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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

13th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission
on Sustainable Development
Cairo, Egypt, 28-30 September 2009

REPORT OF THE 13th MEETING OF THE MCSD STEERING COMMITTEE

**Delegates are kindly requested to bring their documents to the meeting.
Documents will be distributed on CD Rom**

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Report of the 13th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee
Athens, Greece, 30 and 31 March 2009

Introduction

1. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD), the 13th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the MCSD was held at the premises of the MAP Coordinating Unit, in Athens, Greece, on 30 and 31 March 2009.
2. The list of participants is included as **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

3. Mr Ufuk Kucukay (Turkey), Chairperson of the MCSD Steering Committee, opened the meeting at 9.30 am on Monday 30 March 2009 and welcomed the participants.
4. Mr Paul Mifsud, MAP Coordinator, also welcomed the participants and conveyed the excuses of the members of the Steering Committee who could not be present, namely the representatives of Spain and UMCE-BusinessMed, and Mr Sahibi (Morocco), who had been appointed by his Government to another assignment and whose replacement had not yet been nominated. He noted that the main document before the Steering Committee was the "Report by the Secretariat for the 13th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee" (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG. 332/2/COR.1), the various chapters of which related to the different items on the Committee's agenda.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

5. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda and the annotated provisional agenda contained in documents UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG. 332/1 and 3, respectively. The agenda of the meeting is attached as **Annex II** to this report.

Agenda item 3: Progress report on MSSD activities

6. Mr Mifsud, with reference to chapter II and Annex III of the Secretariat's report, briefly reviewed the findings of the preliminary progress report submitted by the consultant reviewing and assessing progress in relation to National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs) and the related initiatives. The review, based on a questionnaire and focussing on significant developments in 2006-08 and new initiatives in 2009, was intended to identify successful strategic frameworks for the implementation of NSSDs, as well as gaps and weaknesses. The exercise had been hindered by the limited response to the questionnaire and the uneven nature of the information provided. Although progress had been noted in a small number of countries, there were three countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Lebanon) in which the process for the development of NSSDs had come to a halt. The funding available to the Secretariat to provide assistance to these countries was being redeployed to support other countries that have already prepared their NSSDs, to launch studies on implementation of their NSSDs and adaptation to climate change. In reply to a request for clarification, he added that the Secretariat could only begin its assistance activities funded from

external sources when a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) had been signed with the country in question.

7. Mr Tarik Kupusovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina) said that, his country regretted the delay in formulating and implementing its NSSD and recognized that progress had been very slow since the commitment to develop NSSDs had been made at the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Portoroz. He explained that the delay was due to internal reasons, in particular the fact that the 2008-12 National Development Strategy had not yet reached the stage at which international commitments could be taken on board.

8. Mr Mitja Bricelj (Slovenia) observed that, despite the investment in time, energy and financial resources, the response from countries remained weak and the data were not therefore available to provide a clear picture of NSSD implementation in the region. However, expectations were high, as was demand, in view of the crucial implications of climate change for economic and social development. The MCS D therefore needed to focus on how it could enhance its impact by being solution-oriented and avoiding discussions that were merely academic and theoretical. The gaps that had been identified were huge, and were not confined to developing countries. The dual problems of the economic crisis and climate change constituted a huge challenge for the countries in the region. The MSC D was the only body that was in a position to assist countries throughout the region to develop an appropriate collective response to the problems that they were facing. However, in order to do so, it needed to develop a vision that focussed on the sustainable use and development of the region's assets, without which there would be little hope for the future. Such a vision lay precisely within the mandate of the Barcelona Convention and the MCS D, which therefore needed to take the lead in pointing the way towards appropriate and sustainable change. He emphasized that one of the most effective ways in which this could be done was through the adoption of a subregional approach, which offered several advantages, including the commonality of conditions and interests of the countries concerned. He cited as an example the subregional initiative in the Adriatic, which was bringing together large and small countries at different levels of development through a common vision based, among other instruments, on the EU Marine Strategy and the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Various MAP components were already successfully applying subregional approaches for the implementation of the respective Protocols, including REMPEC, SPA/RAC and PAP/RAC, while the ecosystem approach required a subregional focus. The subregional approach offered the advantage that it was more effective than focussing on individual countries, while requiring the same level of resources.

