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Draft Discussion Paper on the Reform of the MCSD, Submitted by the Presidency of the MCSD Steering Committee

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February 2014 (Revised May 2014 version) –

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document puts forward some ideas for the reform of the MCSD, based on the decision approved in December 2013 at COP18 in Istanbul (see IG.21/12 in Annex 1). Section 2 provides the rationale for the reform as per the COP18 decision. The paper then provides a background about the MCSD and its reform in section 3. Section 4 discusses the MCSD mandate and composition. Section 5 provides a summary of some of the evaluations of the MCSD that have taken place in recent years, while section 6 analyses the attendance pattern at MCSD meetings, and Section 7 presents a set of nine recommendations for the MCSD reform.
- 1.2 The MCSD Steering Committee Presidency is aware that the MAP III discussion has a bearing on the role of the MCSD, as noted in the relevant COP18 decisions (IG.21/11 and 12). However since it is yet early days regarding that discussion, and the current SC needs to deliberate on the reform of the MCSD in view of the upcoming 16th MCSD meeting in Morocco in June 2015, it is for now noted that the MAP III process and the MCSD reform are related and that the two debates need to engage with each other before the next COP in February 2016.

2. Rationale

- 2.1 The key elements of the rationale for reforming the MCSD focus on mandate and composition, and, as laid out in the relevant COP18 decision at Annex 1, are:
- The need to take on board the implications of the outcomes of Rio+20 regarding the upgrading of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development into a High Level Political Forum;
 - the need to sharpen its role;
 - the need to revise its composition to ensure greater representativeness.

3. Background

- 3.1 The MCSD was launched following the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development, the 1995 revision of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) into MAP II, and the related 1995 amendments to the Barcelona Convention. The Commission had its first meeting in 1996. Meetings during the first years were characterised by strong participation from the membership in preparing thematic recommendations. Early on, however, concerns about capacity for follow-up of these recommendations, as well as the need to reach out to other actors, were voiced. In 2000, the Sixth MCSD Meeting in Tunis contained a half-day ministerial segment, and came out with a decision to prepare a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, which was adopted in 2005.
- 3.2 The evaluation and reform of the MCSD has become somewhat of a recurrent theme within the MAP system in recent years. The MCSD mandate and composition were reformed in 2008 as part of the Almeria Governance decision taken during the 16th COP to the Barcelona Convention, on the basis of a 2007 Report on Options for the reform of the MCSD (see below for more details).

- 3.3 Soon after this, at COP16 in November 2009 in Marrakech, Decision IG.19/8 requested the Secretariat to undertake an assessment of the MCSD modalities. Consequently in 2011 a paper reviewing the modalities of the MCSD was published ('The Roles and Modalities of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development' – see below for more details) and discussed during the 14th MCSD meeting in 2011 in Budva, Montenegro (see more details below).
- 3.4 At COP17 in early 2012, another call to reform the MCSD was made, on the basis of the recommendations of the 14th MCSD meeting in Budva, Montenegro in 2011 (see below for more details). During the 15th MCSD meeting in Malta in June 2013, general principles for the reform were agreed (see below for more details) and during COP18 in Istanbul, a decision (IG.21/12) on MCSD reform was taken (see Annex 1), once again mandating the Steering Committee during the 2014-2015 biennium to flesh out a reform proposal for final agreement in 2015. During COP18, it was decided to '[s]trengthen the position of the MCSD in the MAP system and in the wider regional community, in line with the outcome of Rio+20 and COP17 Decision IG.20/13, by ensuring that, sustainable development matters will be discussed at the Conference of the Parties once every two COP meetings (four years)' (see Annex 1 for full text).

4. MCSD mandate and composition

Current mandate of the MCSD

- 4.1 The current mandate and composition of the MCSD, which serve as a starting point for the strengthening of the MCSD, may be found in Decision IG 17/5 which adopted the Governance paper at the 15th Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention held in Almeria, Spain. This current mandate is to:
- I. *Assist Mediterranean countries and other stakeholders active in the region in the adoption and implementation of sustainable development policies, including the integration of environmental considerations into other policies;*
 - II. *Ensure the follow-up of the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) through appropriate tools, mechanisms and criteria that would better enhance an efficient follow-up function;*
 - III. *Promote the exchange of experience and good practices regarding the integration of environmental and socioeconomic policies, as well as examples which show the application of international sustainable development commitments at suitable scales in different countries;*
 - IV. *Identify the obstacles encountered and support regional and sub-regional cooperation for the effective implementation of the sustainable development principle;*
 - V. *Coordinate the periodical drafting of the report on the state of implementation of the MCSD recommendations; and,*
 - VI. *Produce opinions of the overall MAP Work Programme and the functioning of the Coordinating Unit and the RACs, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations into the MAP / Barcelona Convention system as a whole.*
- 4.2 The above-cited Decision IG.17/5 considered that the MCSD should involve the greatest possible variety of national actors in its work, so as to ensure the greatest possible dissemination of the concepts promoted, and that for this to be achieved the composition of the Commission was agreed to be expanded as follows:
- I. Contracting Parties 22 (21 MS and EU Commission);
 - II. NGOS (3);
 - III. Local authorities (3);
 - IV. Socio-economic stakeholders (3);

- V. Scientific Community (3);
 - VI. Intergovernmental organizations working in the field of sustainable development (3);
 - VII. Eminent experts in the field of the topics of the MCSD meeting agenda (3).
- 4.3 Decision IG.17/5 also underlined that all efforts should be made to ensure participation of representatives from both the environment and development sectors and appropriate geographical representation, and media participation.

