



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

EP



UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.180/2
6 July 2001

ENGLISH

MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of the Inter-agency Steering Committee

Athens, Greece, 8 March 2001

**REPORT MEETING OF THE INTER-AGENCY STEERING
COMMITTEE FOR THE GEF PROJECT**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Report

1- 6

Annex I : List of Participants

Annex II : Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting

1. Mr Lucien Chabason, Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan, opened the First Meeting of the GEF Inter-Agency Steering Committee at 9.45 a.m. on 8 March 2001. At his proposal, the Meeting adopted the agenda as set out in document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.180/1.

2. Background and objectives of the project

2. Mr Chabason emphasized that the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) was of great importance for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, and in particular the Land-based Sources (LBS) Protocol. This would provide a solid basis for the future work of MAP. He reminded the meeting that the SAP had been adopted by the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Tunis in December 1997.

3. He recalled that, up to the present, MAP's activities had been focussed on monitoring activities and scientific issues, as well as common measures in certain areas. The GEF Project, which had commenced in January 2001, marked an important turning point in this respect. While MAP's activities in the fields of monitoring and other areas would remain important, the GEF Project marked the launching of a practical operational phase of MAP activities to combat marine pollution in the Mediterranean Sea. The project would be undertaken in cooperation with and between countries, including those which were not eligible to receive GEF funds. He stressed the importance of the participation of the agencies in the project and mentioned that the World Bank, METAP, ICS/UNIDO, the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) and the MAP Regional Activities Centres and WHO were involved. Another partner was the European Union, both in its capacity as a Contracting Party and as an important actor and potential donor in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

4. Introducing document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.181/3/Rev.1, *Background and operational aspects of the implementation of the project "Determination of Priority Actions for the further Elaboration and Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Mediterranean Sea*, Mr F.S. Civili, Senior Environmental Affairs Officer, briefly reviewed the significance of the SAP and the GEF Project in the context of the whole Barcelona system, as revised in 1995 and 1996 to align it with the principles endorsed at the Rio Summit in 1992. One of the commitments set out in the revised LBS Protocol was the formulation of a regional strategic action plan for the reduction and elimination of marine pollution from land-based sources as a cornerstone of MAP activities in this field. In view of the high cost of formulating the SAP, it had been necessary to seek additional funding from the UNEP/GEF Coordination Unit. With the aid of an initial small grant from the GEF Project Development Facility (PDF), the SAP had been formulated on the basis of a transboundary diagnostic analysis and a report on pollution hot spots. He emphasized that the long-term implementation of the SAP would require a solid technical, scientific and institutional basis for its application of the national level. It was precisely with a view to developing this technical, scientific and institutional basis at the regional and national levels that the present GEF Project had been planned. He added that, in addition to the SAP for the reduction and elimination of marine pollution from land-based sources, the GEF Project also included as one of its components the preparation of a SAP for biodiversity. The total cost of the GEF Project was some \$12 million, of which one half would be provided by GEF, \$1.6 million by FFEM, \$3 million in counterpart contributions in kind from the countries, \$900,000 by the Mediterranean Trust Fund, as well as funding from other sources, including METAP.

5. In conclusion, while the overall objective of the GEF Project was the reduction and elimination of marine pollution from land-based sources, a number of specific objectives had been set for the project, which were intended to lead up to the formulation of National Action

Plans (NAPs) setting out concrete basis for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities.