9. Mr Henri-Luc Thibault (Blue Plan), while agreeing that it would be valuable to evaluate the implementation of NSSDs at the regional level, wondered whether the method adopted to carry out the assessment was appropriate. It was expecting a lot of an expert hired specifically for the task to produce effective evaluations of national situations relating to the formulation and implementation of NSSDs, particularly as the primary source of information was a questionnaire to which many of the countries concerned might not have responded, or might only have provided incomplete answers. In his view, a more effective approach, which had proved its worth in evaluating the implementation of the French NSSD, was peer review, with the involvement of reviewers from other countries, and even other regions. However, assessment by several peer reviewers required a higher level of resources than the hiring of a single expert. Moreover, a crucial point was that the type of review exercise in which the Secretariat was engaged was unlikely to be successful unless it was undertaken in response

to a specific demand. If this demand was only evident in a small number of countries, the Secretariat should work with those countries and focus on the others at an appropriate time.

10. Mr Mifsud welcomed the constructive comments made concerning the subregional approach and alternative methods of assessment and evaluation, including peer review, and agreed that they should be given full consideration. He noted that two levels of assessment were envisaged of the MCSD and its work: the first concerned the formulation and implementation of NSSDs in the last five years, and the second in 2010-11 consisted of an overall review of the MSSD, as provided for in the MSSD itself. With regard to the identification and use of regional assets as the way forward in response to the current economic and ecological crises, he noted that this was already integral to the MSSD, under which the thematic priorities included the principal regional challenges, with particular reference to energy, climate change, tourism, biodiversity and urban transport, of which, for example, tourism and biodiversity were among the main regional assets. The MSSD was a framework document that should be used as a roadmap. The Blue Plan was very active through its work on indicators in assessing the extent to which the objectives of the MSSD were being achieved, and the information obtained through this work would be vital in the overall review of the MSSD that was to be carried out over the next two years.

Agenda item 4: Activities by MAP components in support of the MSSD

11. The representatives of the MAP components who were present briefly reviewed the activities undertaken in support of the implementation of the MSSD.

12. Mr Thibault recalled that the Blue Plan was preparing a major stocktaking paper on the situation with regard to climate change in the region, which would be presented at the meeting of the MCSD in June. It was the first such synthesis paper covering the region as a whole and its findings had been discussed at a regional seminar held in Marseilles in October 2008. The main conclusion was that the Mediterranean as a whole would be a hot spot of climate change, characterized in particular by a reduction in the level of precipitation and the more frequent occurrence of extreme climatic events. What was particularly important about the Marseilles seminar was that it had been the first occasion on which all those concerned from countries throughout the region had met to discuss the issue of climate change. When the countries met in the context of other Conventions, including those covering climate change and biodiversity, they tended to be divided into different regional groupings, such as Europe, Africa and the Arab States. This meant that the MCSD could play an extremely important and unique role in bringing the countries of the region together on these crucial issues. In particular, it would be especially useful if, within the context of the MCSD, work could be undertaken on adapting and applying the various existing climate change models to the situation in the Mediterranean. The Blue Plan was clearly willing to support such an activity within the context of the MCSD, but it should be piloted by a country in order to demonstrate the shared will to engage in this exercise. Mr Thibault went on to review briefly the activities of the Blue Plan in the areas of urban mobility, tourism and agriculture and rural development, outlining the case studies carried out, the regional seminars held or planned and the publications prepared. In conclusion, he emphasized that the Blue Plan seized every opportunity to disseminate and communicate its work. One particularly important example had been the distribution of the Blue Plan's prospective scenarios for the Mediterranean to all the Heads of State participating in the Paris Summit of the Union for the Mediterranean. The document had emphasized the role of the MCSD and had been the only synthesis paper available covering the environmental and sustainable development situation in the region as a whole. In addition, he emphasized that the role of the MCSD was becoming more firmly established at the sectoral level. At the

meeting of Mediterranean ministers responsible for water held in Jordan in 2008 it had been decided to develop a Mediterranean Water Strategy covering the period up to 2025, which made explicit reference to the MSSD. Similarly, at the meeting of Mediterranean Ministers of Agriculture held in Zaragoza in February 2009 the MSSD had provided a point of reference for future planning at the regional level.

