



EP



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/5
8 May 1997

Original: ENGLISH

MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Second Meeting of the Mediterranean
Commission on Sustainable Development

Palma de Majorca, Spain, 6-8 May 1997

**REPORT
OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT (MCSD)**

Introduction

1. At their Ninth Ordinary Meeting, held at Barcelona from 5 to 8 June 1995, the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its Protocols (the Barcelona Convention) decided that a Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) should be set up within the framework of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.5/16).
2. Subsequently, the Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties, held at Montpellier from 1 to 4 July 1996, adopted the terms of the reference of the Commission and decided on the criteria for membership (Annexes V and VI to document UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.8/7 respectively). In particular, it agreed that, in addition to one high-level representative from each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention, five representatives from each of the following categories would participate as members on an equal footing: local authorities, socio-economic actors, and environmental non-governmental organizations.
3. The Bureau of the Contracting Parties, at its meeting held at Athens on 4 and 5 November 1996, selected the members representing each of the three categories approved by the Contracting Parties.
4. Upon an invitation from Morocco, the first meeting of the Commission was held in Rabat from 16 to 18 December 1996. The meeting agreed on a programme built around short-term and medium-term activities corresponding to some of the priority needs of the Mediterranean region. The first meeting designated Task Managers and Thematic Working Groups to deal with each selected theme, as well as a Bureau composed of eight members.
5. The second meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development was held in Palma de Mallorca, (Spain) from 6 to 8 May 1997, at the kind invitation of the Government of Spain and the authorities of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands.

Participation

6. The Meeting was attended by the following members of the Commission: Albania, Algeria, Association de protection de la nature et de l'environnement de Kairouan (APNEK), Association of Chambers of Commerce of the Mediterranean (ASCAME), Chambers Group for the Development of Greek Islands (EOAEN), Centre des régions euroméditerranéennes pour l'environnement (CREE), Croatia, Cyprus, EcoMediterrania, European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC/EUROCHLOR), European Community, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, MEDCITIES Network, Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), Monaco, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).
7. The Coordinator informed the participants that the representatives of the City of Rome, the Foundation for International Studies, and Malta had conveyed their regrets at not being able to attend the meeting.
8. The following organizations participated as observers: World Health Organization (WHO), Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Program (METAP), and the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE).

9. The following Regional Activity Centres of MAP also attended the Meeting: Regional Activity Centre for the Blue Plan (BP/RAC), Regional Activity Centre for the Priority Actions Programme (PAP/RAC), Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Regional Activity Centre for the Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC), Regional Activity Centre for Environment Remote Sensing (ERS/RAC) and the Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC). The full list of participants is attached as Annex I.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

10. After the Second Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) had been declared open by H.E. Mr. Nouridine Benomar Alami, Minister of the Environment of Morocco and President of the Commission, Don Juan Luis Muriel, the Secretary General of the Ministry of the Environment of Spain, said it was a great honour for him to welcome the participants to Palma de Mallorca. Sustainable development was a concept of vital concern to everyone; it had first emerged at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and had since made slow but steady progress, involving not just national governments, but non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and society as a whole. With the active participation of NGOs and regional bodies, MCSD could become the driving force of the Barcelona Convention.

11. Mr. Muriel drew special attention to the importance for all countries of the region of tourism, one of the pillars of Spain's economy. It was for that reason that Spain, together with Egypt and EOAEN, had offered to be task manager for the (eco) tourism theme. In that context it should be noted that tourism could have both positive and negative effects, making it essential to develop sustainable tourism that respected the natural environment, which was a major concern of all countries of the region and in particular of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands. Water management was another priority area which called for treatment specifically adapted to conditions in the Mediterranean. He also drew attention to the need to promote environmental education and popular participation, in particular through public information. Other priority areas which would benefit from joint action were the struggle against desertification and the protection of the Mediterranean forest. Lastly, he stressed the importance of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities and the Protocol on the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

