

Agenda item 1: **Opening of the meeting**

A. Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Portoroz, Slovenia, November 2005) to convene an extraordinary meeting of the MAP Focal Points in order to consider the conclusions and recommendations of the Report on the External Evaluation of MAP and to make recommendations to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007, the Extraordinary Meeting of the MAP Focal Points was held at the Romano Palace Hotel, Catania (Italy) from 7 to 11 November 2006.

2. Mr Paul Mifsud, Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), opened the Meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, 7 November 2006. Welcoming participants, he stressed the importance of the meeting for the future of MAP. He thanked the Italian Ministry of the Environment, Territory and Sea and Slovenia for their financial assistance in organizing the meeting.

3. A message from H.E. Mr Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio, Minister for the Environment, Territory and Sea of Italy was read out by the Secretariat, in which the Minister drew attention, *inter alia*, to the need to enhance the role of the Mediterranean Action Plan in implementing the Barcelona Convention in the context of new environmental and development priorities and challenges. The traditional concept of territorial sea must yield to a common idea of sovereignty. There was a need for sound governance of a shared heritage, for a clear understanding of how MAP and its components could effectively work to that end, and hence for reform and strengthening of MAP. The Convention and its Protocols were the key elements of the MAP framework and the basis for developing strategies, programmes and actions. A common infrastructure for information sharing and communication was also decisive to improve visibility and monitor progress. The Italian Government wished to play a central role in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention. That priority had been formally expressed with the introduction of "Sea" into the official name of the Italian Ministry of the Environment. He was confident that the Catania meeting would help to shape a clear new vision for the MAP system. The full text of the message is attached as **Annex I** to the present report.

4. Ms Maria Dalla Costa, speaking on behalf of the Italian delegation, said that the reform of MAP called for a clearer definition of its objectives and of the means to be employed for their achievement. The MAP work programme must be strategic and focused on clear priorities, and its components properly integrated. The role, objectives and *modus operandi* of the RACs must be clarified. A common system for information sharing and communication, building on existing environmental information systems, would contribute to that end. A thorough reform of the MCSD was required, with consideration given to mainstreaming the MSSD approach into the overall MAP structure. Giving a new impetus to the MCSD and to MAP in general called for flexibility and adaptability to the multilateral context, with the establishment of partnerships and synergies with other key institutions in the region. Emphasis should be placed on improved visibility and on good governance as the key to efficiency, transparency and accountability. The present meeting was an opportunity to begin addressing that substantial challenge.

B. Attendance

5. The following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were represented at the meeting: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Egypt, European Community, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey. Montenegro attended as an observer.

6. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/GPA, the MAP Coordinating Unit and all the MAP Regional Activity Centres were also represented.
7. Non-governmental organizations were represented by an observer: Arab Network for Environment and Development (AOYE/RAED).
8. The full list of participants is attached as **Annex II** to the present report.

Agenda item 2: **Rules of procedure**

9. The meeting agreed that the Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention would apply *mutatis mutandis* to its deliberations (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI, as amended by the Contracting Parties (documents UNEP (OCA)/MED IG.1/5 and UNEP (OCA)/MED IG.3/5).

Agenda item 3: **Election of officers**

10. In accordance with Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure and after informal consultations, the meeting unanimously elected the following Bureau:

Chair:	Ms M. Dalla Costa (Italy)
Vice-Chair:	Ms Etleva Canaj (Albania)
Vice-Chair:	Mr Mohammed Khalil (Egypt)
Vice-Chair:	Ms Odile Roussel (France)
Vice-Chair:	Mr Nouredine Ben Rejeb (Tunisia)
Rapporteur:	Mr Sedat Kadioglu (Turkey)

Agenda item 4: **Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

11. The Coordinator said that, on the basis of the outcome of discussions at the present meeting, a vision statement and other documents would be prepared for submission to the Contracting Parties. He informed the participants that the Secretariat had received a proposal from the EC on behalf of the EU MAP Focal Points that a drafting committee be established by the present meeting with a view to finalizing all relevant documents for the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007. The drafting committee would work on line to ensure maximum efficiency and accessibility. Its composition and mandate would need to be established at the present meeting. Following an exchange of views on that proposal, there was agreement in principle to establish such a group, whose members could be selected using the same criteria as those used to select Bureau members and which would report back to the Focal Points before finalization of the texts for submission to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007.

12. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda proposed by the Secretariat contained in document UNEP (DEPI)/MED WG.297/1 and the proposed timetable of work in document UNEP (DEPI)/MED WG.297/2 as amended. The meeting agreed that the draft terms of reference of MAP and RAC Focal Points (agenda item 8) and of the MCSD (agenda item 9) proposed in the relevant documents would not be reviewed in detail for adoption, but would

be discussed, possibly in conjunction with other agenda items. The adopted agenda is attached as **Annex III** to the present report.

Agenda item 5: **General discussion concerning the main principles about the future orientation of MAP**

13. Introducing the item, the Coordinator highlighted the opportunity afforded by the external evaluation exercise to chart the way forward for MAP. The main objective of the general discussion was to draw conclusions regarding the main principles that should govern the future orientation of MAP. The conclusions would serve as the basis for a declaration and recommendations for consideration by the Contracting Parties in 2007. The Secretariat had issued a background brief (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/Inf.3) identifying issues that needed to be addressed and had requested inputs from MAP Focal Points on what they perceived to be the main principles.

14. A written submission from the European Commission (EC) had been received in response to that request and circulated among MAP Focal Points well in advance of the meeting. Entitled "Summary of discussions", it reflected the preparatory discussions held among Focal Points from the seven European Union MAP Contracting Parties, the EC and Croatia from which five main principles had emerged. First, there was a need to streamline and renew the MAP system to make it more effective; the external evaluation was a good starting point for such action. Second, the objective of MAP was to ensure implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and the strategies, policies, programmes and plans of action adopted at the Meetings of the Contracting Parties, including the MSSD. Contracting Parties should receive support and guidance in working towards that goal. Third, the RACs, including MED POL, were integral parts of MAP and their work should be entirely focused on implementation of the Convention and its Protocols and on strategies, policies, programmes and plans of action adopted at the meetings of Contracting Parties, including the MSSD. Fourth, the Contracting Parties were an essential part of the Barcelona Convention/MAP system and needed to play a full and active role therein. Fifth, proper targeted dissemination of information was a key to effective implementation of the Convention and to enhancement of political visibility and strengthening of commitment within Contracting Parties.

15. Other core principles identified by the Secretariat were that the Contracting Parties should take the MCSD's recommendations into account in implementing the objectives of sustainable development; that the Barcelona Convention was a regional environmental mechanism that would benefit from synergies with other conventions and with global, regional and subregional organizations and institutions; and that international governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in activities related to the Barcelona Convention should become actively involved in its implementation.

16. He added that the meeting afforded an opportunity to increase MAP's efficiency and relevance in the region as the only forum in which all Mediterranean countries could address environmental issues. It should therefore seek consensus on basic principles and adopt clear operational decisions aimed at ensuring implementation of the MAP legal instruments, bearing in mind that the basic objectives of MAP Phase II were still relevant.

17. During the discussion, it was generally agreed that there was a need to evaluate the achievements of MAP in attaining the simple and clear objectives for which it had originally been established and to assess whether MAP had achieved its major objectives. The occasion of MAP's thirtieth anniversary provided a good opportunity to examine its history and the progress made, and determine the direction it should take in the future. The central role of MAP and the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as a forum for common concerns - environmental but also economic and social - should be emphasized. Several

speakers said that the focus of MAP's work must be to implement the Convention and the Protocols, and also the strategies, policies and programmes agreed to by the Contracting Parties, including the MSSD. It was suggested that Contracting Parties' expectations of the Barcelona Convention structures should be identified as a starting point for any assessment of implementation. Another point made was that the current state of the environment was the main issue in determining whether MAP and the Contracting Parties were achieving their collective principles.

18. MAP played a significant role in bringing countries together to identify and solve problems relating to their common environment. Emphasis was placed, however, on the differences in terms of ratifying and implementing the legal instruments. Every effort should be made to identify the reasons for non-ratification. Attention was drawn to the need to work towards convergence, as appropriate, between the legislation of EU countries and the countries of the southern rim of the Mediterranean. The crucial importance of providing assistance of various kinds, including capacity-building activities, to southern countries was underlined. It was observed that, for many developing countries, the issue was not how best to implement a piece of legislation, but whether any measures could be taken at all because of a lack of resources.

19. Among the numerous suggestions made on how to improve the MAP system and implementation of the Barcelona Convention, particular emphasis was placed on reporting and compliance monitoring and how to ensure that the Secretariat had sufficient information to assess implementation. Reference was made to the need for alternative reporting mechanisms, such as regular on-line updating, to ease the reporting burden on States. The need for further information sharing and improved data analysis was stressed by several speakers.

20. The Coordinator, responding to comments, said the only way the Secretariat could monitor implementation was indeed through reporting, which had recently become an obligation for Contracting Parties. Work was ongoing with regard to both reporting and compliance mechanisms. In response to the question about cooperation with the scientific community, he said that such cooperation was not a new departure, but that the input of the scientific community was important for informed decision making.

21. Taking the floor for the first time, the representative of Montenegro explained that observer status had been accorded to Montenegro pending completion of its admission procedures. She expected that ongoing MAP activities with Montenegro would continue as before.

22. Most speakers agreed that the RACs were an integral part of MAP and not of the Secretariat. The Secretariat's role in coordinating RACs and providing them with priority directions for their work should be enhanced. Better coordination, not only with the Secretariat but also between RACs was stressed, since it would improve results and increase the visibility of the MAP system. The establishment of a RAC information exchange mechanism was suggested as a way of keeping the Centres abreast of developments under the Barcelona Convention. Several speakers highlighted the importance of RAC capacity building in information and communication, where necessary.

23. It was observed that MEDU and RACs existed to serve MAP, and facilitate its implementation and that their efforts should be focused towards the common cause. The MAP Coordinating Unit was urged to exercise more effective coordination and holistic oversight to ensure that RACs were working towards the same goals, and to identify additional measures needed for implementation not currently covered by RAC activities and cases in which RACs diverged from the path defined by the Contracting Parties.

24. There was broad agreement that RACs should concentrate their activities on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and the strategies, policies, programmes and plans of action adopted at the meetings of the Contracting Parties, including the MSSD, especially given that financial and other resources were finite. It was generally agreed that the role and mandate of each RAC needed to be clarified. Revised terms of reference for the RACs should be adopted in 2007 at the next meeting of the Contracting Parties, rather than in 2009.

25. The Chairperson noted that it was generally agreed that the RACs were an integral part of MAP and that more coordination of their activities was needed. It was also generally agreed that any new start called for a redefinition of the general principles underlying RAC mandates, focusing on the Convention and Protocols while bearing in mind the goal of sustainable development.

26. With regard to legal issues, there was general agreement that the rate of ratification and entry into force of MAP legal instruments posed a problem that the issue of why countries had not ratified particular instruments needed to be fully addressed. It could be that countries were taking action anyway, perhaps under other legislation, or that some of the instruments had become redundant. Several speakers expressed the view that ratification alone was not necessarily an indication of compliance, which also depended on economic and technical factors, political priorities, and countries' capabilities and capacities. The need for MAP to promote capacity building was highlighted, as was the lack of mechanisms to ensure compliance, which reduced the credibility of MAP. It was important for Contracting Parties to submit information to enable the Secretariat to ascertain whether legal instruments were being implemented. In that regard, full reporting should help rectify the situation.

27. Following an intervention about a more active role to be played by the depositary country, the Focal Point for Spain said that his country had endeavoured to encourage ratification, but ratification was ultimately an internal matter for countries. One Focal Point called on all Contracting Parties to ratify the outstanding legal instruments, as his country had already done, in order to increase the effectiveness of MAP.

28. In order to strengthen links between MAP and the Contracting Parties, it was suggested that official channels should be developed, such as visits to countries by the Coordinator and the President of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, although it was pointed out that in the latter case protocol problems might arise. Interactive activities such as seminars could also be organized.

29. It was observed that the MSSD should be implemented through the Contracting Parties' national strategies, with countries that had developed or were developing NSSDs sharing their experience. Reporting on national strategy implementation on the basis of a common format would assist in monitoring implementation of the MSSD itself. Ways of involving RACs in the process and of making the MCSD technically and financially sustainable should be defined.

Agenda item 7: Draft Vision and Strategic Statement of MAP

30. Introducing document UNEP (DEC)/MED WG.297/4, the Coordinator said that the draft submitted to the meeting was the result of discussions within the Secretariat. It had been decided that the Secretariat's proposal should consist of a brief statement of vision and strategic directions for MAP, including synergy with other programmes and organizations, but that the draft should not include objectives in the form of specific targets since those were already specified under the different Protocols to the Convention and in the context of the various components of the MAP system.

31. The draft document prompted a discussion concerning its form and content. While in the view of some it had the merit of being concise and exhaustive, there was a general feeling that it fell short of providing a clear strategic vision and statement. One view strongly expressed was that the document failed to offer a long-term vision of the future of MAP, of the way in which its goals were to be achieved or of its relations with – for example - the Blue Plan Environment and Development Report or the Geo-4 review process. The draft was concerned more with means than with results. A number of participants considered that MAP's objectives were sufficiently well known and that the main focus should be on how they were to be realized. For some, that justified the need to define MAP's activities over the next decade in some detail and even to include a calendar of proposed activities. Others warned of the dangers of lessening the impact of the document by entering into too much detail.

32. While some took the view that the document needed considerable revision, others put forward suggestions for its improvement. It was proposed that reference should be made to the importance of improving the governance of the MAP system, including the RACs and the MCSD. Mention should also be made of the need for Contracting Parties to ratify the relevant instruments. One participant raised the question of what was meant by the "ecosystem approach" referred to in the draft document. It was said in response that, while the question was still being debated and the concept was not yet fully "operationalized", the ecosystem approach signified in broad terms the management of human activities as they integrated with the environment, including its social aspects. MED POL, on behalf of MAP and in response to a recommendation by the Contracting Parties, was currently preparing, with the help of an EC grant, a draft road map for the gradual application of the ecosystem approach, including an analysis of the implications for the region and for the MAP system. A small working group had been established to draft the road map for submission at a later stage to the Contracting Parties. A proposal at the planning stage was that the approach might be tested in a small area of the Mediterranean, such as the Adriatic and the Ionian Sea. It was however clear that effective application, adapted to different situations, was a long-term prospect. It was agreed that any redrafting of the strategy declaration would take account of the above information.

33. A new structure for the vision and strategic document was proposed, answering the following questions: why a long-term strategy was needed (i.e. to avoid increased pollution, urbanization, etc.); what would be done (e.g. promoting sustainable development, reducing pressure on the environment, increasing coping capacity); how it would be done (through implementation of the Convention, which would require increased synergy and partnership, information, education and communication activities, etc.); who would do it (MAP Secretariat, RACs, Contracting Parties, civil society, the private sector, etc.); and when it would be done (short-term, medium-term and long-term activities). It would be necessary to indicate the resources which would be required and from where they might be obtained. It would also be necessary to prepare a governance paper covering the Coordinating Unit, MAP components and the MCSD.