13. Mr Abdelrahmen Gannoun (Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre – SPA/RAC) recalled that biodiversity was one of the seven priority areas for action identified in the MSSD and that the Strategic Action Programme on Biodiversity (SAP/BIO) had been developed with the dual objective of the protection of marine and coastal biodiversity and the rational exploitation of natural resources. There had been a relatively important loss of biodiversity over recent years and it was an important objective that this loss should be stopped. Another important objective, in the context of the rational exploitation of natural resources, was to regulate the development of aquaculture, which was playing an increasingly important role in food security both globally and within the region. With a view to the implementation of the SAB/BIO, emphasis was being placed on the re-establishment of the consultative committee and the networks of national correspondents, together with the launching of the major MED/MPAnet project financed by the GEF for the development of a strategic partnership for the Mediterranean Sea. Assistance was being provided to countries which so requested for the management of existing specially protected areas and for the creation of new areas. SPA/RAC was also trying to act as a catalyst at the subregional level by encouraging countries to make proposals to the IMO for the establishment of new high seas marine protected areas, of which only one currently existed in the Mediterranean, namely the Pelagos sanctuary involving Monaco, France and Italy. Certain of the existing action plans in the field of biodiversity, such as those relating to marine turtles, marine birds and monk seals, were being updated and a new action plan was being developed for the conservation of the coralligenous. The Centre was also strengthening its collaboration with other Convention secretariats and national and international institutions, and particularly with the General Fishing Commission for the Mediterranean. Finally, SPA/RAC was continuing to organize training activities and to provide technical assistance to countries.

14. Mr Fouad Abousamra (MEDPOL) recalled the parallel but converging elements of the process that was being followed to reduce land-based pollution of the Mediterranean. The policy element of this process consisted of the formulation of National Action Plans (NAPs) by all Mediterranean countries to combat pollution from land-based sources, for which assistance was being provided. A differentiation approach had also been developed over the past year designed to take into account the differing situations of the countries in the region and to ensure fairness and equity in the implementation of the NAPs. This approach was based on the establishment of emission limit values, which had to be achieved, although the timeframe for their achievement varied according to the country concerned. The financial component of the process was based on reinforcing national capacities to achieve an appropriate blend of financial instruments, both local and international, for the implementation of the 44 'bankable' projects that had been identified by countries in collaboration with the European Investment Bank. The third element, following the entry into force of the LBS Protocol in June 2008, consisted of the development within one year of its entry into force, as required by the Protocol, of a regional plan setting out measures and timeframes for the implementation of the Protocol. In this context, three specific regional plans were being proposed covering the reduction of BOD from wastewater treatment plants, DDT and pesticides and Annex I compounds under the Stockholm Convention. In addition, MEDPOL was contributing to the development of a Mediterranean water strategy, with particular reference to seawater

desalination plants, the numbers of which were increasing rapidly in the Mediterranean in order to counter water shortages. In particular, Algeria was developing a major desalination programme. The main environmental hazard associated with desalination plants consisted of the release of brine, which was highly detrimental to local flora, and particularly to *Posedonia* meadows.

15. Mr De Villamore Martín (Cleaner Production Regional Activity Centre – CP/RAC) described the activities of CP/RAC to promote sustainable consumption and production (SCP) in the region, in accordance with the MSSD. Recalling the steep rise in the emission of greenhouse gasses in recent years, he referred to CP/RAC's activities to demonstrate to governments, institutions and the private sector the financial and environmental benefits of the application of SCP, including the GRECO seminar held in Barcelona in November 2008. Several projects were being undertaken to build capacities for cleaner production and the sustainable management of hazards and chemicals, including one on the sustainable management of industrial areas in Tunis and another on integrated waste management in the olive oil industry in Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. Workshops and other activities were also being carried out to create appropriate national legal and institutional frameworks for SCP, including the requirement for the use of BATs and BEPs as a condition for issuing operating permits, and the promotion of eco-labelling. Further activities were focussed on the carbon footprint, a tool making the link between the patterns of consumption and production and the emissions of GHG, sustainable public procurement and the promotion of change in consumer behaviour, including a video and a database on sustainable consumption of products. With a view to disseminating the message more widely, CP/RAC was continuing to carry out research and develop a public debate on the critical importance of changing the production and consumption system in order to reverse environmental degradation and social inequalities and to fight against climate change. In this respect, the Centre had organized the first Mediterranean Roundtable on SCP that joined experts from public administrations, civil society, non-governmental organisations, business and industrial sectors, universities as well as MAP components and international agencies from across the Mediterranean.