12. H.E. Mr. Nouridine Benomar Alami, Minister of the Environment of Morocco and President of the Commission, thanked the authorities of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands for their generous hospitality. He pointed out that the work of MCSD differed from that of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) as a result of the specificity of the Mediterranean region. In that connection, he wished to report on his participation in the Fifth Session of UNCSD (April 1997) in New York, where work was proceeding on the draft declaration to be made by the Heads of State or Government at the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly. In his statement he had indicated that recent years had been marked by the adoption of the MED 21 programme of action, the revision of the Barcelona Convention, the renewal of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP II) and the establishment of MCSD. The Commission had the great advantage of including in its Bureau both NGOs and the European Union. With the help of the Coordinating Unit it had already made considerable progress. When the special session of the General Assembly came to examine the extent to which the Rio commitments had been followed up, he believed it would be seen that MCSD, with the active participation of NGOs and the European Union, would be in a position to respond to the sustainable development aspirations of the Mediterranean countries.

13. Mr. L. Chabason, Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), welcomed participants on behalf of Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and offered his special thanks to the Government of Spain and to the authorities of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands for hosting the Meeting. He particularly commended Mr. Alami for once again finding time to preside over the Commission's work, which had benefited so greatly from his personal participation. The Contracting Parties attached the highest importance to the Commission, which would be presenting an initial review of its activities to the Contracting Parties in Tunis in November.

14. Don Jaime Matas Palou, President of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands, said it gave him great pleasure to attend the opening of a meeting at which decisions of crucial importance to the Balearic people and the authorities of the Autonomous Community were to be taken. Every effort was being made to achieve a balanced land use conducive to responsible and sustainable growth. Regulations were at present being drafted to control tourist development of the coast and to protect the rural environment. Action was under way to rehabilitate city centres and to conserve the cultural heritage. In addition, measures were being introduced to use cleaner energy sources and to establish nature parks that were compatible with the private ownership of property and the development of private enterprise. In short, the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands was vitally concerned with the issues to be discussed at the Meeting. He wished the participants every success in devising measures that would enable the present inhabitants of the Mediterranean region to enjoy a quality of life as good as that bequeathed to them by their forebears.

Agenda Item 2: Rules of procedure

15. The Commission decided that, while awaiting finalization of its own rules of procedure and their adoption by the Contracting Parties, the rules of procedure applicable to meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties UNEP/IG. 43/6, Annex IX) should apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the provisional agenda and organization of work

16. The meeting adopted its agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda contained in document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/1.

17. The meeting decided to conclude its substantive deliberations as early as possible on Wednesday, 7 May, to allow time for the working groups to meet.

Agenda item 4: Progress report by the Coordinator

18. The Coordinator introduced his progress report on the work of the MCSD (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/3), which covered the period December 1996 to April 1997. He also drew the meeting's attention to the booklet entitled "Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development: A regional channel for Agenda 21", which had been prepared by the Coordinating Unit with a view to the Fifth Session of UNCSD and the special session of the United Nations General Assembly to be held in New York from 23 to 27 June 1997.

19. The President informed the meeting that, when attending the ministerial segment of UNCSD's Fifth Session, he had seized the opportunity to draw the Commission's attention to the establishment of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development. Moreover,

he had discussed with the Chairman of the UNCSD how best to obtain a solemn political commitment on the part of governments in the Mediterranean region to include sustainability in their development plans. As negotiations on the final declaration of the special session were well advanced and it would not be possible to include a statement of the Mediterranean position, he proposed that the MCSD should agree upon two or three important non-controversial environmental and sustainable development issues indicative of the common Mediterranean position. This statement could then be transmitted to the Contracting Parties so that Heads of State or Government could take it into consideration in their declarations to the special session.

20. The Coordinator said that he had attended the second week of the UNCSD session as a member of UNEP's delegation, thus giving him an opportunity to inform the Commission's members about the work of the MCSD. In view of the importance and relevance of the issues discussed by the UNCSD, it was essential for the MCSD to become accredited to the Commission, but that would require political support from Mediterranean governments. It would not be possible to obtain accreditation in time for the special session of the United Nations General Assembly, therefore, the MCSD's priorities could only be reflected in the declarations made by Mediterranean Heads of State or Government.

