



United Nations Environment Programme



UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.242/5 13 January 2004

ENGLISH Original: FRENCH



MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of the Informal Network on Compliance and Enforcement

Athens, 3-5 December 2003

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE INFORMAL NETWORK ON COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

In cooperation with



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Introduction

- 1. Pursuant to Article 6 of the "LBS" Protocol, which foresees the setting up of pollution inspection systems and/or the strengthening of existing ones, a workshop of experts on compliance and enforcement of legislation in force in the Mediterranean was held in Athens in March 1999, and recommended amongst others the setting up of an informal regional network on compliance and enforcement of environmental legal provisions. The Network held its first meeting in Sorrento in March 2001.
- 2. A second meeting of the informal Network was convened in Athens from 3-5 December, 2003, one of its aims being to study the documents which had been prepared and the activities undertaken by way of follow-up to the recommendations from the Sorrento meeting.

Participation:

- 3. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following countries from the informal Network: Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, European Commission, France, Israel, Morocco, Slovenia and Turkey. The representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Syria had confirmed their attendance, but were unable to attend the meeting as a result of last minute hitches (airline strikes and bad weather). A representative of the Regional Activity Centre for Clean Production (UNEP/MAP) was also in attendance, as was a representative of EUROCHLOR/ATOFINA. The MAP Coordinating Unit was represented by the coordinator of MEDPOL, and by the WHO/MED POL Senior Scientist, who acted as secretariat to the meeting.
- 4. The full list of participants can be found in Annex I to this report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

Mr. Francesco Saverio Civili, MED POL Coordinator, welcomed participants on behalf of UNEP/MAP, stressing that the issue of compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation/regulations was becoming ever more central to MED POL and MAP's activities and meetings. Indeed, having long limited itself to the "pollution assessment" stage, MED POL was now focusing all its efforts on the "pollution control" stage, with assessment itself becoming an instrument for operational monitoring. Moreover, since the adoption of the Strategic Actions Programme in 1997, enforcement of the "LBS" Protocol had taken the shape of a pragmatic GEF-backed project for reducing and eliminating pollution, with its own specific timetable. Against this new backdrop, checking compliance with the antipollution measures and objectives established by legislation had become an essential element of the mechanism which was gradually being built up. The aim of this meeting, organised under the technical responsibility of WHO/MED POL, was to make further headway in the development of the informal Network which held its first meeting in Sorrento in March 2001, with the presentation of guidelines and a reference handbook for environmental inspection systems in the countries of the region, which would allow the countries to benefit from them. Article 6 of the "LBS" Protocol provided a very sound legal basis for all of this activity.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Agenda

6. The meeting examined and approved the provisional agenda as proposed by the Secretariat.

Agenda item 3: Scope and Purpose of the Meeting

7. Mr. George Kamizoulis, WHO/MED POL Senior Scientist, began by announcing that, for reasons beyond their control, four country representatives who had confirmed that they would attend had in fact not been able to reach Athens. Although this was most unfortunate, Mr. Kamizoulis nonetheless hoped that the coming three days would produce some substantial and fruitful work. He went on to explain the scope of the meeting. The initial task was to examine once again the Guidelines, to discuss the details of their implementation, and subsequently to examine the four parts of the Reference Handbook, which went into the detail of the various organisational, management and technical aspects of the inspection systems. The countries would thus be in possession of two general documents, which could be adapted for use in their own specific national context. Finally, bearing in mind any comments made during discussions, participants would be invited to produce recommendations on the direction to be taken and activities to be implemented within the framework of the informal Network over the forthcoming period.

