

MAP

Mediterranean Action Plan
for the Barcelona Convention



UNEP



In 1975, 16 Mediterranean countries and the European Community adopted the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), the first-ever Regional Seas Programme under UNEP's umbrella (United Nations Environment Programme).

In 1976 the same Parties adopted the Barcelona Convention, the legal basis for the protection of the Mediterranean sea. Six Protocols addressing specific aspects of Mediterranean environmental conservation complete the MAP legal framework:

- Dumping Protocol (from ships and aircraft)
- Prevention and Emergency Protocol (pollution from ships and emergency situations)
- Land-based Sources and Activities Protocol
- Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol
- Offshore Protocol (pollution from exploration and exploitation)
- Hazardous Wastes Protocol

The Barcelona Convention's objectives are:

- [to assess and control marine pollution;
- [to ensure sustainable management of natural marine and coastal resources;
- [to integrate the environment in social and economic development;
- [to protect the marine environment and coastal zones through prevention and reduction of pollution, and as far as possible, eliminate pollution, whether land or sea-based;
- [to protect the natural and cultural heritage;
- [to strengthen solidarity among Mediterranean coastal States;
- [to contribute to improvement of the quality of life.

Although MAP's initial focus was aimed at marine pollution control, over the years, its mandate gradually widened to include integrated coastal zone planning and management. The Protocol for the Prevention and elimination of pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft or incineration at sea was amended in 1995. In the same year the Protocol concerning Specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean, also known as the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol was signed. MAP's mandate became more action-oriented, and started addressing also the issue of sustainable development.

MAP has been a unique process for one very important aspect: developing or developed Mediterranean countries, with different cultures and traditions sit around the table on an equal footing and work together for a better marine environment for the present and future generations.

Faced with many problems caused by a high number of human activities -both sea and land-based- generating pollution, the scientific community has assessed the fragility of the natural resources and the challenges to be met in order to ensure sustainable development in the region. MAP addresses these issues by joining different sectors of Mediterranean society in its efforts to preserve the region's human and natural resources that have been degraded by rapid development, not always planned with a view to the future.



_Albania _Algeria
_Bosnia and Herzegovina
_Croatia _Cyprus _Egypt
_the European Community
_France _Greece _Israel
_Italy _Lebanon _Libya _Malta
_Monaco _Morocco _Montenegro
_Slovenia _Spain _Syria
_Tunisia _Turkey

The Mediterranean Sea covers more than 2.5 million square km, with a 46,000 km coastline. Mediterranean countries have a population of nearly 425 million, with an additional 170 million tourists visiting them each year.

Its average depth is just 1500 metres. It is a semi-enclosed sea with two main exits: the Gibraltar Strait, approximately 14 km wide, and the Suez Canal. As a result, it takes over a century for the Mediterranean waters to be renewed through inflows from other oceans.

As far as biological diversity is concerned, the Mediterranean is one of the richest seas in the world: 7.5 per cent of all animal species and 18 per cent of all marine flora, in a sea that represents only 0.7 per cent of the total surface of the oceans. The Mediterranean's flora and fauna consist partly of temperate zone species and partly of subtropical species, of which 30 per cent are endemic.



Its waters join the coastlines of countries in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, making the region politically, economically and geographically complex as well as environmentally unique and diverse.

The **Contracting Parties** decide on MAP strategies, budget and programme at their Ministerial meetings, held every two years. **Focal Points** nominated by the CPs review the progress of work and ensure the implementation of recommendations at the national level. A rotating Bureau of six representatives of the Contracting Parties guides and advises the MAP Secretariat in the interim period between the biannual meetings.


Since 1982, the Secretariat of the **MAP Coordinating Unit** has been based in Athens on the basis of a Host Country Agreement signed between Greece and UNEP. The Secretariat performs diplomatic, political and communications roles, supervising the main MAP components (Regional Activity Centres) and organizes major meetings and programmes.