21. One member of the Commission noted that sustainable development was being discussed in several different forums and underlined the need for the MCSD to be informed of all relevant meetings and activities so that it would be aware of the trends in different sectors. In this connection, the representative of MIO-ECSDE informed the meeting that, when participating in the Rio + 5 Conference (Rio de Janeiro, 13-19 March 1997), his organization had the opportunity of presenting the MCSD, its role and its work.

22. In response to one speaker who had requested the Coordinator to include in his progress report more comprehensive information on MAP activities, financial resources and all activities of Mediterranean interest, the Coordinator said that the purpose of the report was simply to describe what was being done to implement the decisions taken by the Contracting Parties; it was not intended to be an exhaustive description of MAP activities. He was aware that many other activities relating to sustainable development were taking place throughout the Mediterranean and he proposed that, where possible and appropriate, the MCSD could invite the persons concerned to inform the Commission of their activities.

Agenda item 5: Progress reports by the task managers for short-term activities

Management of water demand

23. On behalf of the task managers for this theme (Morocco and Tunisia), Mr. M. Ennabli introduced the progress report on the theme "Management of water demand" (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/Inf.6), based on a preliminary report that had been submitted to the meeting of the Commission's Bureau held at Athens on 20 and 21 February 1997. The report dealt with trends in demand for water and the overall water resource situation. Mediterranean countries could be divided into four main categories as far as water demand was concerned: firstly, countries where resources could satisfy per capita demand exceeding 500 m³/year until at least 2025; secondly, countries where per capita demand not exceeding 500 m³/year could be satisfied until 2025; thirdly, countries where per capita demand did not exceed 500 m³/year and must decrease from 2000 onwards in order to satisfy demand; lastly, countries where per capita demand exceeded 500 m³/year and must decrease from 2000 onwards in order to meet demand.

24. The analysis carried out indicated that large amounts of water were misused or little used, but more accurate information was required in order to evaluate the problem. One other aspect that should be included in water management programmes was the cost/benefit ratio of practical water-saving measures compared with investment to cope with future demand.

25. Regarding the group's future work, an assessment of water demand management strategies in the Mediterranean, through national studies on water utilization systems, was required. In addition, data on utilization yields, water-saving schemes, and prevention of pollution should be collected. There should also be analyses of the drinking water situation in large cities and water demand for agriculture. The gains to be made by reducing leakage from water distribution systems, wastage by consumers, and by modifying exploitation systems and changing attitudes, needed to be quantified. In the medium term, pilot studies on countries representative of each of the four main categories would help to highlight the various options adopted to manage water demand.

26. The report before the Commission was purely preliminary and not intended to be exhaustive or definitive. It was intended to send out a form to Mediterranean countries in order to obtain additional data, which would then be processed by Blue Plan and discussed at the workshop to be held on 12 and 13 September 1997.

27. Members of the Commission expressed their appreciation of the comprehensive report, which was largely based on Blue Plan activities and contributions. Several speakers described water management demand activities in their own countries and indicated their willingness to share their experience. Attention was drawn to certain errors in the statistics given in the report and a number of suggestions were made regarding aspects that required further study. It was also noted that data should no longer refer to former Yugoslavia but should be specific to the countries concerned (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia). Particular emphasis was laid on water's role in preserving ecosystems, the financial aspects of water demand and water-saving schemes. It was emphasized by one speaker that, in order to have the maximum impact, the outcome of the group's work should be a short list of practical recommendations, to which all the comprehensive studies carried out could be annexed. The observer for METAP indicated that the European Union and the World Bank had launched a water initiative worth US\$ 2 million for the countries of the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Sustainable management of coastal zones

28. On behalf of the task managers for this theme (MEDCITIES and Morocco), Ms. B. Layachi explained the methodology that had been followed by the working group as outlined in the preliminary report entitled: "Sustainable management of coastal zones" (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/Inf. 7). Terms of reference had been drawn up for the expert, Mr. Harry N. Coccossis, who had prepared a draft report on a related issue. The working group had respected the initial criterion of building on previous work in order to provide added value. An effort had been made to evaluate past experience, develop a global strategy incorporating institutional, human, economic and environmental factors, propose practical lines of action and establish a system of indicators to assess the impact of the strategy on the environment. The future schedule of work involved discussion of the draft report by the working group, finalization of the text and its presentation to the Commission for validation at the October meeting to be held in France.

