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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of Government-designated Experts to review the implementation of the SAP through the execution of the GEF Project and the MED POL Programme

Catania, 9 -12 December 2002

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF GOVERNMENT-DESIGNATED EXPERTS TO REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAP THROUGH THE EXECUTION OF THE GEF PROJECT AND THE MED POL PROGRAMME

Introduction

1. The Meeting of government-designated Experts to review the Implementation of the SAP through the Execution of the GEF Project and the MED POL Programme was held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Centre in Catania, Italy, from 9 to 12 December 2002. The Meeting was partly sponsored by the non-governmental organization Amici per la Vita Onlus in cooperation with the Municipality of Catania.
2. Experts from the following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention attended the Meeting: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Commission, Greece, Israel, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey.
3. An observer for the Palestinian Authority was also present.
4. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations were represented: Global International Waters Assessment (UNEP-GIWA), World Health Organization (WHO), International Centre for Science/United Nations Industrial Development Organization (ICS-UNIDO) and Secrétariat de la Commission RAMOGE.
5. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Amici per la Vita Onlus, CEFIC/EUROCHLOR, Greenpeace International, MAREVIVO and World Wildlife Fund for Nature International (WWF).
6. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

Agenda item 1. Opening of the Meeting

7. Mr. Umberto Scapagnini, Mayor of the City of Catania and Member of the European Parliament, said that the city was proud to be hosting another UNEP meeting, thanked the Association Amici per la Vita Onlus for its support and welcomed the participants. He stressed Catania's geographically, historically, culturally and emotionally strategic position in the centre of the Mediterranean, with its long history of cooperation with other cultures, both East-West and North-South. Looking forward to the major meeting scheduled for late 2003, he said that it should offer a unique occasion for different cultures to achieve a common goal, namely to preserve a sea that was the region's past, present and future. Against a politically complex background, including the proposed enlargement of the European Union, the 2003 meeting would coincide with Italy's Presidency of the EU, an important fact given the country's central position in the Mediterranean. Much had been done since 1975 to create a new industrial culture in the Mediterranean and to protect the sea, a marvellous asset, but despite laws and conventions the basic principles of safety were still being violated. The "Prestige" disaster in the Atlantic should serve as a warning to the Mediterranean countries, since if the same happened there the damage would be irreversible. It was vital to ensure that the outcome of the 2003 meeting was a genuine benchmark for safeguarding life in the whole Mediterranean area.
8. Mr. Sergio Illuminato, President of Amici per la Vita Onlus, commending the strong commitment of the Municipality of Catania, welcomed the increasingly close cooperation with local institutions working to protect the environment, which he expected to be clearly in evidence at the 13th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to be held in late 2003. Amici per la Vita Onlus was, inter alia, working to promote awareness of the environment among young people and would shortly be launching the SASA Prize (Sana Alimentazione e Salvaguardia Ambientale – Healthy food and environmental safeguard), a cultural initiative linking gastronomy and the environment, and using the latest information technology for

dissemination to the target group, to encourage young people's involvement in environmental protection. He looked forward to support for the initiative. The association he represented offered its full cooperation for the success of the Meeting.

9. Mr. Aldo Iacomelli, speaking on behalf of the Ministry of the Environment of Italy, expressed thanks to the municipal authorities of Catania for their hospitality and the association Amici per la Vita Onlus for its contribution to the Meeting. He drew attention to the current discussions by the European Ministers for the Environment on the European strategy for the protection and conservation of the marine environment, stressing the importance of the strategy for the sustainability of the marine resource environment. In the light of the conclusions of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, full implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) would be a milestone on the path to sustainable development in the Mediterranean Basin. The Meeting of Experts would be playing an important role in taking the SAP forward towards that goal. The GEF Project had provided a crucial opportunity in terms of initial funding for SAP implementation, but the Meeting would also need to identify new sources of financing, drawing on input from PAP/RAC. ERS/RAC also had an important role to play in the implementation of the SAP. In conclusion, he expressed continued support for UNEP/MAP and for the contribution of MED POL to SAP implementation.

10. Mr. Ante Baric, GEF Project Manager, said that the three-year GEF Project initiated at the beginning of 2001 was funded principally by GEF, with contributions from the French GEF (FFEM), the Mediterranean Trust Fund and other sources. The Project encompassed some 50 activities, divided into a number of groups: National Action Plans (NAPs) to combat land-based pollution, studies for pollution hot spots, capacity-building, regional and national training, sustainability of the SAP through economic instruments, preparation of regional guidelines and plans, public participation, and revision and updating of transboundary diagnostic analyses (TDAs). The main aim of the Project was to assist the Mediterranean countries in fulfilling their obligations regarding SAP implementation.

11. Mr. Francesco Saverio Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, commended the hospitality of the Municipality of Catania and its clear and continued commitment to reducing pollution in the Mediterranean. Credit was likewise due to Amici per la Vita Onlus, more generally for its continuing support to MAP over the years and specifically for its assistance in preparing for the current Meeting and the 2003 Contracting Parties' Meeting. The youth project mentioned by the association's President was an interesting initiative worthy of support. The Meeting of Experts would be taking stock of achievements and shortfalls to date and moving towards more concrete implementation of the SAP. In the context of the Johannesburg Summit, the SAP could be seen as a dynamic structure sensitive to emerging issues and adaptable to changing global developments, which held out promise for concrete results in the future. The Meeting would further clarify the operational links between MED POL, the RACs, GEF and MAP in the overall regional context and show the way forward to further improvement. The active participation of the Municipality of Catania was proof of the success of the SAP process in reaching out to local authorities as important stakeholders.

Agenda item 2. Election of officers

12. The Meeting unanimously elected the following officers:

Chairperson:	Mr. Aldo Iacomelli (Italy)
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Gabriel Gabrielides (Cyprus)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Mohammed Chaoui (Morocco).

Agenda item 3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

13. The Meeting adopted the proposed agenda contained in document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/1, which is attached as Annex II to this report.

14. The Rules of Procedure 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 Experts.

Agenda item 4. Background information on the operational links between MED POL, SAP and GEF project objectives

15. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, recalled that, since the adoption of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) to Address Pollution from Land-based Activities in 1997 and the decision of the Contracting Parties to assign to MED POL the coordination and follow-up of the related activities, substantial efforts had been made to adequately prepare the basis at the regional and national levels for a successful and sustainable long-term implementation of SAP activities.