34. The proposed structure of the vision and strategic document met with general approval, although it was felt that it should place more emphasis on sustainable development and deal with issues of wider interest such as climate change in order to make MAP more visible and attractive to a non-specialist audience, both decision-makers and the general public. Some participants called for the addition of a detailed plan of action specifying the activities to be undertaken by the various components of MAP, while others maintained that the statement should be a declaration of long-term goals in general terms. The final version of the statement, to be presented to the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, should adequately reflect the achievements of MAP in promoting the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols.

35. It was generally agreed that the document should cover a period consistent with existing strategies, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Horizon 2020 initiative and the deadlines specified in the MSSD.

36. The meeting agreed to establish a core group to prepare an outline for the strategy statement during the meeting.

37. A core drafting group, consisting of Cyprus, EC, Israel, Italy, Morocco, Slovenia and the observers for RAED and UNEP/GPA, produced an outline strategy declaration. The first draft of the document, attached to this report as **Annex IV**, would be further elaborated by the post-sessional drafting committee, taking into consideration the comments set out in paragraphs 38-42 below, and then sent to all the Focal Points for comment and amendment.

38. Commenting on the outline strategy declaration, participants said that, in the section "What we need to accomplish and when", it should be made clear that all activities – short-term, medium-term and long-term – should be aimed at promoting sustainable development. The section must cover all the issues of concern to MAP and not concentrate exclusively on pollution, as implied by the reference to Horizon 2020. Action to address the most urgent situations ("hotspots") should be taken "in collaboration with" rather than "through" Horizon 2020 – a minor change in wording which nevertheless represented an important conceptual difference.

39. The text referred in several places to "formulation of national environmental policies", but MAP's actions were intended not only to influence environmental policies in the strict sense, but also to mainstream environmental concerns in policy-making and decisions by socioeconomic actors in all relevant fields.

40. The section "How and Who" should include a specific reference to the components of MAP, e.g. the RACs and the MCSD. The MED POL Coordinator suggested that the information collected should be used for the preparation of SoE. The point was made that the term "coastal and marine environment" was too restrictive and should be replaced simply by "environment".

41. An introductory paragraph should be added at the beginning of the governance paper, stating the goals and principles that should be observed in the governance of MAP. The section dealing with auditing should make it clear that a full management audit was required, not merely confined to job descriptions but covering the entire *modus operandi* of the Coordinating Unit. The cost of the exercise must also be borne in mind.

42. The section dealing with mobilization and distribution of resources should include planning processes that would show the resources required for each activity and the allocation of funding between the Mediterranean Trust Fund and external sources.

43. The meeting agreed that the post-sessional drafting committee would consist of Albania, Cyprus, Egypt, European Commission, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain and Tunisia. Italy would chair and steer the work. The drafting committee would start work as soon as possible by email on the strategy declaration, the governance paper, the terms of reference of the MCSD and the mandates of MEDU and the RACs and, where required, agreements and arrangements with host countries. If necessary, one meeting could be held in February 2007, in Athens. The drafting process would be fully interactive. Drafts would be sent by email to all Focal Points and MAP components for their comments, to be submitted to the Chair of the drafting committee.

44. The Secretariat would provide documentation and assistance, as well as the meeting facilities, including interpretation, required for the February meeting, if it took place. The Secretariat would also provide assistance to enable some of the participants to take part in

the meeting. The meeting was informed that most of the documents were available on the MAP web site.

Agenda item 6: **A Secretariat submission with proposals for implementing the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Mediterranean Action Plan**

45. The Coordinator, introducing document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/3, which is attached as **Annex V** to this report, noted that some of the recommendations in the external evaluation report had been overtaken by events and others might not call for debate or a formal decision. The meeting was expected to decide which recommendations should be accepted and submitted to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007 for endorsement. The recommendations and the corresponding proposals by the Secretariat had been grouped under different headings, and it was proposed that they should be examined on that basis.

I. A new start

46. Following a discussion on recommendation 29, the meeting, while recognizing the need to make the link between MAP and the Barcelona Convention, decided by consensus to recommend that the name MAP be retained and that the linkage with the Convention be given more prominence in MAP documents and in the redesigning of the logo.

47. The Coordinator informed the meeting that the Secretariat had submitted a proposal for a new logo to the Bureau, linking "MAP" with "the implementation of the Barcelona Convention". However, the Bureau had decided to recommend the holding of a Mediterranean-wide logo design competition and had requested the Secretariat to prepare the terms of reference, taking into account the work already done. The Secretariat would involve all RACs in the process, in particular INFO/RAC.

48. With reference to recommendation 28 to invite Ministers for Foreign Affairs to attend the Ministerial Segment of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, the meeting agreed that Environment Ministries would continue to be invited as a matter of course. At all events, Parties would continue to determine the composition of their delegation. At the same time, every effort should be made by Focal Points, the Coordinator and the host country to rally attendance by high-level representatives in order to enhance MAP visibility.

Strategic vision

49. It was agreed that the draft Vision and Strategic Statement should cover implementation of the MSSD as a whole, not only section 2.7, and contain specific proposals to that effect.

50. The view was expressed that on-the-ground action should reflect new developments, including the ecosystem approach, and that close links should be established with related global projects, such as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the GEO-4 review process. A call was made for more specific proposals from the Secretariat for promoting such action, given the prevailing financial constraints on countries.

51. It was observed that apart from improving its links with political leaders, MAP should pay more attention to partnerships with the private sector, including the development of market instruments and the role of financial institutions. The MCSD was suggested as an appropriate forum for promoting such partnerships. It was noted that the countries of the Mediterranean region were already committed to pursuing the objectives of the World Summit for Sustainable Development, including "Type II" initiatives, but also that it was for

the Secretariat and RACs, not Contracting Parties, to promote public-private partnerships. The need for MAP to take into account bilateral and regional agreements and international commitments such as the Millennium Development Goals was also stressed.

52. When discussing the question of a resource mobilization plan, it was noted that it was not merely a question of funds, but also of human resources and governance.

II. Legal, institutional and policy issues

53. The Coordinator noted a number of issues which the Secretariat considered to be particularly significant, namely membership of the Bureau, the Protocols to the Convention which had not yet entered into force and increasing the political influence of MAP.

Ratifications

54. The meeting decided that a country's election to the Bureau of the Contracting Parties should not depend on its status with respect to ratification of legal instruments. It was more important to identify the reasons why countries had not yet ratified the instruments.

55. The meeting did not consider justified recommendation 40 that a Memorandum of Understanding should be concluded with the depositary country, defining the latter's role in promoting ratification of the Convention and Protocols. It was observed that activities to promote ratification should also be targeted at national stakeholders from civil society and the private sector.

56. Participants felt that it was not appropriate to rescind the Protocols which had still not entered into force without making more effort to promote their ratification, perhaps through less formal initiatives such as regional information meetings. The meeting requested the Secretariat to investigate the possibility of organizing such meetings. The experience gained from the efforts to encourage ratification of the earlier protocols should be applied to future instruments, such as the ICZM Protocol, in order to prevent similar problems occurring in the future.

Reporting and compliance

57. The importance of a comprehensive system for reporting on implementation of the Convention and its Protocols was generally acknowledged, along with the need for clear, validated environmental indicators. Reporting and compliance should be viewed to some extent as separate issues, although reporting was obviously an essential tool in evaluating compliance. Synergies should be sought with other bodies, such as the European Environment Agency (EEA), and their reporting systems, to see whether reports could be prepared in a way to satisfy the requirements of more than one organization, thus avoiding duplication of work.

Possible new instruments

58. Several speakers expressed support for the discussions and negotiations which had already taken place on the draft ICZM Protocol which they considered an important instrument for protecting the Mediterranean environment. It was hoped that the draft Protocol would be ready for submission to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007. Discussion of the Protocol had already helped some countries to plan their own national legal instruments. Attention was drawn to the experience of the stalled ratification processes of other Protocols which should be borne in mind so that similar problems could be avoided with the new Protocol.

Political clout

59. On the subject of whether the main point of entry of the Convention in each Party should be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Ministry of the Environment (recommendation 46), there was general agreement that it was for Contracting Parties to decide. In the majority of cases it would be whichever Ministry had responsibility for the environment. There was some disagreement over whether involving Contracting Parties' Ambassadors in Athens in MAP processes would be beneficial. It was pointed out that the Focal Points, as representatives of Ministries of their countries, enjoyed political clout in their own right. In addition, not all countries had embassies in Athens. The meeting agreed that it would be acceptable to brief Contracting Parties' ambassadors in Athens periodically.

60. Visits to countries by the Coordinator to increase the visibility of the Convention (recommendations 47 and 48), were generally felt to be a positive step. It was pointed out that the involvement in such visits of the Minister of the Environment holding the Presidency of the Bureau could pose problems in terms of organization and protocol.

61. The Secretariat was urged not to weaken the position and responsibility of Focal Points by using additional channels of communication.

Meetings of the Contracting Parties

62. Opinions were divided on the recommendation in the external evaluation report (recommendations 49 and 50) that ordinary meetings of the Contracting Parties should be held every three rather than every two years. It was argued that a longer interval between meetings could help to ensure a critical mass of issues for discussion and should make for an agenda more attractive to Ministers. Extraordinary meetings of the Contracting Parties could always be organized if the need arose. Others were against the proposed change on the grounds that it would reduce the opportunities for consultations between Ministers of the Environment in the Mediterranean region, that it would make the governing body more remote from the MAP network, and that it could have budgetary and other implications for the MAP system as a whole.

63. Other comments touching on the same issue included the suggestion that, where appropriate, meetings of the Contracting Parties might be organized back-to-back with other meetings like those of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, thereby encouraging ministerial participation and helping to raise MAP's profile. The question was raised whether a ministerial segment should always be included in meetings of the Contracting Parties and whether it should not be restricted to occasions where it was justified by the agenda.

64. The discussion concluded with the consensus that the periodicity of meetings of the Contracting Parties should remain unchanged, but that some of the ideas put forward by participants might be reflected in the corresponding recommendation to the Contracting Parties.

65. There was general agreement with the Secretariat's proposals regarding the early preparation of the agenda of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties and the Ministerial Segment (recommendations 51 to 53). Emphasis was placed on the need for a flexible approach to the identification, at each meeting of the Contracting Parties, of issues for inclusion in the agenda of its next meeting. It was noted that the question of the amendment of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties (recommendation 57) would be taken up, as appropriate, at a later stage.

The Bureau

66. With regard to recommendations 58 and 59, the meeting agreed that the Party hosting the subsequent Meeting of the Contracting Parties should be a member of the Bureau. It was for the Contracting Parties to determine the level of representation in the Bureau. It was agreed that the Party should be named as member of the Bureau and not a specific individual.

The role of the Secretariat

67. Introducing the discussion on the role of the Secretariat (recommendations 60 to 67), the Coordinator highlighted the main recommendations of the external evaluation.

68. Some speakers considered that MAP would lose the unique historical identity that set it apart from other Conventions if the title MAP Coordinator was replaced by that of Executive Secretary. The use of two designations – Executive Secretary of the Convention and Coordinator of MAP – attracted some support but was opposed on the ground that it was likely to create confusion. The meeting eventually decided that the post of Deputy Coordinator should be reinstated, following the requisite procedures and that a decision on titles and the functions of the Deputy Coordinator would be left in abeyance until the terms of reference of the Secretariat were established and the role of each MAP component was clarified.

69. Several speakers stressed the need for an assessment of whether the Coordinating Unit was achieving its goals and, in particular, whether it had the capacity to ensure effective coordination and supervision of the work of all RACs. The auditing process should cover not only administrative issues but also the *modus operandi of the Coordinating Unit*.

Resource mobilization

70. The Coordinator expressed the view that, if the Coordinating Unit were to undertake major fundraising activities (recommendations 68 and 69), it would be necessary to enhance the human resources capacity of the MAP system. The Focal Point for Spain considered that fundraising went beyond the mandate of CP/RAC.

71. Some RACs already obtained additional funding for specific projects: the possibility of further funding from such projects or from bilateral sources should be explored. The Coordinating Unit should keep track of the projects for which the RACs sought funding, in order to ensure that they were consistent with the overall mandate of MAP and with the area of competence of the RAC concerned. It should also ensure that several RACs did not simultaneously approach the same donor. However, the directors of the RACs must retain the flexibility to make their own decisions, take risks and exploit the unique talents and capabilities residing in their own Centre.

III. The mandate of the RACs and MED POL

The Regional Activity Centres (RACs)

72. The meeting agreed to consider the mandate of the Coordinating Unit, as set out in Article 17 of the Barcelona Convention, and the interaction between it and the RACs as a starting point for the discussion on the mandate of the RACs and MED POL (recommendations 70-78).

73. In response to questions about the respective functions of the Coordinating Unit and the RACs under the Convention, the Coordinator clarified that, under the Barcelona Convention, no reference was made to RACs. The Contracting Parties assigned specific

activities to RACs as support centres but final responsibility for supervision fell on the Secretariat in order to ensure that decisions of the Contracting Parties were implemented and that each RAC adhered to its mandate.

74. There was general agreement that the role of the Secretariat should be to coordinate rather than to supervise, since it did not have the expertise necessary to enter into the technical aspects of the work undertaken by RACs. However, divergent views were expressed as to what was implied by the term "coordination". Several speakers noted that the Secretariat should identify the weak and strong points of each RAC, to ensure they obtained the best results and made the best use of resources. It should also be involved in developing synergies. One of the views expressed was that, in the interests of overall harmony, RACs should receive general guidance from MEDU and in turn consult the Secretariat with regard to their work rather than simply informing it of their activities.

75. The Secretariat's response to the recommendation on the preparation of the mandates of the various RACs (recommendation 73) prompted the comment that the Contracting Parties had given a clear indication at their 14th Ordinary Meeting that a vision should be prepared which would include the mandates of RACs, and it was not therefore necessary to wait until 2007 before starting to implement the recommendation.

76. The Coordinator, introducing a general discussion on the issue of coordination, said that coordination within the MAP system needed improvement. The reason for lack of coordination was partly historical: the RACs had not been conceived as an integral part of MAP but had been set up over the years and subsequently offered as support centres to MAP by the cooperating countries. Their role had been institutionalized under MAP Phase II, when they had been given responsibility for carrying out specific activities agreed upon by the Contracting Parties under the guidance and supervision of the Coordinating Unit. Coordination of the RACs had not been given the attention it deserved. Their Directors met for coordination purposes only once annually, and the Centres tended to develop along individual lines in their fields of specialized competence. Effective coordination required that the Directors should interact more frequently by various means and should report systematically to the Coordinator on the activities proposed to implement the decisions of the Contracting Parties. Once they had a mandate within that framework, the Centres should be given operational flexibility by the Coordinating Unit, which remained answerable to the Contracting Parties for compliance with its directions. Decisions by the Contracting Parties on the mandate of the RACs were necessary to support the Secretariat in its coordinating functions. It was important that none of the Centres should interpret its mandate in such a way as to interfere with the roles of other RACs or jeopardize their coherence.

77. The Coordinator's intervention on how he considered that effective coordination could be achieved met with general approval. Participants agreed on the need for more effective coordination of the activities of the RACs. The linkage between those activities and their coherence with the implementation of the Convention were not always apparent. RACs tended to operate in isolation, so that Focal Points were often uninformed of their activities, to the detriment of visibility. The process of developing work programmes needed changing. It was suggested that there should be a logical framework for the approval of activities, a format outlining the way the activity would contribute to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, and MSSD activities, what would be its long-term benefits, and how its outputs would be measured. That suggestion was widely endorsed, although it was noted that a similar procedure already existed whereby project documents including the work programme were presented to the Coordinating Unit before transmission to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties for approval and adoption. It was emphasized that the procedure must amount to more than mere "rubberstamping" and should involve meaningful and timely consultations with Focal Points to assist the Coordinating Unit in preparing a more consistent formal proposal to the Contracting Parties.