29. Mr. H.N. Coccossis, University of the Aegean, highlighted the key elements of the draft report entitled "Sustainable Development for Mediterranean Coastal Areas". He began by stressing that the adoption of a common strategy had become imperative. Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), planning for tourism and review procedures were among the tools that could be used for the sustainable development of coastal areas. In most cases, coastal management developed around key issues, such as the preservation of sand dunes or the upgrading of tourism, with the result that programmes were not fully integrated, involving limited interventions only. Some of the reasons for failure were inadequate information and coordination, the limited range of regulatory instruments and unsatisfactory policy implementation. ICZM required a multi-sectoral approach, which was usually lacking. Although some significant progress had been made, a more "aggressive" policy was perhaps required. In particular, greater awareness and training were necessary. It appeared that the degree of integration of coastal management issues depended largely on the institutional framework.

30. With regard to policies for the sustainable development of Mediterranean coastal areas, he outlined the main conclusions of the International Workshop of Experts held in Santorini in April 1996. The priorities for action should be identification and assessment of resources, identification of areas of interest, analysis of conflicts and pressures, analysis of existing policies plans and programmes, and development of a plan of action and a periodic review process.

31. Members of the Commission commended the high quality of the reports while hoping that at the next stage it would focus much more sharply on specific issues and make practical proposals for action at both the national and regional levels. It was important, in order to provide added value, to concentrate on realistic objectives, to set priorities and to lay down a clear time frame. Mistakes had been made in the past because there had not been an integrated approach to coastal management. It was a sensitive area in which a consensus had to be found among conflicting views.

Agenda Item 6: Preliminary reports by Task Managers for medium-term activities

Sustainable development indicators

32. On behalf of the task managers for this theme (France and Tunisia), Mr. S. Antoine introduced the preliminary report entitled "Sustainable development indicators" (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/Inf.3). The primary objective of the working group was to produce indicators that would be put to practical use. Essentially, the document had been prepared by the Blue Plan and after review by Tunisia was submitted also on behalf of Morocco, the European Community and EcoMediterrania. It was important not to repeat what had already been done, so over the coming year the group would look into the work carried out by the Blue Plan, the United Nations, the World Resources Institute, UNDP, other organizations and individual countries. On that basis it was hoped to make concrete proposals or recommendations. At the same time, it had to be recognized that of currently available Mediterranean data few were reliable. Measures were needed to facilitate the collection of data, both by the working group and by others. For that purpose he would welcome regular meetings of Mediterranean statisticians and an effort to enlist the support of national observatories. A further point related to the use made of the indicators. It was all very well to put them on the INTERNET, but how could their use by the whole of civil society be ensured? As far as proposals were concerned, he agreed that they should be relatively short, otherwise they would not be read. The future work schedule included a restricted meeting in July 1997, to be followed by a larger one in 1998, with a view to completing the task by

mid-1999. Finally, he pointed out that all the working groups would need to use indicators as a basic tool. In the case of water, for example, some data were available but there were many gaps. There was a particular need to zoom in on specific coastal regions and towns.

33. The Coordinator emphasized the major importance of sustainable development indicators, which would provide a scientific basis for framing operational policies. By producing such indicators, the Mediterranean would be setting an example for other regions. Great care would have to be taken to ensure a degree of comparability, for conditions varied widely from country to country, in such areas as coastal development, energy use and the production of household waste, for example. He hoped that an effort could be made to produce the first results by 1998.

34. The representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) informed the participants of the work being done by WHO in the field of environmental health indicators. In the context of sustainable development, health should be viewed as a broad, cross-cutting issue, affecting and affected by all aspects of environment and development. In the area of development decision-making, WHO was helping to ensure that the health and environment consequences of economic development policies were fully understood by all stakeholders. He therefore proposed that, in coordination with the work to be performed by the Blue Plan, the WHO indicators should be evaluated and those of Mediterranean importance should be considered for the Mediterranean region.

