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Barcelona, Spain, 24 - 27 May 2005

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE MED POL NATIONAL COORDINATORS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Pages</u>
Report	1 -23
 <u>Annexes</u>	
Annex I List of Participants	
Annex II Agenda	
Annex III Principles and objectives of MED POL - Phase IV (2006-2013)	
Annex IV Recommendations	

Introduction

1. The Meeting of MED POL National Coordinators was held at the Hotel Atenea Mar, Barcelona, Spain, from 24 to 27 May 2005.
2. National coordinators or their representatives from the following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention attended the Meeting: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Commission, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Morocco, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey.
3. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations were represented: Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (UNEP/GPA), World Health Organization (WHO), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The following MAP Regional Activity Centres were also represented: Cleaner Production Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC) and Environment Remote Sensing/Regional Activity Centre (ERS/RAC).
4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: CEFIC/EUROCHLOR and MedCities.
5. The full list of participants is attached as **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda item 1. Opening of the meeting (joint session with CP/RAC)

6. Mr Salvador Mila, Minister for the Environment and Housing of Catalonia, welcomed participants to the meeting, and said that he hoped that Spain's extensive regional devolution of powers in environmental policy and pollution prevention would serve as a reference point for the current endeavour to extend cooperation between MED POL and CP/RAC and also as an example of the scope that could be provided for getting communities involved on the basis of thinking globally while acting locally.
7. Mr Armand Vilaplana, Director of CP/RAC, wished participants every success in their work and said that Spain's Centre for the Enterprises and the Environment (CEMA) was ready to be of assistance whenever required. He expressed satisfaction that once again Barcelona was being given the opportunity to prove itself as a benchmark participant in MAP's work.
8. Mr Francesco Saverio Civili, MED POL Coordinator, thanked CP/RAC for organizing the meeting and for helping to streamline the work of CP/RAC and MED POL for the benefit of the Contracting Parties. He was confident that the present endeavour of exchanging information and organizing future joint cooperation would be very successful.
9. Mr Paul Mifsud, MAP Coordinator, thanked the Minister for the Environment and Housing of Catalonia and the representative of the Ministry for the Environment of Spain for their presence, and observed that the joint meeting of MED POL National Coordinators and CP/RAC Focal Points was a very interesting exercise. MAP had recently held similar meetings involving three of its other components, and it had been

clear that the Contracting Parties were very keen indeed to see Centres working more closely together and more closely with MAP itself.

10. Mr Jaime Alejandro, Director of Environmental Quality, Ministry for the Environment of Spain, said that his country's government believed more in the alliance than in the clash of civilizations, and in the devolution of power in the interests of effectiveness and competitiveness. Although CEMA's budget was currently planned on an annual basis, multi-year planning would be preferable. Better environmental rules made for greater competitiveness, as environmental rules obliged companies to invest in research and development, which in turn strengthened their presence on world markets and made them more diverse.

11. Mr Mila said that environmental and pollution prevention policies were currently at the centre of world attention: the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol marked the beginning of a new age which in social and economic terms would be qualitatively different at the international level when compared with the situation that prevailed with the environment policies of the past. Companies that were present in a number of countries now used their corporate social responsibility – their production quality and pollution prevention – as a competitive strength. That was why the activities fostered by MED POL were so important. Furthermore, it was a cause of concern that the environment – natural resources and environmental issues – could become a source of conflict in the twenty-first century; it was against that backdrop that the initiative underpinning the present meeting could be seen as an exercise in conflict prevention, through the enhancement of North-South solidarity and the building of policies of peace and cooperation.

12. The Governments of Spain and Catalonia placed great hopes in the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference, to be held in Barcelona in November 2005, as a means of reviving the Barcelona process by establishing sustainable environment and environment cooperation issues as clearly defined, central elements of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in terms of sharing natural resources – such as water – and environmental policies in production. It was hoped that the Ministerial Conference would result in enhancing that kind of cooperation, perhaps with the development of joint policies to provide a coherent framework for investing in and developing clean production mechanisms. The emphasis should be placed on developing such mechanisms in the Middle East, the Maghreb and the EU accession countries of Eastern Europe, with more funding going to such countries and less to the North. Economic and social policies, as well as environmental policies, were involved.

Agenda item 2: Organization of work (joint session with CP/RAC)

13. Mr Civili, MED POL Coordinator, said that MED POL and CP/RAC had proposed to the Contracting Parties a joint initiative for a first joint meeting of MED POL National Coordinators and CP/RAC Focal Points. It had been considered however practically impossible to hold the whole meeting jointly as many activities of interest to the MED POL National Coordinators were not of sufficient interest to the CP/RAC Focal Points, so a compromise had been reached. Agenda items 1, 2, 3, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5 would be dealt with jointly, while the others would be dealt with by the MED POL National Coordinators.

14. Mr Vilaplana, Director of CP/RAC, said the exercise would be a new experience in seeing how the two could work together. It had not been easy to plan, partly because of changes in CP/RAC – he himself had been in his post for only a year – and

partly because CP/RAC was currently in the process of sketching out its cooperation and role within MAP.

Agenda item 3: Prospects of enhanced cooperation between MED POL and CP/RAC (joint session with CP/RAC)

15. Mr Civili, MED POL Coordinator, reviewing the history of cooperation between MED POL and CP/RAC, said that it had only been in recent years, with the shift in the emphasis of MED POL's work to pollution control and the realization that MED POL lacked experience in industrial pollution and, especially, contacts with industry, that it had turned to CP/RAC, whose potential was significant in that area, for the implementation of specific tasks. CP/RAC had, in particular, been involved in the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) from the outset of the GEF Project. That cooperation had then expanded from Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP) to industrial processes and the efforts of small and medium industries (SMIs) in fulfilling the objectives of the SAP. A core area of cooperation between the two components was their work within the framework of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), notably through outreach to small and medium-sized industries to assist them in pollution reduction and to raise awareness about sustainable development and the importance of fulfilling the objectives of the SAP.

16. The effective cooperation between MED POL and CP/RAC in the previous biennium had culminated in the submission to the Contracting Parties, and adoption by them, of two regional plans and two recommendations on pollution reduction from industrial biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and hazardous waste. On the strength of that successful cooperation, and looking ahead to further collaboration, the two components would now be proposing a more concrete and less ad hoc cooperation mechanism for the future.

17. Mr Vilaplana, Director, CP/RAC, said that, in the course of the timely and fruitful collaboration between CP/RAC and MED POL, the former had emerged as a useful technical instrument assisting in identifying the sources of pollution in the Mediterranean. Circumstances around the Mediterranean Basin, and particularly in the southern rim countries, had clearly changed, with 80 per cent of marine pollution now deriving from industrial and human activity, and MAP needed to fine-tune its approach and adapt to that changed situation. The time had come to move further towards developing clear objectives and strategies to introduce BAT, BEP and pollution control standards into industry and hence transfer technology effectively and evenly across the region.

18. In view of the very positive experience of cooperation between MED POL and CP/RAC, the meeting discussed ways and means of further enhancing such cooperation and the synergy that had so far been extremely beneficial for the implementation of the SAP. It was therefore recommended that the two components further develop their areas of cooperation, in particular in relation to the long-term implementation of the NAPs, for which countries would need assistance in their efforts to achieve concrete reduction of pollution. MED POL and CP/RAC were accordingly requested to develop their work plan for the period 2006-2007, taking into account their respective roles but bearing in mind the common goal to assist countries with the implementation of their NAPs.

Agenda item 4: Election of officers

19. The Meeting unanimously elected the following officers:

Chairperson: Mr José Rizo-Martin (European Commission)
Vice-Chairpersons: Ms Fatma Abou Shouk (Egypt)
Ms Nada Krustolovic (Croatia)
Rapporteur: Mr Recep Sahin (Turkey)

Agenda item 5: Adoption of the Agenda

20. The Meeting adopted the proposed agenda contained in document UNEP(DEC)/MED/WG.264/1/Rev.1, which appears as **Annex II** to this report.

21. The Rules of Procedure for the meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI) applied *mutatis mutandis* to the Meeting of MED POL National Coordinators.

Agenda item 6: Presentation of MED POL Phase III evaluation

22. Introducing the evaluation document (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/3), Mr Civili, MED POL Coordinator, noted that the evaluation of MED POL Phase III had been a lengthy process in view of the great variety of issues and activities to be covered. Although the evaluation had taken longer than envisaged, he expressed the belief that the evaluators had done an excellent job, that their findings were fair and that their recommendations would provide a good basis for the planning and implementation of MED POL Phase IV.

23. Mr Mifsud, MAP Coordinator, added that the recommendations of the MED POL Phase III evaluation had been issued at a time when the findings of the overall evaluation of MAP were still awaited. The findings of the MED POL evaluation should be considered carefully and the necessary lessons drawn from them by the Contracting Parties at their Meeting in November.

24. Introducing the evaluation, Mr Massin, coordinator of the evaluation team, drew attention to two principal issues. The first was the differences in the levels of development, including in particular the development of scientific knowledge, in the countries in the region. The second concerned the situation of EU Member States, which were legally bound by EU Directives on environmental matters, some of which were not necessarily in accordance with the views expressed by certain countries from the southern Mediterranean.

25. Mr Kayyal, a member of the team of evaluators, gave a presentation of the information contained in the "Evaluation of MED POL Phase II Programme" (document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/3), in which he outlined the mandate for the evaluation and explained the process followed. He recalled that, in response to the recommendation adopted by the Contracting Parties at their meeting in Catania in November 2003 "to evaluate the MED POL Programme and formulate a new phase of MED POL", three experts had been selected by MAP with the objective of assessing MED POL's performance in order to enhance its role in achieving the Programme's objectives, and to provide elements for use in the formulation of MED POL Phase IV. The scope of the

evaluation therefore included determining the extent to which the expected results and outputs of the MED POL Programme had been achieved and assessing the quality and usefulness/impact of its results and outputs. He explained that what was known as the "process approach" had been adopted as a basis for the evaluation, with the identification of five main processes, namely management responsibility, realization of work programmes, monitoring of work programmes, resource management and action to improve the Programme, based on the outcome of the monitoring of work programmes. The evaluation then went on to identify processes or parts of processes which had been carried out mostly in a satisfactory manner or which were unsatisfactory. In the latter case, recommendations were made for improvement, which was the most valuable aspect of evaluation. In certain cases, it had also been found that there was insufficient information available to be able to reach an evaluation conclusion, which in itself tended to indicate the existence of problems.

26. In reply to comments concerning the evaluation process, he explained that the evaluators had visited eight of the 21 Mediterranean coastal States, which was a very high rate for such an evaluation. The countries concerned had been selected as being representative of the diversity of national situations in the region. He added that the intention was to evaluate the performance of the MED POL Programme itself, rather than the success or failure of the countries concerned in implementing the various recommendations and putting into practice the guidance provided by MED POL.

27. Mr Kayyal then briefly summarized the findings of the evaluation, which had shown, on the one hand, that the following had not been carried out in a satisfactory manner: implementation of the monitoring programme, the programme for the Dumping Protocol and the programme for the Hazardous Wastes Protocol. On the other hand, the principal processes carried out in a satisfactory manner were the management of the MED POL programme's objectives and strategies and its resources, together with the planning and implementation of the programme for the LBS Protocol and planning of the programme of monitoring activities.

