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Introduction

1. The 67th meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was held, at the invitation of the Government of Spain, at the Hotel Melia Castilla, Madrid, Spain, on 18 and 19 September 2008.

Participation

2. The meeting was chaired successively by Ms Alicia Paz Antolin, Director of the Coast and Sea Sustainability, Mr Javier Cachon de Mesa, Head of the Division for the Protection of the Sea and Prevention of Marine Pollution, and Mr Juan Carlos Martin Fragueiro, General Secretary for the Sea, Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain. The following members of the Bureau attended: Ms Odile Roussel, Deputy-director for the Environment, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (France) (Vice-President), Mr M. Abdelfetah Sahibi, Head of the Division for International Cooperation, Secretariat of State for Water and Environment, Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Directorate of Partnership, Communication and Cooperation, (Morocco) (Vice-President), H.E. Mr Mohamed Ridha Kechrid, Ambassador of Tunisia in Madrid and Mr Chaker Ouahada, Counsellor at the Embassy of Tunisia in Madrid, (Tunisia) (Vice-President), Mr. Sedat Kadioglu, Deputy Undersecretary, Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Turkey) (Vice-President); Ms Valerie Brachya, Senior Deputy Director General for Policy and Planning, Ministry of the Environment (Israel) (Rapporteur). The following participants from Spain also attended the meeting: Mr Sebastian Fraile Arevalo, Cabinet Director for the General Secretary for the Sea, General Secretariat for the Sea, Ms Ana Ruiz Sierra, from the Division for the Protection of the Sea and Prevention of Marine Pollution, Directorate for Coast and Sea Sustainability, and Ms Patricia Olmos Rodriguez, Division for the Protection of the Sea and Prevention of Marine Pollution Technical Assistant TRAGSATEC, S.A, Deputy Directorate for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Coastal and Maritime Affairs Unit

3. Mr Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, and Ms Tatjana Hema, MEDU Programme Officer, represented the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP).

4. The full list of participants is attached as Annex I to the present report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

5. The meeting was opened by Ms Alicia Paz Antolin, Director of the Coast and Sea Sustainability, Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine affairs of Spain. She welcomed participants and, reaffirming Spain's continued strong support for MAP, drew attention to the important developments that had taken place since the January Meeting of the Contracting Parties and Conference of Plenipotentiaries and the work ahead in implementing the decisions taken by the Contracting Parties. Among the points to which Spain attached particular importance were increased visibility of the Convention and MAP and awareness of their objectives, implementation of the tasks set out in the Governance Paper, cooperation with regional programmes and initiatives and MAP's role in furthering knowledge of the Mediterranean ecosystem. Spain welcomed recent developments in MAP legal instruments, particularly the signing of the new ICZM Protocol, a pioneering instrument.

6. The Coordinator and the members of the Bureau thanked the Spanish authorities for their hospitality and efficient organization of the meeting.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

7. The meeting adopted the agenda prepared by the Secretariat (UNEP/BUR/67/1) and the organization of work set out in the annotated agenda (UNEP/BUR/67/2). It agreed that the questions covered by the addendum to the progress report by the Secretariat (UNEP/BUR/67/Add.1) would be dealt with under agenda item 3. The agenda is attached as Annex II to the present report.

Agenda item 3: Progress report by the Secretariat on activities carried out since the last Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention

8. Introducing the progress report (UNEP/BUR/67/3 and Add.1), the Coordinator drew attention to the new format, with a clearer presentation of goals, objectives, expected outputs, achievements, constraints and lessons learned, and recommendations.

Legal component

9. The Coordinator highlighted in particular the entry into force of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol and of the amendments to the LBS Protocol, and the signing of the new ICZM Protocol. With reference to the three Contracting Parties that had still not ratified any of the new and revised MAP legal instruments, he informed the Bureau that positive developments were reported from Lebanon and that he would be discussing the issue with the authorities of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on the occasion of a forthcoming visit. Regarding the ICZM Protocol, there were unofficial indications that several countries had undertaken ratification procedures. He noted the one-year deadline for adoption of the legally binding programmes, measures and time-frames for implementation of the amended LBS Protocol and reported on progress made in drafting those programmes.

10. The members of the Bureau welcomed the positive legal developments. The representatives of France and Spain confirmed that procedures were under way in their countries to ratify the ICZM Protocol. Non-ratification of MAP legal instruments remained, however, a cause for concern, particularly with the establishment of the Compliance Committee, since compliance monitoring could in effect put in an unfavourable position the Contracting Parties that had ratified the instruments over those that had not. It was stressed that energetic efforts should be made to encourage Contracting Parties to speed up the ratification process for all instruments, in particular the ICZM Protocol. Spain, as the Depositary State, was invited to approach the relevant Contracting Parties, and the Secretariat was requested to provide any assistance to them for that purpose upon request. The representative of Spain confirmed that such an approach would be made through diplomatic channels; the Secretariat for its part assured the Bureau that it would continue its own efforts to that end, including the transmission of the Bureau's message in that regard. It was suggested that a letter sent to the Ministry of the Environment as well as to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs might help expedite the process. The Status of signatures and ratifications of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols as at 11 August 2008 is presented in Annex III to this report.

11. Some concern was expressed about the tight deadline for the complex technical process of drafting and approving the legally binding programmes, measures and timetables following the entry into force of the amendments to the LBS Protocol, particularly for Contracting Parties that were European Union member States. The need for coordination and harmonization with European Union requirements was stressed. The Secretariat said that, aware as it was of the reporting burden on Contracting Parties, the binding measures to

be proposed to the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties were expected to concern only some, and not all, of the pollutants listed in the annex to the Protocol, and that they would furthermore be drawn up with due regard for the differentiated approach.

Promoting implementation and compliance

Compliance

12. The Coordinator, referring to paragraphs 17 to 22 of the progress report, informed the Bureau that the Compliance Committee, having successfully held its first meeting, now had draft terms of reference and a programme of work for 2008-2009. He drew attention to a number of issues concerning the Committee's future work which the Bureau was invited to consider.

13. The reported constraints prompted requests for clarification concerning Compliance Committee membership, possible difficulties in constituting a quorum and the status of participants in Committee meetings. The Secretariat pointed out that the Committee was on a "learning curve", and provided explanations about the difficulties that might arise – and had indeed arisen at the Committee's first meeting – in constituting the seven-member quorum decided upon by the Contracting Parties at their 15th meeting. It was recalled that members and alternate members were designated in their personal capacity and that only they should therefore enjoy full member status, with the right to vote. In order to ensure that a full quorum was attained, it was agreed that all alternate members, as well as members, should be invited to attend Committee meetings and that, in order to allow for greater flexibility for quorum purposes, members and alternate members should be counted on the basis of the group within which they had been designated rather than on a nominal basis. It was confirmed in response to a question that the selection of alternates within a group was for the group to decide.