MAP's regional influence is very much a product of its close interaction with various UN agencies and other inter-governmental organisations, that share MAP's commitment to the welfare of the Mediterranean region and its peoples.

The growing number of Mediterranean **NGOs** focusing on environment and development reflects the rising public concern for participation in activities. MAP recognises the expertise and awareness-raising capabilities of NGOs, supports their initiatives and encourages their participation in MAP activities.

MAP's activities are primarily financed by the Contracting Parties through their contributions to the Mediterranean Trust Fund. Other sources of funding to support specific projects and activities include voluntary contributions from the European Union, UN agencies, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) is an advisory body to the Contracting Parties. Established in 1996, it has a unique structure of representatives of the 22 Contracting Parties as well as 15 representatives from local authorities, business community and NGOs, forming, on equal footing, a think-tank on policies for promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean Basin. The MCSD coordinated the preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development (MSSD), which was adopted by the Contracting Parties in 2005.



The Strategy establishes four main objectives with the aim of promoting sustainability:

- contributing to economic development;
- reducing social disparities;
- changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns and ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources;
- improving governance.

The Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean Region (MED POL)

Is the scientific and technical component of MAP. It is responsible for the implementation of the Land-Based Sources, Dumping, and Hazardous Wastes Protocols. MED POL assists Mediterranean countries in the formulation and implementation of pollution monitoring programmes, including pollution control measures and the drafting of action.

Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC), France

Adopts a systemic and prospective approach to Mediterranean environment and development issues using observation and evaluation tools and generating indicators. Experts produce scenarios for reconciling the environment and the realities of socio-economic development in a drive to help Mediterranean countries make decisions with the future in mind.

Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC), Croatia

Concentrates on integrated coastal zone management to alleviate development problems in coastal areas. It offers technical assistance and coordinates Coastal Area Management Programmes (CAMP) that typically involve the participation of many local bodies.

Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), Tunisia

Focuses on biodiversity and the protection of Mediterranean species, their habitats and ecosystems. It develops management plans, information tools for monitoring, and promotes awareness campaigns and the circulation of information among specialists and relevant international organisations.

Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Malta

Assists Mediterranean coastal states to build up their national prevention and response capabilities to be prepared for major marine pollution incidents. The centre also facilitates cooperation between countries in combating accidental marine pollution from a range of hazardous substances including oil. REMPEC is managed under the joint auspices of MAP and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

INFO/RAC, Italy

Provides communication services and technical support to the MAP Secretariat and the other MAP regional components (RACs). INFO/RAC also focuses on enhancing public awareness and establishing multi-sector working partnerships that enable sustainable development across the Mediterranean region.

