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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

UNEP GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem

First Strategic Partnership Coordination Group (SPCG1) Meeting
“Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem”
16-18 September 2009, Athens, Greece

Report of the First Strategic Partnership Coordination Group (SPCG1) Meeting for the “Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem”

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Introduction

1. The Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem is the second and largest Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project to be implemented in the Mediterranean. The project consists of an “*Investment Fund*” implemented by the World Bank, and a “*Regional Project*” implemented by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Division of GEF (DGEF), with the Coordinating unit of UNEP’s Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) as lead executing agency and co-executed by a number of partner organizations, as detailed below.

2. The project was endorsed by GEF in April 2008 and since October 2008, UNEP/MAP has established the coordination arrangements for the project, such as the recruitment of the project management unit (PMU) and the finalization of all legal agreements with project partners. The purpose of the first meeting of the Coordination Group is to bring together all partners of the project, to discuss the implementation plan of the project, given the changing context and new initiatives in the region since the project was initially conceived. It gives an opportunity to review the key strengths and weaknesses of the project, the need for any re-design of activities and demonstrations, to seek solutions for coordination and communication, not only amongst partners but with other organizations working within the region, and to agree on the strategy to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Partnership. The work undertaken during this meeting and over the coming two months will be included in the “Inception Report” which with the first years work-plan and budget, will be presented to the Steering Committee for adoption at the first Steering Committee meeting.

Participation

3. The following United Nations (UN) bodies and intergovernmental organizations were represented: UNEP/DGEF, as implementing agency of the *Regional Project*; UNEP Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (UNEP/DEPI); the World Bank as implementing agency of the *Investment Fund*; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization International Hydrological Programme (UNESCO/IHP); the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). In addition to the Coordination Unit of UNEP/MAP, regional activity centers for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC); Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC); Priority Actions Programme (PAP/RAC); and the Mediterranean Programme for Pollution (MEDPOL/MAP) participated.

4. The following non-governmental organizations participated: Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean (GWP-Med); Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE); and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

5. The following observers from organizations and programmes were represented: the current regional activity center for Information (INFO/RAC – Sicily); the future INFO/RAC (as of 2010) managed by Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA); the EU Horizon 2020 programme, and the EU Results-Oriented Monitoring Programme for European Neighbourhood and Partnership Countries.

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

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting, objectives of the meeting, introduction of the participants

7. Ms. Maria Luisa Silva Mejias, the MAP Deputy Coordinator and Officer-in-Charge opened the meeting by stressing the importance of this project, as a continuation of past projects by MAP and other partners, including the previous UNEP/MAP GEF funded project that resulted in the development of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) for the Mediterranean Sea, and the development and adoption of the Strategic Action Plans (SAPs) to assist the Barcelona Convention and its protocol and with the support of all the countries in the region. She stressed that this is a time of renewed political importance and focus on the Mediterranean and presents an opportunity, through increased visibility to bring the environment agenda to the attention to politicians, and with increased resources now available presents an important moment to ensure coordination amongst partners. She noted that the Strategic Partnership is a great opportunity, to bring together the community of the willing, and to ensure that the project now adapts to the new context and complimentary programmes in the Mediterranean. Ms. Silva Mejias expressed her happiness to have the project team now on board, who bring to the project knowledge and experience of the Mediterranean region, and GEF project execution.

8. Mr. Ivica Trumbic, UNEP/MAP Project Manager for the Strategic Partnership, noted that this was the first opportunity to officially introduce himself to partners and was especially pleased to meet all colleagues in person and witness their readiness to begin project implementation. In his introduction to the meeting, he reminded participants on the role of the Coordination Group, which aims overall to ensure effective coordination between the *Regional Project* and the *Investment Fund*, to ensure consistency with agreed targets, and to review and approve for submission to the Steering Committee meeting the projects progress. Mr. Trumbic presented the specific objectives of the first meeting of the Coordination Group: 1) to review the status of the project's implementation, 2) to present the first year programme of activities and 3) to agree on the format of and timetable for the preparation of the Inception Report.

9. Regarding the agenda he noted that agenda items 7 and 15 related to the Replication and Communication Strategy would not be presented, as the status of INFO/RAC is currently in the process of some changes. Both the current INFO/RAC (Sicilian Region) and the future INFO/RAC managed by ISPRA were therefore invited as observers to the meeting.

Agenda item 2: Brief overview of the Regional Component of the project and the current status of its implementation

10. Mr. Trumbic presented an overview of the Strategic Partnership project and a brief update on the current status of the project, reminding partners on the overall objectives of the Strategic Partnership, along with the *Regional Project* and *Investment Fund*, and highlighting the major impacts of the project. He noted that the slogan used in the presentation "Together for the Mediterranean Sea" was inspired by an email from Mr. Andrea Merla, and asked all partners to use this slogan. Mr. Trumbic stressed that the value added of the Partnership is to provide a seed for coordinated action for the implementation of priority concerns of transboundary importance in the Mediterranean in line with the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, and its protocols. He informed participants that the project was endorsed by GEF on April 9th 2008, and that the UNEP Internal Cooperation Agreement (ICA) for project implementation was signed on 13 October 2008. Since then the project management unit (PMU) has been recruited consisting of a Coastal and Marine Expert (Virginie Hart) on 1 May; an Administrative Officer (Giorgos Petridis) on 22 June and a Project Manager (Ivica Trumbic) on 1 August 2009. Legal agreements with 10 partners for project execution have been developed and agreed with partners and UNEP/MAP and UNEP administration and legal dept and the WWF legal agreement was signed on 14 April 2009.

11. A number of activities have begun as part of the inception period of the project. These include dialogue with GEF and MAP Focal Points on the status of the project and the nomination of project national focal points. As the project involves a large number of partners and several different sources of funding, administration and reporting procedures were developed and agreed. In terms of monitoring and reporting, the 1st Project Implementation Review (PIR) was completed in July 2009. The project has been presented and discussed at several international meetings including the IOC-IUCN-NOAA Large Marine Ecosystem, 11th Consultative Committee Meeting at IOC-UNESCO, Paris, FRANCE (9-10 July 2009) and the UNEP/MAP Focal Point meeting (7-8 July 2009), Athens, Greece. Upcoming regional meetings include the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), Cairo, Egypt (28-30 September); the additional session of the UNEP/MAP Focal points, Barcelona, Spain (1 October); the Horizon 2020 Steering Committee in Dubrovnik, Croatia (13 October); and the Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the Barcelona Convention (3-5 November), Marrakech, Morocco. International meetings include the 5th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference, Cairns, Australia, (26-29 October 2009).

Agenda items 3 and 4. Update on complementary new programmes, projects and issues in the region and discussion, including the need, if any, to revise the project's activities

12. Under this agenda item a number of presentations were given by participants. Ms. Christine Haffner-Sifikis, (expert for the European Commission DG Environment) informed the meeting of existing fruitful cooperation between the EC's Horizon 2020 initiative and UNEP-MAP, on the investment related de-pollution sub-component where close collaboration between the EC DG Environment, the EIB and MEDPOL led to the creation of a Hot Spot Investment Programme (MeHSIP). A short term DG ENV contract is currently being implemented in order to assess the potential for similar synergies between the other two H2020 sub-groups, "capacity building"; "monitoring, indicators and research" and the activities of UNEP/MAP and its RACs.