14. In response to queries about the attendance of observers at Committee meetings, it was further explained that the compliance procedures and mechanisms adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties provided for participation by persons other than the members and alternate members. Contracting Parties that were not members could not, for example, be denied attendance. The Bureau confirmed that such participants should have the status of observer, but considered that in principle Committee meetings should be confined to members and alternates. It also agreed that the Committee should develop specific criteria for attendance by observers and in particular by a concerned Party at the normally closed meetings at which the findings and recommendations concerning non-compliance in respect of that Party were discussed.

15. The Bureau considered that, for reasons of continuity, the specific competence of designated members and alternates and the credibility of the Committee, members and alternate members should be replaced only in exceptional circumstances, such as in the event of resignation or incapacity. It agreed that the nominated replacement of such a member or alternate member should be subject to endorsement by the Bureau, in order to avoid a hiatus in membership pending endorsement by the Contracting Parties.

16. It likewise agreed that any amendments to the Committee's rules of procedure should be considered and adopted by the Bureau, subject to validation by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

17. The Bureau endorsed the nomination of Mr Abdelaâli Beghoura, a national of Algeria, as alternate member of the Committee. Noting that Lebanon had still not nominated an alternate member for half a term, it requested the Secretariat to communicate with the Lebanese authorities in order to expedite the process.

18. Noting that the Compliance Committee had proposed to add Arabic as its third working language, and following explanations by the Secretariat, the Bureau decided that a precedent should not be set, nor costs added, by providing for three working languages in a technical body such as the Committee, unless otherwise decided by the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

MAP reporting system

19. The Coordinator said that, on account of delays in delivering the new MAP on-line reporting system due to the shortfall in INFO/RAC's budget, it might not be possible for all Contracting Parties to comply with the deadline for submission of their national implementation reports for 2006-2007. The Bureau agreed to extend the deadline to February 2009 and meanwhile to call upon INFO/RAC to ensure that the system was operational by the end of December 2008. The system should be fully compatible with other international or regional information reporting systems operating in the region, in order to avoid duplication and unnecessary expense, and reports should be consistent with the format adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Institutional arrangements and coordination

Implementation of the Governance Paper

20. Following the presentation by the Coordinator, members expressed satisfaction that the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP), a very important development in the structure of MAP, was now fully functioning, having already held two meetings, with a third scheduled for the following week. The Bureau adopted the ECP's terms of reference as contained in Annex IV to this report. It recommended that the President of the Bureau should attend ECP meetings in order to strengthen the interrelationship between management and the Contracting Parties. It was suggested that the ECP should consider holding video-conferencing to facilitate communication among ECP members.

21. In the wider context of implementation of the Governance Paper, and noting the ECP's biennial programme of work, it was further suggested that, when considering cross-cutting priority issues, the sustainable use of natural resources should also be considered more broadly in economic and resource productivity terms and should extend across the MAP system rather than being specifically confined to the mandate of SPA/RAC.

22. Members further recalled that the development and refinement of the mandates of the MAP components was a crucial factor in improved, coordinated management. The ECP should make preliminary proposals, including a strategic orientation, for those mandates. The terms of host country agreements were key in that respect.

23. The Bureau agreed with the ECP proposal that the functions of the BP/RAC and INFO/RAC Focal Points be merged with those of the MAP Focal Points, and the competencies and functions of the meetings of those RACs transferred to the MAP Focal Points' meeting. However, it was stressed that such a decision was contingent on the elaboration of the mandates of those Centres and that, for the current biennium, the joint meetings would be maintained.

24. The Bureau felt strongly that the role and functions of INFO/RAC, in particular, must be clarified, and notably whether in conceptual terms it should be regarded as being required to provide an information base for all countries in the Mediterranean, in which case its information and communication technology (ICT) competence and facilities were crucial, or

whether its role consisted not in developing ICT but mainly in developing programmes to assist the Secretariat in such areas as on-line reporting and enabling MAP to operate more efficiently. The Secretariat and the ECP were requested to prepare a paper on the subject for consideration by the next Bureau meeting. The Coordinator, outlining recent developments, confirmed that the status of INFO/RAC vis-à-vis the Italian authorities remained unclear.

25. The Bureau adopted the proposed criteria and procedures for the selection of MCSD members representing the academic and scientific communities, regional IGOs and eminent experts, as set out in Annex V to the present report, on the understanding that such members were to be selected primarily for their expertise and, while coming from the Contracting Parties, need not be specifically from the Mediterranean Basin as such.

26. The Bureau endorsed the terms of reference for the financial and management audit of MAP, recommending that special emphasis should be placed on results accountability, efficiency and resource productivity by developing measurable indicators.

27. In the discussion on the ECP's proposals with respect to the organization of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, several proposals were put forward regarding possible topics for discussion in the ministerial segment, principally: sustainable use of natural resources, for example in terms of spatial planning, adaptation to climate change, depollution in the Mediterranean, and the role of MAP in the newly established Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean. On the latter subject, the Coordinator informed members of a forthcoming one-day informal brainstorming session to be held with UNEP, on which he would report to the Bureau. The need for consultation with the host country of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on all matters pertaining to arrangements for that meeting, including topics for discussion, was stressed. It was agreed that, on the basis of the Bureau's comments, the ECP should prepare a set of proposals after consultation with the host country. In response to a question, the Secretariat confirmed that it had confirmation from the host country that all Contracting Parties would be able to participate at the meeting.

28. The Bureau endorsed the proposal to shorten the duration of the 16th meeting by one day, agreeing to that effect that the decisions taken at the MAP Focal Points' meeting could be adopted as a package, provided that issues pending or subject to reservations could be re-opened for discussion. Noting that the proposed dates would clash with other important international and regional meetings, in particular the United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Copenhagen, it proposed that further consultations should be held with the host country with a view to bringing the dates forward to the first week of November 2009 and that a final proposal be submitted to the Bureau at its next meeting.

29. The possibility was raised of organizing the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties and the meeting of the EuroMed environmental ministers back to back. It was pointed out that it would be difficult to hold them back to back because of the different venues of those meetings.

30. It further agreed that more efforts should be put into ensuring broader media coverage of the Meetings of the Contracting Parties, and that the ministerial segment might be complemented by round tables.