28. The evaluation contained a number of proposals and suggestions made in the light of the findings and relating to management responsibility, realization of work programmes, the monitoring of work programmes, and resource management.

29. It was pointed out by one participant that the MED POL evaluation had been conducted in a very innovative way, using up-to-date management tools.

30. During the discussion of the evaluation findings, it was noted that the evaluation was very complete and offered a good overview of the important work carried out by MED POL during the period under review. One finding that should be emphasized was that the size of the staff of MED POL was inadequate for it to be able to meet all the expectations placed upon the Programme.

31. One national coordinator pointed out that it had already been observed during the evaluation of MAP in general that it was not sufficiently well known by the general public in the countries of the Mediterranean, and that was the case with MED POL as well. Contacts should be made at senior decision-making levels to ensure that there was much greater awareness of the work of MED POL. In the Mediterranean countries of the South, in particular, frequent changes of ministers meant that it was not always easy for the MED POL Secretariat to know with whom it should be engaging; socio-economic and political developments in countries should be assessed on a continuing basis in order to ensure that continuity of contact.

32. One national coordinator said there were lessons to be learned by both the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties: the former had to take steps to improve coordination, while the latter had to take steps to enhance compliance. The evaluation had criticized the failure of States to ratify the Hazardous Wastes Protocol, but their reticence in accepting the text as it stood might be due to their considering that it overlapped unnecessarily with the Basel Convention to which they were already Parties.

33. Mr Massin agreed with the comments made about the level of public awareness in Mediterranean countries regarding the work of MED POL; his team had been struck at the outset by the fact that in some countries the Barcelona Convention and its instruments were not well known. That might have been because ministers for the environment changed, although senior civil servants usually remained in their posts longer. In fact, the Secretariat had made a great deal of progress with regard to the latter: much more information was now available online, and its own website was more clearly set out than in the past. Even so, it could still contain more information about forthcoming meetings and reports of past meetings.

34. Mr Civili said MED POL was pleased and proud to have been exposed to such a rigorous, in-depth evaluation. Overall, it had been an extremely useful exercise for the Secretariat, although hardly any of the criticisms and comments in the evaluation had come as a surprise. The Secretariat had been aware of the problems that had been pinpointed, but in some cases had been unable to resolve them. Some of the comments had been addressed to the management of MED POL, while others had been addressed to the implementation of the Programme's activities. The former had included some excellent comments and recommendations, some of which the Secretariat had already used in preparing Phase IV. The second series of comments and recommendations had also come as no surprise, although the Secretariat did not necessarily agree with all of them, feeling that some of the actions implemented by MED POL had not been fully understood by the evaluation team. Almost all of those recommendations, however, had been taken into account in Phase IV. The evaluation team had reported what they believed to be the case, and they should not now be asked to change any of their recommendations. The Secretariat should simply make appropriate use of them in Phase IV.

35. The comments on lack of indicators were the most important observations to be addressed to management, which would need to be reorganized so as to be informed at any time, through indicators, of progress made in the fulfilment of objectives. The Emergency and Prevention Protocol had not been covered by the evaluation because it came under the responsibility of REMPEC.

36. Mr Mifsud said that the problems of poor visibility and unsatisfactory perception concerned MAP as a whole and were now being addressed. MED POL was already working in cooperation with ERS/RAC, which was to become an information and communication component of MAP. He agreed that implementation and compliance mechanisms were badly needed, while pointing out that acceptance and ratification of the Barcelona legal texts were Contracting Party prerogatives. The Secretariat took every opportunity to encourage countries to come forward.

37. The Chairperson said in conclusion that the national coordinators of MED POL clearly considered the evaluation of MED POL Phase III to be of excellent quality and a starting point for Phase IV. They also wished to see a new communication strategy put in place, and had furthermore stressed the importance of indicators to determine the extent to which objectives were being met.

Agenda item 7: Review and discussion of MED POL Phase IV

38. Mr Civili, MED POL Coordinator, presented the draft principles and objectives of MED POL Phase IV (2006-2013) (document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/4). Outlining the background to the preparation of the document and the procedure for its adoption, he explained that the document was intended to be a statement of visions, principles, objectives, policy, methods of implementation and elements for long-term sustainability, to the exclusion of operational details, which would be prepared during the next biennium. If the document were adopted, MED POL would therefore continue to implement Phase III during the next biennium, while gradually incorporating the principles agreed upon for Phase IV in the form of new or pilot activities. The document was divided in two parts, the first part dealing more with the historical background and external factors that had influenced the development of Phase IV. While welcoming comments on Part I, he suggested that the discussion should focus on Part II, which covered Phase IV more specifically.

39. The question of the status of Part I of the document was raised, several participants suggesting that it should not form part of the document to be submitted to the MAP Focal Points and the Contracting Parties. After discussion, it was agreed that Part I may be issued as a separate information document, incorporating any amendments submitted in writing by MED POL national coordinators and that the main document would consist of the present Part II together with a one-page summary of Part I as an introduction.

40. Introducing the discussion on Part II of document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/4, Mr Civili noted that the preparation of MED POL Phase IV was based on a critical analysis of the results of the evaluation of MED POL Phase III, in order to benefit from the evaluation's findings and recommendations, and on agreement with countries on five main clusters of issues: the overall objectives and goals of MED POL Phase IV; the basic principles and assumptions on which it should be based; its scope; its modalities of implementation; and the operational details of implementation, including specific goals and targets. The visions upon which the Programme would be based consisted of a strong commitment by the Contracting Parties to the goals of the Convention and the Protocols and the adoption and implementation of a clear strategy for sustainable development covering a gradual but steady reduction of urban and industrial pollution through the application of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities. With regard to the overall objective and goals of MED POL Phase IV, he said that the basic starting point consisted of the objectives and goals of Phase III. Nevertheless, Phase IV would clearly go further, particularly in contributing to the development of a holistic approach to the monitoring and assessment of human impacts on the marine and coastal environments, in cooperation with other bodies, and in assisting in the application of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities. Phase IV would also go much further in assisting countries in the implementation of national action plans and in monitoring the implementation of the action plans, programmes and measures adopted by countries for the control of pollution and in the assessment of their effectiveness.

41. In a discussion of the presentation of the document, it was noted that the extensive use of footnotes was intended to provide a relatively short and readable text, with the option that readers could refer to the explanations given in the footnotes if they required further detail. However, several speakers expressed the opinion that the lengthy footnotes were not always necessary and could be removed.

42. One coordinator expressed a certain disappointment that the proposals for MED POL Phase IV appeared to be basically a continuation of Phase III and feared that, in adopting a rather gentle approach, the opportunity was being lost to make a strong political statement concerning the need for action at the national level and to ensure that MED POL remained the flagship MAP component. A large proportion of the proposed activities were still confined to monitoring and assessment, the traditional activities of MED POL. The proposals should be more forward-looking, taking into account the imminent entry into force of the amended LBS Protocol, and should be more proactive and dynamic in the provision of assistance to countries, with particular reference to the implementation of the NAPs and with greater emphasis on practical activities, such as pilot programmes. As steady progress had been made over the years in the development of the monitoring system, MED POL now needed to strengthen its activities in other areas, and particularly in communication with a view to raising the profile of MAP and its influence within the region.

43. In response, Mr Civili, while underlining the innovative character of Phase IV and the substantial expansion of its coverage, reaffirmed the importance of information. Although progress had undoubtedly been made, the information supplied to MED POL by the countries in the region was still not sufficient for authoritative statements to be made on detailed aspects of the state of the environment in the Mediterranean. It was therefore necessary to pursue MED POL's monitoring and assessment activities. He added that, when read carefully, there were indeed very new aspects to the proposed objectives and goals of MED POL Phase IV, including much greater involvement by the Programme in assisting countries in the implementation of national action plans, programmes and measures and a very new role for the Programme in monitoring the implementation of such plans, programmes and measures.

Basic principles and assumptions

44. In his introduction to the proposed basic principles and assumptions underlying MED POL Phase IV, Mr Civili placed emphasis on the role that MED POL should play in promoting the application of the ecosystem approach for the management of human activities. Greater emphasis would also be placed on the relations of MED POL with decision-makers in the region and on increasing the involvement of the various stakeholders, including NGOs, the private sector, local authorities and the scientific community, in MED POL's activities. He added that the integration of MED POL's monitoring activities into the context of the implementation of the SAP was a major development and would constitute an additional guarantee of the implementation and follow-up of the SAP. Finally, he drew attention to the increased importance attached to MED POL's collaboration with the European Community, with particular reference to the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy, for which MED POL should act as a link with non-EU countries.

45. In the discussion of the proposed basic principles and assumptions for MED POL Phase IV, the proposals made by the Secretariat were generally welcomed. It was agreed that the use of monitoring for the purposes of controlling the implementation of the SAP and the LBS Protocol was a major step forward in the work of MED POL. It was further noted that, while MED POL should play an important role in the context of the EU Marine Strategy, as recognized by the European Community, it should also collaborate with other MAP components in that work.

Scope (content)

46. Mr Civili, turning to the scope of Phase IV, said it could include specific new issues which at present were not covered, or not adequately covered, by the scope of

Phase III. The marine environment was to be treated in a holistic way, as an integrated whole consisting of the sea area and the adjacent terrestrial coastal area. Phase IV would also cover the monitoring of pollution inputs from rivers into the Mediterranean, including the identification of sources of pollution upstream in cases where river mouths or estuaries were found to be pollution hot spots.

47. MED POL proposed to follow international developments in applying the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities and had requested Mr Lascaratos (Greece), who had actively participated in the work of the European Commission within the framework of the Marine Strategy project, to draw up, on behalf of MED POL, definitions, implications and a tentative road map for applying such an approach in the Mediterranean.

48. Mr Lascaratos introduced the concept of the ecosystem approach, together with a suggestion as to how its implementation could be initiated, as contained in document UNEP(DEC)/MED/WG.264/Inf.3. Although originally conceived as a scientific tool, the ecosystem approach was now considered mainly as a management tool. It put the emphasis on a management regime that maintained the health of the ecosystem alongside appropriate human use of the marine environment for the benefit of current and future generations, regarding humans as part of the natural ecosystem. It would involve an adaptive management process of learning by doing in order to take account of the natural variability and dynamic nature of marine ecosystems.

49. The European Marine Strategy being developed by the European Commission was to be implemented through and with the help of existing regional marine conventions. It would encompass a vision, common principles, strategic goals and associated ecological and operational objectives, as well as the benefits and environmental conditions sought through the implementation of the ecosystem approach. The selection of regions should be based on biogeographic and physical oceanographic characteristics and managerial aspects and should also take account of the links between the marine and terrestrial environment. The MAP Secretariat had suggested an initial and provisional subdivision of the Mediterranean into four management regions where regional ecological and operational objectives would apply, namely the Western Mediterranean Sea, the Adriatic Sea, the Ionian Sea and the Aegean-Levantine Sea.

50. Step-by-step application of the ecosystem approach would take at least ten years to complete. It had been suggested that the Adriatic might be a good test case as there was a large amount of marine data to support the exercise, but another region could be chosen instead.

51. Mr Civili indicated that national coordinators were not being asked to adopt document UNEP(DEC)/MED/WG.264/Inf.3 but to give MED POL the green light to embark upon the process, with the support of the European Commission, to be followed later by the entire MAP system.

