and the related NAPs;

Considering that the process of the implementation of the NAPs, which will require adequate financial resources, will enhance economic, technological and social development at the local level, and also that the proposed GEF Partnership for the Mediterranean large marine ecosystem will contribute to their implementation;

Keeping in mind that, with the entry into force of the LBS Protocol, a legally-binding regional plan containing measures and a timetable for the gradual reduction of pollution, based on the SAP [Strategic Action Plan] and other relevant international developments, will have to be formulated and adopted;

DECLARATION

Considering that SAP and the NAPs provide useful tools already in place to contribute to the achievement of the proposed strategic goal for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to depollute the Mediterranean by 2020.

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To endorse the NAPs and integrate them into their national development plans, national strategies and pollution control plans, including prevention and reduction measures, as appropriate,
2. To encourage the involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of the NAPs,
3. To mobilize all necessary resources for the full implementation of the NAPs through national regular budgets and innovative financial instruments, as well as from international institutions,
4. To contribute to the implementation of the proposed Euro-Mediterranean Partnership initiative, once it has been endorsed, to depollute the Mediterranean by 2020, based on MAP's ongoing and future work, in particular on the SAP and the NAPs.

With regard to the conservation of the Monk Seal

Considering that the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol) entered into force in 1999, and *aware* of the urgent need to implement the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean region (SAP-BIO), adopted in 2003 as a response to safeguard Mediterranean biodiversity and achieve the WSSD's targets;

Concerned at the high risk of extinction of the Mediterranean Monk Seal, mostly due to human activities, deliberate killings and habitat losses;

Aware that the recovery of this species is a major challenge for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity;

Noting with satisfaction the success stories of the integration of the conservation of this species into local development processes;

Recognizing the necessity of having an appropriate legal framework and participatory mechanisms for the protection and conservation of this species and its habitats;

Acknowledging the need to have adequate operational tools, together with appropriate human and financial resources for targeted conservation and efficient management;

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To take as quickly as possible all necessary measures for the implementation of the Action Plan for the Mediterranean Monk Seal (*Monachus monachus*) and to strengthen their cooperation to reverse the decline of the species,
2. To seriously address the problem of deliberate Monk Seal killing, combined with habitat loss, through action tailored to local communities and involving fishermen and other stakeholders,
3. To promote information on relevant success stories regarding the protection of the Monk Seal and exchange experience with all concerned parties and partners,
4. To further develop, implement and enforce legislative measures relevant to the conservation of the Monk seal, including incentive and regulatory measures, together with adequate operational management plans for targeted human activities,
5. To contribute to the implementation of relevant activities by concerned countries, the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) and its partners through bilateral cooperation and voluntary contributions.

With regard to the future orientation of MAP

Acknowledging the need to review, after 10 years, the role and mandate of MAP, taking into account the developments that have taken place in social, economic and environmental fields at the international and regional level;

Convinced that a Strategic Vision for MAP can further contribute to sustainable development in the Mediterranean region;

Considering that the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the external evaluation of MAP may constitute a good basis for launching the process to introduce any necessary reforms to strengthen MAP's future role in the Mediterranean;

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To request the MAP Secretariat to draft a vision statement for MAP, taking note of the MAP evaluation report,
2. To convene an extraordinary meeting of the MAP Focal Points as soon as possible to discuss the new vision for MAP and to submit recommendations for MAP's future orientation to the meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007.



With the entry into force of the Protocol for the LBS Protocol, a legally-binding regional plan containing measures and a timetable for the gradual reduction of pollution, based on the SAP [Strategic Action Plan] and other relevant international developments, will have to be formulated and adopted



The Contracting Parties decide] to contribute to the implementation of the proposed Euro-Mediterranean Partnership initiative, once it has been endorsed, to depollute the Mediterranean by 2020

MAP and the EC strengthen their partnership

MAP and the European Commission have launched a joint work programme to strengthen their mutual co-operation on a wide range of Mediterranean environmental and sustainable development issues.