Application of the ecosystem approach

31. The Coordinator drew attention to recent developments as set out in paragraphs 41 to 48 of the progress report. The Bureau examined the results of the second meeting of experts on the ecosystem approach. It welcomed the move from a sectoral to a horizontal approach, with responsibility for application of the ecosystem approach shifted from MED

POL to the MAP Coordinating Unit, but considered that further efforts were needed to that end, in particular by ensuring that socio-economic dimensions were taken fully into account in the delivery of marine and coastal ecosystems services. Furthermore, it requested the Secretariat to ensure the involvement and cooperation of all MAP components in the implementation of the tasks decided upon at the last meeting of experts. Several members suggested that consideration should be given to the development of pilot projects on a voluntary basis, at the expense of interested Parties.

Cooperation and partnership

Cooperation with United Nations agencies, the European Union and regional initiatives

32. Introducing paragraphs 49 to 59 of the progress report, the Coordinator highlighted, inter alia, recent developments concerning the GEF Strategic Partnership and MAP relations with the OSPAR Secretariat and, in particular, with the European Union's newly established Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean initiative. He noted with regard to the latter that MAP participation in the Summit establishing the Union and the preparation and distribution at the Summit of a Blue Plan report on sustainable development in the Mediterranean had been instrumental in raising MAP's profile in the region, and that the forthcoming brainstorming session with UNEP to which he had referred would further clarify MAP's role in cooperation with the Union. Members, stressing MAP's legitimacy and added value, referred to its position as an acknowledged partner in the Horizon 2020 initiative. They considered that MAP, bearing in mind the need for close coordination in order to avoid duplication, should build on that role and strengthen its participation in all relevant regional and international initiatives and programmes on the basis of its longstanding experience and comparative advantages in the field of sustainable development policies in the region.

Cooperation with NGOs, MAP partners

33. The Bureau agreed with the proposed scope and objectives of the assessment of MAP's cooperation with civil society and reconfirmed its endorsement of the participatory approach, emphasizing that priority should be given to specific proposals and actions that would improve the system as a whole and make it more effective.

Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD)

34. Following the Coordinator's presentation, Bureau members took up the question of the NSSD formulation process in four additional countries, the failure to make progress in all but one of those countries and the consequent suggestion that the financial resources contributed by the AZAHAR programme of the Spanish Agency for Development and Cooperation might be re-allocated to support other interested countries. The representative of Spain said that the AZAHAR programme had its own internal procedures for re-allocation of resources to projects previously passed and he consequently pointed out that internal process had to be completed. In order to meet the requirements of those internal procedures, he suggested that the agency might be contacted directly to ascertain the outcome of the process.

35. Several speakers stressed the need to look into the reasons for the delays in preparing national strategies and into whether further assistance could be provided to the countries concerned. What was most important, however, was to see how the strategies were being implemented across the region, and therefore to foster an exchange of experience, not only in the preparation but primarily in the implementation of NSSDs at national and local levels, and to ascertain how socio-economic actors and the private sector were involved in the process.

36. In response to queries about the distinction between the proposed Task Force and the working group on climate change, the Coordinator explained that the Task Force would be set up to steer the preparatory process for the MCSD meeting, while the proposed working group would be one of the regular working groups on thematic issues, but dealing with a theme that had thus far not been covered. The Bureau agreed to the establishment of the Task Force and of an MCSD working group on adaptation to climate change that would explore cross-sectoral issues.

37. Noting that, in the context of climate change, no specific mention was made in the proposed MCSD and working group tasks of risk assessment, it was recommended that a full analysis should be undertaken of possible risks associated with climate change in the region, which should include the identification of the most vulnerable areas, the magnitude of the risks and ways and means of addressing them at the regional, national and local levels. It was noted that some information on vulnerability to climate change was to be found in Contracting Parties' reports.

38. Bureau members observed that the topic of climate change was an important, but not the only, aspect of sustainable development, which was primarily concerned with mainstreaming environmental issues in development. It was pointed out that the work to be carried out at MAP level on climate change adaptation would help the Contracting Parties in identifying priority issues of Mediterranean concern and raising awareness about those issues at the global level. After an exchange of views, it was agreed, however, that the MAP approach to, and findings on, adaptation to climate change in the Mediterranean could make a unique contribution to the Copenhagen conference.

39. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to strengthen MCSD intersessional work by mobilizing the Steering Committee and maintaining regular contact between members.

Information and communication

40. The Bureau expressed appreciation of the Secretariat's work in the field of information and communication, but considered that further efforts were needed to improve the content of MAP website and electronic access to documents. It was commented that enhanced visibility might also help motivate the staff.

Financial, personnel and administrative matters

41. Among the points highlighted by the Coordinator in his introduction was the question of arrears in contributions due from Serbia and Montenegro. Taking into account the Contracting Parties' decision to admit Montenegro as a Contracting Party following the separation of Serbia and Montenegro, the Bureau agreed that the outstanding contribution should be written off.

42. The representatives of France and Spain announced that procedures were under way in their countries for the payment of their ordinary contributions to the Mediterranean Trust Fund.

43. The Bureau took note of the updated information provided on recruitment to the post of Deputy Coordinator and expressed the hope that the vacancy would soon be filled. In response to a concern expressed that the candidate's knowledge of French had become a secondary criterion, the Coordinator explained that the decision had been taken following

discussions with UNEP. It was agreed to revert to the requirements in the initial call for applications.

44. Concern was expressed by the representative of Israel about the findings of the mission report (document UNEP/BUR/67/3/Add.1) by the Director of the Division of Environmental Policy (DEPI) of UNEP following his two-day visit to the Athens Office in July. MAP had since its inception been recognized as a pioneering, flagship regional seas programme, and it was unfortunate to read in the report about discontent and demotivation among the staff. Teamwork and togetherness in the MAP family were to be encouraged, and the Bureau therefore agreed to a proposal to hold the next Bureau meeting at the seat of the MAP Secretariat and to set aside a special session at that meeting for dialogue with the staff as a means of expressing support and building confidence. The Coordinator observed that, in the matter of staff demotivation, the report findings were based on perception rather than reality. He added that this was the result primarily of the perception among the staff that recruitment procedures were not conducted in a transparent manner. The Coordinator assured the members of the Bureau that recruitment procedures were totally in line with the rules and regulations of UNEP.

Components

45. By way of general comment concerning reporting by MED POL and some RACs, members drew attention to some inconsistencies in the style and substance of reports and called for a clear, harmonized, truly results-based presentation of activities, showing their positive environmental impact and including budget details, in order to be able to assess components' respective functions and activities. Only on that basis, could decisions be taken on a possible re-allocation of resources which, it was suggested, should be effected in mid-term.

