





***I know but one single means of increasing the prosperity of a people that is infallible in practice and that I believe one can count on in all countries as in all spots. This means is naught else but to increase the ease of communication between men. (Alexis de Tocqueville, 1831)***

## **Note about the nature of this Report**

This report describes the essential elements that form the basis of the information and communication strategy for the MSSD, providing the reader with an overall and clear picture of the findings, conclusions and recommendations stemming from a broad consultation process carried out by INFO/RAC over the last two years.

This document is divided into four sections. The first offers ideas and considerations that form the basis for the second section, which is of a technical-organizational nature. The third section is devoted to the main IC Pilot Projects being carried out and which should form the basis of the Work Plan for the 2008-2012. The fourth section includes the recommendations.

This report will be submitted for consideration to the MCSD Partners during the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD, to be held in Istanbul on 30-31 May 2007. Comments and suggestions provided by the Commission will serve as an important input for the finalization of the IC Strategy of the MSSD, which will then be submitted for approval to the INFO/RAC National Focal Points, the MAP National Focal Points and ultimately to the Contracting Parties during the COP 15 in Spain.

INFO/RAC wishes to express its most sincere appreciation to all those who contributed so meaningfully to the elaboration to this document. The large majority of the Components of the Barcelona Convention, as well as international organizations, the Convention on Biodiversity, GEF, ITU, WHO, MEDWET-RAMSAR, UNDP, NGOs, Festivals, schools, local institutions, the business sector and academics participated enthusiastically in the preparation and execution of the IC Pilot Projects and were always available to co-operate with the Centre.

The implementation of the IC Pilot Projects in different Mediterranean countries was an enlightening experience and the Centre Team was always received with warm hospitality. In particular, MAP NFPs and the RACs were extremely cooperative and demonstrated particular commitment to ensuring the effective development of the activities. Finally, the Centre expresses its gratitude to the Coordinator of UNEP/MAP and all our colleagues from the Secretariat who provided important contributions to this exercise.

**INFO/RAC**

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## INTRODUCTION

This document offers a summary of conclusions and recommendations from activities carried out from January - December 2006 in preparation of an *Information and Communication Strategy (IC) for the MSSD*. Activities are described in the INFO/RAC Project Document approved by the UNEP/MAP Secretariat on 28 February 2006 with recommendations adopted by the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Contracting Parties (Slovenia, 8-11 November 2005).

The preparation of the IC Strategy envisaged:

- The drafting of a [Vision](#) for the IC Strategy, presented and approved by the 11<sup>th</sup> MCSD Meeting (24-26 May 2006, Nicosia - Cyprus);
- The launching of [IC pilot initiatives](#), approved by the 11<sup>th</sup> MCSD Meeting to validate the IC solutions proposed within the *Vision* through a consultation process engaging the different sectors of civil society;
- The [presentation](#) of the first draft of the IC Strategy to the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee of the MCSD, previously submitted to the Secretariat and other MAP Components.

This document should be examined alongside the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)*, the *Vision for an IC Strategy*, and documents concerning the pilot activities carried out during the 2006-2007 biennium, published on the MSSD website [www.medstrategy.org](http://www.medstrategy.org).

Although much care was taken to analyse information gathered during the consultation process, a strategy for IC for the MSSD cannot be enshrined in a single, early document. Comments and external inputs will help improve the accuracy of this paper, thereby pushing forward the development of a responsive and relevant IC Strategy for the MSSD.

Once approved by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the document will form the basis for a *Biannual Plan of IC Actions for the MSSD*, containing priorities and medium-term objectives, with timetables, specific tools and required resources, as well as indicators for the monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of the actions undertaken.

The drafting of an initial work plan has proven to be essential. The latter (attached) comprises the priority areas and actions identified during the 2006-2007 biennium.

This also considers convergence with other regional initiatives such as Horizon 2020 of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, SMAP, GEF's Mediterranean Strategic Partnership for the Large Marine Ecosystem, and the Adriatic Sea Initiative.

The aim of course, is to develop a shared IC Strategy for the benefit of different Mediterranean initiatives characterised by common and complementary objectives.

Once approved, the final version of the document will also form a draft of an IC Strategy for the Barcelona Convention, in conformity with Art. 15 of the Convention.