78. The definition of a clear mandate for the Coordinating Unit and for the RACs was seen as a priority requirement. Stress was placed on the essential role of the Coordinator in ensuring the overall coherence of activities within the MAP system, in conformity with the Convention and the decisions of the Contracting Parties. The view was expressed that the Secretariat's role should be to consider implementation not only through "command and control" instruments, but also through economic instruments to give the right market signals and remove economic barriers to effective implementation. Another participant argued that the Coordinator's function of guiding MAP should not be seen as weakening the status of RAC Directors. The need for the Secretariat to promote an effective communication strategy was also mentioned.

Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC)

79. The Director of BP/RAC said that the impact on the general public of Al Gore's documentary film and Sir Nicholas Stern's report to the British Government on climate change and its economic consequences contained an important lesson for his Centre and for MAP as a whole, namely the importance of mobilizing key actors and communicators for the environmental cause and of shifting the perspective so that sustainable development was given the prominence it deserved. He had reviewed Blue Plan's 30-year-old history and evolving mandate with that end in view and had submitted a medium-term strategic document to the Coordinator for his consideration. The document identified four strategic objectives and developed an analytical framework that would guide Blue Plan's actions during the period 2007-2015, which broadly corresponded to international timeframes such as the MDGs. Once he had received the Coordinator's response, the document would be circulated to the RAC Focal Points. The proposed activities would be broken down into biennial programmes in the context of regular meetings with the MAP Coordinating Unit.

Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC)

80. The Director of SPA/RAC said that his Centre's mandate, which was derived from the amended SPA and Biodiversity Protocol, focused on developing protected areas and conserving biodiversity in the Mediterranean in the context of sustainable development. It was discharged through a working programme prepared on the basis of the Contracting Parties' recommendations and in the light of consultations with the RAC Focal Points. This Programme was implemented in partnership with national institutions, NGOs, research institutions, regional and international organizations and civil society and the private sector, but the full and effective implementation of the Programme was to some extent hampered by insufficient human and financial resources. The recommendations in the external evaluation for the development of an action-oriented vision and strategy and a resource mobilization plan should be reflected in SPA/RAC's revised terms of reference. The external evaluation also recommended that the agreement with the host country should be reviewed in the light of institutional changes in the environmental field in Tunisia. It was proposed to ensure greater visibility and closer collaboration with other relevant Mediterranean organizations in the future. Relations with other RACs and the Coordinating Unit should also be strengthened, clarified and systematized, and field activities and the participatory approach should be effectively implemented.

Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC)

81. The Director of CP/RAC reported that the Centre was currently drawing up its mandate, following the recommendations of an external evaluation in 2005, so as to expand the strategic areas of action to include new economic sectors (services, agriculture) and new priority fields of action in accordance with the MSSD: chemicals management (POPs, Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management – SAICM), climate change and energy efficiency. There were no formal guidelines for coordination of CP/RAC's activities with those of the other Centres, but the Centre had nevertheless collaborated fruitfully with

several other RACs, including MED POL, in relation to national action plans (NAPs), BP/RAC in relation to priority areas for the MSSD, INFO/RAC, SPA/RAC and PAP/RAC. A formal statement of principles for collaboration would be very useful, although the host country agreement (currently under negotiation with the Spanish Ministries of the Environment and Foreign Affairs), which had been proposed in recommendation 90 of the external evaluation report, was perhaps not the most appropriate place for it. The host country agreement would be broader, in order to support the required good functioning of the Centre, covering legal status, financial benefits, etc. It was also important to harmonize the conditions under which the various RACs worked: their status, the funding they received from the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and the advantages they enjoyed, including financial advantages and the opportunity to employ non-nationals of the host country. The Centre had undertaken a number of measures to increase its presence in countries, as recommended in paragraph 93, including consultations with CP/RAC Focal Points at the beginning of 2006 which had contributed to the current work programme and assured accountability towards the Contracting Parties and an important presence in countries.

Regional Activity Centre for the Priority Actions Programme (PAP/RAC)

82. The Director of PAP/RAC said that the Centre had a very clear mandate, namely to implement MAP activities related to ICZM. Its main priority at present was the drafting of the ICZM Protocol. The Centre was active in capacity-building, conducting training courses in English, French and Arabic and an Internet-based postgraduate course in coastal zone management. Other strategic activities included development and application of ICZM tools, awareness-raising and analysis of priority ICZM issues. Its collaboration with the Coordinating Unit was excellent, particularly in respect of the preparations for the new Protocol, but its relationship with the other RACs was less close and was conducted on an *ad hoc* basis.

83. It would be difficult to implement the recommendation 94 that PAP/RAC should secure ownership of coastal zone management activities by national stakeholders, since the issue was largely beyond PAP/RAC's control: it could merely offer assistance with capacity-building and implementation. Its priority in the area of ICZM-related tools (recommendation 95) was to assist countries in the period following the implementation of their coastal area management programmes (CAMPs), when many countries found it difficult to maintain progress.

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

84. The Director of REMPEC explained that, following a decision taken by the Contracting Parties in 1976, the Centre was administrated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and UNEP. The most recent mandate of the Centre had been adopted in 2001, taking into account the new scope of activities that the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol was to give to the Centre. He emphasized, on the issue of the coordination process, that according to existing regulations the Centre had to comply with a full set of reporting mechanisms which formed part of the coordination. Turning to the issue of coordination with other components of MAP, he noted that it was conducted on a case-by-case basis, although some information tools existed to keep each RAC informed of the activities carried out by the others. He was not in favour of expanding the number of physical meetings, taking into account the related work-day burden. He also pointed out in relation to coordination with Contracting Parties that liaison with Focal Points should be reinforced and become more interactive. As an example for improvement, he took the spill-response simulation exercises. It would benefit both the Contracting Parties and the Centre to be made aware at the beginning of each year of the exercises planned by each Contracting Party. In reply to a request expressed by some Contracting Parties, he explained that, as far

as mid-term programming was concerned, the Centre, in elaborating its biennium work programme, was led by the timetable laid down in the regional strategy (2007-2012).

100 Mediterranean Historic Sites

85. With respect to recommendations 98 to 105 on the Protection of Coastal Historic Sites, the meeting was of the opinion that cultural heritage should be addressed within the framework of the MCSD.

86. Regarding the specific recommendation 101, the Coordinating Unit did not consider that the appointment of a high-level official to deal with cultural issues was justified.

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

87. The Coordinator of MED POL said that MED POL had a clear mandate, confirmed by the external evaluation carried out in 2005, to support countries in the implementation of the Dumping, LBS and Hazardous Waste Protocols. That mandate was fulfilled through the implementation of activities related to pollution assessment, pollution control and capacity-building. Following the refocusing of the Programme towards pollution control, as part of the wider updating of the MAP system in 1995-1996, one of the major challenges of MED POL was to facilitate and ensure the implementation of the National Action Plans (NAPs) to address land-based pollution, prepared and endorsed by the countries in 2005. As the Programme had been established in 1975 as an integral part of the MAP Secretariat and was based in Athens, liaison and policy coordination with the Coordinating Unit posed no problems. Cooperation and coordination on objective-shared projects was ensured with almost all the RACs, e.g. with CP/RAC on the implementation of the SAP, with BP/RAC in the area of indicators and with INFO/RAC on the preparation of the MED POL Info System. MED POL also enjoyed close links with a large number of stakeholders and initiatives outside MAP, such as the Basel Convention, the London Convention, the EU Marine Strategy and Horizon 2020, the Global Environment Facility, the World Bank, the European Investment Bank and the European Environment Agency.

INFO/RAC

88. The Director of INFO/RAC said the Centre had received clear recommendations from the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to serve as the "information and communication" RAC of MAP – and especially to develop "a common infrastructure" for information-sharing and communications across MAP (known as InfoMAP), as well as an information and communication strategy for the MSSD. INFO/RAC collaborated widely with the other RACs and with external partners to implement activities outlined in the project document and reports from the Centre. Three operational focus areas had been identified for the Centre: information and communication technologies (ICT); information, education, public participation and awareness; and building of partnerships and cooperation. During its first year of formal operations, INFO/RAC had made every effort to focus on priority (MAP) needs with a regional impact within those activity areas. However, in order to enable its ongoing work, there was a need to establish a common information policy for MAP; gain the highest institutional and decision-making support from the Contracting Parties with strong consent and commitment at all levels; and to define an appropriate and supportive governance plan for MAP. In particular, there was a need to strengthen the current weak coordination with MEDU, since information and communication initiatives had been launched by MEDU without coordination with INFO/RAC. Coordination must be a multidirectional and consistent process, forming part of sound governance and efficient operations.

89. Many speakers expressed their appreciation of the presentations given by the RAC Directors, which had been most useful and instructive. Some speakers requested more

detailed information on the functioning of each RAC. There was general agreement that clear mandates were needed, not only for all RACs but also for the Coordinating Unit, though unnecessary changes should not be made where clear mandates already existed. The lack of an integrated vision among the RACs was noted. Improved coordination on the part of the Coordinating Unit was necessary to ensure that all RACs were working in the same direction and were aware of each other's mandate as well as their own, in order to avoid the overlap and omissions sometimes observed in their current activities. Several speakers also highlighted the need for a monitoring system to ensure that RAC mandates were being implemented appropriately.

90. Emphasis was placed on the need for all RACs to have the same status, since at present, for example, some RACs were unable to recruit non-nationals of their host countries. Several speakers mentioned the need for harmonized medium-term planning, presented in an appropriate standardized format and, *inter alia* specifying the resources required. It was suggested that a four-year cycle would be appropriate, as Meetings of the Contracting Parties were held every two years. Other specific suggestions included improving the clarity of reports submitted by RACs, using modern communication technologies to facilitate coordination and avoid a surfeit of meetings.

91. The Focal Point for Spain disagreed with the recommendation in paragraph 74 (d) since generating resources for the whole of MAP went beyond the mandate of the Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production and should be undertaken by the Secretariat rather than a specific RAC.

92. Summing up the discussion, the Chairperson noted that no specific decisions had been taken; rather, the discussion had been part of an ongoing process. The meeting had heard what amounted to self-evaluations by RACs, and had observed that there was a degree of overlap between their activities and that some activities expected by Contracting Parties were not carried out. There was a need to improve planning and the Contracting Parties should give clear direction and assistance to the Coordinating Unit in that regard.

IV. The Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)

93. The Coordinator drew attention to the main points raised in the external evaluation report (recommendations 110-118).

94. Support was expressed for the recommendation that the MCSD should be an advisory body on policy and technical issues and a mechanism for assessment, monitoring and evaluation. It should offer action-oriented advice that could be applied by the RACs and Focal Points in specific work programmes. It was observed that the Commission had not really departed from its original role but that role had evolved in line with changing attitudes to the concept of sustainable development. Considerable momentum had recently been generated through workshops and other events involving a wide range of actors. The MCSD's unique character as a regional forum bringing together representatives of governments, NGOs, civil society and business should be fully exploited, for instance through the forging of partnerships and through regional coordination in areas such as transport and energy.

95. Several speakers drew attention to the importance of linking national strategies with the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development and of drawing on the expertise available at each level as a basis for decision-making and monitoring.

96. Some speakers felt that the main problem besetting the MCSD was the tendency of MAP components to view it as a foreign body instead of making it part and parcel of the MAP system. The plenary meetings of the MCSD had also fallen short of expectations. Improved agenda-setting and new procedures were required. An effort should be made to attract a

variety of stakeholders and high-profile personalities. It was also suggested that the plenary meeting should be held back-to-back with meetings of the Focal Points. However, that could result in countries' Focal Points being nominated to serve on the commission as well, which would be counter-productive. Both MAP and MCSD meetings might be made more attractive if they focused less on internal matters and spent less time questioning whether they were proceeding in the right direction.

97. The meeting agreed on the desirability of promoting synergy with the UNCSD and of learning from its experience. It was also agreed that the MCSD Secretariat should remain in Athens.

V. The system of Focal Points and capacity building

98. It was the view of participants that the terms of reference of Focal Points (FPs) should not be prescriptive beyond specifying in general terms their responsibilities and the need for their functions in their own countries to be relevant to the concerns of MAP. It was suggested, and widely endorsed, that the term "guidelines" would be preferable to "terms of reference". A more restrictive definition of FPs would not be acceptable to governments, which must be free to decide on specific functions and profiles. There was support for the idea that FPs should be able to cover more than one RAC, which would facilitate coordination and lessen the demands on countries with limited capacities. FPs should also play a more active role by providing strategic inputs to RAC programmes and helping to monitor their results. Another idea advanced was that MAP FPs should be authorized to delegate their functions, subject to the requirements of a particular RAC. Another suggestion was that the thematic FPs, as distinct from those representing MAP as a whole, should be renamed "correspondents". The Secretariat reminded however, that the designation of a "national focal point" for RACs was mentioned in one Protocol. It was agreed that legal opinion should be sought on this issue.

VI. Relations with the European Union/European Commission

99. The Coordinator said that a number of developments had taken place with respect to MAP-EC relations since the preparation of the external evaluation report and that most of the recommendations had been overtaken by events. A detailed Joint Work Programme had been signed establishing a closer working relationship with the EC. That new relationship was reflected in the envisaged strong MAP involvement which will be launched in the Horizon 2020 initiative meeting to be held in Cairo. A Memorandum of Understanding had also been signed between the EC and UNEP.

100. While welcoming the developments reported by the Secretariat and supporting efforts to further strengthen the relationship with the EC, two participants considered recommendation 130 to be inappropriate since they were in a position to state, as EU members Parties to the Convention, that their countries lost no opportunity to champion the cause of closer interaction between the EC and MAP. Advantage should be taken of the experience and strong points of the two processes, such as the long experience of the EC with institutional and legal instruments and the activities, instruments and long and successful cooperation developed by MAP/UNEP with all countries of the diverse Mediterranean region.

101. A participant drew the attention of the Secretariat to the fact that a group of countries, including the Balkan countries, remained outside the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Horizon 2020 initiative. Given the crucial importance of that initiative, the Secretariat was called upon to consider the possibility of developing a partnership mechanism to compensate in some degree for the non-participation of the countries concerned in the activities of Horizon 2020.

VII. Synergies

102. In response to a query concerning the content and purpose of the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) mentioned under this heading (recommendations 141-142), the Secretariat said that it was felt appropriate to establish a more formal relationship with bodies with which MAP had synergies and would be able to pursue common activities. It was agreed that cooperation with the bodies concerned could involve the signing of Memoranda of Understanding, where required. It was important to adopt a focused and structured approach to the identification of synergies.

103. With respect to recommendation 144 of the external evaluation report, referring to the possibility of the Arab League and the African Union becoming Contracting Parties as per Article 30 of the Convention, it was agreed that legal opinion should be sought on that issue.

