



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



UNEP(OCA)/MED WG. 155/2

22 February 1999

Original : ENGLISH

MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Second Meeting of the Steering Committee of the
Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development

Tunis, 8-9 March 1999

**Report by the Secretariat for the second meeting of the Steering
Committee of the Mediterranean Commission
on Sustainable Development**

Introduction:

At their fourth meeting in Monaco, 20-22 October 1998, the members of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development decided to convene a meeting of its Steering Committee to mainly discuss issues related to :

1. Method of work and follow-up of recommendations; and
2. New subjects and selection criteria;

If possible and if time allows, the Secretariat proposes to also exchange views on :

3. preparation of the "Strategic review for 2000", as agreed upon in the MCSD terms of reference; and
4. Cooperation with UN and National Commissions on Sustainable Development;

In addition to the above important questions, the members of the Steering Committee will review:

5. the MCSD thematic intersessional activities together with an agenda of the meetings of respective working groups; and finally
6. a provisional agenda for the 5th MCSD meeting.

For easier reference, the Secretariat has prepared a synthesis note (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.155/Inf.1) encompassing major issues, decisions and tasks, deriving from the report of the 4th MCSD meeting.

In order to make best use of the limited time (one and a half days), a report will not be adopted at the end of the meeting, as already the case for the meetings of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties. However, a list of recommendations and decisions will be reviewed and adopted whereas, the report will be prepared immediately after the meeting and sent, not later than one week, to the members of the Steering Committee for review.

I. **Method of work and follow-up of recommendations. (Agenda item 3)**

Inspired by the UN-CSD method of work (task managers and intersessional activities) but adapted to our MAP Mediterranean context (specific membership, priority issues, support centres), the **actual method of work**, since MCSD's inception, is **rather satisfactory**.

A serious and **substantial work** based on a large **participatory approach** was undertaken, particularly through the activities of the thematic working groups.

Yet, some **improvements** are necessary for the **revitalization of the MCSD** and its impacts. In this respect, the **discussions** during the MCSD meetings are generally **lacking of consistency**, probably because **too many subjects** are tackled in a **short period** (two days of work). Consequently, the Commission sometimes **just skim over** important issues, **without** reaching sufficiently **practical recommendations** and programme of actions, frequently lacking a clear **operational dimension**.

Moreover, the debates and resulting recommendations are usually not followed by further initiatives, this being even weakened by an **unclear implementation and follow-up process** with related responsibilities. In such context the **risk** for the recommendations **to go unheeded** is high, mainly when considering that the MCSD activities have a **rather low political and media visibility and support**, not mentioning that very **limited funds** are specifically allocated.

In order to improve the taking-into-account of the recommendations by concerned actors and induce their effective implementation, it would be necessary to **review and enhance the presentation of the recommendations by relating them to different actors**. This will require an analysis of the ways and means for moving **from** mainly **assessment** activities and results **to** more action oriented recommendations with specifically identified **actions per category of actors with**, where applicable, some **milestones**.

To that end, the **Secretariat should take up again the recommendations** proposed by the Working Groups **and translate them into more operational and practical steps** to be followed and implemented, as appropriate, by Contracting Parties, local Authorities, Socio-Economic Actors, NGOs, IGOs, other partners and/or MAP. The **Secretariat should**, in referring to the thematic recommendations of the Working Groups, **submit to the MCSD members and then to the Contracting Parties a set of practical recommendations, including some commitments and related benchmarks, addressed to above different actors**. To be able to present such set of reviewed and adapted recommendations, the Working Groups should submit their results at least two months before any MCSD meeting.

A more **systematic approach** would require, once a new theme is agreed upon and task managers and support centres identified:

- clear and detailed **terms of reference**;
- specific **organisation of activities**, with type of necessary working meetings and expected results;
- relevant and useful **partners** to be involved, in addition to MCSD members;
- adequate **working period** for the subject and agenda;
- early strategy for **fund raising**.

However, whatever the quality and details of the recommendations, they can hardly be taken into account and implemented without an **adequate information and communication strategy**. This is valid for the MCSD and all its activities that will gain a lot in dynamism and support if better and more widely known by concerned actors and partners. Consequently, and in close relation with the MAP Information Strategy presently under preparation, **brief information sheets** should be prepared and **adequate communication means** should be identified and used.

