

X. Agenda Item 3: THE BLUE PLAN

General principles

26. The Meeting agreed to ask the Executive Director to initiate the first phase of the "Blue Plan" in accordance with the following principles:

26.1 Absolute respect for national sovereignty;

26.2 Co-operation with national institutions and national experts;

- 26.3 Co-operation with organizations of the United Nations system and regional intergovernmental organizations concerned. The Executive Director may also enlist the co-operation of competent and concerned non-governmental organizations.
- 26.4 Account should be taken of activities in progress in various countries including those undertaken in co-operation with UNDP and through multilateral and bilateral programmes.
27. In elaboration of these general principles the following comments were made during the discussion:
- 27.1 Priorities should be limited in the first phase to a few areas so that the impact might not be diluted.
- 27.2 The Blue Plan should address itself to problems that are common to Mediterranean countries or groups of Mediterranean countries. Problems specific to one country should also be taken into account.
- 27.3 A central concern of the Blue Plan should be to undertake research on the interrelationship between socio-economic developments and ecological evolutions.
- 27.4 Priority activities should be conceived within the context of overall development activities of the various countries.
- 27.5 The principle of equity among the Mediterranean States in matters of participation in, organization of, and benefiting from activities, should be respected.

Organizational principles

28. The Meeting agreed to ask the Executive Director to follow the following principles in organizing the work of the Blue Plan:
- 28.1 The designation by each Government of a national focal point will help to ensure that Governments effectively control national contributions, and Governments are therefore invited to designate focal points. Blue Plan activities should be carried out through the network of such focal points.
- 28.2 National Focal Points designated by Governments will facilitate co-operation with national institutions and experts.
- 28.3 Governments' review and direction of the implementation of the "Blue Plan" will be facilitated by regular intergovernmental meetings to be convened for this purpose. Such meetings would be prepared, as appropriate, by expert consultations.
- 28.4 Constant links with international and other organizations should be maintained by UNEP, who will make full use of the expertise, experience and data which they can contribute.

- 28.5 Basic information which is required must be clearly defined to ensure useful collection and exchange. National focal points can facilitate access to this information. An information system co-ordinated with existing international plans is an essential part of the Blue Plan activity in order to ensure the compatibility of information.

Agenda Item 8.1: OBJECTIVES

Long-term objectives

29. The Meeting approved the following statement of long-term objectives of the "Blue Plan":

- 29.1 The fundamental long-term objective of the "Blue Plan" is to initiate a continuous process of concerted co-operation among the Mediterranean coastal States. The term "Plan" should not, therefore, give rise to misunderstandings: the objectives of the "Blue Plan" are not to concentrate the decision-making process or to promote the establishment of a body that would define in technical terms what should be the rational management of natural resources and optimum socio-economic development for all the Mediterranean countries. By ensuring exchange of experiences in all relevant fields among the Mediterranean countries, the "Blue Plan" should create a pool of knowledge to which each of the countries concerned would have immediate access.
- 29.2 More specifically, the objective of the "Blue Plan" is to place at the disposal of decision-makers and planners in the different countries of the Mediterranean region information enabling them to formulate plans for optimum socio-economic development on a sustainable basis without environmental degradation.
- 29.3 The "Blue Plan", while promoting co-operative efforts to solve common problems, would take existing socio-economic development styles into consideration and facilitate the formulation of alternative environmentally sound development styles by each country in accordance with its own options and conditions.
- 29.4 The other long-term objectives of the Blue Plan are:
- (a) To assist the Governments of the coastal States of the Mediterranean to gain a more accurate insight into the common problems they face both in the Mediterranean Sea and in its coastal zones;
 - (b) To assist these Governments in reaching appropriate decisions that would promote rational management of resources and sustainable development in the Mediterranean region.

30. Furthermore:

- 30.1 From the operational point of view, the "Blue Plan" would comprise three phases, each of which would make provision for sets of successive or simultaneous studies. These studies may cover fields as varied as soils protection, water resources, food and agriculture, industrialization and urbanization processes, energy production

and consumption, tourism, coastal zone management, and education and training with choices to be made by Governments concerned at intergovernmental meetings. The studies would be interdisciplinary, intersectoral and integrated, and would take into account the social and cultural characteristics and diversities of the countries concerned. In each of the fields to be examined, long-term trends would be identified and their effects on the environment analysed. In the lights of that analysis, alternative development strategies and policies would be formulated wherever possible and brought to the attention of Governments for their consideration.

30.2 The "Blue Plan" should lead to a continuous increase of co-operation among various countries in the Mediterranean region. It is through such co-operation and mutual assistance, with full respect for national sovereignty, that economic imbalances within the region might be progressively eradicated. One of the essential conditions to reach these ends is a due appreciation of the socio-economic situation of the Mediterranean region. It is hoped that insight into the social and economic factors underlying development will lead to a progressive strengthening of international co-operation and to sectoral and general agreements, as well as appropriate juridical provisions on environmental matters. It is also hoped that activities under the "Blue Plan" will contribute to the consolidation of peace, which is a basic condition for the development and protection of the Mediterranean environment.

30.3 To sum up, the programme envisaged under the "Blue Plan" should contribute to the promotion of economic and social development of the whole Mediterranean region in a manner which will safeguard the natural systems on which sustained development depends. To achieve this purpose, the studies and activities to be undertaken under the "Blue Plan" will be conceived and implemented in such a way as to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States ^{4/} will also influence the nature and scope of studies to be undertaken in the context of the "Blue Plan".