Agenda item 4: Election of Officers and Organisation of Work

8. The meeting elected its Officers as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Rani Amir (Israel)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Nabil El Dafrany (Egypt) Rapporteur: Mr. Boris Zbona (Slovenia)

- 9. As to how work would be organised, the Secretariat pointed out that the report of the meeting would not be adopted by the meeting at the close of its proceedings. It would be drafted by the Secretariat over the coming days and sent out to all the members of the Network for possible comment, or for them to make any corrections which would then be included in the final version.
- 10. Taking up his duties, the Chairman of the meeting stressed that issues of compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation were increasing in scope, and were part and parcel of the complexity of our modern world, with their technical, economic, tax and society-related implications. Globally speaking, the policies involved swung like a pendulum between strict enforcement of the provisions in force, and voluntary enforcement. According to Mr. Rani Amir, a middle way needed to be found between these two approaches.

Agenda item 5: Developments on Compliance and Enforcement in the framework of MED POL

- 11. Mr. Kamizoulis made a Power Point presentation giving an overview of developments since the experts' workshop held in Athens in March, 1999, and the Network's first meeting in Sorrento in March, 2001, recalling the outcome and recommendations, some of which were related to the preparation of the documents currently before the participants. This presentation was all-the-more necessary in view of the fact that the representatives of the various countries within the Network often changed, and were thus not always familiar with any developments which may have come about in the interim.
- 12. Mr. Kamizoulis highlighted certain shortcomings in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, as a result of which in most countries there was a qualitative therefore unquantified- overview of the state of the environment, a lack of any legislative framework for cases of non-compliance with permits and regulations, and limited human infrastructures, with ill-assorted responses to the obligations incumbent upon the Contracting

Parties. This was particularly true of obligations arising from Article 6 of the "LBS" Protocol on the setting up or strengthening of inspection systems and the assistance which could be provided on request by the Secretariat for such purposes. He also recapitulated the four main types of compliance monitoring: 1) official inspection by certified inspectors; 2) self-monitoring, using records and notification; 3) community monitoring (with citizens filing complaints); and 4) environmental sampling near installations.

- 13. Concluding, the WHO/MED POL scientist stated that the current situation on inspection systems in Mediterranean countries presented a "mixed bag". Although all countries now had systems for issuing permits, and although compliance with the provisions in force was improving, with some form of verification, integrated systems did not exist across the board, enforcing the impact assessment was a problem, and BATs and clean technologies were rarely taken into account. The meeting was therefore invited to identify solutions, and to consider a programme of activities for the forthcoming biennium, with the possibility of collaborating with other networks.
- 14. All participants thanked Mr. Kamizoulis for his pertinent and exhaustive report.
- Mr. George Kremlis, representing the European Commission, stated that he felt it 15. would be desirable for all the members of the Network to work with the IMPEL network, which had been set up under the aegis of the EU, and which, apart from the EU member states and those set to become members in May 2004, also included Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Norway. The network had produced a considerable amount of material (results. quidance documents, conclusions from conferences and meetings) which was available on its website, and had also instigated working groups. Amongst others there was a joint Spanish-Greek programme concerning waste from the olive sector, which had been agreed upon at the last meeting of the network, with a proposal for minimum criteria, and this could be used as a model for other sectors. The network had also worked on integrated permitting, and organised peer reviews, a system which allowed inspectors to travel to other countries on a voluntary basis in order to share their experience and provide mutual advice concerning best inspection practices. IMPEL would take a positive view of members of the Mediterranean network taking part in these missions or in other projects, or in the many training activities it organised. Finally, the EC had ratified the Aarhus Convention, and IMPEL laid great store by public information and participation.
- 16. Responding initially to the Turkish participant seeking clarification as to what was meant by "integrated permit systems", the WHO/MED POL scientist explained that in most countries there was a whole panoply of permits depending on the criteria and the sectors involved, and that each permit tended to be issued by a different body, thus creating redtape. The idea was therefore to roll all these permits into one, national legislation permitting, thus avoiding wasting time, staff and resources. As for the comments made by the EC representative regarding IMPEL, it was true that contact with this network had been sporadic and not really followed-up by concrete cooperation. The comments made by the EC representative were thus welcomed by WHO and MED POL, regarding both the peer reviews and the prospect of having joint activities and projects. In any case, the necessary contacts would have to be made, avoiding duplication, and bearing in mind that four Contracting Parties were EU members (and 3 others soon would be). The Secretariat would in any event propose a recommendation that cooperation with other networks- starting with IMPEL-should be improved.
- 17. The MED POL Coordinator pointed out that MAP had just adopted a new reporting system, which was to be implemented in all countries starting early 2004, having already been tried out in several of them. Also, following the Catania meeting, during the next biennium an expert group would be invited to think about and prepare a project on a platform for compliance with and enforcement of the Convention, with reports being sent to the

