

XI. Agenda Item 9: PRIORITY ACTIONS PROGRAMME

9.1 Identification of fields for priority actions

40. The Meeting considered the fields proposed for priority actions by the Executive Director in document UIEP/IG.5/5. The meeting felt that, in examining these fields and in determining priority activities within each field, it was important to take account of the relevant past, present and proposed activities in the region undertaken by the Governments and regional and international organizations. For this purpose, therefore, it would be valuable to have an "inventory" of major projects aimed at sound environmental management in individual areas being carried out by Governments and international agencies in the region. Moreover, surveys and in-depth studies to be conducted under the "Blue Plan" should progressively help to identify the nature and scope of activities that may be usefully undertaken in each of the agreed priority action areas.

41. It was recognized that certain actions involving co-operation among countries could be undertaken in the near future on the basis of available knowledge of sound environmental management practices in selected priority action areas. In some cases, on-going projects and programmes in the Mediterranean region may serve as demonstration

projects. Programmes of interest being carried out elsewhere could be introduced in the Mediterranean with minor adjustments in their focus in order to meet particular regional needs. Studies under the Blue Plan should also benefit from relevant experiments being carried out outside the Mediterranean region.

42. For some areas it was considered advisable to await the recommendations of relevant pending international activities: e.g. Conference on Desertification, to be convened at Nairobi in August/September 1977, the United Nations and the United Nations Water Conference to be convened at Mar del Plata in March 1977.

43. All activities undertaken under the PAP should seek to demonstrate, through practical actions, alternatives for environmentally sound socio-economic development. Wherever possible, activities should include a training component and assist in the transfer of appropriate technology and experience. It was recommended that training activities should so far as possible make use of the existing national institutions in each State.

44. It was agreed that the implementation of the PAP would follow the same general principles as agreed to for the Blue Plan: that is,

- 44.1 absolute respect for national sovereignty;
- 44.2 co-operation with national institutions and national experts;
- 44.3 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;
- 44.4 account should be taken of the relevant activities in progress in various countries, including those undertaken with UNDP assistance and through multilateral and bilateral programmes.

45. The Meeting recommended that the following criteria should be applied in selecting priority fields of action:

- 45.1 contribution to the reduction of existing socio-economic inequalities among the various Mediterranean States;
- 45.2 significance in terms of the protection and enhancement of the Mediterranean environment;
- 45.3 community of interest among the Mediterranean countries;
- 45.4 speed with which practical actions in each area could be implemented.

46. The Meeting noted with gratitude the paper submitted by the Yugoslav Delegation on the PAP and commends it to the attention of the Executive Director in his further elaboration of this programme. Although the Meeting felt that it was unable to elaborate plans for specific projects within the PAP, delegations did express

their views on the priority fields in which actions should be undertaken. Attached as annex I is a chart showing the indications by delegations of priorities for the PAP which the Executive Director should take into account in the further development of this portion of the integrated planning component of the Barcelona Action Plan. Some delegations emphasized that blanks in the chart should not be interpreted as a lack of governmental interest in these areas, since the chart only illustrates areas where immediate action should be considered. Areas not chosen at present as priority areas could be considered in a later phase.

47. Six such priority fields were recommended by a majority of delegations to the Executive Director as requiring immediate action:

- 47.1 Protection of soil;
- 47.2 Management of water resources;
- 47.3 Marine living resources: management of fisheries and aquaculture;
- 47.4 Human settlements;
- 47.5 Tourism;
- 47.6 Soft technologies for energy, including solar energy.

It is being understood that each field of priority should include training components.

48. This list should not be considered exhaustive, nor should the categories themselves be taken as final since some, for example (i) and (ii) concerned with soil and water, might best be treated under a single unifying concept such as physical planning or "aménagement du territoire", and in any case clear linkages between these categories must be observed.

9.2 Methods of implementation

49. It was agreed that the objective of the PAP should be to establish a permanent network of continuous co-operation among the Mediterranean coastal States concerning practical actions for progressive, inter-sectoral planning. The PAP should initiate this process by selecting specific actions in the priority fields identified in paragraph 47 above. Activities in other fields may be developed at a later stage as agreed by the Governments of the region. These activities should take account of the long-term prospective studies that are to be undertaken within the Blue Plan.

50. The Meeting felt that the PAP could also launch a number of interdisciplinary intersectoral studies in the priority fields indicated by Governments at the Intergovernmental Meeting on the Blue Plan. Some of these fields are described in information documents UNEP/IC.5/INF.5 and following numbers. UNEP Secretariat in exercising its co-ordinating role will see to it that duplication between studies is avoided and that the Blue Plan prospective studies give clear indications, as soon as possible, regarding the concrete actions to be undertaken.

51. Each Government of the Mediterranean region should decide in which activity or activities it wishes to participate. The results obtained through the implementation of the PAP should be made available to all States in the region.

52. The elaboration of specific projects within the priority areas should be undertaken through the national focal points in co-operation with the UNEP Secretariat and its unit of PAP. The delegation of Greece offered to use the Environmental Pollution Control Project in Athens as a demonstration and training site in urban environmental problems management for officials from other Mediterranean countries. The Greek delegation has also offered to convene before May, in consultation with UNEP, and other international organizations, particularly the FAO/GFCOII, a meeting of experts to consider a detailed plan of action for one of the priority areas, possibly marine living resources: aquaculture and fisheries management. Other Mediterranean Countries may wish to consider accepting the responsibility for convening expert groups to discuss the other priority action areas some of which are described in the paper submitted by the Yugoslav delegation.