European Commissioners adopted the text on 9 November 2005. The document was formally signed on the same day in Portoroz, Slovenia, by Mr Paul Mifsud, MAP Coordinator and in Brussels by Ms Catherine Day, Director-General of the EC Directorate-General for the Environment.

The document is entitled "Work Programme of Cooperation between The Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Coordinating Unit and the European Commission concerning the Strengthening of Cooperation between the MAP Coordinating Unit and the European Commission in the Field of Environment".

Three priorities

Three central priorities and seven cooperation areas are listed in the Programme. The priorities are:

- a) regular high-level meetings for coordination on strategic matters of common interest;
- b) increased interchange between the EC and MAP's seven Regional Activity Centres to implement environmental policies and actions within the European Union, the European Neighbourhood Policy, and actual or potential EU candidate countries in the Mediterranean basin;
- c) strengthening of the environmental dimension of public policy and the promotion of sustainable development in countries bordering the Mediterranean.

The programme emphasises the close links to be developed between MAP activities and the Euro-

Mediterranean Partnership, as well as the systematic exploration of financing possibilities for MAP activities under EU financial instruments.

The seven key action areas for co-operation identified cover a wide range of activities relating to, for example, the prevention of marine pollution from both land-based sources and maritime activities; protection of biodiversity, promotion of sustainable development and clean industrial production technologies.



A strategy to preserve the quality and stability of Mediterranean life

The Mediterranean is in grave danger of losing the main environmental assets that have provided the basis for its development, especially agriculture and tourism. Poor management of scarce natural resources – particularly water, agricultural land, energy and coastal zones – is compromising economic development, the quality of life and social stability.

These concerns prompted the Mediterranean states to launch a wide-ranging cooperative effort to design a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD). The process involved governments, intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, NGOs, and representatives of the private sector and civil society, many of which were already active partners in the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MDSO) and the Mediterranean Action Plan. The resulting strategy was presented to the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for adoption.



The continued spread of unsustainable production and consumption patterns is likely to increase the costs of environmental degradation dramatically

Alarming degradation

The strategy sounds an alarm that environmental degradation has accelerated, setting in motion irreversible trends. Valuable agriculture land is being lost to urbanization and salinization — over 80% of arid and dry areas are already affected by desertification, and the consequences will be exacerbated by the impact of climatic change. Scarce, over-used water resources are threatened with depletion or degradation. Urban standards of living and health are being degraded by traffic congestion, noise, poor air quality and rapid growth of waste generation. Coastal areas and the sea are already affected by pollution and erosion; while fish resources are being depleted. Landscapes and biodiversity have been disrupted by over-exploitation.

The potential increase in environmental pressures on coastal regions over the coming 20 years is considerable, particularly in the areas of tourism. Some 137 million more visitors are expected to visit this region. Transport is projected to more than double in volume. Urban development is inevitable to house 33 million more people, bringing urban sprawl and larger energy infrastructures.

The continued spread of unsustainable production and consumption patterns is likely to increase the costs of environmental degradation dramatically. Such damage already accounts for between 3 and 5 percent of GDP, according to the World Bank.

The northern area is not able to absorb the considerable pressure from emigration from southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, which are faced by the need to create over 30 million new jobs by 2025.

Most Mediterranean economies, which have been insufficiently dynamic for the past 20 or 30 years in relation to other regions of the world, are experiencing difficult employment situations, with unemployment rates ranging generally between 8 and 25 percent, the strategists point out. Poverty is closely related to the employment situation, as well as changes that marginalize categories of society, such as the very rapid transformation of the agricultural, crafts, and rural sectors.



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Four objectives

The environment should not be considered as an additional constraint, but as a driving force, an asset and an incentive, the strategy argues. Four objectives are set up to promote progress towards sustainability in the economic, social and environmental fields and governance:

- 1) Contribute to economic development by enhancing Mediterranean assets.
- 2) Reduce social disparities by implementing the Millennium Development Goals and strengthen cultural identities.
- 3) Change unsustainable production and consumption patterns and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources.
- 4) Improve governance at the local, national and regional levels.