Bureau in cases of infringement. In this perspective the informal network, which had been designed as a back-up rather than a control system, could be granted a new status within the broader framework of implementation of the "LBS" Protocol and the SAP, but it should in any case remain an internal matter for the Contracting Parties.

- 18. The EC representative pointed out that there were numerous possibilities for cooperation. The EC itself was a member of the INECE network (International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement), the next conference of which was scheduled to take place in Morocco in 2005. A link could be established so that the Mediterranean Network could participate, represented by the Coordinator of MED POL and the WHO/MED scientist.
- 19. The representative of Morocco stated that these prospects for cooperation were indeed welcome, and could prove most useful, but that the Network could become more institutional to this end. This was the first international meeting which he himself was attending as an environmental inspector. On this front, Morocco was undergoing huge changes. Three major laws had just been promulgated, stipulating that official use should be made of inspections: thus the switch was being made from a loose form of inspection to an official one, where inspectors swore an oath before a court. One of the main problems to be solved was that of coordination within the ministry of the environment between the inspectorates which answered to different and, in certain cases, very old police forces (for water, classified establishments, forests, hunting etc.). This dissipated situation had to some extent been sorted by the promulgation of a law on the impact assessment providing for a certificate of environmental acceptability, which in a sense "topped off" all the permits, whilst on the other hand companies were being helped to comply with standards through the FODEP (industrial de-pollution fund).
- 20. The WHO/MED POL scientist stated that he had noted with interest the developments coming about in Morocco, because contact with the NFP had gone somewhat awry on this front, and the country had not taken part in the regional training course. It might be advisable to plan a training course for assisting the implementation of the new Moroccan legislation.

5a. Presentation of the "Guidelines on environmental inspection systems for the Mediterranean Region"

- 21. Mr. Kamizoulis introduced the "Guidelines for environmental inspection systems for the Mediterranean region" (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.242/3), having recalled that it was at the Sorrento meeting in 2001 that their preparation and content had been decided upon. A consultant had been entrusted with drafting them, they had been circulated to the members of the informal Network, by whom they had been approved, and they had subsequently been reviewed at the meeting of national MED POL coordinators in Sangemini (May 2003). The entire process had enjoyed the support of the GEF project. It was now time to move on to the enforcement of these guidelines, and participants were invited to discuss this issue and propose methods. Mr. Kamizoulis ran through the general layout of the document, highlighting certain chapters such as inspection strategies, conducting inspection visits, self-monitoring and human resource management. The document had been deliberately kept to forty pages to make it easier and effective to consult. It was now up to the authorities and inspectors involved in each country whether or not they used them to improve their inspection systems.
- 22. During the ensuing debate, participants expressed the view that this document had accomplished some very thorough work, that it reflected the best practical approach, and that it should be distributed and promoted in the countries- it was up to them to pick out those

