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1. Programme coordination

During the biennium 2002-2003 there were no changes in the personnel structure of the MED POL Programme and the activities continued to be implemented by one Coordinator and two Programme Officers. The WHO Senior Scientist continued to work full time on the Programme in relation to the sanitary aspects of the SAP and the LBS Protocol, compliance and enforcement.

In addition to the long-standing cooperation with WHO, work has continued to be carried out in cooperation with other UN Agencies for the implementation of specific activities. In particular, as in the past, IAEA/MEL has been responsible for the implementation of the data quality assurance of chemical analyses through training, intercalibration, scientific visits, purchase of instruments, advice and quality control. In view of some personnel changes at the Agency, cooperation with WMO did not continue during the biennium. The cooperation with ICS-UNIDO was instead formalized and it resulted in joint activities carried out for the implementation of the PRTR Project and the launching of one pre-investment study in the framework of the GEF Project.

Cooperation with the Cleaner Technology Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC) in Barcelona was strengthened as part of the GEF Project and negotiations were carried out to bring MED POL and CP/RAC further closer in the framework of the long-term implementation of the SAP.

A new Agreement was signed with the Universities of Genoa and Alessandria, Italy, (Prof. Viarengo), to ensure the continuation of the data quality assurance activities related to biological effects monitoring.

Close cooperation was ensured with MED GOOS and, as a result, MED POL has been acting as formal partner of the MAMA Project and responsible for one work package of the Project.

The MED POL Secretariat continued to have close working relations with the existing sub-regional Agreements of the region. In particular, cooperation was ensured with RA.MO.GE. (France, Monaco, Italy) in the framework of monitoring and, in relation to the implementation of SAP, for the preparation of national baseline budget of releases. In this framework, RA.MO.GE. contributed to the preparation of the methodology and of the software that is now being used by all countries. Cooperation was also strengthened with the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (AII) in the framework of monitoring and river basin management and plans were made for concrete future joint work.

Full cooperation was continued with GEF and the partners of the GEF Project. In particular, negotiations were made to finalize the terms of cooperation with FFEM; as a result, the formal signature of an Agreement will be made soon for the transfer of the funds and the implementation of the activities.

Contacts were maintained with the office of the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP and with a number of Regional Seas Programmes. In particular, financial support was provided by UNEP for cooperation with NOWPAP and an MOU is being formalized with PERSGA for cooperation and exchange of experience at no cost for MAP. Close contacts were also maintained with OSPAR and HELCOM, mostly to ensure harmonization of programmes and methodologies.

The MED POL Secretariat actively participated in the work of UNEP for the preparation of a global assessment of persistent toxic substances (PTS) requested by the UNEP Governing

Council in 1997. In particular, one staff member of MED POL acted as team member for the work which was carried out for the Mediterranean region as part of the global assessment, and all the available MED POL data were put at the disposal of the team. The Mediterranean regional assessment was published by UNEP in 2002.

The MED POL Secretariat participated at the process of preparation of the Marine Strategy launched by the European Commission. Close contacts were ensured at all times with the EC Secretariat to ensure harmonization of programmes and it was agreed to further strengthen cooperation in terms of monitoring, reporting and SAP implementation. In addition, the MED POL Secretariat closely worked with the European Environment Agency (EEA) in the field of monitoring data reporting and management aiming at finding appropriate solutions to streamline the flow of data from European/Mediterranean countries.

In view of the completion of MED POL Phase III in 2005, the Secretariat has initiated the process of revision of the present Programme to be able to propose a new programme with new objectives and principles to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2005. The first steps have been to collate and process information on recent developments at the regional and international levels, including the Johannesburg Summit, the European Commission but also the other Regional Seas Programmes. The successes and gaps of the present Programme are also being taken into account. Although the process of preparing a new Programme will mostly be achieved during next biennium, during 2003 the Secretariat plans to start identifying, with the help of Mediterranean experts, the basic elements which will be used for the formulation of the future Programme.

2. Implementation of the LBS Protocol and the Strategic Action Programme

National Action Plans (NAPs)

On the basis of the SAP implementation work plan, financially supported by the Mediterranean GEF Project, Mediterranean countries are expected to formulate their NAPs to address pollution from land-based activities by the year 2003 with a view at making them fully operational by the year 2005. As a result, during the 2002-2003 biennium, the Secretariat, making use of the Mediterranean GEF Project funds, prepared Guidelines for the preparation of the National Diagnostic Analysis (NDA) and Baseline Budget of Releases (BB) (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.3) which constitute the basis and the first step for the preparation of the NAPs. In addition, in cooperation with RAMOGE a software and a data base were prepared to be used by national experts and authorities in the estimation of releases from the industrial sectors included in the annex A of the LBS Protocol, in case of data not available. Finally, with the financial assistance of GEF, the Secretariat contracted in each country experts designated by the National Coordinators to assist them in the implementation of these two activities at the national level.