MED POL

46. The Bureau took note of the activities of MED POL (paragraphs 101-107 of the progress report). In reply to questions about the discrepancy between the small budget allocated to the financing of NAP implementation and the work required of countries, and about the apparent absence of information on desalination activities, the Coordinator said that he would report back on further budget details, and confirmed that desalination activities were being addressed by MED POL.

CP/RAC

47. Members appreciated the impressive range of activities carried out by CP/RAC (paragraphs 111-194). Noting that the Centre was now clearly dealing with chemicals, they pointed to possible overlap with the tasks of MED POL and the necessary synergy with other conventions and regional instruments covering the same field. The representative of Spain stressed that the potential and experience of CP/RAC would help bolster the Convention and MAP, and assured the Bureau that the significant expansion of the Centre's activities and work in areas covered by other conventions were being closely monitored by the Spanish authorities. It was noted more generally that the division of tasks among the MAP components and relations with other conventions and agreements would be examined when the mandates of the MAP components were addressed.

REMPEC

48. In their review of the activities of REMPEC (paragraphs 195-214), members of the Bureau commended the proven effectiveness and high international visibility of the Centre in preserving the Mediterranean environment.

49. The Bureau urged Contracting Parties to inform national shipowners' associations about the entry into force of the Special Area Status of the Mediterranean Sea under Annex V of the MARPOL Convention in order to comply with the new regulations coming into effect on 1 May 2009.

50. Noting that, although Contracting Parties members of the European Union were not entitled to funding under the GloBallast Partnership Project, their participation in the project was important for regional implementation, those Contracting Parties were encouraged to associate themselves with the implementation of the project. The question of enabling non-European Union Contracting Parties to benefit from the European Union's EMSA programme was also raised, and it was asked whether REMPEC had an inventory of acceptance facilities for ballast water.

51. The representative of Israel expressed Israel's interest in revitalizing the former trilateral arrangement between Egypt, Cyprus and Israel under the auspices of REMPEC.

SPA/RAC

52. In the course of the Bureau's review of SPA/RAC's activities (paragraphs 215-255), attention was drawn to the lack of funding for the SAP BIO Operational Plan and the possibility of a re-allocation of resources was raised. The Coordinator replied that funds were not available from the overall budget, but suggested that SPA/RAC might wish to prioritize its activities. In response to members' concern about the reported withholding of data for copyright reasons, he suggested that the matter should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

PAP/RAC

53. Members reiterated their interest in seeing the new ICZM Protocol enter into force rapidly. The representatives of France and Spain announced that their ratification procedures were under way.

54. Stressing the importance of PAP/RAC's role in the sustainable management of coastal zones and particularly in the implementation of the ICZM Protocol, and noting the realistic work programme outlined in paragraphs 256-282 and PAP/RAC's current funding difficulties, the Bureau agreed that the activities proposed by the expert group on ICZM should be implemented in the interim period pending entry into force of the Protocol, but considered that the necessary funding should be drawn from internal PAP/RAC sources. It was noted that the situation would be eased when the expected GEF funds became available.

55. With a view to facilitating the implementation of CAMP Morocco, the Bureau authorized the allocation to BP/RAC of funds from the MAP regular budget for 2008 for activities related to sustainability and prospective analysis. It was noted in that regard that a number of PAP/RAC's activities were carried out in conjunction with other RACs, notably BP/RAC.

BP/RAC

56. Reviewing BP/RAC's activities (paragraphs 293-302), members again drew attention to the need for greater coordination and cooperation among the MAP components and the need to define their roles more clearly. That was particularly relevant when considering BP/RAC's activities that were ostensibly to be carried out in conjunction with INFO/RAC and prompted the question whether INFO/RAC was needed at all. Such matters should be clarified by the ECP, in particular when determining the respective mandates of the Centres and considering a cross-cutting rather than a sectoral approach. The Secretariat specified as a preliminary comment that the role of BP/RAC was to produce data and that of INFO/RAC to disseminate it and make it accessible. The question of thematic issues previously carried out by PAP/RAC possibly now being duplicated by BP/RAC was also raised in that connection.

57. Following an exchange of views on the need for Blue Plan studies to provide a more specifically country-oriented breakdown of the state of the environment (SOE), the Bureau requested that, in the preparation of the SOE report, account should be taken of the Governance Paper requirement that SOE reporting should be a tool for monitoring results on the ground at the regional, subregional and possibly also national level.

58. The question of port development and the consequent impact on coastal areas was suggested as an important subject for study by BP/RAC.

INFO/RAC

59. The Coordinator, after drawing attention to the information contained in paragraphs 303 to 306 of the progress report and in the addendum, briefed the Bureau on the situation regarding INFO/RAC. Although the Italian authorities had informed the Secretariat in April that it would allocate the necessary resources to INFO/RAC to carry out its work programme for 2008 pending the transfer of its functions to a marine research institute, no funds had so far been forthcoming. The Secretariat had subsequently been informed that the institute in question had now been subsumed by another institution. As reported, a memorandum of understanding had been concluded between MEDU and INFO/RAC detailing specific activities to be conducted in 2008, and an amount of 66 000 euros allocated from the Mediterranean Trust Fund for that purpose, pending the disbursement of the agreed funds by the Government of Italy. The Secretariat was still awaiting clarifications from the Italian authorities.

60. Bureau members expressed deep concern about the current uncertain situation, which was embarrassing in terms of MAP's image and credibility and unsatisfactory in terms of continuity in MAP's programme of work. The future of information services in MAP was at stake. Some members recalled the reservations they had expressed at the time the decision had been taken to transform ERS/RAC into INFO/RAC. In the current climate of uncertainty, it could even be questioned whether the provisional budget allocation to INFO/RAC was a sound investment. Clearly the situation could not go on. While appreciating that the matter was delicate, the Bureau considered that strenuous efforts should be made to elicit a reply from the Italian authorities clarifying the situation and their intentions regarding INFO/RAC.

61. The Coordinator assured the Bureau that an official communication would be sent to the Italian authorities requesting clarification. Regarding the re-allocation of resources from one Centre to another, the transfer of funds from one budget line to another was subject to the authorization of the Contracting Parties. The amount transferred to INFO/RAC under the memorandum of understanding, which had been disbursed, was a complementary contribution for agreed specific activities.

Agenda item 4: Date and place of the next meeting of the Bureau

62. The Bureau confirmed that its next meeting would be held in Athens, in early 2009, at suitable dates to be proposed after consultations. Another meeting would take place in May-June and a third, formal meeting held back-to-back with the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Agenda item 5: Any other business

63. No matters were raised under this item.

Agenda item 6: Conclusions and decisions

64. The meeting reviewed the draft decisions prepared by the Secretariat and adopted them slightly amended. The decisions are presented in Annex VI to this report.