16. As a first step, many MED POL activities, e.g. monitoring, capacity-building and reporting, had been reviewed and placed in a new perspective so as to contribute to the implementation of the SAP objectives. Secondly, after numerous negotiations, a specific project had been prepared and proposed to the GEF for funding in 1998. The project specifically presented a number of activities at the national and regional levels aiming at creating a solid technical, institutional and policy basis to ensure the implementation of the SAP in the long term. The project, which had been approved and launched in 2001 for a duration of three years, included a contribution of US\$ 6 million from GEF and around US\$ 900,000 from MAP. It had also attracted other donors such as FFEM and METAP and external contributors and partners such as ICS-UNIDO, so the final figure was US\$ 12 million.

17. The implementation of the SAP, which also included WHO/EURO, PAP/RAC, SPA/RAC and CP/RAC, had become the main objective of MED POL. In view of its importance for the region, the participation of all countries, including those that were not beneficiaries of the GEF Project, which would be assisted by MAP, was of paramount importance.

Agenda item 5. Review of the implementation of the SAP through the related MED POL and GEF activities

18. The Chairperson introduced the overall issue of implementation of the SAP, stressing the importance of making institutional arrangements to ensure the implementation of what had already been agreed and to define the bodies created for that purpose in each country. In conjunction with that process, the technical criteria for pollution reduction and the Baseline Budgets of releases (BBs) would be set, with the help of MED POL, so that the National Action Plans (NAPs) could finally be prepared and adopted.

19. The MED POL Programme Coordinator added that, while the NAPs were of paramount importance, other aspects, such as the reporting system, would also determine the success of the Programme. He also drew attention to the issue of the financial sustainability of SAP and any innovative measures related thereto.

20. Given that the NAPs would be the principal result of the first three years' work on the Programme until 2003, he focused on three areas concerning the implementation of the SAP included in the operational document adopted by the Contracting Parties in 2001: the current conceptual framework; the institutional arrangements in each country for implementing the SAP; and more specific technical issues such as pollution reduction, the Baseline Budget and capacity-building.

21. It was expected that NAPs would be ready for implementation in many countries by 2005 but the process required continuous updating and was dynamic in nature, realistically taking into account national, regional and international situations.

22. The representative of Greenpeace International considered that observance of the deadlines set in the SAP was particularly important in the light of the creation of the Mediterranean Free Trade Area (MFTA) in 2010. The latter's creation would lead to accelerated industrial development, especially in countries on the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean. The SAP was one of the instruments that would ensure that such development was not harmful to the environment or human health. In addition, she drew attention to the Stockholm Convention, already signed by 50 countries, which provided for the elimination of Persistent Organic Pollutants by 2025. Consequently, application of the SAP would serve as an important model for the rest of the world.

23. The MED POL Programme Coordinator said that, at the present stage, the Secretariat was especially interested in receiving information on the institutional arrangements made and any difficulties encountered so far. He emphasized that the establishment of interministerial committees was crucial for ensuring implementation of the SAP, since, if only the environment ministries were involved, progress would be thwarted. It would also be useful to share information on national experiences of think tanks or "incubators".

24. The representative of Slovenia spoke of two major shifts in philosophy in her country: the first was the launching of an integrated approach involving river basins, coastal zones and land-based activities; the second was the new interministerial approach that she believed might actually hold up progress. She added that, if the goals of implementing the SAP were to be achieved, monitoring was vital. In Slovenia, it would take time for the institutional arrangements to be put in place; in the meantime, she felt that they should strive towards the Programme goals, making do with the arrangements already in place.

25. The Chairperson said that it had been agreed at Johannesburg that social, economic and environmental issues had to be dealt with jointly. The problem was exactly how the environment, industry, energy and finance ministries in each country could cooperate in practice.

26. The MED POL Programme Coordinator added that there was no universal recipe to ensure involvement of other Ministries and stakeholders. Vital funds earmarked for extremely useful pre-investment studies would, however, largely go to waste unless there was an integrated approach involving not only the environment ministry but also other ministries, such as tourism, industry, public works, etc. Support at the highest political level was vital if the Programme was to succeed.

27. The representative of Croatia said that in her country an interministerial committee had been set up to implement the SAP, but only a third of the ministerial representatives had attended a recent meeting, highlighting the difficulty of involving other ministries. More effort would be needed to stimulate interest at a higher political level in order to implement the SAP. An environmental agency had been created, however, and plans to establish an

environment and energy efficiency fund were being debated in parliament. A problem that had held up progress, on the other hand, was repeated reorganization in the environment ministry, but despite that Croatia was fully participating in MED POL Phase III. It was hoped that the National Diagnostic Analysis (NDA) and the BB would be completed at some time in 2003 so that the NAP would be ready by the year's end.

28. The representative of Cyprus said that, in his country, environmental issues were the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, along with other ministries, so Cyprus had a *de facto* interministerial committee, in whose work NGOs took an active part. The NDA and BB were due to be ready in January 2003, after which the procedure for preparing the NAP could begin. He also mentioned other relevant interministerial activities such as those of the Planning Bureau and hoped that Cyprus was on the right track, with the NAP due to be ready before the end of 2003.

29. The Chairperson, speaking as representative of Italy, said that the situation in his country was similar to that in Cyprus. He estimated that Italy's NAP would be ready for final consideration by September 2003.

30. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that an interministerial committee had been created after repeated contacts with other ministries and authorities concerned. She extended her Government's invitation to the GEF Project Officer to visit the Syrian Arab Republic to help clarify a number of issues concerning the implementation of the SAP. A number of workshops and other meetings concerning the issue had been held. A national environment protection council had been established in accordance with the new environmental law, which gave the Deputy Prime Minister the authority to bring together the ministry of the environment and other ministries. Preparation of the NDA and BB had already begun, the first steps towards the preparation of the NAP. With regard to the question of think tanks or "incubators", her country would be seeking the Secretariat's advice as to which form they should take.

31. The representative of Egypt observed that, in any enterprise involving strategic commitment, high-level political support was needed, suggesting also a top-down approach to ensure the commitment of all stakeholders. Interministerial and intersectoral structures were already in place in her country, and the national environmental action plan would serve as the framework for the NAP. Many of the basic elements for the formulation of a NAP were there, notably in terms of sewage and urban solid waste treatment and air pollution control. Certain shortcomings might be remedied, for example with the support of donor agencies, whereas others were likely to remain unresolved due to lack of infrastructure.