aspects best suited to their own situation- and possibly posted on the INECE website. Four speakers (EC, Egypt, France and Israel) felt that self-monitoring was an essential element for inclusion in the legislation, given that Mediterranean countries often lacked the resources and capacity to be able to set up enough adequately qualified inspectorates. One of these speakers (France) felt that self-monitoring presented two advantages: 1) the responsible company becoming aware of its environmental obligations; 2) a reduction in the checking authority's workload, and inspectorates should be invited to point the way using simple, polite reminders of the need to comply with the provisions in force. But, it was added (Algeria), this self-monitoring in itself required staff possessing scientific, legal and communications skills. which implied good training. Other aspects also required particular attention: the frequency of inspections (on which there was an important IMPEL report), the imposing of dissuasive and proportionate sanctions, the introduction of an environmental liability system based on the polluter pays principle, with the requirement to rehabilitate the environment. The matter of the integrated inspection system with one and the same body issuing the permits and conducting the inspections gave rise to divergent opinions; two speakers (Turkey and EC) felt that in cases of non-compliance the objectivity of the procedure could be affected when there was only one body, whilst another (Israel) believed on the contrary that it would encourage a more complete, speedy and effective regulatory cycle. Three representatives (Algeria, Cyprus and Egypt) mentioned the need to accredit more laboratories using standardised methods of analysis, so that they could provide the possibility of recourse for companies and administrations against which proceedings were being brought, and so that homogeneous, comparable results could be produced throughout the entire region, which raised the issue of a regional or national accreditation procedure. Finally, one representative (Morocco) requested a demonstration project for the Guidelines in one or more Mediterranean countries. His own country struck him as being particularly well-suited insofar as it was in a stage of transition and needed to set up a network to coordinate the various police forces responsible for inspection missions.

- 23. On a slight tangent, the representative of Algeria informed participants about the major legislative work in which his country was involved, particularly with the revision of the law on environmental protection within the framework of sustainable development, the implementing texts for which were in the process of being promulgated, and which should mean that certain constraints such as the lack of manpower could gradually be removed. For the time being, Algeria had 48 inspectors for 48 wilayas, each being backed up by a multi-sectoral commission. One point in the guidelines which he felt needed to be emphasised was the one concerning the "out-of-court settlement" or "compromise" which Algeria applied to classified plants of strategic importance in the form of "performance contracts", which were a way of avoiding entire sectors of the national economy being excessively hard-hit by repressive measures.
- 24. On the issue of laboratory accreditation (or certification) the WHO/MED POL scientist recalled that MED POL was cooperating with the Monaco-based IAEA/MEL to ensure that laboratories working within the framework of national pollution monitoring programmes could participate in collective inter-comparison and inter-calibration exercises. This allowed them to check the quality of their analysis procedures, their measurements and data. The Secretariat felt that the meeting should draw up a recommendation on accreditation.
- 25. The representative of EUROCHLOR, the branch of CEFIC (European chemical industry) dealing with chlorine, which embraces 43 companies, pointed out that for some twelve years now his federation had been requiring its companies to monitor chlorinated products, and that one of the problems it faced was the lack of homogeneity over the years in the analysis procedures followed. It was absolutely essential to standardise methods if valid comparisons were to be made.

- 26. Mr. Kamizoulis picked up on this last comment in order to point out that the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development also included representatives of the socio-economic sector- such as EUROCHLOR- and that in this respect it provided some useful contacts for consulting industrial companies. Otherwise, many of the anti-pollution measures adopted were in danger of proving ineffectual or being wrongly interpreted by those mainly concerned.
- 27. The representative of CP/RAC, having mentioned the Barcelona Centre's work in promoting cleaner technologies and procedures in industry, expressed his belief that what he felt was an essential point had so far been left out of the comments made by participants-pollution prevention. How could this approach be included in the inspector's training?
- 28. Two participants echoed this comment, pointing out that it was cheaper and less painful to prevent pollution rather than controlling and possibly suppressing it. But this raised the issue of the professionalism of the inspector, who would need to be able to advise about prevention, in other words to be well-versed in best environmental practices, cleaner production methods, correct product packaging, etc. Another participant felt that basic training alone could not achieve this, and that the inspector would require on-going training to keep him abreast of the latest technological developments.
- 29. At the end of this discussion, and having been given more details by Morocco regarding its demonstration proposal, the Secretariat declared its willingness to examine it in view to providing some specific follow-up, and thus see how the Guidelines could be applied in Morocco. This could prove of interest to other countries.