65. Mr Juan Carlos Martin Fragueiro, assuming the Chair, commended the Bureau on the fruitful results of its meeting, which would be instrumental in furthering the aims of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and of MAP. The decisions taken at the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties indeed presented a challenge to all Contracting Parties. The recent developments in MAP legal instruments augured well for the future, and Spain as the Depositary State would make every effort to encourage full entry into force of all of those instruments. Outlining the main developments reported in the progress report considered by the Bureau, he said that good progress had been made on many fronts.

66. The Coordinator took the opportunity of the presence for the first time in a MAP meeting of Mr Juan Carlos Martin Fragueiro, the new General Secretary at the Spanish Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs, to express, on behalf of MAP, his thanks and appreciation to the Spanish Authorities for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to all the Members of the Bureau and the Secretariat.

67. Thanking participants, he declared the meeting closed at 2.00 p.m. on Friday 19 September 2008.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work
3. Progress Report by the Secretariat on activities carried out since the last Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention
4. Date and place of the next meeting of the Bureau
5. Any other business
6. Conclusions and decisions
7. Closure of the meeting

ANNEX III

Signatures and Ratifications of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols as at 11 August 2008

Contracting Parties	Barcelona Convention 1/			Dumping Protocol 2/			Emergency Protocol 3/		New Emergency Protocol 4/	
	Signature	Ratification	Acceptance of Amendments	Signature	Ratification	Acceptance of Amendments	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification
Albania	-	30.05.90/AC	26.07.01	-	30.05.90/AC	26.07.01	-	30.05.90/AC	-	-
Algeria	-	16.02.81/AC	09.06-04	-	16.03.81/AC	-	-	16.03.81/AC	25.01.02	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-	01.03.92/SUC	-	-	01.03.92/SUC	-	-	01.03.92/SUC	-	-
Croatia	-	08.10.91/SUC	03.05.99	-	08.10.91/SUC	03.05.99	-	08.10.91/SUC	25.01.02	01.10.03
Cyprus	16.02.76	19.11.79	15.10.01	16.02.76	19.11.79	18.07.03	16.02.76	19.11.79	25.01.02	18.01.08
European Commission	13.09.76	16.03.78/AP	12.11.99	13.09.76	16.03.78/AP	12.11.99	13.09.76	12.08.81/AP	25.01.02	25.06.04
Egypt	16.02.76	24.08.78/AP	11.02.00	16.02.76	24.08.78/AP	11.02.00	16.02.76	24.08.78/AC	-	-
France	16.02.76	11.03.78/AP	16.04.01	16.02.76	11.03.78/AP	16.04.01	16.02.76	11.03.78/AP	25.01.02	02.07.03
Greece	16.02.76	03.01.79	10.03.03	11.02.77	03.01.79	-	16.02.76	03.01.79	25.01.02	27.11.06
Israel	16.02.76	03.03.78	29.09.05	16.02.76	01.03.84	-	16.02.76	03.03.78	22.01.03	-
Italy	16.02.76	03.02.79	07.09.99	16.02.76	03.02.79	07.09.99	16.02.76	03.02.79	25.01.02	-
Lebanon	16.02.76	08.11.77/AC	-	16.02.76	08.11.77/AC	-	16.02.76	08.11.77/AC	-	-
Libya	31.01.77	31.01.79	-	31.01.77	31.01.79	-	31.01.77	31.01.79	25.01.02	-
Malta	16.02.76	30.12.77	28.10.99	16.02.76	30.12.77	28.10.99	16.02.76	30.12.77	25.01.02	18.02.03
Monaco	16.02.76	20.09.77	11.04.97	16.02.76	20.09.77	11.04.97	16.02.76	20.09.77	25.01.02	03.04.02
Montenegro	-	-	19.11.07	-	-	-	-	-	-	19.11.07
Morocco	16.02.76	15.01.80	07.12.04	16.02.76	15.01.80	05.12.97	16.02.76	15.01.80	25.01.02	-
Slovenia	-	15.03.94/AC	08.01.03	-	15.03.94/AC	08.01.03	-	15.03.94/AC	25.01.02	16.02.04
Spain	16.02.76	17.12.76	17.02.99	16.02.76	17.12.76	17.02.99	16.02.76	17.12.76	25.01.02	09.08.07
Syria	-	26.12.78/AC	10.10.03	-	26.12.78/AC	11.04.08	-	26.12.78/AC	25.01.02	¹ AC-
Tunisia	25.05.76	30.07.77	01.06.98	25.05.76	30.07.77	01.06.98	25.05.76	30.07.77	25.01.02	-
Turkey	16.02.76	06.04.81	18.09.02	16.02.76	06.04.81	18.09.02	16.02.76	06.04.81	-	04.06.03