Relations with other partners

104. The Coordinator recalled recommendation 146 in the external evaluation report that criteria should be developed for the selection of MAP partners, a proposal which the Secretariat supported. Representatives noted that criteria should relate to all potential partners, not just non-governmental organizations, and be developed when needed. They stressed the need to clarify the rights and responsibilities of potential partners and the benefits they would bring to MAP, such as scientific advice or financial assistance. It might be valuable to distinguish between various categories of partners, for instance non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and decide whether intergovernmental organizations were eligible. The experiences of other agencies in the Mediterranean region should be taken into account.

Outreach strategy and activities

105. The Coordinator said that the budget allocated to a programme should make provision for publicity, including the provision of programme materials in Arabic where relevant. Some participants commented that INFO/RAC was already engaged in a number of relevant activities. The web site must be redesigned in such a way that the general public would clearly understand the work MAP was doing to implement the Convention, and what remained to be done. The information should be presented in an interactive format and be based on validated indicators.

Agenda item 8: Draft terms of reference of MAP and RAC Focal Points

106. It was agreed that the issue of the terms of reference of MAP and RAC Focal Points had been adequately covered in the discussion of the relevant sections of the external evaluation report.

Agenda item 9: Draft amendments to the terms of reference of the MCSD

107. The Secretariat drew attention to document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/6/Corr.1, highlighting the proposed amendments.

108. After an exchange of views, it was agreed that the MCSD should be an advisory forum which could perform the functions set out in the draft terms of reference. It was suggested that it should advise all MAP components. Some speakers suggested changing its composition to a small group of eminent people nominated by the Contracting Parties but not necessarily their own nationals. Others suggested that eminent people be invited from time to time on particular issues with no permanent status. Another view was that the

Commission should continue as it was and nominate or establish a consultation committee of eminent people.

109. Several speakers said that the membership should reflect the geographical distribution of the Contracting Parties. It was agreed that there should be increased representation of stakeholders such as local authorities, economic actors, the scientific community, NGOs and intergovernmental organizations. Some speakers considered that members of the MCSD should be nominated by the stakeholders themselves. It was suggested that a profile and selection criteria for membership should be developed and circulated to Focal Points, who would handle administrative matters, the selection of experts and the channelling of information on behalf of the Commission.

110. It was agreed that the MCSD should be a forum for decision-making at the highest possible political level based on clear advice from MCSD working groups and expert groups. Those groups should not have a purely technical membership. They should be composed of competent national representatives, not only from the Government but also independent consultants and representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society and business. Expert studies and ways of making effective use of existing knowledge should come from the RACs and collaborating institutions at global, European Union and national level. The Rules of Procedure of the MCSD should be amended for submission to the next meeting of the Contracting Parties.

111. With regard to size, some speakers were in favour of a small focused advisory panel of 5 to 10 eminent personalities or high-level experts. Others supported the figure of 39 mentioned in the draft terms of reference, provided that the membership was of a high quality. In general, care should be taken to avoid the proliferation of expert groups and duplication with bodies established by Blue Plan.

112. Most speakers agreed that the Commission should hold regular meetings every two years, as other MAP components did, with the option of additional meetings being called on an ad hoc basis, although it was also believed that even annual meetings would be insufficient to ensure a continuous dynamic reporting process on implementation of the MSSD.

113. The meeting agreed that the Drafting Committee should develop a certain number of limited options covering, for instance, retention or amendment of the existing set-up, composition and membership, nomination procedure, selection criteria for eminent personalities, rules of procedure, mandate of the MCSD and its relationship with MEDU and other MAP components. The options should be presented in a concise form, setting out the pros and cons of each option.

Agenda item 10: **Identification of the main topics of the agenda for the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties**

114. The Coordinator proposed that the topics on the agenda of the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties would include the progress report on activities, the budget and programme of work and recommendations for the next biennium, the strategy declaration and governance paper to be prepared by the Drafting Committee, and the draft ICZM Protocol. If the ICZM Protocol is approved by the Contracting Parties, a conference of plenipotentiaries to adopt the Protocol could be held immediately after the Meeting. To make the ministerial segment more attractive, it was proposed to invite a high-level personality to deliver a keynote speech on a topical issue. A number of participants welcomed the idea.

115. One participant suggested that the governance paper should look into the possibility of creating a new mechanism that would cater for countries in the Adriatic subregion that

were not involved in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership or the Horizon 2020 initiative. It would increase interest in the Ministerial Segment of the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

116. The Focal Point for Spain, the Party hosting the 2007 Meeting, welcomed the proposal for a keynote address and suggested that climate change or desertification could be suitable topics.

117. The Coordinator announced that, during a meeting of the RAC Directors and the Coordinating Unit, it had been agreed to make an effort to adopt a new approach to the preparation of the budget and the programme of work for the next meeting of Focal Points, taking into consideration the discussion at the present meeting.

Agenda item 11: **Other matters**

118. The Chairperson noted that there was no other business.

Agenda item 12: **Adoption of the Report of the meeting**

119. The meeting adopted the draft report contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/L1, as amended, at its meeting on Saturday, 11 November 2006.

Agenda item 13: **Closure of the meeting**

120. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 1.45 p.m. on Saturday, 11 November 2006.

ANNEX I

Introductory greeting by H.E. Mr Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio, Italian Minister for Environment, Land and Sea

Mr Mifsud, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we are witnesses of a special moment: this year we celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Mediterranean Action Plan which was launched by the coastal States of our internal basin to establish a cooperation on a regional level aiming to deal with common problems of marine pollution.

Despite the efforts carried out over these last 3 decades by UNE/MAP, the quality of the environment in the Mediterranean area is yet in jeopardy due to the non- sustainable use of natural resources. This situation has been worsen face the political instability in the region.

The above mentioned trends bring to a unique conclusion: the actual role played by the MAP in the implementation of the environmental protection policy of the Mediterranean countries is weak and it has to be definitely improved within the Barcelona Convention.

Both MAP stakeholders and partners are aware that environmental and development priorities of the Mediterranean area have been changed in the past years, and maintaining the status quo and "*business as usual*" is not sufficient for the challenges in the foreseeable future. We must overstep traditional concept of territorial sea, reproducing a common idea of sovereignty able to be adapted in multiple fields, with several, concrete applications: to set a successful fight against the fishing through not conventional means, for example.

We must turn towards an effective, consistent and efficient governance face the environmental challenges of our own home, that "Mare Nostrum" whose coasts unify all of us, whose destiny we share. A new "era" for MAP and the whole Mediterranean area is rising on. Therefore it appears essential to understand how the Mediterranean Action Plan and its components can effectively work in such a fascinating scenario, within such an ever changing international contest.

Consequently, a "reform" of MAP is timely and necessary.

Starting from Catania, and through the following appointments foreseen into the working agenda, a reform represents a compulsory step to confirm an interest of each country to a solid realization of Barcelona Convention, as well as an unchanged interest to strengthen and enhance the "new MAP".

To draw a "new MAP" it is crucial to reevaluate the central role of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as key elements of the entire framework. The legal background should become the real basis to develop strategies, programs and actions, and to circumscribe the perimeter of any activity. Furthermore, the common infrastructure for information sharing and communication, along with clear indicators, look decisive in order to improve visibility and to monitor each progress.

The Italian Government wants to play a central role in this process.

The protection of the Mediterranean Sea and the Barcelona Convention, in fact, have always been a priority for Italy due to its strategic geographical position, its historical and cultural links with North Africa, Middle East, Balkans and Central Europe.

This priority has formally been expressed even with the introduction of the word “Mare” (sea) in the official name of the Italian Ministry for Environment: not a symbolic act but a clear sign of the extreme attention paid to marine environmental issues.

I wish you a fruitful and productive meeting, truthfully sure that those days of work in Catania will shape a “new” clear vision for the MAP system.

The Minister of Environment, Land and Sea

ANNEX II
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LISTE PROVISOIRE DES PARTICIPANTS

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**ANNEX III
PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Rules of procedure
3. Election of officers
4. Adoption of the Agenda and organization of work
5. General discussion concerning the main principles about the future orientation of MAP
6. A Secretariat submission with proposals for implementing the recommendations of the External Evaluation of the Mediterranean Action Plan
7. Draft Vision and Strategic Statement of MAP
8. Draft Terms of Reference of MAP and RAC Focal Points
9. Draft Amendments to the Terms of Reference of the MCSD
10. Identification of the main topics of the Agenda for the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties
11. Other matters
12. Adoption of the report of the meeting
13. Closure of the meeting

ANNEX IV

Outline for Strategy Declaration

(Why)

30 years on, much work done – legislation put in place, and programmes and structures established,

But challenges still remain: Environmental degradation still significant – pollution continues, loss of biological resources, loss of landscape

Driving forces – such as urban expansion, climate change and rapid changes in economic growth, underlying poverty – generating increasing pressures

Furthermore, most countries of region have a low coping capacity

We have been unable to address these problems sufficiently. Root cause include fact that environmental protection and SD have not been high enough on the political agenda, or sufficiently mainstreamed and decisions affecting the environment are taken by other actors.

(What we need to accomplish and when)

Overall: to ensure healthy future for the Med.

In short term – address hotspots (i.a. through H2020)

In medium – reverse adverse trends,

Long-term: generate sustainable future.

(How and Who)

Principles and targets for doing this have already been established in the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and the strategies adopted by the CPs of the Barcelona Convention including the MSSD. We reaffirm the principles and targets in these documents, and continue to believe they fit correctly into international policy framework.

The objective of MAP is ensure the proper implementation of the B.C., its protocols and strategies, and to overcome the obstacles hindering this.

MAP will use the following tools to solve this:

- Analysis of the reasons behind the implementation deficit. On this basis, MAP to increase its activities to assist the CPs to ratify and implement the provisions of the BC, its protocols and related strategies including the MSSD. This should include capacity building and help in formulating the CP's national environmental policies. In parallel an effective compliance mechanism is to be developed.
- Proper governance of MAP to ensure most effective and efficient use of MAP resources, where different components of MAP work in a mutually reinforcing manner (see attached).

- Development of Resource Mobilization Plan – to provide resources for implementation of B.C. and MAP strategies and for concrete actions on ground; plan to cover where to get resources and how to use money most efficiently/sustainably.
- Collection of information on SoE and analysis of distribution of costs and benefits of environmental degradation and costs and benefits of environmental regulation, and their appropriate diffusion. This will be useful to check MAP is on right track, and to support knowledge-based policy making and help mainstreaming environmental concerns into policy making and into decisions by socio-economic actors.
- Supporting education, awareness raising, enhance visibility and enhanced public participation related to the state of the coastal and marine environment, its resources and possible threats to them, as well as on the economic, social and environmental importance of coastal and marine resources. Development of MAP information and communication policies, and contributing to appropriate national and regional monitoring activities.
- Promotion of market/financial instruments (making markets work) to promote implementation of BC, protocols and strategies in CPs.
- Creating synergies (in content and timing) with relevant national, regional and international organizations and initiatives, incl. H2020.
- Establishment of partnerships to ensure full involvement of civil society and private sector players at both regional and national level

Topics to be covered in Governance Paper:

- 1) Coordination and Coherence Mechanisms, incl
 - Identification of gaps
 - Auditing
 - Communication strategy – internal and with CPs
- 2) Mandates for Coordination Unit and for each RAC
- 3) Host Country Agreements
- 4) Work Programme and Long-Term Planning:
 - Ensuring coherence and focus
 - Mobilisation and distribution of resources
- 5) Monitoring of progress towards goal-vision, and implementation of work programme
- 6) Role of FPs (guidance, not ToRs!)
- 7) Visibility

ANNEX V

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP)

**A Secretariat submission with proposals for implementing
the recommendations of the External Evaluation**

Explanatory Note

This document features the recommendations made by the Consultant and the comments and proposals by the Secretariat on the recommendations. The submissions by the Secretariat were prepared following a consultation exercise within MEDU involving all RAC Directors and Programme Officers who were invited to submit comments in writing which were then discussed during a one day meeting with the Consultant.

All the recommendations made by the Consultant have been listed under one column and grouped under different headings with the comments and proposals by the Secretariat listed under another column.

The recommendations have been grouped under the following headings:

1. A New start
2. Legal Institutional and Policy Issues
3. Mandate of the RACs and the MEDPOL
4. Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)
5. The system of the Focal Points and capacity building
6. Relations with the European Union/European Commission
7. Synergies

It should be noted that the recommendations were reproduced from the full report of the External Evaluation of MAP (UNEP(DEC)/MED 270/Inf.9) dated 18 July 2005. This explains why the recommendations are numbered 27-153 in order to keep the same reference, as in the original report.

I. A new start

Recommendations of the Evaluation Report	Comments and Proposals by the Secretariat
<p>27. The Convention and its Protocols should be re-valued as the central international law instruments that are at the basis of the process. In real terms, this has never ceased to be the case, but a general perception has been generated, maybe inadvertently, that there is a nebulous "Mediterranean Action Plan" being implemented, when what actually exists is no more – but no less – than a mechanism to implement an intergovernmental treaty. The treaty as such should be reinstalled at the centre of the process and the misnomer of a 'Mediterranean Action Plan', or MAP should no longer be employed.</p>	<p>While it is agreed that the Convention and the Protocols should be at the centre and the point of reference of all the activities carried out by the Secretariat and its components, MAP should continue to be employed because it addresses also socio-economic issues, especially under the MCSD, which are not covered by the legal instruments.</p> <p>Moreover, MAP is mentioned in the Preamble as well as in Article 4 para. 2 of the Convention. In conformity with this article, CPs pledge themselves to implement the Mediterranean Action Plan.</p>
<p>28. The 30th Anniversary of the Convention should be used as a good opportunity to strengthen and launch a true new phase of the Convention, a new face with a new meaning and a new resolve.</p>	<p>It is proposed that the Ministerial Segment at the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties should include the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Ministers of Environment in order to: a) reaffirm the commitment of the Parties to the amended Convention now in force; and b) establish a real link with the Euro Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). This will require a special effort, especially by the host country (Spain), to secure a well-attended Ministerial Segment.</p>
<p>29. To indicate this new start and to avoid the confusion of names between the 'Barcelona Convention' and the 'Barcelona Process' the COP should pass a resolution concerning the presentational and graphic identity of the Convention¹. For presentational and promotional purposes, the resolution should establish that the <i>Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols</i>, as well as all the other processes and components related to the Convention that so far have been referred to as the 'Mediterranean Action Plan – MAP' and/or the 'Barcelona Convention', will hence forth be referred to as, for example, the Mediterranean Environment Convention, with its appropriate translation in other languages, and with the acronym MedEC used in all languages.</p>	<p>While the graphic identity of the MAP and the Barcelona Convention should be changed to give more importance and visibility to the term "Barcelona Convention" giving it the same exposure as UNEP, it is not recommended to use the term "Mediterranean Environment Convention (MedEC)."</p> <p>Otherwise, the Barcelona Convention and MAP will lose their unique identity, which has been created over the last 30 years.</p>

¹ In the same manner that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development has adopted the presentational name 'World Bank'.