Cleaner Production Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC), Spain

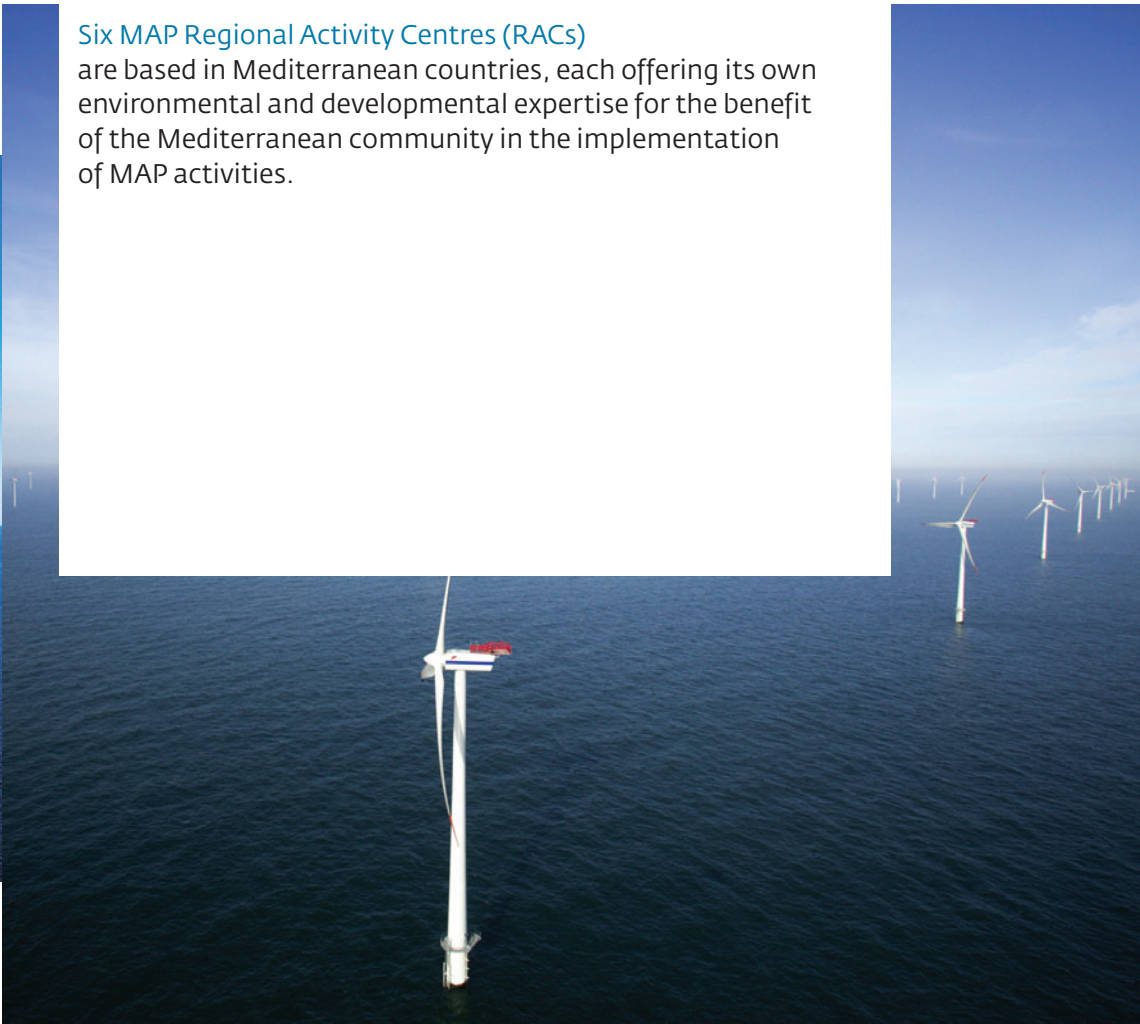
Promotes the reduction of industrial waste from the Mediterranean industrial sector and disseminates tried-and-tested cleaner production techniques. The centre also organises training programmes, and promotes the exchange of experts, facilitating technology transfer within the region.

Programme for the Protection of Coastal Historic Sites, France

Concentrates its work on sites that are on the list of 100 Historic Sites in various Mediterranean coastal states and offers training in optimal site management practices.

Six MAP Regional Activity Centres (RACs)

are based in Mediterranean countries, each offering its own environmental and developmental expertise for the benefit of the Mediterranean community in the implementation of MAP activities.



KEY ACTIVITIES

- [Combating land-based pollution;
- [Preventing maritime accidents and illegal discharges from ships;
- [Managing coastal areas;
- [Preserving the Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity;
- [Integrating the environment and development;
- [Promoting information and communication;
- [Safeguarding cultural heritage.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

- [to bring about a massive reduction in pollution from land-based sources;
- [to protect marine and coastal habitats and threatened species;
- [to make maritime activities safer and more conscious of the Mediterranean marine environment;
- [to intensify integrated planning of coastal areas;
- [to monitor the spreading of invasive species;
- [to limit and intervene promptly on oil pollution;
- [to further promote sustainable development in the Mediterranean region.

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