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Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development

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Synthesis Note from Fourth MCSD Report

**From 4th to 5th MCSD:
Major issues, decisions and tasks deriving from the report of 4th MCSD.**

The intersessional period between fourth and fifth MCSD is rather short as the next meeting will be held in 1-3 July 1999 in Rome. Considering the minimum time required to send the Secretariat progress report to MCSD members, less than 4 months are left and all intersessional expert meetings, working group meetings and/or workshops will be held between April and May 1999 (early June the latest).

The major objective of this note is to assist the Steering Committee, the Secretariat, the Task Managers and the Support Centres in better planning, preparing and organizing follow-up activities. Basically a synthesis of the 4th MCSD report, this note will highlight major issues, decisions and tasks to be taken into account for further activities, together with some comments or suggestions.

Method of Work:

Issues and decisions:

- Contracting Parties solely responsible for implementing adopted recommendations.
- Reporting system to be established and summary information by Secretariat to be submitted to Contracting Parties.
- MCSD could reconsider an already studied theme to complete assessment and draw new proposals.
- Work of Task Managers and Working Groups completed once recommendations adopted by Contracting Parties.
- Secretariat to prepare a series of options for follow-up of recommendations.
- Mobilize resources to carry out and pursue the activities, and ensure larger participation.
- Work on a few subjects in depth rather than attempting to cover too much. Identify limited number of relevant priorities, well in advance.
- For each theme, prepare clear Terms of Reference and timetable, bearing in mind the periodicity of the Contracting Parties meetings.
- Working Groups will preferably have two Task Managers, with a balanced distribution between North and South, and with participation of qualified outside experts.

Tasks (Secretariat/ Med-Unit, mainly)

- Secretariat to prepare a report for mid-February on the method of work, including a series of options for follow-up of recommendations. Report to be discussed at next Steering Committee meeting before review and submission to 5th MCSD. Report to encompass, inter alia: organization of work (Working Groups, experts group, Task Managers, meetings, partners, means, etc.). communication/dissemination of results, procedures and options for follow-up of recommendations, etc.

New Subjects:

Issues and decisions:

- Steering Committee to examine the interest and feasibility of new proposed subjects on the basis of a report or note to be drawn up by the Secretariat.
- New subjects not necessarily in the form of Working Group with a 2 to 4 years term.
- Strategic review for 2000, including implementation of Agenda MED 21, to be given priority.
- Proposed subjects: new opportunities for funding conservation initiatives (WWF), Islands and Sustainable Development (EOAEN, with background documents), Mediterranean Strategy on the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity (Monaco).
- Other subjects mentioned: greenhouse effect, energy, soil conservation.

Tasks (Secretariat / Med Unit, mainly)

- Secretariat to prepare a note on criteria for selecting new themes, to be reviewed and used by the Steering Committee in appraising new proposals. Criteria could concern: coordination with CSD themes (ante, post or at same period), potential added value by MCSD, Sustainable Development dimension of new theme, etc...
- Secretariat to prepare Terms of Reference for the Strategic Review with organisation of work, partners and responsibilities, tools and means, to be reviewed at 5th MCSD.

Cooperation with UNCSD, UN and Partners:

Issues and decisions:

- Strengthen cooperation with other bodies, through exchange of information and joint activities/meetings.
- Identify asap and associate relevant partners in each thematic activity.
- In addition to participation to activities implementation, cooperation could include cost-sharing and even association of partners/observers as co-Task Managers or co-Support Centre.
- MCSD and UN-CSD to organize a joint meeting on National Sustainable Development strategies in the Mediterranean Region.
- MCSD and CEDARE to organize jointly an advisory and consultative meeting among partners involved in Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean.
- Promote information on and development of National CSDs, and their cooperation with MCSD.
- Improve exchange of information and direct cooperation, with UNEP support, between MCSD and Secretariats of international organizations/agreements of interest for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean, particularly with UN-CSD.

Tasks (Secretariat/Med Unit, mainly):

- Secretariat to exchange with UN-CSD on the joint meeting on National Sustainable Development Strategies (options for dates and venues, budget, cost-sharing and sponsors, organization, etc.).
- Secretariat to exchange with CEDARE on the opportunity and possibility of Mediterranean Partners Consultative meeting (Terms of Reference, options for dates and venues, participants, cost, organisation etc.).
- Secretariat to prepare a form and collect information on National CSDs.
- MCSD, through Secretariat and/or members, to participate to CSD relevant intersessional meetings and annual ones.
- Secretariat, together with Task Managers and Support Centers, to look for better ways and means to strengthen cooperation and joint activities with concerned partners /observers.
- Secretariat to establish a list of all events and meetings related to Sustainable Development of the Mediterranean, of interest to MCSD.

Sustainable Development Indicators:

Issues and decisions:

- Final list to be harmonized with the work of other organizations.
- List of indicators to be tested and put into effect gradually.
- Task Managers of other thematic Working Groups to be associated.
- Statistical availability and capacity to be appraised at an early stage.
- As far as possible, look for dynamic indicators, not only status ones.