Original mandate of the MCSD

- 4.4 The original mandate for the MCSD was as follows, as per the constitutive documents of the MCSD that emerged from the fourth MCSD meeting in Monaco, 1998 (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG. 140/Inf.4 [[08WG327_Inf3_eng.pdf](#)]) (see Annex 2 for full document). The constitutive documents consist of 'rules of procedure', 'terms of reference' and 'composition' documents. The terms of reference establish the MCSD as an 'advisory body' to make proposals to the Contracting Parties (CPs) within the framework of the MAP. The purpose, functions and composition of the MCSD were set out as below:

2. The purpose of the Commission is:

- (a) *to identify, evaluate and assess major economic, ecological and social problems set out in Agenda MED 21, make appropriate proposals thereon to the meetings of the Contracting Parties, evaluate the effectiveness of the follow-up to the decisions of the Contracting Parties and facilitate the exchange of information among the institutions implementing activities related to sustainable development in the Mediterranean;*
- (b) *to enhance regional cooperation and rationalize the inter-governmental decision-making capacity in the Mediterranean basin for the integration of environment and development issues.*

B. Functions

3. The functions of the Commission shall be:

- (a) *to assist the Contracting Parties by making proposals on the formulation and implementation of a regional strategy of sustainable development in the Mediterranean, taking into consideration the resolutions of the Tunis and Barcelona Conferences and the context of Agenda MED 21 and MAP Phase II;*
- (b) *to consider and review information provided by the Contracting Parties, in accordance with Article 20 of the Barcelona Convention, including periodic communications or reports regarding the activities they undertake to implement Agenda MED 21, and the problems they encounter, such as problems related to the integration of environment into national policies, capacity-building, financial resources, technology transfer, and other relevant environment and development issues;*
- (c) *to review at regular intervals the cooperation of MAP with the World Bank and other international financial institutions, as well as the European Union, and to explore ways and means for the strengthening of such cooperation, and particularly to achieve the objectives of Chapter 33 of Agenda MED 21;*
- (d) *to consider information regarding the progress made in the implementation of relevant environmental conventions, which could be made available by the relevant conferences or by the parties;*
- (e) *to identify technologies and knowledge of an innovative nature for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region and to provide advice on the various means for their most effective use, in order to facilitate exchanges among the Contracting Parties and to enhance capacities for national development;*
- (f) *to provide reports and appropriate recommendations to the meetings of the Contracting Parties, through the MAP Secretariat, on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of reports and issues related to the implementation of a regional strategy related to MAP Phase II and Agenda MED 21;*

- (g) *to undertake a four-year strategic assessment and evaluation of the implementation by the Contracting Parties of Agenda MED 21 and decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties and of actions by the Contracting Parties relevant to sustainable development in the Mediterranean region and propose relevant recommendations thereon; the first strategic review should be undertaken for the year 2000 (with ministerial participation), with the objective of achieving an integrated overview of the implementation of Agenda MED 21, examining emerging policy issues and providing the necessary political impetus. The Commission shall make the best use of the main results of MAP activity centres in the field of sustainable development, and those of the MAP Mediterranean Environment and Development Observatory, as well as those of national environmental observatories;*
- (h) *to assume such other functions as are entrusted to it by the meetings of the Contracting Parties, to further the purposes of the Barcelona Convention, MAP Phase II and Agenda MED 21.*

C. Composition

- 5. *The Commission shall be composed of a maximum of 36 members, consisting of representatives from each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention and representatives of local authorities, socio-economic actors and non-governmental organizations working in the fields of environment and of sustainable development. All representatives shall participate in the Commission on an equal footing.*

5. Evaluation of the MCSD

The 2007 Report on Options for the reform of the MCSD

- 5.1 The 2007 Report on *Options for the Reform of the MCSD* (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.320/6), prepared for the meeting of MAP Focal Points on 1 August 2007, noted that:

Ten years after its founding, the MCSD needs to be reformed, taking into account the new international and regional developments (the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Millennium Development Goals, the MSSD etc.). Whatever the option chosen, better interaction should be sought between the MCSD and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), for instance regarding the choice of themes, which should bring a breath of fresh air to the MCSD and allow its fuller integration into the international actions being carried out in favour of sustainable development. Furthermore, the composition of the Commission should be reviewed to ensure it achieves greater representability and fosters a sense of ownership by the entire Mediterranean community. Furthermore, the role of the Commission should be better clarified in relation to the overall MAP system and to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

- 5.2 The 2007 report presented 3 options for the MCSD reform. The first consisted of minor amendments to the existing system, the second a widening of the MCSD composition and a narrowing of its mandate, while the third consisted of transforming the MCSD into a ‘council of sages.’ The Almeria decision of 2008 was based on the second option.

The 2009 report on the Roles and Modalities of the MCSD

- 5.3 The 2009 report on *The Roles and Modalities of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development* (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.358/5) noted that in the 17 years since its inception, the MCSD has made important contributions to the sustainable development of the region, including, particularly: the MSSD, which was adopted by the 14th Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in Portoroz (Slovenia) in 2005; its innovative modalities of participation and engagement of civil society organizations and other major stakeholders; its contribution in many ways to MAP and its activities by broadening perspectives and linking environmental protection to development issues, enriching discussions and eventually policies

and actions on environmental management around the Mediterranean; enabling dialogue with civil society on environment/development issues; and, the way the MCSD has been an innovation at the global scale as the only sustainable development commission at the Regional Seas level of UNEP.

- 5.4 At the same time there is general recognition that, as with the gGlobal Commission for Sustainable Development, there have been some shortcomings, such as the limited scope of the MCSD, which can be attributed to various factors influencing effectiveness such as the long-term horizon of sustainable development strategies; the broad mandate and very limited means it has been given; the challenges to maintain substantive technical coherence while ensuring cross-sectoral integration; the difficulties in securing involvement of all relevant stakeholders; the insufficient focus on effective monitoring; the complexities of Mediterranean regional governance; and the limited political will and commitment.