Due to the complexity of the exercise being undertaken by national authorities from one side and the organizational difficulties of the Secretariat on the other, with the assistance of SAP/GEF and in cooperation with PAP/RAC and CP/RAC, the Secretariat organized in Catania in December 2002 a Meeting with Government-designated experts to review and coordinate the activities dealing with the preparation of NAPs for the implementation of the SAP and to streamline MED POL and GEF cooperation (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.212/4).

In order to increase the prospect of success of the preparation of NDA and BB and to assist the national experts in their activities, the Secretariat, with the assistance of a regional expert and with financial support from GEF, organized five sub-regional meetings for the national experts responsible for the preparation of NDA and BB. The objectives of these meetings were to:

- review and discuss the Guidelines for the preparation of NDA and BB;
- harmonize the outputs of the national experts;
- enhance the horizontal cooperation between experts from different countries that could have similar environmental problems;
- constitute a Mediterranean SAP hub which could play a major role in the implementation of NAPs

As a result of the sub-regional meetings, a report was prepared for consideration by the MEDPOL Coordinators which outlines the national plans for the implementation of NDA and BB, as described by the national experts, and pinpoints the difficulties and the assistance that would be needed to overcome them (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.4).

So far the Secretariat has received seven National Diagnostic Analysis and one baseline budget report. In order to harmonize the information included in the reports, the secretariat is reviewing them with the assistance of a regional expert, and comments are being sent to the national experts for consideration and finalization. These reports represent the basis for the preparation of National Action Plans.

Pollution hot spots and sensitive areas

One of the major activities the results of which are expected to have direct impact on the preparation of NAPs is the preparation of pre-investment studies in pollution hot spots supported by the GEF Project.

In order to implement the activity, an expert Meeting was organized to examine and finalize appropriate criteria for the prioritization of transboundary pollution hot spots (Athens 5-6 April, 2001). The meeting was attended by eleven participants, out of whom eight were from GEF eligible countries. The meeting formulated the criteria for the prioritisation of the pollution hot spots taking into consideration the potential risk of transboundary effects.

Following the Meeting of experts, all Mediterranean countries were consulted, in order to provide their consensus on the criteria to be followed. Only minor remarks were made to the criteria to be used for the selection of priority hot spots for the preparation of pre-investment studies. These remarks were incorporated into the proposed criteria and formed the material that was sent to the GEF eligible countries, asking them to revise the national report on hot spots prepared in 1997 and also to fill in appropriate tables indicating the potential risk of transboundary effects. The same was also followed for the GEF non-eligible countries. The exercise was completed in 2003, and all countries updated their national pollution hot spots areas by providing the necessary information, in accordance to the decision taken by the Contracting Parties during their last ordinary meeting. The collection of information regarding the national hot spots areas, including the area's natural characteristics and the pressures, as well as a comparison between the old and recent data, appear in document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/5).

Due to the complexity of the above mentioned work, the Secretariat, under the technical responsibility of WHO/MED POL and the financial assistance of GEF, contracted experts from each country, who contributed considerably to the whole exercise.

The GEF eligible countries were asked by the GEF Project Management to apply socio-economic criteria, prepared by METAP, for the prioritisation of pollution hot spots for the preparation of pre-investment studies.

The revised country reports, with the data and information on the potential risk of transboundary effects and on the application of socio-economic criteria for the prioritisation of pollution hot spots to be selected for pre-investment studies, were considered by an *Ad-hoc*

Technical Committee for the Pollution hot spots, held in Athens, from 28-29 January 2002. The Committee adopted a preliminary priority list of pollution hot spots for pre-investment studies.

The preliminary priority list of pollution hot spots for the preparation of pre-investment studies was communicated to the countries. The countries were required to express their opinion regarding the proposed hot spot(s) in the country for the preparation of a pre-investment study and to provide their position either at national or local level regarding the follow-up investments. This was required in order to avoid the preparation of pre-investment studies for hot spots having high uncertainty for investment. The final priority list of pollution hot spots for the preparation of pre-investment studies was prepared and adopted by the Second *Ad hoc* Technical Committee held in Tirana in March 2002. As a contribution to the activity, METAP was asked to prepare generic Terms of Reference (TORs) for the preparation of pre-investment studies, which are being used to prepare the TORs in each country.