13. Mr. Vassilis Petrides, Team Leader, presented the "***Mediterranean Hot Spot Investment Programme (MeHSIP)*** - Project Preparation and Implementation Facility", one of the projects under the EU Horizon 2020 initiative. Firstly he reminded participants that Horizon 2020, for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean, consists of four components: 1) Reduce the most significant pollution sources; 2) Capacity-building measures; 3) Using EC's Research budget to develop and share knowledge of environmental issues; and 4) Developing indicators to monitor the success of Horizon 2020. The Steering Committee, consisting of 27 EU member states, other partner countries and regional and international organizations (including UNEP/MAP) is to meet in Dubrovnik in October 2009. In addition to the Steering Committee a de-pollution sub-group consisting of the EC, UNEP/MAP, World Bank, the French Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Germany's "Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau" (KfW) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) as chair, meet regularly to ensure coordination of the project. The aim of the MeHSIP Project Preparation and Implementation Facility is to develop a consolidated pipeline of investment projects. This is based on the original study of the National Action Plans (NAPs) for the reduction of pollution from land-based sources, produced by UNEP/MAP with the support of GEF. From these 44 investment projects were identified. The geographical coverage includes North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia), Middle East (Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Syria). Currently the short list of projects is 76, with an estimated project cost of about €5 billion, of which €3.0 billion is being secured.

14. In the discussion that followed Mr. Petrides recalled that Horizon 2020 focuses on pollution from industrial emissions, municipal waste and particularly urban wastewater. There was discussion with participants from the World Bank on how to ensure coordination of Investments as many of the projects will be complimentary and use simultaneously funds from GEF, the EIB and other sources. Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure joint coordination and reporting of the projects. In response to queries regarding the current status of the investment projects, Mr. Petrides noted that all projects are still under preparation, and it will be approximately 2-3 years before activities begin implementation. A web-site for these projects will be in place by mid October with the status of each project and an interactive web-site is expected to be ready by early 2010. Mr. Civili, Coordinator of MEDPOL/MAP, commended the cooperation between Horizon 2020 and the work undertaken by UNEP/MAP, such as the NAPs, and stated that this can be regarded as a model of cooperation that should be followed. Mr. Abousamra, Programme Officer for MEDPOL/MAP, added that currently UNEP/MAP is undertaking a review of the level of implementation of NAP's and as such they will be updated. He also stressed that the Horizon 2020 pollution subgroup bringing together International Financial Institutions (IFIs), should be used as a forum to assist the Strategic Partnership to catalyze investments.

15. Mr. Michael Scoullos, Chairman of MIO-ECSDE, informed participants on the background to Horizon 2020 and the recent approval of the capacity-building project under Horizon 2020, with the aim to overcome the ineffective integration of environmental policies, and the weak capacity of the main stakeholders. The project is for three year's and will support to implementation of the Horizon 2020 roadmap approved by the Ministers in 2006. Results will include a better cooperation for the steering committee and its sub groups, knowledge sharing and the effective use of tools such as Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) etc., increased capacity for legislation reform, mobilized local networks in the countries, and the general support to the civil society. Mr. Merla, consultant for the World Bank, stressed the need for a clear coordination mechanism to be established among these complimentary projects, and that this should not be left to chance. Mr. Petrides reminded participants that we must work through existing structures in the countries. Finally Mr. Abderrahmen Gannoun Director of the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) noted the need to also address investments and other actions for the protection of biodiversity in the Mediterranean and the priorities identified in the Strategic Action Plan for the protection of biodiversity (SAP-BIO), with estimated actions amounting to 150 million US\$

16. Mr. Daniel Cebrian, Marine Biology expert for RAC/SPA presented the project "**Identification of possible SPAMIs in the Mediterranean areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ)**". This project, which began in 2008, addresses the need for open ocean Marine Protected Areas (MPA's) in the Mediterranean. He informed participants that in one month a shortlist of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs) will be prepared. Following this a roadmap for the elaboration of further proposals will be presented to the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention for adoption for future implementation. In the discussion Ms. Virginie Hart enquired on the link with the work undertaken by FAO on a ecosystem approach to fisheries management, to which Mr. Cebrian responded that FAO is part of the Steering Committee of the project and is working closely on the link to the establishment of fisheries restricted areas, and integration into the management strategy for the Mediterranean. Mr. Cebrian also confirmed, in response to a query from Mr. Scoullos that SPA/RAC and the EC would work to integrate the projects results into the EC Marine Strategy.

17. Mr. Holger Treidel, Assistant Programme Specialist for UNESCO/IHP, presented the parallel UNESCO/IHP GEF funded projects related to the management of aquifers activities under the Strategic Partnership. These include "**DIKTAS: Protection and Sustainable Use of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System**", "**IW: Science: Expanding the Scientific Basis for GEF International Waters Projects**", "**TWAP: Development of a methodology for the**

Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme” and **“MENARID IW:LEARN 3: Strengthening IW Portfolio Delivery and Impact”**. These projects were designed to complement each other and UNESCO/IHP will ensure that the partners of the Strategic Partnership are informed on the progress of these projects. Mr. Merla noted that all these projects have a bearing on the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol to the Barcelona Convention and therefore UNEP/MAP should consider how to integrate the issue of groundwater and aquifer management into the ICZM Protocol. Ms. Raya Marina Stephan, consultant for UNESCO-IHP, informed about the recent UN General Assembly Resolution on the law of transboundary aquifers, that could be relevant for transboundary coastal aquifers in the Mediterranean.

18. Mr. Pedro de Barros, Fishery Resources Officer for FAO, briefly summarized the complementary projects in the Mediterranean which focus on the need to reinforce the capacity of countries' fisheries institutions for fisheries management according to the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF). These include the regional projects, **“AdriaMed: Scientific Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea”**; **“CopeMed: Cooperation Networks to facilitate Coordination to Support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean”**; **“EastMed: FAO Regional Project in Eastern Mediterranean”**; **“MedsudMed: Assessment and Monitoring of the Fishery Resources and Ecosystems in the Strait of Sicily”**.

19. Mr. Vangelis Constantianos, Executive Secretary of GWP-Med, briefly discussed two new initiatives, the St Peterburg declaration and the **EU Water Initiative** that will have a direct bearing on the activities of the Strategic Partnership related to Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) to be executed by GWP-Med. He noted that since the original project design, a decision was taken in 2008 for a new strategy for water in the Mediterranean. This initiative is led by the EC and will be followed up under the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The first meeting of this initiative was in September 2008 and now an intensive work-plan is underway.

20. Ms. Amy Evans, consultant for the World Bank, then presented the new “WB Adriatic Sea Initiative” that is currently under discussion with countries and World Bank management, with the aim to address *inter alia* nutrient enrichment and eutrophication, chemical and oil pollution, and solid water and litter (based on MEDPOL data and priorities and hotspots identified in the SAP for pollution reduction). This initiative may be funded through an adjustable programme loan in three phases and for in total seven or more years of implementation. Possible funding could be in the range of 50-60 million US\$ for the 1st phase of two years, 110-220 million US\$ for the 2nd phase of three years, with the funding and period of the third phase to be determined. The initiative is currently undergoing internal review within the World Bank, and is planned to be launched after March 2010, after a round of consultations with potential co-financiers, including GEF, carbon finance funds, IFC, other IFIs, and national partners. The Adriatic Sea Initiative includes Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro and Slovenia.