32. The representative of Israel reported that work had been completed on updating pollution hot spots for the NAP and that an agreement had been signed with MED POL to formalize the national mechanism for the marine environment monitoring programme, according to MED POL Phase III requirements. A professional committee had been set up in the Ministry of the Environment to identify priorities for inclusion in the NDA and BB reports, and the consultant's final report would be submitted within the next two months.

33. The representative of Morocco informed the Meeting that an interministerial committee for MED POL existed in his country and would constitute the core of the GEF Project interministerial committee. Furthermore, his country had recently embarked on the preparation of the NDA and the BB following the subregional meeting convened in Rabat by MAP. Work on pre-investment studies and hot spots had not yet commenced.

34. The representative of Turkey said that, in his country, two important reports on pollution had been prepared by the Scientific and Technical Research Council, focusing on point source discharges and releases into water bodies from activities listed in the LBS

Protocol. A database containing information about all pollutants had been prepared and a comprehensive inventory of pollutants had been compiled. The NDA was already under way and the priorities for the NAP would be determined upon the basis of its findings. National regulations concerning point source discharges of domestic and industrial wastewater into rivers and the sea had been brought into line with EU Directives. The NAP would be prepared along the same lines as the National Environmental Action Plan, already adopted.

Agenda item 5.1 Preparation of National Action Plans

35. Mr. Fouad Abousamra, MED POL Programme Officer, gave a summarized powerpoint presentation of the proposed draft guidelines for the preparation of NAPs, as described in detail in document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/Inf.3. Preparation of the NAP would proceed in successive phases (phases 1-4) at the "administrative region" level, on the basis of a bottom-up approach, culminating in the formulation of the NAP proper (phase 5). The guidelines made allowance for the fact that some countries might wish to adopt an approach based on sectoral environmental plans rather than NAPs; the end result, in compliance with SAP commitments, should be a list of priority actions for the reduction of pollution to be carried out by 2010. The guidelines, notably in respect of national programmes, called for concrete actions, with specific targets and timeframes, and proposed several additional priority activities for inclusion in the NAPs.

36. Mr. Abousamra sought suggestions on the impacts to be included in the impact matrix contained on page 2 of Annex I to document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/Inf.3. He explained that the list given on pages 3 to 9 of Annex I was indicative and the guidelines would be updated in the light of comments to be sent to the MED POL by the end of 2002.

37. A number of speakers commended the draft guidelines as a highly useful tool for the preparation of the NAPs and made suggestions for inclusion in the matrix. It was proposed that the cumulative impact on the marine environment be included, but the difficulty of evaluating the impact in a uniform manner was highlighted. It was also proposed that the four impacts correspond to the methodology used for the hot spots project.

38. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina said that the draft guidelines would provide valuable assistance to the national team and other stakeholders already working on the NAP, on the basis of environmental action plans developed with the support of the European Union and the World Bank.

Agenda item 5.2 Pollution hot spots and pre-investment studies

39. Mr. George Kamizoulis, Senior Scientist, WHO/MED POL, presented the progress made since 1997, emphasizing the importance of the activity since it would lead to concrete measures aimed at preventing further deterioration of the environment. The criteria for the prioritization of transboundary pollution hot spots had been finalized at a meeting of experts and in consultation with MED POL National Coordinators. The updated reports on national pollution hot spots and national priority lists had been prepared, and the separate criteria for the prioritization of pollution sensitive areas had been determined; those criteria, which took into account transboundary aspects of the sensitive areas, would shortly be sent to the MED POL Coordinators for their comments. At a meeting of the ad hoc Technical Committee set up under the GEF Project, the priority lists of national pollution hot spots had been considered with a view to the preparation of pre-investment studies.

40. Expert missions to re-validate the selected hot spots and prepare the terms of reference had been conducted in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Syrian Arab

Republic and Turkey. Meanwhile, letters of agreement with the national implementing agencies had been signed with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Egypt, and a consultant had already been selected to prepare a pre-investment study in Bosnia and Herzegovina. ICS-UNIDO was organizing and financing the preparation of a pre-investment study in Croatia. Slovenia had declared that it required no assistance, while the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had not responded to the assistance proposal. FFEM had selected another four countries for support (Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia) and expert missions organized by GEF, in cooperation with METAP, would visit those countries to re-validate the selected hot spots and prepare the terms of reference during the first three months of 2003, during which time consultants would be selected to prepare all the pre-investment studies. Consultants would be contracted during the first half of 2003 while the pre-investment studies would be prepared throughout the year, to be ready by 31 December 2003.

41. Countries had been asked to update their reports on hot spots and all had responded favourably. National reports had been received during 2002 from all countries with the exception of France.

42. The GEF Project Manager announced the list of pollution hot spots selected for the preparation of pre-investment studies. They were Vlora (Albania), Neum (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Abu Qir Bay, Alexandria (Egypt), the area of Banias (Syrian Arab Republic), the Municipality of Icikel, Mersin (Turkey), and Zadar (Croatia). The list for the four countries selected by FFEM was incomplete but would be ready in early 2003. A full list of pollution hot spots would be made available to the experts as soon as it was finalized.

43. The representative of Morocco announced that, with the help of FFEM expertise, the pollution hot spot for his country had been selected, namely Nador, and as a result preparation of the pre-investment study could begin.

44. Welcoming the prospect of cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to the transboundary pollution hot spot at Neum, the representative of Croatia thanked ICS-UNIDO for its support. Preparation of her country's pre-investment study would begin shortly.

45. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya said that, although no official request had yet been made, his country did require assistance, especially concerning the problem of sediment analysis. Nevertheless a great deal of preparation work with a view to selecting a pollution hot spot had already been carried out.

46. The Senior Scientist, WHO/MED POL, welcomed the announcement by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and said that GEF would therefore examine the possibility of taking that country into consideration with regard to pollution hot spots.

47. Replying to a question on quantitative criteria for selecting and possibly ranking hot spots, he explained that, since the Contracting Parties had opposed the notion of ranking at the regional level, it had been decided to utilize ranking at the national level. In Tirana, it had further been agreed that priority should be given not only to the hot spots in the most urgent category but also to those for which the pre-investment studies were likely to be the most sustainable.

48. The MED POL Programme Coordinator added that the major concern of GEF and the Secretariat was that, as the largest share of GEF funding for the Programme would be spent on pre-investment studies, its use should be as cost-effective as possible, with proper follow-up.

49. The representative of Spain said that, although his country was not GEF eligible, a list of pollution hot spots would be incorporated into its NAP.

50. The Chairperson encouraged non-GEF-eligible countries to look to European Union programmes for the possible funding of pre-investment studies on pollution hot spots.