The MSSD focuses particularly on the integration of environmental concerns into key economic development sectors, while giving due consideration to social and cultural dimensions. As a basis for building a dynamic regional process of sustainable development, it outlines the main needs and challenges in the region, before going on to identifying four major objectives and sets of actions to be carried out in seven basic priority fields of action.

Seven priorities

The seven interdependent priority fields considered essential to make real progress are:

- 1) better management of water resources and demand;
- 2) improved rational use of energy, increased renewable energy use and mitigation of and adaptation to climate change;
- 3) sustainable mobility through appropriate transport management;
- 4) sustainable tourism as a leading economic sector;
- 5) sustainable agriculture and rural development;
- 6) sustainable urban development; and
- 7) sustainable management of the sea, coastal areas and marine resources.

These priority areas were chosen because they are the most threatened by unsustainable trends; they are crucially important areas at the economic and social levels, offering a strong potential for improvement, and they are ripe for action and demonstrate all the shortcomings in governance and integration that need to be corrected if the region is to reverse the current degradation.



The MSSD focuses particularly on the integration of environmental concerns into key economic development sectors, while giving due consideration to social and cultural dimensions

NAPs: Green light to reduce pollution

The Mediterranean marine environment has for long been subjected to considerable stress as a result of pollution caused by human activities. The greatest part of this pollution –around 80% – originates on land and is linked primarily to population pressures, urban growth, industrial and agricultural activities.

One of the major MAP achievements in its ongoing struggle against land-based pollution has been the formulation and adoption by the Contracting Parties of a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) to address pollution from land-based activities.

The SAP is the basis for the implementation of the Land-Based Sources (LBS) Protocol by the Mediterranean countries over the next two decades. It is an action-oriented initiative identifying priority target categories of substances and activities to be eliminated or controlled by the Mediterranean countries within a set time frame. The reduction and phasing out targets are formulated in harmony with related regional and international Conventions and programmes, such as the EU Directives, policies and strategies and the Stockholm and Basel Conventions.

The key land-based activities addressed in the SAP are linked to the reduction of municipal and industrial pollution. Its contribution to the mitigation of municipal pollution focuses on technical assistance, such as guidelines for the construction of treatment plants, capacity building for their operation and maintenance. Since 2003 it has addressed industrial pollution by preparing the policy and technical basis for achieving concrete reductions. A national baseline budget of emissions and releases was developed and tested as the reference point from which a reduction in percentage of pollutant inputs must be achieved.



CP/RAC

THE KEY LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES ADDRESSED IN THE SAP ARE LINKED TO THE REDUCTION OF MUNICIPAL AND INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION.

After the adoption of the SAP, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved a Mediterranean Project for 2001–2005, and contributed US\$6 million for the implementation of a number of activities on the ground. Other donors, such as the Fonds français pour l'environnement mondial (FFEM), brought the total budget to US\$12 million.

The major contribution of the project was the preparation of National Action Plans (NAPs) to address land-based pollution.

NAPs are now complete for all Mediterranean countries. They propose the policy and actions each country can take to reduce pollution in line with SAP targets.

After wide discussion, the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Portoroz recognized the great importance of the NAPs, and formally endorsed them with a view to their integration into national development plans.

A strong foundation

The NAP process made good use of the background work carried out in the framework of MED POL, from guidelines and technical and policy documents to capacity building programmes and information gathered on emissions and releases.

The NAP process has been particularly notable for the level of involvement of all stakeholders. In each country, national and local authorities, the industrial sector and NGOs sat around the same table discussing priorities, possible actions and opportunities for investment. Its success has led to a new GEF Strategic Partnership, including the World Bank and a large number of international organizations, to support the long-term implementation of NAPs.

Additional positive prospects lie in the expected synergy with the new EC "Horizon 2020" initiative, with its very similar pollution reduction objectives and targets for the Mediterranean region.

The NAP implementation process, with its embedded mechanisms for information exchange, technology transfer, promotion of cleaner technology, public participation and sustainable financing, is expected to greatly enhance economic, technological and social development at the local level, thus making a concrete contribution towards sustainable development.