Following the decisions of the *Ad hoc* Technical Committee and the Inter-Agency Steering Committee concerning the preparation of pre-investment studies, expert missions to revalidate the proposed pollution hot spots (i.e. to prepare TORs for the preparation of pre-investment studies, to assess the costs for the preparation of pre-investment studies and to identify an implementing agency) were organized in five countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Syria and Turkey) during the period May-September 2002.

The mission reports and draft TORs were sent to the five countries for comments. Four countries agreed with TORs and signed a letter of agreement for the preparation of the pre-investment study. Only one country (Bosnia and Herzegovina) has so far accomplished the procurement procedure for the selection of a consultant, and signed contract with UNEP/MAP for financial assistance for the preparation of a pre-investment study.

Slovenia recently proposed a new pollution hot spot for pre-investment study. The process of its revalidation is under way.

FFEM, as the main partner for this action, has decided that it would directly support the preparation of pre-investment studies in four countries (Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia) by applying the same procedure applied for the other countries in the context of the GEF Project. However, after the initial contacts with the countries and the exploratory missions, the activities on the preparation of pre-investment studies were not initiated. FFEM submitted in September 2002 the proposal for a framework agreement between FFEM and MEDU concerning their contribution to the GEF project. The negotiations on the proposed agreement were recently positively concluded and the agreement will be signed soon.

ICS/UNIDO is directly supporting the preparation of one pre-investment study in Croatia. The contract between ICS/UNIDO and the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning for the preparation of the study has been signed, and the activities on the preparation of the study were initiated recently.

So far, only one GEF eligible country is not participating in this activity.

A consultation Meeting on the criteria for the prioritization of pollution sensitive areas was held in Athens in November 2002. In accordance with the recommendations made by the participants on the proposed criteria, a final draft was prepared which was circulated for comments among the MED POL National Coordinators. The final criteria as amended were used to produce a document on the revised national pollution sensitive areas, indicating by category the immediate measures to be taken. The report on pollution sensitive areas is presented as information document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.14).

Municipal Sewage

Concerning municipal pollution, a number of activities were carried out to facilitate the countries' implementation of the related SAP targets and to provide basic tools for the preparation of NAPs.

A "Meeting of Government designated experts to revise regional Guidelines to support SAP" was convened by WHO/MED POL in Athens, from 8-10 April 2003. The following Guidelines were discussed: (i) sewage treatment and disposal, (ii) municipal wastewater reuse and (iii) management of coastal litter. Fourteen Government-designated experts attended the meeting with the presence of five temporary advisors. Their comments and remarks were taken into consideration and were included in the final drafts. Guidelines (i) and (ii) are dealt with under this chapter while Guidelines (iii) is dealt with under "Solid Wastes" below.

The Guidelines for municipal wastewater reuse in the Mediterranean region were also developed as requested by the last meeting of MED POL Coordinators, considering that these are strictly related to the Guidelines for sewage treatment and disposal. The draft Guidelines were prepared by two regional experts and were presented during the Workshop on "Water recycling and reuse practices in Mediterranean countries", which was attended by international experts from all over the Mediterranean, in order to include all necessary aspects on the subject. Following the suggestions made at that meeting, a final draft was presented to the meeting of Government-designated experts, held in Athens in April 2003. Their comments and suggestions were taken into consideration and are included in the final draft presented to this meeting as information document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.6).

The Guidelines for sewage treatment and disposal in the Mediterranean region, were prepared by an expert in collaboration with WHO/MED POL. As a general procedure for the preparation of Guidelines, the draft document was reviewed by a team of experts, so as to include general comments and provide guidance for the preparation of a working draft. Following the comments of the experts, the draft was presented at the meeting of Government designated experts for further comments and the final draft has now been produced as document (UNEP(DEC)/MED/WG.231/6).

A Workshop on Water recycling and reuse practices in Mediterranean countries was convened within the framework of the "International Symposium on water reclamation and reuse", held in Iraclio, Greece, from 26-29 September 2002, organized by the International Water Association. The workshop was jointly organized by WHO/MED POL and the Union of National Associations of Water Services on 25 September 2002. Fifty-two experts participated and among other issues they discussed and gave remarks on the draft Guidelines of municipal wastewater reuse.

A document on "Wastewater Reclamation and Reuse in the Mediterranean Region", was prepared with the support and collaboration of national experts. The document, that appears as information document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.5), provides in its first part the basic concepts of wastewater reclamation and reuse technologies, as well as the reuse categories, while the second part addresses the issue of wastewater reuse practices in the Mediterranean region and supplies information on each of the Mediterranean countries.

