

Background

1. The riparian States of the Mediterranean Sea, fully aware of their responsibility to preserve and develop the entire area in a sustainable way, and recognizing the threat posed by the pollution of the marine environment, agreed in 1975 to launch an Action Plan for the Protection of the Mediterranean Basin (MAP) and, in 1976, to sign a Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution (Barcelona Convention). The Convention entered into force in 1978 and was amended in 1995 to introduce the concept of sustainable development, but the revised text is not in force yet.

2. Recognizing that the land based activities and sources have the highest impact on the marine environment, a Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources (LBS Protocol) was signed in 1980, entered into force in 1983, and was revised in 1996 to better cover industrial activities and to enlarge the coverage to the hydrographic basin. The revised LBS Protocol is not in force yet.

3. The revised LBS Protocol covers not only the Mediterranean Sea itself, but also the entire watershed area within the territories of the riparian states draining into the Mediterranean sea.

4. A Strategic Action Programme to address pollution from land-based activities (SAP MED), which represents the regional adaptation of the principles of the GPA as a follow up to the provisions of the revised LBS Protocol, was adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in 1997. The SAP MED was prepared based on the results of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) which was prepared in 1997 and on a list of pollution hot spots. The SAP MED identifies the major pollution problems of the region, indicates the possible control measures, shows the cost of such measures and establishes a work plan and timetable for their implementation. The time span of the full achievement of the targets of the SAP is 25 years (2025) through the implementation of intermediate targets (2005, 2010, etc.)

5. In order to assist the Mediterranean countries in the long-term implementation of the SAP MED, particularly for the formulation, adoption and implementation of National Actions Plans (NAPs), a three-year GEF Project "Determination of priority actions for the further elaboration and implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Mediterranean Sea" was prepared and approved by the GEF Council.

6. In addition, the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) has decided to support the preparation of pre-investment studies in four countries, capacity building in three countries and the organization of three regional training courses.

7. This training course was organized with the support of FFEM.

Objectives

8. Objectives of the regional training course are:

- To review the guidelines for the river monitoring
- To train national trainers on the matter
- To review state-of-the-art river monitoring in Mediterranean countries
- To agree upon a methodology for the quantification of pollutant inputs from rivers into the Mediterranean sea.

Introduction

9. The Regional Training course on Mediterranean river monitoring was held at the premises of the French Institute for the Environment (IFEN), Orleans, from 18 to 19 December 2003. The training course was bilingual (English/French) with simultaneous interpretation.

Attendance

10. The training course was attended by 11 national experts from 11 Mediterranean countries and 4 trainers. A list of participants is attached as Annex 1 to this report.

Opening and objectives of the training course

11. On 18 December 2003 at 9.15 a.m Mr Philippe Crouzet, IFEN, opened the training course on behalf of the director of the IFEN, who was unable to attend the course due to other commitments. He welcomed the participants and expressed his wishes for the success of the training.

12. Mr Ante Baric, GEF Project Manager welcomed the participants on behalf of Mr Arab Hoballah, Deputy Coordinator of MAP, and himself. He introduced the GEF Mediterranean Project, whose main aim is to create a sound ground at the regional and national levels for the implementation of the revised LBS Protocol and SAP MED. Within the project for the capacity building a series of regional and national training courses were planned, and some of them have been organized so far. The organization of this training course was supported by FFEM, and Mr Baric took this opportunity to thank the French authorities for their support. Finally, Mr Baric expressed his thanks to IFEN, and particularly to Mr Crouzet for the effort and supports he devoted to the organization of the training course, and for hosting the training course.

13. Mr Fouad Abousamra, MED POL Programme Officer, welcomed all participants of the training course on behalf of himself and Mr Civili , MEDPOL Coordinator. He thanked IFEN for hosting the training course. He explained the relations between SAP MED and the revised LBS Protocol with special emphasis on the inclusion of rivers into the monitoring programme. He stressed the importance of rivers as one of the major sources of pollutants to the Mediterranean sea and the necessity of the estimation of inputs of rivers in order to take the convenient measures to reduce their inputs according to the SAP. Finally, he explained the objectives and the structure of the training course. The Agenda of the training course is attached as Annex 2 to this report.
14. All participants introduced themselves in a round table presentation.

