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ENGLISH



**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

Meeting of MAP Focal Points

Athens (Greece), 21-24 September 2005

**Information Note on the Progress Made  
for the Implementation of a CHM  
on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean**

*Pour des raisons d'économie, ce document sera  
disponible en quantité limitée pendant la réunion.  
Prière de vous munir de cet exemplaire.*

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## **Background**

The extent to which countries perceive benefits from the conservation and sustainable use of their biological resources depends in part on their ability to achieve a fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of such resources. This, in turn, depends on their ability to acquire and develop the knowledge and technologies to add value to these resources.

Scientific and technical cooperation is required to develop joint research programmes and joint ventures for technological development. Such cooperation will foster partnerships between countries and across sectors, involving institutions, enterprises and experts, covering all aspects of the objectives of the Convention and in particular its Protocol concerning specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean, and will bring tangible benefits to the Parties involved.

The clearing-house mechanism provides the means by which the RAC/SPA can promote and facilitate such cooperation. However, in order for a clearing-house to be operational, initial sectorial limitation may be needed by limiting the scope of the topics of the clearing-house mechanism and expanding the number and complexity of functions as experience and resources are developed.

The use of new information technologies, particularly web-based ones, can greatly assist in these efforts to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. These technologies can also foster dialogue with a view to enhancing opportunities for technical and scientific collaboration. Among these new information technologies, those making use of the World Wide Web (WWW) are the most popular and widespread. Indeed, no other technology can reach so many people, in so many different regions at so low a cost. Moreover, no other technology is able to integrate so many other technologies in such a flexible and easy to use manner.

Although a large number of Parties have established national CHMs, and an equally significant number have access to email, very few have established national CHM Websites, the part dedicated to the conservation of marine and coastal biological diversity is not well developed or absent.

### **During the previous biennium (2003-2004)**

RAC/SPA has organised in collaboration with the CBD secretariat a consultation meeting on the harmonization of the implementation of the SPA protocol and the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean region (Spain, Valencia, 20-21 April 2001). The Meeting expressed support for the general concept of setting up a Mediterranean clearing-house mechanism on marine and coastal biological diversity in the Mediterranean. This was subsequently endorsed by the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Contracting Parties to Barcelona Convention who invited RAC/SPA to work in collaboration with CBD Secretariat on the establishment of the Mediterranean CHM that will be integrated with the global CHM of CBD.

An ad-hoc meeting was organised to draw up a roadmap to conceive and to implement the Mediterranean CHM on marine and coastal biological diversity. The Mediterranean CHM will constitute the nodal of a network linking between them national focal point for SPA, the conservationists, researchers and the global CHM and other initiative at national and regional level. In this framework, RAC/SPA will play the role of a catalyser and animator and will coordinate the activities of this network.

### **During the actual biennium (2004-2005)**

A feasibility study was performed to produce an overview, operational plan and suggest technical solutions for setting up the Mediterranean CHM on marine and coastal biological diversity and for link it in a harmonised way to CBD/CHM services developed nationally or globally and to other relevant networks that use biodiversity information mainly at European level. The feasibility study was based on two major initiatives, the first at international level on the global CHM of the CBD and the second at regional level on the European CHM of EC.

The study identified the EC CHM as model to be used to develop the Mediterranean CHM taking into account the similarities between the two cases. The Mediterranean CHM website should contain all national biodiversity-related information that is required to assist policy makers and interested stakeholders to meet obligations under the Barceloan convention and in particular its Protocol SPA/BD. There are almost an infinite number of ways to organize this information and to make it easily accessible. Normally, categories to organize information should comply with the standard and norms established at international level and may include the Protocol, national CHM Services, National Contribution, Partnerships, Links and News (see page 5 and 6).

The Mediterranean CHM website will be linked to the national CHM's, the EC CHM and the global CHM.

### **The proposed structure of the Mediterranean CHM on marine and coastal biological diversity**

The study identified the structure of the European CHM as the appropriate platform to be used to develop the Mediterranean CHM through an adaptation using the findings of the feasibility study.

