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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of MED POL National Coordinators

Delphi, Greece, 20-23 May 1997

REPORT

MEETING OF MED POL NATIONAL COORDINATORS

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Introduction

1. The Meeting of MED POL National Coordinators was held at the European Cultural Centre of Delphi, Greece, from 20 to 23 May 1997.

Participants

2. National Coordinators or their representatives from the following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention attended the Meeting: Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Community, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.

3. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: World Health Organization (WHO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and International Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC/UNESCO).

4. The following MAP Regional Activity Centre and non-governmental organizations were represented: Regional Activity Centre for Environment Remote Sensing (ERS/RAC), Friends of the Earth International, and CEFIC/Eurochlor.

5. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

Agenda Item 1. Opening of the Meeting

6. The Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan, Mr. L. Chabason, opened the Meeting and welcomed the participants. The Meeting was of special significance because, for the first time since the adoption of MAP II, the revision of the Dumping and LBS Protocols and the adoption of the principles governing MED POL III, the National Coordinators were called upon to approve new activities and programmes corresponding to these wider objectives. Accordingly, MED POL would henceforth focus its efforts on pollution control. In formulating activities under Phase III, full account would be taken of the disparities in the level of development of the different countries of the region, necessitating the strengthening of management capacities so that all countries attained an acceptable minimum standard. An effort would also be made during the next biennial period to establish a sound basis for the implementation of the LBS Protocol, involving the preparation of a regional strategic action programme, guidelines for the formulation of national action plans and a report on pollution "hot spots" to be submitted for adoption by the Contracting Parties. In that context, he had been deeply impressed by the prompt and consistent response of almost all countries, which demonstrated their determination to get down to the task of implementing the Protocol.

7. With regard to the financing of MED POL activities, every effort would be made to propose an adequate budget to the Contracting Parties, bearing in mind, however, that the Bureau, at its latest meeting, had proposed that contributions to the Trust Fund should be held at their 1997 level, which implied that external funding would have to be sought. In that connection, he drew attention to the grant recently made by GEF and the promising contacts with the European Commission and METAP. It was hoped to fill the post of MED POL Coordinator, approved by the Contracting Parties, during the second half of 1997. Lastly, the Coordinator assured participants that he considered the MED POL programme to be a decisive component of the overall MAP structure.

Agenda item 2. Rules of procedure

8. The rules of procedure adopted for the meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI) applied *mutatis mutandis* to the Meeting of MED POL National Coordinators.

Agenda item 3. Election of officers

9. The Meeting unanimously elected the following officers:

Chairperson:	Ms Alenka Malej (Slovenia)
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr Giovanni Guerrieri (Italy) Mr Yahia Sabhi (Morocco)
Rapporteur:	Mr Ilkay Salihoğlu (Turkey)

Agenda item 4. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

10. The Meeting adopted the proposed agenda contained in document UNEP(OCA)/MED.WG.127/1, which appears as Annex II to this report.

Agenda item 5. Progress report on the implementation of MED POL in 1996 and review of 1997 ongoing and planned activities

11. Mr F.S. Civili, MAP First Officer (Marine Scientist), in charge of the coordination of MED POL a.i., introduced the progress report (UNEP(OCA)/MED.WG.127/Inf.3), which detailed the MED POL - Phase III activities carried out from July 1996 to May 1997 concerning the implementation of pollution assessment, pollution control, including activities related to the formulation of a strategic action programme to address pollution from land-based activities, and the Dumping and Hazardous Wastes Protocols.

12. In the ensuing debate, with reference to the implementation of the Dumping Protocol, attention was drawn to the obligation on Contracting Parties to submit reports even when no dumping permits had been issued. It was suggested that the Secretariat should send out reminders not only in the case of reporting for the Dumping Protocol, but also in relation to the provisions of other Protocols. The participants were informed of a recent meeting of the scientific group of the 1972 London Convention, at which reference had been made to the possibility that Article 4.2(e) of the Dumping Protocol might be used as a pretext for dumping asbestos. Several participants reported on the progress made towards ratification of the revised Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

13. Concern was expressed about the termination of the post of maintenance engineer, which it was feared might create problems for national laboratories. It was pointed out, however, that needs for maintenance and repair of MED POL instruments could be included in the planned country-tailored capacity-building assistance programmes. In response to a question concerning the proposal to hold a workshop on the issue of *Caulerpa taxifolia*, it was recalled that the workshop would take place in 1997 but that it had been decided by the Contracting Parties to conduct such activities in the biodiversity framework rather than under the MED POL programme.

14. For future meetings of the National Coordinators, it was suggested to the Secretariat to prepare progress reports highlighting the activities carried out, those foreseen and the corresponding budget.