## 1. THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE

From Stockholm (1972) to Rio de Janeiro (1992) and again to Johannesburg (2002); environmental protection is at the centre of the international political debate for over thirty years with the recognised objective of *sustainable development* and its essential components that include education, training (capacity building), information and communication.

Knowledge, transparency and promotion are among the most important recommendations that are fundamental to gain the confidence of wider civil society ensuring its participatory involvement in the definition of environmental policies and actions.

Greater understanding and urgency concerning environmental issues and sustainable development at all levels of civil society are being achieved through information and communication activities that raise awareness and foster a commonality of purpose.

The human desire (and right) to be better informed ensures more participation from individual actors, but also spurs the community into carrying out watchdog activities for example, which are more evident than in the past. The virtuous circle of increased knowledge and awareness in an “information society” undergoes a positive fragmentation that allows citizens to take part in many different actions that can and do impact the policy process.

The changes seen within the public domain are linked to the incredible rise and diversification in mass media influences and channels. But increases in the delivery/volumes of information and especially of pre-packaged opinions, often weakens the critical capacity of the audiences.

Furthermore, the proliferation of ‘news’ and the large quantity of communication channels complicates the content selection/focus for messages destined for the public at large. What is and is not really important and meaningful remains a most challenging question?

To obtain the most powerful and lasting communication impacts; the chosen methods, the timing and language/vocabulary used (based on actual audience requirements and objectives to be achieved) need to be carefully selected. The aim is to ensure near-universal accessibility to correct information at the right time using a preferred communication means. This will ensure the acquisition of priority ‘news’/information within the shortest possible timeframe at minimum expense with some guarantee of reliability and timeliness.

## 1.1 Why is an IC Strategy for the MSSD necessary?

The challenges of sustainable development, particularly the equitable and balanced strengthening of the social, economic, and environmental conditions within the Mediterranean region are complex matters.

This is undoubtedly the situation in the Mediterranean where the social, economic, and environmental pressures clash and often conflict with the region's diverse political, cultural and geographic landscapes.

A specific communication strategy is needed to give voice to the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development* (MSSD) making it immediately recognisable and accessible across this diverse region. The communication strategy should raise universal awareness but also provide essential information to decision-makers and politicians, as well as the public at large including "activist" citizens and organizations with a 'grassroots' interest in sustainable development.

At the same time, there is a need to adapt and streamline information emanating from institutions directly associated with the MSSD, engaged in efforts to promote its adoption and implementation. External perceptions and communication requirements need to be determined and harmonised before effective actions can occur.

Furthermore, an Information and Communication Strategy is essential to avoid conflicting perceptions created by the different partners involved. Again, this requires some 'regulation' of the information and communication processes and activities of the MSSD, and the mechanisms involved. In the end, the Strategy's effectiveness i.e. the relationship between the proposed objectives and what has been achieved; and its efficiency i.e. the relationship between what has been achieved and what has been perceived (by the wider public) must be measured.

The conditions for the development and implementation of a coherent regional MSSD information and communication strategy appear to be favourable but remain challenging and quite complex.

The strategy should provide access and value-added to essential information and increase the (public) focus and future prospects of the most fragile Mediterranean ecosystems. Furthermore, it should ensure an enhanced awareness and perception of the MSSD and its vital unifying role within the diverse Mediterranean community. It should also open up new possibilities for cooperation and partnership among regional countries, governing institutions, NGOs and the private sector because multi-sector partnerships certainly offer the best way to achieve the essential goals of the MSSD.

The Strategy is a key tool for coordinating the numerous actors involved in environmental protection in the Mediterranean; a tool aimed at achieving better

coherence and wider awareness of the actions being carried and at avoiding fragmentation and redundancy.

## **1.2 An authentic and dynamic political leadership**

The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have reiterated the (political) will to develop a common information and communication strategy focused on the main themes of the MSSD. To be successful, the Strategy should be oriented around the political priorities of Mediterranean governments and foster concerted action among the different (information) resources of each partner. Furthermore, it should be adopted and supported at the highest political levels.

The need to strengthen the perception of the MSSD through an IC Strategy and its ability to disseminate its core messages, requires a profound change where the MSSD is embraced and promoted through authentic and sustained political leadership.