21. Ms. Alessandra Pomè briefly informed participants on the **Mediterranean Protected Areas Network (MEDPAN) association**, which complements the activities of WWF for Marine Protected Areas under the GEF Strategic Partnership. The MEDPAN association was created in Oct 2008, and currently the Secretariat is about to be established. WWF has a seat in the Board of the association and there is full collaboration with SPA/RAC. In addition a number of proposals are under development to compliment the activities of the Strategic Partnership.

22. Finally Ms. Virginie Hart, UNEP/MAP expert for the Strategic Partnership, informed participants on two new GEF funded projects in the region. The regional project **“Integration of climatic variability and change into national strategies to implement the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean”** to be executed by UNEP/MAP, BP/RAC, PAP/RAC, and GWP-Med was

prepared to complement the Strategic Partnership which does not directly address the issue of climate change and variability. This two year project has been submitted to GEF, and is pending approval of the next GEF Council in November 2009. In addition a Medium size project "**Policy and legislative development for mainstreaming the sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems in Lebanon**" was approved by GEF in 2009, and aims to compliment the work on marine protected areas undertaken by SPA/RAC and WWF.

23. Mr. Ivica Trumbic concluded the session by stressing that full details of all these projects and initiatives and their coordination with the Strategic Partnership will be included in the Inception Report. All presentations given are included in Annex III of the report.

Agenda item 5: Investment Fund: Status of implementation, projects' pipeline, new ideas and opportunities for projects

24. Mr. Andrea Merla presented the current status of the World Bank *Investment Fund* projects. He informed participants that the *Investment Fund* has been approved in 2006. The *Investment Fund* is expected to result in the reduction of transboundary pollution and the conservation of biodiversity in priority hotspots and sensitive areas of the Mediterranean Sea identified through the TDA-SAP process. It should also result in the initiation of replicating in-country investments, would include SAP implementation within World Bank country dialogues and promotes knowledge-sharing and cross-fertilization of project achievements among partners.

25. As the GEF Implementing Agency of the *Investment Fund* of the Partnership, the World Bank is committed to identify, design and implement a critical number of investment projects complying with the Fund eligibility criteria, and to support the overall goals of the Partnership by: promoting the Strategic Partnership objectives and SAP targets in the country dialogues and including them in the World Bank Country Assistance Strategies (CASs) as they are updated; by promoting policies that address transboundary pollution reduction and biodiversity conservation as part of country dialogues; by championing and helping to mobilize funds from countries and donors for pollution reduction; and to cooperate with the *Regional Component* of the Strategic Partnership to foster replication at a larger scale of individual investment projects.

26. Mr. Merla then presented each of the projects under implementation. The Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina "**Neretva and Trebisnjica Management Project**", which began on the 1st September 2008, aims to provide mechanisms for the efficient and equitable water allocation amongst the users of the Neretva and Trebisnjica river basin (NTRB) at the transboundary level, and for enhancing the basin ecosystems and biodiversity through improved water resources management. The "**Croatia Coastal Cities Pollution Control 2 (APL)**" project, which began in June 2009, aims at the reduction of organic pollution and nutrient emissions from point sources in selected Croatian towns, that are either located directly at the coast or near it. This requires the new construction of waste water treatment plants (WWTPs) designed for the removal of both organics and nutrients. Two sites of the Project, Opuzen and Metkovic, will complement the on-going GEF Neretva and Trebisnjica Management project which is focusing, amongst others, on the wastewater discharges from several municipalities in Bosnia Herzegovina. The Project will focus on the Croatian portion of the Delta. The net result will be improved environmental conditions in the Neretva Delta. The different technologies applied in these sites were briefly presented and include the use of activated sludge; constructed wetlands; extended aeration; membrane bio-reactor's and trickling filters. The "**Alexandria Coastal Zone Management Project**", still under development was also presented. The main activities under preparation include the development of a Coastal Zone Management Plan; the implementation of pilot scale pollution reduction measures to contribute to reducing the pollution load to Lake Mariout; and the increase in the capacity of the EEAA's Regional Branch Office (RBO) in Alexandria to monitor and manage the pollution in Lake Mariout.

27. In conclusion Mr. Merla stressed that these are exciting times for the Mediterranean. With increasing GEF and World Bank resources dedicated to the Mediterranean Sea, these two initial projects of the *Investment Fund* for the Mediterranean Partnership will soon be followed by many others. In fact new funding mechanisms targeting investments in sub-regions of the Mediterranean - the Sustainable Mediterranean Program, covering Northern Africa, and hopefully the Adriatic Sea Environment Program – are being catalyzed and will join the Strategic Partnership adopting its goals and conceptual framework. Coordination among actors and between single country and regional actions will be critical for the overall success of these complementary initiatives.

28. Following the presentation and given the new role of the ***Mediterranean Environmental Sustainable Development Program ('Sustainable MED')*** in the Strategic Partnership, Ms. Dahlia Lotayef, Senior Environmental Specialist, for the World Bank, gave a presentation on the programme, approved by the GEF Council in June 2008. It should be noted that new *Investment Fund* projects of the Strategic Partnership will be funded through this programme, and therefore will need to be coordinated within the Strategic Partnership project. The goal of “Sustainable MED” is to integrate environment within the economic development agenda of Mediterranean countries, to promote environmentally sound development and improved livelihood of communities. This programme has a long term goal but the initial focus is on International Waters related issues, and therefore in this Phase 1 of the programme the objective is to "enhance and accelerate the implementation of transboundary pollution reduction, improved water resources management, and biodiversity conservation measures in priority hotspots and sensitive areas of selected countries of the Mediterranean basin that would help achieve the Strategic Action Plans' (SAP MED and SAP BIO) targets". Ms. Lotayef stressed that the “Sustainable MED” is an expansion of the *Investment Fund* of the Mediterranean Strategic Partnership, and as such the objective of the Sustainable MED (Phase 1) remains aligned with the *Investment Fund*. It will consist of investment projects with, in addition, the establishment of a regional Mediterranean governance structure, and a number of capacity building and knowledge management activities to be coordinated by the WB Marseilles Center. Five projects are already approved and will begin their preparation phase shortly. A further five projects will be submitted before the end of 2009. These projects predominantly focus on water and coastal zone management, adaptation to climate change and pollution reduction in the Middle East and North African region (MENA). UNEP, as partner to the programme is a co-executing agency on the approved regional project “***Regional: Sustainable MED Governance and Know-MED Center***” and is implementing and executing the project “***Integration of climatic variability and change into national strategies to implement the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean.***”

Agenda item 6: Discussion on the linkages between Regional Component and Investment Fund

29. In the discussion that followed the presentations, Mr. Saverio Civili observed that the Investment projects under the new “Sustainable Med” programme are a continuation of the *Investment Fund* under the Strategic Partnership. As such the programme effectively remains the same but with one new element that is a new governance structure and also the role of the Marseilles center for knowledge management. Mr. Civili observed that this may cause some confusion. That is the previous and current GEF-funded and UNEP/MAP-executed project in the region used the existing Governance structure that the Barcelona Convention hosted at UNEP/MAP in Athens. Therefore he requested that the new programme considers the use of the existing governance structure in the region. In response Ms. Lotayef stressed that the programme covers not only International Waters but much broader issues of sustainable development and therefore the idea behind the new governance structure is to involve the ministries of finance.