15. The Meeting took note of the progress report.

Agenda item 6. Implementation of MED POL - Phase III Programme

16. Mr F.S. Civili introduced document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.127/3, which provided a brief analysis of the achievements and bottlenecks of Phase II and the priority lines of work proposed for the implementation of MED POL - Phase III. The document had been prepared by the Secretariat after consultation with government authorities and scientists. On the basis of the general objectives approved at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties held in Montpellier from 1 to 4 July 1996, namely, to provide the basis for the reduction of marine pollution, the Programme gave much stronger emphasis to action-oriented managerial aspects, i.e. pollution control. After reviewing the proposed activities for pollution assessment and pollution control, he described the mechanisms proposed by the Secretariat in relation to the coordination of activities and their implementation mechanisms. Finally, he presented the proposed activities related to the implementation of the Dumping and Hazardous Wastes Protocols.

17. The MAP Coordinator emphasized that the proposals had been elaborated bearing in mind the new situation in the Mediterranean resulting from the adoption or revision of the Protocols to the Barcelona Convention. MED POL - Phase II had ensured that all countries in the region had enhanced their capacity to assess pollution. In addition, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and the Programme METAP - Phase III at the regional level, together with Agenda 21 at the global level, had helped to define the objectives for the future.

18. In the course of the ensuing general discussion, the MED POL National Coordinators expressed their appreciation of the concise but comprehensive document prepared by the Secretariat.

19. The Coordinator from the European Community informed the Meeting that the Mediterranean was one of the main issues included in the programme concerning the international role of Community research under the forthcoming 5th European Union Framework Research Programme. In particular, with the objective of strengthening the partnership with Mediterranean countries, it was proposed: to strengthen the scientific infrastructure in Mediterranean countries so that they could better survey, study and monitor their environment using E.U. norms and methods; to assist Mediterranean countries in implementing international environmental conventions of a global or regional character; and to support participation by Mediterranean countries and international scientific organizations promoting environmental research and protection, and to promote the participation of regional environmental bodies, such as the Mediterranean Action Plan and the Helsinki Commission, in the EU research programme and activities.

20. The National Coordinators emphasized the need to accelerate the process of ratifying the amended Barcelona Convention, as well as the new and revised Protocols adopted by the Contracting Parties in 1995 and in 1996, in order to provide the legal basis for the proposed programme of activities under Phase III. It was noted, nevertheless, that, in relation to the LBS Protocol, the Contracting Parties had authorized the Secretariat to carry out preparatory activities without awaiting ratification. The Meeting agreed that National

Coordinators should approach their respective governments to urge them to ratify the instruments as soon as possible.

21. It was proposed that in Phase III emphasis should be laid on the subregional approach. Although this proposal was supported by a number of Coordinators, others felt that such an approach was already inherent in many activities. The need to establish assessment coordination groups to harmonize the work to be carried out at the subregional level was also discussed and the view was expressed that the Coordinating Unit should be responsible for the task. After participants were reminded that the Contracting Parties, at their Extraordinary Meeting in Montpellier, had decided not to accept a proposal to set up another different but comparable advisory group (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.8/7, paragraph 97), the Meeting accepted the offer of the National Coordinator from France to prepare a document explaining the role and the functions of such a group. The document would be circulated by the Secretariat to all National Coordinators.

22. The focus in Phase III on the building of capacity in managerial skills was welcomed because the difficulties faced in implementing MED POL were now not only of a scientific nature. The lack of both coordination of activities and collaboration among scientists, as well as excessive bureaucracy, also constituted limiting factors.

23. With regard to the selection of four or five countries for assistance in capacity building to a minimum capability standard, questions were raised concerning the criteria to be applied. One National Coordinator believed that the choice of countries should be heterogeneous, another considered that thought should be given to an alternative strategy, while yet another called for a progress report on the current situation in the region.

24. In the course of a discussion on the limit of more than 100,000 inhabitants for the assessment of contaminants reaching the Mediterranean Sea from coastal cities and urban agglomerations, one participant considered the figure too low thus involving too many towns, while others believed that the number of tourists in a particular area should be taken into account. It was pointed out that the figure was not arbitrary, being based on one of the targets of the 1985 Genoa Declaration. The representative of WHO stated that the figure was indicative only and that due consideration should be given to national and regional priorities.

25. One National Coordinator drew attention to the difficulties encountered by his country in adapting clean technologies to local conditions taking into account their complexity and their costs and called for demonstration projects to ensure a gradual transfer of technology.

26. The Meeting felt that in the future implementation of MED POL - Phase III, closer working relations with MAP Regional Activity Centres (RACs) were necessary. In particular, it was noted that it would be appropriate to launch relevant joint activities with the Environment Remote Sensing Regional Activity Centre (ERS/RAC) in relation to monitoring activities, and with the Cleaner Technology Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC) concerning the possibility of launching demonstration projects on the transfer of technology relating to source clean-up.

27. Bearing in mind the recommendation by the Contracting Parties on drawing up new quality criteria for bathing waters taking into account the results of work conducted in an international context, a National Coordinator proposed that the relevant draft Directive of the European Union be taken into account in the light of the Mediterranean context. She informed the Meeting that, under the framework of the RAMOGE Agreement and subject to the approval of its Committee, a meeting of experts would be held on the subject and she proposed that, on the basis of its work, Mediterranean experts should meet before the end of 1997 in order to finalize draft criteria.