Solid Wastes

Guidelines on coastal urban solid wastes management were prepared during the biennium as part of MEDPOL and the GEF Project in support to the implementation of the SAP document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/7). The Guidelines consider the findings of the assessment report on coastal litter in the Mediterranean prepared during the previous

biennium. They include the state-of-the-art management tools for urban solid waste in general and specifically those that could be implemented in coastal areas in order to reduce the releases of solid waste into the marine environment. The Guidelines stressed on the importance of reuse-recycling and environmental management of landfill dumping sites as potential tools to reach the objectives. They were also prepared focusing on the management of coastal litter, being the major subject related to SAP. Following the review of the first draft by a team of experts, the draft was presented to the meeting of Government designated experts, held in Athens from 8-10 April 2003. The document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/7) reflects the comments and suggestions made by the experts during the above mentioned meeting.

Air Pollution

No special activities were implemented under this subject identified by the SAP. In trying to meet the agreed targets, the countries were expected to be in close contact with the regional and international competent Organizations and Convention Secretariats for the implementation of programmes and measures foreseen by the existing legal instruments such as the EU Directives and the Kyoto Protocol. Concerning the related issue of climate change, the Secretariat has followed the related development at the scientific and policy level and will regularly report to the Contracting Parties on Mediterranean-related issues.

Industrial Pollution

Concerning industrial pollution, the activities directly related to the Preparation of NDAs and BBs are dealt with under the chapter "National Action Plans" above.

In addition to those, in the context of the implementation of GEF project as a support to the SAP implementation, the Secretariat prepared Guidelines and Regional Plans as follows.

The Guidelines for the management of industrial wastewater in the Mediterranean region, were prepared and reviewed by a team of Mediterranean experts prior to their submission for further comments to the Expert's meeting on the Management of Industrial wastes, held in Split, Croatia from 18-20 March 2003. During that meeting, the experts examined the above draft Guidelines and suggested a number of amendments to the text. The final draft presented here as document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/8), includes the comments and suggestions made during the above mentioned meeting.

Also, Guidelines for the development of ecological status and stress reduction indicators were prepared and are presented to this Meeting as document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/18).

Three Regional Plans were also prepared to be used by the countries as a contribution to the long-term implementation of the SAP targets. They are related to (i) the management of PCBs and the nine pesticides (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/9), (ii) the management of hazardous wastes including an inventory of hazardous wastes (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/10), (iii) the reduction of input of BOD by 50 per cent by the year 2005 from industrial sources (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/11). These documents were sent to MEDPOL National Coordinators for comments. In addition, experts from the region reviewed exhaustively the documents and updated them in the course of experts meetings organized jointly by MEDPOL, WHO/MED POL and CP/RAC with the financial assistance of the GEF project. The Plans are now presented to this Meeting for approval.

In addition to the above, CP/RAC prepared a technical document related to the application of BAT and BEP in industries which was reviewed by experts and that will be presented to Meeting of CP/RAC Focal Points.

According to the SAP, the process of updating of the national regulations for point sources discharges of pollutants from industrial sources should have started in 2002 with the assistance of the Secretariat. In this context, the Secretariat believes that the numerous Guidelines and technical documents prepared could serve as a solid basis for countries to initiate the process.

As a result to the interest of Mediterranean countries in responding to their growing water demands through the creation of new sea water desalination plants, the Secretariat held in Forli, Italy, in May 2002 a consultative Meeting with Government-designated experts and with the assistance of two experts in desalination from Kuwait and Germany. As a result of the Meeting, Guidelines for "environmental management of sea water desalination plants in the Mediterranean region" were prepared (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/12). The Guidelines mostly focus on the proper siting of the desalination plants aiming at reducing the impact on the marine environment. The subject of desalination is dealt with under this chapter in view of the recommendation of the Meeting in Forli' to consider desalination an industrial activity and therefore subject to the provisions of the LBS Protocol. This recommendation is brought to the attention of the MED POL National Coordinators for comments.

Monitoring

The ongoing monitoring programmes which had been finalized during the period 1999-2000 in Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia and Turkey were revised during the 2002-2003 period. In addition to those, other two national programmes were finalized in Tunisia and Israel. A new draft programme was received from Syria, comments were provided by the Secretariat and a final draft is now expected. After discussing the basic elements of its national programme, a new draft programme is now expected from Lebanon. A technical meeting with the national experts of Morocco has been planned during 2003 in order to formulate their MED POL Phase III Monitoring Programme. Unfortunately, the draft programmes of Algeria and Malta could not be finalized during this period. Work has started with Italy in order to harmonize their comprehensive national monitoring network with the MED POL Phase III monitoring objectives. Negotiations are in course with France, Monaco and Spain to formulate programmes based on MED POL requirements.