30. Mr. Cebrian noted that SPA/RAC is currently working on the inclusion of climate change issues into the Centre activities, following the decisions adopted by the Parties within the Almeria Declaration. The Barcelona Convention Parties have updated the SAP BIO priorities with regard to climate change, together with the preparation of National, Sub regional and Regional Overviews on vulnerability and impacts of climate change on marine and coastal biological diversity in the Mediterranean region. The sub-regional and regional synthesis documents, and the updating of SAP BIO priorities with regard to the Climate Change issues¹, prepared by a working group integrated by 30 experts belonging to all the Parties should therefore be considered in this programme, since they reflect the official concerns and willing of the Parties.

31. In his commentary on the new programme, Mr. Michael Scoullos, stressed that he is glad to see new initiatives in the region. However he observed that there is still great confusion on the role of the Marseilles Center with the Strategic Partnership coordinated by UNEP/MAP. Therefore it is important to understand where are the overlaps and differences between the mandate of the Marseilles center and that of UNEP/MAP and its regional activity centers. He observed that there was original concern with the Union for the Mediterranean (UFM) on how to ensure no duplication, which is currently being resolved. He recalled that for many years the key issue of projects is how we can move from ad hoc multilateral projects into a coherent approach with some criteria, which the international community could understand. Mr. Scoullos expressed concern that the new "Sustainable Med" programme is investment orientated, and as such should follow clear criteria in selection and design. He also noted that the acceptability of the WB has been a problem in the past, and that more recently there has been greater acceptance of WB initiatives, concerning environment issues. Therefore this programme should avoid giving the opportunity to return to old arguments regarding lack of transparency. Mr. Scoullos therefore suggested that we seek to find a common governance structure for the new programme, also accepted by the UFM, and avoid the creation of new governance that will exist on-top of what is already in place in the region.

32. Mr. Vangelis Constantianos also noted that it would be helpful if the mechanism that was used to select these investment fund proposals under the "Sustainable Med" followed clear and agreed upon criteria. An important issue is how the Strategic Partnership can be used to benefit the new programme, as he stressed that in view of the large amount of organizations present at the meeting and committed to the project, the Strategic Partnership is an achievement for all partners. Mr. Constantianos recommended that the new "Sustainable Med" should rather expand on the existing Partnership rather than creating a new one. He also noted that in Paris at end of June 2008 at the UfM meeting, Ministerial Conference there was presentation on "Sustainable Med" and how it would take place under the framework with the UFM. He therefore enquired as to how this will coordinate with the UFM secretariat. More specifically, how this would relate to the new strategy for water for the Mediterranean. As such he strongly recommended that some strategic discussion was first needed before progressing to projects and risking lack of coordination. It is also important to ensure that the Strategic Partnership is used to assist and guide the process of developing more action oriented projects.

33. Ms. Lotayef in response informed participants that Oct 9th will launch the Marseilles center, and its main focus will be on knowledge. She added that the center does not provide funds for programmes, rather each project will include sub-project that will support the center. Many projects, like Horizon 2020, came before the UfM, and therefore, like "Sustainable Med" they all contribute to the UfM. The "Sustainable Med" programme was not created for the UFM but rather shares the same objectives. The WB is in full contact with the UfM to exchange notes. Regarding the selection criteria for projects she stressed that the same criteria for *Investment Fund* projects was used for the selection of the projects under the Strategic Partnership, and as detailed in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E) of the World Bank

¹ UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.331/Inf.15; WG.331/Inf.16; WG.331/Inf.17; WG.331/Inf.18; WG.331/13

component of the Strategic Partnership. Regarding comments on ensuring a smooth way to avoid duplication in governance, she concurred with comments made by Mr. Scoullos and Mr. Constantianos.

34. Mr. Alberto Pacheco, Programme Officer for UNEP/DEPI, firstly regarding Mr. Merla's presentation on the *Investment Fund* projects, suggested that a link should be established with UNEP's work and projects on best practices in nutrient reduction. Regarding the "Sustainable Med" programme, Mr. Pacheco, stressed the need to see the links between the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), the Barcelona Convention and the new proposed Governance structure, and that in order to assess this, a mapping exercise should be undertaken to see the overlaps. It is critical to get this right, if not countries will accuse UNEP and WB of not aligning their actions to countries needs. Mr. Trumbic recalled that unfortunately the *Investment Fund* projects were already identified before the Regional project was operational, so that this link that had been designed is only recently being established. As such he stressed the importance to now begin working on how the two components of the Strategic Partnership will work together, and clearly defined in the Inception report. Mr. Merla agreed and noted that the *Regional Project* can assist the World Bank to in turn assist countries better, and also stressed the key to cooperation between the two is through the Regional Components' Replication and Communication strategy.

35. Mr. Civili noted the importance of using the process of the Barcelona Convention to assist countries in moving in a more strategic direction to address pollution hotspots and priorities. In addition participants mentioned the need to address priorities in certain countries, such as Algeria and Lebanon. Ms. Lotayef noted that there is the need for a governance structure that will apply pressure on these countries. Finally, Mr. Pacheco stressed the importance of using existing mechanisms such as the protocol for Land-based sources of pollution (LBS) to encourage countries to make the needed reforms, along with communication and capacity building.

Agenda item 7: Replication Strategy: Current status, organizational issues, next activities

36. This agenda item was not presented pending the transition of the function of the current INFO/RAC S.p.A. to the INFO/RAC which will be managed by ISPRA as of January 2010, as communicated by the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea.

Agenda item 8: Presentation of the template for Inception Report

37. Mr. Ivica Trumbic presented the elements for the Inception report for discussion. These include an introduction section, status of project implementation, proposed revisions and their justification, the detailed first year budget and work-plan, institutional roles and responsibilities, project governance and administration, monitoring and evaluation and coordination mechanism with the WB *Investment Fund*/Sustainable Med programme. It also will include sections on feedback mechanisms of project related partners, communications activities, risks, sustainability of the project and several annexes. He concluded by stressing that the Inception report would need to be ready by November 2009 so that it can be shared with all members of the Steering Committee one month prior to the Steering Committee meeting scheduled for the first week of December 2009.

Agenda item 9: Discussion on the Inception Report template

38. In the discussion that followed Mr. Civili made a number of suggested changes to enhance the structure of the Inception report and avoid any overlap. In particular he stressed the importance of presenting an initial vision on the long-term continuity of the project. Regarding the timing of the report, Mr. Fouad Abousamra expressed concern that for MEDPOL/MAP's activities, there would not be enough time to contact countries, and all the relevant focal points (including those of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions) to reach agreement on any changes to the project activities and demonstrations. He therefore proposed to prolong the Inception phase and delay the 1st meeting of the Steering Committee. Mr. Marko Prem, Director a.i. of PAP/RAC, indicated that for PAP/RAC's activities, he would arrange to meet with countries to discuss activities and as for the pilot projects; countries are likely to make some changes. Mr. Daniel Cebrian stressed that the first activities for SPA/RAC would be an evaluation of each country in order to clearly design in country activities. This may not be fully achieved during the next two months proposed for the inception phase. Ms. Lotayef requested information on which focal points will be responsible for the project. She was informed that the GEF Focal points have been regularly contacted, copied to MAP Focal points in order to nominate focal points for the project. This list would be sent to partners following the meeting.