Recommendations from 14th MCSD meeting in May 2011

- 5.5 The recommendations from 14th Meeting of MCSD on the analysis of the role and modalities of the MCSD, contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.358/5, are as follows:
- I. the primary function of the MCSD as an advisory body, focusing on creating synergies for regional integration, and on the need for practical action, drawing on national expertise, in pursuing its work;
 - II. Emerging issues such as the ecosystem approach, climate change adaptation and the green economy approach should be taken on board;
 - III. There is a need for integration and coordination with the other existing international and regional sustainable development and environmental programmes, policy frameworks and initiatives;
 - IV. It is crucial to focus on the MCSD's comparative advantage and the input it could provide in facilitating environmental mainstreaming and integration, and strengthening cross-sectoral and intersectoral environment/development policy coordination at national and regional levels;
 - V. The MCSD should serve as a platform of reference and a tool for enhancing regional dialogue on environment and development issues, assisting Contracting Parties in introducing environmental concerns into sectoral policies;
 - VI. The work of the MCSD should be expanded to include other stakeholders to give the Barcelona Convention broader appeal;
 - VII. There is a need to establish a coherent monitoring system for the MSSD and its periodic review.

COP17 Decision (January 2013)

- 5.6 Decision IG.20/13 of COP17 invited the Steering Committee of the MCSD to "... work, on reforming the MCSD in particular through revising its composition to ensure greater representativeness and sharpening its role", as follows.

Recognizing the role of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) in providing a useful multi-partner platform to contribute to regional sustainable development and provide a valuable advice to Contracting Parties in this regard, however emphasizing the need for better focusing the MCSD contribution to the MAP system taking into consideration the results of the discussions to be held in Rio+20;

[Decides ...]

To invite the Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) to work, taking into consideration the availability of funds in consultation

with the Bureau of the Contracting Parties and with the assistance of the Secretariat, on reforming the MCSD in particular through (i) revising its composition to ensure greater representativeness and foster a sense of ownership by the entire Mediterranean; and, sharpening its role and further enhancing its contribution to sustainable development in the Mediterranean and the national level as well as the mechanisms of Barcelona Convention and present the results for adoption by the Parties. To this end, the conclusions and recommendations of its 14th meeting (Budva, Montenegro, 2011), as well as the upcoming Results of the Rio+20 Summit (2012) should be considered.

Recommendations from the 15th MCSD meeting in June 2013

- 5.7 During the 15th MCSD meeting held in Malta in June 2013, discussions on MCSD Operations and Reform were based on a document on the same subject (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.383/5), which was prepared as a response to the COP17 decision (IG.20/13) (see above) regarding ways to better focus and reform the MCSD structure, building on progress achieved at global level during the Rio+20 Conference. This document highlighted lessons learned from the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development regarding the need for firmer institutionalising of the sustainable development agenda within the UN system, as well as a greater emphasis on implementation, when considering the implementation of the Rio+20 outcome on the setting up of a High Level Political Forum.
- 5.8 One of the key recommendations to emerge from the 15th MCSD meeting concerns the mirroring, as much as possible within the context of the Mediterranean Action Plan, of the High Level Political Forum within the Mediterranean region. In this regard, it was concluded that '[w]ith a view to raising political attention on SD in the MAP, proposals to regularly discuss sustainable development matters at the Conference of the Parties, for example once every four years, were broadly endorsed.'
- 5.9 Recommendations on the core functions of the MCSD were also agreed during the 15th MCSD meeting in Malta, as follows:
- I. Revising the MSSD, regularly monitor it on biannual basis and evaluate its implementation, using the MSSD indicators and the universal SDGs emerging from the RIO+20 process, expected in 2015, but also possibly other means such as monitoring implementation through actions (legal actions, programmes and projects);
 - II. Forging partnerships and coordination between various actors, including other UN actors besides UNEP;
 - III. Encouraging the exchange of good practice, in sustainable development plans, programmes and projects, and in the formulation of sustainable development policies and strategies for which a simplified peer review could be a tool; and,
 - IV. Preparing input for COP sessions on Sustainable Development, including priority and emerging issues.

6. MCSD attendance

- 6.1 This section contains an analysis of how well the MCSD is performing in terms of implementing the changes outlined in the 2008 Almeria Governance decision regarding MCSD composition. As noted above, Almeria indicated that the MCSD should involve:
- 22 Contracting Parties (21 MS and EU Commission);
 - 3 NGOS;
 - 3 Local authorities;
 - 3 Socio-economic stakeholders;
 - 3 Scientific Community;
 - 3 Intergovernmental organizations working in the field of SD;
 - 3 Eminent experts in the field of the topics of the MCSD meeting agenda.

In addition, the Malta Agreement adopted by the Bureau in 2000 allowed to the Palestinian Authority to be admitted as "Observer" to the MEDPOL meetings in May 2001 (Venezia), May 2003 (Sangemini) as well as several others technical meetings in Turkey and Catane (elaboration of National actions Plans) and in Rome (MEDPOL Regional Workshop on Dumping Protocol). In that perspective, it is suggested to invite the MCSD Steering Committee, to adopt a clear rule by taking an official decision providing the possibility for Palestine to attend future MCSD Meetings, which are mainly technical expert meetings, as an observer.

- 6.2 An analysis of attendance at the last 3 MCSD meetings where a breakdown of attendance between MCSD and non-MCSD members (2013, 2009 and 2007), on the basis of reports of the meetings, indicate that not all these posts in the new composition may have been appointed, and, further, that attendance at the MCSD might have been falling even with respect to posts where organisations have been appointed or country nominations made. Table 1 provides a list of organisations that have attended MCSD meetings in the non-CP categories.