FOUAD ABOUSAMRA



ANGELA LOPEZ GARCIA/UNEP / STILL PICTURES

Protecting Mediterranean biodiversity

The Contracting Parties are committed to take all necessary measures to reverse the decline of the species in the Mediterranean and to give new life to a related Action Plan.

As a response to mitigate the impact of the complex threats to the Mediterranean marine and coastal biological diversity, the Contracting Parties adopted in 2003 the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region (SAP BIO), elaborated through a participatory approach involving the stakeholders at national and regional levels.

The SAP BIO represents a further development of the regional policy on biodiversity. It identifies priority targets, objectives and actions to be taken at regional and national levels with a view to implementing the Specially Protected Areas (SPA) and Biodiversity Protocol, in order to protect and conserve the values of marine and coastal biodiversity.

One of the most important issues addressed by the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol and the SAP BIO is the protection and conservation of endangered or threatened species.

Urgent action to save the monk seal

As part of the Portoroz Declaration, Ministers and government officials from 21 Mediterranean countries and the European Community agreed a series of actions to prevent the extinction and protect the habitat of the Mediterranean monk seal.

Monachus monachus is one of the most endangered mammal species in the world. Its distribution has diminished considerably in recent decades. The bulk of the world population (about 380-500 individuals) is currently limited to only two places. Most are in the eastern Mediterranean (246/300 in Greece). The others are in the north-east Atlantic, off the coast of north-west Africa.

Human activities are the main cause of the decline: deliberate killing, fishing activities and disturbance of their habitats.

The monk seal is legally protected in virtually all countries within its range of distribution. However, important gaps exist in law enforcement. An integrated approach combining awareness campaigns for fishermen and enforcement of appropriate legislation and regulations is urgently needed.

Moreover, the number of protected sites encompassing seal habitats is still extremely limited in the Mediterranean, and existing ones are not always properly managed. The adequate protection and management of important monk seal habitats is recognized as a priority.

In spite of the highly threatened status of the species, there is relatively little basic knowledge on population size and parameters, habitat use and movement. This lack of know-how constitutes a hindrance to the identification of adequate conservation measures. Nevertheless, sound management actions can already be undertaken based on the present knowledge.



CBD-HÁBITAT/FEZ. DE LARRINOA

Partnership, vision and accountability

The Portoroz meeting adopted a major programme of work for MAP in the form of Recommendations. These ranged from a new protocol on integrated management and an extraordinary meeting of Focal Points on evaluation of the Action Plan to adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy, protection of marine turtles, and an intensified effort for public awareness.



PAPADOPOULOS-UNEP / STILL PICTURES

THE NEW INFO/RAC WILL PROMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS RAISING.



JORGE ED ROMAN / UNEP / STILL PICTURES

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES CALLED FOR RULES ON LIABILITY AND COMPENSATION WITH REGARD TO MARINE POLLUTION.



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A NEW MEDITERRANEAN PROTOCOL WILL BE DEVELOPED ON INTEGRATED COASTAL AREA MANAGEMENT

The Portoroz meeting stressed the need for **ratification of MAP legal instruments** and recommended the Contracting parties to accept urgently the amendments to the Convention and main protocols. It urged countries to help each other, particularly the most vulnerable states, to build their technical and logistical capacity, particularly in combating pollution.

The Mediterranean States also recommended starting on the road to a **new Protocol dealing with Integrated Coastal Area Management** "with a view to its consideration and possible approval by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007".

The Contracting Parties also urged new efforts to draw up rules on **liability and compensation**, particularly with regard to pollution of the marine environment as set out in the Barcelona Convention. They suggested establishing an open-ended working group of legal and technical experts to propose appropriate rules and procedures.

The MAP States would also like to develop a full **compliance mechanism** under the Barcelona Convention for adoption at the next meeting and recommended extending the mandate of the working group on the issue.