Implementation of the project

Hot Spots

6. Mr G. Kamizoulis, WHO-EURO Scientist, recalled that work had been carried out by MAP in 1996-1997 on the identification of pollution hot spots at the national level. However, further action was now required to revise if needed the list of national pollution hot spots to take into account new data. This would lead up to the development of a revised list of pollution hot spots, from which a number of hot spots would be selected by the Ad Hoc Technical Committee for priority action. A meeting of experts would be held in April 2001 to develop the criteria, related to transboundary effects, to be used together with socio-economic criteria in the selection process. The target of these activities was to complete the preliminary phase of the selection process so that a meeting could be held in September 2001 to select the list of hot spots to be covered by pre-investment studies. In this respect, it would be important to hold consultations with the countries concerned, particularly with regard to the sustainability of the proposed activities, or in other words, the commitment of the countries to reduce pollution. The pre-investment studies themselves would be carried out by the countries concerned with the assistance provided on the basis of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). Under the proposed schedule, all of the pre-investment studies would be completed by the end of 2003. He added that the proposed action on sensitive areas was not as urgent as the action on pollution hot spots. A meeting would therefore be held later on the subject of sensitive areas.

7. The METAP representative underlined the need for the new prioritised list of Hot Spots and the involvement of countries in this selection. He also stressed the need for developing socioeconomic criteria for the selection process in prioritising the hot spots. It was clarified by the secretariat that the Ad hoc Committee that will make the final selection and prioritisation of hot spots would do so in consultation with the countries.

8. Mr Chabason mentioned that it was foreseen that the selection of consultants for this purpose would be made at the national level (in consultation with the Secretariat and METAP).

9. The METAP representative pointed out the need for the preinvestment studies to be consistent with the aims of the GEF project and that METAP would be responsible for the provision of technical support in the preparation of the TOR. It would also supervise the consultants work to ensure quality control of the work and in evaluating the investment studies.

10. Mr Caplat clarified that the FFEM project was still at the preparatory stage and would be submitted to the Steering Committee of the FFEM when ready. He mentioned that two consultants had already been recruited. The involvement of FFEM in the hot spot activities would be decided upon when the prioritised hot spot list was ready and submitted the FFEM steering committee.

11. Mr Longo of UNIDO/ICS mentioned that ICS was ready to participate in the work and to finance one pre-investment study. He also mentioned that they would follow the guideline developed and would cooperate with METAP in this.

Regional Cooperative Actions

12. Mr Civili explained that the regional cooperative actions component of the GEF Project was intended to develop the legal, technical and administrative basis at the regional level as a platform for the investments to be made in future on the basis of National Action Plans. As such, it was a component which would benefit the whole region, including countries which were not eligible for funding under the GEF Project. The activities to be carried out included the preparation of sets of regional guidelines and plans on a range of important subjects, some of which, such as river pollution, were new in the MAP context and corresponded to the broadened scope of the revised LBS Protocol. The main responsibility for these activities would lie with MED POL and WHO-EURO. An important part of the activities under this component of the SAP concerned the development of regional guidelines and plans on clean production technologies. The RAC/CP in Barcelona would play an important role in this work. The Secretariat was currently preparing an operational document on the methods, approaches and principles for the implementation of the commitments set out in the SAP, which would be examined at a meeting to be held in Catania at the end of March 2001.

13. The proposed activities and workplan as detailed in the working document were agreed upon.

Capacity Building

14. Introducing the capacity-building component of the GEF Project, Mr Civili explained that, following the regional courses planned, the activities would mainly have a national dimension, particularly through the emphasis placed on the training of national trainers, who would then carry out further training in their own countries. This was a very important component of the SAP, which was designed to improve the capacity of national institutions to address the objectives and activities set out in the SAP. The main body of training activities would commence in 2002.

15. Mr Kamizoulis explained that while the planned training activities would be for a fixed number of countries which were eligible for GEF funding, resources would be found to cover training for more countries. Moreover, the training materials were being developed so that they could be easily translated into national languages and could be disseminated to all the countries in the region.

16. The METAP representative mentioned that METAP has already started several capacity-building activities in the field of EIA at regional and national levels. These activities include assessment of the existing situation in selected countries and identification of priority needs, organisation of national and regional workshops on EIA, and organisation of EIA training courses.

17. Mr Caplat of FFEM clarified that they had not yet chosen which of the capacity building activities they would be involved in. They could be towards national training courses and they were also interested in the development of training centres in selected countries. He mentioned again that two experts had been chosen for this purpose and that they would like countries to define their needs and come up with proposals for this.