Table1: Non-CP attendees at MCSD meetings (2007, 2009, 2013)¹

Type of actor	Representative	Attended as MCSD member		
		2007	2009	2013
Local Authorities	Medcities (Network)	1	-	-
Local Authorities	Association of Italian Local Agenda 21	1	1	1
Socio-Economic Actors	UMCE-Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises	1	-	1
Non-Governmental Organisations	ENDA MAGHREB- Environnement Développement et Action au Maghreb	1	1	1
Non-Governmental Organisations	Friends of the Earth (Europe/Mediterranean)	1	-	-
Non-Governmental Organisations	MIO-ECSDE-Mediterranean Information Office for Environment Culture and Sustainable Development	1	1	1
Non-Governmental Organisations	RAED-Arab Network for Environment and Development	-	1	1
Non-Governmental Organisations	WWF Mediterranean Programme	-	1	
Inter-Governmental Organisations	CEDARE- Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe		1	1
Inter-Governmental Organisations	The World Bank	1	1	1

- 6.3 Further analysis of attendance records suggests that while attendance from some parties, including MAP components and observers may be on the rise, which is a positive sign, the attendance of other groups such as contracting parties appears to be in decline (Table 2). There may be a number of reasons for this, but one possible reason was noted in the Report on the Assessment of the Implementation of the MSSD (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.358/4):

8. A different organization of the roles and organization framework concerning UNEP/MAP and in particular national focal points would be needed to create figures working exclusively on the MSSD...

- 6.4 It could be that the persons appointed on the MCSD are not working exclusively on the MCSD within the MAP system and in some cases might be the MAP Focal Point. This may be positive

¹ There was no distinction made between MCSD members and observers in the 2009 meeting report.

in terms of coordination, given the wide remit of the MCSD, however it may also render the MCSD meetings less attractive given the other fora that the MAP Focal Points have in which to meet. Also the perceived benefits of attendance in terms of the outputs of the MCSD meeting may not be large enough to justify attendance. This should inspire the MCSD SC meetings to provide more output-oriented programmes for the meetings, as well as to involve MCSD members more in preparing those outcomes.

Table 2: Attendance at MCSD meetings for 2007, 2011 and 2013

Type of actor	2007	2011	2013
Contracting parties (22)	20	17	13
Local authorities (3)	2	1	1
NGOs (3)	3	4	3
Socio-Economic stakeholders (3)	1	0	1
Scientific community (3)	0	1	1
Inter-Governmental Organisations (3)	1	2	2
Eminent experts (3)	1	1	1
MAP components	6	4	5
Observers	6	11	11
Alternate members (2007 only)	6	-	-
Coordinating unit	5	3	2
Grand Total	51	44	40
MAP components + observers + alternate members	23	18	18
MCSD members = Grand Total - MAP components, Observers and Coordinating unit	28	26	22

6.5 As noted in paragraph 6.2 above, another reason for low attendance of certain categories of members may be that they have not been nominated/invited. Table 3 provides a summary of attendance in 2009-2013 of the non-CP members. The table suggests that in certain categories of the Almeria composition, some posts have not been appointed. There are other categories where organisations have been appointed, but they are not attending. There are also cases, such as the environmental and sustainability NGOs, where there are more appointees than the three posts required, though some might have been observers at certain meetings.² **The current composition of the MCSD, as agreed at COP 15, is provided at Annex 3.**

² As noted above, this analysis is based on the participant lists in the 2007, 2011 and 2013 MCSD meeting reports. In 2009 there was no distinction between members and observers, so it is not included in the analysis.

Table 3: Non-CP appointees and attendance at the MCSD meetings, analysed by Almeria composition (2009-2013)

Type of actor	MCSD members required as per Almeria composition	Participation	1	2	3	4	5
Local authorities	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MedCities (2007), Association of Italian Local Agenda 21 (2007, 2011, 2013) 	MedCities (2007)	Association of Italian Local Agenda 21 (2007, 2011, 2013)			
NGOS	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ENDA MAGHREB(2007, 2011, 2013), Friends of the Earth (Europe/Mediterranean) (2007), MIO-ECSDE(2007, 2011, 2013), RAED-Arab (2011, 2013) 					
Socio-economic stakeholders	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UMCE-Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises 					
Scientific Community	3						
Intergovernmental organizations working in the field of sustainable development	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEDARE-(2011,2013) The World Bank (2007, 2011, 2013) 					
Eminent experts in the field of the topics of the MCSD meeting agenda	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required 					