28. The National Coordinators welcomed the offer made by the Coordinator from France to prepare a document on nutrients and eutrophication describing the experience in his country to provide a basis for further work on remedial action pursuant to the requirements of the LBS Protocol.

29. The observer for CEFIC/Euro-Chlor said that, in order to reflect the tenor of the document, the first sub-paragraph under section (A) of part 2 should read: " - identification of policies and implementation of strategies for the reduction of TPBs with a view to their elimination based on.....".

30. With regard to target-oriented research, emphasis was laid on the need to undertake applied research rather than undertake research for its own sake.

Agenda item 6.1 Trend monitoring and biomonitoring

31. Mr G.P. Gabrielides, MAP Senior Programme Officer introduced document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.127/4: "A Regional Site-Specific Temporal Trend Monitoring Programme" and explained, with the help of slides, the purpose and methods of the proposed trend monitoring activities. The programme would be implemented in a small number of stations, selected from the national monitoring programmes. Common methodology would be employed for the designing of the programme, the sampling and analysis, as well as the processing of the data. The same criteria would be used for the selection of stations, contaminants and species to be used (if the matrix was biota). Several points should be noted: the programme design, based on statistical analysis, making use of the work already carried out by other bodies, such as ICES; the "site-specific" nature of monitoring, which would make it possible in particular areas of the Mediterranean to verify the effectiveness of the measures taken (such as the installation of a sewage treatment plant); and the need to minimize variations that mask contaminant level changes really due to pollution. This could be achieved by being consistent and by applying a proper data quality assurance programme. He further pointed out that, for the purposes of managing and processing MED POL data, especially trend monitoring data, the Coordinating Unit's statistical analysis capability needed to be strengthened. Lastly, in view of the assistance that some countries might need in order to implement this type of monitoring, from the initial design of the programme to the analysis of data, it was proposed that sufficient resources should be allocated in the MAP budget.

32. In the course of the debate, several National Coordinators voiced their concern over certain features which they thought required detailed study and should be approached with caution: the lengthy delays that would inevitably occur before a programme of that kind began to produce tangible results; the difficulty of interpreting data which did not indicate a "rising" trend but described a "flat curve", or produced unexpected results; the very large number of parameters contained in the document, which might not correspond to the actual situation of a particular country; and the cost of introducing so complex a system. One participant, while finding the approach both positive and convincing, considered that monitoring should not be confined to chemical contaminants. A National Coordinator, while underlining the importance of the new phase, urged that eutrophication should not be neglected. Lastly, another speaker believed that two different approaches were at issue: the first, of an intellectual nature, called for a sophisticated system based on advanced statistical methods; the second, of a more practical kind, consisted in tackling the sources of pollution, which corresponded to the wishes of the Contracting Parties.

33. The representative of WMO proposed that, since a document had already been produced on trend monitoring in coastal areas, the Secretariat should now prepare documents

on trend monitoring of pollutant loads for submission to the next meeting of National Coordinators.

34. One Coordinator asked the Secretariat to include in the next version of the document on trend monitoring the explanation of why the programme proposed was not called "regional" any longer and to justify the passage to a "site specific" programme.

35. In response to the many comments made, which were both relevant and justified in view of the innovative nature of the proposed programme, Mr Gabrielides emphasized that there was no question of imposing the details of the programme on any country. The selection of the sites to be included in the programme and the parameters to be measured should satisfy local needs. This type of monitoring was undertaken for the first time in the Mediterranean but it was essential to enable the Secretariat to determine whether the measures taken were really effective since the main aim now was to reduce inputs from land-based sources. The chosen horizon of 2005 corresponded to that fixed by the Contracting Parties for MED POL - Phase III. He shared the view expressed by most speakers that the work should go forward prudently and step-by-step, if necessary simplifying the statistical procedures and drawing on the experience of other countries, organizations and institutions. In the course of implementation, the programme would of course have to be adapted to new situations and the new knowledge acquired, to remedy the possible shortcomings, and if necessary, the underlying concept would have to be reviewed. The Secretariat's initial objective in this new phase was to achieve a reasonable level of uniformity of the criteria and methods adopted and apply consistency in order to reduce variations to a minimum. Support will be provided to countries requesting it in order to enable their full participation.

36. As a complement to the discussion, the meeting heard two statements on remote sensing in support of pollution monitoring, illustrated by a number of slides.

37. The representative of the European Community described the latter's long experience in this area. Remote sensing provided the statistical database needed to put *in situ* measures in perspective, to evaluate long-term trends and thus to contribute towards decision-making. The Joint Research Centre of the European Community (within the framework of programmes such as that for the creation of an earth observatory) could offer valuable assistance to scientists and managers in the Mediterranean in exploiting the potential of remote-sensing systems for monitoring environmental trends.

