



UNEP



medwaves e-newsletter

March 2007

A monthly e-newsletter by UNEP/MAP

IN THIS ISSUE:

UNEP NEWS

An Alternative Energy Agenda For Africa

Africa must be bold and follow the examples of Brazil and Germany to plan an energy future around renewable and alternative sources.

Global Ecotourism Conference To Take Place In Norway In May

The co-organizers of the Global Conference on Ecotourism 2007 announced the list of speakers and presenters for the conference, which will be held in Oslo, Norway, May 14th through the 16th.

Steiger Award for UNEP ED Achim Steiner

On 17 March, Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director, has been honoured as one of the recipients of the 2007 Steiger Award.

MAP COMPONENTS and BARCELONA CONVENTION

MEDPOL Phase IV Prepared In Mytilini

MEDPOL National Coordinators from the Member Countries of the Barcelona Convention held an extraordinary meeting in Mytilini, Greece on the 26- 28 March to look at the specific operational tasks of the Med POL Phase IV Programme.

Improved Water Policies Could Save 25% Of Water By 2025

During the 3rd Regional Water Workshop convened by Blue Plan, a UNEP/MAP regional activity centre, in Zaragoza, 19-21 March, it was recommended to the national political authorities of the Mediterranean countries to include, in accordance to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), water demand management in the national priority strategies.

Developing A Euro-Mediterranean Know-how On Water Management

On the 5th March, MEDPOL joined a meeting of the Steering Committee to develop a regional water observation mechanism in the Mediterranean region.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

EU Ozone Pollution High Again In 2006

Summer smog in Europe was at its second worst level in a decade in 2006, according to a report issued by the European environment agency on Thursday.

Our Climate, Our Actions, Our Future

Community-based action to address causes of climate change will be the focus of an estimated 35 million people in over 120 countries this year as part of one of the world's largest environmental campaigns Clean Up the World.

UNEP NEWS

An alternative energy agenda for Africa

Global Ecotourism Conference to take place in Norway in May

Steiger Award for UNEP ED Achim Steiner

AN ALTERNATIVE ENERGY AGENDA FOR AFRICA

Africa must be bold and follow the examples of Brazil and Germany to plan an energy future around renewable and alternative sources, said Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, at a development conference in Kenya on 22nd March.

Many of the plans being considered by African governments, including huge hydropower dams and fossil fuel plants, were simply "more of the same", according to Steiner.

Many would be able to supply the huge appetite of industry and city dwellers on the world's poorest continent, he said, but they would "lock in" the rural majority to decades without power.

"We should not live with the dream of a trickle-down of energy supply (to villages) in 20 to 30 years time. Africa should not follow the technological path the rest of the world is willing to give it access to," Steiner said.

"More imagination, honesty and boldness to set an African agenda is what the continent is screaming for today."

GLOBAL ECOTOURISM CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE IN NORWAY IN MAY



The co-organizers of the Global Conference on Ecotourism 2007 – the International Ecotourism Society (TIES), Ecotourism Norway and UNEP – announced the list of speakers and presenters for

the conference, which will be held in Oslo, Norway, May 14th through the 16th.

With the support and participation of various intergovernmental organizations, UN agencies, international NGOs, governments, and national and regional ecotourism associations, the conference seeks to develop action plans on key issues including biodiversity conservation, poverty alleviation, and tourism industry reforms, according to conference

organizers.

Topics to be presented and discussed at the conference include:

- ❖ Local Partnerships for Community-Based Ecotourism
- ❖ Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility in Travel & Tourism
- ❖ Nature and Culture Interpretation as Key Components of Ecotourism
- ❖ Architecture & Landscaping in Ecotourism
- ❖ Ecotourism and its Impacts on Wildlife

Co-hosted by UNESCO, the United Nations Foundation, and Counterpart International, and supported by key international organizations such as IUCN, Environmental Defense, Rainforest Alliance, National Geographic Society, PAN Parks Foundation and WWF, the conference will mark an important step forward in reinforcing ecotourism's global brand. www.ecotourismglobalconference.org

STEIGER AWARD FOR UNEP ED ACHIM STEINER

On 17 March, Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director, has been honoured as one of the recipients of the 2007 Steiger Award. Mr Steiner was awarded in the category of the Environment for his "commitment and important work for the protection of our planet".

He was joined by other winners in categories ranging from sports and music to journalism and politics, including H.E President Hamid Karzai of

Afghanistan, Franz Beckenbauer, Wolfgang Niedecken, boy band US5, Peter Scholl-Latour and Hans Dietrich Genscher.