<p>30. A new logo and graphic identity should be adopted, in which the words 'MedEC' and 'The Mediterranean Environment Convention' (or any other new presentational name) should be prominent, with the full official name of the Convention in smaller print. The indication that the Secretariat of the Convention is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) should also appear in small print. In other words, in the letterhead and other graphic presentations the prominence of the UNEP name and logo should be removed, highlighting instead the prominence of the Convention. After all, UNEP is providing the Secretariat to the Convention but is not the main actor and/or component.</p>	<p>It is recommended that a new logo and graphic identity be adopted, highlighting the prominence of the Barcelona Convention and MAP, but retaining the UNEP name and logo and the prominence they enjoy at present.</p> <p>Being under the UN umbrella gives more clout to the Barcelona Convention and MAP on the international stage.</p>
<p>31. In order to back the new image with real new substance, the Convention should develop a Vision and Strategic Statement that would encompass the whole process and current structure. This document should set the road map for coordinated and concerted efforts of the COP and Bureau; the RACs and Programmes, the MCSD, the system of focal points, and the Secretariat. The Statement should aim to ensure that all these components work in <u>synergy</u> and achieve tangible and quantifiable results. The terms of reference, roles and responsibilities of each component, in particular of each RAC and programme and the MCSD, should be clearly defined.</p>	<p>See the draft for a Vision and Strategic Statement (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/4)</p> <p>In addition, the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007 should adopt specific decisions dealing with, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the composition and <i>modus operandi</i> of the MCSD; and b) the roles and responsibilities of RACs.
<p>32. In order to fulfil the expectations and aspirations of the Contracting Parties, this document should attempt to be practical, problem-solving and action-oriented.</p>	<p>See the draft for a Vision and Strategic Statement (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/4)</p>
<p>33. The Vision and Strategic Statement should be based on the understanding that the main contribution that the Convention system can make to the quest for sustainable development is the effective implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. This should be the highest priority and the system should develop the capacity to provide assistance to Parties in this direction.</p> <p>This approach should also take into account the fact that some Protocols require substantial resources for effective implementation: e.g. MEDPOL officers have indicated that 9 billion euros might be needed to control land-based pollution in the next 10 years.</p>	<p>See the draft for a Vision and Strategic Statement (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/4)</p>

<p>34. If the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development is endorsed by COP-14, the Vision and Strategic Statement should make use of section 2.7 of the Strategy (draft dated June 2005) entitled: 'Promoting sustainable management of the sea and coastal zones and taking urgent action to put an end to the degradation of the coastal zones'. The concept of 'ecosystem services', coined by the report of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment launched in March 2005, could also serve as the basis for the elaboration of the Vision and Strategic Statement.</p>	<p>See the draft for a Vision and Strategic Statement (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/4)</p>
<p>35. There is a general and strong demand of more on-the-ground action, going beyond the adoption of resolutions and the preparation of guidelines and technical and policy analysis. The implementation of the Vision and Strategic Statement should contemplate, in the first instance, a limited number of regional programmes that would encourage the participation of the 22 Parties. It is very important that the Convention continues to be, or becomes, relevant to <u>all Parties</u>, both developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition. MEDPOL is widely recognized as the most successful undertaking of the Convention and could serve as a model for other region-wide programmes.</p>	<p>Regional programmes contemplating more action on the ground should be developed in order for the Convention and MAP to continue to be relevant to the CPs. Emerging issues of relevance to the region should be identified and addressed through concrete action especially if the concept of ecosystem approach is to be effectively applied. The Report on Environment and Development identifies several issues of extreme interest to the Mediterranean that could be the basis of concrete action at the regional or sub-regional level.</p>
<p>36. In addition to these regional programmes, a series of sub-regional initiatives should be considered in order to cater to the specific needs of groups of Parties, provided that there is a guarantee of full participation of all those interested. This sub-regional approach could benefit from being associated with the methodology of EU regional policy instruments.</p>	<p>As stated earlier, initiatives at the sub-regional level taking into account developing countries or countries with economies in transition are very important and should be encouraged.</p>
<p>37. 'Type II' initiatives similar to those launched at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) should be envisaged at the regional and sub-regional levels.</p>	<p>Parties and partners shall be invited to propose "Type II" initiatives.</p>
<p>38. A 'Resource Mobilization Plan' that contemplates all the components of the Convention process and in particular the RACs and programmes, should also be included within the Vision and Strategic Statement.</p>	<p>MAP needs a strong financing framework or a Resource Mobilization Plan for its future activities especially in helping the countries to face the challenges that need to be addressed in the long-term implementation of the Convention and its Protocols at the national level. Such a mechanism would give more value to MAP.</p>

<p>39. To improve the Convention's political visibility, a 'Davos-like approach' should be envisioned, involving political leaders, relevant corporations, other actors in the business sector, economic circles and other public figures.</p>	<p>A "Davos-like approach" could be tested in one of the meetings of the MCSD.</p>
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II. Legal, Institutional and Policy issues

Ratifications

Recommendations of the Evaluation Report	Comments and Proposals by the Secretariat
<p>40. Pending ratifications and some inconsistencies in the ratifications by some Parties are key questions because they are at the base of the credibility of the whole process. The COP should seriously look into this matter and the Coordinator, with the active support of the Bureau and the Depositary, should take a much more proactive role in working with the Parties on this matter. To this end:</p> <p>a) it will be important that the COP considers electing to the Bureau Parties that are in good standing with regards to the ratifications, so that they can assist in this matter from a position of moral authority; and</p> <p>b) the Secretariat should improve its working relations with the officials in Spain dealing with the Depositary function with a view to: i) enlist their support in promoting ratifications through the appropriate use of diplomatic channels; ii) remain constantly up-to-date concerning the status of ratifications; and iii) maintain files in the Secretariat with copies of all the relevant documents of ratification.</p>	<p>A MoU should be developed between the Secretariat and Spain concerning the <i>modus operandi</i> of the Depositary country.</p> <p>Lack of ratifications by some countries is a key issue. The Secretariat, together with the Depositary country, should take an active part in this matter. However, no distinction should be made, as proposed in para (a) between those CPs that have ratified the legal instruments and those that have not because such an approach could penalize countries who are active within MAP but have not ratified the legal instruments because of internal constraints extraneous to MAP.</p>
<p>41. It appears that the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil (Offshore Protocol, Madrid, 1994) is unlikely to enter into force. It may therefore be appropriate to consider rescinding the agreement, so as to avoid dragging an instrument of international law that has little value in practice, in particular since its provisions are already covered by a global instrument.</p>	<p>The recommendation to rescind the Offshore Protocol is not supported. Efforts should continue to be made to have it ratified.</p>

Reporting and Compliance

<p>42. The establishment of a compliance mechanism should constitute a high priority. COP-14 in Slovenia should provide clear instructions for the preparation of an efficient mechanism, including the tools that could serve to accelerate and monitor compliance, such as guidelines, information tools, performance indicators, etc.</p>	<p>The absence of a compliance mechanism, even though it is provided for in the Convention is undermining its effectiveness and credibility of MAP. A compliance mechanism should be finalized and ready for approval by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007.</p>
<p>43. The reporting system being established for the Convention should be such that it does not become yet another burden for overworked Focal Points, but rather an instrument that can be used as a national planning tool for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. This tool should also be designed as an on-going, on-line reporting system, so that data can be entered at all times, avoiding the rush of producing a national report when the deadline approaches. The effort made by the Secretariat in comparing the reporting requirements and practices of other Conventions should be put to practical use in order to assist Parties to converge towards the very the important, yet elusive, 'joint reporting system'.</p>	<p>A comprehensive reporting system is currently being developed taking into account other reporting requirements by the Contracting Parties in order to avoid duplication of work.</p>
<p>44. The Secretariat should be instructed to analyse the possibility of coupling the reporting system with other on-going exercises, such as the preparation of the Human Development Report undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and/or the reports on environmental performance carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).</p>	<p>This issue will be considered during the preparation of the final reporting system to be submitted for adoption by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007.</p>

Possible new instruments

<p>45. It would seem advisable to discontinue the discussions and negotiations of any new Protocol and/or Annex to the Convention until such a time when there is guarantee that the new instrument(s) would obtain the required number of ratifications for entering into force in a reasonable period of time. Otherwise, it would not be healthy for the Convention process to have yet other instruments that have not entered into force after more than 10 years after being signed.</p>	<p>The recommendation has been superseded by the decision adopted by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2005 to develop a draft of a new ICZM Protocol.</p>
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Political clout

<p>46. As in all intergovernmental treaties, the main entry point of the Convention in each Party should be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with other appropriate line ministries being involved in the technical aspects of the development and application of the treaty. To this end:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the COP should adopt a decision requesting the Parties to designate their Ambassadors in Athens, or in the nearest capital, as the Permanent Representatives to the Secretariat of the Convention; b) the Secretariat should establish and maintain active contacts with the Permanent Representatives, keeping them informed of all developments and informing them of all Convention meetings; c) the Secretariat should organize briefing sessions for the Permanent Representatives at regular intervals during the year and at any other time there is an identified need; and d) all formal communications to the Parties should be transmitted under cover of a diplomatic note (note verbale) addressed to the Permanent Representatives, with copy to the Convention Focal Points. 	<p>The Secretariat agrees with these recommendations.</p>
<p>47. In order to increase the visibility of the Convention – and thus its political clout – and also as a capacity building tool, the Secretariat should organize regular official visits to each Party, preferably by the Coordinator. Eleven Parties should receive an official visit each year – using, if appropriate, the opportunities provided by regional or international meetings – in such a way that each Party would receive an official visit every two years.</p>	<p>The Secretariat will consider implementing this recommendation in 2007, in consultation with the Bureau and interested Parties. To increase even more MAP's visibility and ensure contacts at the highest possible level of governments, some of these visits could be led by the Minister of the Environment of the Contracting Party holding the Presidency of the Bureau. Impacts of such visits could be enhanced through various public relations initiatives during the visit including press conferences, public lectures and visits to projects being carried out with the support of MAP.</p>
<p>48. These visits should last for approximately three days and should encompass, as a minimum: i) meetings with the line Minister(s); ii) a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; iii) a working session with the Focal Points, iv) an encounter with representatives of civil society groups; and v) a press conference and interviews with the press. A lecture on the Convention and its process at a public and prestigious venue</p>	<p>See the previous paragraph.</p>

should also be envisaged. In each case, consideration should be given to organizing a media event (an inauguration, opening of an exhibition, launching of a major study, etc.).

The Conference of the Parties (COP)

<p>49. In spite of the general satisfaction expressed by the Parties with having ordinary meetings of the COP every two years, this interval could be too short for a Convention which is dealing more with processes than with managing issues that change from year to year. Thus, it would seem reasonable to consider holding the ordinary meetings of the COP every three years. This would have the following advantages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) would allow more time for the implementation of the key decisions taken by the COP; b) would make the reporting process less cumbersome and eventually more meaningful; c) would allow for better preparation of strategic proposals that normally should involve complex and time consuming consultation processes; d) would help to reduce the 'COPs-related fatigue' that Parties in general are suffering from; and e) would reduce meeting costs. 	<p>Legal advice has been sought on this matter since the provision to hold the Meeting of the Contracting Parties every two years is included in the Convention. If this recommendation is accepted, a formal letter from each Party expressing agreement with holding the Meeting of the Contracting Parties every three years would suffice, in spite of Article 18 of the Convention. However, in the opinion of the Secretariat, the meeting of the Contracting Parties should continue to be held on a biennial basis as is the practice at present.</p>
<p>50. Regrettably, Article 18 of the Convention establishes that "the Contracting Parties shall hold ordinary meetings every two years..." (an issue that could have been left to the Rules of Procedure to establish). Legal advice should be sought regarding the possibility of holding the COP every three years, in spite of the letter of Article 18.</p>	<p>See the previous paragraph.</p>
<p>51. Each COP should define the key issues that should be in the agenda of the next meeting, in particular those issues of a strategic nature, so that the work for preparing well thought-out proposals could start immediately after the COP.</p>	<p>If the proposal is accepted, the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007 should already identify the key issues to be included in the agenda of the 16th Meeting in 2009.</p>
<p>52. Preparations of the key decisions of the COP should be done with much more lead time, allowing for more consultation with the Parties and the involvement of the Convention partners and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>The process envisioned for the implementation of these recommendations is in fact an application of this <i>modus operandi</i>, which will be used for decisions on all major issues concerning the Convention.</p>
<p>53. The ministerial segment of the COP should be planned well in advance (one year) in terms of issues to be discussed and</p>	<p>The Secretariat is not in favour of the use of facilitators during the ministerial segment of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.</p>

<p>outcomes. Professional facilitators should be used. The aim should be to: a) use the presence of Ministers in a meaningful way; and b) ensure that Ministers go back home with the feeling that their attendance has been worthwhile, which in turn would be translated in more political support for the Convention.</p>	
<p>54. The COP should avoid, at all cost, the adoption of sweeping resolutions without clear plans and identified resources for implementation. Repeating this practice will undermine the credibility of the Convention and its processes.</p>	<p>Decisions adopted by the Contracting Parties should be limited in number, address policy issues and be supported by financial allocations to ensure their implementation.</p>
<p>55. There should be a modification of the manner in which the decisions of the COP are worded and numbered. Until now they are registered in a very confusing manner in terms of content, language and numbering, resulting in many cases in a lack of clarity as to whom they are addressed to and as to the real intent of the decision. All decisions are registered as 'Recommendations', even if some of them are giving instructions to the Secretariat, and thus, have the value of 'resolutions', not 'recommendations'.</p>	<p>The practice followed in other Conventions should be adopted by the meeting of the Contracting Parties. A sample of the proposed wording of the decisions of the Contracting Parties is in Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/Inf.5.</p>
<p>56. It is recommended that all decisions of the COP be registered as 'Decisions' using the numbering system in place in most Conventions: a roman number to indicate the COP number, followed of the Arabic numbers in chronological order (e.g. Decision XIV.1, XIV.2, etc.). Each Decision should have a preambular section providing the background and justification for the Decision followed by the operative paragraphs. There would be no need to differentiate between 'resolutions' and 'recommendations' since the intent of the Decision would be evident in the operative paragraphs.</p>	<p>See previous paragraph.</p>
<p>57. The Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties should be amended to bring them up-to-date with the present situation of the Convention. The acceptance of some of the recommendations put forward in this report would also require amendments to the Rules of Procedure. In an advanced briefing note for the Bureau on the results of the External Evaluation prepared for its meeting in June 2005, a detailed proposal for amending the Rules of Procedure was submitted as part of the briefing note.</p>	<p>The proposal with the amendments to the Rules of procedure is in Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/Inf.6.</p>

The Bureau

<p>58. The COP may consider incorporating as an additional Bureau member the Party that will host the next Conference of the Parties. In this case, this Party would not be a candidate in the election of Bureau members since its seat would be already secured.</p>	<p>No amendment to the Convention is necessary in order to implement this recommendation. However, there is a need to amend the Terms of Reference of the Bureau.</p>
<p>59. Parties, and not individuals, should be elected to the Bureau. The COP should pass a decision to the effect that the representation of Parties in the Bureau should be at the level of Ministers or their representatives. (See also paragraph 40 (a) above also related to the Bureau.).</p>	<p>This is already the <i>de facto</i> situation but it should be stated in the Rules of procedure to avoid any ambiguities, keeping in mind that according to the Rules of procedure in force “<i>At the commencement of the first sitting of each ordinary meeting or conference, a President, two Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur are to be elected from among the representatives of the Contracting Parties</i>” (Rule 20).</p>