 not nominated
 not attending

7. Recommendations for the MCSD reform

Scope and function

- 7.1 It is considered that the current mandate of the MCSD as revised at Almeria (see section 4.1) from the original mandate (see section 4.2) is reasonable, although some small changes may be helpful to strengthen and sharpen the remit of the MCSD. The first element ensures the MCSD has a role in assisting with and promoting national and regional sustainability policies, which is a major avenue for implementing the MSSD, and achieving results on the ground. It is suggested that this role may be strengthened by changing the word ‘especially’ in the second clause to ‘particularly’. This would strengthen the MCSD’s remit to assist countries and other stakeholders to actively engage within policy processes outside the typical sustainable development arena, which could be very effective in ensuring environmental policy integration into other sectors. The second element concerns the follow-up of the MSSD, another related key success factor for the MCSD. The third element is concerned with the exchange of good practice between key actors and countries, again a key aspect of the role of the MCSD as a network of SD actors, and which could be constructively built upon in line with the 15th MCSD meeting recommendations and the COP18 decision (IG.21/12). The third element allows the MCSD to raise concerns to the COP about obstacles in achieving SD, which is in line with the COP18 decision (IG.21/12) to ‘[s]trengthen the position of the MCSD in the MAP system and in the wider regional community ... by ensuring that, sustainable development matters will be discussed at the Conference of the Parties once every two COP meetings (four years)’. The fourth element allows the MCSD to present reports to the COP about the implementation of MSSD and MCSD recommendations, while the final element tasks the MCSD with suggesting ways in which the MAP system could work better in favour of sustainable development. It is considered that given that the implementation of the MSSD is directly connected and should be integrated with the MAP system, this element should be retained, particularly with a view to strengthening the role of the MCSD within the MAP system and in the context of the MAP III debate.
- 7.2 The core functions of the MCSD as discussed in the 15th MCSD meeting in Malta (section 5.7) highlighted the second and third aspects of the mandate as particularly important. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that, other than the small change mentioned above, further reducing the scope of the MCSD from the Almeria decision would undermine its ability to promote sustainability within the MAP system and in the region.

Recommendation 1: The MCSD mandate as agreed at Almeria is reasonable and does not need to be greatly amended. In this regard, it is recommended firstly to strengthen the first element of the Almeria mandate regarding assisting with national and regional sustainability policies, by changing the word ‘especially’ in the second clause to ‘particularly’. This would strengthen the MCSD’s remit to assist countries and other stakeholders to actively engage within policy processes outside the typical sustainable development arena, which could be very effective in ensuring environmental policy integration into other sectors.

- 7.3 As indicated in the 2009 report on *The Roles and Modalities of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development* [UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.358/5] the shortcomings of the MCSD may be attributed *inter alia* to the ‘very limited means it has been given’, and ‘the insufficient focus on effective monitoring’. In addition, the 2011 assessment on the implementation of the MSSD noted that ‘... MAP should create and adapt existing work units to provide a service of monitoring the existing programmes and push forward activities of technical assistance, knowledge sharing, capacity-building, information exchange and monitoring’. The 2011 report proposes the creation of a permanent position within the MAP Secretariat working specifically on MSSD implementation, both through national strategies and international actions. In this regard the approval of a post of Technical Secretary to the MCSD during COP18 is highly positive. It is important also to mention the key role of the Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre, which has the mandate to contribute to raising awareness of Mediterranean stakeholders and decision makers concerning environment and sustainable development issues in the region, by providing future scenarios to assist in decision-making. In this respect its mission is to provide the Contracting Parties with a solid basis of environmental and sustainable development data,

statistics, and indicators to support their action and decision making process. The main themes and areas covered by Plan Bleu are consistent with the priority fields of action of the MSSD and its activities are designed to facilitate its implementation and follow up.

- 7.4 Given these considerations, particularly after the reduction in scope of the MCSD mandate in 2008, it seems reasonable to hold that for the MCSD to credibly fulfil its functions the allocation of permanent staff within the Secretariat who can focus on implementing its remit is necessary. The issue, therefore may not be one of mandate but one of resources, which, until the present, have been limited. Core staffing within the Secretariat is required to compile research and other reports, follow-up the MSSD and other MCSD recommendations through the many initiatives of the various actors in the Mediterranean SD arena, monitor the implementation of the strategy, and undertake and fundraise for initiatives to implement the MSSD, including through assisting national and regional authorities in preparing, peer reviewing or revising their SD Strategies. This suggests that there may be for not just one but two full-time posts within the Secretariat dedicated to the MCSD, and the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD. In the short-term, given the financial pressures facing the MAP system, the Technical Secretary role can be reinforced by additional personnel through additional project support, for example on projects related to MSSD implementation. This staff allocation must be seen in terms of the importance of engaging and building bridges with actors outside the MAP 'environmental' system to take on board the environmental agenda, without which sustainable development cannot be achieved.
- 7.5 The decision taken at Istanbul to sharpen the role of the MCSD through having sustainable development discussed at a high level at the COP every four years in line with the RIO+20 outcome on the High Level Political Forum, provides an opportunity to sharpen the role and profile of the MCSD in line with the COP17 decision (IG.20/13).

Recommendation 2: The MCSD requires increased staff resources from the MAP system, which has already partially been provided through the Technical Secretary post approved during COP18. However this staff support should entail at least two persons, to be able to cover MSSD implementation and monitoring. In the short-term, given the financial pressures facing the MAP system, the Technical Secretary role can be reinforced by additional personnel through additional project support. This staff allocation must be seen in terms of the importance of engaging and building bridges with actors outside the MAP 'environmental' system to take on board the environmental agenda, without which sustainable development cannot be achieved.

Modalities of work

- 7.6 At the same time there is room for improvement in the modalities of work of the MCSD, mainly because members mostly become involved in the work of the CION when biannual meetings are being organised, which leads to a feeling of isolation from the Commission and its mandate, as well as representing an underutilisation of the MCSD's potential. This is a serious failing and needs addressing. The MCSD represents key players in the Mediterranean, in a setting where discussion and debate have the opportunity to be very productive and it is therefore a great resource both for the MAP system and for the Mediterranean Region in general. In this respect serious efforts need to be made by the Steering Committee and Secretariat to involve the members more by improved communication and participation in events and actions to address the functions of the MCSD (e.g. follow-up of MSSD implementation, projects to implement the MSSD, sharing of good practice through online systems, etc).

Recommendation 3: The MCSD modalities of work need to involve the members more between meetings, for example in projects and actions to follow-up of the MSSD implementation, sharing of good practice, knowledge transfer, peer review, etc.

7.7 The proper functioning of the Steering Committee is essential to the success of the MCSD. Regular meetings, including face-to-face meetings, are essential. All necessary support from its Secretariat, including in terms of translation/interpretation, is necessary and needs to be continued and strengthened.

