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**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

Second Meeting of the Steering Group for  
the preparation of a Strategic Action Programme  
to address pollution of the Mediterranean Sea from Land-Based Activities

Athens, 8-10 September 1997

**REPORT OF THE MEETING**

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## 1. Opening of the Meeting

1. Mr Lucien Chabason, Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan, opened the meeting at 10.00 hours on 8 September 1997 and noted with appreciation the progress to date in executing the GEF-PDF B activities. He particularly noted the extent of co-operation and participation from National Coordinators and the extent to which data had been made freely available for the necessary analyses undertaken in the context of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis. Mr Chabason welcomed participants and expressed his regret that the UNDP and World Bank were not represented at the meeting.

2. Mr J. Pernetta, UNEP/GEF Coordination Office noted that the Mediterranean GEF initiative was one of two UNEP/GEF International Waters activities that appeared to be on track, having met, with only minor adjustments the originally planned timetable and workplan. He thanked the members of the Secretariat for their hard work that had ensured this state of affairs and noted that the GEF project brief was scheduled to be submitted for inclusion in the winter inter-sessional programme of the GEF Council. This would necessitate its submission to the GEF Secretariat immediately following the meeting of the Contracting Parties scheduled for November.

3. Participants noted with considerable regret that representatives from UNDP and the World Bank were unable to be present and that neither agency had provided comments on the draft documentation provided prior to the Ischia meeting of experts. The absence of the World Bank representative was of particular concern given the need to coordinate activities under this PDF-B with those envisaged to be undertaken in the context of the Bank's Mediterranean Oil Pollution GEF Project; the desire of UNEP that the World Bank be directly involved in the planned donor's meeting; and the originally planned involvement of the World Bank in the economic aspects of the present project.

## 2. Review of Activities

4. Mr. F.S. Civili briefly reviewed the progress to date in the preparation of the Review of priority Hot Spots, the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme noting that the meeting of Government Experts held in Ischia, Italy from 15-18 June 1997, had reviewed a series of documents including the draft Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) for the Mediterranean Sea; the draft Strategic Action Programme (SAP) to address Pollution from Land-Based Activities; the draft report on Priority Pollution Hot Spots; the draft framework Priority Investment Portfolio; and draft guidelines for the Preparation of National Action Plans. The revised, Hot Spots, TDA and SAP documents were in front of the meeting for consideration of members.

5. During their review the experts had requested certain modifications to the structure of the TDA and SAP namely that the TDA should contain an analysis of proximate and ultimate root causes and potential transboundary issues, but that the cost estimates, actions, products and milestones should be removed from the TDA and inserted where appropriate in the SAP. The meeting had also recommended that all activities and issues not directly related to land-based activities should be removed from the body of the text and relegated to Annexes. The report on Pollution Hot Spots should be recast such that priorities were not assigned on a regional but only on a national basis and that a clear distinction be drawn in the SAP between national and regional actions with sections removed from the SAP and transposed to the guidelines for the preparation of National Action Plans.

6. During discussion of these proposed changes it was noted by the representative of UNEP/GEF that these were counter to the philosophy advocated by agenda 21 that stressed

the need for a greater cross-sectorial approach to addressing environmental and natural resource issues: that in addition the intention of the TDA was to provide the broadest possible base from which to develop the more restricted SAP to address Land-Based Activities. He noted that issues such as eutrophication and the impacts of nutrients on primary productivity and hence fisheries biomass could not be considered and addressed in isolation from issues relating to exploitation of the fisheries resources themselves.

7. Following an extensive discussion it was agreed that a number of the recommended changes could be made without irreparable damage to the structure and cohesiveness of the documents but that in some cases a compromise approach would need to be adopted. It was agreed that the TDA need not include either the costings or the products and milestones and that these could be incorporated into the SAP. It was proposed however that an additional column be inserted following the ultimate causes column entitled possible solutions. It was further agreed that the items removed from the body of the TDA and included as annexes in the revised draft should be re-incorporated into the body of the TDA.

### **3. Present status of preparation of the Strategic Action Programme, Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and report on Pollution Hot Spots.**

8. Noting the discussion under agenda item 2 it was agreed that Mr Jetic would amend the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis in the light of the agreements reached and that the document would be presented to the meeting of government nominated experts scheduled for 13-16 October, 1997, as an information document and would not be opened for discussion. It was further agreed that the report on Pollution Hot Spots and Sensitive Areas would be amended to include the comments and additional information provided by the countries and that this would also be presented as an information document.

9. During discussion of the revised SAP it was noted that in their present revised form the connection between the TDA and the SAP was not immediately apparent and that the bridge provided by the framework priority investments portfolio although incorporated into the re-drafted SAP did not provide an adequate economic analysis of the costs of environmental damage or the effectiveness of proposed interventions that would provide a suitable document for eliciting donor support.

10. A number of weaknesses were noted in the SAP as presently formulated, these included an inadequate consideration of actions designed to address the root cause in the policy and economic domain and the gross nature of the cost estimates.

11. The discussions centering on the accuracy of the estimates of total costs for implementation of the SAP (approximately 7bn US\$) resulted in agreement on the need to improve the accuracy of these estimates. It was suggested and agreed that selection of a number of the priority hot-spots for more detailed feasibility studies and cost analysis would facilitate a more accurate overall estimate of the costs of SAP implementation whilst at the same time providing potential donors with a clearer picture of the support required by the developing countries.