52. In the ensuing discussion, there was wide agreement on the principle of adopting the ecosystem approach, subject to further discussion. At the same time, it was agreed that the current meeting was concerned not with detail but with the general principles underlying the approach. Participants stressed that the ecosystem approach was merely a tool and did not replace the obligations to be fulfilled under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocol.

53. The question of the division of the Mediterranean region into management sub-regions prompted several questions and comments, notably regarding the definition of

an ecosystem or eco-region and the criteria for the selection of particular areas. It was explained that such a division was clearly necessary and that some of the many possible criteria were outlined in the document, but that the selection proposed was very much a tentative one and was readily adjustable: it was for the meeting, as an initial stage in the exploration of the process, and for subsequent meetings, to comment on those proposals and suggest other possible criteria and sub-divisions, bearing in mind that, for purposes of practical management and representativeness, an eco-region, though a small-scale entity, should, among other criteria, be of a sufficient size and encompass several Contracting Parties, preferably from the northern and southern rims of the Mediterranean. It was agreed that introducing such an approach would be a very long process and could only proceed gradually. The idea of testing it initially in the Adriatic Sea, which appeared to lend itself particularly well to such an exercise, received some support.

54. Mr Mifsud, MAP Coordinator, said that the current meeting of MED POL national coordinators was an important initial stage in a process which would need to be addressed at the MAP level, as other MAP components would necessarily be involved. Further meetings would be required to explore the issue in greater depth.

55. Mr Civili added that MED POL Phase IV included a series of subjects which had not been tackled by MED POL, but which, in some cases, needed collaboration with other institutions. Such subjects included: the physical alteration and destruction of habitats; analysis of the relevant social and economic factors relating to the state of the marine environment; the involvement of the private sector in the design and implementation of pollution control programmes; consideration of the environmental effects of fisheries; the ecological and health-related impact of dumping; the wider use of environmental impact assessments in planning activities; the environmental effects of energy production and maritime transport; assessment of the health risks associated with the quality of bathing and shellfish-growing waters; an intensification of the dissemination of information; an assessment of the differentiated approach to the reduction of pollution, as a basis for its gradual application where appropriate; and programmes to facilitate the transfer of technology between countries in the region.

56. In reviewing the proposed subjects to be addressed by MED POL Phase IV, it was pointed out that the fields covered amounted to a major extension of MED POL's scope of activities. Care should be taken not to overstretch its scarce human and financial resources and not to duplicate work in areas covered by other institutions and MAP components. It was also proposed that the list of subjects be re-arranged into major areas of activity; once the list had been restructured, it would be easier to identify priority areas of action, with particular reference to those most closely related to the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and the LBS and Dumping Protocols.

57. In a series of more detailed comments, it was proposed that the intensification of the involvement of other actors in the work of MED POL should cover not just the private sector, but also all the other stakeholders. The reference to preventive actions should be expanded to include best environmental practices (BEPs), best available techniques (BATs) and the application of substitution. On the subject of the transfer of technology, MED POL should promote and facilitate cooperation among countries by acting as a clearing-house for information. Finally, the proposed areas of action should include desalination activities, in view of the significant work already carried out on the subject by MED POL.

58. In response, Mr Civili indicated that, on some of the subjects proposed, MED POL had already done a certain amount of work and that the intention was to obtain formal endorsement for further work. The observer representing the International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) added that it would be useful if MED POL could carry out work, in collaboration with the competent international and regional bodies, on issues relating to the environmental effects of maritime transport, such as the use of certain anti-foulants.

59. The issue was raised of the extent to which MED POL pollution assessment and monitoring activities should be carried out in relation to river basins, watersheds and ground waters. The opinion was expressed that river estuaries were clearly included in the definition of the Mediterranean Sea area contained in the Convention, and should therefore be covered by MED POL. However, in relation to rivers themselves, it was felt that MED POL's mandate related to the pollution inputs of rivers. MED POL should clearly monitor such inputs and, in the case that a river estuary or mouth was found to be a pollution hot spot, it would be justified in identifying the point or diffuse source of pollution. One speaker added that in such cases countries should be ready to adopt pollution control measures affecting point sources located even far inland.

Modalities of implementation

60. Mr Civili emphasized that the transition from Phase III to Phase IV would be gradual. If the underlying principles for Phase IV were endorsed, work would begin on the operational aspects during the next biennium simultaneously with the implementation of Phase III. Stakeholders should be more closely involved in implementation, particularly of the SAP, and NAPs should not remain in isolation but should be fully integrated into overall national planning for pollution reduction and elimination. The establishment of inter-ministerial committees, which had been a requirement for GEF funding, should be encouraged for all MED POL activities in all countries. He therefore urged that consideration be given to how to establish such a mechanism or adapt existing mechanisms.

61. During the ensuing discussion, the MED POL Secretariat was encouraged to enhance contacts with national institutions so that they could also take the lead in the implementation of some activities and actively to contribute to the preparation of the operational document of Phase IV.

62. Mr Civili said that every effort would be made to reach the highest possible political level in order to obtain support for the NAPs under preparation. As a first step, he hoped that the next meeting of Contracting Parties would provide the NAPs with the support needed for their long-term implementation.

Sustainable implementation of MED POL

63. Mr Civili said that, as in the past, countries would be helped to find ways of obtaining external funds and a limited amount of external resources was available, but the major part of the cost would have to be borne by the countries themselves. The MED POL Secretariat was working with the Global Plan of Action on the establishment of a clearing-house mechanism to identify funds and projects of interest.

64. The MED POL National Coordinators approved the draft MED POL Phase IV as amended (see **Annex III**) and agreed to transmit it to MAP Focal Point and later to Contracting Parties for adoption.

Agenda item 8: Review of activities carried out during the 2004-2005 biennium and proposed activities and recommendations for the 2006-2007 biennium

8.1 Policy and coordination

65. Mr Civili, MED POL Coordinator, introduced the progress report on activities carried out during 2004-2005 and activities proposed for 2006-2007 (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/5). It also contained recommendations that were to be approved and brought before the Contracting Parties for adoption. He highlighted MED POL's cooperation with United Nations bodies and in particular with WHO and IAEA, which had continued to provide very valuable and substantial support for MED POL activities. While reviewing MED POL cooperation with RACs, he highlighted the joint work that had been initiated with ERS/RAC (INFO/RAC) on the preparation of an information system.

66. Mr Fouad Abousamra, MED POL Programme Officer, introduced the summary of the development of the MED POL information system (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/Inf.15), noting that the MED POL database contained information from two sources: national monitoring and LBS and SAP activities. With a view to putting in place an information system aimed at various stakeholders, a road map for implementation had been drawn up at a joint meeting between MED POL and ERS/RAC held in March 2005.

67. Mr Sergio Illuminato, Director, ERS/RAC, gave a brief description of the proposed information system for MED POL data. He said the system had to be GIS-based, have a modular structure, and be accessible via the internet. He outlined the system content and the way in which data and content would be managed.

68. Responding to a number of queries, Mr Abousamra said a system was already in place for the quality control of data, while links to other databases were a purely technical matter upon which ERS/RAC would be giving advice. There was no objection in principle to its being connected to other databases.

69. Mr Civili then turned to the preparation process for the European Marine Strategy (EMS), which had been followed by MED POL, indicating that it was entirely in harmony with MAP and MED POL objectives. Indeed its implementation could result in extra funds being channelled to the region. MED POL had proposed a number of scenarios to the European Commission whereby it might serve as the operational tool for implementing the Strategy in the Mediterranean region. The Commission had noted MED POL's proposals, which would be discussed by the Mediterranean EU countries.

70. Mr José Rizo-Martin, Coordinator for the EC, then presented the EC's proposed "Thematic Strategy for the Protection and Conservation of the European Marine Environment". He said an extensive stakeholder consultation procedure had led to the drafting of the EMS, which was due to be submitted in the form of a Communication to the Council of Ministers for the Environment and the European Parliament before July 2005. Its objectives and key elements were its regional approach – which was new for Europe – the ecosystem approach and cooperation with other actors. The regional approach meant the sharing of strategic goals and objectives, while the ecosystem approach was a policy instrument to ensure that the dual European and regional approach was secured. Implementation plans would be developed at the regional level. A project proposal was being made to MED POL with a view to assisting the region with application of the ecosystem approach covering methodology, sources of information, and policy implications for the Convention.

71. Participants welcomed the work accomplished on the European Marine Strategy and the close association of the Barcelona Convention with that process. Although it would be premature to discuss modalities of implementation of the Strategy before its finalization and adoption, consideration should be given to preparing for consultations in the near future so as to be in a position to react rapidly to the challenges of regional implementation. A question was asked about the benefits that would accrue to non-EU countries from the implementation of the EMS and whether there was any provision for strategies to cover Mediterranean-wide interests. Mr Civili replied that through the ensuing transfer of experience and no doubt the channeling of funds to the region, all Mediterranean countries could but benefit from the process. Furthermore, it could be seen from Annex II to document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/Inf.3, concerning MAP's possible contribution to the regional implementation of the EMS, that the strategies under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (in particular the SAP) were fully consistent with the strategic goals and objectives of the proposed EMS.

72. Mr Mifsud, MAP Coordinator, observed that the joint action undertaken in connection with the EMS was but one example of the cooperation that was developing with the European Commission on many fronts, for the benefit of the whole region. He agreed with a proposal from the floor to secure the endorsement of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership meeting to be held in Barcelona later in the year, adding that every opportunity was being taken by the MAP Secretariat to secure acknowledgement of the MSSD. The Coordinator for the EC confirmed that, in a paper prepared by the EC for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, there was a clear environmental objective for the whole of the Mediterranean basin.

73. Mr Civili drew attention to a new EC initiative to launch a European Maritime Strategy. Contacts had already taken place with MAP, underlined by the recent visit by the EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs to MAP, and MAP had expressed its readiness to cooperate on any marine environmental issue covered by the new Strategy. MAP had been assured that there would be no overlapping between the Maritime and Marine Strategies on environmental matters.

8.2 Implementation of the Dumping Protocol

8.2.1 *Review and approval of Guidelines for the management of inert uncontaminated geological material*

8.2.2 *Review and approval of Guidelines for the placement of material for purposes other than dumping*

74. Mr Civili recalled that one of the findings of the MED POL Phase III evaluation had been that the follow-up by the Secretariat of the implementation of the Dumping Protocol was one of the least satisfactory aspects of MED POL's activities. As a result, for the purpose of reviewing dumping activities in the region and enhancing the implementation of the Dumping Protocol and its guidelines, a regional workshop had been organized in Nicosia in February 2005 in cooperation with the London Convention Secretariat. The workshop had reviewed problems arising in the implementation of the dumping guidelines and country needs for further capacity building. The Secretariat had also prepared an assessment of dumping activities in the Mediterranean for the period 1995-2001, based on information provided by the countries. One of the new issues emerging from the assessment was that the dumping of military ordnance was widespread in the region and it could cause serious environmental problems. As a

result, the workshop had proposed that additional information be collated and the assessment completed.

75. Several of the national coordinators welcomed the results of the Nicosia workshop, which they had found to be very useful. They also welcomed the activities proposed concerning the implementation of the Dumping Protocol. The national coordinator for Spain, speaking in his capacity as the First Vice-Chairperson of the London Convention, expressed satisfaction at the results of the Nicosia workshop and the willingness of the Barcelona Convention to strengthen its collaboration with the London Convention. He urged Mediterranean countries to make every effort to ensure that the Protocol came into force as soon as possible.