Accession = AC

Approval = AP

Succession = SUC

¹ Pending notification from Depository country

Contracting Parties	Land-Based Sources Protocol 5/			Specially Protected Areas Protocol 6/		SPA & Biodiversity Protocol 7/		Offshore Protocol 8/		Hazardous Wastes Protocol 9/	
	Signature	Ratification	Acceptance of Amendments	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification
Albania	-	30.05.90/AC	26.07.01	-	30.05.90/AC	10.06.95	26.07.01	-	26.07.01	-	26.07.01
Algeria	-	02.05.83/AC	-	-	16.05.85/AC	10.06.95	² AC	-	-	01.10.96	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-	22.10.94/SUC	-	-	22.10.94/SUC	-	-	-	-	-	-
Croatia	-	12.06.92/SUC	11.10.06	-	12.06.92/SUC	10.06.95	12.04.02	14.10.94	-	-	-
Cyprus	17.05.80	28.06.88	18.07.03	-	28.06.88/AC	10.06.95	15.10.01	14.10.94	15.10.01	-	-
European Commission	17.05.80	07.10.83/AP	12.11.99	30.03.83	30.06.84/AP	10.06.95	12.11.99	-	-	-	-
Egypt	-	18.05.83/AC	-	16.02.83	08.07.83	10.06.95	11.02.00	-	-	01.10.96	-
France	17.05.80	13.07.82/AP	16.04.01	03.04.82	02.09.86/AP	10.06.95	16.04.01	-	-	-	-
Greece	17.05.80	26.01.87	10.03.03	03.04.82	26.01.87	10.06.95	-	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Israel	17.05.80	21.02.91	-	03.04.82	28.10.87	10.06.95	-	14.10.94	-	-	-
Italy	17.05.80	04.07.85	07.09.99	03.04.82	04.07.85	10.06.95	07.09.99	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Lebanon	17.05.80	27.12.94	-	-	27.12.94/AC	-	-	-	-	-	-
Libya	17.05.80	06.06.89/AP	-	-	06.06.89/AC	10.06.95	-	-	-	01.10.96	-
Malta	17.05.80	02.03.89	28.10.99	03.04.82	11.01.88	10.06.95	28.10.99	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	28.10.99
Monaco	17.05.80	12.01.83	26.11.96	03.04.82	29.05.89	10.06.95	03.06.97	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Montenegro	-	-	19.11.07	-	-	-	19.11.07	-	-	-	19.11.07
Morocco	17.05.80	09.02.87	02.10.96	02.04.83	22.06.90	10.06.95	-	-	01.07.99	20.03.97	01.07.99
Slovenia	-	16.09.93/AC	08.01.03	-	16.09.93/AC	-	08.01.03	10.10.95	-	-	-
Spain	17.05.80	06.06.84	17.02.99	03.04.82	22.12.87	10.06.95	23.12.98	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Syria	-	01.12.93/AC	11.04.08	-	11.09.92/AC	-	10.10.03	20.09.95	-	-	-
Tunisia	17.05.80	29.10.81	01.06.98	03.04.82	26.05.83	10.06.95	01.06.98	14.10.94	01.06.98	01.10.96	01.06.98
Turkey	-	21.02.83/AC	18.09.02	-	06.11.86/AC	10.06.95	18.09.02	-	-	01.10.96	03.04.04

Accession = AC

Approval = AP

Succession = SUC

² Pending notification from Depository country

Contracting Parties	Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol 10/	
	Signature	Ratification
Albania	-	
Algeria	21.01.08	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-	
Croatia	21.01.08	
Cyprus	-	
European Commission	-	
Egypt	-	
France	21.01.08	
Greece	21.01.08	
Israel	21.01.08	
Italy	21.01.08	
Lebanon	-	
Libya	-	
Malta	21.01.08	
Monaco	21.01.08	
Montenegro	21.01.08	
Morocco	21.01.08	
Slovenia	21.01.08	
Spain	21.01.08	
Syria	21.01.08	
Tunisia	21.01.08	
Turkey	-	

STATUS OF ENTRY INTO FORCE

Legal instruments	Place and date of Adoption	Entry into force date	Place and date of adoption of amendment, if any	Entry into force of amendments
Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution, amended as Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention)	16 February 1976, Barcelona	12 February 1978		
			10 June 1995, Barcelona	9 July 2004
The Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (Dumping Protocol), amended as The Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft or Incineration at Sea (Dumping Protocol)	16 February 1976, Barcelona	12 February 1978		
			10 June 1995, Barcelona	Not yet in force
The Protocol concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency (Emergency Protocol)	16 February 1976, Barcelona	12 February 1978	—	—
The Protocol concerning Co-operation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (Prevention and Emergency Protocol)*	25 January 2002, Malta	17 March 2004	—	—

* According to paragraph 2 of Article 25, this Protocol as from the date of its entry into force (17 March 2004) shall replace the Emergency Protocol (of 1976) in the relations between the Parties to both instruments.

Legal instruments	Place and date of Adoption	Entry into force date	Place and date of adoption of amendment, if any	Entry into force of amendments
The Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution from Land-based Sources, amended as The Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol)	17 May 1980, Athens	17 June 1983		
			7 March 1996, Syracuse	11 May 2008
The Protocol Concerning Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas (SPA Protocol)	3 April 1982, Geneva	23 March 1986	—	—
The Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA & Biodiversity Protocol)**	10 June 1995, Barcelona	12 December 1999	—	—
Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil (Offshore Protocol)	14 October 1994, Madrid	Not yet in force	—	—
Protocol on the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Hazardous Wastes Protocol)	1 October 1996, Izmir	18 January 2008	—	—
Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM Protocol)	21 January 2008, Madrid	Not yet in force	—	—

** According to paragraph 2 of Article 32, this Protocol as from the date of its entry into force (12 December 1999) shall replace the SPA Protocol (of 1982) in the relationship among the Parties to both instruments.

ANNEX IV

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EXECUTIVE COORDINATION PANEL

Background

The 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Almeria, Spain 15-18 January 2008) approved the Governance Paper which provides inter alia for the setting up of an Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) to enhance accountability, collaboration and coordination across the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) system.

Mandate

Taking into account the goals and principles outlined in the Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development of the Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean adopted in 1995, and in the Governance Paper approved by the Contracting Parties at their 15th Meeting in Almeria, Spain, and considering also the terms of reference of the Regional Activity Centres as outlined in the respective Protocols or Host Country Agreements, the Executive Coordination Panel is mandated to:

1. Identify and propose to the Contracting Parties a five-year working programme highlighting the priorities and goals based on the Convention, its Protocols, the MSSD, regional thematic policies and the decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties;
2. Prepare and propose to the Contracting Parties a two-year programme of work for MAP. This programme of work shall reflect thematic priorities of MAP and identify cross-cutting issues, bearing in mind the need to ensure synergy and complementarity among MAP components. The programme of work shall also reflect the activities carried out by the various MAP components, together with the proposed budget allocations;
3. Review the status of implementation of the programme of work and budget and decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties and propose necessary measures and actions for their successful and timely implementation;
4. Ensure the effective functioning of the MAP information system;
5. Act as a forum for exchanges of views on policy issues of MAP relevance and on methods and means to tackle operational issues;
6. Propose to the Bureau and to the meetings of the Contracting Parties a coherent platform for joint action and cooperation with other concerned actors and initiatives at the regional and international level.

Membership

The members of the ECP shall be the Coordinator, the Deputy Coordinator, the MED POL Coordinator and the Directors of REMPEC, BP/RAC, SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC, CP/RAC, INFO/RAC and the 100 Historic Sites programme. In the event that they are unable to attend the meetings, their deputies shall represent the members of the ECP. Other officials from the Coordinating Unit and the RACs may be invited to attend the ECP meetings.

The meetings of the ECP shall be chaired by the Coordinator and, in his absence, by the Deputy Coordinator. The Coordinating Unit shall provide the secretariat for the meetings of the ECP.

Modus operandi

The members of the ECP shall meet in principle four times a year, on dates to be agreed upon in advance. Each meeting shall last for one or two days depending on the agenda and shall be conducted in a results-driven, flexible and cost-effective manner. In the interim periods, the ECP members shall maintain constant communication among themselves, using modern telecommunication technologies.