5b. Presentation of the Reference Handbook on Compliance and Enforcement of Environmental Provisions in the Mediterranean Region (parts I – IV)

- 30. Mr. Kamizoulis recalled that it was the MED POL national coordinators who had decided to draw up the Reference Handbook in four parts, circulated with the reference UNEP(DC)/MED WG.242/4-a,b,c, and d, as a back-up to the Guidelines, dealing with all aspects of the inspection programme in detail. Given the differences between the Mediterranean countries, the Secretariat felt that these would be better taken into account, whilst at the same time giving for a fuller, more objective and better balanced document, if four consultants- two of them non-Mediterraneans- were each asked to draft one of the four parts. A further consultant, entrusted with the previously examined Guidelines, had been responsible for coordinating and revising the four parts of the Handbook. Finally, each consultant had revised the parts drafted by the other three, in order to avoid any repetition wherever this was not inevitable given the inter-linkages between the themes under discussion.
- 31. Mr. Kamizoulis introduced parts I, III and IV, with the respective titles of "Organisational Issues" (Mr. Yasser Sherif, Egypt), "Human Infrastructure" (Mr. Duncan, United-Kingdom), and "Sampling" (Robert Kramers, Netherlands). Mr. Rani Amir (Israel), chairman of the meeting, introduced part II entitled "General Procedural Issues", which he himself had drafted.
- 32. The Chairman invited the country representatives to comment in turn on the document as a whole, in terms of their own national situation. In Egypt there was a different system, involving two separate stages: first came the "auditors" who conducted an environmental audit and could offer negotiation without dealing with the legal issues: 60 days later, should an infringement be notified, the inspectors then stepped in to force compliance with the legislation, or where needs be to extend the negotiation, which often led to a good compromise in both industry and agriculture; due to a lack of manpower auditors sometimes

also acted as inspectors, without however mixing up their responsibilities in these two roles; both the Handbook and the Guidelines contained some very useful ideas and recommendations, but political backing would be needed before they could be put into practice. In Turkey it could not be convenient to apply the Handbook to the whole environmental inspection system, since under their new system an annual inspection of the installations is organised at national level by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, with 26 certified inspectors as well as 26 inspectors who completed their training but are not yet certified inspectors for the entire country; there were, however, also regional and local level inspections, and each institution had its own inspection system (for example, the Ministry of Health for environmental health matters). As far as Slovenia was concerned, the Handbook was instructive, particularly as the country was preparing for accession to the European Union in May 2004, and would be required to train inspectors in this new context. For a country such as Morocco, the Handbook described a rather wide-ranging inspection system with a major infrastructure; it did however have the advantage of logically pooling together activities which tended to be scattered between various bodies, and as such could provide a longer term model and act as a unifying element for the various administrations involved in inspections. In the view of Cyprus, any control procedure would always need to be backed up by a handbook containing those details which could not appear in the legislation, a purpose which the Handbook served very well. Finally, to Algeria's mind, the Handbook was well designed, even for a country which still lacked the financial means and manpower, but where an adequate structure and basis nonetheless existed. In Israel too, prior political backing would be required before this type of system could become operational, and even then there could be contradiction and conflict between departments of one and the same ministry at the enforcement stage.