The role of the Secretariat

<p>60. The COP should pass a resolution by which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the MAP Coordinating Unit (MEDU) should be renamed ‘Secretariat of the Convention’; b) the head of the Secretariat should have the title of ‘Executive Secretary of the Convention’ (as is the case of all the other Conventions administered by UNEP); and c) the Coordinator [Executive Secretary] should act on UNEP’s behalf in dealing with all issues related to the Convention, including the issuing of invitations to the COP and other Convention meetings, preparing the agendas, reporting on administrative and financial matters, etc., as it is the common practice in all other UNEP-administered Conventions. The Rules of Procedure should be amended accordingly. 	<p>These issues are included in the proposed changes to the Rules of procedure, (Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.297/Inf.6) but it may be advisable to adopt them through a decision of the Contracting Parties.</p> <p>If this recommendation is approved, especially with respect to para (b) the role of the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention would be brought in line with that of other Conventions.</p> <p>It may also be advisable to keep both designations – Executive Secretary of the Convention and Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan.</p>
<p>61. The Coordinator [Executive Secretary] should pay much more attention than is currently allotted to the diplomatic and political dimension of his/her function by establishing and maintaining contacts at higher political levels that has been the case so far. He/she should also concentrate more on strategic issues and on the synergy with other key conventions, institutions and</p>	<p>The substance of this recommendation is already part of the Job Description/Terms of Reference of the post. Whether there should be a Deputy Executive Secretary (or Deputy Coordinator) is under discussion and should be clarified as a result of the evaluation exercise. At the same time, the Secretariat is too small to allow such a differentiation in roles and functions.</p>

<p>processes, leaving a Deputy Executive Secretary in charge of the administrative and day-to-day operational issues of the Secretariat.</p>	<p>Following the decision of the CPs in Portoroz, Slovenia, the post of Deputy Coordinator was frozen for the 2006-2007 biennium to be reconsidered at the next meeting of the Parties on the basis of the recommendations of the Extraordinary Meeting of MAP Focal Points. On the basis of past experience it is recommended to reinstate the post of Deputy Coordinator.</p> <p>With a Deputy Coordinator or Deputy Executive Secretary, the Coordinator or Executive Secretary will be able to give much more attention to the diplomatic and political dimension of his role.</p>
<p>62. Another key function of the Coordinator [Executive Secretary] should be the coordination and supervision of the work of all the RACs. (See also paragraphs 74-78).</p>	<p>This is already a function of the Coordinator but should be exercised in a more effective manner.</p>
<p>63. The Secretariat should reinforce its capacity to efficiently serve the key Convention processes, such as the preparation and running of the COP and the meetings of the Bureau and the Convention FPs, the proposed briefings to the Permanent Representatives, issues of compliance, the national reporting process and questions related to ratifications and legal interpretations of the Convention and its Protocols. To this end, the Secretariat should review the level and capacity of the post assigned to these functions.</p>	<p>This function is currently being carried out by a Professional Officer at P4 level. Current duties already justify the re-classification of the post to P5 level. However, the level of the functions of the post do not justify the recruitment of additional personnel. The Secretariat does however make use of the services of consultants to help it with specific issues especially of a legal nature.</p>
<p>64. The Secretariat should take all necessary steps to ensure that at no time it 'looses contact' with any of the Parties, in spite of the frequent changes of organization charts, personnel and attribution of responsibilities that are common in the public administration of all countries. When the contacts appear to have been lost and all attempts to re-establish connections by regular means of communication have failed, an official from the Secretariat should be dispatched to the country in question to find out who is now in charge of the Convention and to make all necessary efforts to bring the Party back on board. With only 22 Parties to deal with, the Secretariat can and should maintain fluid and effective contacts with <u>all</u> Parties at <u>all</u> times.</p>	<p>The Coordinator should keep under constant review the situation in relation to the effective contact with all Parties and take the necessary action when warranted.</p> <p>This could be done during the biannual visits to the countries by the Coordinator as proposed in Recommendation 47.</p>

<p>65. The Secretariat has the obligation to ensure the quality of all documents that carry the imprimatur of the Convention (e.g. those produced by the RACs), including working documents of all Convention-related meetings. This includes the need to ensure the quality of language in all language versions. To this end, the Secretariat should use the service of a language editor to supervise the text in the original language and then use professional translators for the other language(s).</p>	<p>The Coordinator should supervise the preparation of documents of all Convention-related meetings to ensure that they are of the proper standard. Official documents should first be vetted by the Secretariat for technical content and policy relevance, and then go for language editing.</p> <p>There is a great need for a language editor to review all the meeting documents before publication/circulation but not on a full time basis.</p>
<p>66. It would be advisable to undertake an external audit by a professional firm of the internal organization, administrative system, financial management and general <i>modus operandi</i> of the Secretariat in order to identify ways and means to render it more efficient.</p>	<p>An audit exercise has already been carried out by an Audit Office of UNEP and an administrative review is on the cards. This will be carried out by the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON).</p>
<p>67. The Bureau of the Convention should negotiate an agreement with UNEP HQ in Nairobi to expedite the recruitment procedures in order to reduce the long months that it currently takes to have new staff members on board in the Convention Secretariat.</p>	<p>There is a great need to expedite recruitment procedures. It is proposed that the Coordinator should take up this issue with UNON in Nairobi.</p>

Resource mobilization

<p>68. In relation to resource mobilization it is recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) all fundraising efforts be fully co-ordinated by the Secretariat; b) efforts should be made to diversify funding sources, including the private sector in these efforts; c) a clear mechanism must be set up in order to assist Parties in project development and fundraising, so that they can implement the Convention and its Protocols and the recommendations of the MCS. This mechanism should be established in the Secretariat but should also build the capacity of the RACs in project development and fundraising; d) an overall financial reporting system must be devised. It should be simple, clear and easy to understand, covering all activities and organs of the Convention; and e) donors must be encouraged to participate as observers in the Convention meetings, so that they are kept informed of developments and can express their views, especially on planning issues. 	<p>With respect to paras. a), b) and c) the fundraising capacity of the Secretariat should be enhanced but this may require creating a new post or upgrading an existing one. This has financial implications, but there is no doubt that for doing more, additional resources will be required.</p> <p>As stated earlier, MAP should devote more effort towards action on the ground. To do this a strong financing framework should be established to mobilize financial resources. As the next phase of MAP progresses, in particular the implementation of SAP/MED, SAP/BIO and the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem, there is a need for sustainable funding which can only be achieved through the involvement of the Contracting Parties in close cooperation with international partners and donors. To organize such sustainable funding there is the need for a mechanism to develop fund raising to support the national implementation of MAP programmes.</p>
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<p>69. The Convention and its components, in particular the RACs, need to establish efficient communication with funding agencies and to follow-up developments in the region in relation to the funding facilities under several regional and bilateral programmes and organizations. When relevant, RACs should also consider involving the private sector in public-private partnerships. Mobilization of financial resources from corporations, as a part of their corporate social responsibility, should be actively pursued. These resources could be used as seed money for major resource mobilization activities. It is proposed that CP/RAC be entrusted with an important role in setting up links with the private sector.</p>	<p>There are a number of international financing options available for environmental investments to support domestic sources of funding for programme implementation together with public private partnerships arrangements. The important thing is the identification and establishment of multi-sector partnerships for joint funding and execution of activities. This should be done under the direction of the Secretariat. For this to happen, however, the human resource capacity of the Secretariat has to be strengthened.</p>
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III. The Mandate of the RACs and the MED POL

The Regional Activity Centres (RACs)

<p>70. The RACs and Programmes should identify tools and/or mechanisms to assist countries in making use of their outputs and services at the national level. This could be done:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) by identifying and devising tools and/or mechanisms that would help the FPs establish and maintain links with other ministries and authorities, in order to encourage them to make use of the general outputs and products of the RACs; and b) by including in their products, to the extent feasible, alternative tools and mechanisms for mobilizing local and national resources in order to support countries to move more towards practical on-the-ground implementation without having to always rely on external support. 	<p>The key issue here is the role of the Focal Points. Their function should be defined in clear terms for them to be effective. Criteria for their designation should be developed to help the countries identify the proper officials to act as Focal Points.</p>
<p>71. There is a pressing need for all the RACs to raise their profiles (together with that of the Convention in general) and to more strongly advertise their results through a wider and more diversified dissemination of their products, public relations activities and contacts with the media.</p>	<p>Raising the visibility requires constant efforts during a considerable period of time. Apart from being attentive to all the opportunities that may arise towards this end, a plan of action should be developed with specific actions to be undertaken with the purpose of raising visibility.</p>

	This weakness should be addressed both with respect to MAP as well as with regard to the RACs with the support of INFO/RAC.
<p>72. Higher technical and political profiles would create an enabling environment that would be conducive to:</p> <p>a) getting the attention of decision-makers in the different sectors to look into the products of the RACs and consider them for use at national level;</p> <p>b) mobilizing international, regional and national resources;</p> <p>c) reaching the media and pressure groups, so as to encourage governments and line ministries to better assume their environmental responsibilities towards the Mediterranean and the Convention.</p>	RACs should promote their activities and success stories much better than they are doing at present. Success breeds success and the higher their profile is, the bigger is the chance of attracting attention and achieving recognition, thus increasing their chances of attracting financial and technical support for their activities. The publicity generated recently about MAP and the BP following the publication of the Report on Environment and Development proves this point.
<p>73. The time has come to update, amend or revisit the mandates, functions and responsibilities of the various RACs and programmes so that they can act in complete synergy, each in their specific areas of competence and all 'pushing' towards the common objective according to the Vision and Strategic Statement proposed above.</p>	<p>The implementation of this recommendation should start in 2007, following the approval of the Contracting Parties in order to submit to the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2009 a proposal concerning a revised (or confirmed) mandate of the RACs, including a clear road map to move towards effective synergies among them. The names of the RACs should also be reconsidered to ensure that the name reflects the true mandate of each RAC.</p> <p>Although evaluations have been carried out in respect of all the RACs, there is a need to re-visit the application of the recommendations made and their relevance in view of the new vision and strategic direction.</p>
<p>74. Overall, the RACs system should be re-shaped as follows:</p> <p>a) the Secretariat should be the umbrella body that coordinates, monitors and follows-up on the activities of the Centres within the framework of the operations of the Convention and its Protocols;</p> <p>b) the Blue Plan should be the technical arm of the MCSD. It should be the only Centre specializing in sustainable development issues, including those of a socio-economic nature, while all the other Centres should incorporate sustainability parameters in their respective fields of action. The components of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) adopted by the COP for</p>	<p>The role of the Secretariat as umbrella for the RACs should be strengthened. RACs should work in much closer cooperation and coordination with the Secretariat. It is important that whatever is produced by the RACs should be identified with MAP and not solely with the RAC producing it.</p> <p>The Blue Plan is already recognized as the technical arm of the MCSD, with the Secretariat being responsible for administration and coordination. The recent experience in the preparation of the MSSD has proved that this approach works very well and should be sustained.</p> <p>The new mandate and mission of INFO/RAC follows the recommendation at para (c) with areas of focus identified under the broad</p>

<p>guidance and/or implementation should guide the work programme of BP/RAC. This basically applies to the themes and issues in the MSSD that are cross-cutting and of socio-economic (not strictly environmental) nature. The role of the BP/RAC as a Mediterranean Environment and Sustainable Development Observatory should be re-emphasized;</p> <p>c) the ERS/RAC, should be transformed into a centre specialized in information and communication technology (ICT), as already reflected in the recent MOU signed between the Convention Secretariat and the Centre. This would entail that the Centre be responsible for the communication, information and visibility functions for the whole Convention system;</p> <p>d) the CP/RAC should extend its activities beyond industry, to additional economic sectors present in the Mediterranean. A new responsibility of establishing links with the multinational corporations, economic circles and the private sector in general should be added to the Centre. The objective would be the mobilization of financial resources from the private sector for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols; and</p> <p>e) the PAP/RAC should focus on integrated coastal areas management (ICAM).</p>	<p>information and communication domains. INFO/RAC is already carrying out this function.</p> <p>In order for CP/RAC to extend its activities beyond industry it needs additional resources.</p> <p>PAP/RAC is entirely focused on integrated coastal areas management.</p>
<p>75. The Coordinator should play an active, recognized and clearly accepted function of:</p> <p>a) supervising the work of each of the RAC Directors in relation to their Convention-related regional functions, undertaking an annual evaluation of their performance on the basis of an agreed upon job description, annual work plan and performance evaluation system;</p> <p>b) ensuring that the strategies, work programme and annual plans of each of the RACs are mutually supportive, responding as a whole to the needs of the Convention and the expectations of the Parties;</p> <p>c) ensuring that there is effective and transparent financial reporting in general and in particular in relation to the contributions made to the RACs from the Mediterranean Trust Fund; and</p>	<p>The recommendation at para (a) should be formalized. This function should be included in the terms of engagement of the RAC Directors. With the exception of REMPEC, the Secretariat has practically no say in the selection of RAC Directors.</p> <p>Transparent financial reporting is already carried out under the watchful eye of the Secretariat.</p> <p>All members of the Secretariat that are UN employees have their performance assessed by UNON on the basis of an evaluation criteria. These assessments are taken into account when the individual's appointment comes up for renewal. The same approach can be used with respect to the evaluation of the RAC Directors' performance.</p>

d) supervising and coordinating the fundraising efforts of the different RACs to ensure that there are no duplications and/or contradictions when approaching donors and that funding opportunities are used efficiently and to the maximum extent possible.	
76. To this end, the Secretariat should sign a Memorandum of Understanding with each host country of a RAC (when there is none in place or revise existing ones) to clearly define the operations of and funding arrangement for the Centre. In particular, the role of the Coordinator in monitoring and coordinating the activities of the Centre within the general framework of the operations of the Convention and its Protocols, including his/her <u>meaningful</u> participation in the search for and selection of the RAC Director, should be specified.	A model MoU should be drafted by the Secretariat and then discussed with all the interested Parties. The MoUs should, in substance be basically the same with all the concerned parties. Existing MoUs should be revised and new ones introduced where they do not exist. The Coordinator should be involved in the selection of all RAC Directors. At present this is only happening with regard to the recruitment of the Director for REMPEC.
77. The Secretariat should be consulted by the RACs concerning the preparation and proceedings of their meetings in relation to the agenda, the expected outputs and the working documents that would be prepared for each meeting. In cases when the Secretariat is not fully confident that the RAC in question has the capacity to efficiently prepare and run the meeting, the Secretariat should become involved and ensure that the meeting is organized and run according to accepted standards.	The Secretariat participates in all meetings of RAC Focal Points. Preparations for these meetings are also discussed during the RAC Directors' meetings with MEDU. RAC Focal Points meetings are generally well organized.
78. The quality and pertinence of the proposals presented at all RAC meetings, especially when these proposals are meant to go to the Parties, should be reviewed by the Secretariat. The quality of the document(s) presenting the proposal should also be reviewed.	This is already being done.