The ECP shall meet on the premises of the Coordinating Unit in Athens and of the different Centres on a rotation basis or back to back with other MAP meetings. The secretariat of the Centre hosting the meeting of the ECP shall provide the conference facilities, including interpretation into English and French and other secretarial support. Travel and accommodation costs shall be borne by the ECP members themselves.

The ECP may establish *ad hoc* working groups on specific issues with precise terms of reference. If need be, external experts may be involved.

Reporting

The ECP shall draw up a report of its deliberations and decisions, to be written in telegraphic style, point by point. It shall be approved at the end of each meeting. The report shall then be submitted to the Bureau for information. The reports of the meetings of the ECP shall be published on the MAP website and circulated among MAP Focal Points.

ANNEX V

SELECTION CRITERIA AND METHOD OF NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES REPRESENTING NEW CATEGORIES OF MCSD MEMBERS

Background

This document is guided by the decisions made by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Almeria, Spain, 15-18 January 2008), particularly those contained in the Governance Paper that concern the MCSD composition (Decision IG 17/4).

The MCSD is a forum for debate and exchange of experience on sustainable development issues that concern all interested parties in the Mediterranean region. It would therefore be appropriate to involve the greatest possible variety of national actors in the work of the Commission, so as to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the concepts promoted by the MCSD.

In addition to representatives of the Contracting Parties, local authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and socio-economic stakeholders, three new categories have been agreed upon, representing:

- the scientific community;
- intergovernmental organizations working in the field of sustainable development;
- eminent experts specializing in the topics on the MCSD meeting agenda.

In order to implement the decision, the Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat to propose to the Bureau of the Contracting Parties for approval, following prior consultation with the MAP Focal Points and MCSD members, the criteria and procedures for the selection of the MCSD members from the academic and scientific community, the intergovernmental organizations and eminent experts as provided for in the Governance Paper.

As indicated in the Almeria report, in determining the proposed criteria and procedures for the selection of representatives of the new categories, efforts should be made to ensure participation of representatives from both the environmental and the development sectors related to the topics on the agenda of each meeting of the MCSD, and also to ensure appropriate geographical representation, and media participation, as requested by the Contracting Parties.

1. Criteria

General criteria

- *Have a broad vision and a Mediterranean focus;*
- *Represent or be an active member of a national or Mediterranean network or knowledge community;*
- *Have relevant expertise in issues of importance to the MCSD, including priority areas and cross-cutting issues;*
- *Be active in the field of sustainable development;*
- *Be willing to share and exchange with other members their expertise and experience, on the occasion of MCSD meetings and during intersessional periods (e.g. through contribution to specific working groups);*

- *Be willing to engage in MSSD implementation in their domain of influence;*
- *Have an explicit interest and effective involvement in Mediterranean activities.*

Specific criteria for the scientific community

- *Be the author of a significant list of publications in domains that are relevant to the MCSD work programme and MSSD priority areas of action: energy and climate change; information and communication; integrated coastal management; management of water demand, marine pollution; sustainable development indicators; sustainable tourism; sustainable agriculture; urban development;*
- *Be familiar with the MAP programme of work and activities;*
- *Be familiar with the Barcelona system;*
- *Have contributed or contribute consistently to increased understanding of environmental, social or economic issues at stake in the region through collaborative action-oriented research or teaching.*

Specific criteria for intergovernmental organizations working in the field of sustainable development

- *Be engaged in significant regional or country-level programmes of relevance to the MCSD work programme and MSSD priority areas of action;*
- *Be involved in regional or subregional cooperation frameworks, facilities, policies or financial mechanisms.*

Specific criteria for eminent experts

- *be distinguished Mediterranean personalities recognized in the environmental, social or economic domains;*
- *have recognized policy influence at the regional or country level;*
- *entertain connections with decision makers and policy leaders.*

2. Methods of nomination

In the selection process for the categories "scientific community" and "eminent expert", the principle of balanced geographical representation between the North, South, East and West will be carefully respected.

Scientific community

The representatives of the scientific community will be selected on the basis of proposals made by the MAP components and partners that transmit the candidatures to the Secretariat of MAP. Spontaneous candidatures may also be solicited and considered by the Secretariat.

Intergovernmental organizations

The representatives of the intergovernmental organizations will be selected through proposals made by the Secretariat of MAP that will solicit candidatures directly.

Eminent experts

Cooptation will be encouraged among the Contracting Parties. Expressions of interest will be solicited directly by the MAP Secretariat.

ANNEX VI

DECISIONS

1. Legal component

1.1 Status of ratification and entry into force

1. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to speed up the ratification process for all MAP legal instruments and, in particular, take all necessary action towards ratifying the new ICZM Protocol with a view possibly to having it in force by the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties.
2. The Bureau invites Spain in its capacity as Depositary to approach through diplomatic channels those Contracting Parties which have not yet accepted the 1995 amendments to the Convention and its related amended or new Protocols to do so, and requests the Secretariat to provide any assistance to them for that purpose upon request.

1.2 Promoting implementation and compliance

Compliance

With the view to ensuring full effectiveness of the work of the Compliance Committee and in conformity with decision IG.17/2 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, and after reviewing the conclusions of the first meeting of the Compliance Committee, the Bureau recommends the following:

1. In order to ensure a quorum at meetings of the Compliance Committee, all alternate members, as well as members, shall be invited to attend such meetings and when constituting a quorum the members and alternate members should be considered on the basis of each respective group as a whole.
2. Only the individuals elected by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties as members and alternate members of the Compliance Committee shall attend its meetings in such a capacity.
3. In accordance with paragraph 13 of the compliance procedures and mechanisms contained in the Annex to Decision IG.17/2 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, any other participant in the meetings of the Compliance Committee shall have the status of observer.
4. Although the session at which the findings, recommendations and measures of the Compliance Committee with respect to a non-compliance situation of a concerned Party is normally closed, the Committee should develop criteria on the basis of which a concerned Party may be invited to attend that session.
5. If a member or alternate member of the Compliance Committee resigns or is otherwise unable to complete his or her term of office, the Party which nominated that member or alternate member shall nominate a replacement to serve for the remainder of that member's or alternate member's mandate, subject to endorsement by the Bureau of the Contracting Parties.

6. Any amendments to the rules of procedure of the Compliance Committee adopted by consensus by the Committee shall be submitted for consideration and adoption by the Bureau, subject to endorsement/validation by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.
7. Mr. Abdelaâli Beghoura, a national of Algeria, is endorsed as alternate member of the the Compliance Committee for a full term.
8. The Secretariat should communicate with Lebanon in order to ensure that its candidate as alternate member of the Compliance Committee for half a term is proposed to the next Bureau meeting for endorsement.