38. The representative of ERS/RAC explained the various types of satellite and their characteristics and drew attention to their usefulness by citing concrete examples of the work carried out by ERS/RAC: evaluation of movements of water masses along the coasts of Sicily and the coastal dynamics of the Gulf of Gabes (in the context of the MAP coastal management programme for Sfax).

39. Also in connection with remote sensing, one National Coordinator referred to the possibilities it offered for the study and mapping of *Posidonia* meadows and beds of algae, which constituted a valuable indicator due to their sensitivity to pollution.

40. Turning to the question of biomonitoring, Mr Gabrielides recalled that, at the outset, all monitoring programmes had been anthropogenic, in other words their primary focus was on the effects of pollution on human health. At their meeting held in Antalya in 1993, the Contracting Parties had decided to introduce biomonitoring in parallel to chemical monitoring to complement each other. The reasons for this was that biomonitoring provided a picture of the health of marine life. He briefly described the activities undertaken so far and especially the pilot biomonitoring exercise which took place in 1996. The individual reports of principal

investigators had been prepared, a synopsis was being drawn up and the results would be submitted to a group of experts which would meet by the end of 1997. This group would also formulate recommendations for future work. The Secretariat wished to reiterate that it was ready to undertake any form of cooperation with organizations and programmes active in this field.

41. The Coordinator from Monaco considered that, the RAMOGE Agreement, on the basis of the work carried out on biological effects monitoring, subject to the approval of its Commission, could carry out pilot activities at the Mediterranean level. Italy and France supported the proposal.

42. All those who took the floor underlined the benefits of biomonitoring techniques for understanding the stress on organisms and improving knowledge of the health of the marine environment. However, the necessity to use a battery of tests and not just one of them was noted. One National Coordinator said that in his country anti-pollution programmes focused on ecotoxicity: chemical and biological data permitted better understanding of the processes that took place in the marine environment between the emergence of a contaminant and its effects.

43. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chairperson and the Secretariat noted that all the statements had underlined the necessary complementarity of both types of monitoring. The Meeting should therefore draw up a recommendation to the Contracting Parties to that effect, requesting that the necessary financial resources be included in the budget and shared equally between the monitoring of contaminants and biomonitoring.

Agenda item 6.2 Compliance monitoring

44. Mr G. Kamizoulis, WHO Senior Scientist, introduced the programme for compliance monitoring in coastal and pollution hot spot areas (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.127/5) and an information document on monitoring for compliance control (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.127/Inf.4). After explaining the background to the programme and briefly summarizing each of its chapters, he cited one example of compliance monitoring that was already in effect, namely, the WHO guidelines for recreational waters.

45. Many countries had not developed and elaborated an environmental quality objectives system based on the control of discharges to ensure that the quality of the receiving water body at any specified place was suitable for its established legitimate uses and development of such a system was obviously a first essential step. The knowledge and experience gained from the monitoring programmes meant that the second step, namely the selection and analysis of the appropriate parameters in space and time, would require less effort. In view of the importance of laboratory analyses and the resulting action the third step would be an analytical quality control programme to ensure the reliability of the data. The final, and crucial, step would be attainability analyses to assist countries to decide whether a water body was suitable for a particular use, evaluating the information collected from the water body survey. The parameters and sites to be utilized for the programme would be selected by national authorities according to their own needs and priorities.

46. The programme was welcomed by the National Coordinators and some suggestions were made on elements to be included. Support was expressed for the inclusion of litter as a primary hot spot indicator and the National Coordinator from Cyprus offered to communicate the experience of his country in this respect. The representative of IOC/UNESCO provided information on MED-GOOS, a regional component of the Global Ocean Observing System. National compliance monitoring programmes could be complemented by implementing MED-GOOS through systematic data collection, analysis and exchange. He also pointed out that

although litter was a priority parameter, it had received little attention in past monitoring programmes. Very few laboratories in the Mediterranean had experience of monitoring persistent synthetic materials, which were an Annex I substance of the 1983 LBS Protocol. He suggested that a training course on coastal litter monitoring methodology for 10-12 participants should be organized in 1998.

47. The focus on quality criteria and standards was also welcomed as these were important for the elaboration of national programmes and would incite countries to develop an appropriate legislative framework.

48. It was pointed out that many countries already had national legislation on emissions which had to be complied with, but the question of compliance with criteria for receiving water was not so clear-cut. The document should clarify whether compliance referred to national regulations or MED POL criteria and should deal with the problem of divergent criteria for the issue of permits.

49. It was noted that the definition of point and diffuse sources of pollution differed from generally accepted principles and would have to be revised.

50. The Secretariat was asked whether provision had been made to improve the capacity at the disposal of National Coordinators as the programme entrusted them with a very important role.

51. The Meeting noted that the European Union Directive on wastewater included parameters that were being implemented in non-member States and the European Union was requested to make a list of relevant Directives available, through the Secretariat, to non-E.U. member States that were Contracting Parties.