Due to the fact that the EC is Party to Barcelona Convention, the use free of charge the tools (PTK) and the modules developed by the EEA (the Agency in charge of the EC CHM) will be an advantage to implement quickly the Mediterranean CHM and to save fund.

As the European Commission (EC) is committed to facilitate public access to information relevant to biodiversity conservation, the EC CHM is a one-stop-shop for such information. It provides access to information on policies, legislation, funding

opportunities, databases, and sources of expertise held by the European Union institutions. It provides links to other institutions and organizations (governments, private and NGOs) keeping useful information elsewhere in Europe and around the world. It also links to web sites of global organizations such as the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The EC CHM portal is developed on an open source base. All the software used is *open source* and its reuse should only acknowledge the original contributors. A kit was developed to serve people that want to install from scratch a running portal and later customize the graphical interface and its behaviour in order to adjust it to the own needs.

It provides tools (such as search facilities) to find information from various perspectives to meet the needs of different users. The EC CHM portal allows to find out what information is available and to access it. Data and information available through the EC CHM is however kept and maintained by the holders of the original sources of information. The structure of the web site guides the user in the search for information.

The structure of the EC CHM portal largely follows the four strategic goals of the CBD's Clearing-House Mechanism.

At present, there are several other toolkits available to assist Parties to develop and establish national CHM websites. These toolkits vary in sophistication, support and purpose. Nevertheless, they can offer substantial technical guidance, instruction, software and support to Parties establishing Websites.

A EC CHM PTK (Portal Toolkit) was created to assist Parties and Governments to establish their respective national Clearing-House Mechanisms (CHMs). Such EC CHM PTK allows the interested users to build their own CHM sites in an easy way, focusing on the content more than on the technical aspects of the site.

## **Follow up**

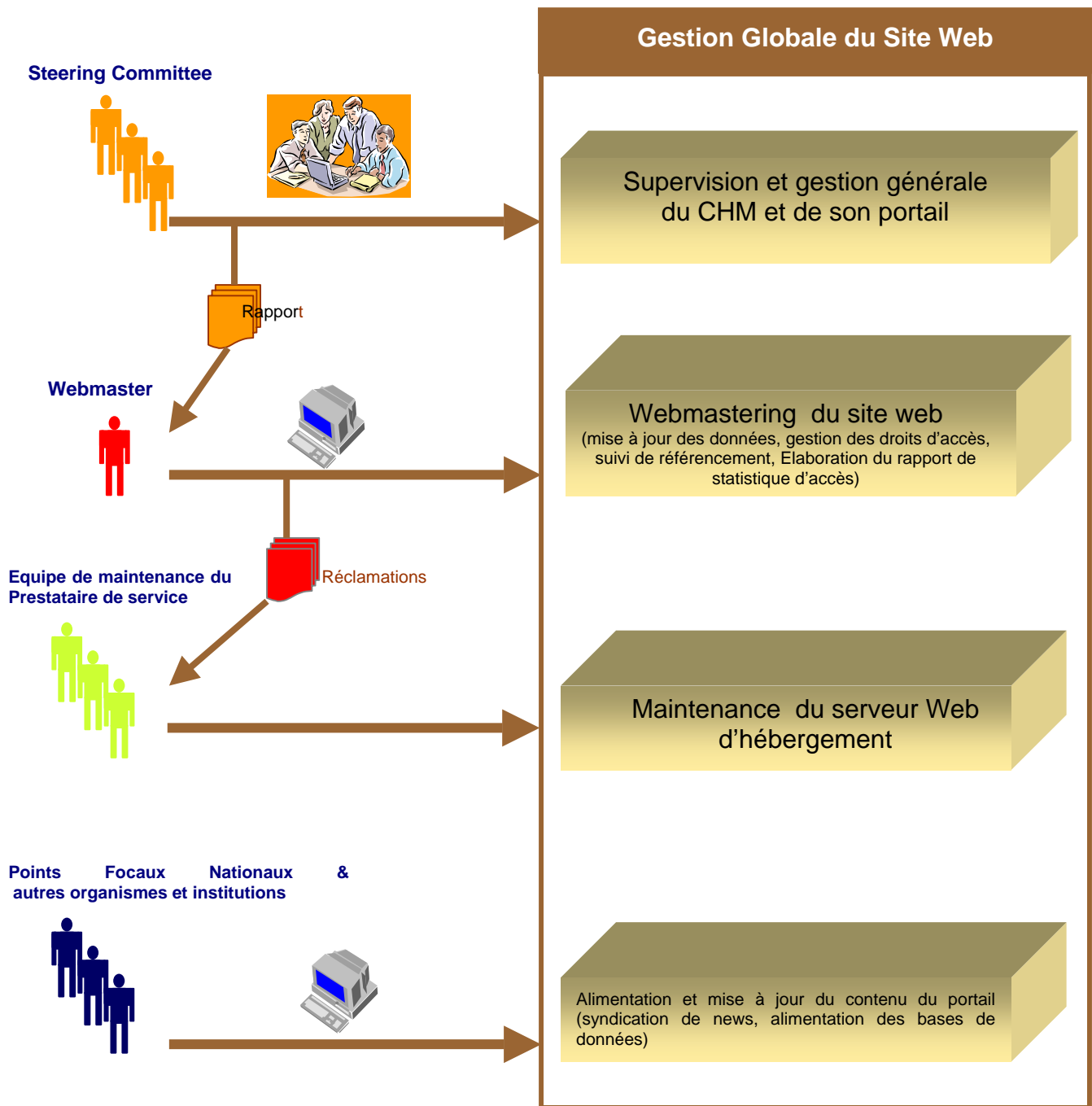
RAC/SPA can use the EC CHM PTK to build the CHM website and adapted to its goal the conservation of marine and coastal biological diversity. By using the EC CHM structure, the interoperability is self-assured with the global CBD with EC CHM and with the Mediterranean countries members of EC. Such approach will allow RAC/SPA to use its resources to elaborate the content rather to focus on the technical aspects of the website .