Agenda item 10: Presentation by implementing/partner agencies of their activities until the end of 2010

39. Each partner gave a presentation of their activities under the Strategic Partnership, following the order of the Components within the project, that is: Component 1: Integrated approaches for the implementation of the SAPs and NAPs: ICZM, IWRM and management of coastal aquifer (executed by UNESCO-IHP, PAP/RAC and GWP-Med); Component 2: Pollution from land based activities, including Persistent Organic Pollutants: Implementation of SAP-MED (executed by MEDPOL/MAP, UNIDO and CP/RAC); Component 3. Conservation of biological diversity: Implementation of SAP BIO and related NAP (executed by WWF, SPA/RAC and FAO); and Component 4: Project Coordination, Replication and Communication strategies, Management and M&E (executed by UNEP/MAP, MEDPOL/MAP, INFO/RAC, MIO-ECSDE). Mr. Trumbic also reminded participants that although the project was designed as a five year project, the current date of completion set in the legal agreement with UNEP DGEF is the 31 August 2013. He therefore urged partners to assess the viability of completing all their activities by this date, and to inform the project management unit (PMU) if they envisaged that more time would be required. Based on this the PMU would if needed make a request to UNEP DGEF to extend the project, by for example one year to August 2014.

40. Mr. Treidel, Ms. Raya Marina Stephan and Mr. Bo Appelgren from UNESCO-IHP presented activities under the Sub-Component 1.1: Management of Coastal Aquifers and Groundwater. Mr. Treidel stressed the importance of aquifer and groundwater for urban and agricultural use in the Mediterranean and how over time, in particular the karstic aquifers are threatened from over extraction, intrusion of salt water and decreased water quality from pollution. The overall aim of the activities is to: reverse the trends in over-extraction and degradation in the quality of coastal aquifers; to provide appropriate capacity and technology for groundwater management, through policy interactions; and to fill the knowledge gaps. The four groups of activities are: 1) Assessing the risks to coastal aquifers and associated uncertainties, 2) Preparation of a regional action plan, demonstrations in collaboration with ICZM, IWRM; 3) Develop legislative, policy and institutional reforms and 4) Monitoring through EO techniques.

41. A number of case studies are already under implementation using co-financing. These include an assessment of groundwater quality Nador Lagoon, Morocco and an evaluation of the vulnerability of the Gahar El Melh, aquifer system in Tunisia to marine salt water intrusion and pollution. Feasibility studies and an action plan will be developed for wastewater management

for the wetlands and Réghaïa lake in Algeria and modeling of the aquifers in the Boyana Bay, Montenegro will be undertaken that will simulate the behavior of groundwater in the alluvial aquifers that are in hydraulic continuity with the rivers and the marine environments. With the additional support of Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM), a fully integrated water resources management and land management approach will be developed for the Oasis of Gabes , Tunisia.

41. In the comments that followed, Mr. de Barros suggested that partners, including UNESCO-IHP, should organize their training activities on tools of interest to several sub-components, like the training on GIS and database management, such that national experts participating in other sub-projects would be able to attend these training activities, thus reducing duplication of work and wasting of resources. Ms Evans also requested that experts of the WB Investment project “Neretva and Trebisnjica Management Project” be able to participate in any relevant training.

42. Mr. Prem then presented the activities under Sub- Component 1.2: Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), executed by PAP/RAC. He reminded participants that the Integrated Coastal Zone management protocol to the Barcelona Convention was signed in 2008, and is in the process of ratification. The main objectives of the sub-component are to facilitate strengthening ICZM (with a focus on water resources and biodiversity). The major activities related to the preparation of National ICZM Strategies and National Action Plans, ICZM NAPs, and the application of the ICZM approach, tools and techniques in the demonstration areas would commence in 2010. Ms Stephan highlighted the importance of setting a proper coordination between UNESCO and PAP/RAC on the legal aspects, as coastal aquifers are a component of coastal zones and have to be properly considered in the management of coastal zones, therefore in the preparation of ICZM Strategies and NAPs.

43. The activities under Sub-component 1.3: Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), executed by GWP-Med, was presented by Mr. Constantianos. He began by presenting the status of IWRM planning and water governance in the Mediterranean, pointing out that within the region there is no unified scheme on national water governance and IWRM planning. Within the general objective to supplement and support the targets established by SAP MED and SAP BIO, the immediate objective of the Sub-Component is to facilitate action to promote IWRM planning at the national, transboundary and regional levels as a means to reduce pollution from land based sources and to protect biodiversity in the Mediterranean. Regional activities include: 1) Preparation of an action plan for integrated water resources management in the Mediterranean; 2) Catalyzing action and building capacity for national IWRM planning; 3) Development of Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) in globally important river basins and adjacent coastal areas; and 4) Preparation of a list of transboundary bodies and water issues suitable for the implementation of pilot projects. National activities have begun in Lebanon on National IWRM Planning, in Egypt on Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WSS) planning, and in Libya on IWRM planning. Activities are also about to begin in Palestine on Governance reforms and Tunisia on IWRM Planning. Local River Basin (RBM) activities are underway in the extended Drin River (including Buna) in Montenegro and planned in Nahr al Kabir, Lebanon. Mr. Constantianos concluded that the IWRM sub-component would be able to meet its objectives by 2013, and that GWP-Med would be working in close cooperation with UNESCO/IHP and PAP/RAC to ensure coordination in activities, joint demonstration actions and training, meetings etc over the project duration.

44. Component 2 of the regional component of the Strategic Partnership addresses the reduction of pollution from land-based sources. Mr. Civili first presented the activities to be executed by MEDPOL/MAP. Under Sub-Component: 2.1: Facilitation of policy and legislative reforms for SAP MED, a number of pilot projects, based on NAP priorities were developed to include: 1) Reduction of metal inputs through improved management of phosphogypsum wastes in Lebanon; 2) Chromium, BOD and nutrient control in tanneries in Turkey; 3) Recycling

and regeneration of used lubricating oils in Algeria; 4) Recycling of lead batteries in Syria; 4) Assessment of the magnitude of riverine inputs of nutrients into the Mediterranean Sea (Regional). In addition with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), activities will be executed for the strengthening of the existing mechanism in the Mediterranean countries regarding environmental inspection systems (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Syria, Turkey). Under Sub-Component 2.3: Environmentally Sound Management of equipment, stocks and wastes containing or contaminated by PCBs in national electricity companies of Mediterranean countries, to be executed in Albania, Syria, Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, countries will be assisted to remove and dispose a total of 870 tones of PCB's that, as identified in their National Implementation Plans (NIPs) remain in national electricity companies. Mr. Alfred Vara, project officer of CP/RAC presented the activities to be executed by the Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production, CP/RAC. These will complement MEDPOL/MAPs activities, with specific focus on awareness raising on the importance of ESM of PCBs equipment and increasing the technical capacity for ESM of PCBs equipment in Albania, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya and Syria. Finally under Component 4 of the project, actions will be undertaken to set up a long-term sustainable financing mechanism, based at UNEP/MAP, for the assistance of countries to access funding from donors. The Strategic Action Plan for pollution reduction (SAP-MED) and the National Action Plans (NAPs) identified the need for additional resources to assist countries in meeting their agreed targets, and in order to do so assistance was requested in identifying donors, and the preparation of proposals. Mr. Civili noted that the project activities, particularly those related to POPs would require the full five years to be completed, that is until 2014. In terms of coordination he also noted that MEDPOL/MAP will be meeting with colleagues from CP/RAC, the Basel and Stockholm Convention Secretariat's in October 2009.