Recommendation 4: It is essential that the MCSD SC meets regularly during the biennium, - at least one of these meetings needs to be face-to-face - and this process must continue to be fully supported by the Secretariat.

Composition

7.8 Tables 1-3 above provide some information about MCSD nominations and attendance after the Almeria decision (IG.17/5) revising its composition. In 2008 the Almeria decision widened the MCSD composition, and the call for widening the MCSD composition was reiterated at the 17th COP in 2011 (IG.20/13) and the 18th COP in 2013 (IG.21/12). In addition the fourth operational paragraph of the COP18 decision (see Annex 1) highlighted the need to involve other UN actors besides UNEP, as well as parliamentarians. In this regard, and based on the analysis provided in Tables 1-3 above, the approach towards addressing MCSD composition may need to be four pronged:

- I. Filling the not-as-yet appointed positions as per the Almeria composition, possibly from current observers since they have demonstrated interest in the MCSD through their attendance;
- II. Ensuring the right nominee attends from the member organisations. This could be achieved through a 'renewable' nomination, for example for a specific period such as 2 biennia/4 years, which would chime with the high level discussions at the COP on SD.
- III. Ensuring that the nominated person attends through greater outreach by the Secretariat and, where necessary, the Steering Committee and the MAP Bureau. to identify and address the reason for the non-attendance. Non-contracting party organisations that have not sent a representative for three meetings of the MCSD should be considered for replacement (see Table 3).
- IV. Adding two new categories of relevant UN bodies and parliamentarians.

7.9 In this regard, the first task is to nominate MCSD members for the unfilled positions. These are (see Table 3):

- 2 local authority organisations
- 2 socio-economic stakeholders
- 3 scientific community
- 3 Intergovernmental organisations
- 3 eminent experts

7.10 Possible candidate organisations for these positions are suggested below:

- **2 new local authority stakeholders: ICLEI (<http://www.iclei.org/>)** (Local Governments for Sustainability) is a global association of cities and local governments dedicated to sustainable development. It is a movement of 12 mega-cities, 100 super-cities and urban regions, 450 large cities as well as 450 medium-sized cities and towns in 86 countries. ICLEI promotes local action for global sustainability and supports cities to become sustainable, resilient, resource-efficient, biodiverse, low-carbon; to build a smart infrastructure; and to develop an inclusive, green urban economy with the ultimate aim to achieve healthy and happy communities. **United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)**

represents and defends the interests of local governments on the world stage, regardless of the size of the communities they serve. Headquartered in Barcelona, the organisation's stated mission is: 'To be the united voice and world advocate of democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests, through cooperation between local governments, and within the wider international community'.

- **2 new Socio-economic stakeholders:**
- **3 additional members from the Scientific Community:** It is suggested to include scientific networks here such as IUCN, **FEMISE** (<http://www.femise.org/en/>) and the **Regional Network for the Mediterranean Sustainable Solutions Network (Med-SDSN)** (<http://unsdsn.org/what-we-do/national-and-regional-networks/regional-sdsn/regional-sdsn-for-the-mediterranean-med-sdsn/>). IUCN Mediterranean has been very active in the MCSD and is a regular observer. The FEMISE Association is a Euro-Mediterranean network established in June 2005. The network includes more than 90 members of economic research institutes, representing the 37 partners of the Barcelona Process. Supported by the European Commission within the framework of the MEDA regional programme since 1997, FEMISE is coordinated by the Institut de la Méditerranée (France) and the Economic Research Forum (Egypt). The association was established with 52 Founding members of EU-Med national non-profit institutes that undertake economic and social research and represent the two sides of the Mediterranean and it has the following objectives:
 - To conduct policy research and make recommendations with respect to economic relations between Europe and their Mediterranean partners;
 - To publish and disseminate this research for the benefit of public and private, national and multilateral institutions,
 - To work for the broadest possible dissemination by the most appropriate means.

The Mediterranean Regional SDSN Center will expand its activities to include inter alia: developing regional pathways towards sustainable development and assisting countries/cities in operationalizing them; collaborations between regional institutions to develop and improve teaching materials and courses on sustainable development through the SDSN's education initiatives and in partnership with the Masters of Development Practice; and, Applied Research Activities with a focus on solutions to give rise to ideas and opportunities for applied research in the Mediterranean Region, which could take advantage of the global network of the SDSN.

- **3 Intergovernmental organizations:** As the main political process in the Mediterranean Region, it is considered that the **Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)** should be a member of the MCSD. The UfM is a multilateral partnership aiming at increasing the potential for regional integration and cohesion among Euro-Mediterranean countries. It is inspired by the shared political will to revitalize efforts to transform the Mediterranean into an area of peace, democracy, cooperation and prosperity. The mandate of the UfM Secretariat focuses on identifying, processing, promoting and coordinating regional projects, which are in line with the principles and rules of international law, and that enhance and strengthen cooperation and positively impact the lives of citizens. On launching the UfM, the Heads of State and Government identified six priority areas:
 - De-pollution of the Mediterranean
 - Maritime and land highways
 - Civil protection
 - Alternative energies: Mediterranean solar plan
 - Higher education and research, Euro-Mediterranean University
 - The Mediterranean Business Initiative

CIHEAM: Founded in 1962, the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) is an intergovernmental organisation composed of thirteen

member states (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). CIHEAM promotes multilateral cooperation in the Mediterranean in the fields of agriculture, food, fishery and rural territories, aiming to respond to the needs of the States and of the agro-food actors. CIHEAM pursues this cooperation mission through specialised training, networked research, scientific diplomacy and political partnership. CIHEAM contributes to the elaboration of a global, structural and engaging vision for development in the Mediterranean. Providing concrete solutions, sharing experiences and promoting useful knowledge are among the main objectives of each one of its actions. Around 170 permanent agents and hundreds of consultants regularly work within the 5 headquarters of the Organisation: the 4 Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes (MAI) based in Bari (Italy), Chania (Greece), Montpellier (France), and Zaragoza (Spain); the General Secretariat is located in Paris (France), and are at the same time active in the Mediterranean countries to develop activities and projects.