Once the recommendations are prepared, agreed upon and adopted by the MCSD members and then by the Contracting Parties, the activities of the Working Group and concerned Task Managers are completed and the Contracting Parties and other concerned actors are expected to take into account these recommendations, integrate them in their respective strategies and implement them. Obviously, they are solely responsible for the ways and means they would select for their implementation, but it is **necessary to report, at regular periods, on their implementation**, results and constraints, **with a focus on success stories** as an example for other partners.

However, without interfering in Contracting Parties and other members responsibility in implementing the recommendations, **MAP Secretariat** can **induce and assist** them throughout the **implementation and follow-up process**. In this respect and keeping in mind that recommendations will be from now on worked out in relation with concerned different actors, where appropriate, MAP will give due consideration to those recommendations by:

- **using them as framework and guidelines** for programme of activities;
- **integrating them in MEDU and RACs programmes** of activities;
- **communicating** widely the **results** of MCSD activities;
- looking for **ways and means for proper implementation** and providing as far as possible **adequate assistance**;
- providing **incentives for implementation** through **awareness** and **training** sessions, relevant **expertise**, seed **support funds**, etc.

At least **two years after** the recommendations were adopted, a **reporting system** would be established. But, in order to avoid overwhelming MAP Focal Points and counterparts with heavy questionnaires, the **Secretariat** will first **collect and analyse related information from relevant national reports** such as the ones submitted to UN-CSD or prepared in relation with Environment Action Plans and Sustainable Development Strategies. Available and accessible reports from other MCSD members and partners, mainly IGOs, will also be considered. **Brief questionnaires, if necessary**, will then be prepared to collect additional information.

MAP and MCSD members and partners' activities related to thematic recommendations will constitute the basis for the follow-up progress report to be prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to MCSD and Contracting Parties meetings. Such reports would cover any implementation progress and achievements, with a focus on success stories.

II. New Subjects and selection criteria (Agenda item 4)

Out of the eight themes selected at the first meeting of the MCSD (December 1996), two of them were completed in October 1997 (management of water demand and sustainable management of coastal regions), two others will be completed in July 1999 (sustainable development indicators and tourism), the fate of the "information, awareness and participation" will depend upon progress and decision of the fifth MCSD meeting, whereas "**free-trade**" and "**industry**" working groups will carry on their activities **till** the MCSD and CP meetings in **2001**. The eighth theme, originally related to "urban and rural development", will continue **up to 2001** but by focussing on **urban issues**, while the interest for the rural question through a specific working group should be re-assessed during next MCSD meeting as for any new subject.

Depending on the **level of already cumulated knowledge** on a given subject, related MCSD activities could run over a **period of two to four years**. Moreover, certain subjects could probably be better or more adequately treated by **a limited group of qualified experts**, in direct cooperation with the Secretariat, over a shorter period (six to twelve months), and not necessarily by a classical working group with Task Managers.

During the last MCSD meeting, two new themes were briefly presented, related to "Islands and Sustainable Development" (with some background information) and "Mediterranean Strategy for biodiversity (brief note prepared during the meeting).

Other possible new subjects were also mentioned: new opportunities for funding conservation initiatives, greenhouse effect, energy and soil conservation. However, none of them was discussed.

By cross-checking MAP phase II and its priority activities together with partners programmes for the Mediterranean mainly EC/SMAP, METAP, CEDARE and NGO networks, following **themes** could be **of great interest for MCSD programme over the next three bienniums up to 2005** : agriculture and agricultural policies; land use, soil erosion and desertification; energy; transport; heritage and landscape; marine resources and fisheries; waste management and consumption patterns; health and environment; education, employment and environment; governance and sustainable development management capacity.

In order to **ensure** proper and **satisfactory preparation**, to identify and **associate** concerned and dynamic **partners**, and mainly to **secure** necessary **additional funds** in due time, it would be preferable to **agree**, as soon as possible, **on an indicative list of subjects** to be considered by the MCSD **over the next two or three bienniums**. This will also induce and encourage MAP centres and programmes as well as partners to take into account at an early stage and initiate/strengthen collection and analysis of relevant information.

To **select the new themes** to be considered by the MCSD, and then **decide on the period** of their related working groups, **and responsible bodies, two respective sets of criteria** are proposed (see following table to be reviewed and later on filled in for selection of themes during the fifth meeting of the MCSD):

- first,
 - **priority issue in MED21 and MAP II;**
 - **priority issue for Mediterranean partners** such as : SMAP, METAP and other international partners in the region;
 - **priority issue in most NEAPs, national /local Agenda 21,** etc;
 - major **stake** for the Mediterranean with major long term **risks**, and potential ruptures;
 - expected **added value** by MCSD;
 - **sustainable development dimension;**
 - relation with **UN-CSD** programme of activities;
 - relation with **UNEP** programme of activities;

- second,
 - **capacity/expertise within MAP** in handling the theme;
 - level of already cumulated/accessible **knowledge**;
 - **potential partners** not only as observers but also as possible “**support centres**” or even “**Task Managers**”;
 - possible cost-sharing and **funding opportunities**.