76. Mr Civili briefly presented the Guidelines for the management of inert uncontaminated geological material and the Guidelines for the placement of material for purposes other than dumping. The former had been prepared under the terms of the provisions of the Protocol and therefore required formal approval by the Contracting Parties. The latter had been requested by the Contracting Parties and also required final adoption.

77. A number of specific changes were proposed to the texts of the Guidelines which the Coordinators agreed to transmit to the Contracting Parties for adoption.

8.3 Implementation of the LBS Protocol and the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) (joint session with CP/RAC)

National Action Plans (NAPs)

78. Mr Civili recalled that the process of the implementation of the SAP was now at an essential stage, with the preparation of the NAPs due to be completed by the end of the year. The Secretariat was quite pleased with the progress made in nearly all countries.

79. Mr Abousamra recalled that Guidelines on the preparation of NAPs had been drawn up by the Secretariat and had been discussed at a regional workshop and training course held in Izmit, Turkey, in March 2004. The NAPs set out targets at the national level which were mostly in line with the targets determined by the SAP and investment portfolios had been prepared for the priority actions. He paid tribute to the work of the national coordinators in the process of preparing the NAPs and welcomed the involvement of stakeholders in the process. He said that a certain number of completed NAPs had already been received by the Secretariat and he updated the information contained in the progress report concerning the status of preparation of the national diagnostic analyses, national baseline budgets, sectoral plans and NAPs. Finally, he noted that the deadline for the completion of NAPs was the end of June for GEF-eligible countries, while NAPs from all other countries should be received by the Secretariat by the end of July with a view to their submission to the meeting of the Contracting Parties in November 2005.

80. Several national coordinators provided updates on the progress achieved in the completion of the NAPs in their countries. The NAPs for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus and Lebanon should be ready for transmission to the Secretariat in June. In the case of Spain, it should be possible to communicate the NAP before the summer. In the case of Monaco, the NAP was composed of sectoral plans which were being submitted to the Minister for the Environment and would then be forwarded to the Secretariat.

81. Introducing document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/8 on policy elements for the transfer of technology for the implementation of the SAP and NAPs, Mr Abousamra explained that, as revealed during the Secretariat's contacts with countries, two main problems were constantly evoked in relation to the implementation of the SAP and the NAPs, namely the issue of financing and the bridging of the technology gap. The Secretariat had therefore prepared a preliminary document reviewing the situation as a means of launching a discussion and a brainstorming process for the establishment of a mechanism to facilitate the transfer of technology. It was clear that it would be necessary to take into account the manner in which the issue was addressed by other international instruments, such as the Montreal Protocol on the ozone layer, and that close collaboration would be required between MED POL and CP/RAC.

82. Mr Civili added that, as a means of ensuring that all the interested parties were involved in the discussion of the issue, the Secretariat was proposing the creation of a task force for the development of a regional mechanism for the transfer of technology related to pollution reduction in the framework of the SAP and the NAPs. Such a task force would not be an additional MAP structure, but would be an ad hoc group representing the diversity of situations in the region and could take any form that the national coordinators deemed appropriate.

83. The national coordinators agreed that it was of great importance to promote the transfer of technology and that an ad hoc regional task force should be set up to develop the necessary regional arrangements. The guidance contained in the Bali Guiding Principles for partnerships and capacity building should be taken into account, as appropriate.

84. Mr Civili said the Secretariat would carry out an assessment of individual countries' needs in developing and implementing policies and legislation needed for the implementation of NAPs. On the basis of the much greater quantity of data now available it would, with the assistance of GEF, launch an assessment study of the feasibility of the application of the principle of burden sharing, which would be reviewed by regional experts before being submitted to national coordinators in 2007 for guidance. The Secretariat, which had been working with the GPA and other donors to facilitate and promote the process of ensuring sustainable financing, would continue, with the assistance of GEF and the cooperation of GPA, EUWI MED and RACs, to assist countries, including the possible establishment of a region-wide clearing-house mechanism to strengthen long-term sustainable financing.

Municipal sewage

85. Mr Kamizoulis, WHO/MED POL Senior Scientist, introduced the Guidelines for Municipal Water Reuse in the Mediterranean Region (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/9) and the series of documents prepared to facilitate the use of the regional Guidelines on Sewage Treatment and Disposal and Wastewater Use (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/Inf. 5 to Inf.11). He noted that an updated version of the document on wastewater treatment plants in Mediterranean coastal cities with more than 10,000 inhabitants had also been published as MAP Technical Report Series No.157. He said that the proposed activities for 2006-2007 were the preparation of documents on appropriate sewage discharge, including coastal outfalls, which were also to be used for capacity building, and concise and simple guidance to local authorities on the construction, management and operation of sewage treatment plants. Dealing with the percentage of Mediterranean coastal cities and the number of inhabitants still not served by wastewater treatment plants and therefore still not benefiting from appropriate sanitation, he said that in light of the WSSD target date of 2015 for that status to be

reached, it was now necessary to assess the situation in agglomerations with between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants, of which there were a very large number.

86. During the discussion that followed, it was suggested that a pilot study be initiated on the efficient application and use of the sewage-related documents prepared in connection with NAPs, with a consultation meeting of experts to provide the necessary guidance in that regard.

87. In response to one national coordinator who had asked about the linkage with the SAP top-priority targets regarding coastal cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, Mr. Kamizoulis agreed that a distinction could be made in the tables clearly differentiating their situation from that of coastal cities with populations of between 10,000 and 100,000. He also asked the national coordinators to take note of the proposed Guidelines on wastewater reuse (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/Inf.11) and to use them as guidance, together with the supporting documentation mentioned above.

Solid wastes

88. Mr Abousamra, reviewing MED POL's work on solid wastes, said that it principally concerned coastal litter management, for which Guidelines had been prepared and a pilot project launched in Lebanon. The project, which involved a wide range of stakeholders, was proving most successful, and he asked whether any other countries might be candidates for similar pilot projects.

89. The national coordinator for the Syrian Arab Republic proposed her country as a candidate for a pilot project, while the national coordinator from Israel stated that his country would welcome assistance from MED POL or GEF in the implementation of a large-scale coastal litter management project currently being launched. The meeting agreed to a suggestion to put forward a recommendation to MED POL to continue assisting countries willing to undertake pilot projects.

90. The observer representing the IAEA suggested that the issue of coastal litter provided a good opportunity for enhancing public participation and awareness of MED POL's work. Experience showed that a Mediterranean-wide "clean-up" day targeting beaches or port areas would have wide public appeal.

91. Mr Civili noted the favourable response to MED POL's activities in coastal litter management and drew attention to the major role that MED POL, whose work in that field was as a model, was expected to play in the global initiative on coastal litter being launched by the UNEP Regional Seas Programme.

Air pollution

92. Mr Civili said that MED POL had long been informally involved in energy-related issues. It was now clear that the development and implementation of energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives could play a major role in marine pollution reduction and control in the framework of the SAP. MED POL had therefore welcomed a joint MAP/UNEP/GPA initiative in that field, supported by the Government of Italy, which could provide useful indications on future activities to be implemented within the framework of MED POL.

93. Mr Aldo Iacomelli, GPA Consultant, presented a paper prepared in connection with the joint initiative. He outlined the major impacts of air releases from the energy sector and energy production on the environment. Energy-generated pollution was already to some extent covered by MAP, through the SAP and the MSSD, but, in view

of the current and forecasted growth of the energy sector and hence of related pollution, not only by CO², and considering the substantial funding generated by the sector and ongoing international, regional and national initiatives, the issue should be tackled in a more direct, systematic way by MAP, through MED POL, notably within the framework of the SAP and NAPs.

94. Proposed regional activities to strengthen the implementation of the SAP included BAT and BEP technology transfer; a policy framework on energy issues, the deployment of financing sources; the possible establishment of a task force dealing, *inter alia*, with training and capacity-building; the dissemination of information; the identification and development of pilot projects and clean development mechanism (CDM) projects; cooperation with existing energy-related initiatives; adaptation of regional policy frameworks to address barriers to BAT and BEP for SAP implementation; and the use of tools such as the baseline budgets to prepare project proposals. Finally, he presented a draft road map for follow-up, including strategy development and project implementation, suggesting that a recommendation might be prepared on proposed future activities in time for the important meetings later in the year.

95. In the discussion, many speakers thanked Mr Iacomelli for his presentation and welcomed the involvement of MED POL in activities relating to energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy, although it was recalled that such activities were not in practice new for MED POL and that countries were called upon to address both point and diffuse sources of air pollution from industrial sources in the NAPs that were being prepared in the context of the SAP. The guidance given by MED POL could play an important role in helping countries curtail air and other forms of pollution from energy production. The national coordinator for Italy indicated that human resources might be available to assist in relevant work by MED POL. The coordinator for Morocco suggested that MED POL contribute to activities to combat pollution due to mobile sources in view of the fact that such pollution had a not inconsiderable effect on the marine environment. The coordinator for France recalled that the issue was already being dealt with, notably by CP/RAC, and that any duplication of effort should be avoided.

96. It was also noted that, as emphasis was being placed on the ecosystem approach, it was clear that energy, as a major producer of pollution, needed to be taken into account in the work of MED POL.

97. As a result of the discussions, it was proposed to formulate an additional recommendation to streamline the future MED POL involvement in the field. The issue should be brought to the attention of MAP focal points at their next meeting.

Industrial pollution

98. Introducing the discussion, Mr Abousamra noted that the many activities carried out by MED POL in the context of the SAP included the establishment of a database of information provided by countries from their national baseline budgets (BBs) of emissions and releases. In addition, a large volume of technical information and guidance had been developed, especially by CP/RAC. MED POL, in collaboration with CP/RAC, intended to prepare a guide for the implementation of a system of pollution control based on BATs and BEPs, mostly for countries not possessing adequate national systems. Other reports prepared included guidelines for the development of national regulations for releases of pollutants from industrial installations and a document on substitutes to be used as alternatives to POPs.

99. The national coordinators welcomed the initiatives taken by MED POL. It was further noted that the intention behind the related activities was not to impose a particular system, but to help countries identify their needs, so that advisory and capacity-building activities could be adapted to national requirements.

100. Mr Civili, referring to the targets and deadlines established by the SAP, said that, while the SAP was considered the reference point for the regional pollution reduction process, including the preparation and implementation of NAPs, it was necessary to ensure that they remained up-to-date and realistic. In that regard, the Contracting Parties had decided that a single overall updating of the SAP should be avoided and had instead asked MED POL to review on a regular basis the appropriate targets and deadlines, to examine their validity and to proceed with specific recommendations and, if need be, to propose changes in either the targets or deadlines. In the previous biennium, the procedure whereby the initial deadlines for the reduction of the generation of hazardous wastes and of industrial BOD had been changed by the Contracting Parties on the basis of regional plans prepared by the Secretariat had been followed successfully. A review by the Secretariat of the chronologically relevant targets and deadlines, based mainly on the up-to-date information received through the recently prepared national diagnostic analyses (NDAs) and national BBs, had suggested that a number of issues had to be examined at the present time. They included the reduction of inputs of nutrients from industrial installations; the reduction of inputs of mercury; the management and disposal in an environmentally sound manner of stockpiles of PCBs and obsolete chemicals; the disposal of used lubricating oil; and the disposal of used batteries. The Secretariat therefore proposed to follow the same procedure as in the case of hazardous wastes and industrial BOD, namely to prepare regional plans as a means of reviewing the respective targets and deadlines.