In dealing with MAP's institutional framework, the Mediterranean States meeting in Portoroz agreed that ERS/RAC should be transformed into **INFO/RAC**. Its work will include developing a common information management infrastructure (MAP Info) to support IC activities across MAP, including the management and periodic upgrading of the UNEP/MAP website, the MED POL Info System and the MAP reporting system.

It will also seek partnerships to promote public participation and raising awareness, and organize the Mediterranean Environmental Award as an annual event.

The Contracting Parties asked the Secretariat to convene an extraordinary meeting of MAP Focal Points to make

RECOMMENDATIONS

recommendations to the **2007 Meeting of the Parties** after reviewing the external evaluation of MAP. A major issue on the Focal Points' agenda will be discussion of a draft **Vision and Strategic Statement**, prepared by the MAP Secretariat.

With regard to the **Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development** (MCSD), the Portoroz meeting recommended the Contracting Parties to adopt its programme of work and provide technical and financial support for the implementation of the MCSD's activities at the regional and national levels. The Recommendations also bring several local authorities, social and economic bodies, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations into the MCSD as representatives of civil society.

MAP will strengthen its **cooperation with the European Union** as a result of another Recommendation, seeking "synergy on strategic matters of common interest" through meetings at the highest level, supporting EC activities on the environment in the Mediterranean region. The Secretariat is to become a major actor in the Euro-Med initiative to "depollute" the Mediterranean by 2020 and establish a joint work programme with the European Environment Agency (EEA) in addition to the existing programme with the EC.

Cooperation with the **Global Environment Facility** (GEF), particularly the Mediterranean Strategy in Partnership "which will substantially contribute to the long-term process of pollution reduction and preservation of biodiversity" was welcomed and endorsed by the Contracting Parties.

Turning to the Protocol on Land-based Sources of Pollution, the Portoroz Meeting urged States to "endorse, support and mobilize the necessary resources" for the implementation of **National Action Plans** (NAPs). They were asked to approve the creation of a regional task force to facilitate cooperation for the transfer of anti-pollution technology, and made a number of recommendations on reducing municipal sewage pollution, air pollution and industrial pollution, and on monitoring.

The Contracting Parties adopted a **Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships** (REMPEC) with the possibility of increasing staff for this purpose in 2008. The Secretariat is to prepare guidelines on pollution from pleasure craft activities [...] so that the next Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points can submit them for adoption by the next Meeting of Contracting Parties.



MAP WILL WORK WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION TO 'DE-POLLUTE' THE MEDITERRANEAN BY 2020

UNEP / STILL PICTURES



COOPERATION WITH THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY ON POLLUTION REDUCTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IS ENVISAGED.

ANGELA LOPEZ GARCIA / UNEP / STILL PICTURES



THE MEETING URGED IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PLANS TO REDUCE POLLUTION FROM LAND-BASED SOURCES.

CERVAL MAURIZIO/UNEP / STILL PICTURES



THE STATES ADOPTED A STRATEGY TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO POLLUTION FROM SHIPS.

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RECOMMENDATIONS



JAN SCHILTHUZEUNEP / STILL PICTURES

STATES RECOMMENDED LEGAL PROTECTION MEASURES FOR MARINE TURTLE NESTING SITES.

The Mediterranean States and the EC approved a number of action plans on **biological diversity and specially protected areas**. In addition to steps to protect the **monk seal**, the States recommended legal protection measures for known **marine turtle** nesting and adjacent sites as well as other areas where the turtles congregate.

The Contracting Parties also suggested pilot studies on tested methods to reduce turtle by-catch and mortality in fisheries.



WATTLUNEP / STILL PICTURES

MAP STATES URGED CREATION AND EXTENSION OF PROTECTED MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS FOR CETACEANS

In implementing the Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Mediterranean sea, the MAP Contracting Parties urged creation and extension of protected marine and coastal areas specifically for **cetaceans**, as well as plans that would put into effect a ban on driftnets.

As part of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Vegetation, the Secretariat was asked to help countries make inventories and maps of **marine meadows and marine vegetation formations**, in particular barrier reefs of *Posidonia* (seagrass) and organogenic surface formations, terraces (platforms with vermitid gastropods covered by soft algae) and certain *Cystoseira* (algae) belts. The States also asked MAP members to take action to conserve **cartilaginous fishes** (Chondrichthyans) and **threatened bird species**, as well as to monitor **invasives**.