Obviously, MAP and its secretariat carrying capacity should be taken into account, even if in case a theme is handled by a partner organisation; in this respect, it is important to note that at least three subjects will be continued throughout the biennium 2000-2001, together with the “Strategic review for 2000”, as agreed upon in MCSD terms of reference (considering its importance mainly as a first term review for MED 21 and MCSD, this activity will constitute the topic of next section).

III. Strategic review for 2000 (Agenda item5)

According to its terms of reference, the MCSD shall “undertake a four-year strategic assessment and evaluation of the implementation by the Contracting Parties of Agenda MED 21 and decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties and of actions by the Contracting Parties relevant to sustainable development in the Mediterranean region and propose relevant recommendations thereon; the first strategic review should be undertaken for the year 2000 (with ministerial participation), with the objective of achieving an integrated overview of the implementation of Agenda MED 21, examining emerging policy issues and providing the necessary political impetus.” (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG. 140/Inf.4 page 8, (g)).

To that end, the Secretariat will prepare and **submit to next MCSD meeting Terms of Reference** for such an important strategic review. Considering the dates of the next CP meetings, this **first strategic review** will be undertaken **for the year 2001**, with a draft to be presented and reviewed **at 6th MCSD meeting**, foreseen around July 2000.

For the preparation of detailed terms of reference, including clear organization of work and identification of executing persons/partners with respective responsibilities, the following **methodology** is proposed. Considering that neither MAP nor MCSD has chosen to systematically work along with MED 21 chapters but rather to select some priority issues, the strategic review will **distinguish between**:

- MED 21 **subjects covered by MAP and MCSD**;
- MED 21 **other subjects covered by UNCSD, METAP and other partners**;
- **other MED 21 subjects**.

In correlation with above categories of subjects, this **strategic review could comprise**:

1. **Synthesis of MED 21** recommendations and related stakes;
2. Mediterranean related **status**, based on analysis of :
 - national reports to UN-CSD;
 - NEAP and national Agenda 21;
 - Local Agenda 21
 - Success stories
3. Identification of **gaps** (information and actions);
4. Programme of **actions** for follow-up with necessary ways and means.

Under the coordination of the Secretariat, the Strategic review for 2000 would be undertaken in line with terms of reference to be agreed upon at next MCSD meeting,

- either a team of 3 experts (North, South and major groups)
- or a team of experts on behalf of MCSD members;
- or MEDU and RACs with some ad hoc experts.

In any case, two review meetings would be necessary. In order to collect necessary financial resources to complement MAP seed money, the **Terms of Reference** for the strategic review could be **used as a basis for a fund raising project** to be submitted for EC and / or other potential funding partners.

IV. Cooperation with UN and national CSDs (Agenda item 6)

A **bridge between global and national levels, the MCSD** is a unique regional case. This important regional function has been recognized at the recent 20th Governing Council of UNEP which has recommended the development of similar commissions in other Regional Seas.

However, it is not yet clear **how and in which form the MCSD will cooperate with UN-CSD** and communicate its regional experience. Meanwhile, representatives of UN-DESA and CSD have participated to MCSD workshops and 4th meeting, expressing clearly their interest in our activities , such as the proposal for the organisation of a major **joint Mediterranean Workshop on National Sustainable Development Strategies**.

As mentioned during the 4th MCSD meeting, and considering the various priority Mediterranean issues with in some cases limited human, technical and financial means, the possibility for having a **UN Agency** or its regional component **acting as a “co -support centre”, even “co-Task Manager”** should be given due consideration in selecting and undertaking MCSD activities.

Moreover, the **Secretariat** together with concerned Task Managers or Support Centres should **inform** and as far as possible **associate** subject related **CSD focal point**. This would improve communication and enhance the interest for the Mediterranean regional case.

Once again, an **adequate information and communication strategy will have a key role in strengthening cooperation** with UN bodies and also with national CSDs or other relevant national institutions.