101. Several coordinators expressed the view that the regional plans should include actions and activities directed towards the implementation of the NAPs.

102. In a discussion of the importance of the targets and deadlines set out in the SAP, some concern was expressed that confusion might arise out of changes to figures that had been used as the basis for important activities at the national level, including the preparation of NAPs. However, it was also recognized that the targets and deadlines in question had been prepared some years ago and that there was a need for a review mechanism.

103. While a more innovative approach, based on the identification of priority pollutants, the identification of sources of pollutants by sector and the formulation of specific control measures, was supported by one coordinator, the meeting agreed that the process of preparing NAPs should not, at the very final stage, be disrupted by new initiatives related to the identification of new targets different from those of the SAP. Nevertheless, it was also agreed that the two processes could be complementary. As a result, it was agreed to proceed with the preparation of regional plans, but at the same time to start working on the formulation of the elements of a new text - based on the present SAP, the recently prepared baseline budgets and taking account of the comparative analysis carried out on the EU and SAP pollution control measures (UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.262/6) - which would in future represent the legally-binding regional action plan referred to in Article 15 of the LBS Protocol.

Monitoring

104. Mr Civili recalled that monitoring had been one of the main topics of the MED POL Phase III evaluation. An enormous amount of progress had been made, and the

Secretariat was in general terms satisfied with the planning of the programme; however, it was much less satisfied with the level of participation by countries. In this context, the Secretariat had worked on the formulation of a number of initiatives which, in parallel with traditional monitoring activities, could fill the existing gap.

105. Ms Çolpan Beken, MED POL Programme Officer, recalled that eleven countries were currently participating in monitoring, covering mostly hot spot stations, and while useful amounts of data were available from several areas of the Mediterranean, large gaps still existed. As a result, in parallel with the implementation of national monitoring programmes, it was proposed that for the next biennium baseline surveys, at sub-regional levels, might be developed and planned for coastal waters for both pollution status assessment and the identification of hot spot areas; temporal trend monitoring activities, basically at hot spots, would be continued within ongoing MED POL monitoring programmes; trend monitoring activities would be improved to include more sites under the direct influence of land-based pollution; current monitoring parameters should be extended to include organic contaminants, in order better to respond to the policy needs of the LBS Protocol and the SAP and other regional obligations; the monitoring tool for compliance monitoring activities would be revised in depth in order better to understand its use for pollution control at national level; and MED POL should consider how monitoring and assessment activities could be extended to cover the status and quality of the marine and coastal environment, including human impact. Finally, in order to fill the gap in the geographical coverage of the monitoring data and while soliciting once again full participation from all countries, comparable data sets would be requested from non-participating countries.

106. In the next biennium the list of sites sensitive to eutrophication, or where it was already evident, would be updated, new pilot programmes would be formulated and the possibility of preparing an updated eutrophication assessment would be examined. With regard to the mid- and long-term strategies of the eutrophication programme, its biological component would be developed, new monitoring and assessment tools investigated, and cooperation with international working groups and networks improved and better coordinated.

107. The monitoring database and the interlinked web site would continue to store, transmit and present data and would be an integral part of the information system MED POL intended to prepare in cooperation with ERS/RAC (INFO/RAC). On the subject of emerging issues and research, she made specific mention of research on atmospheric inputs of nitrogen and phosphorus, the estimation of diffuse inputs of nutrients from watersheds, and a study on testing the TRIX index.

108. In the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that it would be useful to establish mutual website links with the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea (CIESM), and mention was made of the difficulties faced by some EU Member States in transmitting information due to the existence of different formats – a problem that would presumably be alleviated once the EMS was up and running; nevertheless, data for the period 1996-2003 had recently been transmitted by France to the Secretariat. The representative of Italy informed the meeting of a broad monitoring programme being implemented in his country and of the availability of data through the web site of the Ministry of the Environment (SIDIMAR).

109. During the discussion that followed, the proposed initiatives were all accepted by the coordinators. One national coordinator observed that the Secretariat should be more proactive in obtaining data from countries that were late in responding, while two others felt that the initiatives should include a clear reference to the EMS and to implementation of the ecosystem approach. It was generally recognized that MED

POL should make use of existing operational oceanographic products for the regular assessment of the marine environment and for the design of monitoring strategies. The coordinator for Italy made specific reference in that regard to the MOON network.

110. The observer for the IAEA informed the meeting that the Agency had hosted a marine science meeting in Monaco in October 2004 which had devoted one session to the study of the Mediterranean. He also said the Agency was launching a programme - the Atomic Techniques for Observing Marine Systems (ATOMS-Med) - involving 10 countries in the eastern Mediterranean Basin.

111. Mr George Kamizoulis, WHO/MED POL Senior Scientist, said that it would be more convenient to postpone the discussion on the draft Guidelines on coastal bathing waters criteria until the draft EC Directive for Bathing Waters was finalized in order to facilitate their adoption at the regional level. In any event, the Secretariat would proceed with the preparation of a common methodology for developing "beach profiles", as recommended by the expert consultation meeting held in Athens in December 2003, taking into account the pilot projects being carried out in some countries, and the holding of a workshop to evaluate the methodology and identify possible problems and capacity building needs. Since the last assessment of the quality of shellfish growing waters had been undertaken in 1996, it had been deemed appropriate to conduct a regional survey and to discuss its results in combination with the finalization of the bathing waters quality criteria.

Capacity building

112. Mr Civili outlined MED POL's intensive capacity building programme during the previous biennium, as described in the relevant section of document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/5. He highlighted the training courses conducted within the framework of the GEF project, including courses on quantification of releases from rivers in the Mediterranean and quality assurance activities for the eutrophication programme, a meeting on LBS pollution for the media, and activities related to biological effects studies. National courses had been run and materials produced in the national languages concerned.

113. The observer for IAEA reported on the IAEA Marine Environment Laboratory's capacity-building programme in support of the MED POL programme and Mediterranean countries, focusing on training courses on marine analytical chemistry of pollutants and quality assurance, interlaboratory studies and the provision of expert technical advice, on request, through country missions. He invited nominations for trainees and feedback on the training provided, announcing that a training course on the measurement of organotins was proposed.

114. Mr Kamizoulis provided additional information on MED POL's capacity-building activities as described in the progress report, drawing attention in particular to training courses on municipal wastewater treatment, water reclamation and reuse and environmental inspection systems, with further courses planned for the next biennium on treated wastewater use, as well as intercalibration exercises on microbiological analyses for bathing waters.

115. Appreciation was expressed to MED POL for its assistance in capacity building. A request was made for a training of trainers course in sewage sludge treatment, disposal and use.

Public participation

116. Mr Civili said that the most important and successful public participation activity had been to secure the full involvement and participation of all stakeholders in the process of reviewing the NDAs, BBs, SPs and NAPs at local and national levels. The challenge now was to ensure similar participation in the implementation of the NAPs. One speaker observed that the experience gained in the preparation of the NAPs could usefully be drawn upon for the implementation of the MAP strategy for public awareness and participation.

Reporting

117. Mr Civili explained that the reporting system on the implementation of the SAP, which was currently being tested in four countries, had not yet been incorporated into the overall MAP reporting system in view of the complexity of the SAP and the very different nature of the action it involved. The test exercise should be completed by the end of the year, at which point consideration would be given to how it could be incorporated into the MAP system. MED POL had meanwhile been actively involved in the preparation of the overall MAP reporting system as the component responsible for the LBS, Dumping and Hazardous Wastes Protocols.

118. He further reported on the implementation of the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) pilot project in Egypt, with follow-up projects launched or planned, and on the development of fact sheets for the core sets of Marine Pollution Indicators (MRI) as a tool for reporting on the implementation of the Dumping, Hazardous Wastes and LBS Protocols and the SAP. National Coordinators were invited to decide by what procedure the testing procedures should be conducted. It was agreed that the Secretariat, with expert input, should submit proposals to the Contracting Parties.

119. Mr Kamizoulis reported on environmental inspections and the informal network on compliance and enforcement of legislation, noting in particular the recommendation of the inspectors to formalize the network. He outlined proposed activities in regard to environmental inspections, observing that every effort would be made to accommodate requests from countries for training courses in environmental inspection.

120. During the discussion, the question of the incorporation of the SAP reporting system into the MAP prompted several comments. Some speakers expressed doubts about incorporating the system, one noting that the SAP did not enjoy the same legal status as the Convention and the Protocols, and another stating that the SAP system should preferably be kept as a separate non-mandatory option to assist Contracting Parties in the follow-up of the implementation of NAPs. Several noted the heavy reporting burden on countries in general and the complexity of the SAP reporting system, and stressed the need for harmonization with reporting obligations under other instruments. Mr Civili observed that the incorporation of the SAP reporting system into the MAP had not been a MED POL decision and that there was time yet for any further decisions on incorporation or otherwise, once the testing exercise had been completed. Mr Mifsud added that the outcome of a forthcoming MAP meeting on reporting would no doubt provide further input to the debate.

Other activities related to the LBS Protocol and the SAP

121. Mr Kamizoulis pointed out that the MED POL Phase IV proposals adopted included activities concerning tourism and health risks related to bathing waters. It was MED POL's intention to carry out an assessment of that issue, considering the positive experience of the CAMP Malta.

8.4 Implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol (joint session with CP/RAC)

122. Mr Civili, MED POL Coordinator, indicated that no direct activities had been carried out over the past biennium on the implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol. However, some of MED POL's work had covered areas related to the Protocol. He said that during the new biennium it was intended to update the regional plan prepared in 2002-2003 on the management of hazardous wastes. Moreover, cooperation had recently been strengthened with the Basel Convention and would be further reinforced in 2006-2007, particularly in the context of a pilot project for the establishment of national inventories of lubricating oils. Coordinated jointly with the Basel Convention Regional Office in Bratislava and the national authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the project was expected to be a model for consideration by other Mediterranean countries. Finally, MED POL intended to analyse the reasons for the lack of interest among countries in the region in ratifying the Protocol.

8.5 Cooperation with GEF

123. Mr Ante Baric, GEF Project Manager, reviewed the achievements of the GEF Project in the previous biennium, as described in the relevant section of document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/5. He highlighted in particular the work carried out in the preparation of the NAPs and in connection with pre-investment studies and capacity building, and outlined some of the problems encountered and the ways in which they had been resolved and the lessons learned from project activities. He introduced the future Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem currently being planned by UNEP in cooperation with a number of international bodies including GEF, which was expected to provide strong support for the future implementation of the SAP.

124. The recommendations, prepared in the light of the discussion, are attached as **Annex IV** to the present report.

Agenda item 9: Budgetary considerations in relation to the 2006-2007 biennium activities

125. Mr Mifsud, MAP Coordinator, indicated that the Secretariat would now prepare the budgetary allocations for the programme of MED POL activities discussed during the meeting. It was understood that, as in the case of the other MAP components, there would be no additional requests for resources from the Contracting Parties compared to those in the 2004-2005 budget. He noted, however, that the change from the United States dollar to the euro as the basis for the MAP budget in 2004 had given rise to certain increases in contributions from countries. He added that, as in the past biennium, every effort would be made to seek additional funding from other sources.