52. Responding to the points raised, Mr Kamizoulis said that each country could use its own national legislation as the basis for its compliance report. As compliance monitoring progressed, any gaps in national legislation would become evident and the appropriate measures could be taken. In response to the comment that the content of the document was too theoretical, he said that it was intended to be a framework document and that it was complemented by the information document.

53. Regarding microbiological analyses, new developments were constantly occurring and the situation would have to be kept under review. It was hoped to convene a meeting on the adoption of new quality criteria and standards for recreational waters and shellfish-growing waters as well as on the revision of the related laboratories techniques. The interim water quality criteria of 1985 were still being used because the National Coordinators had decided to defer the adoption of new criteria and standards for bathing waters until international developments had clarified the problem (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG. 104/5, para. 41).

54. Finally, he explained that provisions for capacity-building programmes related to compliance control were already included in MAP and, if budgetary resources so allowed, further workshops and training exercises would be held.

55. The Secretariat was requested to revise the document in the light of the comments made, with a view to its submission to the Contracting Parties.

Agenda Item 6.3 Data quality assurance programme

56. Mr Civili presenting the activities proposed under MED POL - Phase III in the field of data quality assurance, stressed the vital importance of the subject at a time when monitoring objectives were becoming more precise. The aim of the programme was to improve the quality of analytical data through the mandatory participation of MED POL laboratories in intercomparison exercises, the enhanced use of certified reference materials and intensified individual and group training.

57. The representative of the IAEA pointed out that, while steady progress had been made over the years in the quality of results, there was still some way to go and the level of participation remained low. He therefore appealed to the National Coordinators to encourage laboratories in their countries to take part in data quality assurance programmes and to make use of the free services offered by the IAEA.

58. It was suggested that the Secretariat should look into the possibility of setting up a system of accreditation for laboratories in the region. One National Coordinator described the system of accreditation of his country which was granted on presentation of a dossier and involved testing on the basis of blind samples and comparison of results. Accreditation had to be renewed annually and the ability to handle a certain volume of work was also taken into account. The representative of the IAEA supported the suggestion but warned that it would not be easy to put into practice. Laboratories would be certified on a case-by-case basis for specific types of analysis and there would be a permanent requirement to achieve accurate results on the basis of blind samples.

59. The Secretariat said that the suggestion had been noted and would be investigated in conjunction with the IAEA.

60. In response to a query, the Meeting was given the assurance that monitoring data which had not been screened for accuracy would not be included in the MED POL database.

61. At the suggestion of a National Coordinator, the representative of the IAEA said that he was willing to inform National Coordinators when intercomparison exercise results were received from national institutions and to provide them with a copy of the results. Such a procedure would encourage interaction between national institutions and the Coordinators.

62. The proposed line of action was approved.

Agenda Item 6.4 Research

63. Mr Civili introduced the priority research areas as listed in document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.127/3, stressing that the projects implemented would continue to be target-oriented. It was intended to modify the method of implementing the programme so as to involve institutions in the developing countries more closely in MED POL research activities. For each research area one or more qualified laboratories in a developing country would be selected and put in contact with a corresponding laboratory in a more developed country to work in partnership over the long term. In that way it was hoped to develop closer cooperation between North and South and to attract additional funding, including from DG XII of the European Commission.

64. In the course of the discussion speakers expressed their keen interest in the research programme and hoped that adequate resources would be allocated to it. It was

suggested that, without prejudice to the subsequent decision of the Contracting Parties, the Meeting should recommend an increase in the research budget.

65. One speaker proposed that the research area referred to as "eutrophication" should be renamed "enhanced nutrient mobilization in coastal waters". Another welcomed the new policy of encouraging North/South and South/South partnership, which would have the effect, *inter alia*, of promoting the transfer of technology.

66. The representative of IOC/UNESCO said that research was an essential component of a monitoring programme. Research areas such as modelling and transport and dispersion mechanisms were very important for the interpretation of monitoring data, particularly in eutrophication and biogeochemical studies. The representative of the IAEA drew attention to the Agency's research programme and technical cooperation programme, under which several countries of the region had already benefited. It was important, at a time of budgetary stringency, to take advantage of any additional assistance that might be available.

67. The proposed line of action was approved.

Agenda item 6.5 LBS Protocol

68. Mr Civili noted that the discussions during the first two days of the Meeting had already touched on the framework for the implementation of the LBS Protocol. He presented the four major action lines around which the Secretariat proposed to develop activities in this area over the 1997-1998 biennium: (i) elaboration of national action plans; (ii) continuation and completion of the work on pollution hot spots; (iii) definition of policies and implementation of strategies on substances that are toxic, persistent and liable to bioaccumulate, nutrients, and wastewater treatment and management; (iv) inspection structures.