(Eco)Tourism

35. On behalf of the task managers for this theme (Egypt, EOAEN and Spain), Mr. L. Alemany Mir introduced the preliminary report on "(Eco)Tourism" (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/Inf.8). He highlighted the methodology that had been used, focusing on tourist destinations, the impact and consequences of tourism on the territory, population and environment of receiver countries, and elements of the tourist industry itself. It was proposed to carry out the work in the following phases: compilation of a document, detection of gaps, preparation of reports and studies, seminars, presentation of the final document and approval of proposals. According to the planned timetable, the final document should be ready by May 1999.

36. The Commission agreed that henceforward the title of this theme should be "Sustainable Tourism".

Information, awareness and participation

37. On behalf of the task managers for this theme (CREE and MIO-ECSDE), Mr. M. Scoullas introduced the working group's preliminary report (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/Inf.4), drawing attention to the interlinkage between this theme and the themes attributed to the other working groups. The group would therefore communicate its ideas to the other groups and would take their comments into account in its work. Although education had not been specified, the group considered that, as an integral part of any awareness promotion policy, environmental education should be included among its tasks. It was hoped that financial resources would be available to allow the group to respect the proposed work schedule, which included Mediterranean input to the International Conference on Environment and Society: Education and Public Awareness for Sustainability to be organized jointly by

UNESCO and the Greek Government in Thessaloniki (8-12 December 1997). The final stage of the work schedule would be the drafting of a set of recommendations.

38. During the discussion that followed the task manager's presentation, the group was urged to take into account the activities on the same theme being carried out under Agenda Med 21 and to ensure that there was an effective linkage with the work of the other groups. Targeting of information at decision-makers was mentioned as an important aspect of the overall theme and the task manager expressed the hope that all Mediterranean ministers attending the special session of the United Nations General Assembly would include a reference to environmental education, education for sustainability and awareness in their declarations and that it would prove possible to convene a summit of Mediterranean Heads of State or Government on environment and sustainable development.

Free trade and environment in the Euro-Mediterranean context

39. In the absence of the task manager for this theme, (Foundation for International Studies) the Coordinator introduced the preliminary report (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/Inf.5), drawing attention to four major issues: the impact of environmental differences among countries within a free trade area; the use of environmental standards as disguised barriers to trade; compromising environmental standards in order to be more competitive; and the use of commercial tools for the purpose of environmental protection. These issues were already being dealt with in forums such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) at the global level, the European Union, North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and Mercosur at the regional level, and the group would have to take their work into account. The proposed Mediterranean Free Trade Area, like other important international agreements, would include an environmental component and would cover agriculture, which was one of the vital sectors in North-South trade.

40. The observer for METAP indicated METAP's willingness to collaborate with the group on the issue and informed the Commission that one of the themes for the Mediterranean policies network to be established by METAP would be technical assistance activities related to trade and environment.

41. One member expressed the view that since the issue of free trade and the environment was being dealt with globally by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other international bodies and had no special regional implications for the Mediterranean in the near future, and bearing in mind the Commission's work load and limited resources, this issue should not be regarded as a priority. Other members emphasized the need to adopt a preventive approach by ensuring that there was a healthy environment in which trade could take place rather than studying the impact of trade on the environment. Other aspects to be taken into account by the group included the problems raised by free zones, consumer information, and civil liability.

Industry and sustainable development

42. Mr. G. Guerrieri (Italy), task manager for the theme, introduced the preliminary report (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/Inf.9), emphasizing that its purpose was to encourage reflection rather than to make concrete recommendations at the present stage. The subject was vast and its scope would have to be clearly defined. Reliable data would have to be collected and ways of mobilizing financial resources, including funds from the private sector, would have to be sought.

43. The observer for METAP underlined the importance of the theme and offered METAP's assistance in complementing the studies to be carried out by the group. The World Bank had developed a decision support system programme to calculate pollution loads and, if desired, it could be made available to the group for assessing pollution loads in Mediterranean countries.