Agenda item 10: Other business

126. Mr Civili, MED POL Coordinator, indicated that MED POL was collaborating with the European Environment Agency (EEA) on the preparation of a new report on the state of the environment in the Mediterranean, based on information supplied to MED POL by countries in the context of the NDAs and the BBs. The use of that information meant that the report reviewed the situation for each country, as well as identifying emerging issues at the regional level. He recalled that the last report had been prepared in 1999 and had met with considerable success. It was proposed to

send out the draft report to the countries in the very near future and he hoped that they would agree to make any necessary comments. It was intended to publish the report in time for the meeting of the Contracting Parties in November.

Agenda item 11: Adoption of the report of the meeting

127. The present report was unanimously adopted by the meeting.

Agenda item 12: Closure of the meeting

128. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 1.20 p.m. on Friday, 27 May 2005.

ANNEX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
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ANNEX II

AGENDA

- 1. Opening of the Meeting (joint session with CP/RAC)**
- 2. Organization of work (joint session with CP/RAC)**
- 3. Prospects for enhanced cooperation between MED POL and CP/RAC (joint session with CP/RAC)**
- 4. Election of officers**
- 5. Adoption of the agenda**
- 6. Presentation of MED POL Phase III evaluation**
- 7. Review and discussion of MED POL Phase IV**
- 8. Review of activities carried out during the 2004-2005 biennium and proposed activities and recommendations for the 2006-2007 biennium**
 - 8.1 Policy and coordination
 - 8.2 Implementation of the Dumping Protocol
 - 8.2.1. Review and approval of Guidelines for the management of inert uncontaminated geological material
 - 8.2.2. Review and approval of Guidelines for the placement of material for purposes other than dumping
 - 8.3 Implementation of the LBS Protocol and the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) (joint session with CP/RAC)
 - 8.4 Implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol (joint session with CP/RAC)
 - 8.5 Cooperation with GEF
- 9. Budgetary considerations in relation to the 2006-2007 biennium activities**
- 10. Other business**
- 11. Adoption of the report**
- 12. Closure of the Meeting**

ANNEX III

PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF MED POL - PHASE IV (2006-2013)

**PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF MED POL PHASE IV
(2006-2013)**

CONTENTS

	Page
BACKGROUND	1
TOWARDS MED POL PHASE IV (2006-2013): PROPOSED APPROACHES	3
Visions	3
Overall objectives and goals	4
Basic principles and assumptions	5
Scope (content)	7
Modalities of implementation	9
Sustainable implementation of MED POL	11
APPENDIX	12
Acronyms and Abbreviations	12

BACKGROUND

Aside from the physical degradation of the Mediterranean coastal (terrestrial and marine) regions and the decline of its biological resources, pollution of the Mediterranean Sea originating from a large variety of terrestrial and maritime sources and activities is presently one of the major problems threatening the Mediterranean Basin. Therefore, pollution control is considered among the most important approaches to halt effectively, and eventually reverse, the continuing degradation of the Mediterranean, as a contribution to the process of achieving sustainable development.

While the primary responsibility for pollution control rests with the national authorities of the Mediterranean countries, action taken at the level of individual countries can be fully effective only if taken as part of concerted efforts of all countries sharing the same sea. Namely, there are no physical barriers that would prevent the spread of pollutants once they reach the sea and therefore their impact is not restricted to the vicinity of the point where they enter the sea but is felt in a much wider area. This obvious fact was recognized by the governments of the Mediterranean countries in the mid-1970s by the adoption of the **Mediterranean Action Plan** (1975) and by signing of the **Barcelona Convention** (1976) which became their common framework for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea.

The present **Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution in the Mediterranean Region – MED POL** evolved, as the environmental assessment and pollution control component and integral part of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), and became MAP's first operational programme. It was adopted in 1975 (**MED POL I, 1975-1980**) by the very first intergovernmental meeting of the Mediterranean coastal States, called by UNEP to consider the formulation of a broad and complex programme for the protection of the Mediterranean region.

The objectives of the first phase of MED POL were to formulate and carry out a coordinated pollution monitoring and research programme taking into account the goals of the Mediterranean Action Plan and the capabilities of the Mediterranean research centres to participate in it. MED POL Phase I concentrated its efforts on capacity building and on collection and analysis of sources, levels, pathways, trends and effects of pollutants relevant to the Mediterranean Sea.

In 1981, the second phase of MED POL (**MED POL II, 1981-1995**) was initially approved for a ten year period which was later extended until 1995. Initially the programme continued focusing on pollution-related monitoring and research but gradually broadened its scope in order to follow the trends indicated by the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development (Agenda 21) adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), and to bring it closer to the other components of MAP, in particular to the implementation of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources (LBS Protocol) and the Coastal Areas Management Programme (CAMP) of MAP.

The development of the present phase of MED POL (**MED POL III, 1996-2005**) was initiated in 1993 and formally approved in 1996. While retaining the assessment of pollution and provision of support to national institutions (i.e., capacity building) as its important functions, pollution control was made the new focus of MED POL III. As in the previous phases of MED POL, the assessment was expected to be based on data reported by national institutions participating in the programme. The assessment programme was envisaged to serve as the basis for the pollution control programme consisting of two major elements: (i) development of pollution control measures and

targets; and (ii) pollution monitoring as an indicator for the effective implementation of these measures (compliance monitoring).

With the adoption of the SAP in 1997 and the launching of its operational phase in 2000, the tasks -and, accordingly, the objectives- of MED POL increased in coverage from the original ones to meet the new needs. Although the MED POL Programme was formally entrusted with the responsibility to follow up the implementation of the SAP, no formal amendments were made to the original objectives of MED POL Phase III.

The relevant provisions of the Barcelona Convention (Art. 5, 8 and 11) and of the protocols associated with the Convention, as well as the MED POL-related decisions of the Contracting Parties to the Convention provide the legal and the basic operational framework for the activities of MED POL.

MED POL has actively participated in and contributed to the development of the European Union's European Marine Strategy. MED POL Phase IV could represent the Mediterranean operational link with the Strategy considering the similarity of objectives and principles.

TOWARDS MED POL PHASE IV (2006-2013): PROPOSED APPROACHES

MED POL Phase III is ending in 2005. In view of the recognized role of the Programme and its important contribution to the over all objectives of MAP, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention decided that the MED POL Programme should continue throughout a new phase (2006-2013) but that it should go through a revision as necessary on the basis of the specific evaluation carried out, the objectives and requirements of the amended Convention and Protocols, the need to substantially contribute to the process of achieving sustainable development, and keeping into account and harmonizing the new Phase IV with ongoing regional and international programmes and initiatives.

There are several steps that should be followed in preparing MED POL IV covering a well structured iterative process needed to develop the next phase of the Programme and ensure its formal adoption by the Parties to the Barcelona Convention.¹ The stages in this process include:

- the critical analysis of the results of the evaluation of MED POL III in order to benefit from evaluation's findings and recommendations;
- and an agreement on five cluster of issues:
 - (i) the overall objectives and goals of MED POL IV;
 - (ii) the basic principles and assumptions on which MED POL IV should be based;
 - (iii) the scope (content) of MED POL IV;
 - (iv) the modalities of implementation; and
 - (v) the operational details of implementation, including specific goals and targets.

A two-step approval of the next phase by the Parties to the Convention appears to be the most appropriate. The first step includes the approval/adoption of the MED POL IV overall objectives and goals, basic principles, scope (content) and implementation modalities. As the second step, the operational details of implementation modalities (i.e., the "operational document") would then be elaborated on the basis of the agreement on these issues, and submitted for approval to the Parties.

Elements that should be used in considering the first four clusters of issues listed above are elaborated in the ensuing sections of the present chapter, with proposals related to the last (fifth) cluster.

Visions

A successful MED POL Programme cannot be seen independently from the context to which it belongs. MED POL is and will remain an integral part of MAP and the Barcelona legal system, and it operates in a regional and a wider international context

¹ The short-term road map of the Secretariat includes: (i) presentation of the first draft of the programme description for MED POL IV to selected experts for comments and suggestions (beginning of 2005); (ii) presentation of the amended draft to the Meeting of the MED POL National Coordinators (May 2005); (iii) presentation of the draft principles, objectives, scope and modalities of implementation of the Programme, as agreed by the National Coordinators, to the MAP Focal Points (September 2005) and to Contracting Parties for adoption (November 2005).

with precise roles and expectations. It is therefore obvious that in viewing the MED POL specific long-term reference points, i.e. its visions, the reader should also consider that some of them will be of general nature and involving other actors and stakeholders.

In addition to the overall commonly shared vision for a clean, healthy, biologically diverse and productive Mediterranean marine and coastal environment that both we and our future generations can enjoy, the MED POL Programme's visions include a strong commitment by the Contracting Parties towards the goals of the Convention and the Protocols, and the adoption and the implementation a clear strategy for sustainable development covering a gradual but steady reduction of urban and industrial pollution made through the application of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities.

Overall objectives and goals

The overall objectives and goals of MED POL III may, at this stage, be considered the basic starting point for MED POL IV too, as they correspond to the objectives of the Barcelona Convention and its relevant Protocols and are in line with the principles and objectives of sustainable development. The evaluation carried out confirmed this statement. As a result of the above and considering the necessary evolution of the Programme, the overall objectives of MED POL Phase IV are:

- ◆ to facilitate the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols by the Contracting Parties in matters of its competence, in particular in the reduction and elimination of pollution from land-based sources and activities and dumping activities;
- ◆ to assess all point and diffuse sources and load of pollution reaching the Mediterranean, and the magnitude of the problems caused by the effects of contaminants on living and non-living resources, including human health, as well as on amenities and uses of the marine and coastal regions;
- ◆ to assess status and trends in the quality of the marine and coastal environment as an early warning system for potential environmental problems caused by pollution and other anthropogenic pressures;
- ◆ to assist countries, including capacity building, for the implementation of national action plans, including programmes and measures, for the gradual elimination of pollution, for the mitigation of impacts caused by pollution and for the restoration of systems already damaged by pollution, as a contribution to the process of achieving sustainable development;
- ◆ to monitor the implementation of the action plans, programmes and measures for the control of pollution and assess their effectiveness;
- ◆ to contribute, in cooperation with other MAP components, to the application of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities within MAP, with MED POL as the monitoring and assessment component.