18. Discussions continued on the need for cooperation with other national and international bodies and the CP RAC representative mentioned that such cooperation was ongoing in the field of cleaner production. The EU representative also stressed the need for such cooperation with existing institutions in Europe.

Financial Sustainability of SAP

19. Mr Trumbic, Director of PAP/RAC presented the activities foreseen and the organisational issues for the sustainability of the SAP . He mentioned that great expectations had been raised on the issue of economic instruments. He mentioned that their success is largely dependant on the political will and commitment of the national and local actors to implement them. Mr Trumbic informed the meeting that the goal of this activity is to create conditions for the successful implementation of SAP decisions after this project is terminated. The activity would first identify the most appropriate sets of economic instruments and, second, develop a sustainable financial platform for the implementation of SAP actions up to the year 2025.

Major steps foreseen were:

- identification and development of economic instruments;
- implementation and testing of instruments at the national level;
- preparation of proposal of the instruments to be submitted to the GEF eligible countries;
- capacity building at national level to identify, develop and implement economic instruments .

20. Types of actions foreseen included expert meetings, regional instructive seminars, questionnaires, comparative analyses, pilot projects and training courses. Collaboration with the World Bank, GPA, regional experts and institutions and above all national and local experts was considered crucial for the long-term implementation of this activity. It was foreseen that the activities would be carried out as planned, by the end of 2003 and some have already started.

21. Mr Civili mentioned the cooperation with the unit in the Hague. The World Bank representative mentioned their involvement and the fact that 2-3 experts had already been identified for the planned expert meeting and seminar. The representative added that this involvement is subject to the approval of the GEF grant and transfer of the agreed US\$ 110,000 to the World Bank.

22. Mr Caplat of FFEM mentioned the implications of the introduction of the Free Trade Area in the Mediterranean on Fiscal systems in this area. He also mentioned the need to define concrete objectives and not just methodologies.

23. Mr Chabason highlighted potential problems resulting from the economic crisis in some countries, since the 1997 Tunis meeting, when decisions were taken. These he mentioned may have a bearing on the willingness of countries to invest in the stage following the GEF project. He mentioned that the order of magnitude of the investments needed had been roughly calculated to be in the range of 6 billion US\$. Hence the role of the World bank in a wider economic sense was critical in the implementation of the SAP.

24. FFEM suggested that to test the impact of the instruments it was desirable to undertake studies at the beginning and end of the project using these instruments (as well as the cost of doing nothing).

Public Participation

25. Mr A. Demetropoulos, Acting GEF Project Manager, indicated that the objective of

this component of the project was to involve the public, particularly in the form of NGOs, more fully in the planning and implementation of action at the national level. Such public participation was vital to the development of the consensus which was a prerequisite for the success of any such action. It would be necessary to identify the methods currently used at the national level to promote public information and participation. In particular, effective public participation would involve the inclusion of NGOs in the Inter-Ministry Committees that were to be set up to prepare the National Action Plans.

26. The EU representative mentioned the need for the regional activities foreseen to focus on the development of guidelines for public participation so that these could be passed down to the countries for implementation at the national level. This received wide support and several speakers supported the need for more emphasis to be given to this component of the project keeping in mind the provisions of several conventions and institutions on the subject.

National Action Plans

27. Mr Civili reaffirmed that the final success of the GEF Project would be measured in terms of the formulation and implementation of National Action Plans, which would set out the manner in which countries would give effect to their commitments under the LBS Protocol and the SAP. There was a great need for capacity-building activities to support the formulation of National Action Plans in view of the new types of commitments and activities that they would contain. The two first steps to be taken at the national level in this respect were the creation of Inter-Ministry Committees and the appointment of national coordinators for the GEF Project. In view of the multidisciplinary nature of the SAP and the GEF Project, their long-term implementation would be severely prejudiced by any failure to create proper Inter-Ministry Committees, in the countries, with adequate political power.