RAC/SPA will collaborate with EEA in the development of solutions and support packages to assist Parties and Governments by the adaptation of such PTK to build up national CHM on marine and coastal biodiversity in the Mediterranean countries. The interoperability between national CHMs, the Mediterranean CHM, the EC CHM and the global one (of the CBD) is guaranteed. In this framework, RAC/SPA could play a major role for the development and the implementation of national CHM by assisting Mediterranean countries to develop firstly a national one focusing on marine and coastal biodiversity.

To provide basic information for the implementation of the Mediterranean CHM, RAC/SPA will launch the evaluation, the structuring and the updating of two main databases: the database on marine and coastal specially protected areas and the legal database on the protection of the environment and in particular the conservation of marine and coastal environment at national level. The databases will be posted on the CHM Portal (see page 7).

RAC/SPA has started to develop a GIS for the Mediterranean region (MedGIS) including a dynamic Atlas made available on Internet (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.270/Inf.28). That GIS will have links with the future Mediterranean CHM.

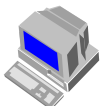
A new version of the EC CHM is under testing and RAC/SPA is invited to a meeting in September 2005 in EEA premises to discuss further the use of the new version EC CHM platform as a base for implementing the Mediterranean CHM.



Steering Committee



Webmaster



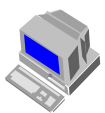
Equipe de maintenance du Prestataire de service



Réclamations



Points Focaux Nationaux & autres organismes et institutions



**Gestion Globale du Site Web**

Supervision et gestion générale du CHM et de son portail

Webmastering du site web (mise à jour des données, gestion des droits d'accès, suivi de référencement, Elaboration du rapport de statistique d'accès)

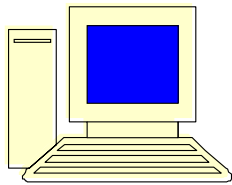
Maintenance du serveur Web d'hébergement

Alimentation et mise à jour du contenu du portail (syndication de news, alimentation des bases de données)