51. The representative of the European Commission said that, following the commitment made in Monaco in 2001 by the Parties to the Barcelona Convention to strengthen the links between the EUROMED Partnership and MAP, the Europe-Mediterranean Ministers for the Environment had made a declaration in Athens on 10 July 2002. In it they had "encouraged SMAP Correspondents to use the possibilities offered by SMAP to facilitate the implementation of the commitments made by the Mediterranean countries in the context of related Conventions and Environmental Programmes". The activities under discussion were likely to fall within that framework.

52. The MED POL Programme Coordinator welcomed the announcement, which would open up new prospects for the follow-up to the present activities on hot spots.

Agenda item 5.3 Pollution reduction and baseline budget of releases

53. Mr. Abousamra introduced document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/Inf.4, which outlined the results of five subregional meetings held to review the process of preparation of NDAs and BBs on the basis of software prepared in cooperation with RAMOGE. On the basis of the countries' presentations made at the meetings, it appeared that 47 per cent of Mediterranean countries were already in a position to prepare NDAs and BBs, 17 per cent would require close follow-up, and 36 per cent would need additional assistance.

54. Several representatives considered the subregional approach used by the Secretariat very good, and appropriate for identifying specific difficulties and gaps.

55. In response to comments by the representative of the European Commission regarding the purpose of the data collection exercise under the European Union's water and IPPC directives, Mr. Abousamra said that the work being carried out for the purpose of preparing the BBs was similar. There would not be any duplication of work and the data collected by the EU could provide input for the BBs.

56. The MED POL Programme Coordinator added that ongoing efforts were made to harmonize reporting by present and future members of the European Union that were also part of MAP. In order to avoid placing an excessive burden on the MAP Contracting Parties, it was intended to assess reporting requirements under the SAP in relation to those under EU Directives in order to see how they could be harmonized.

57. In response to questions, Mr. Abousamra explained that the NDA covered all urban and industrial development activities, whereas the BB only covered industrial releases. The NDA should be based on real trends data, but in view of the wide discrepancies between the data available in each country, no common approach to their establishment could be advocated. It had been intended that preparation of the NDAs should commence in September 2002 and a period of three or four months would be needed. BBs should have started at the same time, but would probably require longer to complete, depending on the situation in each country. The purpose of the BBs was essentially to track pollution reductions in the future.

58. Some representatives drew attention to the difficulty of preparing the BB on account of the lack of data. In response, Mr. Abousamra pointed out that BBs could be drawn up on the basis of existing data. It was not necessary to await new monitoring data, and emission factors could be used, even though there might be some uncertainty. The emission factors

proposed by the Secretariat, based on the most recent emission factors widely used worldwide, could be refined over time and the updated figures utilized. It was important to make a start but, where necessary, monitoring programmes could be initiated. The vital role played by BBs was underlined because without a BB it would not be possible to measure reductions.

59. During the ensuing discussion, some representatives emphasized that, where emission factors were used, they could possibly be confirmed and complemented by field data. NAPs should therefore contain a provision for the establishment of monitoring activities.

Agenda item 5.4 Monitoring

60. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, drew attention to the links between the traditional monitoring activities conducted by MED POL and the new needs arising from implementation of the SAP. Considering the general objectives of MED POL Phase III (listed on page 8 of document UNEP(DEC)MED WG.212/3), it was obvious that proper implementation of monitoring activities was essential for the success of the SAP in the long term.

61. However, no major modifications to the MED POL monitoring structure were required for implementation of the SAP, but some components had to be adapted and the Secretariat was working to that end. In particular, he stressed that: (i) the selection of parameters had to be harmonized with the SAP requirements; (ii) the selection of sampling sites had to be better related to the selected hot spots; (iii) in the area of capacity-building, the training component already adapted to the region's overall needs had to be more diversified and cover all SAP activities; (iv) there could be no effective programme without effective reporting so a reporting system for the SAP was needed, in harmony with the MAP reporting system, and the Secretariat was working with experts to that end; (v) compliance monitoring had to be fully implemented in all countries according to the Baseline Budget approach; and (vi) the gradual inclusion of river basin monitoring was required.

62. During the discussion on the agenda item, appreciation of the training component and the assistance given in establishing monitoring programmes was expressed, but it was proposed that the number of courses should be increased so as to ensure an adequate supply of reliable data. One representative also stated that compliance monitoring would only yield full benefit if Mediterranean criteria were fixed, and stressed the need for the Secretariat to accelerate the process of preparing Mediterranean criteria. Nevertheless, even in the absence of Mediterranean criteria, compliance monitoring was important because it enabled the effectiveness of action taken to reduce pollution to be assessed in relation to existing national legislation.

63. Attention was drawn to the distinction between compliance and trend monitoring: the former allowed observance of legislation to be verified and the latter showed the effectiveness of the measures taken to reduce marine pollution. It was pointed out that it was sometimes difficult to relate pollution detected to the polluter concerned. One question raised in connection with compliance was whether it meant compliance with national, regional or international standards.

64. In response, the MED POL Programme Coordinator said that, for the moment, compliance monitoring should be seen as a training exercise in cases where such systems did not exist. Its purpose was to monitor the application of domestic legislation and, even in the absence of Mediterranean criteria, it was a valuable exercise. However, Mediterranean standards would be proposed in the future, taking into account those already set at the

international level, adapting them to the special needs of the Mediterranean. Some countries already had well-developed systems, whereas others had no monitoring system at all, so if all countries as a minimum had a system to monitor compliance with their own legislation, it would be an important step forward.

65. With regard to identifying polluters, he explained that MED POL compliance monitoring allowed for the inclusion of monitoring of effluents so specific polluters could be identified.

Agenda item 5.5 Capacity-building

66. The MED POL Programme Coordinator stressed the importance and diversity of the capacity-building component of the GEF Project, which was intended, mostly by means of regional guidelines and plans, to assist countries in setting up their strategies and framing their policies for the long-term implementation of the SAP. Many activities would be executed by a number of programmes/bodies, in particular MED POL, WHO/MED POL, CP/RAC and METAP.

67. The Senior Scientist, WHO/MED POL, said that regional guidelines had been prepared for: river monitoring; indicators concerning ecosystem stress; the application of BEP for the rational use of fertilizers and the reduction of loss of nutrients from agriculture; the application of BAT and BEP in industry; the application of BAT and BEP in industrial installations; sources of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) nutrients and suspended solids; sewage treatment and disposal; municipal wastewater reuse; industrial wastewater and coastal litter. At least two meetings of experts would be held in 2003 to review the guidelines; the number of meetings would depend upon the cost and the experts' ability to attend. Most of the draft guidelines would shortly be dispatched to the MED POL National Coordinators.