Additional RAC-specific recommendations

The Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC)

79. In its role as a Mediterranean Environment and Sustainable Development Observatory, the BP/RAC should continue to undertake research and to provide support in the area of statistics and indicators for sustainable development. In this context, it should produce a visible and politically 'attractive' periodic report (along the lines of the UNDP Human Development Report) that	This is already being done. The recently published Report on Environment and Development is a good example of the high quality of work produced by BP/RAC. However, this recommendation will be addressed as part of the exercise to update the mandates of the RACs.
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would reflect and compare the status of sustainable development in the different Parties.	
80. The BP/RAC should sharpen its focus and reduce its range of activities so that it can conduct its analytical work with more depth and at a level of detail that would make its products more useable at the national level. These products should help decision-makers (and in some cases even pressure them) to understand what must be done, to find solutions and to take action. For products that are intended to address national issues and provide assistance to decision-makers, these should, as a prerequisite, receive political backing and be deemed useful by the countries.	This recommendation will be considered together with the previous one.
81. For a better dissemination and utilization, the products of the BP/RAC should be always published in French and English as a minimum, and also in Arabic whenever possible.	This is already being done.
82. The BP/RAC's activities and products should be targeted to an audience much wider than that of environmental institutions and/or those directly concerned with the Mediterranean Sea.	This does not apply only to BP/RAC but also to all other RACs.
83. If the BP/RAC comes to play the role recommended here in relation to the MCSD and in the follow-up to the MSSD, if endorsed (see paragraph 74 b) above), the Parties' representatives in the MCSD should act as the FPs for the BP/RAC.	To be considered when preparing the submissions to the 16 th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the RACs' mandates. The Contracting Parties' representatives on the MCSD should be chosen on the basis of the contribution they could make to the debate on sustainable development and especially to the implementation of the MCSD programme of work. Preferably they should not hold any other position within the MAP system.

Special Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC)

84. The SPA/RAC needs to develop, as soon as possible, a vision and strategy that is action-oriented, in line with the overall Convention vision and strategy, and coordinated with the efforts of the other RACs and programmes.	To be considered when preparing the submissions to the 16 th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the RACs' mandates, taking into account also the recommendations made in a recent evaluation exercise.
85. SPA/RAC should, based on its strategy, mobilize resources to implement actions and activities (at least those identified in the SAP/BIO). These resources are very much needed to expand its human resources and capabilities to cover 21 countries.	A resource mobilization plan should be an integral part of any strategy or work plan that is designed.

86. The Centre should move to a more adequate office space.	This is a matter for the Tunisian authorities to decide.
87. Given the institutional changes that have taken place in Tunisia concerning the institutions dealing with environmental management, the agreement with the host country and the terms of reference of the Centre should be re-visited as soon as possible, in particular with regards to the mechanism to select the top management of the Centre.	This should be part of the process to prepare/revise the MoUs with the countries hosting the RACs.
88. More attention should be given to transforming the scientific documents produced by the Centre into guidelines and toolkits, to help practical implementation of their recommendations.	To be addressed by the Director of SPA/RAC.
89. Awareness of the existence and knowledge of the activities of RAC/SPA is far too limited throughout the Mediterranean. There is a need to make the Centre better-known/more visible and to open it to more active collaboration with other organisations in the Mediterranean dealing with biodiversity, including research centres, universities, and competent NGOs.	The lack or limited visibility of the RACs applies to all the Centres and should be addressed.

Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC)

90. The recommendation contained in paragraph 76 above concerning MOUs is particularly applicable to this Centre, since there is no formal document signed between the Government of Spain and the Convention concerning this RAC. In doing so, it would be important to harmonise the relationship between the CP/RAC and the other RACs.	The Secretariat's comments with respect to recommendation No.76 apply also in this case.
91. The CP/RAC should better take into consideration the real pressing needs of the Parties. As a component of the Convention's institutional set-up, the CP/RAC should also review its strategic areas of action so as to respond to the needs, gaps and weakness in the current structure.	To be considered when preparing the submissions to the 16 th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the RACs' mandates
92. The CP/RAC should extend its activities to cover other representative economic sectors in the Mediterranean, such as tourism, agriculture and services.	To be considered when preparing the submissions to the 16 th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the RACs' mandates.
93. The CP/RAC presence and penetration in the Mediterranean countries needs to be improved. To this end, a number of measures that have been recommended in the recent evaluation should be seriously considered.	To be considered when preparing the submissions to the 16 th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the RACs' mandates.

Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC)

<p>94. While the focus on integrated coastal area management (ICAM) should continue, more emphasis should be placed on the fact that the success in this area depends to a large extent on the commitment of and ownership by each country. The PAP/RAC should make every effort to secure ownership through the participation of key institutional stakeholders in the countries. This should include the relevant central as well as local institutional stakeholders.</p>	<p>Will be taken into account by PAP/RAC in the implementation of its programme of work.</p>
<p>95. Having focused to a large extent on the development of, and training in the application of ICAM-related tools, the PAP/RAC should now focus on facilitating the utilization/implementation of these tools.</p>	<p>More emphasis should be placed on the monitoring of the implementation of CAMPs by the countries.</p>
<p>96. Given the fact that the PAP/RAC is preparing a Protocol on ICAM for the consideration of the Parties, the doubts expressed by a number of stakeholders concerning the value and/or practicality of such a Protocol should be further analysed and seriously taken into account.</p>	<p>This recommendation is overtaken by events. The CPs have already given a mandate to the Secretariat to develop a draft text of an ICZM Protocol for submission to the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties for consideration and possible approval.</p>

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

<p>97. A number of recommended actions included in the report of the 2003 evaluation should be re-emphasized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) REMPEC should provide more information on the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU) (which provides advice in the event of an emergency of an oil or chemical spill or incident), including the procedures for obtaining assistance; b) REMPEC should make efforts to get the countries more involved in the Centre's activities and, as a consequence, in implementation at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. In particular, REMPEC should initiate a dialogue on how best to involve the national maritime organizations which are the most direct partners of REMPEC; and c) REMPEC's focus should now move towards implementation, using the tools that the Centre has generated. One clear example would be the implementation of the National Contingency Plans. 	<p>REMPEC is a successful Centre and its activities are supported by the countries. Its Focal Points are very active and effective at the national level. There is a need, however, to address the issue of the designation of the Focal Points, in particular whether they should be from the Ministry for the Environment or from the Ministry of Transport.</p> <p>All proposed activities are being carried out by REMPEC or are being developed.</p>
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Secretariat for the Protection of Coastal Historic Sites

<p>98. The Convention should remain involved in questions related to cultural values for a number of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) as sustainability is now a widely accepted aim, its social pillar cannot be conceived of without a clear cultural component, as culture itself expresses the beliefs and activities of each society; b) especially in the Mediterranean, a place of strong interaction between humans and nature for millennia, it is not possible to dissociate the environment from cultural heritage; c) associating culture to environment is now generally accepted as a need in all major conventions dealing with nature and the environment; and d) the World Heritage Convention has a different focus, as its concern is with cultural heritage of exceptional global value. On the other hand, the Barcelona Convention should be interested in the conservation of all the cultural heritage related to the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal zone, and promote its wise use within efforts for sustainable development. Thus, UNESCO's approach may be complementary, but in no way can it supplant the involvement of this Convention in cultural issues. 	<p>The Convention should address cultural issues as part of the social pillar of sustainable development. At present, however, the programme for the Protection of Coastal Historic Sites is more oriented towards the conservation and restoration aspects of historic sites rather than the integration of culture in environmental policies.</p> <p>These recommendations should be taken into account once the report being prepared regarding the future orientation of the programme for the Protection of Coastal Historic Sites is finalized.</p>
<p>99. The Programme should be maintained within the broader system of the Convention, but it should be refocused and restructured, taking into account the general points stated in section B of the full report (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.270/Inf.9).</p>	<p>See previous remarks. Moreover, this should be considered when preparing the submissions to the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the RACs' mandates.</p>
<p>100. Cultural aspects and values should be integrated in all of the activities of the Barcelona Convention. Specific activities would be carried out by existing organs of the Convention.</p>	<p>See previous remarks.</p>
<p>101. In order to foster the integration of cultural aspects, it does not appear advisable to establish a standalone 'unit on cultural heritage' within the Convention structure. Instead, every effort should be made to decentralise activities within the system. In view of the importance of cultural aspects, a high-level official should be added to the Secretariat. Her/his function would be to facilitate the operation of the Culture Expert Group, to liaise with the MCSD and with the RACs on cultural issues, and to report on</p>	<p>While reiterating the importance of the cultural heritage within the framework of the Convention, it is not justified to appoint a high level official within the Secretariat to deal with such matters unless a Contracting Party is willing to assign an official on secondment without any cost to the Secretariat.</p>

overall progress to the Parties.	
102. Decentralised activities would be included in the budgets of the responsible organs. However, a special budget line should be provided for the MEDU officer on culture and for the operation of the Culture Expert Group.	See previous comments .
103. The MCSD should take into account cultural values in finalising the MSSD; so that the new programme on 'Mediterranean cultural heritage and sustainable development' would be fully integrated in the Strategy. In addition, the MCSD should take the lead in this field and ensure the implementation of the guidance of the MSSD in this sector, including the provision of guidance on the contribution that the cultural heritage can make to sustainable development.	Cultural heritage is addressed in the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development. However, more emphasis should be made on cultural heritage and sustainable development in the MCSD programme of work.
104. Membership of MCSD should be opened to representatives of the cultural sectors.	Will be considered when discussing the proposed amendments to the TOR of the MCSD.
105. Systematic collaboration on the integration of the cultural heritage with environmental concerns should be initiated with all major conventions and other multilateral organisations. As a priority these would include the Convention on Biological Diversity; the World Heritage Convention; the Convention on Wetlands and its MedWet Culture Working Group; the European Commission; the European Landscape Convention; the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (established in the framework of the EMP); ICOMOS; and IUCN. As such collaborations require constant attention and considerable investment of time and funds, each case should be carefully analysed, the exact areas of collaboration should be agreed upon, specific joint actions identified and the results recorded in official memoranda or joint work plans.	The Secretariat for the Protection of Coastal Historic Sites should explore the possible areas of cooperation with those institutions listed in this recommendation. This should also be considered in the report being prepared regarding the future orientation of the programme.
106. A very careful analysis should be made of the recent proposal to launch a 'MEDPATRIMOINE' initiative before any further steps are taken since there are strong doubts both concerning its feasibility and its appropriate place in the Convention.	This should be considered in the report being prepared regarding the future orientation of the programme.

Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution in the Mediterranean Region (MEDPOL)²

107. The MEDPOL Phase IV should be based on an action-oriented approach aimed at achieving a tangible reduction of pollution. This effort would build on and utilize the results achieved so far, such as the National Diagnostic Analyses (NDA), the National Baseline Budgets of Pollutants (NBB), the National Action Plans, and the results of the monitoring activities (monitoring data base). This action-oriented approach should be supported by a strong and visible compliance monitoring and reporting system.	This is being done already.
108. MEDPOL should assign specific tasks and responsibilities to its programme officers in order to actively pursue the implementation of the Dumping Protocol.	This has been done.
109. MEDPOL should analyse the underlying reasons as to why Parties are not ratifying the Hazardous Waste Protocol, and to recommend that amendments be incorporated if necessary.	It is intended to do this in the 2006-2007 programme of activities.

IV. The Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)

110. The MCSD should clarify its role in the sense of being: a) an advisory body on policy issues; and/or b) an advisory body on technical issues; and/or c) a mechanism for assessment, monitoring and evaluation; and/or d) a mechanism to support the implementation of sustainable development strategies/programmes/plans/projects at national and regional levels; or e) a combination of these options.	The role of the MCSD should include a combination of the recommendations. The MCSD should go back to its original purpose and functions, giving due importance also to economic, ecological and social issues set out in the Millenium Development Goals (MDG) and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI).
111. After clarifying its role, and as a matter of high priority, the Commission should also establish criteria for the designation/selection of its members, including the role of the Convention Focal Points in relation to its work.	This is of utmost importance. In several cases the MAP Focal Points and the MCSD members are the same persons. MCSD members do not necessarily have to be Ministry officials but should enjoy the trust of the Contracting Party concerned. In any case, preferably, they should not hold any other position within the MAP system.

² The recent evaluation conducted for MEDPOL presents a relatively large number of recommendations and suggestions for assisting MEDPOL in improving its performance and effectiveness. Only recommendations that are of strategic nature are presented here.

<p>112. The present system of individual representatives from the socio-economic sector and local authorities, selected by the MFPs and rotating every two years, could be replaced with long-term partnerships with key actors, both governmental and non-governmental, from these two sectors. With the approval of the Parties, these partnerships should be established by the Secretariat on the basis of specific MOUs for a period of at least five years. A systematic survey should be carried out to identify such organisations, assess them on the basis of agreed upon criteria and select the ones appropriate for the MCSD and willing to contribute to its mission.</p>	<p>This is one option among other possibilities which should be considered when identifying the criteria for the designation of the members to sit on the Commission. This is a crucial issue if the MCSD is to become a useful forum for discussion of policy matters and emerging issues.</p>
<p>113. As long as the MCSD remains a mechanism established under the Barcelona Convention, it should limit its remit to the sustainable development components of the issues that are dealt with by the Convention and its Protocols. In this sense, the Commission should also consider changing its name to 'Commission on the Sustainable Development of the Mediterranean Sea and its Coastal Zone' (or any variation of this concept). To really act as a 'Mediterranean Commission', dealing with all aspects of sustainable development in the entire region, the Commission should gain the acceptance and formal recognition of the governmental sectors dealing with issues that are beyond the remit of the Barcelona Convention, and of the other key intergovernmental processes active in the Mediterranean region.</p>	<p>The Convention should not limit itself to sustainable development in the marine and coastal zone sectors.</p> <p>Moreover, there is no need for the Commission to change its name. The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development which has been developed, addresses not only marine and coastal zones issues but also the integration of environmental concerns into key economic development sectors, taking into consideration also the social and cultural dimensions.</p>
<p>114. The Commission should clarify its role vis-à-vis the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, both in terms of substantive work and of process, and establish a true synergy with the UNCSD. Parties should insist that the Commission has the right, and the need, to deal directly with the UNCSD, without being intermediated by UNEP.</p>	<p>This issue has already been raised with UNEP but it should be clarified further.</p>
<p>115. An effective secretarial support for the Commission should be established in one place, either in the Convention Secretariat, in one of the RACs or in a new unit established to this effect in one of the Parties, with adequate human and financial resources to effectively play this function.</p>	<p>The Secretariat of the MCSD should remain in Athens. The Secretariat should be responsible for the coordination and organizational aspect of the MCSD with the technical aspect continuing to be dealt with by BP/RAC, with the support of the other MAP components.</p>

<p>116. Concerning the MSSD, it is recommended that the Strategy should be endorsed (not adopted) by the COP, with an indication of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the specific components of the Strategy that could be taken up by the Convention mechanisms for implementation; b) the resources that would be needed to do this and where they should come from; c) the synergies that should be established by the Convention in order to achieve its objectives vis-à-vis the Strategy; and d) the monitoring system that should be established within the Convention, including the role and activities of the MCSD in relation to the process of the implementation of the Strategy. 	<p>The MSSD was adopted by the Contracting Parties in Portoroz. All four issues raised here are being addressed by the Secretariat together with BP/RAC which has developed a set of indicators to monitor the MSSD together with a number of activities involving the Contracting Parties.</p>
<p>117. In addition, in the preambular section of the decision endorsing the Strategy, the COP should address and respond in an appropriate manner to two key questions raised in relation to the MSSD:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the legitimacy of the process used to prepare the draft, and thus the legitimacy of the document in itself; and b) the implications of endorsing a Strategy with very significant components which are beyond the remit of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. 	<p>This recommendation has been overtaken by events.</p>
<p>118. It is encouraging that the Conclusions of the VIIth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Luxemburg, 30-31 May 2005) “supported the successful conclusion of the drafting of the Mediterranean Strategy for sustainable development...”. Now it is imperative that the Convention be invited to participate in and address the Extraordinary High Level Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to be held in Barcelona on 27-28 November 2005. Arrangements should be made in advance through the Senior Officials to ensure that this meeting in turn endorses the Strategy, if it would have been endorsed by COP-14 in Slovenia on 8-11 November 2005.</p>	<p>The MSSD has been endorsed by the Euro-Mediterranean High Level Summit in November 2005. Moreover, the Secretariat took an active part in the High Level technical meeting organized by the EC to launch the Horizon 2020 initiative to de-pollute the Mediterranean and which will take into account the objectives and targets of the MSSD.</p>