- **3 eminent experts:** these are usually appointed on the basis of the subjects to be discussed –given the importance of the MSSD review for the 16th Meeting, these could be key experts working on the review.

Recommendation 5: It is recommended to appoint the following organisations to the MCSD through the February 2016 Contracting Party meeting, though which, based on the ‘Terms of reference and composition’ of the MCSD (see Annex 2), new members may be nominated:

- **2 local authorities:** ICLEI, UCLG
- **2 socio-economic stakeholder:** to be decided
- **3 scientific community:** IUCN, FEMISE and UNSDS
- **3 Intergovernmental organisations:** UfM, CIHEAM and third to be decided

Recommendation 6: Ensure that MCSD nominations are for a specific but renewable period, such as 2 biennia/4 years, in line with the high level discussions of the COP on SD. Where a number of organisations fit the criteria (e.g. environmental and SD NGOs), it is important that a roster is established so that MCSD members are appointed from the roster on a rotational basis.

Recommendation 7: It is important to ensure that MCSD members attend the biennial sessions. When members do not attend, outreach should be carried out through the Secretariat, the Steering Committee, or the MAP Bureau as necessary, to identify and address the reason for the non-attendance. Non-Contracting Party organisations who have not attended three meetings of the MCSD should be considered for replacement.

Recommendation 8: It is recommended to add an additional category to the criteria for MCSD membership to take on board the COP18 decision on the MCSD reform regarding involving other UN actors besides UNEP, and regarding Parliamentarians. The appointments here could include UNDP, UNFCCC and FAO. The Parliamentary nominees, possibly three in number, could be from the Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly.

7.11 The Almeria MCSD reform decision did not update the constitutive documents of the MCSD in terms of ‘rules of procedure’, ‘terms of reference’ and ‘composition’ (see Annex 2). The present MCSD reform should update these constitutive documents in the light of the Almeria reform and the current reform, as well as the COP18 decision (IG.17/5), which specifically mentions the need to update them.

Recommendation 9: It is recommended that this present reform updates the constitutive documents of the MCSD in terms of ‘rules of procedure’, ‘terms of reference’ and ‘composition’

(UNEP(OCA)/MED EG.140/Inf.4) with the outcome of the Almeria reform and this present reform.

8. Conclusions

8.1 This paper seeks to raise certain issues and suggest recommendations for the reform of the MCSD as mandated by the 17th and 18th COPs, for debate during the June 2014 MCSD Steering Committee meeting. It reviews the history of the MCSD, looking at its current and original mandate and composition, as well as the various evaluation processes that have shaped the work of the MCSD since its inception in 1996 following the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment in Development. It highlights the institutional factors that have influenced how well the MCSD has been able to fulfil its mandate, which have been raised by a number of evaluation reports and MCSD meeting conclusions over the years. It also analyses MCSD attendance over the last three biennia. On the basis of its analysis the paper puts forward nine recommendations for the consideration of the Steering Committee. The recommendations are summarised below.

Recommendation 1: The MCSD mandate as agreed at Almeria is reasonable and does not need to be greatly amended. In this regard, it is recommended firstly to strengthen the first element of the Almeria mandate regarding assisting with national and regional sustainability policies, by changing the word ‘especially’ in the second clause to ‘particularly’. This would strengthen the MCSD’s remit to assist countries and other stakeholders to actively engage within policy processes outside the typical sustainable development arena, which could be very effective in ensuring environmental policy integration into other sectors..

Recommendation 2: The MCSD requires increased staff resources from the MAP system, which has already partially been provided through the Technical Secretary post approved during COP18. However this staff support should entail at least two persons, to be able to cover MSSD implementation and monitoring. In the short-term, given the financial pressures facing the MAP system, the Technical Secretary role can be reinforced by additional personnel through additional project support. This staff allocation must be seen in terms of the importance of engaging and building bridges with actors outside the MAP ‘environmental’ system to take on board the environmental agenda, without which sustainable development cannot be achieved.

Recommendation 3: The MCSD modalities of work need to involve the members more between meetings, for example in projects and actions to follow-up of the MSSD implementation, sharing of good practice, knowledge transfer, peer review, etc.

Recommendation 4: It is essential that the MCSD SC meets regularly during the biennium, - at least one of these meetings needs to be face-to-face - and this process must continue to be fully supported by the Secretariat.

Recommendation 5: It is recommended to appoint the following organisations to the MCSD through the February 2016 Contracting Party meeting, though which, based on the ‘Terms of reference and composition’ of the MCSD (see Annex 2), new members may be nominated:

- 2 local authorities: ICLEI, UCLG
- 2 socio-economic stakeholder: to be decided
- 3 scientific community: IUCN, FEMISE and UNSDS
- 3 Intergovernmental organisations: UfM, CIHEAM and third to be decided

Recommendation 6: Ensure that MCSD nominations are for a specific but renewable period, such as 2 biennia/4 years, in line with the high level discussions of the COP on SD. Where a number of organisations fit the criteria (e.g. environmental and SD NGOs), it is important that a roster is established so that MCSD members are appointed from the roster on a rotational basis.