12. During discussion it was noted that a nominal figure of four to six million had been assigned for planning purposes to the next phase of the GEF SAP implementation. It was noted that such a sum could not possibly solve the existing problems identified in the TDA and translated into the SAP. It could however be used as the basis for an initial phase of activities that would serve to initiate the SAP. Activities that could be incorporated in such an initial phase could include a series of detailed feasibility studies as noted above, a series of regional level activities taken from those detailed in the SAP, activities designed to leverage both national level

support to the execution of the SAP and donor support for specific activities in developing countries.

13. It was noted that the present documentation was inadequate to present to a donors meeting; that the World Bank needed to be actively involved in planning such a meeting and that the time available to finalise and prepare for such a meeting planned originally for December was too short to ensure success. It was agreed therefore that a full donors meeting should not be convened prior to completion of a detailed analysis of the costs of non-action, the effectiveness of alternative actions, and the pre-feasibility studies noted above.

14. It was noted that the GEF would not provide funds to meet the costs of national actions designed to achieve national environmental benefits. but that rather the GEF existed to fund the costs of addressing transboundary issues and problems and achieving regional and/or global benefits, that is the GEF targets for its support the incremental costs of achieving trans-national environmental benefits. To ensure GEF support it would be necessary to complete, for inclusion in the project brief, an incremental cost analysis including an estimate of the existing baseline, and some indications of the additional funding that would be applied by national governments to addressing issues and problems identified as being of priority in the SAP.

#### **4. Forthcoming Activities**

15. Mr Civili noted that the planned expert meeting to be held in Athens 13-16 October 1997, would have as its primary task, approval of the draft of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea from Land Based Activities in order to be submitted to the meeting of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention that would be convened in Tunis, 18-21 November 1997.

16. It was agreed that the revisions to the Priority Hot Spots document, the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action programme needed to be completed within the next few days in order to provide time for translation and their despatch to participants in the October expert meeting.

17. It was further agreed that section 11 of the SAP would be modified to indicate which activities would be planned to be undertaken in phase 1 of the implementation of the SAP and that this would provide the basis for the preparation of the GEF Project brief. During discussion it was noted that the GEF would only fund activities in GEF eligible countries or regional activities directed towards achieving wider regional environmental benefits and that this would need to be made clear to the participants in the expert meeting.

18. It was noted in the context of the preparation of the GEF project brief that a considerable number of activities were already being undertaken by the parties to the Barcelona Convention that could be considered as baseline support to the execution of the SAP. In addition new actions proposed to be undertaken by individual countries in support of the execution of the first phase of the SAP would be considered as constituting co-financing in the context of the GEF.

19. It was agreed that a preliminary framework for a Project brief of around two pages, would be prepared in advance of the October expert meeting such that should the occasion arise it could be tabled at that meeting. It was considered extremely important that both the expert meeting and the Meeting of Contracting Parties endorsed the principle of approaching the GEF for financial assistance in the execution of the SAP.

20. Mr Pernetta outlined the steps required to be taken in preparing a project brief which include the following:

- securing endorsement of the Meeting of Contracting parties to the preparation of a brief for submission to the GEF;
- preparation of the brief in the agreed GEF Project format, a step that would involve iteration of the various drafts in consultation with the national coordinators, the UNEP/GEF Office and the MAP Coordinating Unit;
- clearance of the brief by the UNEP/GEF Coordination Office to ensure that it meets the requirements of the GEF process and securing endorsement from the GEF Operational Focal Points in the involved countries;
- presentation of the brief at a UNEP/GEF Secretariat bilateral discussion, and subsequent revision; and,
- presentation of the final brief to an Executive GEF Operations Committee Meeting for consideration for inclusion in the Inter-sessional Work Programme of the GEF Council (December/January).

21. It was suggested that once the preliminary contents of the brief had been agreed by the Coordinating Unit it would be advantageous to commence bilateral discussions with the countries concerned about the selection of the priority hot spots that would be included in the more detailed pre-feasibility analysis; to encourage the national coordinators to consult widely with their inter-ministry committees, where they exist, concerning in-country support for the proposal; and to encourage the National Coordinators to discuss the proposal with the GEF Operational Focal Points such that when the final brief was submitted for endorsement it would already have been widely discussed and supported in-country. The Secretariat should encourage and support the National Coordinators in countries where activities will be undertaken to form inter-ministry committees where this has not already been done.

## **5. Conclusions**

22. The new format for the GEF Project brief was presented and briefly discussed and it was agreed that presentation of such a document to the experts meeting in October was not advisable, but that rather a brief summary of the major activities and a workplan and timetable would be prepared for consideration of the experts. The GEF project brief would then be prepared by the Secretariat in close consultation with the UNEP/GEF Coordination Office on the basis of the activities agreed by the expert meeting and Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

23. The draft report prepared by Mr Pernetta, was noted with appreciation and adopted as it appears in this document.

## **6. Closure of the Meeting**

24. There being no further business, Mr Civili closed the meeting at 12,00 hours on 10 September 1997, and thanked participants for their constructive contributions to the work of the meeting.

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## **ANNEX II**

### **AGENDA**

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Review of activities
3. Present status of preparation of Strategic Action Programme, Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and report on pollution Hot spots
4. Forthcoming activities
5. Conclusions
6. Closure of the Meeting