68. Regional plans had been prepared for a 50 percent reduction of BOD from industrial sources, the management of nine pesticides and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), including regional inventories for those substances, the management of hazardous wastes, and a 20 percent reduction in the generation of hazardous wastes from industrial installations by 2007. Four meetings of experts were scheduled in 2003 to review them.

69. With regard to training courses, he said that a regional course had been held in Athens on the subject of "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operation and Management". As a follow-up, participants would be organizing national training courses in their own language, for which training material had been prepared in English, French, Arabic, Croatian, Turkish and Greek, thus covering 16 countries. National courses had been held in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, in Croatia (with participants from Croatia and Slovenia), and in Albania (tailor-made to address the country-specific subject of treatment by stabilization ponds). Three or four further national training courses would be held in GEF-eligible countries in 2003. Following a regional training course on "Environmental Inspections", held in Cyprus, seven national training courses would be conducted by participants in their own languages. A regional workshop on environment impact assessment had led to two "train the trainers" national workshops, conducted in English and French. Participants in a regional training course on cleaner production techniques organized by CP/RAC, held in Barcelona, would be organizing national training courses on the same subject, while one regional and four national training courses on river monitoring were scheduled for 2003, though some courses might have to be scheduled in 2004, GEF funding permitting.

70. At a regional workshop held in Crete, municipal wastewater reuse practices in the Mediterranean had been drafted. In response to a request by the Contracting Parties in

Monaco, a report on Mediterranean coastal wastewater treatment plants was being updated and would be published in 2003.

71. It was suggested that the preparation of guidelines and plans for POPs management should be addressed in close parallel with work on the Stockholm Convention so as to avoid duplication. Requests were made for guidelines to be distributed directly to end-users rather than to Coordinators and National Focal Points.

72. The Senior Scientist, WHO/MED POL, gave his assurance that any necessary fine tuning of translations into Arabic would be made before training courses began. In response to requests for further translations into other languages, such as Arabic, he suggested that additional sources of funding should be sought, including national sources. He said that guidelines would have to be sent to countries through the established communication channels, namely the national MED POL Coordinators.

73. The Chairperson added that it would be excessively burdensome, in both human and financial terms, for the Secretariat to see to further translations and the distribution of materials at every administrative level within the different countries. It was up to each country to disseminate the information as it saw fit, possibly with the assistance of a strategy worked out by the Secretariat.

74. The MED POL Programme Officer said that two regional plans (for the management of nine pesticides and PCBs, including regional inventories for those substances; and for the management of hazardous waste, including regional inventories of hazardous waste) took into consideration the provisions of the Stockholm and Basel Conventions, respectively. Value had been added by a new approach, that of taking into account the real situation of hazardous waste in Mediterranean countries. He also mentioned developments involving Basel Convention regional centres for hazardous waste management such as that in Egypt.

75. Guidelines on river monitoring in English and French had been prepared, and plans had been made for a powerpoint presentation, with a view to holding regional and national training courses in 2003. He said that the Secretariat would welcome offers to hold such courses.

76. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that her country offered to hold one of the scheduled national training courses on river monitoring.

77. The representative of CP/RAC said that three sets of regional guidelines (for the application of BEP for the rational use of fertilizers and the reduction of losses from nutrients from agriculture; for the application of BAT and BEP in industries; and for the application of BAT and BEP in industrial installations) and the regional plan for the 20 percent reduction of the generation of hazardous wastes from industrial installations by 2007, all prepared by the Centre, were ready for final review by the experts. Once reviewed, they would be sent to the National Coordinators and Focal Points for comment by early 2003.

78. The representative of MAREVIVO asked how many countries, especially GEF-eligible countries, had yet to ratify the LBS Protocol. He wondered whether financial support, including that set aside for capacity-building, might not be withdrawn from those countries as a possible way of exerting pressure on them to proceed with ratification.

Agenda item 5.6 Public participation

79. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, introducing the agenda item, said that the Secretariat had already started to develop an overall information and awareness strategy

framework and, with the assistance of GEF funds, a strategy related to the implementation of the SAP was being prepared. Meetings at the subregional level had led to the development of subregional components, which would be utilized to develop the final proposed Mediterranean Strategy on Information, Awareness and Public Participation. Two meetings would be held, one to harmonize the subregional components and another to review their integration into a single Mediterranean strategy.

80. Mr. Baric, GEF Project Manager, added that a regional plan for public participation was under preparation and in 2003 a meeting of national experts, NGOs and GEF coordinators would be convened to discuss the draft regional plan.

81. The representative of WWF International stressed the importance of public participation in environmental issues because the public could constitute a valuable ally in inciting decision-makers to take the necessary measures. Environmental issues were often complex and they must be made comprehensible to the public. NGOs had considerable experience in that respect so they could add value to MAPs work and he urged the Secretariat to involve NGOs more closely in its public participation and information activities.

82. The Meeting recognized the need to identify and involve as early as possible key stakeholders from the public and private sectors as well as civil society.

Agenda item 5.7 Reporting

83. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, explained that a reporting system was needed in order to follow the progress made in implementing the SAP. As was being done in the case of monitoring, a special reporting system was now being developed for the SAP.

84. He was pleased to be able to report that the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) pilot project in Egypt being implemented with the cooperation of ICS/UNIDO was in its final stage and was proving a success, and it was planned to hold a regional workshop in order to encourage the implementation of similar projects in other countries. Such projects would make a significant contribution to the implementation of the SAP.

85. Mr. Abousamra, MED POL Programme Officer, described the approach to the reporting system for the SAP, giving the main outline and illustrating his remarks with slides. He looked forward to receiving feedback on the system proposed.

86. As mentioned in document MED(DEC)/MED WG.212/3, there were four components in reporting for the SAP, namely, progress monitoring of SAP activities, compliance with SAP requirements, evaluation of performance, and public information. The document also listed the elements for progress and compliance monitoring, evaluation, and the three key levels of public information to be collected in order to have an overall comprehensive picture of a country's performance.

87. The last phase of the PRTR pilot project in Egypt had been reached, resulting in guidelines for implementation, a database, and use of software for process simulation.

88. Indicators of marine pollution would be used for status monitoring and it was planned to convene a meeting of experts in February 2003 to discuss the issue.