44. During the discussion, it was stressed that the three most important aspects of pollution were its magnitude and severity and, above all, its impact on public health. Ways would have to be found to finance pollution abatement, notably from private sources, including banks. The special problems of islands, industrialization in countries diversifying their economies, the proliferation of industrial legislation and regulations, the installation of non-polluting industries in countries of the South, the participation of trade union representatives and an enterprise in the group's work, and the establishment of the international centre for eco-technology recommended in Agenda 21 were cited as elements to be taken into account by the group. It was emphasized that industry should be looked upon as a partner rather than an opponent in the fight against pollution.

Management of urban/rural development

45. Mr. A. Aldieb (Egypt), task manager for the theme, said that the main priorities for development of human settlements had already been agreed at the international level and the MCSD would have to take these into account in its work on urban/rural development. The urbanization process in the Mediterranean region constituted one of the main economic, social and environmental problems in the Mediterranean region due to the concentration of population.

46. The group would study national urban/rural development strategies with a view to developing a Mediterranean strategy on development of urban and rural areas so as to safeguard resources and reduce pollution.

47. The proposed programme of work for the group would comprise meetings in 1997 and 1998, with the elaboration of a final report to be considered in September 1998 and transmitted to the MCSD for submission to the Contracting Parties.

48. Concern was expressed at the overlap with the work of the group on sustainable management of coastal zones and at the heavy work programme proposed for the group. It was stressed that care must be taken to ensure that there was no duplication of work by the two groups. One member, however, expressed the view that the terms of reference of the two groups were sufficiently distinct to prevent any overlap and, moreover, one group was expected to complete its work in the short term whereas the other was working in a medium-term perspective. It was agreed that the task managers of the working groups on coastal zones and urban/rural development should meet with the MAP support units to consider ways and means of deriving mutual benefit from their activities and avoiding overlapping.

49. It was suggested that the group should focus on practical experience so that viable recommendations could be made. Other issues proposed for the group's consideration included cooperation among local authorities, land-use planning and its legal framework.

General comments on items 5 and 6

50. Following presentation of the preliminary reports, the Commission agreed that in future the main focus should be on the two short-term activities so as not to dissipate efforts and resources. Several members expressed concern at the very broad, general level of the approach in the reports on short-term activities. They felt that there was a danger of repeating previous studies and recycling existing information. Accordingly, they stressed the importance of focusing much more precisely on specific actions. In that connection, it was suggested that the two working groups should concentrate on strategies, processes and issues.

51. In connection with the medium-term activities, it was stressed by many speakers that the programme of work was too intensive to allow satisfactory completion of the tasks. In view of the limited resources available, it was essential not to duplicate work being done elsewhere and it was pointed out that some of the tasks were already included in the work programmes of the Regional Activity Centres. The scope of the groups' work should be defined more clearly and priorities should be fixed among the six groups. Action programmes by objective, with a specific time frame, should be proposed to the Contracting Parties. One element that was missing in the proposed activities was their relationship to MAP's priorities and activities. It was agreed that when convening future meetings of the MCSD, the Secretariat, in consultation with the task managers, should specify which working group would meet in parallel with the Commission.

52. The Coordinator said that he understood the concerns expressed and, together with the task managers, the Secretariat would propose a revised timetable for medium-term activities. It was important for the working groups to examine specific national situations, to describe and analyse them, and then to define clear objectives. Once the problems had been identified, tangible solutions could be proposed. The Commission had to be both realistic and practical in its work.

53. Summing up the debate, the President pointed out that the current stage was one of collecting information in order to build on existing material and then proceed to making specific proposals. In future, task managers would have to move towards more concrete proposals of an innovative nature for submission to the Contracting Parties.

Agenda Item 7: Review of the composition of the Working Groups

54. It was agreed that the following members of the Commission and observers would participate in the activities of the working groups, as follows:

Management of water demand - CEDARE, Cyprus, Israel

Sustainable management of coastal zones - Albania

Sustainable development indicators - Greece, Israel

Sustainable tourism - ASCAME

Information, awareness, participation - Albania, Algeria, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Free trade and environment in the Euromediterranean context - MIO-ECSDE

Industry and sustainable development - Algeria, as co-task manager.