The success of the Strategy is thus directly proportional to the attention and support it receives from the countries (political leadership) of the Barcelona Convention. Such support can create a multiplying effect of resources including adequate dissemination channels; tailored expertise; nationally focused information directions, and the engagement of the main Ministries concerned within the Contracting States to achieve the objectives outlined in this report. For this to happen of course, the MSSD and its IC Strategy must strengthen (political) incentives for active engagement and promotion, and minimize any potential liabilities or negatives.

The sharing of responsibility among partners requires a mature level of political commitment by institutions and contracting States involved: a commitment that should not be procedural/bureaucratic but rather creative and not too risk averse. Such political commitment towards environmental and/or social issues is evident in many countries and needs to be harnessed towards the MSSD. The MSSD offers a 'wide and potentially all-embracing tent' under which members of Mediterranean institutions as well as national, regional and local policy-makers, including the business and academic world can be accommodated and have a precise role to play in its promotion.

## **1.3 Responsiveness**

The Johannesburg Summit devoted an entire chapter of its implementation plan to governance. Numerous paragraphs refer to the need for efficient, well coordinated institutions, structures and mechanisms to ensure the integration of social and environmental issues into other policies. Also, the engagement of interested parties and civil society; to responsiveness and the capacity to respond to

community needs.

A comprehensive information and communication strategy is a key aspect for the revision of governance in the Mediterranean. Information and communication should not be considered a minor requirement for the implementation of the MSSD. It is also the basis for the success of the policies and initiatives surrounding and related to the MSSD.

However, for this to occur, the leading institutions (especially UNEP/MAP) must undergo a cultural transformation, involving all levels of responsibility and develop a far greater capacity for proactive “listening” to the Mediterranean community including policies and mechanisms that actively mandate this neglected process.

This new communication approach must be accompanied by a methodology that supports and achieves constant image/perception improvement of the MSSD:

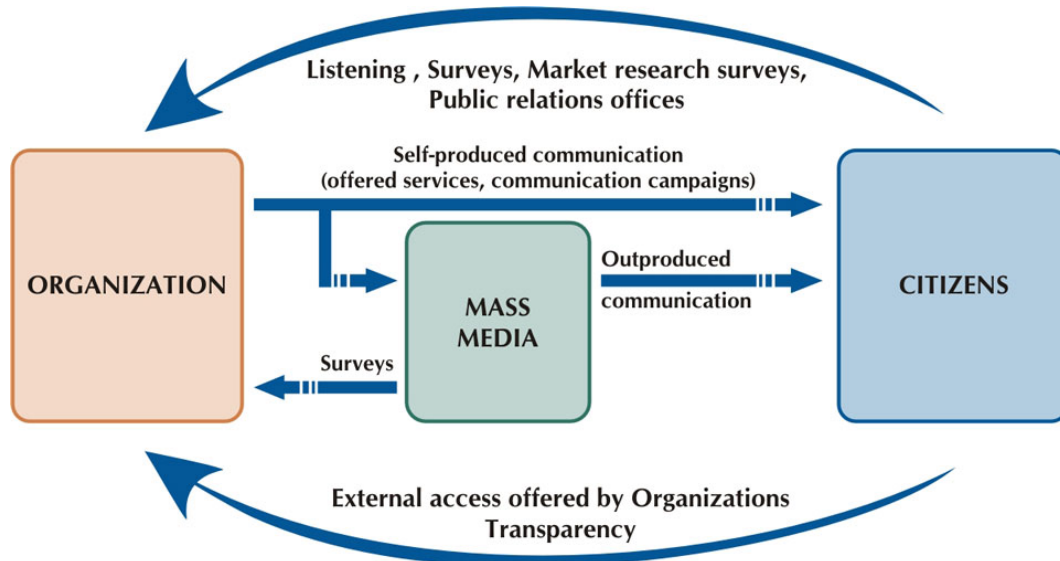
- The language used to explain the priority aims, actions and benefits of the MSSD should be accessible and readily understandable by the general public. There must be a move away from ‘UN-speak’ that is administratively/bureaucratically acceptable but little understood outside of this narrow domain;
- Take into account the essential views of citizens to better define the real and most urgent needs of target audiences. Up to now, this ‘grassroots’ communication stream has been grossly under-estimated and/or taken for granted, neglecting its potential richness and contemporary importance to the MSSD.