89. During the ensuing discussion, the Secretariat was congratulated on the comprehensive explanation of reporting activities. One proposal was made to include information on the application of BEP and BAT. It was therefore proposed that information on the use of BEP and BAT should be included in the reporting system and that some

mention be made of the need to change unsustainable production and consumption patterns, in accordance with the concept adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

90. It was emphasized that reporting was a crucial element in implementation of the SAP, and the inclusion of PRTR projects was welcomed because they constituted a powerful tool for better environmental management. The need to harmonize the SAP and MAP reporting systems and marine pollution indicators used by various forums was underlined.

Agenda item 5.8 Long-term financial sustainability of SAP

91. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, introducing the item, said that the financial sustainability component of SAP, entrusted to PAP/RAC, was the most innovative part of the GEF Project as its outcome was expected to point the way to the sustainable implementation of SAP activities at the national level in the much longer term.

92. Mr. Trumbic, Director, PAP/RAC, pointed out at the outset that the purpose of the sustainability component was not strictly to identify funding sources but to assist countries in creating their own approaches to fund-raising once the GEF and MAP involvement was terminated. He then outlined the reasons why the SAP required financial sustainability, as set out in document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/3 (para. 9). What was needed was a sustainable financial platform for long-term SAP implementation, the incorporation of economic instruments in the NAPs, and national professionals qualified in the development and implementation of economic instruments. Economic instruments were instruments of change and could encourage behavioural change among polluters and consumers of natural resources while raising revenues for environmental protection.

93. The project objectives were to develop and assist countries in implementing economic instruments for the sustainable implementation of the SAP, to assist in combating land-based pollution through self-financing, and to demonstrate the economic benefits of integrated approaches to coastal management. The expected results included administrative, legal and fiscal mechanisms for the sustainable financing of SAP implementation at country level, enhanced government capability to identify, develop and implement appropriate economic instruments, and the development of guidelines for their implementation.

94. Since the activity had been set up in 2000 and after the initial fact-finding phase, including expert meetings, questionnaires, a project implementation plan, an analysis of the application of economic instruments and a seminar, seven pilot projects had been selected and launched in Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia (2), Egypt and Morocco. Valuable experience had been gained from the projects, although some problems had been encountered with the Egyptian project, which had now been discontinued, and the Moroccan project would only be partly implemented. A diagnostic analysis of the seven projects had been carried out in December 2002, training courses on the use of economic instruments had been held in the countries concerned, and the projects had been presented to the countries' stakeholders.

95. Among the awareness-raising activities carried out, a brochure on the advantages of using economic instruments, translated into all the languages of the countries hosting a pilot project had been prepared and widely distributed, and a new attractive web site had been created following a questionnaire.

96. He concluded by outlining the expected direct and indirect future results of the project, as set out in document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/3, adding that by and large work was proceeding on schedule.

97. In the ensuing discussion, speakers commended the approach adopted and the work being done under the guidance of PAP/RAC, stressing the importance of looking to the future. The point was raised that it might be difficult to mobilize the necessary political will in countries in the short time remaining before the end of the GEF Project, as environmental issues were seldom a priority in government policy. The involvement of all stakeholders was considered crucial, one representative suggesting that more attention should be given to local authorities. In the view of one non-governmental organization, sound management practice and proven organizational ability in countries were needed to attract investment in the longer term.

98. Several representatives stressed the need to explore all possible opportunities for financing the SAP in the long term. One suggestion was to investigate private/public partnerships, as recommended at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Another avenue to explore might be integration of national Mediterranean projects in the European Union's forthcoming initiative on water. It was further observed that the SAP should be promoted as an integrated regional initiative and its results widely disseminated. On the subject of private sector funding, one representative suggested that a paper might usefully be prepared outlining possible solutions, including ways and means of attracting private initiative. He further stressed the need in general for practical, concrete indications to be given to countries. Another representative inquired about the possibility of adding a project to those currently being financed. Several representatives stressed the need for clear links to be established with the MAP website.

99. Mr. Trumbic, Director, PAP/RAC, said that one of the objectives of the sustainability component was precisely to provide guidelines for the future. Project sustainability encompassed financial, political and institutional sustainability as prerequisites for successful implementation. PAP/RAC's contribution to that endeavour included public information and publicity on the benefits of using economic instruments, and also training and capacity-building. The project itself was not a panacea, but, with its obvious benefits, could provide an incentive to stimulate the necessary political will. He agreed that local authorities should also be a focus of attention and that there were economic instruments that could be – and were being – adopted and applied at the local level, Croatia being one example.

100. Further thought should indeed be given to integrating the private sector, particularly in the wake of the Johannesburg recommendations regarding the financing of environmental protection and management. As to the addition of new pilot projects, the deadlines for submission of proposals was past, but the good results achieved in certain countries in applying economic instruments could certainly be disseminated, for example through studies commissioned to pass on their valuable experience.

101. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, took up the important point made about assisting countries in preparing for the future. The ultimate responsibility for long-term financial sustainability lay with the countries themselves. What the project could do was to mobilize the regional and international community to create a momentum for finding opportunities and initiatives of which countries could avail themselves. PAP/RAC was engaged on just such a task, in identifying possible solutions. He mentioned the creation of a donors' committee, with the Secretariat fulfilling a clearing-house function between national needs and priorities and international donors. Some kind of guideline document, containing suggestions as well as success stories, might be produced for use by all Mediterranean countries. He drew attention, in conclusion, to the new MAP website and said that a new network had been created, linking all bodies and projects.

102. The Chairperson endorsed those comments, stressing the need for an effective communication policy and high visibility to be given to successful projects and sound

investments, demonstrating the added value, for instance in terms of tourism, of reduced pollution.

103. Mr. Baric, GEF Project Manager, gave a presentation on the contribution and opportunities of the GEF Project for GEF-eligible countries within the SAP context, an outline of which is attached as Annex III.

104. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, said that the presentation clarified the availability of financing for full implementation of the SAP under the three-year project, and hoped that it would prompt an active reaction from the countries. In reply to a question, he confirmed that the financing in question concerned GEF-eligible countries only, but said that the project provided for specific support, albeit in smaller measure, for countries that were not GEF-eligible, an example being support for participation in training courses.

Agenda item 5.9 Other activities related to SAP

105. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, introduced the agenda item, drawing attention to the two activities undertaken by WHO\MED POL.

106. Mr. Kamizoulis, Senior Scientist, WHO\MED POL, explained that the draft guidelines for environmental inspection systems had been prepared in line with the decision taken by the informal network of environmental inspectors and had been translated into French. They had subsequently been sent to MED POL National Coordinators for comments. Four reference guides on Compliance, Inspection, Human Infrastructure, Sampling, General Issues, and Management had been prepared and two national environmental inspection plans had already been drawn up.