Among the sites recommended for inclusion in the protected list, the MAP States singled out:

- the Banc des Kabyles Marine Reserve
- the Habibas Islands
- the Portofino Marine Protected Area.



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PARTIES CALLED FOR ASSESSMENTS OF CARRYING CAPACITY OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES AROUND THE SEA.

To further the Blue Plan/Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC) work on environment and development, the Contracting Parties encourage national and local authorities to undertake assessment of their area's **carrying capacity for tourism activities**, and agreed to support activities to combat **land degradation**.

The Secretariat is to promote the use of carrying capacity assessment as a tool for the sustainable development of tourism, support local authorities in implementing guidelines for the sustainable management of urban water resources, and seek new partnerships with international and regional organizations and institutions on land degradation.

The BP/RAC will focus its thematic activities on areas where MAP can offer added value: sustainable development indicators and trend analysis, inventory of best practices and of policy tools for demand management and integrated development, and sharing of Mediterranean experience.



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STATES AGREED TO SUPPORT ACTIVITIES TO COMBAT LAND DEGRADATION AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN.



INFO/RAC

Lucien Chabason receives MAP Medal

During the Contracting Parties meeting in Portoroz, Slovenia, Mr Lucien Chabason was presented with the MAP Medal in recognition of his sterling and dedicated service as Head of the Secretariat to the Barcelona Convention during his ten years (1994-2004) as MAP Coordinator.

The Medal is awarded by the Contracting Parties to personalities for their contribution to the Mediterranean environment.

Mr Chabason is the new President of Blue Plan, one of MAP's Regional Activity Centres.

Mediterranean Environmental Award

This award was created in 2005 to honour the best films and photographs addressing environmental concerns in the Mediterranean basin.

The first winners, selected from more than 400 works from 61 countries, were announced in Portoroz. They are, left to right: Nicolas Salis (France) for the film *R. Mertonensis*; Christian Ostermann (Germany) for the film *Der durstige Planet – Kampf ums Wasser*; and Leonardo Blanco (Spain) for the photograph *My world*.



INFO/RAC

A sustainable Mediterranean future



Blue Plan, one of MAP's Regional Activity Centres, has launched a definitive and authoritative report on the progress made by the Mediterranean countries in their pursuit of sustainable development, and the challenges that remain. *A Sustainable Future for the Mediterranean* (2005) is the second comprehensive report on environment and development in the Mediterranean Basin prepared by the Blue Plan at the request of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. It follows by 15 years the first such assessment, *Futures of the Mediterranean Basin – the Blue Plan* (1989).

The 2005 report describes the political, financial and cultural barriers to sustainability, such as increasing disparity between the north and south Mediterranean shores, continued population growth of coastal cities and shores, water stress, loss of agricultural lands, waste generation, and expanding maritime traffic. It commends the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) as an important first step to address these problems, but warns that credible *action* to attack the root causes of environmental degradation is long overdue. It calls for more ecological efficiency in sectors such as energy, agriculture, industry, transport and tourism. It recommends increased protection of the coastal regions and strengthened financing for pollution reduction.

The report represents a joint effort by the Blue Plan team, other MAP regional activity centres, and hundreds of experts from around the Mediterranean, with support from the French government, the European Commission, and the European Environment Agency.

The Blue Plan's report analyses the changes that have occurred in the world and in the Mediterranean region over the past 20 years. It extends beyond assessment, diagnosis and warnings. It identifies win-win alternatives and displays firm resolve by calling for action to build a responsible, united and dynamic Mediterranean.

The publications, which is available also in French, was launched in Paris in October, 2005. It was officially presented to the Contracting Parties during their meeting in Portoroz. BP/RAC together with INFO/RAC will launch a publicity exercise to promote the publication particularly in the countries of the Mediterranean.

SCENES FROM COP 14



INFO/RAC