16. Mr Ivica Trumbic (Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre – PAP/RAC) emphasized that in the field of integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), which was one of the highest priorities of the MSSD, the major achievement had been the adoption of the ICZM Protocol following six years of negotiation. Although the Protocol had not yet entered into force, it had been agreed that PAP/RAC should proceed with activities for its implementation. These included the development of a toolkit for the implementation of the Protocol, the preparation of an explanatory guide, the implementation of training activities and the design of a brochure. Although a number of countries had set in motion the process of ratification, the first ratification of the Protocol was still awaited. To assist in this process support was being provided to a number of countries, including Croatia, for the preparation of impact studies showing the benefits and costs of implementing the Protocol. A start had also been made on the development of a reporting format for the Protocol. Within the context of the instrument, several projects had been elaborated and submitted to financing institutions. He added that PAP/RAC was continuing its coastal area management projects (CAMPS), of which five had been completed or were in full implementation. CAMPS were one of the longest-standing MAP activities and played an important role in demonstrating how effect could be given to the ICZM Protocol.

17. During the discussion that followed these presentations, all the speakers welcomed the quantity and variety of the activities undertaken in support of the implementation of the MSSD. It was emphasized that it was now urgent to take a major step forward to increase momentum

in response to the gaps that existed in countries at all levels of development and the global challenges that were being faced throughout the region. It was necessary to ensure that all the products of the MAP components were sufficiently attractive and integrated to encourage application by decision-makers and stakeholders in all Mediterranean countries. In their present form, many of the products were too sectoral to achieve broad application and dissemination. The Secretariat should therefore prepare a very concise and structured paper bringing together the lessons learned and the gaps identified as a means of showing countries the best way forward in the current crisis situation. Greater emphasis also needed to be placed on developing innovative ways of 'selling' the high-quality products offered by MAP and its components. Once again, this process would be facilitated through the adoption of a subregional approach wherever possible as the most effective vehicle for the provision of clear guidance to the countries concerned. It was added that, where difficulties of implementation were being experienced at the national level, the initial focus should be on areas and activities in relation to which it would be easiest to mobilize national stakeholders to engage in collaboration with neighbouring countries and at the regional level.

18. It was also recalled that the MCSD could play an important role in ensuring the adaptation and application of available climate change models, most of which tended to cover northern Europe, to the variety of situations found within the region. Local authorities were already engaged in this exercise with a view to finding better ways of focusing on the situation as it affected the specific conditions that prevailed within Mediterranean as a whole. This was particularly urgent as it appeared that the Mediterranean was likely to be affected more severely by climate change than its northern neighbours, and indeed would become a climate change hot spot. Moreover, the timing of the MCSD meeting in June was particularly important in view of the timeframe for the post-Kyoto process. Negotiations were likely to be finalized over the summer in preparation for the UNFCCC meeting in Copenhagen in November. With its very broad and representative composition, backed up by the political support of the Contracting Parties, the MCSD should therefore release a strong statement on the urgency of the situation and the direction that should be taken in Copenhagen. The statement could then be released and widely disseminated well in time for the Copenhagen summit.

19. Mr Mifsud added that, although progress had clearly been made and some excellent work had been carried out by the MAP components, there was still a need for greater coordination between the work of the various centres with a view to achieving a more integrated approach overall. Moreover, certain components were promoting their findings and products more effectively than others. This was therefore another area in which improvement was needed. He observed in this respect that the application of the ecosystem approach called on all the MAP components to work together more effectively, as well as focussing on implementation at the subregional level.

Agenda item 5: Functioning of the MCSD

20. Mr Mifsud recalled that, as approved by the Contracting Parties in decision IG 17/5 on the Governance paper, the membership of the MCSD was being expanded by the inclusion of three new categories: the scientific community, intergovernmental organizations and eminent experts in the topics on the agenda of MCSD meetings. The last meeting of the Bureau in February had nominated UNWTO, CEDARE and the World Bank in the intergovernmental category, but had called for further nominations in the other two new categories. For that purpose, it had extended its deadline for nominations until the end of April, with the

nominations to be approved by electronic means. The Steering Committee was therefore invited to put forward proposals for suitable nominations.

21. During the discussion of this subject, it was agreed that experts on the specific subject of adaptation to climate change did not really exist, although there were plenty of experts on the broader issue of climate change itself, as well as on very important issues closely related to climate change, such as water management, energy, transport and tourism, on all of which it was becoming more urgent to develop pragmatic collective responses.