45. Sub-Component 2.2: Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technology (TEST-MED) is executed by UNIDO, and as an agency eligible for direct GEF funding, have since September 2008, begun their activities, as presented by Mr. Igor Volodin, Chief of the Water Management Unit at UNIDO. The objective of TEST-MED is to build national capacity to apply the UNIDO-TEST integrated approach for the transfer of Environmentally Sound Technology (EST) in order to improve the environmental performance and the productivity of the priority industrial pollution hot spots in the Mediterranean region. Participating countries are Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt and the project includes demonstration activities at pilot enterprises to be selected within the priority industrial areas that are affecting the Mediterranean basin. Activities already underway include the selection of national partners, establishment of advisory boards (governmental and relevant stakeholders, including MAP/MED-POL focal points), the training of national experts on UNIDO TEST methodology, the launching of the project web-site and the initial work for the selection of demonstration sites. The project is expected to be completed by December 2011.

46. Component 3 focuses on the conservation of biological diversity and the implementation of SAP BIO. Mr. Daniel Cebrian presented SPA/RAC's activities under the Sub-component 3.1: Conservation of Coastal and Marine Diversity through the Development of a Mediterranean MPA Network. The overall objective of this sub-component is to 'maintain the long-term function of the Mediterranean LME through the use of an ecologically-coherent network of protected areas combined with the sustainable use of renewable marine resources'. Activities undertaken so far include a regional study on Mediterranean countries' needs for legal, policy and institutional reforms to strengthen the management of marine protected areas (June 2007), a preliminary assessment survey of Montenegro coast (July 2008), preparatory activities to support MPAs creation in Syria and Libya, personnel selection for the project engagement and an ongoing preparation of a training seminar on MPA Management Planning to be carried out in November 2009. Ms. Alessandra Pome, Project manager for WWF, then presented the WWF activities under the same component, under the name of "MedPAN South", whilst reminding participants that only 42% of Mediterranean MPA's currently have management plans. Activities also began in 2008 and, as well as the coordination arrangements for the activities, WWF has already begun the implementation of the demonstration projects in Algeria, Croatia, Tunisia,

Libya and Turkey with the first drafts of the MPA management plans to be finalized by the end of 2010. Expected outputs will include management plans for 7 MPAs (5 in Croatia – 1 in Algeria – 1 in Turkey), the identification of system of MPA in Libya (marine surveys) and a Management unit and business plan for 1 MPA in Tunisia. As well as the demonstrations a large number of capacity building activities and workshops are planned for 2009 and 2010.

47. Mr. Pedro de Barros presented the FAO-executed activities under the Sub-component 3.2: Promote the sustainable use of fisheries resources through the application of ecosystem-based management approaches (EAF). He stressed that the EAF activities will build on and expands upon current fisheries management, rather than starting a new process. The main objective is to increase the ability of coastal nations to utilize fisheries resources sustainably through the adoption of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries management (EAF) and the application of targeted interventions to reduce by-catch and unsustainable fishing. Results will include the mainstreaming of the ecosystem approach into national and sub-regional fisheries management policies and activities; the organization of information on the legislative governance structure that supports the ecosystem approach to conservation and sustainable use in the Mediterranean; by-catch of iconic and vulnerable species reduced through improved fishing practices and improved awareness; unsustainable fishing reduced in regionally-prioritized MPA sites; and improved tools and capacity for the management of Mediterranean fisheries according to EAF. Following the presentation of the 2009 and 2010 schedule of activities, Mr. de Barros stressed that insufficient human capacity is currently the major risk in the sustainable management of fisheries resources. Currently there are not enough trained personnel to undertake all the activities planned under the large number of projects already under execution or being planned for the Mediterranean. This requires that stronger coordination is established amongst projects and also amongst the sectors. In a brief discussion that followed Mr. Civili requested information on the division of the Mediterranean into sub-region's each with its own fisheries management project. Mr. de Barros briefly outlined the status of each, AdriaMed, CopeMed, EastMed and MedsudMed. Mr. Gannoun also agreed that there is a need for good coordination between projects and involvement of using also the SAP-BIO focal points in the process. Ms. Hart requested whether the issue of climate change had been assessed and incorporated into the fisheries management process, and Ms. Amy Evans suggested that FAO also liaise with a WB group called "ProFish" that could be of assistance in sharing information, tools etc.

48. Ms. Anastasia Roniotes, Head Officer of MIO-ESCDE briefly presented the activities and work plan of activities for NGOs involvement in the region, under Sub-Component 4.1 Project Co-ordination, Management and M&E, to be executed by MIO-ESCDE. The activities foreseen are expected to contribute significantly to the overall transparency of SAP implementation and enhancing the levels of commitment by civil society and other stakeholders while promoting effective public access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making in the Mediterranean region. This also compliments MIO-ESCDE's involvement in Horizon 2020 on capacity building, and Ms. Roniotes noted that another EU contract has been signed to ensure civil society involvement in the European Neighborhood Partnership (ENP) processes, which includes a specific component for implementation of Horizon 2020. In this contract there is specific reference to establishing coherence with the related activities in the GEF Strategic Partnership. In terms of activities planned and underway, one of the first actions this year will be a web-page prepared targeting NGOs on the Strategic Partnership. Once the other partners' work during the Inception phase is finalized, then operational links with ongoing initiatives will be mapped by March 2010. Operational links will also be established in 2010 with the GEF Small Grants programme in the beneficiary countries, to ensure their objectives are aligned with the Strategic Partnership. Reliable NGO partners at the national and local level will be identified. By May next year the first knowledge document will be produced, which will most likely be linked with a web-tool.

49. It was suggested that Mr. Paolo Guglielmi, Deputy Director of the current INFO/RAC – Sicily, give a brief presentation on the activities originally planned under Sub-Component 4.2: Information and Communication strategies and Sub-Component 4.3: Replication Strategy. As a result of these planned actions, at least 20 new potential replicable projects will be identified, including their funding mechanisms, and a Communication Strategy for the Strategic Partnership will be implemented, improving access to, and sharing of, information, results and lessons learned with all key stakeholders informed of the project activities, and sharing of lessons learned. Mr. Guglielmi indicated that since April 2008, the following initial project activities have been carried out by INFO/RAC until today: the Selection and hiring of project team; the Revision and testing of new functionalities of the existing official project website; the Initial design document for the new GEF LME project website/portal; the Design of the Action Plan for the implementation of the first stages of the Replication Component; the Initial Design of the IC strategy and involvement plan for project partners, other stakeholders and Media; the Creation of a Regional Media/Events Network to be used for project results dissemination; and the Conceptual design and collection of the first shootings for the "ad hoc" audiovisual.

50. Finally, Mr. Claudio Maricchiolo from ISPRA informed the meeting that during 2009 ISPRA has prepared the future INFO/RAC mandate, the contribution to the five year Strategic Plan and the 2010-2011 Work Plan and related budget, which includes all implementation activities of the GEF SP-LME project to be carried out by INFO/RAC, following the task received by ISPRA from the Italian Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea to take over the functions of the Centre, as of January 2010.

