

ANNEX V

**MEDITERRANEAN CHILDREN CONFERENCE
(Tunis, 28-30 August 1997)**

CHILDREN'S RECOMMENDATIONS, MESSAGES AND PROPOSALS

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At the closing session the following recommendations, messages and proposals from the three working groups (Arabic, French and English) were presented according to the topics discussed during the conference:

Pollution

- Ensure clean seashores and devise a strict law on waste disposal including pollution caused by ships in the high sea. Sanctions should be considered for polluters.
- Set up polluting factories far away from the coastal areas and riparians systems, find out appropriate sites for waste disposal and treatment while using environmentally friendly technologies.
- Develop facilities for waste recycling in Mediterranean countries.
- Promote environmentally friendly technologies and products with long lasting use.
- Treat sewage waters before their release into rivers or the sea.
- Refrain from using products causing pollution.
- Set up a mechanism to combat oil spills in the Mediterranean and restore aquatic ecosystems.
- Develop renewable and clean energy and promote public transport.
- Diversify information on environment to children in order to raise their awareness in respect to environmental problems especially pollution.

Biodiversity

- Create natural reserves to protect rare species of plants and animals.
- Protect nesting sites.
- Consider reintroduction of extinct species into protected areas.
- Avoid further loss of species
- Create breeding centres for Mediterranean rare species.

- Fight against illegal hunting.
- Forbid drifting nests to protect populations of whales and dolphins in the Mediterranean.

Desertification

- Organise afforestation campaign to counter the problem of desertification.
- Set up desalinization plants of brackish water for reuse.
- Limit deforestation and degradation of forest.
- Avoid intensive farming that exhausts soil resources.
- Spread the use of solar energy as renewable and environmentally friendly energy .
- Fight against fires to preserve forests.
- Manage grazing resources in a rational way.
- Protect soil against salinization.
- Set up a research Mediterranean centre on desertification and restoration of degraded land.

General recommendations

- Create employment in the field of environmental protection.
- Collect funds for research on environmental protection and wise use of natural resources.

Messages and proposals

Children participating to the conference expressed their hopes that:

- the Mediterranean and the other seas would not be polluted in the future;
- awareness of the Mediterranean's problems would be extended to the different generations;
- decision making concerning these problems would be taken rapidly;
- governmental and non governmental organisations would work together for the protection of our Mare Nostrum.

It has been also proposed to create a network of Mediterranean children or schools for the monitoring of the seashores in collaboration with relevant municipalities.

On biodiversity, it has been proposed to involve children in guarding protected areas and in informing visitors.