Agenda item 6: Thematic Programme of Work of the MCSD

22. Mr Mifsud observed that the main subject to be discussed by the MCSD was intended to feed into the ministerial discussion at the next meeting of the Contracting Parties. It was also the aim that the MCSD should address thematic subjects as the UNCSD so that a Mediterranean regional perspective could be put forward at the global level. He added that the thematic clusters that were being examined in the context of the MCSD's Programme of Work up to 2011 had been decided upon five years ago by the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Portoroz. It might therefore also be necessary to examine other issues that had taken on greater importance over time. He noted that most of the thematic issues examined by the MCSD were being covered by the Blue Plan and that the next meeting of the MCSD would identify thematic issues that were to be addressed in subsequent years. Mr Thibault observed in this respect that, in addition to the thematic clusters identified in the context of the MCSD, the Blue Plan's programme of work was also designed to complement that of the UNCSD so that the themes covered at the regional level were in coherence with those examined by the global body. Moreover, there were a number of important areas on which the MCSD had focussed in the past on which work was continuing, with particular reference to water management, urban development, transport, waste management and agriculture. Work in these areas was carried out in response to the increasingly pressing demand at the regional level, such as the call by the responsible ministers to develop a Mediterranean water strategy. Mr Abousamra added that work on the theme of water should include the issue of wastewater treatment, which both reduced the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea and offered an additional water resource.

23. Mr Bricelj believed that all were agreed on the thematic clusters, with the adoption of certain additional themes, and particularly water. However, he felt that it was necessary to achieve greater efficiency in the work carried out through a focus on transboundary issues, particularly at the subregional level, in which context it would be possible to make proposals that were more complete and better adapted to the specific subregional situation of, for example, North Africa, where the conditions differed markedly, from those of Southern Europe. Moreover, although there were signs of greater cooperation between experts at the regional level on sectoral issues, and particularly on water and agriculture, there was still a major gap in the development of an integrated approach on all of the elements that would be needed to constitute an appropriate response to the pressing challenges of sustainable development and climate change.

24. Several speakers agreed that it made a lot of sense to focus on the subregional level. The application of the ecosystem approach was demonstrating that action at the subregional level was effective, and certain MAP components were now giving greater emphasis to subregional action, such as the initiative by SPA/RAC to promote the creation of high seas marine protected areas. Moreover, the application of the ecosystem approach, which had not been taken into account when the MCSD programme of work was adopted, by definition

required all the elements of the ecosystem to be taken into account, and therefore required all the various issues to be approached in a coordinated manner.

Agenda item 7: In-depth assessment of the MSSD

25. Mr Mifsud indicated that the MSSD called for an in-depth assessment of the Strategy every five years, and that such an assessment had been included in the MCSD Programme of Work. The main objective was to assess the level of implementation of the MSSD over the past five years, including the progress made in the achievement of its objectives and the activities carried out in the MSSD's seven priority fields of action. The assessment would be undertaken by a consultant, for which purpose terms of reference had been prepared by the Executive Coordination Panel.

26. In the discussion of the proposed terms of reference of the consultant, it was agreed that too much emphasis had been placed on qualifications in economics, rather than social sciences. It was further agreed that the assessment should focus on the practical lessons learned over the past five years and should, if possible, be undertaken by a person or persons with practical experience of the implementation of a national strategy for sustainable development, so as to avoid insofar as possible an academic and theoretical approach. While it might be interesting if the assessment were carried out by someone from outside the region, it should be a requirement that the consultant had a good knowledge of regional issues and priorities.

Agenda item 8: 13th Meeting of the MCSD

27. Mr Mifsud recalled that the previous meeting of the Steering Committee in June 2008 had decided that the theme of the next meeting of the MCSD would be "Climate Change Adaptation – Experiences and Strategies in the Mediterranean", which was in line with UNEP's Climate Change Strategy. Representatives of the UNEP Climate Change Adaptation Unit (CCAU), UNFCCC, World Bank/GEF and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) had agreed to participate in the meeting. He further recalled that a Task Force composed of a limited number of MCSD members had been set up to steer the preparatory process for the meeting of the MCSD. As usual, there would be break-out sessions that would explore a number of specific issues related to the main theme of the meeting. The expected outcomes of the meeting of the MCSD included recommendations to the Contracting Parties, the approval of the MCSD's new programme of work and its new terms of reference, the adoption of the reports on the results of the thematic working groups and the approval of the new members of the MCSD. In particular, it would be important for the MCSD to adopt a communiqué containing a message from the region in the lead up to the UNFCCC meeting in Copenhagen in November, as well as to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, which would be held prior to that of the UNFCCC in November. The meeting of the MCSD could also be decisive in formulating a roadmap for the regional response to climate change.