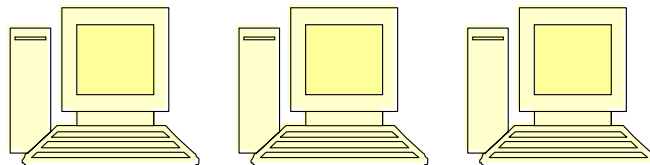
ASP-MEDCHM : MECANISME D'ECHANGE SUR LA BIODIVERSITE MARINE ET COTIERE ET SUR LES AIRES SPECIALEMENT PROTEGEES EN MEDITERRANEE								
CAR/ASP	PNUe-MAP	MEDMPA.NET	CHM-CBD			Recherche	Go	Français <b>Anglais</b>
Home	Login	A propos du CHM	News	Agenda	Forum	Aide/FAQ	Stemap	Mon CHM
<b>CADRE LEGAL</b>				<p align="center"><b>BIENVENUE SUR LE PORTAIL DU MECANISME D'ECHANGE SUR LA DIVERSITE BIOLOGIQUE MARINE ET COTIERE EN MEDITERRANEE</b></p> <p><b>NEWS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .....</li> <li>• .....</li> <li>• .....</li> </ul> <p><b>AGENDA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .....</li> <li>• .....</li> <li>• .....</li> </ul>				
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<b>INFORMATIONS</b>								
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Espèces méditerranéennes protégées (plans d'action régionaux et nationaux)</li> </ul>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans d'action et stratégies nationales</li> </ul>								
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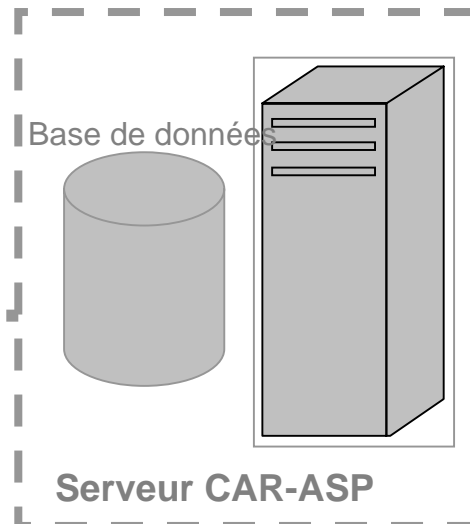
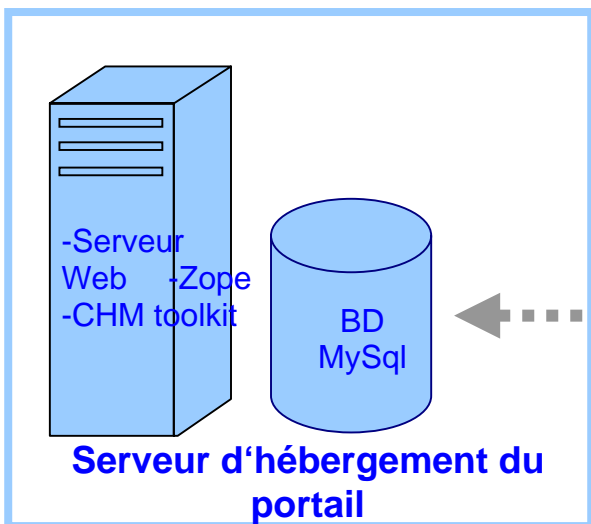
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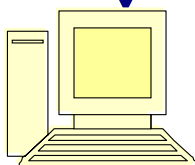
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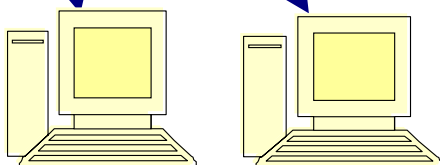
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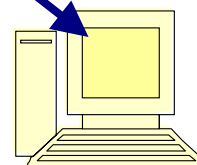
Internet



Autres organismes et institutions



Points Focaux Nationaux



Internaute Anonyme