Recommendation 7: It is important to ensure that MCSD members attend the biennial sessions. When members do not attend, outreach should be carried out through the Secretariat, the Steering Committee, or the MAP Bureau as necessary, to identify and address the reason for the

non-attendance. Non-Contracting Party organisations who have not attended three meetings of the MCSD should be considered for replacement.

Recommendation 8: It is recommended to add an additional category to the criteria for MCSD membership to take on board the COP18 decision on the MCSD reform regarding involving other UN actors besides UNEP, and regarding Parliamentarians. The appointments here could include UNDP, UNFCCC and FAO. The Parliamentary nominees, possibly three in number, could be from the Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly.

Recommendation 9: It is recommended that this present reform updates the constitutive documents of the MCSD in terms of 'rules of procedure', 'terms of reference' and 'composition' (UNEP(OCA)/MED EG.140/Inf.4) with the outcome of the Almeria reform and this present reform.

Annex 1: COP18 Decision IG.21/12 supporting the reforming of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), proposed by the MCSD Steering Committee

The 18th Meeting of the Contracting Parties,

Acknowledging the implications of the outcomes of Rio+20 on the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) regarding the upgrading of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development into a High Level Political Forum,

Recalling the Decision IG20/13 of COP17, which invited the Steering Committee of the MCSD to "... work, on reforming the MCSD in particular through revising its composition to ensure greater representativeness and sharpening its role,

Recalling the current mandate and composition of the MCSD, which serve as a starting point for the strengthening of the MCSD (Decision IG 17/5 which adopted the Governance paper at the 15th Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention held in Almeria (Spain),

Recalling also that the above-cited Decision IG 17/5 considered that the MCSD should involve the greatest possible variety of national actors in its work, so as to ensure the greatest possible dissemination of the concepts promoted,

Recalling on the one hand the constitutive documents of the MCSD from the fourth MCSD meeting in Monaco, 1998, as collected in UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG. 327/Inf.3 of June 2008, and on the other the Governance Paper of the Almeria COP in January 2008 (Decision IG 17/5),

Recalling also that the above-cited Decision IG 17/5 also underlined that all efforts should be made to ensure participation of representatives from both environmental and development sector and appropriate geographical representation, and media participation,

Appreciating that in the 17 years since its inception, the MCSD has made important contributions to the sustainable development of the region, including, particularly, the MSSD, and adopted by the 14th Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in Portoroz (Slovenia) in 2005, its innovative modalities of participation and engagement of civil society organizations and other major stakeholders, and the way the MCSD has been an innovation at the global scale as the only sustainable development commission at the Regional Seas level of UNEP,

Appreciating also that at the same time there is general recognition that, as with the Global Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), there have been some shortcomings, such as the limited scope of the MCSD, which can be attributed to various factors influencing effectiveness,

Emphasizing that the objective of a strengthened MCSD should be the further integration of the environment pillar in other public policies, brought about through focusing on the interface between environment and development, and thus building on its successes and potential,

Taking note of the recommendations from the 15th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development in Malta in 2013 in this regard, particularly with respect to the envisaged core functions of the MCSD,

Acknowledging that there is a need to balance ambition and realism, especially since the MCSD has had a relatively limited budget so far,

Considering the need for enhanced cooperation with other international and regional organizations and financial institutions such as the World Bank, the Union for the Mediterranean, the UNDP and the Secretariat of the UNFCCC, in particular in view of on-going negotiations to adopt a legally-binding new global climate change regime at the end of 2015,

Decides to:

Strengthen the position of the MCSD in the MAP system and in the wider regional community, in line with the outcome of Rio+20 and COP17 Decision IG.20/13, by ensuring that, sustainable development matters will be discussed at the Conference of the Parties once every two COP meetings (four years);

Sharpen the mandate of the MCSD so as to strengthen its role and contribution to integrate the environment in other public policies and call for the revision accordingly of the constitutive documents of the MCSD, including its 'Terms of Reference', 'Rules of Procedure' and 'Composition'; and present the revised documents for the consideration and approval of the COP in 2015;

Request the MCSD, with the support of the Secretariat, to review MCSD participation and its composition, while retaining its focus on environmental sustainability (as agreed at COP 17 in Paris) and the interface between environment and development, with a view to ensuring the sufficient membership and participation, as MCSD members, by the key regional sustainable development stakeholders as described below, and presenting a final proposal for adoption by the 19th COP in 2015:

- other UN specialized agencies and programs such as UNDP, UNIDO, FAO/ GFCM and UNESCO;
- partners representing the economic and social pillars of sustainable development;
- parliamentarians;
- the scientific community;
- local governments;
- representatives of wider Mediterranean processes, in particular the Union for the Mediterranean;

Request the Secretariat to support the MCSD to work further on forging partnerships and coordination between various actors, including the World Bank, the Union for the Mediterranean, and other UN actors besides UNEP such as the UNFCCC and the UNDP, to improve the implementation of the new MSSD;

Request the MCSD to encourage, through its meetings and operations, the exchange of good practice and to establish an on-line consultation platform for these purposes;

Request the Secretariat to prepare a proposal for the consideration of the MCSD on how a simplified peer review process could be put in place;

Request the Secretariat to support the MCSD in preparing input for COP discussions on Sustainable Development, including priority and emerging issues;

Invite the MCSD, supported by the Secretariat and Info/RAC, to be more effective and visible in its work and its communications, using technology to support its work, specifying the exact nature of the outcomes it produces in response to each of its core functions;

Request the Secretariat to include participation of the MCSD in the process of preparation of the State of the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Environment Reports.

Annex 2: Constitutive documents of the MCSD (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.140/Inf.4)

http://195.97.36.231/dbases/acrobatfiles/98WG140_4_Add1_Eng.pdf

Annex 3: Current composition of the MCSD, as agreed at COP 15

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