- 33. The WHO/MED POL scientist concluded from the comments made around the table that the two documents under examination should not be seen as binding, but rather as instruments of "soft law" like recommendations, indicating the various possible pathways, and stressing the need for coordination. If, as certain countries had indicated, there was a lack of resources and capacity, despite its limited budget WHO/MED POL could think up some form of assistance, identify the best means, and encourage cooperation on certain aspects. These points could be covered by a recommendation from the meeting. In reply to the proposal of one delegate that each country should be invited to transpose the Guidelines into its legislation, Mr. Kamizoulis expressed the view that the Guidelines and Handbook would be better proposed as reference texts.
- 34. The meeting also felt that no specific timetable should be set for the submission of any possible reports on implementation of the inspection systems. The MAP NFPs and the national coordinators were already very busy with all manner of reports as environmental conventions and agreements mushroomed, and a new request regarding inspections would simply add to their administrative load. It would be better to put the holding of the informal Network's two-yearly meeting to good use, with the first part being dedicated to a question and answer session in order to take stock of the situation.

5c. Briefing on the assistance provided to the Contracting Parties for the Compliance and Enforcement of Legislation.

35. The WHO/MED POL scientist recapped on the assistance activities conducted over the last two years. They had first and foremost involved two countries- Libya and Syria- at their request. Technical programmes had been established on the setting up or strengthening of their inspectorates, with information being collected on the types of industrial installations, consultation with outside experts sent on site, visits to inspectorates in other countries, and training courses on technical matters and inspection procedures. In Syria these activities had got underway in the Damascus area, before being provisionally

suspended due to restructuring in the environment sector, which now came under a greater Ministry for Local Administration and the Environment.

- 36. Capacity building, a further aspect of assistance, had involved the organisation of a national training course in Israel in March 2000 at the country's request, a regional training course in Cyprus in November 2002, and national courses in Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Slovenia in 2003, which had been conducted in the respective national languages and using teaching material in translated form. In Spain, a non-eligible country, a course had been organised using funding from the Mediterranean Trust Fund; it had brought together representatives from 14 of the country's 17 autonomous regions.
- 37. The representative of Slovenia spoke of the success of the national course conducted in Slovenian using Slovenian material; it had indeed been so successful that there was a great deal of pressure for a second course to be organised.

5d. Identification of gaps and possible assistance to form a programme of related activities

- 38. The EC representative pointed out that prior to any assistance programme the onthe-spot capacity needed to be checked out, and the programme adapted accordingly and with some degree of selection (whether or not to include SMEs in the list of polluting industries, for example). IMPEL would be prepared to organise field visits. Since some of the members of the Mediterranean network were also members of the IMPEL, INECE and BERCEN (Balkan countries) networks it would be possible to take some joint initiatives, for example a meeting of all the networks. On the matter of training and recruiting inspectors, two participants gave more details concerning their respective countries, where qualification, ability and seniority were all criteria. In most countries there was a notorious shortage of manpower compared with the number of plants to be inspected, and extending the responsibilities of the inspectorates' technical managers to grant them control powers would be a determining factor. Mention was also made of the difficulty of obtaining reliable information from companies. Although this could sometimes be an attempt to deliberately obscure reality, many companies actually did not know how to fill out the questionnaires sent to them, and were in need of training in this respect.
- 39. Participants identified other forms of assistance which WHO/MED POL could provide, such as creating an information document on eco-taxation using information gleaned from the bodies involved, popularisation and awareness raising projects targeting groups within civil society and the associations, and training in clean technologies and best environmental practices (BEPs).

Agenda item 6: The Direction to follow for the next biennium including possible activities

40. The participants felt that the foregoing discussions had already given them the opportunity to touch upon the main directions which should inspire and guide the Mediterranean Network's activities in 2004-2005, and they flagged up certain aspects: participation in other networks, the call for political backing, stability within the structures entrusted with representing the countries within the Network, building up inspectors' expertise regarding the various sectors of industry to be checked, the interest of bilateral exchange and "peer reviews", the possibility of the Network visiting countries in order to immerse itself and reflect within a specific context, improving the quality and homogeneity of information supplied regarding inspectorates' performances and their needs, furthering assistance and, given MED POL's limited means, seeking windows of assistance through

other organisations, with MED POL acting as a go-between or intermediary. One participant suggested setting up a regional information centre so that information could be better shared.