28. Mr Civili reviewed the proposed process for the formulation of National Action Plans, as described in the Annex to document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.181/3/Rev.1, with particular reference to the preparation of national diagnostic analyses and sectoral programmes. MOUs would be signed with each country on the specific activities to be undertaken for the formulation of National Action Plans. He emphasized that the implementation of the National Action Plans would constitute proof of the success of the GEF Project and that NAPs would need to include provisions to safeguard their financial sustainability.

29. The EU and METAP representatives stressed that NAPs should be prepared taking an integrated approach.

Institutional Aspects of the Project

30. Mr Demetropoulos briefly reviewed the composition and functions of the GEF Project Inter-Agency Steering Committee, the Coordination Committee and the Ad Hoc Technical Committee as provided for in the project document. The first was expected to cover all aspects of the GEF project. The Coordination Committee (of National Coordinators) and the Ad hoc committee were intended to cover the SAP MED aspects of the project. He added that a parallel set of institutions was envisaged for the preparation of the SAP for biodiversity, with a committee of National Correspondents and an Advisory Committee, mainly of representatives of international and regional bodies and programmes and NGOs, with expertise in marine and coastal biodiversity. He mentioned that, to-date, not all the countries had nominated National Coordinators and National Correspondents.

Development of a SAP for Biodiversity

31. Mr G. Trochia, Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), informed the participants of the objectives of the proposed SAP BIO, the institutional arrangements and the planned activities. The main objective of these activities was to develop a strategic action plan for the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity as a basis for the implementation of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity. He noted that the institutional structure for the SAP BIO was separate from that of the rest of the GEF Project, and included the appointment of national correspondents. The Coordinator added that, in contrast with the work carried out on marine pollution, for which a SAP had already been prepared and approved by the Contracting Parties, it was still necessary to go through the whole process of the formulation and approval of the SAP BIO. Another difference was the profusion of the existing instruments on biodiversity covering various regions and groups of countries, including the European Union Directive on habitats. There therefore existed a problem of coordination with the existing commitments of countries under these instruments. He believed that the added value of the SAP BIO would be the fact that it went beyond existing inventories and recommendations to develop a strategic framework of practical action for the achievement of biodiversity objectives in the Mediterranean. The SAP BIO also provided an important opportunity to raise the priority given to marine and coastal biodiversity, which often ranked behind land-based biodiversity in terms of its public profile.

32. Discussion followed in which the need to take into consideration in the preparation of the SAP for biodiversity, what is going on in other fora and conventions, especially global ones, such as the Biodiversity and Ramsar Conventions, was agreed upon. In relation to this it was agreed that it was desirable for the National Correspondents to at least have links with the National Focal Points for the Biodiversity Convention, even though coastal and marine biodiversity issues were not often given priority on the national level.

Other business

33. The subject of underlying a link between the ratification of the amended LBS protocol and participation of countries in the GEF project was discussed at some length. Mr Chabason suggested that some mention of this could come about when developing socioeconomic criteria, where legal aspects and criteria for the selection of sites for pre-investment studies had to be made.

Closure of the meeting

34. The meeting was closed by the MAP Coordinator at 17.30 on the 8 March 2000.

ANNEX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****Mr Laurent Caplat**

Chargé de mission Méditerranée
Service des Affaires Internationales
Ministère de l'aménagement du territoire
et de l'environnement
20 Avenue de Ségur
F-75302 Paris
France

Tel: +33 1 42191705
Fax: +33 1 42191719
E-mail:
laurent.caplat@environnement.gouv.fr

Mr Alessandro Curatolo

Administrateur Principal
Direction Générale de l'Environnement
Commission Européenne DG ENV/A4
200 rue de la Loi
B-1049 Bruxelles
Belgique

Tel: +32 2 2990340
Fax: +32 2 2969557
E-mail: alessandro.curatolo@cec.eu.int

Mr Ducastel

Secretariat du FFEM
Agence Française de Développement
5, Rue Roland Barthes
75598 Paris Cedex 12
France

