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**UNITED NATIONS
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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

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16th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development Steering Committee

Floriana, Malta, 19 February 2015

Report of the Meeting

Introduction

1. The Sixteenth Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development was held on 19 February 2015 in Floriana, Malta.

Participation

2. The President of the Steering Committee, Ms. Marguerite Camilleri (Malta); the Vice-Presidents Mr. Mohamed Abdel Monem Farouk Osman (Egypt), Mr. Bernard Brillet (France), Ms. Jelena Knezevic (Montenegro), Mr. Antonio Troya (IUCN-Mediterranean) and Mr. Chrifi Hamid (ENDA-Maghreb) attended the meeting. In addition, the Coordinator of UNEP/MAP, Mr. Gaetano Leone; the representative of Moroccan Government that will host the 16th MCSD Meeting, Ms. Nassira Rheyati; the Programme Officer of UNEP/MAP, Mr. Atila Uras; the Director of Plan Bleu Regional Activity Center, Mr. Hugues Ravenel; the Programme Officer of Plan Bleu Regional Activity Center, Mr. Julien Le Tellier; and Ms. Roberta Debono of the Maltese Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change were also present in the meeting.
3. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

Agenda item 1. Opening Remarks

4. The meeting was opened by Ms. Marguerite Camilleri, President of the Steering Committee, who welcomed the members and other participants.
5. Opening remarks were made by Mr. Gaetano Leone, Coordinator of UNEP/MAP, who welcomed the members and thanked Malta for hosting the meeting. In his statement, Gaetano Leone updated the Steering Committee on recent developments in the Secretariat and the MAP system. The upcoming UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy (2016-2021) is planned to have a close link to the MSSD. He mentioned that partnerships with organizations such as UfM, the EEA, IUCN, MEDPAN, and the CBD are being strengthened. He indicated that due to improved financial planning and timely contributions from the Parties, it was now possible to consider launching the recruitment process for the sustainable development officer who would provide support in the area of sustainable development. He then stressed the work on visibility and outreach that is being undertaken by UNEP/MAP, especially to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the MAP/Barcelona Convention.

Agenda item 2. Adoption of the Agenda

6. The Committee reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.410/2. (Annex II)

Agenda item 3. MCSD Reform

7. The President of the Steering Committee presented the MCSD Reform draft proposal and recommendations, as contained in the document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.410/3. The updated proposal contained draft recommendations on the mandate and composition of the MCSD. The members of the Steering Committee provided comments and a new set of recommendations regarding the mandate of the MCSD was agreed (see Annex IV). Regarding MCSD composition, it was agreed that the Secretariat would propose an updated list of MCSD members for the next 2 biennia, based on the discussions and suggestions made at the Steering Committee meeting, and that the related proposed recommendation for the 16th MCSD meeting would reflect this Secretariat proposal.

Agenda item 4. MSSD Review – Conference Outcome and Next Steps

8. The Steering Committee was informed by the President of the Steering Committee of the major outcomes of the MSSD Conference that had taken place during the preceding days (17-18 February). These included general support for the scope and breadth of the Strategy, as expressed

in the strategic directions. It was agreed that further work was required on the actions and their relative importance, as well as to pitch the strategy to be attractive to a wide range of stakeholders, including governments and business. There was support for the idea that the right balance needs to be struck between having a strategy that is concrete and implementable but still retains enough flexibility to be relevant for all the states around the Mediterranean. The role of networks and NGOs in implementing the strategy needs more recognition, it was noted, as well as the private sector. A well-balanced set of flagship initiatives can help mobilize interest and resources. It was also noted that actions of horizontal importance are sometimes mentioned only once under a particular theme. A number of participants had mentioned that the role of key UNEP/MAP initiatives such as the SCP Action Plan in delivering MSSD implementation should be highlighted in the Strategy.