69. He expanded on the first and third points. The elaboration of national action plans formed part of a series of activities that had been initiated five months previously and were financed in part by a GEF grant. Four important documents would be available by the end of 1997: a strategic action programme to address pollution from land-based activities; a report on pollution hot spots, a transboundary diagnostic analysis, and an investment portfolio. If the Contracting Parties adopted these documents at their meeting to be held in Tunis in November 1997, they would be put before a donors' conference in December. Country-specific national action plans would then be prepared in 1998 on the basis of the provisions in the LBS Protocol and the principles adopted in the Washington Global Plan of Action. The process under way, for which the contribution of National Coordinators was essential, provided a unique opportunity to undertake practical measures that met the obligations in the Protocol within a very short space of time. With regard to action on major pollutants and wastewaters, it was superfluous to emphasize its importance for the Mediterranean because it corresponded to the results of Phases I and II of MED POL and the recommendations made in Washington.

70. Mr Kamizoulis responsible for the second action line - hot spots - described the main stages. All Mediterranean countries, with one exception, had responded to the request for data in record time. A regional report on priority pollution hot spots, incorporating all the national reports, had been drawn up and the sites had been prioritized according to the level of pollution. Donors and countries would be called upon to finance the rehabilitation.

71. With reference to inspection structures, he commented briefly on the overall pattern of regulatory system of compliance and control and indicated that, as the inspection systems in force varied greatly from country to country, there should first be an evaluation of the region as a whole. A proposal could then be made on setting up a network of persons responsible for

these questions at the national level so that they could exchange views and experience. Rather than envisaging the creation of a regional inspection corps, a framework for self-inspection should be outlined for each country, in particular by helping the national authorities to establish or strengthen their inspection systems. This activity would require considerable resources and there were contacts with METAP and the European Union, which were especially interested in these issues.

72. One National Coordinator asked whether the various activities proposed for the implementation of the LBS Protocol would be for the whole of the Mediterranean basin or for particular areas. Mr Civili, in reply, said that the first priority was to assist in drawing up national plans and that the follow-up in respect of hot spots and the other activities proposed would be on a country-by-country basis.

73. With regard to inspection structures, one National Coordinator considered that an eco-auditing instrument was more attractive and effective than a centralized and binding system, since it was not based on coercive and punitive measures but on willingness to respect standards.

74. One Coordinator stressed that, according to the LBS Protocol, the strengthening of the inspection systems should be made at the request of the interested countries. In any case the activities should be carried out voluntarily and gradually.

75. The representative of the European Community stated that he fully supported that approach. Within the E.U. no decision had yet been taken on the question of inspection. A Council regulation that had been in force for several years provided specifically for a voluntary system of the eco-auditing type which had already been adopted by several thousand businesses: they undertook to inspect their entire production processes themselves, from the supply of raw materials to the finished product. The success of the system was due to the fact that it stimulated healthy competition, inciting every business to improve its image and project onto the market a benevolent ecological profile. At the regional level, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership launched in Barcelona in 1995 foresaw the creation by the year 2010 of a free trade area which would encourage this sort of spontaneous inspection since the goods on offer would have to meet acceptability standards.

76. The other Coordinators who addressed this topic agreed that experience in their own countries had followed similar lines. One participant reported that, after an initial phase of strict State control enforced by penal sanctions, polluting businesses had, in a second phase, voluntarily approached the central authorities for help in observing the regulations through a "clean-up fund". Other countries had drawn similar lessons: a regulation on the production and recycling of wastewater had resulted in a self-inspection system that was more reliable than State supervision; municipal authorities had been given wide powers to approach the central administration for help for factories that were committing offences; a general system of "clean-up" funds had been introduced; and industrialists had been involved "upstream" through the creation of an ecological "seal of approval". In one country, model laws had been drawn up that applied to the entire territory, although in sensitive areas the local authorities were authorized to take additional measures, thereby introducing a high degree of flexibility into the system.

77. At the end of the debate on compliance and control including inspection structures, the Chairperson noted that all the observations and suggestions that had been made converged on the adoption of the line of work proposed by the Secretariat including "eco-auditing" as an environmental instrument for pollution control.

78. The representative of WMO presented a series of preliminary estimates on atmospheric depositions and comparison of reverine and atmospheric inputs of nitrogen, heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants (POPs from land-based sources to the Mediterranean Sea and its sub-regions. It was shown that atmospheric inputs for some pollutants (especially for POPs) were often most significant. For the effective application of the LBS Protocol by the year 2010, a drastic reduction of atmospheric inputs would be required, at considerable cost.

79. The figures were disputed by several National Coordinators, who expressed scepticism at the picture presented to them. Considering that at the present time very few stations for the measurement of atmospheric inputs existed in the region, that the emission data used for modelling should be rectified and that the figures did not indicate the margin of error, several participants felt that either the figures were correct and then the orientation adopted by MAP up to now had to be reconsidered, or they were not, and the utmost caution should be exercised in making their presentation. Nevertheless, some participants took the view that, even if the accuracy of the figures could be called in question, the issue still had to be taken into account.