Considering that a new director was recently appointed at the head of the **UN-CSD**, the Secretariat will resume discussions related to cooperation and possible joint activities (workshops as above, but also joint implementation of Indicators Country tests such as the ones already undertaken for Tunisia and under preparation for Morocco by the Blue Plan/RAC together with the French Environment Institute). Discussions, to be held during CSD intersessional meetings, will concern **practical steps related to ways and means for the organization of joint activities/meetings**, and also for dynamic **participation in respective major meetings**. In this respect, it seems that the best solution for the participation of MCSD's Secretariat would be as a **specific UNEP/MAP Observers seat** but working in very close cooperation with UNEP concerned experts for which adequate accreditation should be obtained. As such, the regional level and related experience would be better promoted than if just a member in UNEP's delegation.

But MCSD Secretariat should also look for establishing **cooperation links with national CSDs** and other relevant national institutions by :

- **informing** them regularly of MCSD activities and results;
- **promoting exchange of information and cooperation** between these national institution/programmes;
- **associating them**, as far as possible, to MCSD activities;

Sub-national levels should obviously not be neglected mainly when considering the **critical role played by local authorities and actors** in promoting sustainable development. There is an increasing number of **local Agenda 21** and interesting local success stories.

To that end, the **Secretariat** could **collect and analyse information** related to **national and local sustainable development experiences, identify gaps and needs** together with **ways and means for promoting dissemination of relevant information, strengthening exchange of information and experience** between national and local cases, and **inducing the establishing of similar cases** in other countries and sub-regions.

V. MCS D thematic intersessional activities and agenda of meeting (Agenda item 7)

As requested by members of MCS D at their last meeting, a provisional agenda of meetings of the working groups and other meetings of interest for MCS D and MAP during 1999, is attached in annex II, just after a revised table of the thematic working groups (annex I).

Expectations from each thematic working group are summarized in (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.155 /Inf.1). More information on the organisation and progress of related activities will be provided during the meeting.

VI. Provisional Agenda for 5th MCS D meeting (Agenda item 8)

As proposed in Monaco's meeting, the City of Rome has recently confirmed its offer for hosting and covering the costs, as usual, for the 5th MCS D meeting in Rome, together with the date (1-3 July 1999).

The secretariat is in continuous contact with designated representatives of the City of Rome for a proper organisation. Practical steps will be discussed and agreed upon soon in Rome together with a Memorandum of Understanding including respective duties and responsibilities.

A provisional agenda for the fifth MCS D meeting is proposed in annex III.

TABLE
THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS

Themes	Task managers	Members of the group	Support from MAP*
Short-term (over about a one-year period)			
- Sustainable management of coastal zones (completed)	Morocco and MEDCITIES	CREE, European Community, Greece, City of Rome, Spain, EcoMediterrania, Monaco, WWF, Italy, EOAEN, Cyprus, France, Tunisia, MIO-ESCDE, Egypt, Malta, Albania, Lebanon, Algeria, FIS	RAC/Priority Actions Programme, RAC/Blue Plan, RAC/Environment Remote Sensing and RAC/Specially Protected Areas
- Management of water demand (completed)	Tunisia and Morocco	Libya, WWF, APNEK, European Community, Egypt, Italy, France, CEFIC, MIO-ECSDE, Malta, Spain, EcoMediterrania, CEDARE, Cyprus, Israel, Algeria, Turkey, Bosnia & Herzegovina	RAC/Blue Plan and RAC/Priority Actions Programme
Medium-term (until 1999 Contracting Parties meeting and beyond)			
- Sustainable development indicators (to be completed in 1999)	France and Tunisia	European Community, Morocco, EcoMediterranean, Greece, Israel, Spain, Slovenia, Turkey, Lebanon, Algeria, Municipality of Silifke	RAC/Blue Plan
- Tourism and Sustainable Development (to be completed in 1999)	Spain, EOAEN and Egypt	Malta, Monaco, Cyprus, Croatia, European Community, Greece, EcoMediterrania, WWF MIO-ECSDE, ASCAME, Slovenia, Libya, Turkey, Lebanon	RAC/Blue Plan and RAC/Priority Actions Programme
- Information, awareness and participation	MIO-ECSDE and CREE	European Community, WWF, France, APNEK, Croatia, Egypt, Morocco, MEDCITIES, EcoMediterrania, Albania, Algeria, Libya, Lebanon	MED Coordinating Unit
- Free trade and environment in the Euromediterranean context (strategic impact assessment) (to be completed in 2001)	Lebanon	Tunisia, France, European Community, APNEK, Morocco, MIO-ECSDE, Algeria, ASCAME, FIS, Bosnia & Herzegovina, WWF	RAC/ Blue Plan MED Coordinating Unit
- Industry and sustainable development (cultural, economic, technical and financial aspects of progressive elimination of land-based pollution) (to be completed in 2001)	Italy, Algeria, F.I.D	WWF, Israel, EOAEN, ASCAME, CEFIC, Spain, European Community, Turkey, Tunisia, RME MIO-ECSDE	MED POL, RAC/Cleaner Production
- Management of urban development (to be completed in 2001)	Egypt, MEDCITIES, Turkey	FIS, MIO-ECSDE, Spain, Morocco, France, Malta, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Algeria, CEDARE, EC, Slovenia, Cyprus, RME	RAC/Priority Actions Programme and RAC/Blue Plan