Tasks (Secretariat / Task Managers and Blue Plan, mainly)

- Task Managers and Support Centre (BP) to review list of indicators according to relevance to Mediterranean Sustainable Development and availability in largest number of countries.
- Proposals for commitments (8) to be reviewed with brief guidelines for implementation and follow-up procedures and steps.
- Major workshop, with large participation of MCSD members and partners/observers, to be held in May 1999 (in Sophia-Antipolis, with the support of France).

Tourism and Sustainable Development:

Issues and decisions:

- Develop indicators of tourist areas carrying capacity and indicators of tourism impact.
- Identify mechanisms to improve cooperation and partnership between tourists, NGO's, tour operator, professional, local and national authorities, etc.
- Collect information on good practices/ success stories and assess their replication and means for their promotion.
- Improve study of eco-labelling, eco-taxes and voluntary systems of contributions.
- Develop more detailed recommendations and proposals for action.

Tasks (Secretariat/Task Manager and BP/PAP, mainly):

- Task Managers and Support Centres to identify indicators of carrying capacity and impact.
- Task Managers and Support Centres to identify mechanisms to improve cooperation and partnership between tourism partners.
- Collect information on good practices/success stories and assess their replication and means for their promotion.
- Study in greater detail eco-labelling, eco-taxes and voluntary systems of contribution and assess the appropriate level for such measures.
- Develop more detailed recommendations and proposals for action.
- Considering above tasks, it would be useful, if not necessary, to have a meeting of the Working Group before submitting relevant report for adoption to MCSD members.

Information, Awareness and Participation:

Issues and decisions:

- More information required on good practices, successful local and national experiences and ways and means for replication.
- Broaden scope of activities (to awareness-raising and communication, public access to information, participation and mechanisms, etc.) and involve more partners.
- More specific results should be produced and greater attention should be paid to defining the practical product to be developed by the Working Group and submitted to MCSD.

Tasks (Secretariat / Med Unit and Task Managers).

- Report to be reviewed taking into account above decisions.
- Information on good practices and success stories to be collected and assessed for lessons and replication.
- Secretariat will induce other partners/participants, particularly from Governments, to actively participate in the Working Group.
- Define better the practical product to be developed by the Working Groups and produce more specific results.
- Meeting of the Working Group to be held in April/May, giving time for above tasks to be better prepared.

Free Trade and Environment:

Issues and decisions:

- Do not oppose eco-protection and free-trade and strengthen synergy between free trade, environment and Sustainable Development.
- Collect information on practical experiences and success stories to improve analysis of the subject.
- Set clear and realistic objectives, define better the approach to be adopted and identify the various stages to be involved.
- Involve more national, regional and international concerned institutions.

Tasks (Secretariat / Task Managers and Blue Plan - Med Unit):

- Task Manager and Support Centre to set clear and realistic objectives, define better the approach to be adopted and identify the various stages for the next MCSD meeting (in view of submitting a final product to the Contracting Parties meeting in 2001).
- Undertake an in-depth analysis of free trade and environment, respective impacts and policies for better euro-Mediterranean partnership.
- Collect information on regional and national experiences, analyse and draw lessons for the Mediterranean.
- Analyse dynamics of key sectors in the framework of free trade and environment interactions.
- A workshop to be organized in April/May 1999, probably in Beirut, with the support of France (Foreign Affairs).

Industry and Sustainable Development:

Issues and decisions:

- Work programme to be planned in a long term perspective with a final product for the Contracting Parties meeting of 2001.
- Many aspects of this theme still need to be explored including multinational enterprises, modernisation process, financing, transfer of technology, legal framework, incentives, etc.
- Federation des Industries Diverses (FID) to act as joint Task Manager and improve coordination with other industrial federations.
- More precise definitions and objectives are required together with concrete programmes for their implementation, with LBS and SAP as framework.
- Need for in-depth analysis of the situation in the region and in specific countries.
- Bring out the practical side of this work and formulate realistic proposals for action.

Tasks (Secretariat/Task Managers and MEDPOL)

- Define clearer objectives, with concrete programmes for implementation.
- Extend and improve the analysis of the industrial regional and national contexts.
- Collect and analyse information on case studies of cleaner production and successful environmental management, and draw lessons.
- Identify information, awareness and capacity building needs.
- Organize a Working Group meeting, with experts and concerned institutions, in April/May 1999, to discuss above tasks, in view of a major workshop afterwards with Italian support.

Management of Urban/Rural Development:

- The Group's work should focus on urban development and management, in the context of land use planning, in cooperation with MedCities and Turkey (as joint Task Managers), and with greater participation of NGO's, Local Authorities and Socio-Economic actors. A background paper, together with clear objectives and related programmes, will be prepared by Support Centres (BP, PAP and ERS) and discussed at an expert meeting in April 1999 (probably in Egypt or any other country, depending on the financial support).
- With the support of Tunisia and Cyprus, draft Terms of Reference for an eventual Working Group on rural development would be prepared for submission to the next MCSD meeting. It would be considered as a possible new subject, to be selected among other themes first by the Steering Committee, then by the next MCSD meeting.