Agenda item 11: Detailed timetable of activities for the preparation of Inception Report

51. Given the comments from partners regarding the need for national consultations, it was agreed that the inception period should be extended with all activities to be completed by the 20th December 2009, in time to circulate the draft inception report to the Steering Committee prior to its first meeting at the end of January 2010. This however would not delay the implementation of activities already planned and approved in the project document and in line with the approved work-plan and budget.

Agenda items 12 and 16: Presentation of administrative/finance issues and reporting schedule

52. Mr. Giorgos Petrides presented the financial reporting requirements for the project, as also detailed in the legal agreements of partners. All partners will work on budget revisions during the inception phase for adoption by the Steering Committee meeting. Mr. Petrides presented the template for this, along with the templates for the inventory report of non-expendable equipment, the procurement plan, the templates and procedure for the cash advance request, quarterly expenditure report and the co-finance report. All of these reports and procedures are requirements for UNEP/MAP to report to UNEP DGEF on the financial management of the project. He explained that UNEP DGEF require the co-financing report to be for the period of June to July rather than the calendar year, as this in turn is a GEF requirement, along with the Project implementation review (PIR). He also advised participants on the procedure to keep records in US\$, and the use of the UN conversion rates. Finally he presented the major change to the financial reporting requirement, agreed during the previous day with UNEP DGEF. Financial reports would only be required on a **half-yearly**, rather than quarterly basis.

Agenda item 13: Co-financing issues and Agenda

53. Ms. Virginie Hart, gave a presentation on co-financing, firstly on the issue regarding the re-confirmation on existing co-financing and secondly on the issue of reporting third party in-kind co-financing in particular from participating countries and presented possible tracking tools for monitoring this co-financing, given the example of tools developed by other GEF projects (for example the "Addressing land-based activities in the West Indian Ocean" project). Mr. Constantianos suggested that rather than calculating the time spent by national experts on project activities, another solution would be to request a formal letter of declaration from countries, including tables and breakdown of time and cost, from a national public authority which is audited by external auditors. This he mentioned has been done in the past in projects in the Mediterranean. However it was noted that this covers the calendar year rather than the requirement from GEF to report on co-financing from the period of July 1st to June 31st. Therefore it was suggested that two co-financing reports may need to be completed in order to cover the period of January to June 31st and 1st June to 31st December. The project management unit would discuss this possibility with UNEP DGEF and it was proposed as this is a sensitive issue, that both solutions would be explored, and presented to the Steering Committee meeting for their final approval. Regarding several queries on the date from which co-financing could be reported, Ms. Kelly West informed participants that co-financing could be reported from the date of GEF approval (8th April 2008) and in addition UNEP/MAP could discuss with UNEP DGEF on a case by case basis, if co-financing was reporting earlier than this date.

Agenda item 14: Monitoring and Evaluation plan: revision, discussion and proposal on the indicators to be tracked

54. Ms. Hart followed with a presentation on the elements and requirements of the Monitoring and Evaluation plan (M&E plan) for the Strategic Partnership. It was suggested that in re-evaluating the overarching outcome indicators, some more work should be done to assess the contribution of the project to the implementation of specific targets the SAPs and NAPs at the level of the Strategic Partnership, and this should be done in conjunction with the work undertaken by MAP (MEDPOL and SPA/RAC) to track SAP and NAP implementation, and taking into consideration additional elements (i.e. aquifers, IWRM, climate variability/change). In the discussion that followed Mr. Appelgren noted that UNESCO's activities could include some economic valuation, and this could be a test approach on how to include a greater economic valuation approach to the monitoring of the project's success. Mr. Merla stressed the importance of environmental status indicators and that although the project was unlikely to show a change in the status of the Mediterranean, the opportunity should be taken within the Strategic Partnership for all partners to agree and establish the tools and methods for the long term monitoring of the environmental status of the Mediterranean. He also noted that whilst it is important for the project to link to the implementation of the two SAPs, that however their implementation is the responsibility of the countries. Mr. Civili added that the long-term tracking of the status of the Mediterranean should also be linked to the Ecosystem approach that UNEP/MAP is currently developing. It was concluded that the project could be an opportunity to bring together a task force to agree on the approach for developing long term indicators, and that further funding could then be requested in the form of a proposal to support this monitoring. Mr. Civili informed participants of the work undertaken in 2003 by MEDPOL/MAP to measure the national baseline budget of pollution releases, and that this year new exercise would be completed to see if these releases have reduced over time (2003-2008). The discussion focused on how to measure the catalytic impact of the project. Mr. de Barros stressed that the project through support to the countries should achieve a change that can be measured in increased capacity, although capacity itself is usually difficult to measure. Mr. Constantianos also noted the need to measure the value added of the partnership itself, and the synergies it is creating, giving as example the joint work undertaken combining ICZM and IWRM, which has not been previously attempted.

Agenda item 17: Information on the First Strategic Partnership Steering Committee meeting in December: Agenda, organizational issues

55. Based on the recommendation of partners it was agreed to postpone the First steering Committee meeting until the last week of January 2010, possibly the 20-22 of January, following the FAO GFCM meeting also to be held in Montenegro. Dates would be confirmed and shared with partners.

Agenda item 18: Conclusions and closure of the meeting

56. In the concluding comments, Ms. Kelly West noted that the inception period of the project is a time to review outputs, rather than outcomes of the project and a time to link with partners and national experts and see if there are any changes to demonstration projects that the Steering Committee will need to approve. She also offered her assistance to follow up if needed on the signature of any pending legal agreements. In terms of the Inception report outline, she stressed the importance of the revised work plan. As previously mentioned currently the project ends on 31 Aug 2013. If an extension is required, partners should agree on this and bring it to the attention of the Steering Committee for their approval. Regarding the communications within the project, given the number of countries and partners, Ms. West stressed that this would be critical to the success of the project. The Project Management Unit should facilitate process, and although some of the partners have plans for their own web-sites and communication activities, that this should be harmonized during the inception phase of the project. In terms of the relationship between Strategic Partnership *Regional Project, Investment Fund* and the new programme "Sustainable Med", given the lengthy debate and many questions by partners, countries will possibly have even more questions. It is therefore essential that a 1-2 page overview on the coordination between these is drafted for countries. Finally Ms. West expressed her appreciation for having been given the opportunity to participate in the meeting, and looks forward to attending future meetings.

57. Regarding the Inception period and First Steering Committee/Inception meeting, Mr. Trumbic requested partners to confirm their availability in January 2010, and following discussion the dates of 20 to 22 January were confirmed with partners. This would mean that three months were remaining for completion of the Inception report, to be ready before Christmas 2009. The PMU would therefore communicate instructions in the coming weeks to all partners for their contributions to the report. Mr. Cebrian requested that a side event, kick off meeting for the biodiversity component be arranged back-to-back with the Steering Committee meeting. Ms. Lotayef also suggested that the project may wish to invite the UfM, and Horizon 2020 as observers to the meeting. As such all partners were requested to inform the PMU, should there be other projects and partners that may need to be invited as observers to this first meeting. In the mean time it was requested that all partners provide the PMU with details of the complementary initiatives that had been presented in the meeting, as well as others and a timetable of all main meeting scheduled for remaining year. Mr. Trumbic also mentioned a possible workshop to be organized in the Adriatic with the WB and UNESCO to discuss coordination of *Investment Fund* projects and the *Regional Project*. In terms of communication with national partners he requested a list of all national partners to be provided to the PMU for the main database of contacts, and for partners to keep project focal points and the PMU on copy with main correspondence with partners so as to allow the PMU to facilitate communication with national partners and experts. Also it was suggested to keep a record of all the activities to be executed in each country and this information should be available on the web-site.