Financial assistance was provided for the implementation of monitoring activities during 2002-2003 to Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece and Slovenia for a total amount of 85,000 and in the same period 5 new GCs were installed in Algeria, Croatia, Slovenia, Syria and Turkey. The above funds have to be accounted together with the 249,000 USD which were provided to Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Israel, Slovenia, Tunisia, Turkey at the end of 2001. Additional financial assistance is still available for countries who will finalize or revise their programme this year.

According to the recommendations of the previous MED POL National Coordinators Meeting (Venice, 2001), the Secretariat prepared a proposal for an eutrophication monitoring strategy in Mediterranean coastal waters. The draft proposal was first discussed with Government-designated experts and other scientists during the Review Meeting of Monitoring Activities (Rome, 2001). Then it was reviewed and finalized during an expert consultation meeting (Athens, 2002). The finalized monitoring strategy is now presented in document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/14).

The programme initially proposes the implementation of a short-term strategy covering the basic indicators of eutrophication which are supporting the Trix index. As a first step, a quality assurance programme has been organized in cooperation with IAEA/MEL and ICRAM. In this context, a draft reference methods manual for the analysis of nutrients and phytoplankton pigments in sea water was prepared (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.9). A training course on the technical operators of the proposed programme, mainly concentrating on the biological parameters, will be organized on 9-13 June 2003 in Italy.

Regarding the establishment of the new database of MED POL, most of the work has been achieved. Firstly, the conceptual model of the database was prepared and then discussed thoroughly and agreed by an experts consultation Meeting which was held in Athens (14-15 March 2002). Later, all the components of the database were developed including the internet module. The details of the work carried out are presented in documents (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/13) and (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.8). The database has recently been installed and all the available data of the ongoing monitoring programmes for the period 1999-2002 have been loaded to the database. Since some of 2001-2002 data are still expected from the MED POL national Institutes, the overall loading will be completed later during 2003. Some of the technical problems faced during the loading procedure are discussed in document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/13).

Concerning research and assistance for emerging issues, which during the biennium focused on the preparation of the eutrophication monitoring strategy, partial support was provided for the organization of a workshop on environmental impacts of mariculture and possible mitigation strategies (Eilat, October 2002) and a research project was financed in Slovenia on the Influence of fish farming on coastal marine sediments.

As in the past, support for travel and subsistence was provided to several Mediterranean scientists who presented results of their work related to the MED POL Programme at scientific meetings and workshops.

In relation to the work which has to be carried out on rivers and river basins as a consequence of the expected entry into force of the revised LBS Protocol, the Secretariat, with the financial assistance of the GEF Project, prepared comprehensive basic Guidelines for Monitoring of Mediterranean rivers document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/15). The Guidelines include all aspects related to river monitoring in the context of the SAP. This document was sent to the MED POL National Coordinators for comments. A Power Point presentation was also prepared to be used as basic information for the regional and national training courses planned as part of the GEF Project. This set will be translated into national languages whenever needed. The Secretariat is proposed to gradually initiate implementing specific and basic activities and programmes related to river monitoring to be able to assist in the near future countries to fulfil their obligations towards the new LBS Protocol.

It had been planned to hold a meeting of Government designated experts during 2002 to discuss and possibly finalize the existing Mediterranean interim quality criteria for bathing waters. However, due to the fact that the new Directive of the EU on bathing waters has been drafted but not yet adopted, it was decided, in order to ensure harmonization in the region, to postpone the meeting towards the end of 2003, hoping that in the meantime the EU Directive would be finalized and the values of the microbiological indicators adopted.

Capacity building

As a follow up to the Regional training course on Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants Operation and Management held during the preceding biennium, a number of national training courses were organized by WHO/MED POL and held during the period under review.

To fulfil the needs of these courses the training material was translated and was made available in the following languages: Arabic, Croatian, English, French, Greek and Turkish.

One national training course, which was held in Arabic, took place in Tripoli, Libya, from 12-16 May 2002. The course was co-organized by the Environment General Authority (EGA) of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and was attended by twenty-one participants, coming from various treatment plants spread around the country. For the usefulness of the course, EGA collaborated with the General Company of Water and Wastewater, which is the public authority in Libya responsible for the operation of wastewater treatment plants.

A national training course, which was held in Croatian, took place in Rijeka, Croatia, from 15-18 October 2002. The course was co-organized by the Croatian Ministry of Environment in collaboration with "Croatian Waters", and was attended by 28 participants from Croatia and 3 from Slovenia. This training course offered the opportunity, both to Croatia and Slovenia, to work together and collaborate on issues of common interest. During the course some trainers requested to use the training material for teaching in universities and elsewhere.