80. In reply to these comments, the representative of WMO stated that the figures were not new, since they had been published in the GESAMP report No.38 and the MAP technical Report Series No.85. They represented at most preliminary estimates obtained by modelling from emission data provided by European governments for the Convention on Long - range Transboundary Air Pollution and emission estimates for other Mediterranean countries. He agreed that there were almost no measurement data for most of the Mediterranean countries but the model validation was made using data available for the North and Baltic Seas and central Europe. The presented estimates should be regarded, for the time being, as indicative and they should be refined on the basis of updated emission inventories and additional measurement data.

Agenda item 6.6 Dumping Protocol

81. Mr Civili pointed out that, until the revised Dumping Protocol had been ratified, the 1976 Protocol remained in force so National Coordinators should continue to submit reports on dumping permits in accordance with their obligations, including nil reports. In connection with the future implementation of the 1995 revised Protocol, the Secretariat was finalizing the Guidelines for the management of dredging material with a view to their submission to the Contracting Parties in November 1997.

82. The National Coordinator from France informed the Meeting of a recent incident in the Mediterranean that had resulted in dumping which had not been communicated to the Secretariat. Following the wreck of a ship in the sensitive region of the Straits of Bonifacio, it had become apparent that its cargo of grain was having a negative impact on the marine environment. The grain had therefore been pumped up in an emergency operation and dumped at 2,000 metres depth off the coast of Corsica. The wreckage of the ship had been cut up and returned to the shipowner at his own expense. The dumping had not been notified because of the urgency of the situation, but the National Coordinators would receive a full report at their next Meeting. He also drew attention to the draft guidelines for the assessment of wastes or other matter that may be considered for dumping, which had recently been agreed by the Scientific Group of the London Convention. The Group had also reached agreement on draft guidance for inert, inorganic geological material, the dumping of sewage sludge, and fish waste or material resulting from industrial fish processing operations, the disposal at sea of platforms and other man-made structures, and the dumping of bulky items. Another National Coordinator expressed his concern that the London Convention allowed the dumping of organic matter and

noted with satisfaction that the revised Dumping Protocol went further by prohibiting such dumping.

83. The Meeting also requested the Secretariat to strengthen its collaboration with the Secretariat of the International Maritime Organization.

Agenda item 6.7 Hazardous Wastes Protocol

84. Mr Civili said it was proposed that, under the overall supervision of the Coordinator, MED POL would coordinate and follow-up the technical aspects of the Protocol's implementation. Once the recruitment of the MED POL staff agreed at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties held in Montpellier had been completed, the Secretariat would be able to cope with the workload involved. Depending on the availability of funds, the Secretariat could start work on preparatory activities, including development of guidelines, rules and procedures for liability and compensation, and the formulation of legal and administrative measures related to the prohibition of export and transit of hazardous wastes.

85. The Meeting approved the proposal that MED POL should be responsible for the coordination and follow-up of the technical aspects of implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol, under the overall supervision of the Coordinator.

86. As a result of the discussions on Agenda items 6. and 6.1 to 6.7, the Meeting agreed on a number of recommendations relevant to the MED POL activities for the 1998-1999 biennium to be transmitted to the Contracting Parties (see Annex III).

Agenda item 7. Funding of 1998-1999 MED POL activities

87. Mr Gabrielides, replying to a comment on the need for a more detailed statement concerning the budgetary position of the MED POL programme, said that once the computerization of the accounting system had been completed, it should prove possible to supply such information without putting excessive strain on an understaffed Secretariat. The basic reason underlying the apparent discrepancies between the budget approved and the amounts actually expended was that the pledges made by Contracting Parties to the Trust Fund were not always paid in.

88. He introduced a list of activities that it was proposed to carry out under Phase III, emphasizing that they could not all be financed under the Mediterranean Trust Fund so external sources of financing would have to be sought.

89. In that connection, he recalled that it had clearly emerged from the latest meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties that no increase in the budget could be expected. At the very most, the present level would be maintained. Moreover, a serious problem had arisen in recent years owing to the failure of actual income to match approved expenditure. Over the past two years there had been a 30 per cent shortfall in activities and pledges amounting to some US\$ 1 million had accumulated with no prospect of their being paid. In the circumstances, it was considered essential to present a balanced budget, which could only be achieved either by increasing contributions or reducing activities. In future, certain specified activities would only be carried out if the necessary resources became available.

90. Two National Coordinators were of the opinion that all the activities should be financed by the Mediterranean Trust Fund, with a consequent increase in the budget. The

National Coordinators should express their concern that MAP was not being given the financial resources to carry out its programme.

91. After the Secretariat had been requested to indicate which activities would be funded from the Trust Fund and which would require external financing, one National Coordinator expressed the view that it was difficult to categorize activities at the present stage, in the absence of any figures or a timeframe.

92. Mr Gabrielides explained that the aim had been to present a list of all the activities it was desired to implement without fixing priorities or allocating resources, which was the task of the MAP Focal Points meeting. An effort would be made to undertake all activities indicated, securing the necessary extra funds from outside donors.