Basic principles and assumptions

The following are the basic principles and assumptions on which the MED POL could rest:

- a) The entry into force of the LBS and Dumping Protocols and the revitalization of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol as the basic assumptions which would provide all MED POL-related activities with the necessary legal and political strength;

MED POL to remain one of the key programme elements of MAP, implemented under the direct authority of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, within the legal and policy framework defined by the Convention, the relevant Protocols to the Convention and decisions of the Parties;

MED POL to remain the MAP component responsible for:

- i. Following up and assisting the countries' implementation of the LBS, Dumping and Hazardous Wastes Protocols;
 - ii. Following up and assisting the countries' implementation of the SAP and national action plans;
 - iii. Assessing the status and trends of pollution of the Mediterranean eco-regions.
- b) The ecosystem approach to the management of human activities to be adopted by MAP;
- c) The full and active involvement of all advisory and decision making bodies of MAP as one of the basic requirements for the successful completion of the process leading to the adoption of MED POL IV;
- d) The next phase of MED POL to be built and heavily lean on the results, achievements and experience of the previous phases (especially Phase III). Therefore, the critical analysis of the results, achievements, shortcomings and experience of the Programme carried out by the MED POL Phase III Evaluation, particularly those related directly to the practical aspects of pollution control, should be taken into account in designing the operational details of a realistic and well focused next phase;²
- e) In the transitional phase, i.e. until the operational details (the "operational document") for the implementation of MED POL IV are formulated and approved, the basic lines of action approved for MED POL III to be continued but with gradual adaptations, modifications and expansions, as may be required by the scope approved for MED POL IV in harmony with the provisions of the amended Convention and Protocols;
- f) Monitoring to be better integrated into the scope of the SAP and of any other pollution control measure adopted by the Contracting Parties in application of the LBS Protocol and to be used as a tool (i) to contribute to the continuous assessment of the status and trends of the quality of the marine and coastal environment and the effects of pollution and (ii) to assess the effectiveness of the pollution reduction measures implemented by the countries. The scope (content) of the monitoring activities of MED POL to be readapted as appropriate to respond to the above needs;

² An evaluation of MED POL III has been carried out by independent evaluators in 2004-2005 in parallel with the design of MED POL IV.

- g) The assessment and, if appropriate, the gradual application of common and differentiated responsibilities in the process of reducing pollution, as recommended by the evaluation carried out, to facilitate the long-term implementation of the SAP.
- h) Monitoring, assessment and pollution control activities, as well as data quality assurance, data collection and handling, reporting and data management policies and procedures to be functionally harmonized with those adopted by regional, international and global bodies and organizations, such as the European Union and other UN Agencies and programmes;³
- i) MED POL assessment and reporting schedules to be synchronised, and the assessment and reporting procedures harmonised, with the schedules and procedures which will be adopted for the evolving global assessment of the state of the marine environment;
- j) Scientific activities related to policy development and implementation that may receive limited support by MED POL IV to be directed to the requirements of operational oceanography and monitoring, assessment and pollution control activities and the formulation of pollution control measures, application of the ecosystem approach or to identified emerging environmental issues that may need clarifications; MED POL could take advantage of the products and tools of the currently existing operational oceanography monitoring and forecasting network in the Mediterranean Sea to support regular assessments of the marine environment, including the identification of scenarios for the fate and dispersal of contaminants at sea;⁴
- k) Public participation and communication to be considered as corner stones for the integration of regional and national civil society and for the achievement of the MED POL objectives; in order to ensure the broadest possible support and the adequate implementation of MED POL IV, the appropriate non-governmental structures (e.g., the scientific communities, private sector, local authorities, NGOs and other relevant structures of the civil society)⁵ should be

³ As repeatedly recommended by Contracting Parties, all MAP programmes and activities should be as appropriate harmonized with existing regional and international programmes and initiatives so as to facilitate implementation and reporting activities.

⁴ MAP recognizes that it should be based on the best possible available science. The scientific foundations of MAP should be ensured by wise use of knowledge and experience generated by the scientific communities and by ensuring that the independent views and impartial advice of these communities is regularly brought to the attention of relevant decision-making structures of MAP.

⁵ The Action Plan adopted in 1995 for the second phase of MAP recognizes that *without public support, the application of nature protection and conservation measures cannot achieve results commensurate with the challenges and threats looming over the natural heritage of the Mediterranean*, and commits the Contracting Parties to *involve local, provincial and regional authorities, as appropriate, in the formulation and implementation of MAP Phase II programme activities, and to associate in the MAP Phase II activities non-governmental organizations involved in the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development, as well as organizations representing economic interests*. The Convention, as amended in 1995, commits the Parties to *ensure that the opportunity is given to the public to participate in decision-making process relevant to the field of application of the Convention and the Protocols, as appropriate*. The SAP also recognizes that *information and public participation are essential*

involved at the onset of phase IV, i.e already during in the dialogue leading to the formulation of the operational details of MED POL IV

- I) MED POL, in cooperation with other competent MAP components, to act within MAP as catalyst for the harmonization and integration of the EC Marine Strategy within MAP and for the bridging between the Mediterranean non EU member states and the EC Marine Strategy.

Scope (content)

MED POL IV will retain most of the basic elements of MED POL III, and as such will continue to deal with marine and coastal pollution assessment and control by using the same tools (e.g. monitoring, capacity building, assessments, elaboration of control measures, etc.) that were successfully implemented in the past. However, considering the results of the evaluation of MED POL Phase III, based on the analysis of MAP's legislative framework and the contemporary initiatives and trends in environmental protection, and the recent policy developments at the region and the international levels, it appears that a number of important issues are presently not, or not adequately, covered by the scope of MED POL III and need to be included in its Phase IV. In particular:

Control and assessment

- a) Control of sources of pollution in river basins, watersheds and ground waters, including the inputs into the marine environment (as advocated by WSSD and the European Union, and as envisaged by the relevant articles of the LBS Protocol⁶). Initially it may be reasonable to cover only the estuaries, particularly if they are declared also as hot spots, and move gradually upstream only when the available data show the existence of pollution hot spots upstream;
- b) Plans and programmes to counter physical alteration and destruction of habitats in cooperation with the competent regional bodies (as advocated by Agenda 21,

components of a sustainable development and environmental policy and identifies, as one of SAP's proposed targets, to mobilize and ensure the participation and involvement of the major actors concerned (local and provincial communities, economic and social groups, consumers, etc.). Last but not least, the Catania Declaration specifies that all concerned partners should be actively involved in the development and implementation of sustainable development policies and activities, in particular the business sector and NGOs, through a participatory approach and operational partnership for joint programmes/projects (operational paragraph 6 of the Declaration adopted at the meeting of Contracting Parties in Catania, 11-14 November 2003). Aside from reasons given above, the UN-ECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making (Aarhus Convention) also requires a full involvement of all stakeholders and general public in processes leading to decision-making.

⁶ Article 3, paragraph (b) of the Protocol: *The area to which Protocol applies shall be the hydrological basin of the Mediterranean Sea.* Article 4, paragraph 1(a) of the Protocol: *The Protocol shall apply to discharges from LBS point and diffuse sources and activities within the territories of the Contracting Parties that may affect directly or indirectly the Mediterranean Sea area. These discharges shall include those which reach the Mediterranean Area, as defined in Article 3(a), (c) and (d) of this Protocol, through coastal disposal, rivers, outfalls, canals, or other watercourses, including ground water flow, or through run-off and disposal under the seabed with access from land.* Article 8 of the Protocol specifies that *the Parties shall carry out at the earliest possible date monitoring activities, presumably covering the Protocol area, i.e. the hydrological basin of the Mediterranean.*

SAP, GPA/LBA, PEBLDS, and identified by numerous assessments such as GESAMP and GEO);

- c) Inclusion of the analysis of relevant social and economic factors such as the analysis of the social and economic roots of environmental degradation into the assessment of the state of the marine environment (as recommended by WSSD, carried out by GIWA, and envisaged by GMA);
- d) Tightened control over ecological and health-related impact of dumping;
- e) A wider use of preventive and precautionary actions in pollution control, especially by preparation of environmental impact assessments, BAT and BEP for planned activities that may be a major source of marine pollution and substitution (as envisaged by the LBS and Dumping Protocols, and the SAP);

Cooperation, information, public participation

- f) Meaningful involvement of, and collaboration, with the private sector and other stakeholders in designing and implementation of pollution control programmes and in the evaluation of their results (recommended by WSSD);
- g) Intensified dissemination of information on the problems associated with the Mediterranean; mobilisation of public support to the goals of MAP/MED POL; preparation and wide distribution of regular "state of the Mediterranean" reports addressed to general public, by making effective use of information technology (IT);
- h) Intensified and well structured programmes that may facilitate cooperation for the transfer of technology between countries in order to reduce the existing technological gaps in the pollution reduction processes.

Ecosystem approach

- i) Treatment of the "marine environment" in a holistic way, i.e. as an integral whole consisting of the sea area and the adjacent terrestrial coastal area (as advocated by Agenda 21 and the WSSD, and as implied by the revised title of the Barcelona Convention and envisaged by the amended Article 1 of the Convention⁷);
- j) Application of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities, including pollution control (as advocated by a large segment of scientific community, proposed by SAP⁸ and the European Union, advocated by the MED POL Phase III evaluation and adopted by a number of regional pollution control programmes⁹). For its application, the Mediterranean is proposed to be initially divided into four management regions (Western Mediterranean, Central Mediterranean (Ionian Sea), Adriatic Sea, Aegean-Levantine Sea);

⁷ The title of the Convention: *Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean*. Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Convention: *The application of the Convention may be extended to coastal areas as defined by each Contracting Party*.

⁸ One of the targets proposed in the SAP is *to safeguard the ecosystem function, maintain the integrity and biological diversity of species and habitats*.

⁹ For instance: HELCOM and OSPAR.

- k) Intensified collaboration with natural and social scientists, and better use of scientific understanding of marine and coastal ecosystems as a functional basis for sound decision-making;
- l) Monitoring and assessment of the environmental effects and ecological implications of fisheries management, including aquaculture, on ecosystems (as advocated by the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities and practised by other Europe-based regional seas programmes) as well as of sea water desalination activities;
- m) Monitoring and assessment of environmental effects associated with energy production and maritime transport, in cooperation with other competent international and regional bodies;
- n) Assessment of the health risk associated with the quality of bathing and shellfish-growing waters, tourist establishment and facilities.

Some of the above issues may appear as beyond the scope of a programme initially designed for marine pollution control. However, while sectoral and narrowly defined control of marine pollution may have been seen in 1975 as an effective remedy to the woes of the Mediterranean basin, the changes adopted since 1995 in MAP's legislative framework are a clear indication that the Parties to the Convention have shifted the focus of their attention from the *protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution* to a broader and more ambitious goal: to the *protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean*.¹⁰ Agenda 21, the contemporary global and regional initiatives and trends in the approach to environmental protection, and the change in the philosophy underpinning the current legislative framework of MAP, justify certain adjustments in the present scope of MED POL.

Modalities of implementation

In order to ensure a smooth transition to the next phase of MED POL, and assuming that the activities of MED POL IV will be organically linked to those of the present phase of MED POL, it would be important that the eventual changes in the current modalities of implementation be introduced only gradually, taking into account the results of the evaluation of MED POL III¹¹, the evolution of MAP and the objectives, goals and scope approved for MED POL IV.

The basic functions and responsibilities of the National MED POL Coordinators, the National MED POL Collaborating Institutions and the Secretariat as agreed for the implementation of MED POL III¹² should be retained, albeit some of their functions and responsibilities may need to be slightly redefined. In addition, considering in particular the multidisciplinary aspects of the pollution reduction process, the need to involve

¹⁰ Comparison of the original (1976) title of the Barcelona Convention with the revised text of the Convention (1995).

¹¹ The evaluation of MED POL III has been carried out by independent evaluators during 2004-2005.

¹² MED POL Phase III: Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution in the Mediterranean Region. Chapter 4. MAP Technical Reports Series No.120. UNEP, Athens, 1999.

other national stakeholders (e.g. Ministries of finance, of public works, etc.) in addition to the Ministries of Environment seems to become necessary if MED POL wants to achieve concrete results. To that end, the establishment of a mechanism in each country to ensure appropriate coordination and integration in their national programmes of the MED POL activities, and in particular those of the SAP, is recommended.