A national workshop on municipal wastewater treatment was held in Tirana, Albania, from 16-17 October 2002. The workshop focused on the use of natural systems in Albania. In fact, in view of the present absence of treatment plants in this country, it was decided to focus on the possibilities given by the natural systems.

A number of national training courses are planned to be held later this year and during the next biennium. The first one will be held in Damascus, Syria with the cooperation of the Syrian Ministry of Environment.

A regional training course to "train the trainers" on environmental inspection systems, took place in Nicosia, Cyprus, from 4-8 November 2002. The training material was especially prepared for the needs of this course as well as for the national training courses to follow. The participants are now expected to organize similar national training courses in their respective countries by using the same training material. For this purpose, the training material was translated into Arabic, Croatian, French and Spanish. In this connection, a national workshop on environmental inspections is being held in May 2003 in Sancti Petri (Sevilla), Spain, co-organized by WHO/MED POL and the regional environmental department. More than thirty senior national experts are expected to participate from all over the country.

During the biennium, a training course was also organized by CP/RAC in the application of cleaner production techniques.

Training activities on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) were carried out during the biennium in the context of the implementation of the SAP and as part of the GEF Project. The activities, organized in Tunis at the CITET and supported by METAP, included a regional workshop and two train-the trainer workshops for national experts, one in English language and one in French.

As in the past, capacity building activities (training, data quality assurance and intercalibration) for the implementation of national monitoring programmes continued during the 2002-2003 biennium under the technical supervision of IAEA/MEL. In particular, two training courses on analysis of organic contaminants were held in Monaco for twelve scientists and, for inorganic contaminants, three scientists were trained in 2002 and a new course is scheduled in 2003. Intercalibration exercises for contaminants in biota and sediments were carried out in 2002 and 2003.

Public Participation

Concerning the activities related to enhance public participation in the process of implementation of SAP, the preparation of a common methodology is planned for the end of 2003, making use of funds from the GEF Project. Subsequently, assistance will be provided to individual countries to apply the agreed methodology on a national basis.

The activities related to enhance public participation in the process of implementation of the SAP will be a joint effort by MAP and all its components, based on the MAP's Strategy on Information and Public Awareness approved by the Contracting Parties. On its part, MED POL will continue to involve NGOs in its activities and will try to diffuse as much as possible information to the public on the SAP content and its objectives.

Reporting

A draft reporting system covering the Convention and all the Protocols has been prepared by MAP and is being tested in a number of countries. Reporting on the application of the SAP has not been included so far in the MAP reporting system in view of the complexity of the SAP and the evident difference in nature of the action contained therein (e.g. policy action, pollution reductions, implementation of action plans, etc.). Considering that SAP should eventually be included in the system, the Secretariat has prepared a draft report entitled "Evaluation of compliance under the provisions of the SAP" (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/16) which is presenting to this Meeting for comments and approval. The document outlines in detailed forms the necessary information that countries have to collate in order to report on their compliance with SAP activities.

As indicated in the SAP, information on levels and trends of loads of pollution will continue to be collected through MED POL as a result of the national monitoring programmes, used for regular assessments and published on the MAP Technical Report Series or other specific volumes.

In the framework of the implementation of Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) pilot project in Alexandria, Egypt, being implemented in cooperation with International Centre for Science and High Technology (ICS) - UNIDO, the PRTR unit in Alexandria has continued the collection of data from the six industrial partners according to agreed formats.

As a result of the successful launching of the Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) pilot project in Egypt, the MEDPOL Secretariat, in the cooperation of ICS-UNIDO, has prepared three documents entitled:

- Guidelines to complete the Mediterranean PRTR reporting format taking into consideration the EPER reporting system and other relevant documents (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.10);
- Data base for storing and processing PRTR data (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.11);
- Process simulation as a tool for quantification of releases from industrial sites (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.12).

These documents would be considered as the basis for the any additional PRTR system that could be implemented in other Mediterranean countries. For this reason, they have been translated into French and Arabic and could be translated into other languages, if needed.

In order to promote the development of PRTR in additional countries, a Government-designated Experts Meeting is scheduled for 23-24 June 2003 in Alexandria with the following objectives:

- to review the implementation of the Pilot project in Alexandria and learn lessons from it;
- to adopt a list of chemicals and industrial sectors to be considered at regional levels;
- to adopt the reporting format and related Guidelines.