Tel: +33 1 53443310
Fax: +33 1 53443248
E-mail: ducastelc@afd.fr

Mr Jaafar Friaa

METAP Consultant
The World Bank
Middle East and North Africa Region
Tunis
Tunisia

Tel: +1 216 9 206727
Fax: +1 216 1 844214
E-mail: jfriaa@gnet.tn

Mr George Kamizoulis

WHO/EURO Scientist
World Health Organization
c/o Coordinating Unit for the
Mediterranean Action Plan
P.O. Box 18019
48, Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
116 10 Athens
Greece

Tel: 30-1-7273105
Fax: 30-1-7253196-7
E-mail: whomed@hol.gr

Mr Gennaro Longo

Director
Area of Earth, Environmental and Marine
Sciences and Technologies
ICS-UNIDO
Area Science Park, Building L2
Padriciano 99
34012 Trieste
Italy

Tel: +39 040 9228104
Fax: +39 040 9228136
E-mail: gennaro.longo@ics.trieste.it

Ms Esther Monfà

International Coordinator
Cleaner Production Regional Activity
Centre (CP/RAC)
184, Paris Street 3rd floor
08036 Barcelona
Spain

Tel: +34 93 4151112
Fax: +34 93 2370286
E-mail: cleanpro@cema-sa.org

Prof. John C. Pernetta

Deputy Programme Coordinator
Global Environment Facility (GEF) Unit
UNEP/GEF Coordination Office
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
P.O. Box 30552
Nairobi
Kenya

Tel: +254 2 623557
Fax: +254 2 624153
E-mail: john.pernetta@unep.org

Ms Daria Povh

Environmental Economist
Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity
Centre (PAP/RAC)
11 Kraj Sv. Ivana
P.O Box 74
HR-21000 Split
Croatia

Tel: +385 21 343499
Fax: +385 21 361677
E-mail: daria.povh@ppa.tel.hr

Mr Giovanni Torchia

Expert Marine Biologist
Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity
Centre (SPA/RAC)
Boulevard de l'Environnement
La Chargaia
1080 Tunis
Tunisie

Tel: +216] 1 795760
Fax: +216] 1 797349
E-mail: car-asp@rac-spa.org.tn

Mr Ivica Trumbic

Director
Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity
Centre (PAP/RAC)
11 Kraj Sv. Ivana
P.O Box 74
HR-21000 Split
Croatia

Tel: +385 21 343499
Fax: +385 21 361677
E-mail: ivica.trumbic@ppa.tel.hr

SECRETARIAT**Mr Lucien Chabason**

Coordinator
Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean
Action Plan
P.O. Box 18019
48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
116 10 Athens
Greece

Tel: 30-1-7273101
Fax: 30-1-7253196/7
E-mail: chabason@unepmap.gr

Mr Francesco-Saverio Civili

MED POL Coordinator
Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean
Action Plan
P.O. Box 18019
48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
116 10 Athens
Greece

Tel: 30-1-7273106
Fax: 30-1-7253196/7
E-mail: fscivili@unepmap.gr

Mr Andreas Demetropoulos

GEF Acting Project Manager
Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean
Action Plan
P.O. Box 18019
48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
116 10 Athens
Greece

Tel: 30-1-7273102
Fax: 30-1-7253196/7
E-mail: andreasd@unepmap.gr

Mr Fouad Abousamra

Programme Officer
Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean
Action Plan
P.O. Box 18019
48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
116 10 Athens
Greece

Tel: 30-1-7273116
Fax: 30-1-7253196/7
E-mail: fouad@unepmap.gr

ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda and Organisation of Work
3. Briefing by MEDU and the various implementing agencies on the progress so far achieved towards launching and implementing the project
4. Briefing by funding agencies (FFEM, METAP, ICS/UNIDO) on implementation and funding modalities
5. Conclusions and Recommendations
6. Closure of the meeting