It should be kept in mind that each Mediterranean country has a national pollution control programme and the implementation of MED POL (including SAP) at national level can be successful only if it is implemented in the framework and as part of this wider national programme carried out through national mechanisms which differ considerably from country to country. Therefore, while retaining the central technical responsibility of the National MED POL Coordinators for the implementation of MED POL at national level, the full integration of national MED POL activities (including SAP) in the national pollution control programmes should be added to their responsibilities. As a minimum requirement, the MED POL National Coordinator should include in his/her functions the follow up of the implementation of the SAP as well.

Under the guidance and supervision of the relevant structures established under the MAP and the Barcelona Convention, the Secretariat should continue playing a central coordinating role for MED POL, ensuring the harmonisation of national activities at the Mediterranean level, and effectively and meaningfully monitoring their implementation. In the preparation of "guidance documents" for the implementation of MED POL (e.g., various technical and policy documents, guidelines), all efforts should be made to take into account the work already carried out by other regional and international bodies and special but critical attention should be paid to their harmonization with other relevant documents developed at the regional and international levels by the European Commission and Union and other international agreements.

Some of the Secretariat's functions and responsibilities could be assumed by or shared with the National Coordinators or Collaborating Institutions (e.g., organisation of training and capacity building activities, or preparation of technical meetings, documents and guidelines). This would lighten the burden of workload on the Secretariat staff and could become a source of considerable in-kind contribution to the budget of MED POL.¹³ It would also seem advantageous to intensify a more meaningful involvement of the Collaborating Institutions in shaping and management of MED POL.

In considering the implementation modalities for MED POL IV, it would seem appropriate to examine also the ways and means to further strengthen cooperation with the relevant international and intergovernmental organisations, global conventions and programmes and, in particular, the support that may be obtained from national structures hitherto not formally associated with MED POL. Harmonisation of the reporting requirements (contents, schedules, procedures) to the maximum possible extent would be highly beneficial as it would allow the countries to prepare a single report that could be used both in the context of MED POL and the relevant global conventions to which the countries are parties. In addition, there may be room for intensified cooperation with some sectors of national economy, local authorities and non-governmental organisations, using innovative approaches. The tourism-based economic sector would seem a particularly appropriate partner, although the establishment of a closer partnership with other sectors would be also worth examining.

¹³ This approach is widely and successfully practiced by a large number of programmes (e.g., OSPAR, HELCOM).

Public awareness and opinion is among powerful forces determining the success of any programme. Therefore, it would be advisable for MED POL to maintain a closer link with NGOs and media representatives and to provide them regularly with information that they could use in promoting the goals of MED POL.

Sustainable implementation of MED POL

As a follow up to the evaluation of MED POL Phase III, and in order to ensure effectiveness to the Programme, in setting the specific objectives, goals and targets for MED POL IV, their feasibility should be carefully examined through the widest possible consultation with key stakeholders, taking into account the social and economic implications of the planned actions, including their cost-benefit ratio.

The financial constraints related to capital investments and their sustainable maintenance are objectively among the major obstacles for the implementation of MED POL (in particular SAP) and should be taken into account when the specific goals and targets will be set as part of operational details for MED POL IV (i.e., in the operational document of MED POL IV).

The Parties to the Convention should face the fact that the costs associated with the implementation of MED POL (including SAP) should be primarily met from their own resources. A variety of instruments are at the disposal of the Parties for the mobilisation of these resources. The instruments differ from country to country and the experience with their application is currently being examined in the framework of SAP. In addition to the resources mobilised at national level, supplementary support for the implementation of MED POL is available, although modest, through the Mediterranean Trust Fund of MAP and, to some eligible countries, through bilaterally or multilaterally funded projects and donations. The most important sources of supplementary funding include the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the World Bank, the programmes of the European Union (the Euro Mediterranean Partnership in particular), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a number of national cooperation funds such as the Fond français pour l'environnement mondial (FFEM). There are specific country eligibility clauses associated with some of these funding sources. In this context, the MED POL Secretariat will play an important catalytic role in the mobilization of such funds by bridging countries and projects with donors and other stakeholders.

The protection of the Mediterranean is today of common interest not only to its coastal states but also to citizens of other countries which in their millions enjoy visiting and benefiting from the Mediterranean environment. This wider interest in maintaining a healthy and clean Mediterranean environment may finally be used to consider the establishment of a "Mediterranean Fund" along the lines of *The Global Fund* and use its resources to make substantial and significant contribution to the present woes of the Mediterranean basin.

APPENDIX

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Aarhus Convention Agenda 21	UN-ECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making Programme of Action for Sustainable Development (adopted at UNCED)
BAP	best available practice
Barcelona Convention	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean
BAT	best available technique / technology
BEP	best environmental practice
CAMP	Coastal Areas Management Programme (of MAP)
CBA	Cost-benefit analysis
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy (of the European Union)
Dumping Protocol	Protocol for the Prevention and Elimination of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft or Incineration at Sea
EQC	Environmental Quality Criteria
EQO	Environmental Quality Objectives
EQS	Environmental Quality Standards
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GESAMP	Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environment Protection (IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/WMO/WHO/IAEA/UN/UNEP)
GIPME	Global Investigation of Marine Pollution (IOC)
GIWA	Global International Water Assessment
GMA	Global Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment / Global Marine Assessment
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System (IOC/WMO/UNEP)
GPA/LBA	Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities
Hazardous Wastes Protocol	Protocol on the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
HELCOM	Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAM	integrated coastal area management (synonymous with ICZM integrated coastal zone management)
IGBP	International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INFOTERRA	International Environment Information System (UNEP)
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	World Conservation Union (formerly: International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources)
LBS Protocol	Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan

MED POL	Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution in the Mediterranean Region
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	non-governmental organization
OSPAR	Oslo and Paris Commission
PAP/RAC	Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (of UNEP/MAP)
PEBLDS	Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (of the Council of Europe)
POPs	persistent organic pollutants
REMPEC	Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea
Rio Declaration	Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (adopted at UNCED)
SAP	Strategic Action Programme to Address Pollution from Land-Based Activities (in the Mediterranean Sea)
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNCHE	United Nations Conference on Human Environment (Stockholm, 5-16 June 1972)
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WFD	Water Framework Directive (of the European Commission)
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
World Bank	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 26 August - 4 September 2002)
WTO	World Tourism Organisation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature (formerly: World Wildlife Fund)

ANNEX IV
RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy and coordination

To the Contracting Parties

- To approve the visions, principles, objectives, content and modalities of implementation of the MED POL Phase IV Programme (2006-2013) as contained in **Annex III** to document UNEP(DEC)/MED WG.264/10 and to ask the Secretariat to prepare, in cooperation with the Contracting Parties, the operational details of the Programme during 2006-2007, taking into account the results of the evaluation of MED POL Phase III and relevant developments in related international and regional programmes and initiatives;
- To welcome the initiative of the European Commission to support a project to be implemented by MED POL on testing and application of the ecosystem approach to management of human activities in the Mediterranean region;
- To welcome the initiative of the European Union to prepare a Marine Strategy for its regional seas, deeming it to be in line and in harmony with the principles, objectives and targets of MAP, the MED POL Programme in general and of the SAP in particular, and to recommend that the European Union consider MED POL to be the bridging element between the European Marine Strategy and the strategies adopted by the Barcelona Convention with a view to achieving the common objective of reducing and gradually eliminating pollution in all Mediterranean countries.

To the Secretariat

- To work in cooperation with ERS/RAC (INFO/RAC) and in consultation with the MED POL National Coordinators on the preparation of an information system covering data on pollution sources, levels and effects as a platform for a future wider system for all MAP data and information.

National Action Plans

To the Contracting Parties

- To endorse, support and mobilize the necessary resources for, the implementation of the National Action Plans (NAPs) to address pollution from land-based activities and to ensure their integration into existing national strategies and pollution control plans;
- To take note of the paper prepared by the Secretariat on transfer of technology and knowledge within the framework of the SAP and the NAPs and to view it as a guide for future initiatives in the region;
- To approve and facilitate the creation by the Secretariat of a regional task force for the development of regional arrangements to facilitate cooperation for the transfer of technology related to pollution reduction within the framework of the SAP and the NAPs; the CP/RAC will assist the Secretariat in this task.

To the Secretariat

- To catalyze and facilitate the mobilization of external funds to assist the Mediterranean countries in the implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs).

Municipal sewage

To the Contracting Parties

- To take note of the proposed Guidelines for municipal water re-use in the Mediterranean region, which had been prepared following a thorough analysis of Mediterranean conditions and would assist countries in achieving the SAP and NAPs targets related to the appropriate management of municipal sewage.

Industrial pollution

To the Contracting Parties

- To provide the Secretariat with all available data and information related to inputs of nutrients and mercury from industrial installations and on national management systems for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), obsolete chemicals, lubricating oil, used batteries and hazardous substances so as to allow the preparation of up-to-date regional plans for pollution reduction within the framework of the SAP.

To the Secretariat

- To prepare regional plans for the reduction of nutrients and mercury from industrial installations, for the management and disposal of stockpiles of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) (avoiding duplication with the work undertaken by the Stockholm Convention) and obsolete chemicals, used lubricating oils, used batteries and hazardous substances. The plans should be prepared on the basis of the recent data and information gathered through the preparation of baseline budgets (BBs), national diagnostic analyses (NDAs), sectoral plans (SPs) and National Action Plans (NAPs), and should contain realistic targets and deadlines based on those indicated in the Strategic Action Programme (SAP), taking into account relevant international developments;
- To start working on the formulation of elements which would in future represent the legally-binding measures and timetables referred to in Article 15 of the new LBS Protocol, on the basis of the present SAP and taking into account any relevant international developments.

Air pollution

To the Secretariat

- To include in the MED POL work programme for 2006-2007 energy-related activities and to start working, according to the availability of funds, on the following issues: impact of the energy sector on the Mediterranean marine environment; life cycle assessment of fossil fuels in the Mediterranean basin; and potentiality and mechanism for the development of energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy (RE) in the Mediterranean basin.

Monitoring

To the Contracting Parties

- To recognize that the formulation and the implementation of marine pollution monitoring programmes is an obligation on all Parties pursuant to Articles 7 and 8 of the LBS Protocol and an indispensable tool for the proper implementation of the SAP, in particular for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the pollution reduction measures taken.

Dumping Protocol

To the Contracting Parties

- To adopt the Guidelines proposed by the Secretariat on dumping of inert uncontaminated geological materials, which had been prepared in close cooperation with national authorities and experts;
- To adopt the Guidelines proposed by the Secretariat on placement at sea of matters for purposes other than dumping, which had been prepared in close cooperation with national authorities and experts;
- To facilitate the collection by the Secretariat of data and information for the preparation of a review/assessment of historical dumping sites of ordnance in the Mediterranean.

To the Secretariat

- To assess countries' needs (covering legal, technical and institutional aspects), and to prepare and implement a programme of assistance for the proper application of the Dumping Protocol and its guidelines and to provide assistance as appropriate;
- To strengthen cooperation with the London Convention Secretariat, to continue exchange of data and information and ensure the harmonization of the reporting system.