107. Activities relating to bathing waters were being coordinated with the activities of other international organizations and the European Union. He informed the Meeting that the European Union guidelines had been put before the European Parliament and, when they had been adopted, a meeting would be convened for the purpose of preparing new MAP guidelines.

Agenda item 6. Updating of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA)

108. Mr. Civili, MED POL Programme Coordinator, introducing the item, explained that the TDA document was used by GEF as a basis for launching projects around the world and that UNEP-GIWA (Global International Waters Assessment) had the responsibility of preparing a global water assessment based on regional TDAs. GIWA considered the work being done on the Mediterranean TDAs was by and large adequate to its needs, but was suggesting a slight adaptation to ensure consistency with GIWA methodology. To that end, a questionnaire had been prepared for completion by country experts.

109. Ms. Elina Rautalahti-Miettinen, UNEP-GIWA Coordinator, said that the overall objective of GIWA, a water programme of UNEP funded mainly by GEF, was to identify priority issues across the globe. It dealt only with transboundary waters, looking at impacts and root causes in the 66 subregions identified. The methodology consisted of scaling and scoping, detailed impact assessment and causal chain analysis. The experts' assistance was being sought for the scaling and scoping component, particularly crucial for identifying priority issues. Presenting the data in the format proposed in the questionnaire would ensure consistency in the methodology applied by GIWA across the 66 subregions. The types of impacts to be investigated covered five major concerns encompassing 22 environmental issues.

110. Mr. Ahmet Kideys, UNEP-GIWA Project Assistant, further specified that the scoping exercise being requested of the experts did not concern freshwater and related to the whole Mediterranean. In submitting the questionnaire, GIWA had been prompted by the consideration that the experience and expertise of the assembled experts could produce a more accurate assessment than could be made by the GIWA Coordinating Unit. The object of the exercise was to produce information for the Mediterranean that could be compared with information for other subregions. He gave some indications of the kind of data required, leaving participants with some latitude in presenting or omitting data, depending on the availability of the information.

111. Most participants in the ensuing discussion proposed to submit their replies electronically after consultation with the authorities in their countries. In that connection, a rather more official presentation of the document would be preferable. Some requested further clarification of the object of the exercise and its outcome and how it tied in with the current work on updating the TDA. One expressed doubts about the accuracy of the overall picture to emerge from the assessment as the data provided would inevitably be piecemeal. Another requested a French version of the document. Regarding comparability with other regions, it was asked whether the methodology used elsewhere was the same.

112. The MED POL Programme Coordinator, referring to the relationship between the exercise under discussion and the Secretariat's ongoing work, said that, when approached by GIWA on the subject, the Secretariat had explained the well advanced state of work on the TDA and its updating, but agreed that consideration could be given to slightly adapting the format it was using to the GIWA format or methodology for reasons of harmonization with other regions for the global GIWA assessment. The questionnaire should be seen as a tool to be used first by MAP to complete its own TDA, which would subsequently be forwarded to GIWA as the Mediterranean contribution to the global assessment.

113. The representatives of two non-governmental organizations questioned the need for yet another compilation of already available data on pollution in the Mediterranean; it was further asked who would do the work of adaptation for a complete TDA and what the cost-benefit of the exercise would be.

114. In response to questions and comments, it was agreed that the MAP Secretariat should collect the questionnaires and incorporate them in the updated version of the TDA. The purpose of the global assessment was to obtain comparable results, a task facilitated by the use of the same criteria and methodology. There was of course an abundance of data available, but assessment criteria and indicators were not all the same. Ultimately, GEF used the countries' priorities for funding purposes. The scaling exercise was commonly carried out by expert teams in other regions but it had not been felt necessary to set up such a team for the Mediterranean, where there were already many existing groups and organizations. Replies to the questionnaire should preferably refer to the whole Mediterranean region, but might equally pertain to only one area, to be specified. A French version of the questionnaire could be provided.

115. The Chairperson, underscoring the sensitive nature of the TDA exercise, agreed that the data collected should be channelled through the Secretariat, which should first complete its ongoing TDA work and later provide the input for the global assessment. That view was shared by the MED POL Programme Coordinator, who added that a formal, coordinated procedure approved by the Contracting Parties was certainly preferable. Several representatives endorsed those views, one pointing to the need to avoid duplication of effort.

116. In reply to a question about the connection between the GIWA global assessment and the call for a global assessment by 2004 in the Plan of Implementation of the World

Summit on Sustainable Development, the GIWA representative said that the GIWA process was scheduled for completion by 2003

117. Concluding the debate, the MED POL Programme Coordinator said that the whole issue need not be unduly complicated. The Secretariat had already prepared a TDA and would prepare its updated version by adding a table on scoring and scaling according to the GIWA format. It was not a parallel or broader assessment, merely a more schematic way of presenting the information. The timeframe for drafting and submitting the TDA for adoption would remain unchanged.

118. Mr. Abousamra, MED POL Programme Officer, recalled that the first TDA had been prepared in 1997 and had served as the basis for launching the GEF Project. In September 2001, the Secretariat, with the assistance of 11 regional experts, had commenced updating the TDA, using the 1997 sources and adding a number of new issues. The majority of the data had already been updated and the first draft of the final document would shortly be ready. The document would then be finalized for submission to the next meeting of the Contracting Parties. It was expected to mark a milestone in MAP's future activities and he underlined the importance of a new chapter on future perspectives of development in the region and potential impacts on pollution issues in the Mediterranean in particular. It was also proposed to include a new chapter on the implications deriving from the application of the principle of shared and differentiated responsibilities for land-based pollution reduction in the Mediterranean.

119. In the course of the discussion, it was stated that one element lacking was the assessment of risk and it was proposed to include it.

120. In reply to a question, Mr. Abousamra confirmed that the results of the UNEP assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS) would be included in the TDA, although they would only relate to the marine environment. He added that updating would be based on existing information and few detailed data on the real impact of activities on the marine environment had been published.

Agenda item 7. Conclusions and recommendations

121. The Chairperson convened an informal, open-ended drafting group to prepare conclusions and recommendations, which were subsequently adopted by the Meeting and are attached as Annex IV to the present report.

Agenda item 8. Other business

122. The Secretariat was requested to contact the National Focal Points with a view to inserting the appropriate web sites for the Contracting Parties in the MAP web site so as to facilitate contacts and flow of information among Parties.