Overview of rivers in the Mediterranean

15. Mr Wolfgang Ludwig, CEFREM, gave an overview of the Mediterranean rivers, their characteristics and their inputs in to the Mediterranean Sea. He particularly pointed out problems of the lack of data from the south and east of the Mediterranean, the dispersion of data between different institutions, policies in many Mediterranean countries to keep data on rivers classified, hiding the data on river pollution, and the lack of political will for the establishment of a relevant data bank on rivers. A common Mediterranean goal should be for all data on rivers to be made available.

Presentation of the guidelines for the monitoring of river

16. Mr. Panagiotis Karakatsoulis, introduced an issue on river monitoring that should be considered as an integrated part of the National Water Resource Management policy. He also stressed the importance of the Guidelines for rivers monitoring prepared by MEDPOL as a frame document to be developed in the future according to the specific needs of the countries.
17. Mr. Myltiadis Vassilopoulos, presented first five chapters of the guidelines. The guidelines for rivers monitoring, including an estimation of inputs in to the Mediterranean Sea was prepared in the framework of the GEF project. Its aim is the harmonization of the methodology of rivers monitoring between the Mediterranean Countries. The document comprises elements of the state-of- the-art of river monitoring and overview about the existing methodologies for the quantification of rivers inputs of nutrients and pollutants into the sea.

Estimation of inputs of materials from rivers into the Mediterranean Sea

18. Mr Wolfgang Ludwig, CEFREM, introduced the current situation concerning the estimation of river inputs from the scientific and technical point of view highlighting the positive and negative aspects of each method.

Case study on estimation of inputs from rivers into the Mediterranean Sea

19. Mr. Wolfgang and Mr. Crouzet presented in two separate presentations the French experience in the quantification of the inputs into the Sea of major French rivers, including information on the methodologies, implementation, data base and the reporting system.

Case study: Design of monitoring programme for a transboundary river

20. Mr. Karakatsoulis presented a paper on the Greek experience in the field of the set up of a monitoring programme for a transboundary river between Greece and Bulgaria. He outlined the steps followed to reach an agreement between the two countries and stressed the importance of the political will to reach a consensus on it.

State-of-the-art of river monitoring in the Mediterranean region

21. The representatives of Syria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Israel and Slovenia presented their national experiences in rivers monitoring. The situation differs from country to country according to the national needs which is, in most cases, not in line with the objectives of the SAP. Quantification of rivers inputs is not included in almost all national monitoring programmes

Round table

22. The round table was chaired by Mr. Karakatsoulis. The issues discussed are as follows:

- Integrating surveillance as a management tool within the MED POL mandate
- How to make these activities progress in countries
- Develop data sharing between the Mediterranean countries
- Which role is for MED POL

Conclusions

. The working group, after discussion agreed on the following recommendations:

Question 1: Integrating surveillance as management tool within the MED POL mandate

- MED POL requirements should be integrated in monitoring programmes related to activities exerted on continental activities focusing on rivers inputs into the Mediterranean

Question 2: Make these activities progress in countries

- Build capacities in rivers monitoring oriented towards the estimation of inputs into the Sea (network design, sampling, measurements, data management, data assessment, reporting)

Question 3: Develop data sharing

- Make data sharing as a way of mutual enrichment for countries (win / win strategy).
Progressive set up, without prior calling into question national practices

Question 4: Which role is for MEDPOL

- Co-ordination / Link between countries, link between countries and European institutions, link between EI and international institutions, link between land and sea, referee.

Closure of the training course

24. The training course was closed on the 19th December 2003 at 17:00 hrs.

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Annex I

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ANNEX II**AGENDA****DAY 1****Session I**

- 09:00-09:30 Opening and objectives of the training course
09:30-10:30 Overview of rivers in the Mediterranean
10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

Session II

- 11:00-12:30 Presentation of the guidelines for the monitoring of river
12:30-14:00 Lunch break

Session III

- 14:00-15:30 Estimation of inputs of materials from rivers into the Mediterranean Sea
15:30-16:00 Coffee Break
16:00-17:30 Case study on estimation of inputs of material into the Mediterranean Sea

DAY 2**Session IV**

- 9:00- 10:00 Case study: Design of monitoring programme for a transboundary river
10:00-10:30 State-of-the-art of river monitoring in the Mediterranean region
(presentations by countries representatives)
10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

Session V

- 11:00-13:00 State-of-the-art of river monitoring in the Mediterranean region
(presentations by countries
representatives (cont.)
13:00-14:30 Lunch break

Session VI

- 14:30-15:30 Round table
15:30-16:00 Conclusions

16.00 Closure of the training course