As a follow up to a request of the MEDPOL National Coordinators at their last Meeting in Venice in 2001, the Secretariat organized an experts meeting to elaborate a concept paper for Marine Pollution Indicators (MRI) to be adopted as a tool for national reporting on the effectiveness of the implementation of Dumping, Hazardous waste and LBS Protocols and the SAP. The document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/17) proposes to apply the DSPIR approach and a framework for the calculation of a core as well as supplementary sets of MRI falling under three types of indicators: concentration of chemicals, change in the marine ecosystem and biomarkers. The concept document proposes the use of the indicators generated in the framework of the MCSD for environment and development. The approach is in line with the EEA activities in the framework of indicators.

Other activities related to the LBS Protocol and the SAP

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) is considered a very important document for the quantity and quality of information that it contains and a very useful background for all the MED POL activities. As part of the process of revising the 1997 version of the TDA, financially supported by the GEF Project, during 2002-2003 one coordinator and several experts were recruited to review and amend the various chapters of the TDA. In addition, a Meeting was held in January 2003 to review the content of the chapters and to harmonize the document. The final version of the TDA will be ready by the end of the year. Considering that on the one hand the TDA should serve GEF purposes and thus should follow a specific format, and that on the other hand the TDA contains valuable information that could be useful for the future development of MEDPOL activities, the Secretariat, on the basis of its content, intends to prepare two documents, i.e. a shorter TDA report as requested by GEF and a larger assessment report on the sources and impacts of transboundary materials in the Mediterranean.

As a follow up to the activities carried out since the precedent biennium, draft Guidelines for environmental inspection systems were prepared on the basis of the recommendations of the Meeting of the Informal Network on Environmental Inspections, held in Sorrento, in 2001. The draft was sent to MED POL National Coordinators for comments and their comments and suggestions were incorporated into a new draft that is presented to this Meeting as information document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/19). Considering the importance of the subject and the need for a full application of the Guidelines, it was felt that additional information was needed in order to facilitate the implementation of the Guidelines. To that purpose, a Reference Handbook was developed to assist the countries and provide further information concerning their application. The Reference Handbook is divided in four parts:

Part I: Organizational Issues, Part II: General Procedural Issues, Part III: Human Infrastructure, and Part IV: Sampling. Each part was drafted by a Mediterranean expert holding long-standing experience on the subject and all four parts were later on reviewed by another team of experts with the assistance of WHO/MED POL. The Reference Handbook including Parts I-IV is presented to this Meeting as information document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/Inf.13).

Activities related to environmental inspection were also carried out by the Secretariat at the national level. Within the framework of strengthening and enhancing the environmental inspection systems, and following discussions with the Syrian Ministry of Environment, WHO/MED POL has implemented the following activities in Syria:

- (i) Preparation of a document on major industrial activities in the Hot Spots areas in Syria, as a feasibility study for environmental inspections in Syria.
- (ii) Following the preparation of the above document, an expert mission took place in Syria to visit various industries and collect relevant information on the subject.
- (iii) Prior to visiting the industries located in the coastal area of Syria, a one-day workshop on the necessity of Environmental Inspections was held in Damascus, on 2 April 2002 with the participation of 35 experts from different governmental bodies. During the workshop a number of presentations were given on major inspection items, followed by a discussion on related national issues.
- (iv) As a final step, a general work plan and timetable for strengthening environmental inspections in Syria was prepared that includes preparation and planning of environmental inspections, training abroad for decision making personnel, training at national level of the inspectors and supervision of the establishment of the inspection system in Syria.

The same activities were carried out in Libya. Following contacts with the General Environment Authority, an expert travelled to Libya in May 2002, to visit a number of major industries and have discussions with the responsible officers dealing with inspections. As a result, a preliminary document was prepared containing a general plan for strengthening the environmental inspections in Libya including a work plan and a timetable.

Coordination and Implementation of the GEF Project

The activities of the GEF Project were planned and are being implemented as support to the implementation of the SAP. The activities of the Project are therefore all connected to the work plan of MAP and/or the MED POL Programme. Thus the activities implemented through the Project are not reported separately but are included in the various chapters of this document according to their subject. This chapter reports on general coordination activities.

The Project "Determination of priority actions for the further elaboration and implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Mediterranean Sea" (GF/ME/6030-00-08), whose overall objective is to improve the quality of the marine environment in the Mediterranean Region by better shared-management of land-based pollution, through improved international cooperation in the management of land-based pollution of transboundary and regional significance, was approved by the GEF Council in 2000 in order to create a sound environment in the Region for the implementation of the SAP at the regional and the national levels. The GEF project also aims at the preparation and adoption of a Strategic Action Plan for Biodiversity (SAP BIO) for the Mediterranean, to serve the needs of the Specially Protected Areas and Biodiversity Protocol.