Der Steiger, which translates into English as 'the miner', reflects the coal mining roots of the North Rhine Westphalian region of Germany where the prize is held. The award reflects the philosophy of straightforwardness, honesty, fairness and helpfulness.



Mr Steiner said: "I am delighted to have been among the winners of the Der Steiger award for 2007. It brings together so many individuals from the worlds of politics, culture, sports and the entertainment. It is also recognition of our work in the United Nations on global environmental issues".

This is the third year that the Der Steiger awards have been made. In the past two years "THE STEIGER" has been awarded to numerous national and international personalities like Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Dr. Mohamed El-Baradei, Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, Boris Becker, Maestro José Carreras, Sabine Christiansen, Peter Maffay, H.I.M. Empress Farah Diba-Pahlavi of Iran, artist Otmar Alt, musician Robin Gibb from the BEE GEES, actors Pierre Brice and Friedrich von Thun, Claude Nobs, James Rizzi and the well-known German journalist Friedrich Nowotny. www.der-steiger-award.de

MAP COMPONENTS and BARCELONA CONVENTION

MEDPOL Phase IV prepared in Mytilini

Improved water policies could save 25% of water by 2025

Developing a Euro-Mediterranean know-how on water management

MEDPOL PHASE IV PREPARED IN MYTILINI

MEDPOL National Coordinators from the Member Countries of the Barcelona Convention held an extraordinary meeting in Mytilini, Greece on the 26-28 March to look at the specific operational tasks of the Med POL Phase IV Programme.

The Contracting Parties had requested this process during the Portoroz meeting in November 2005. The main issues to be tackled were "the examination of the operational aspects of MED POL Phase IV, the preparation of an information System and the draft elements that could form the basis for the legally-binding text containing the measures and timetables for implementation required under Art. 15 of the LBS Protocol".

Since the Portoroz Meeting, the MED POL Secretariat had been working on those issues with the assistance of regional experts and presented the finding and related documents in Mytilini.

In particular one of the documents presented elaborates the principles, objectives and activities of the adopted MED POL Phase IV programme and describes the modalities of implementation. An additional text was discussed, which identifies the elements to be used in the elaboration of the legally-binding text for the SAP (Strategic Action Programme) to address pollution from land-based activities.

The participants were also presented a draft Information System prepared by INFO/RAC combining all available pollution data. This system is currently being reviewed and tested.

IMPROVED WATER POLICIES COULD SAVE 25% OF WATER BY 2025

During the 3rd Regional Water Workshop convened by Blue Plan, a UNEP/MAP regional activity centre, in Zaragoza, 19-21 March, it was recommended to the national political authorities of the Mediterranean countries to include, in accordance to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), water demand management in the national priority strategies

In the Mediterranean Region, water resources are scarce and unevenly apportioned, the Southern



such as the rapid depletion of some fossil resources, the destruction of coastal aquifers through seawater intrusion, the degraded quality of water and aquatic systems, reduced flows and the drying-up of wetlands. Supply-based policies are therefore reaching physical, socio-economic and environmental limits – in Algeria for instance some reservoirs have already lost 25% of their initial capacity.

The 3rd Regional Water Workshop indicated that problems connected with water demand management should also be properly integrated within the global environmental problems, such as climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, to which they are strongly related.

In addition it recommended to the national political authorities to promote the implementation of water demand management also by mobilising all necessary instruments and tools, normative, tariff, fiscal, contractual and market tools in the region.

Policies aimed at improving efficiency of use and further reduce losses and poor usage can help to invert the current trends. An improved water demand management would make it possible to save 25% of water demand, approximately 86km³/year in 2025.

The improved management of irrigated agriculture could help save a total 65% of water demands, a further 22% can be expected from the industry through water recycling, and another 13% from a

Mediterranean countries for instance are endowed with only 13% of the total water resources available.

The current national policies are mainly supply-increase-driven, but in so-doing they constantly deteriorate natural resources, and present severe risks in the long-term,

sounder management of drinking water supply.

These global estimates are based on concrete experiences carried out in some countries, Tunisia and Morocco for instance . It is also crucial to take all necessary measures to raise the awareness of the public, by informing them of the challenges involved and by identifying, and making use of good practices concerning the maintenance of water distribution systems, individual consumption of drinking water and its rational use in agriculture.

Among the recommendations from the Workshop, it was prompted the establishment of a Mediterranean Water Observatory which would compile data information and good practices useful to Mediterranean stakeholders and decision makers. Every two years, Blue Plan will also issue a report on progress accomplished in the Mediterranean, it will contribute to establish a compendium of good practices and will organise in 2012 the 4th Regional Workshop in Water Demand Management.