28. During the discussion on the theme of the MCSD meeting, the CP/RAC representative expressed the opinion that it should not be confined to adaptation to climate change, but should also include the crucial issue of mitigation. It was pointed out that, according to Blue Plan figures, the emission of greenhouse gases had tripled over the past 20 years in certain cases in the region. The IPCC had indicated that the Mediterranean would be one of the regions that was worst affected by climate change, with around 60 per cent of its population being subject to water scarcity. The primary objective of the Kyoto process was the reduction

of emissions. The message from the Mediterranean on climate change sent to the IFCCC conference in November should therefore cover both of the closely inter-related aspects of the problem, namely adaptation and mitigation, and the MCSD should address the issue of the emission of greenhouse gases, both from the production and the consumption side. That would enable to tackle the misperception that the industrialized countries appeared to be stabilizing their emissions of greenhouse gases, when that was in large part due to the delocalization of production to developing countries with lower environmental and social standards, which at the same time contributed to the increase of GHG emissions associated to the growth of transport and trade flows. Several speakers said that, while mitigation would certainly be addressed within the context of the MCSD, it should be given greater priority but there was no need to make such a clear distinction between what were in practice very closely inter-related aspects of the same problem. CP/RAC pointed out that although both approaches were complementary they presented clear differences in the way to address climate change in the Mediterranean. In this respect, while adaptation focus on preparing and accommodating the region to the effects of climate change, mitigation focus further on tackling the reduction of GHG causing it.

29. Other speakers noted that, while not wishing to minimize the vital importance of mitigation, there appeared to be a more pressing demand among the Contracting Parties, and particularly among Ministries of the Environment, for the focus to be directed towards adaptation to climate change. This was partly because action on adaptation to climate change could be taken more easily at the national and local levels, for example through ICZM and land-use planning, while mitigation measures required broad-ranging initiatives at the international level, strong interministerial commitment and high investments. According to those speakers, there was therefore a certain realism in the MCSD focussing on adaptation. On that, CP/RAC commented that the focus of the MCSD as independent board joining both experts from public administrations, businesses, NGOs, local networks, scientific community and other representatives of the Mediterranean civil society had to be put on identifying the real needs and challenges to fight against climate change in order to attain sustainable development for the Mediterranean and to give advice on them to the countries further than adapting the MCSD focus on those issues that could be more easy to discuss by countries. Finally, it was clear that action was required in terms of mitigation. If the Mediterranean were to review its action in this context, and focus more fully on the exchange of technology between developed and developing countries and the promotion of financing mechanisms to encourage the introduction of more environmentally friendly production techniques, it could perhaps become a model in this respect. Taking into account the views expressed during the discussion, it was agreed that the main theme would remain adaptation to climate change, but that one of the break-out sessions, led by CP/RAC, would cover mitigation.

Agenda item 10: Adoption of conclusions

30. As there was no other business to be examined (agenda item 10), the meeting moved to the consideration of its draft conclusions. The conclusions, as amended in accordance with the discussion, are contained in **Annex III** to this report.

Closure of the meeting

31. Following the usual exchange of courtesies, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed on Tuesday 31 March 2009 at 11.30 am.

ANNEX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**
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Annex II

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Introduction

1. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) a meeting of the Steering Committee of the MCSD is being convened on 30 and 31 March, 2009 at the premises of the Coordinating Unit (48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue, Athens, Greece).

2. The following annotations to the provisional agenda were prepared by the Secretariat to assist the meeting of the Steering Committee in its deliberations.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

3. The meeting will be opened at 09:30 hrs on Monday 30 March 2009, by the President of the Steering Committee.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work

4. The Provisional Agenda prepared by the Secretariat, was distributed as document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.332/3.

5. The meeting will review and adopt the Provisional Agenda. Simultaneous interpretation in English and French will be available for all sessions.