MAP reporting system

1. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to submit their national reports on measures taken for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols for 2006-2007 according to the format adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.
2. The Bureau calls upon INFO/RAC to ensure that MAP's new on-line reporting system design is fully compatible with other information reporting systems operating in the region under various international or regional organizations, and to proceed on time and make it operational on line by the end of December 2008, in order for the Contracting Parties to submit their reports on line by February 2009 at the latest.

2. Institutional arrangements and coordination

1. Acknowledging the usefulness of the Governance Paper and in particular the establishment of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) as an important management body, the Bureau adopts the terms of reference for the ECP and recommends that its President attends the ECP meetings.
2. In accordance with decision IG.17/5 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the Governance Paper, the Bureau adopts the criteria and procedures for the selection of MCSD members representing the academic sector and the scientific community, regional IGOs and eminent experts, contained in Annex V to this report, as amended.
3. The Bureau endorses the terms of reference for the financial management audit of MAP, suggesting that special emphasis should be placed on MAP results accountability, efficiency and productivity by defining measurable indicators.
4. The Bureau welcomes the proposals of the ECP with respect to the organization of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, in particular:
 - a) The following topics could be considered by the ECP with a view to preparing a final proposal for the consideration of the next Bureau meeting:
 - Sustainable use of natural resources
 - Adaptation to climate change
 - Depollution of the Mediterranean
 - The role of MAP in the newly established process of the Union for the Mediterranean;

- b) With the view to shortening the duration of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, the proposed decisions could be adopted en bloc provided that no issues are pending from the meeting of the MAP Focal Points;
5. The Bureau recommends that the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties might be held in the first week of November 2009. The Secretariat and the host country should further consult on the dates for a final proposal for submission to the next meeting of the Bureau.
 6. The Bureau welcomes the proposal of the ECP that the functions of the BP/RAC and INFO/RAC Focal Points be merged with those of the MAP Focal Points, as well as to transfer the competencies and functions of the meeting of those RACs Focal Points to the MAP Focal Points meeting. However that proposal should be considered in close conjunction with the exercise to be carried out by the ECP on the elaboration of mandates for those MAP components. Only on that basis should a decision be taken on the matter.
 7. The Bureau reconfirms that for this biennium the meeting of BP/RAC, INFO/RAC and PAP/RAC Focal Points should be held as per usual practice.
 8. The Bureau requests the Secretariat and the ECP to prepare a paper defining the role and functions of INFO/RAC for consideration by the next Bureau meeting.

3. Application of the ecosystem approach

1. The Bureau considers that there is still a need for reorientation of the work done so far by following a more horizontal approach, and in particular, by making sure that the socio-economic dimensions of marine and coastal ecosystems services are taken fully into account in the application of the ecosystem approach by MAP.
2. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to ensure the participation, cooperation and involvement of all MAP components in the process of the implementation of the tasks that have been decided upon at the second meeting of experts on the ecosystem approach, held in Athens, Greece on 9-10 July 2008.

4. Cooperation and partnership

1. The Bureau appreciates that the substantial role of the Mediterranean Action Plan in the EuroMed Horizon 2020 Initiative is fully recognized. It also recommends that MAP should strengthen its active participation in the Barcelona Process - Union for the Mediterranean initiative on the basis of its longstanding experience and comparative advantages in the field of sustainable development policies in the region.
2. The Bureau agrees with the proposed scope and objectives of the assessment of the cooperation of MAP with civil society as well as its participatory approach. In particular, priority should be given to the elaboration of proposals and actions that would improve the whole system and make it more effective.

5. Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development

1. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to strengthen the MCSD intersession work by mobilizing the Steering Committee and maintain regular communication between members.
2. The Bureau recommends that the Secretariat facilitates an exchange of experience gathered in the region not only in the preparation of NSSDs but primarily in their implementation at national and local levels, and in particular how socio economic actors and the private sector are involved in the implementation of sustainable development policies.
3. The Bureau is in favour of the establishment of a Task Force to prepare the next MCSD meeting that will emphasize adaptation to climate change, and of the establishment of an MCSD working group on climate change that would explore cross-sectoral issues.
4. The Bureau recommends that the MCSD undertake a full analysis of possible risks associated with climate change in the Mediterranean region, including the identification of the most vulnerable areas, the magnitude of the risks and necessary measures and actions to be taken at the regional, national and local levels in this regard.

6. Information and communication

The Bureau, while appreciating the work done by the Coordinating Unit in the field of information and communication, requests the Secretariat to step up its efforts to improve the MAP website and the access to the documents.

7. Financial, personnel and administrative matters

Taking into account the decision of the Contracting Parties to admit Montenegro as a Contracting Party following the separation of Serbia and Montenegro, the Bureau agrees that the outstanding contribution of 36000 euros from Serbia and Montenegro to the Mediterranean Trust Fund be written off.

COMPONENTS

1. REMPEC

1. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to inform the national shipowners associations about the entry into force of the Special Area Status of the Mediterranean Sea under MARPOL Annex V in order to comply with the new regulations coming into effect on 1st May 2009.
2. The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties, members of the European Union, to associate themselves in the implementation of the Globallast partnership project in order to achieve the goal of a regional implementation.

2. PAP/RAC

1. The Bureau agrees that the activities proposed by the expert group on ICZM held on 18-19 June 2008, in Split, Croatia, are implemented in the interim period until the Protocol enters into force provided that the necessary funds are drawn from internal PAP/RAC sources.
2. The Bureau authorizes the Secretariat to allocate 10 000 euro from its regular budget for 2008, to Blue Plan for carrying out activities related to sustainability and prospective analysis in respect of CAMP Morocco.

3. Integrating Environment and Development (Blue Plan)

The Bureau requests the Secretariat and MAP components, when preparing the State of the Environment report for the Mediterranean to take fully into account the requirement of the Governance Paper that considers SOE reporting as a tool to monitor results on the ground at regional, sub/regional and possibly at national level.

4. INFO/RAC

The Bureau requests the Secretariat to approach the Italian authorities on the issue of INFO/RAC in order to clarify the situation and their intention vis à vis the Centre.

OTHER MATTERS

1. With a view to ensuring a more harmonized reporting by the MAP components, for the preparation of the progress report on activities to the Bureau meetings, the Bureau requests the Coordinator to address this issue at the ECP meeting.
2. The next meeting of the Bureau will be held at the seat of the Coordinating Unit in Athens at the beginning of 2009.