58. With regards to the establishment of environment status indicators and long-term monitoring of the Mediterranean, partners were requested to volunteer for the establishment of a working group to elaborate this concept from the perspective of pollution and biodiversity conservation. Mr. Merla agreed in the mean time to draft a brief concept note for this working

group to be shared with partners. Regarding the project extension it was concluded that a one year project extension would be a realistic request, but this would be confirmed as partners finalized their detailed work programmes.

59. Mr. Trumbic concluded the meeting by thanking all participants and wishing them fruitful working sessions for the afternoon.

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Annex II Draft Provisional Agenda

First Strategic Partnership Coordination Group Meeting (SPCG1)
Hotel Divani Caravel, Athens
(16-18 September 2009)

Wednesday, 16 September 2009

- 09:00 – 09:30 **Registration of the participants**
- 09:30 – 10:00 **Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting, objectives of the meeting, introduction of the participants**
The meeting will be opened by the Chair, Ms. Maria Luisa Silva Mejias, the MAP Deputy Coordinator and Officer-in-Charge. The participants will be informed on the objectives of the meeting by Mr. Ivica Trumbic, SP GEF Project Manager.
- 10:00 – 10:15 **Agenda item 2: Brief overview of the Regional Component of the project and the current status of its implementation**
The outline of the Regional Component of the project will be given. The emphasis will be on the concrete outputs and results of the project, i.e. those that will be based on the project's objective but which will have a long-lasting effect in the region. The project practically started only recently, and the activities undertaken so far will be presented. (Ivica Trumbic and Virginie Hart).
- 10:15 – 11:00 **Agenda item 3: Update on complementary new programmes, projects and issues in the region**
An overview of the new initiatives, programmes and projects initiated in the region during the last two years, i.e. since the completion and adoption of the SP proposal will be given. All participants will be invited to present new complimentary programmes and initiatives to the SP, and propose how they can be coordinated with the SP.
- 11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30 – 12:00 **Agenda item 4: Discussion, including the need, if any, to revise the project's activities**
The participants will be invited to present the reasons for eventual revision of the project document. These initiatives will be discussed, and agreement reached which ones will be integrated in the Inception Report.
- 12:00 – 13:00 **Agenda item 5: Investment Fund: Status of implementation, projects' pipeline, new ideas and opportunities for projects**
The implementation of the Investment Fund is ahead of the implementation of the Regional Component. The information on the current status will be given to the participants as well as on the activities in the coming period. The participants will be informed on the projects pipeline, criteria for the selection and procedure to establish linkages with the Regional Component. The role of Investment Fund in the Sustainable Mediterranean initiative will be presented and discussed (World Bank).
- 13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break
- 14:30 – 16:00 **Agenda item 6: Discussion on the linkages between Regional Component and Investment Fund**
Participants will be invited to discuss the integration of the RC and IF, in particular having in mind the role the Replication Strategy will have in it. The discussion will also touch upon other initiatives, in particular the Sustainable Mediterranean, and provide inside on how to absorb/integrate/make it complementary to the Strategic Partnership's context.

- 16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break
- 16:30 – 18:00 **Agenda item 7: Replication Strategy: Current status, organizational issues, next activities**
The Replication Strategy is one of the critical tools for the integration of the project's components, and its implementation is crucial in delivering the long lasting and tangible results of the project. The participants will be given a brief on the development of its components and presented how the Replication Strategy will be integrated in the SP's work plan. Special emphasis will be given to the discussion on the role Replication Strategy will have in the Investment Fund (Ivica Trumbic).

Thursday, 17 September 2009

- 09:00 – 09:30 **Agenda item 8: Presentation of the template for Inception Report**
The structure of the Inception Report and its annotated table of contents will be presented in detail. (Ivica Trumbic).
- 09:30 – 10:00 **Agenda item 9: Discussion on the Inception Report template**
The participants will discuss the proposed template and give their comments and suggestions. It is expected that the template/table of contents will be agreed among the partners and adopted.
- 10:00 – 11:00 **Agenda item 10: Presentation by implementing/partner agencies of their activities until the end of 2010**
All partners will be invited to present their plan of activities until the end of 2010. Each presentation will last 15' at most. The presentations will have to be precise on the activities, partners involved, countries involvement, expected outputs and indication of funds to be used. The partners will give an assessment of the co-financing mobilised.
- 11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30 – 13:00 **Agenda item 10 continued**
- 13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break
- 14:30 – 15:00 **Agenda item 11: Detailed timetable of activities for the preparation of Inception Report**
The detailed timetable will be presented. It is expected that, after the meeting, each agency/partner will have to prepare its individual input for the Inception Report to be delivered to the PMU by 15 October 2009. The draft integrated Inception Report will have to be ready by 25 October 2009 to be sent to DGEF for approval (Ivica Trumbic).
- 15:00 – 16:00 **Agenda item 12: Presentation of the template and a discussion on the first year's budget**
The participants will be presented the templates for the first year's budget, which is one of the essential elements of the Inception Report. They will be instructed how to prepare it (Giorgos Petridis).
- 16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break
- 16:30 – 17:00 **Agenda item 13: Co-financing issues**
Partners will be asked to report on the current status of co-financing within their respective components of the projects. If they will not be able to provide accurate information, they will be asked to propose steps they intend to take to re-confirm the co-financing pledges. The project will also need to track co-financing (cash and in-kind) and partners will discuss most effective methods to track and report on co-financing. The Inception Report will have to be as precise as possible on this issue (Virginie Hart).

17:00 – 18:00 **Agenda item 14: Monitoring and Evaluation plan revision, discussion and proposal on the indicators to be tracked**
The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan will be presented, which will be further detailed and revised during the inception phase of the project. Partners will be invited to comment on the monitoring and evaluation plan, and report on their preparatory activities towards its implementation. Particular emphasis will be on selecting the indicators to be tracked and integration of indicator sets among partners (Virginie Hart).

Friday, 18 September 2009

09:00 – 10:00 **Agenda item 15: Information and Communications Strategy: information and data sharing, harmonization of reports, publications, web site, etc.**
The participants will be informed on the current status of the GEF Project's Information and Communications Strategy, as well as complementary activities on the preparation of the new MAP Information and Communications Strategy. The project's communications activities that have already started, or will soon start, will be presented and comments and suggestions from the participants will be sought (Ivica Trumbic).

10:00 – 11:00 **Agenda item 16: Presentation of administrative/finance issues and reporting schedule**
Specific administrative and financial issues will be presented and discussed (Giorgos Petridis, Virginie Hart, Kelly West, Rodney Vorley).

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 – 12:00 **Agenda item 17: Information on the First Strategic Partnership Steering Committee meeting in December: Agenda, organizational issues**
The first Steering Committee meeting will be held during the first week of December, tentatively in Kotor, Montenegro. The participants will be informed on the progress in the preparation of the meeting (Ivica Trumbic).

12:00 – 13:00 **Agenda item 18: Conclusions and closure of the meeting**

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break

14:30 – 18:00 **Meetings among the partners**
The partners are encouraged to plan meetings among themselves in advance to discuss implementation of the individual components of the project.