6. It is expected that the Steering Committee will tackle all items of the Provisional Agenda during its one and a half day meeting including the adoption of a list of conclusions. It is envisaged to close the meeting of the Steering Committee at mid-day on 31 March, 2009. The report of the meeting will be prepared by the Secretariat and distributed to the members of the Steering Committee for comments and approval through electronic means.

Agenda item 3: Progress Report on MCSD activities

7. The Secretariat will present the "*Progress Report by the Secretariat for the 13th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee*" UNEP (DEPI)/MED WG.332/2.

8. The members of the Steering Committee are invited to comment on the progress report on the implementation of the activities carried out since the last meeting of the Steering Committee on 19 – 20 June, 2008 in Athens. In particular the Steering Committee is expected to consider the progress report with respect to:-

- National Strategies and Initiatives for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region;
- Support to NSSD formulation and implementation;
- NSSD and Adaptation to Climate Change in three countries (Egypt, Syria, Montenegro).

9. The meeting is expected to have an exchange of views on these issues and provide the Secretariat with their views and guidance as appropriate. In particular, the meeting is invited to have a broader discussion on the way the MCSD is tackling the issues of NSSD preparation and implementation, taking into account the 1st Progress Report on the Updating Review 2009 of the NSSD (Annex III of the report)

Agenda item 4 **Activities by MAP Components in support of the MSSD**

10. The Steering Committee is invited to review the reports submitted by MAP components with respect to their activities carried out in support of the MSSD in the following priority fields of actions as outlined in the MSSD:-

- Implementation and monitoring of MSSD (BP/RAC);
- Marine and coastal biodiversity and marine resources (RAC/SPA);
- Reduction of pollution of the marine environment (MEDPOL);
- Sustainable consumption and production (CP/RAC);
- Integrated coastal zone management (PAP/RAC).

Following a short presentation by the MAP components of their progress report on their activities in support of the MSSD, the Steering Committee is invited to comment on the presentations and to advise the Secretariat as they deem appropriate.

Agenda item 5 **Functioning of the MCSD**

11. The Steering Committee will be informed by the Secretariat about the developments since the last MCSD meeting with respect to the composition of the Commission and in particular with regard to the nomination of the representatives of the three new categories to sit on the MCSD. The Steering Committee will also be informed about the decision of the Bureau with respect to the nomination of these representatives and will be invited to comment and provide guidance to the Secretariat.

12. The Steering Committee is also invited propose how to foster synergies and dialogue between the different MCSD members and the concerned entities (the SC itself, MAP components and other actors that may not be represented in the MCSD).

Agenda item 6: **Thematic programme of work of the MCSD**

13. Apart from the reports by Blue Plan with regard to the thematic programme of work of the MCSD which are featured under section VI of the Secretariats progress report, the Steering Committee will be briefed about the thematic issues that will be addressed during the cycle 2009-2010. The Steering Committee will be invited to give its comments on the proposed thematic issues.

Agenda item 7: **In-depth assessment of the MSSD**

14. The Secretariat will introduce the Terms of Reference for the recruitment of a consultant to carry out an in-depth assessment of the MSSD in line with the MCSD Programme of Work. As agreed by the Executive Coordination Panel during its last meeting in Tunis in February, 2009, the Terms of Reference are being submitted to be discussed first with the Steering Committee of the MCSD (Annex V of the report) etc. The Steering Committee is invited to review the Terms of Reference and advise the Secretariat as appropriate.

Agenda item 8: 13th Meeting of the MCSD

15. The Secretariat will introduce the draft Agenda for the 13th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development for the consideration and approval of the Steering Committee (Annex VII of the report).

Agenda item 9: Any other business

16. The meeting will consider other issues which may be raised during the meeting.

Agenda item 10: Conclusions of the meeting

17. The Secretariat will submit for adoption a set of conclusions on the basis of the discussions on the different items of the agenda. The report of the meeting will be circulated to the members of the Bureau at a later stage for adoption.

Agenda item 11: Closure of the meeting

18. The meeting will be closed by the President of the Steering Committee at approximately 12:00 hrs on Tuesday, 31 March, 2009.