Management of urban/rural development - Algeria, CEDARE, EC.

55. The revised composition of the Thematic Working Groups is contained in **Annex II** to this report.

Agenda Item 8: Review of the draft Rules of Procedure for the MCSD

56. The Secretary of the Meeting presented the draft Rules of Procedure (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.124/4) which reflected the comments and amendments that had been made at the First Meeting of the Bureau of the Commission held in Athens in February 1997. For example, the consensus method of taking decisions was stipulated in Rule 32 while Rule 17(1) specified that all members of the Commission participated on an equal footing. In several instances the Rules had been simplified in line with the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Contracting Parties and the Commission's Terms of Reference. A long discussion on languages had been held in the Bureau and a compromise had been reached which was reflected in Rule 30. Lastly, Rule 21 established a membership of eight for the Bureau, although in his own view it would be advisable to return to the original figure of six, while Rule 17(2) laid down a simplified accreditation procedure.

57. In the course of the discussion a considerable number of amendments were proposed, some of them being mainly of an editorial nature. The Secretariat took note of these amendments. Other proposed changes were more substantive and related to the role of the Bureau of the Commission, the number of members, and the question of the presidency of the Bureaux of the Commission and the Contracting Parties respectively.

58. On the subject of the role of the Bureau of the Commission, some members took the view that, in accordance with the decisions of the Contracting Parties and the Commission's Terms of Reference, the Bureau should be elected at the commencement of the first sitting of each ordinary meeting but should cease to function once that meeting came to an end. They considered that there was a serious danger of confusion, if not conflict, if two Bureaux were to meet during the intersessional period, especially if two different Presidents were involved. As they saw it, there was no need for a Bureau of the Commission outside the period of meetings since the Bureau of the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat were responsible for following up activities and maintaining relations with other organizations. They further pointed out that the Commission was an advisory body only. In addition, meetings of the Bureau of the Commission involved considerable expenditure. Other members took the opposing view, believing that the Bureau of the Commission had an important role to play between meetings, more particularly at a later stage when the frequency of meetings became biennial. It would then be essential to have a body to follow up activities during the interval between meetings in order to ensure continuity. Moreover, they strongly believed that no action should be taken that would weaken, or might be perceived as weakening, the Commission, which had an exemplary and innovatory nature. It was important to adopt a creative approach, without fear of being different. Several members said they would like more time to ponder the matter before coming to a decision.

59. With regard to the number of members of the Bureau, several speakers favoured a return to the original figure of six, consisting of a President, four Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur. Others believed that eight members were justified in a body composed of 36

members in all, in order to achieve a balanced representation. They drew attention to the unique character of the Commission which comprised both governments and representatives of civil society.

60. Concerning the presidency of the Bureaux, it was suggested that it might be advisable, in order to avoid any possible conflict, to stipulate that the same person should occupy both offices, as was the case at present. It was pointed out that such a provision would preclude any representative of civil society from ever becoming President of the Bureau of the Commission. Many speakers considered that it would be preferable to leave the decision to the wisdom of the Contracting Parties.

61. Due to time limitations, it was decided to defer the decision on the draft Rules of Procedure to the Third Meeting to be held in France in October 1997.

Agenda Item 9: Provisional agenda, dates and venue of the Third Meeting of the MCSD

62. The representative of France confirmed that his country wished to invite the Third Meeting of the Commission to a venue still to be decided in France some time in the first half of October 1997.

63. The representatives of the World Wide Fund for Nature and EcoMediterrania asked for the inclusion in the agenda of the third meeting of an item on the establishment of a conservation trust fund, for which a feasibility study was being carried out by WWF and would be ready by October.

Agenda Item 10: Any other matters

Future meetings of the Commission

64. The representative of Italy indicated that his country would like to host the Fourth Meeting during 1998. The Coordinator informed the participants that he had received a fax from the City of Rome offering to host a meeting of the Commission in 1998.

65. The representative of Monaco said that his country wished to host a meeting in Monaco in 1998 as part of the celebration of the 150th anniversary of Prince Albert I.