Agenda item 8. Other business

93. The WMO representative proposed that "scientific lectures" on specific subjects and new developments in the activities related to the MED POL - Phase III objectives be presented by invited high-level experts during the meetings of the National Coordinators. The meeting supported in principle this proposal and agreed that a possibility to organize such lectures should be considered in preparation of the next meeting of the National Coordinators.

94. The representative from France, while recalling that his delegation had offered to prepare two reports to be presented to the next Meeting of the National Coordinators (on Eutrophication and on the accident of the cargo in the Straits of Bonifacio), he suggested the Secretariat to solicit all Coordinators to submit in written form to the next Meetings, documents, reports and position papers relevant to the subjects to be treated. The documents would be discussed according to the Agenda of the Meeting and could facilitate the discussions and the decisions. The Coordinators accepted the proposal.

95. The representative from Slovenia brought to the attention of the participants the issue of the difficulty to evaluate the environmental damage in case of oil spills and accidents at sea. She recalled the existence of the Emergency Protocol for such cases but she reckoned that such subject was not covered. She suggested to initiate working on the preparation of Guidelines to establish the value of the ecological damage deriving from spills of oil and other harmful substances.

96. A discussion followed the proposal of the delegate from Slovenia. While all the participants agreed on the necessity to work on the preparation of such Guidelines which did not exist, some participants considered the subject as falling under the competence of REMPEC and suggested the Secretariat to contact the Centre to coordinate a joint action. The Meeting finally agreed on the importance of the subject and suggested the Secretariat to contact, in coordination with REMPEC, all the competent international Organizations such as IMO and FIPO. The Coordinator from France offered to present to the Secretariat, to be made available to all Coordinators, a short information paper on how his country faced the problem of the evaluation of the environmental damage deriving from accidents at sea.

Agenda item 9. Adoption of the Report of the Meeting

97. The English and the French versions of the draft Report of the Meeting were unanimously adopted by the participants.

Agenda item 10. Closure of the Meeting

98. Mr Civili and Mr Gabrielides expressed the deep satisfaction of the Secretariat for the results of the Meeting which would greatly facilitate the future implementation of MED POL Phase III.

99. The Chairperson thanked all the participants for their active participation and declared the Meeting closed at 13,30 hours of 23 May 1997.

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Rules of Procedure
3. Election of Officers
4. Adoption of the Agenda and organization of work
5. Progress report on the implementation of MED POL in 1996 and review of 1997 ongoing and planned activities
6. Implementation of MED POL - Phase III Programme
 - 6.1 Trend Monitoring and Biomonitoring
 - 6.2 Compliance Monitoring
 - 6.3 Data Quality Assurance Programme
 - 6.4 Research
 - 6.5 LBS Protocol
 - 6.6 Dumping Protocol
 - 6.7 Hazardous Wastes Protocol
7. Funding of 1998-1999 MED POL activities
8. Other Business
9. Adoption of the report of the Meeting
10. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX III

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. To the Secretariat

- To request the Secretariat (MED POL) to give priority to capacity-building activities related to the design and implementation of pollution trend monitoring, biological effects monitoring and compliance monitoring;
- To request the Secretariat (MED POL) to complete and finalize the work on the identification of sources and pollution loads related to pollution hot spots and to work on the formulation and implementation of action plans, programmes and measures related to the control of pollution from land-based activities;
- To request the Secretariat (MED POL) to work on the processing and analysis of the data resulting from the trend monitoring activities and to explore ways of strengthening significantly the statistical analysis capabilities of MED POL;
- To assign to the Secretariat the coordination and follow-up of the activities related to the future implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol in accordance with the recommendations made by the *ad hoc* Working Group responsible to analyse the structure of MEDU, RACs and MED POL;

II. To the Contracting Parties

- To urge acceleration of the process of ratifying the revised LBS Protocol, signed in Syracuse in 1996, as well as the revised Dumping Protocol, signed in Barcelona in 1995 and the Hazardous Wastes Protocol signed in Izmir in 1996;
- To move towards the formulation and implementation of action-oriented activities focusing on the control of pollution including environmental instruments such as eco-auditing;
- To decide that data quality assurance activities are essential to ensure the necessary reliability of the pollution data deriving from the monitoring activities;
- During the biennium 1998-1999, to concentrate on the identification of policies and implementation strategies for the reduction of TPBs in view of their elimination, the management and discharge of municipal waste waters, and the prevention and elimination of releases of nutrients;
- To continue and/or strengthen cooperation with the competent United Nations agencies, Regional Activity Centres, intergovernmental and international organizations, sub-regional agreements and programmes and, as appropriate, non-governmental organizations for the implementation of priority activities approved by the Contracting Parties.
- To provide adequate funds including external funds for the proper implementation of MED POL - Phase III, bearing in mind the activities which need to be carried out in the framework of LBS, Dumping and Hazardous Wastes Protocols for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean Sea.