It is a three-year project, which was initiated at the beginning of 2001. The project is implemented by MED POL, MEDU, WHO/MED POL, PAP/RAC, RAC/CP and RAC/SPA. The main contributions to the project are from GEF, MTF and FFEM. All Mediterranean countries are participating in the project, while only 12 GEF eligible countries may receive a financial support for the implementation of various activities at the national level.

The GEF project consists of numerous activities, which are directed towards the elimination of pollution hot spots, the preparation of regional guidelines and plans for the elimination and pollution control, the capacity building, the creation of a sustainable financial platform for the continued implementation of the SAP, the preparation of a regional programme for public participation, the preparation, adoption and implementation of National Action Plans (NAP) specifically related to the elimination of pollution from land-based activities, and the preparation of SAP BIO.

The project is managed by the Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan, where a Project Management team is established. The management consists of Project Manager, Administrative Assistant and Secretary. The Project Manager reports directly to the MAP Coordinator. For the coordination and management of the project's activities several committees have been established.

The Inter-Agency Steering Committee is composed of the implementing and donor agencies. It is chaired by the leading implementing agency (UNEP), in accordance with the agreed procedures for GEF International Waters Projects and includes representatives from the UNEP GEF Coordination Unit, UNEP/MEDU, UNEP/MED POL, WHO/MED POL, GEF, UNDP, the World Bank, METAP, FFEM and UNIDO-ICS, as well as other potential donors. So far, three meetings were organized (Athens, March 2001, Tirana, March 2002, and Athens, January 2003). The meetings were informed on the development of project's activities and decided on further implementation of the project. The last meeting decided to propose the extension of the project until 2004.

The Coordination Committee is composed of the members of the Inter-Agency Steering Committee and of national coordinators for activities undertaken in the framework of the project. All Mediterranean countries nominated their national GEF coordinators. The Committee met twice (Athens, March 2001 and Tirana, March 2002). The national GEF coordinators were informed on the details of project's activities.

The *Ad-hoc* Technical Committee is composed of representative from MAP/MED POL, WHO/MED POL, the Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Plan (METAP) and its partners, GEF, FFEM and UNIDO-ICS. It is responsible for the coordination of the implementation of the pre-investment studies. It met, so far, twice (Athens, January 2002 and Tirana, March 2002). The Committee adopted the priority list of pollution hot spots for pre-investment study, approved generic terms of references for the preparation of pre-investment studies and adopted a procedure for the preparation of pre-investment studies.

The Donors meeting planned for September 2001 has been postponed until 2003, because of the delay in the adoption of the priority list of hot spots for the preparation of pre-investment studies and in order to ensure a better preparation and attract more potential donors and partners.

3. Activities related to the implementation of the Dumping Protocol

Under the provisions of Article 5 of the 1976 Dumping Protocol, national authorities are requested to keep records of the dumping activities by issuing permits and informing the Secretariat accordingly. However, as it was reported on several occasions, since the entry into force of the Protocol, only few countries have regularly reported to the Secretariat on the permits issued.

In this context, considering the relevance that dumping activities have for planning pollution monitoring and control activities and the expected entry into force of the 1995 revised Dumping Protocol, the Secretariat prepared an assessment of dumping activities for the

period of 1995-2001. The document was prepared on the basis of the information provided by countries through a questionnaire that was prepared by the Secretariat and of information available from other relevant organizations such as the London Dumping Convention Secretariat. The Assessment is presented to this Meeting as document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/20).

In order to fulfil the requirements of Art. 6 of the 1995 Dumping Protocol, during the year 2000 the Secretariat had prepared draft "Guidelines for the dumping of platforms and other man-made structures at sea". The Guidelines were reviewed and discussed during the MEDPOL Coordinators Meeting held in Venice in 2001 where the Secretariat was asked to prepare a revised version on the basis of the comments expressed during that meeting. As a result, a revised draft document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/21) was prepared accordingly and is presented for consideration and approval in view of their transmission to Contracting Parties for adoption.

In the context of the requirements of Art.6 of the 1995 Dumping Protocol, the Secretariat prepared draft Guidelines for the management of inert uncontaminated geological materials, which will complete the list of Guidelines to be prepared. The Guidelines were prepared on the basis of similar Guidelines being developed in the framework of the London Dumping Convention and the work of GESAMP. The draft Guidelines are presented to this Meeting as document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.231/22) for discussion and approval in view of their transmission to Contracting Parties for adoption.

4. Activities related to the implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol

Regarding the Hazardous Wastes Protocol, it should be noted that a number of activities aiming at preparing the ground for the future implementation of the Protocol are part of the SAP implementation plan and are being carried out during the 2002-2003 biennium, mostly as part of the GEF Project (see the chapter on Industrial Pollution above).