DEVELOPING A EURO-MEDITERRANEAN KNOW-HOW ON WATER MANAGEMENT

On the 5th March, MEDPOL joined a meeting of the Steering Committee to develop a regional water observation mechanism in the Mediterranean region. The meeting was organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Information System on Know-How in the Water Sector (EMWIS) and the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development in France.

The joint feasibility study is developed in cooperation by EUROstat, the EEA, MEDPOL and INFO/RAC.

During the meeting, the participants reviewed the first phase of the feasibility study, which indicated that water directors in the region fully support the initiative that would assist Mediterranean countries to streamline and harmonise their national water resources databases and information systems.

During the second phase, between March and September 2007, four additional national pilot studies will be launched, as well as a web portal for the information system, a catalogue of data sources and an interactive map of prototypes system.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

EU ozone pollution high again in 2006

Our climate, our actions, our future



EU OZONE POLLUTION HIGH AGAIN IN 2006

Summer smog in Europe was at its second worst level in a decade in 2006, according to a report issued by the European environment agency on Thursday. In the last ten years ozone pollution has only been higher in 2003.

As in past years, Mediterranean countries such as Italy, France and Spain experienced highest levels of ozone pollution.

The report notes that ozone pollution remains a problem despite cuts in emissions of ozone precursors over the past decade. The phenomenon has been "substantially induced" by climatic variability, with hot dry summers causing increased ozone levels, it says.

The EU's alert threshold of 240 micrograms per cubic metre (ug/m3) was exceeded 190 times in 2006, compared with 127 in 2005 and 99 in 2004. However, this still pales in comparison with the 720 exceedances reported in 2003 linked to that summer's damaging heatwave.

In addition, the information threshold value of 180 ug/m3 was exceeded at 56 per cent of 2,000 monitoring stations in 2006, versus 42 per cent in 2005 and 35 per cent in 2004. The highest recorded ozone level was in Italy at 370 ug/m3.

The EU target value of 120 ug/m3 – which member states must try to reach by 2010 - was breached at most stations. At 42 per cent of them there were more than 25 exceedances of this value, up from 30 per cent in 2005.

OUR CLIMATE, OUR ACTIONS, OUR FUTURE



Community-based action to address causes of climate change will be the focus of an estimated 35 million people in over 120 countries this year as part of one of the world's largest environmental campaigns Clean Up the World.

Clean Up the World, held in conjunction with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) brings together businesses, community groups, schools, governments and individuals in a range of activities and programs that positively improve local environments. Since the first Clean Up the World campaign in 1993 the improvements achieved due to the efforts of millions of concerned volunteers around the world have been astounding.

In the lead up to World Water Day on 22 March, organisers have urged more communities to get involved in Clean Up the World to ensure a huge global effort on water conservation and other climate change issues in 2007.

The Australia-based Chairman of Clean Up the World, Ian Kiernan said people involved in Clean Up the World produce great benefits for their communities and the 2007 theme of "our climate, our actions, our future" reflects that when action is taken locally, the benefits spread globally.

"Clean Up the World is a practical and immediate way to help reduce some of the causes of climate change. This is a challenge for our generation and the next. The environment must be a priority for all of us," said Mr Kiernan.

"Members of Clean Up the World receive a range of support materials to help drive local projects and assist with implementation of environmental activities in local communities."

"Anyone can participate. I urge you all to visit the website, register and start making a difference to our environment," Mr Kiernan said.



www.cleanup.com.au



UNEP/MAP Key 2007 Dates

7-11 May	REMPEC Focal Points, Malta
21-22 May	Reporting Meeting, Istanbul, Turkey
23-25 May	Compliance Meeting, Istanbul, Turkey
30-31 May	MCS D, Istanbul, Turkey
4-8 June	Joint meeting BP/PAP/INFO/RACs Focal Points, Rome, Italy
5 June	World Environment Day Exhibition on climate change "Envisioning Change", Oslo, Norway (until 20 August). It will then travel to Brussels, Belgium and next year to Chicago, United States
12-15 June	SPA/RAC Focal Points, Rome, Italy
26-28 June	MED POL Focal Points, Tunis, Tunisia
2-3 July	Bureau of the Contracting Parties, Madrid, Spain
September	publication of UNEP's 4th Global Environmental Outlook – GEO4
16-19 October	MAP Focal Points, Madrid, Spain
24-27 October	First International Conference on Marine Protected Area, France
10-13 December	Contracting Parties, Almeria, Spain