66. The President thanked all Governments for their offers to host future meetings.

Participation in MAP meetings

67. The representatives of Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya drew the attention of the Bureau and participants to the difficulties experienced by their officials in obtaining visas for travel to MAP meetings. The representative of France assured the Secretariat, the representatives of the Contracting Parties and the members of the MCSD that his country, undertook to honour its commitment to receive on its territory all participants in meetings and working groups held within the framework of MAP. The Coordinator would make every effort to ensure the application of the provisions of the United Nations concerning the movement of persons within countries Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

Statement by the observer for METAP

68. The observer for METAP drew attention to the METAP III objectives: management of natural resources scarcity; arresting emerging pollution, and strengthening of environmental institutions and increasing public participation. Its operating principles were based on ownership, decentralization, partnerships, roll-in resources, and monitoring and evaluation. METAP's Project Preparation Unit had developed a number of projects around the Mediterranean, and a capacity-building programme, financed by UNDP and the World Bank, was under way. Under UNDP leadership, four potential private-public partnership projects had been identified. Assistance was available for countries to develop a reliable system of indicators to monitor and assess the impact of their policies, programmes and projects. A series of networks linking various organizations and institutions around the Mediterranean were expected to be the core of the regional initiatives. The Med Policies programme would initially focus on three areas: trade and environment; improving ambient air quality through cleaner fuels; and environmental liability and privatization. He hoped that METAP could become an instrument to serve MAP and looked forward to close cooperation between the two organizations.

Agenda Item 11: Adoption of the report of the meeting

69. The meeting adopted its report on Thursday, 8 May 1997.

Agenda Item 12: Closure of the meeting

70. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the President declared the meeting closed.

ANNEX I

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ANNEX II

TABLE
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(Revised)

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Short-term (over about a one-year period)			
- Sustainable management of coastal zones	Morocco and MEDCITIES	CREE, European Community, Greece, City of Rome, Spain, EcoMediterrania, Monaco, WWF, Italy, EOAEN, Cyprus, France, Tunisia, MIO-ECSDE, Egypt, Malta, Albania	RAC/Priority Actions Programme, RAC/Blue Plan, RAC/Environment Remote Sensing and RAC/Specially Protected Areas
- Management of water demand	Tunisia and Morocco	Libya, WWF, APNEK, European Community, Egypt, Italy, France, CEFIC, MIO-ECSDE, Malta, Spain, EcoMediterrania, CEDARE, Cyprus, Israel	RAC/Blue Plan and RAC/Priority Actions Programme
Medium-term (until 1999 Contracting Parties meeting and beyond)			
- Sustainable development indicators	France and Tunisia	European Community, Morocco, EcoMediterranean, Greece, Israel	RAC/Blue Plan
- Sustainable Tourism	Spain, EOAEN and Egypt	Malta, Monaco, Cyprus, Croatia, European Community, Greece, EcoMediterrania, WWF MIO-ECSDE, ASCAME	RAC/Blue Plan and RAC/Priority Actions Programme
- Information, awareness and participation	MIO-ECSDE and CREE	European Community, WWF, France, APNEK, Croatia, Egypt, Morocco, MEDCITIES, EcoMediterrania, Albania, Algeria, Libya	MED Coordinating Unit
- Free trade and environment in the Euromediterranean context (strategic impact assessment)	FIS	Tunisia, France, European Community, APNEK, Morocco, MIO-ECSDE	MED Coordinating Unit
- Industry and sustainable development (cultural, economic, technical and financial aspects of progressive elimination of land-based pollution)	Italy, Algeria	WWF, Israel, EOAEN, ASCAME, CEFIC, Spain, European Community	MED POL, RAC/Clean Production
- Management of urban/rural development	Egypt	MEDCITIES, FIS, MIO-ECSDE, Spain, Morocco, France, Malta (Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Algeria, CEDARE, EC	RAC/Blue Plan and RAC/Priority Actions Programme

¹ The Coordinating Unit and the Regional Activity Centres will each provide the necessary support to the different working groups according to their expertise.