V. The System of Focal Points and Capacity Building

<p>119. A pro-active and dynamic Focal Point system is of prime importance. This applies to the Convention Focal Points as well as to the RACs Focal Points. One key question that the COP should consider in the terms of reference of the Convention Focal Points is the level of seniority that these should have in the national administration of each Party.</p>	<p>The 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties should adopt a decision adopting the Terms of Reference for the Convention Focal Points, including a recommendation to the Parties concerning the criteria for their designation. The Terms of Reference should also make reference to the appropriate ministries/agencies that the Focal Points should be attached to, which do not necessarily have to be always the ministries of environment.</p> <p>The success of the implementation of MAP activities depends on the Focal Points who should be persons enjoying thrust and with direct access to Government Ministers.</p>
<p>120. The whole FP system should be revisited as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) prepare terms of reference for each group of FPs, clarifying their roles, responsibilities, <i>modus operandi</i> and linkages with each other; b) establish that a RAC FP should have the rank of a 'government-designated expert'; c) identify tools and mechanisms that would support the FPs in their national tasks, including, but not limited to, intersectoral coordination and improving the Convention's and RACs' visibility; and d) in each RAC evaluate whether the FPs' structure and composition need to be changed. In some cases it might prove feasible and more effective to have one FP system serving more than one RAC. 	<p>These proposals have been taken into consideration in the development of Terms of Reference for the designation of Focal Points which will be submitted to the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties for approval.</p>
<p>121. This whole exercise regarding the FPs system should be contracted out and performed in the most straightforward, independent and simple manner. The results reflecting the full picture should be presented to the Parties for discussion and approval.</p>	<p>Draft Terms of Reference for MAP and RACs Focal Points have been prepared.</p>
<p>122. Capacity building for performing the Focal Point functions should constitute one of the highest priorities in the new phase, with an emphasis on institutional capacity, more than on technical capacity which to a large extent is already there. This applies to both developed and developing countries that are Parties to the Convention.</p>	<p>Following the designation of Focal Points, a seminar should be held in order to train the identified individuals to perform their role in a proper manner.</p>

<p>123. To this end, the Secretariat should:</p> <p>a) develop a clear understanding of the capacity situation in each of the 21 member states and of the arrangements in place to implement the Convention, in particular in relation to the system of Focal Points;</p> <p>b) on the basis of this understanding, and in consultation with all interested parties:</p> <p>i) develop guidelines on how to establish and effectively operate a focal points system at the country level, making use, to the extent possible, of the lessons learned by different Parties; and</p> <p>ii) prepare a capacity building programme, with an appropriate and realistic budget, for submission to COP-15. Such a programme should, <i>inter alia</i>, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in-country seminars/workshops to create a better awareness and understanding of the Convention and its Protocols and the tools and means for their implementation;• technical seminars at regional and/or sub-regional levels on the implementation of the different Protocols;• sub-regional dialogues aimed at helping environment ministries increase their implementation capacity, including improving their ability to work with other parts of their national administration to promote environmental integration;• technical assistance on administrative matters regarding the running of an effective focal points system; and• technical and financial assistance, when needed, to develop, use and maintain an effective electronic communications system in the institution hosting the Focal Point in each Party. To this end the Secretariat should try to connect with the work on ICT being supported by the EC within the framework of the EMP.	<p>The Secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, will consider the implementation of this recommendation as a matter of priority.</p>
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124. Capacity building should not be viewed as a one-time activity but rather as an ongoing process. Thus, constant interaction with the focal points – including training of new officers designated to perform this function – and a close follow-up of all the issues addressed to or requested from the Parties are essential components of capacity building.	To be addressed with the previous recommendation.
125. The official visits to the Parties recommended in paragraphs 47 and 48 above should be seen as part of the capacity building programme and should be used to raise, with political authorities, the question of the chronic under-staffing for the implementation of the Convention, in developing and developed countries alike.	To be taken into account in the implementation of the recommendations regarding visits to the countries.

VI. Relations with the European Union/European Commission

126. The joint work plan being developed by the Convention and the EC at present does not have the required overriding political character, but is focused instead on rather detailed technical aspects. If an agreement can be reached on its content, this might improve the situation, but it would not resolve the need of a stronger partnership.	The Joint Work Programme which was signed in Portoroz, Slovenia in 2005, is a first step in establishing a closer working relationship with the EC. Efforts should continue to establish this relationship on a stronger footing and at a higher political level.
127. The EC's interest in the Mediterranean is increasing and moving beyond free trade. This fact, coupled with the celebration in 2005 of the 10 th Anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP or 'Barcelona Process'), could make this a key moment to redefine the relationship between the EC and the Barcelona Convention.	The launching by the EC of the Horizon 2020 Initiative presents both MAP and the EC with the opportunity to establish a more fruitful cooperation especially with the acknowledgement by the High Level meeting of the EuroMed Partnership that the MAP is the appropriate mechanism for its implementation.
128. There is a need for substantial improvement of the collaboration between the Convention and the EU. This improvement would entail: a) an agreement recognizing an official role of the Convention as a full partner in EU Mediterranean initiatives in the areas of interest of the Convention; b) use of the Convention's capacity, and especially its RACs, in supporting the EU initiatives in the Mediterranean; c) appreciation of the potential contribution of the MCSDD to EU objectives and policies in the region; d) taking into account all the other relevant processes that the EU is involved with in	The relationship between the EC and MAP, including the RACs, should be at a higher level than between the EC and other organizations. The Convention should be a full partner with the EC. This new relationship should be built on the basis of the strong statement made at the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Summit in November 2005 in which the Partners agreed to promote the MSSD and to use the MSSD to implement the EC's initiative to de-pollute the Mediterranean by 2020. They have also agreed to develop a road-map for de-polluting the Mediterranean sea using the MSSD and UNEP/MAP while providing

<p>the Mediterranean when developing a new phase of the Convention;</p> <p>e) coverage by the EC of the costs of the services to be provided by the Convention; and</p> <p>f) contribution of the EC to the implementation of the MSSD, especially if it is endorsed by the EMP.</p>	<p>adequate financial and technical assistance to this end.</p>
<p>129. In view of the current <i>modus operandi</i> of and sensitivity concerning financial management within the EC, such a relationship would only be possible through a top-level formal agreement between the EC and UNEP – the latter acting as the legal persona of the Convention – specifically focused on the Mediterranean. This would probably entail a formal decision of the EU Council based on a proposal from the Commission promoted by the Executive Director of UNEP.</p>	<p>If approved, this recommendation will be taken up with the Executive Director of UNEP, for him to raise it at the appropriate level within the European Commission.</p>
<p>130. The seven Parties to the Convention that are EU members should champion the establishment of a ‘new deal’ between the EC and the Barcelona Convention, with interventions at the highest political level. Greece, as the host country to the Convention Secretariat could – and maybe should – take the lead.</p>	<p>To be addressed together with the previous recommendation.</p>
<p>131. Without this high-level political initiative it may be very difficult to overcome the ‘good reasons’ that may exist to continue with business as usual in the Convention-EC working relations. The Convention Coordinator, with the active support of the Executive Director of UNEP and of the Head of Regional Seas (both European citizens at present), should undertake to catalyze this process as a matter of the highest priority.</p>	<p>To be addressed together with the previous recommendation.</p>
<p>132. This move could be justified on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the EC and UNEP on 20 September 2004, which includes as areas of cooperation between the two parties “supporting MEA [multilateral environmental agreements] implementation, with an initial focus on biodiversity and Regional Seas”; and “enabling developing countries and countries with economies in transition to achieve environment-related targets and meet their international commitments, including implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, global initiatives and regional initiatives...”.</p>	<p>To be addressed together with the previous recommendation.</p>

<p>133. This 'new deal' could take the form of a 'Strategic Partnership between the EC and the Barcelona Convention for Joint Actions in Areas of Common Concern'. The Strategic Partnership could be implemented through a Five-year Joint Work Programme (JWP) executed through a Joint Programme Office (JOP) located, preferably, in the Convention Secretariat or otherwise in one of the RACs or in a Party that would be willing to contribute all the facilities and the required support staff. In the later case, the Director of the JOP and the rest of the professional staff should have international status and report directly to the Coordinator of the Convention.</p>	<p>While the Secretariat is in favour of a stronger relationship between MAP and the EC which could be in the form of a Strategic Partnership, it does not agree with the proposal for a Joint Programme Office. The present structures are more than sufficient to implement a strategic partnership.</p>
<p>134. If the proposal to launch an initiative within the EMP framework for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020 is formalized, the role of the Convention in this initiative should become an important component of the proposed JWP.</p>	<p>The Secretariat is already working in this direction, having had discussions with the EC on MAP's participation in the initiative</p>
<p>135. The series of major regional and sub-regional programmes recommended in paragraph 35 above should also be part of the JWP.</p>	<p>This proposal should be taken into consideration if the proposed high-level agreement with the EC moves forward.</p>
<p>136. Funding for the implementation of the JWP should come from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the different mechanisms that now exist in the EC for external cooperation, including the proposed European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument; b) other funds that the EC could allocate out of its budget for activities in the Mediterranean EU members; c) voluntary contributions from Parties and other governments; and d) project funds from sources such as the GEF, UNDP, the World Bank, UN agencies, foundations, NGOs and corporations. 	<p>This proposal should be taken into consideration if the proposed high-level agreement with the EC moves forward.</p>
<p>137. The establishment of an Endowment Fund could also be considered.</p>	<p>Professional advice should be sought on the establishment and operation of an Endowment Fund with a view to submit a recommendation on this matter to the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.</p>
<p>138. The capacities of the RACs, MEDPOL and other partners, including NGOs, should be enlisted and assigned clear roles in the implementation of the JWP.</p>	<p>This recommendation should be considered if the proposed agreement for a Joint Work Plan moves forward.</p>
<p>139. In the meantime, the joint work plan being developed by the two sides at present</p>	<p>A first Joint Work Programme was signed during the meeting of the Contracting Parties</p>

could go ahead and later serve as the basis for the preparation of the proposed JWP, which could be ready for consideration and adoption by COP-15.	in Portoroz in November, 2005, and is being implemented.
140. The Convention Secretariat should also seek to participate in the Ministerial Conference at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held every 18 months in the framework of the EMP, as well as in the EuroMed Committee.	This matter should be discussed during the high level meeting between the EC and MAP envisaged in the Joint Work Programme signed in Portoroz, Slovenia.

VII. Synergies

141. The Convention should serve as a platform for the regional implementation of international instruments and programmes, such as those of the International Oceanographic Commission, the International Maritime Organization and the Jakarta Mandate of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant CBD work programmes. Memoranda of Cooperation or Agreements with clear and specific aims should be signed or renewed with these institutions.	MOUs have already been signed with some of these organizations to carry out joint activities. However, this kind of cooperation should be developed further.
142. It is imperative that the Convention also sign or renew effective working arrangements with, at a minimum, the following additional treaties and institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN Convention on the Law of the Sea - UN Framework Convention on Climate Change - Convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area - UN Commission on Sustainable Development 	MOUs have already been signed with some of these Conventions. Other MOUs will be developed with other Conventions. Joint activities should now be identified and implemented.
143. A serious attempt should be made to bring on board other regional institutions and processes beyond the EC/EU, which has thus far been the focus of almost all the attention. These include the Arab League, the Islamic Bank and the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD). As stated by one of the partners of the Convention, it is	This initiative should only be embarked upon following the agreement of the Contracting Parties.

about time that the Convention learns “to write from right to left”!	
144. The possibility of inviting the Arab League and the African Union to become Contracting Parties, as per Article 30 of the Convention, should be considered by the COP.	This initiative should only be embarked upon following the agreement of the Contracting Parties.

Relations with other partners

<p>145. On the basis of the observations contained in section B of this Report, it is recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a detailed inventory of all key actors in the Mediterranean that could contribute to the work of the Convention be prepared. This should include an understanding of their policies and priorities, the identification of areas of mutual interest, and a cost-benefit assessment of efforts to be invested in and results to be expected from a possible partnership; b) relations with the organisations/processes selected for substantial co-operation should be maintained at the level of Secretariat and should not be delegated to other components of the Convention process. Where the RACs need to be involved, the overall co-ordination should remain with the Secretariat, including the monitoring of the development of such co-operation efforts; c) at regular intervals (3-4 years), each co-operation arrangement should be reviewed and readjusted as appropriate; and d) for the implementation of the relevant sections of the MSSD in particular, strong partnerships must be built with key actors in the economic and social sectors, including the private sector. 	The Secretariat is in favour of this recommendation.
146. Clear criteria and a strategic view should be developed for the partnerships with national, regional and international NGOs active in the areas of concern to the Convention, including for the funding provided for NGO projects.	This exercise is essential because at present there are no clear cut criteria for NGOs to become MAP partners.

Outreach strategy and activities

147. The Convention web site should continue to be developed as the main communication tool. All the RACs' web sites should be linked to the main web site and should develop a common graphic/corporate identity.	This matter will be addressed as part of the development of a new website including the implementation of a Portal Internet Architecture by INFO/RAC.
148. In addition, the Convention web site should become an interactive site, where Focal Points and partners could exchange information and documents.	To be consider by INFO/RAC.
149. The Convention should greatly increase its use of the Arabic language, including posting an Arabic version of the Convention web site.	Adequate resources should be specifically allocated in the central budget and in all project/programme budgets for this purpose. It should be noted though, that InfoMAP will have multi-lingual support.
150. The Secretariat should also consider establishing an unmediated electronic mailing list maintained as a service to the public for exchange of information among all those interested in the Convention issues.	To be considered by the Secretariat with the assistance of INFO/RAC. An electronic mailing list already exists but needs to be updated.
151. The effective use of ICTs should constitute an important component of capacity building in all Parties and in the RACs where this capacity is still weak.	This is part of the mandate of INFO/RAC and InfoMAP will be the backbone and network to strengthen capacity across users, sectors, key institutions and the region.
152. ERS/RAC should be approached to consider implementing a communication strategy for the Convention under the close supervision of the Secretariat. If this is feasible, a professional firm should be engaged to prepare such a strategy in consultation with the Secretariat and ERS/RAC.	INFO/RAC is already developing an Information and Communications Strategy for MAP using internal expertise as well as external support.
153. The RACs should also evaluate their outreach capacities and develop plans to improve them by: a) obtaining the services of communication and/or marketing experts; b) widening and diversifying the circulation of reports and publications; and c) increasing their capacity to use the media.	INFO/RAC will assist all other RACs in these important areas. Again InfoMAP will be the essential platform and infrastructure for outreach communications, information sharing and exchanges.