- 41. The representative of France stated that although he was not yet authorised to make any formal commitment on this point, he believed that his national authorities would be in a position to host a delegation from another country on the inspections issue.
- 42. Several participants raised the matter of the Network's current status, which they deemed to be a handicap. If it were to be recognised and able to develop serious cooperation at regional and international level, it would need to lose its "informal" nature and adopt an acronym to make it visible.
- 43. The MED POL Coordinator pointed out that a change in status, towards which the Network appeared to be leaning- and rightly so- would require a certain procedure in advance. At the outset in 1999, at the time of the first meeting concerning a Mediterranean network, the environmental inspection concept had still been a delicate subject for most countries, given its legal and coercive connotations, to the extent that they had opted to keep it as an informal context. Before it could become more specific and official it would require the approval of the Contracting Parties. In other words, a recommendation would need to be addressed to the Contracting Parties at their next ordinary meeting scheduled for November 2005 by the meeting of the Network to be held some months in advance; meanwhile, the preparation of draft revised terms of reference for the Network could be combined with MAP's new reporting system, implementation of the SAP, and the control mechanism for enforcement of the Convention, to be drawn up in the course of the next biennium.

Agenda item 7: Conclusions and Recommendations.

44. A set of draft recommendations was submitted to the meeting, which was adopted after due examination, and with certain changes having been made. The recommendations are as follows:

Recommendations

To the Contracting Parties

To do their utmost to provide the proper training to environmental inspectors and trainers in all related fields, including that of national legislation.

To make full use of the material prepared by MED POL and other international networks such as INECE, IMPEL etc. in their respective fields of interest, and to entrust the Secretariat with providing any relevant information.

To invite the Mediterranean countries to take part in the work of the IMPEL and other related Networks by actively participating in the groups formed, and to carry out specific tasks related to inspection procedures and topics.

To invite the higher national authorities to politically support the inspection systems in their countries, these being some of the most important tools for preserving the quality of the environment.

To coordinate inspection activities in an efficient manner, including permitting authorisations when appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of activities regarding environmental inspections.

To regularly inform the Secretariat, during the meeting of the Network, about the progress and achievements of the national inspection systems.

To the Secretariat:

To prepare the basis for the procedure of involving laboratories other than state ones in analysing samples taken during compliance inspection, through an accreditation procedure and the standardisation of methods when these are non-existent.

To further enhance cooperation with relevant networks operating in the region, such as IMPEL, BERCEN and others and, within this framework, to post the Guidelines on the IMPEL or INECE webpage.

To adequately address the need for material related to informal negotiations during the inspection of facilities.

To develop information material on financial mechanisms and fines in cases of noncompliance and undesirable activities.

To promote and support peer review activities including those related to the exchange of information and experience through visiting inspectorates in other countries.

To continue organising activities related to capacity building and in particular those regarding regional and national training courses. The training courses should, in addition to inspection procedures, also address the issue of technical inspections in specific enterprises.

To prepare information material for the managers of facilities on the methodology used by the inspectors, in order to facilitate the whole procedure. This information could be included in a CD-Rom or displayed on the website of Ministries.

To collect all relevant information concerning electronic information systems for inspections available in the countries, and disseminate the most successful ones. Moreover, a collection of the environmental laws prevailing in each country may provide useful information for other countries.

To prepare an overview document on the assessment of the performance of the inspectorates.

To strengthen the activities of the Network by providing the bases for greater cooperation between its members, and to provide substantial support for the implementation of its activities.

To begin the process for proposing to the Contracting Parties that the role of the informal Network within MAP be strengthened and enhanced, particularly within the framework of the reporting system and the compliance control mechanisms.

Agenda item 8: Closure of the Meeting.

45. Following the usual exchange of courtesies the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 12:45 on Friday, 5 December 2003.

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ANNEX I

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