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES

31. The meeting approved the immediate objectives of the Blue Plan comprising the following activities:

31.1 A systematic survey of the main development activities being carried out in the Mediterranean region and their consequences for the environment. The data concerning these activities should be compiled on the basis of a common methodology with a view to facilitating their comparability and assessment, as well as the transfer and exchange of data.

^{4/} The delegations of France and Italy expressed reservations with regard to some aspects of these two texts.

- 31.2 The preparation and up-dating of a directory of institutions and experts available in the region to participate in the studies and activities of the "Blue Plan".
- 31.3 The launching of a number of interdisciplinary intersectoral studies in the priority fields indicated by Governments at the Intergovernmental Meeting on the "Blue Plan". Some of these areas are described in information documents UNEP/IG.5/INF.5 and following numbers.
- 31.4 The identification and analysis of the most significant of various existing and planned activities in the Mediterranean region that have a clearly beneficial impact on the environment.
- 31.5 The identification and analysis of a number of national or internationally supported projects aimed at satisfying basic human needs on a sustainable basis.
- 31.6 The progressive elaboration, on the basis of the data and experience gathered through the studies and activities to be undertaken, of conceptual frameworks and methodologies for long-term environmentally sound development planning.
- 31.7 The provision of technical assistance and training in the fields mentioned in sub-paragraph 30.1, with priority for developing countries.

Agenda Item 8.2: METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

32. The Meeting approved the following methods of implementation:
 - 32.1 Systems analysis and methodologies involving prospective research were considered to be among the best means of dealing with the problems involved. To ensure that all those concerned in the carrying out of the studies under the Blue Plan use the same approach, a common methodology will be worked out before the initiation of the studies. The view was expressed that the first step in this direction would be to establish appropriate procedures for the collection and dissemination of the necessary data keeping in mind the need for their comparability. However, it would be difficult to obtain the required data from national sources in the absence of a coherent presentation of the conceptual framework, and of the establishment of appropriate institutional structure for continuous co-operation. Informal consultations are urgently required in order to obtain the views of Governments concerning the selection of institutions and groups of experts to be entrusted with the scientific responsibility for the conduct of the studies. At the same time these consultations should allow a thorough exchange of views concerning the conceptual framework. In this respect it was felt that the eco-development and systems analysis approaches would serve as important components in the establishment of the conceptual framework.

Many delegations considered it indispensable that collection of information be made through focal points designated by each Government.

32.2 Plans and reports on all studies and activities carried out in the context of the "Blue Plan" will conform to the following outline:

- (i) Define the problems encountered in a situation affecting the development and/or environment of the region;
- (ii) Establish the present status of those problems and their relationships with the environment;
- (iii) Identify the long-term trends of those problems and their implications for the environment;
- (iv) Identify the most significant aspects of those problems for the environment, and propose practical actions to solve or forestall them;
- (v) Formulate proposals aimed at securing long-term development with the least adverse effect on the environment.

32.3 In order to deal adequately with the questions raised in the preceding paragraph, the studies and activities will be interdisciplinary and intersectoral. Furthermore, to make sure that local conditions and social and cultural characteristics are fully taken into consideration, the teams concerned will include institutions and experts from all parts of the Mediterranean.

33. PHASES OF THE PROJECT

The Project should be carried out in three phases.

34. The first phase should comprise the broadest possible exploratory work in all the fields selected by Governments. Institutions and experts from all Mediterranean countries, preferably grouped in pairs (with an equitable geographical North-South representation) should actively participate in the exploration and study of data and practices of development and environment management in order to identify, in particular, new priority actions which should be considered and decided upon at intergovernmental meetings.

35. During the second phase of the project, a more thorough investigation would be made of the most critical problems brought to light in the first phase and of the sectors affected. The results of this phase should lead to a number of more consolidated surveys of development trends from which it would be possible to determine what activities should be provided for in order to deal with problems that risk becoming serious during the coming decades.

36. In the third phase, reports should be produced synthesizing all the activities previously undertaken, and which, above all, derive from those activities, conclusions and appropriate recommendations that would assist the Governments of the coastal States of the Mediterranean in the planning and execution of continuous socio-economic development of their countries without environmental degradation.

37. Completion of the three phases of the project would require about four years from the date of its approval at the Intergovernmental Meeting on the "Blue Plan".

38. The institutional machinery to be devised for carrying out the "Blue Plan" should make provision for the receipt of a steady stream of information about the progress of activities. It should also make provision for ways of communicating this information to the Governments concerned. In addition, the results of each phase should be reviewed by periodic meetings of the Mediterranean coastal States at the intergovernmental level. A progress report on the first phase will be submitted to the intergovernmental meeting of the Mediterranean coastal States scheduled to take place in Monaco late in 1977. This report should include proposals for subsequent actions, particularly in the areas of information exchange and training.

39. GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

The Meeting agreed that the "Blue Plan" should cover the entire Mediterranean basin, namely the Mediterranean Sea, as defined in the Barcelona Convention, and the adjacent coastal zones. These coastal zones might vary in territorial depth from one area to another, depending on the problems to be considered and the nature of the disciplines involved. The Mediterranean region is recognized in this respect as constituting not a single ecosystem but, rather, a complex of ecosystems of varying dimensions, displaying certain comparable ecological and climatic features, but differing from one another according to latitude and altitude. In all cases, the States concerned are the 13 coastal States of the Mediterranean Region.