123. The Meeting recommended that, if they had not already done so, Contracting Parties should urgently ratify the amended Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, in particular the LBS Protocol, as the legal basis for proper implementation of the SAP.

Agenda item 9. Adoption of the report

124. The Meeting unanimously adopted the present report on the basis of the draft reports contained in documents UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/L.2, Adds. 1 and 2.

Agenda item 10. Closure of the Meeting

125. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairperson declared the Meeting closed at 9 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 December 2002.

ANNEX I

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ANNEX II**AGENDA**

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of Officers
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work
4. Background Information on the operational links between MED POL, SAP and GEF Project objectives
5. Review of the implementation of the SAP through the related MED POL and GEF activities
 - 5.1 Preparation of National Action Plans
 - 5.2 Pollution hot spots and pre-investment studies
 - 5.3 Pollution reduction and baseline budget of releases
 - 5.4 Monitoring
 - 5.5 Capacity Building
 - 5.6 Public Participation
 - 5.7 Reporting
 - 5.8 Long-term financial sustainability of SAP
 - 5.9 Other activities related to SAP
6. Updating of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA)
7. Conclusions and recommendations
8. Other Business
9. Adoption of the Report
10. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX III

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE GEF PROJECT TO THE GEF-ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES

The following are the fields for which the GEF project can provide support to GEF-eligible countries:

I. DIRECT CONTRIBUTION RELATED TO SAP MED

A. Preparation of NAPs

1. Support to activities of Interministerial Committee (MoU)
2. National expert assistance (administrative) to the Interministerial Committees
3. National expert assistance for the preparation of draft sectoral National Action Plans (NAPs)
4. National expert assistance for the preparation of draft integrated NAPs
5. Meetings at national level for the preparation and presentation of NAPs
6. Expert (regional) assistance to countries for the preparation of NAPs

B. Preparation of pre-investment studies

1. Consultant (regional) in country missions to assist in the preparation of pre-investment studies
2. Preparation of pre-investment studies (selection of consultants after a procurement procedure)
3. Meetings with countries for pre-investment studies

C. Capacity building

1. Regional training courses
2. National training courses

D. Sustainability

1. Pilot projects

E. Travel on Official Business

1. Travel of national experts

II. INDIRECT CONTRIBUTION RELATED TO SAP MED

A. Regional cooperation

1. Regional guidelines
2. Regional plans
3. Other supporting documents

B. Public participation

1. Regional plan for public participation

ANNEX IV

Conclusions and recommendations

The Meeting recognized:

- A. The role played by the Secretariat in the implementation of the SAP, in particular the approach and methodology adopted to increase the prospect of SAP implementation at national and regional levels;
- B. The importance of the financial assistance provided by GEF and other partners that aims at preparing the ground at national and regional levels for the implementation of the SAP;
- C. The willingness of the CPs and the progress they have made in the development of the national institutional and technical framework for the proper implementation of the SAP;
- D. The importance of taking into account the provisions of the related MEAs and the need to use the already created synergy between the related work done under the provisions of MEAs and the SAP;
- E. The importance of the long-term implementation of the SAP and the need for long-term financial support from the Contracting Parties, international financing institutions, and stakeholders.

The Meeting welcomed:

- The reference by the European Commission representative to the declaration made by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers in Athens, on 10 July 2002, on the possible use of SMAP/MEDA financial assistance to ensure SAP implementation at national and regional levels;
- The activities that have so far been implemented in the context of capacity-building and, in particular, the regional and national training courses and workshops.

The Meeting recommended that the Secretariat:

- Strengthen the link with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in matters related to the SAP and the LBS Protocol and investigate the possibilities afforded by the recent WSSD partnerships as a means to ensure the long-term sustainability of SAP implementation;
- Continue and strengthen the coordination with secretariats of related MEAs and the European Commission;
- Consider the risk associated with LBS activities;
- Consider the risk associated with other activities, such as maritime transport, in any future assessment, such as the TDA, that the Secretariat may be requested to undertake;
- Include a short but detailed evaluation of risk associated with maritime transport in the current TDA, in the chapter on the overall evaluation of pollution and future development in the Mediterranean;

- Speed up the negotiations between the GEF Project and the FFEM to start the process towards the implementation of pre-investment studies in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Lebanon;
- Provide promptly, and by electronic means when requested, the necessary information and documents concerning SAP implementation at national level to National MED POL Coordinators and to GEF Project National Coordinators;
- Investigate the possibilities of making more of the relevant documents available on the Internet, with the use of security passwords where appropriate;
- Continue to involve the Palestinian Authority in implementation of the SAP and ascertain whether the Authority is eligible for GEF Project funding for that purpose;
- Increase the visibility of SAP MED in order to attract interim external and internal sources of financing to ensure the continuity of the SAP, working in parallel at national level for long-term sustainability.

The Meeting recommended that the Parties:

- Urgently ratify, if they have not already done so, the amended Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, in particular the LBS Protocol, as the legal basis for the proper implementation of the SAP;
- Strengthen national coordination between the National MED POL Coordinators of the Barcelona Convention framework and national stakeholders, including the end user, in order to ensure the adequate dissemination of documents and information related to SAP implementation, and to assist capacity-building programmes at national level;
- Actively continue or undertake the preparation and implementation of national MED POL Phase III monitoring programmes and report the results of such programmes to the Secretariat;
- Ensure that adequate financial support is given to the long-term implementation of the SAP, taking into account national priorities in order to achieve sustainable development in the Mediterranean Basin.

The Meeting concluded on the need:

Preparation of NAPs

- To endorse the proposed guidelines for the preparation of NAPs;
- To take into consideration the comments of the Meeting and submit the final version of guidelines to CPs;
- To consider the same criteria used for the selection of hot spots in the scoring of impacts according to the issues/impact matrix.

Monitoring

- To develop the trends and compliance monitoring programmes of MED POL to cover the substances and sources covered by the SAP, as appropriate.

Public Participation

- Urgently to identify and to involve as early as possible key stakeholders from public and private sectors as well as civil society.

Reporting

- To continue the work on that issue on the basis of the outline provided by the Secretariat and included in document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/3 in order to make it more comprehensive by, for example, including elements on BAT and BEP and ensuring consistency with the MAP and EC reporting system.

Financial sustainability of the SAP

- To identify the financial means for supporting the medium- and long-term sustainability of SAP implementation, taking into account the findings of the PAP/RAC pilot projects on economic instruments and presenting them in the form of guidelines if so decided.