9. The Steering Committee provided its feedback on the draft MSSD. The main points raised referred to the need to review actions to ensure a balance in their relative importance, the role of the flagship initiatives in catalyzing action, the need for better information about funding, better balance in the structure between themes and tools, for a mid-term review of the strategy, and the importance of including some implementation guidelines for countries in the final chapter. The need for levers was also noted, as was the targets and indicators that are core to the implementation of the strategy and related directly to the Barcelona Convention and others that are more governance-related and involve more flexibility.
10. It was mentioned that the Strategy should refer to the outcomes of the 2011 evaluation of the current MSSD. The 6 themes, which were recommended by the Steering Committee in their 15th Meeting, should have sufficient coverage of major sectors like tourism, industry, energy and seek ways to use the thematic areas as a tools in each sector to achieve sustainable development with reference to those sectors. As an example, in case of tourism, principles of green economy, planning of coast and sea, good governance, responses to climate change, the good use of natural resources and efforts on sustainable cities will all serve to achieve sustainable tourism. This could be replicated in each of the sectors. For the implementation of the Strategy, existing regional strategies and action plans should be mobilized, rather than investing in development of a new action plan for the MSSD."
11. It was also noted that the governance section needs strengthening, including in the area of funding, and that the strategy should include a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators. The structure that is going to implement the strategy should also be indicated. In addition, it was suggested that the introduction be compressed and made more concrete, and that pressures and impacts are more clearly distinguished. It was also suggested that the strategy give more justification to the choice of thematic areas as agreed by the Steering Committee in their 15th meeting, and also that it needs objectives as well as an aim. The importance of tourism was also highlighted. It was suggested that chapter 3 should include concrete tools for implementation. Regarding indicators, the strategy should draw on the EcAp and ICZM indicators but will also be able to draw ones from the evolving SDGs process. Financing projections should also be included.
12. The MSSD Review Roadmap for the period February 2015 to COP 19 was then discussed and agreed (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.410/4) (See Annex III).

Agenda item 5. 16th MCSD Meeting and Input into COP 19

13. The Steering Committee discussed and agreed on the provisional agenda of the 16th MCSD Meeting as contained in the document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.410/5. It was also agreed that a peer review proposal would be presented for discussion at the 16th MCSD meeting.
14. Ms. Nassira Rheyati, representing the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, presented information about the logistics of the 16th MCSD meeting, which will take place in Rabat, Morocco, on the 9-11 June 2015.

Agenda item 6. Any Other Business

15. There were no additional issues to be discussed during the meeting.

Agenda item 7. Closure of the Meeting

16. The meeting was closed by the President of the Steering Committee at 17:00 on Thursday, 19 February 2015.

Annex I
List of Participants

List of Participants

MCS D Steering Committee

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Annex II
Provisional Agenda

TIMETABLE

Thursday, 19 February 2015		
09.30 – 10:00	Agenda item 1. Opening of the meeting Agenda item 2. Adoption of the Agenda	President of the Steering Committee
10.00 – 10:45	Agenda item 3. MCSD Reform	President of the Steering Committee
10:45 – 11:15	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:15 – 12:30	Agenda item 4. MSSD Review – Conference Outcome and Next Steps	President of the Steering Committee
12:30 -14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
14:00 - 15.00	Agenda item 4. MSSD Review - Conference Outcome and Next Steps (cont'd)	President of the Steering Committee Plan Bleu UNEP/MAP Secretariat
15:00 – 15:15	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15:15 - 16.00	Agenda item 4. MSSD Review - Conference Outcome and Next Steps (cont'd)	President of the Steering Committee Plan Bleu UNEP/MAP Secretariat
16:00 – 16:40	Agenda item 5. 16th MCSD meeting and input into COP19	President of the Steering Committee UNEP/MAP Secretariat
16:40 – 16:50	Agenda item 6. Any other business	UNEP/MAP Secretariat
16:50 - 17.00	Agenda item 7. Closure of the meeting	President of the Steering Committee UNEP/MAP Secretariat

Annex III

MSSD Review Roadmap for the period February 2015 to COP 19

MSSD Review Roadmap for the period February 2015 to COP 19

The process of the review of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development has been fully aligned with the roadmap as adopted by the COP 18 in its Decision IG.21/11 at Annex 1. Following the period following the MSSD Review Conference (17-18 February, 2015 – Floriana, Malta), which is one of the most important milestones of the review process, the roadmap will be shaped as follows:

Time	As adopted in Decision IG.21/11, Annex 1	Annotations
February 2015	Conference with MCSD members and MAP components and partner organizations to endorse first draft of the MSSD 2.0, provided funds are available.	The meeting took place on 17-18 February 2015. The draft MSSD was discussed in six thematic groups which met in two sessions and three parallel working groups.
Until 11 March 2015		The MCSD members and all stakeholders involved in the review process will be able to provide written comments on the draft MSSD till 11 March 2015. Additionally, the document will be open for online consultation on Plan Bleu website until the same date for any additional stakeholders' written comments.
April 2015	Draft MSSD 2.0 submitted to MAP Focal Points meeting for initial comments.	The first MAP Focal Points of 2014-2015 biennium will take place in Athens, Greece on 19-21 May 2015. The draft MSSD document that was submitted to the MSSD Review Conference (19-21 February 2015) will be provided to the MAP Focal Points a month before the meeting as an information document, as per rules of procedure for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to Barcelona Convention.
May 2015	Expert group meeting to integrate MCSD and MAP Focal Point comments.	An MSSD Core Team videoconference or face-to-face meeting (depending on funding and requirements) will be held in the first week of May 2015 to review the required updates to the document. Upon clearance by the MCSD Steering Committee and the MAP Coordinator, the final draft MSSD will be ready in English and French to be submitted to the MCSD a month before (8 th May) its 16 th Meeting that will be held in Morocco on 9-11 June 2015.
June 2015	MSSD 2.0 Draft submitted to MCSD meeting for finalization.	MCSD will discuss and endorse the final draft MSSD during its 16 th Meeting that will be held in Morocco on 9-11 June 2015.

September 2015	MSSD 2.0 submitted to MAP focal point meeting.	The MSSD will be submitted to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points for endorsement, as an Annex to its corresponding Decision a month before the meeting (mid-September 2015) in English and French as per rules of procedure for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to Barcelona Convention.
Mid-October 2015	MAP Focal Points Meeting, Athens, Greece (exact date to be confirmed)	MAP Focal Points endorse and send the draft "MSSD Decision" to the consideration and possible adoption of the Contracting Parties at their 19th Meeting (COP 19)
End of 2015	MSSD 2.0 submitted to COP 19 for adoption.	The draft "MSSD Decision" will be submitted to COP 19 for adoption two months before the meeting, in English, French, Spanish and Arabic as per rules of procedure for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to Barcelona Convention.
9-12 February 2016	COP 19, Athens, Greece	The Contracting Parties will adopt the MSSD.

Shaded boxes are activities as adopted in Decision IG.21/11, Annex I.

Annex IV

Agreed Revisions to Almeria Mandate and Proposed MCSD Reform Recommendations

Agreed revisions to Almeria mandate and proposed MCSD Reform recommendations

- I. Almeria mandate: Assist Mediterranean countries and other stakeholders active in the region in the adoption and implementation of sustainable development policies, including the integration of environmental considerations into other policies;
- II. Ensure the follow-up of the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) through appropriate tools, mechanisms and criteria that would better enhance an efficient follow-up function;
- III. Promote the exchange of experience and good practices regarding the integration of environmental and socioeconomic policies, as well as examples which show the application of international sustainable development commitments at suitable scales in different countries;
- IV. Identify the obstacles encountered and support regional and sub-regional cooperation for the effective implementation of the sustainable development principle;
- V. Coordinate the periodical drafting of the report on the state of implementation of the MCSD recommendations; and,
- VI. Produce opinions of the overall MAP Work Programme and the functioning of the Coordinating Unit and the RACs, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations into the MAP / Barcelona Convention system as a whole.

Amendments to item VI of mandate:

- VI. Produce opinions and recommendations on the overall MAP work programme, with the aim of integrating sustainability into the MAP / Barcelona Convention system as a whole and strengthening the implementation of the MSSD.

Additional element of mandate to be added:

Provide opinions and recommendations for integration and coordination of the work of the MCSD with other existing international and regional sustainable development and environmental programmes, policy frameworks and initiatives.

Recommendations

To add to Recommendation 6: It is recommended to improve MCSD visibility at the High Level Political Forum, relying on the UNEP (institutional) capacities.