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TIMETABLE

Monday, 30 March, 2009

09.30	1) Opening of the meeting 2) Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work	President of the Steering Committee
10.00	3) Progress Report on MCSD activities 4) Activities by MAP components in support of the MSSD	Secretariat RAC Directors
11.00	Coffee break	
11.30	5) Activities by MAP components (continued). 6) Functioning of the MCSD	RAC Directors Secretariat
13.00	Lunch Break	
15.00	7) Thematic programme of work of the MCSD 8) In-depth assessment of the MSSD	BP/RAC Secretariat
16.30	Coffee break	
17.00	9) 13 th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development	Secretariat

Tuesday, 31 March, 2009

09.30	10) Any other business 11) Adoption of the conclusions	Secretariat
11.00	Coffee break	
11.30	12) Adoption of the conclusions (continued) 13) Closure of the Meeting	Secretariat By the President of the Steering Committee

Annex III

Conclusions of the 13th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee Athens, Greece 30 and 31 March 2009

Progress on MSSD Activities

1. Although there are a limited number of successful experiences of NSSD formulation and implementation, no progress has been observed in certain countries. Also, there has been a limited response by countries to requests for information by the Secretariat with a view to assessing progress in the implementation of NSSDs. Weaknesses in the present system of assessing implementation, based on country reports and the hiring of experts, need to be examined and other systems of assessing the progress achieved should be explored, such as peer review approaches involving peers from both within and beyond the region.
2. It is necessary to ensure that MAP and MCSD activities are consistently demand led and are based on a broader understanding by countries and all the parties concerned of the need for the services and added value offered by the MCSD, particularly in terms of its unique role in bringing together and serving stakeholders from all Mediterranean countries.
3. It is important for the MCSD, based on the knowledge that has been acquired about the challenges and assets in the region, to develop a very focussed and pragmatic response to the global issues facing the Mediterranean, drawing together all the sectoral inputs prepared by the MAP components, so that they can be communicated in an effective manner to decision-makers and stakeholders at the national and subregional levels.
4. Emphasis should be placed on subregional approaches and initiatives, such as those in the Adriatic, to facilitate the implementation of the MSSD and other MAP strategies and programmes. The community of interests between countries at the subregional level, as well as their close relations, facilitate the development of partnerships and synergies, which can be effective in overcoming problems at the national level. Implementation at the subregional level is also a focus of the ecosystem approach and other thematic projects.
5. The MCSD should take advantage of its unique structure, composed of national governments, local authorities, the private sector, NGOs and experts, to foster a broader holistic approach and promote subsidiarity and stakeholder participation.

Activities by MAP components in support of the MCSD

6. The many substantive activities undertaken by the MAP components in support of the implementation of the MSSD, together with the information products prepared and the practical implementation initiatives pursued, are welcomed. Improvements have been made in disseminating and 'selling' the products offered by MAP components and the MCSD and greater coherence has been achieved in their work, and this should be continued.

Functioning of the MCSD

7. The Secretariat should prepare a very concise and structured paper for submission to the 13th Meeting of the MCSD in June setting out the way forward to help countries address common global challenges through a regional response prioritizing the action to be taken and emphasizing the sustainable use of national and regional assets.

8. Pursuant to the decision of the 68th meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties on the new categories of MCSD membership, the Members of the Steering Committee are invited to make proposals for nominations of members of the MCSD representing the scientific community and eminent experts on climate change.

Thematic Programme of Work of the MCSD

9. The thematic Programme of Work decided upon at the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Portoroz, intended to cover the period up to 2011, remains valid. Emphasis will also be given to water (and wastewater) management, sustainable transport, waste management and biodiversity..

10. In the work of the MCSD great emphasis needs to be placed on the response to climate change in the Mediterranean, which is becoming a hot spot of climate change.

In-depth assessment of the MSSD

11. The proposed terms of reference of the consultant who is to carry out the in-depth assessment of the MSSD should place greater emphasis on competence in the field of social science than in economics in section G(1). They should also include the condition that "Good knowledge of Mediterranean environmental and socio-economic priorities and issues is required" in section F.

13th Meeting of the MCSD

12. While the importance of the mitigation of climate change is recognized by all members of the Steering Committee, the main theme of the 13th Meeting of the MCSD will be "Climate Change Adaptation" and the issue of "Mitigation" will be addressed in a break-out session.

13. The MCSD Secretariat together with BP/RAC will prepare the working documents for the 13th meeting of the MCSD in Cairo next June. All members of the Steering Committee, the MAP components and those countries that have shown interest in being on the Task Force for the preparation of the MCSD meeting will be invited to review the draft documents through electronic exchanges.