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

Annex II
Provisional Agenda of Meetings in the MCSD framework or of interest
for MAP and MCSD 1999

Item and organisers	Dates and venue	Concerned persons/bodies
Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Sustainable Cities. World Federation of United Cities and the Municipality of Seville.	21-23 January Seville	MEDU/PAP/BP MCSD members
High level policy dialogue: "Trade Policy and Sustainability the Regional Approach". ICTSD	1-2 February Geneva	MEDU/BP
20 th Session of UNEP Governing Council. UNEP	1-5 February Nairobi	MAP/CP
Group of Experts meeting MCSD Free Trade and Environment	3 February Geneva	BP/MEDU
UN - CSD Ad-Hoc Intersessional Working Groups (22-27 February - Tourism and Consumption Patterns 1-5 March Oceans and SIDS) UN-CSD Secretariat	22 Febr. - 5 March New York	MCSD members MAP/MED Unit
MCSD Steering Committee MAP- Med Unit/ MCSD Secretariat	Tunis 8-9 March	Committee members MAP/MED Unit
UN - CSD - 7 - 19-21/4 - Tourism 21-23/4 - High level Segment 26/4 - National presentations 27-30/4 - Drafting groups. UN-CSD Secretariat	19-30 April New York	MCSD members MAP/MED Unit
Bureau of the Contracting Parties MAP-Med Unit	29-30 April Athens (tentative)	Bureau members MAP/MED Unit
5 th MCSD MAP-Med Unit/MCSD Secretariat	1-3 July Rome	MCSD members MAP/Others
MAP National Focal Points MAP-Med Unit	6-9 September Athens	CP/MAP/Others
11th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties MAP-Med Unit	27-30 October Malta	CP/MAP/Others

Subject	Dates and venue	Responsible persons/bodies
<u>MCS D Intersessional Working Groups</u>		
Management of Urban Development	Experts meeting , 26-27 April 1999 Split	Egypt-Med Cities-Turkey- PAP-BP-ERS
Sustainable Development Indicators	Workshop, 10 -11May 1999, Sophia Antipolis	France-Tunisia-BP
Information, Awareness and Participation	Working Group, 24-25 May 1999, Athens	MIO-ECSDE - CREE - Med Unit
Tourism and Sustainable Development,	Working Group, 27-28 May 1999, Split	Spain-EOAEN-Egypt-BP- PAP
Free Trade and Environment	Working Group, 4-5 June 1999 Barcelona	Lebanon-BP-Med Unit- ASCAME
Industry and Sustainable Development	Working Group April/May 1999 Masa Carrara (tentative)	Italy-Algeria-FID-MED POL-CP
National Sustainable Development Strategies in the Mediterranean Region	Workshop, end 1999 early 2000	UN-CSD and MCS D Secretariats.

Annex III

5th meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development
Rome, 1-3 July 1999

Provisional Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting;
2. Rules of procedure;
3. Election of the Steering Committee of the Commission;
4. Adoption of the provisional agenda and organisation of work;
5. Progress report by the Secretariat;
6. Activity reports by the Task Managers :
 - 6.1. Sustainable Development Indicators : review and adoption of list of indicators and proposed recommendations (per geographical levels and categories of actors);
 - 6.2. Tourism and Sustainable Development: review and adoption of proposed recommendations (per geographical levels and categories of actors);
 - 6.3. Information, awareness and participation: proposed programme of actions and recommendations;
 - 6.4. Free Trade and Environment: major issues and programme of work;
 - 6.5. Industry and Sustainable Development: issues, method and programme of work;
 - 6.6. Management of Urban Development : terms of reference and organisation of work;
7. Method of work and follow-up of recommendations;
8. New subjects and selection criteria;
9. Cooperation and fund raising;
10. Sixth meeting of the MCSD;
11. Any other subject;
12. Adoption of the meeting's report;
13. Closure of the meeting.