#### **1.4 Exchange, with continuous listening**

Information and Communication are everyday exercises that everyone carries out voluntarily and/or involuntarily on the most diverse of subjects, often with very high stakes involved. Communication is a “*communis agree*.” The actual mechanism is simple: we outwardly convey facts or ideas to inform, to obtain a reaction and lastly, to supplement and improve the message content and understanding. For this reason, sensitivity and the ability to listen are also fundamental.

To a relatively small and select audience, the importance and value of the MSSD is already apparent. However, effective communication must serve to “explain” the MSSD and grant the widest audience the possibility to know and better understand implicit decisions and actions undertaken. This is essential in enabling key parties to intervene and if necessary, promote changes and in appropriate ways, take part in the decision-making process.

To be effective, communication requires transparency including broad engagement in the choices of parties directly and/or indirectly concerned, and listening to gather opinions, suggestions and where required, to implement changes to achieve common goals.



However, it is clear that such a MSSD IC Strategy can only develop gradually and incrementally – often by trial and error and lessons-learned. Clearly, it cannot be expected necessarily to meet the challenges of ‘good governance.’ However, it can contribute significantly by providing a public forum for debate, to which Mediterranean states and various sectors of society can participate. It should provide real and pragmatic mechanisms (through activities) that invite and encourage broad involvement under the common framework of the MSSD, with mutual respect for the value of each participant’s differences and roles.

### 1.5 Agenda setting

The preparation of a set of ‘priority messages’ on the main themes of the MSSD must be preceded by an in-depth analysis of public opinion in the different Mediterranean states about related issues. This work should be carried out through regular cooperation with the relevant offices in the national (information) directorates as well as community-oriented organizations e.g. local media who regularly sample the changing ‘pulse’ of the community. This should simplify the acquisition of information on individual expectations and wider community requirements.

The development of this capacity in the field will also support the preparation of sector-specific messages for example, targeted at tourism including informational campaigns for them to take part in events involving the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, at the international, national and local levels.

Clearly, the media agenda, which impacts both public and political leaders in their own 'agenda' of priorities and/or interests, must be influenced if the information and communication process is to have the maximum level of visibility and relevance to the MSSD.

The functions/value of the media agenda is proportional to its overall credibility; and the extent to which it's capable of influencing knowledge dissemination, ideas, attitudes and even quite entrenched positions across society.

### **1.6 Ethics, credibility and reputation. When and why information and communication strategies are successful**

Ethics, credibility and reputation are obligatory and intrinsic to every successful communication relationship and strategy. Among the millions of events that take place each day and the thousands of circulating news/information items, only a few find (public) space and visibility. The process of gathering, processing and disseminating information today is generally an industrial-scale process. '*Gatekeeping*' this vast and distributed process occurs through "barriers" or "gates" overseen by media or related professionals.

In the management of the information-production process, journalists for example, do not seek to watch over all of the globe or a region (for this is impossible!), but rather on key institutions that may transform "facts" into "news events" worthy of wide publicity.

However, for such institutions/entities to garner the mass media's attention it must have the attribute of authority. The MSSD is an authoritative plan for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean. However, access to and attention from the media requires that it be recognized as such and having authority. In practice, the mass media prefer to legitimize those who are already perceived to be legitimate and credible since this is mutually beneficial process.

Publication and/or publicity regarding the MSSD on leading media outlets for example, undoubtedly could act as an indicator of credibility and trust with respect to public opinion.

It is mandatory therefore, before the MSSD and its activities, goals, policies etc. are disseminated especially towards the mass media, it should be thoroughly and responsibly verified through the IC Strategy and its procedures. This will ensure that informational materials entering the wider public domain enhance the credibility, trust and reputation of the MSSD and those individuals/organisations associated with it.

## 1.7 Highest common denominator

The “highest common denominator” should be identified for organisations promoting the MSSD to consolidate their image, as well as the priority message(s) of the MSSD.

A common message should clearly state key reasons for the existence and actions of the MSSD, and provide relevant institutions with a common framework for the consistent dissemination of integrated, shared messages.

This highest common denominator provides a constant reference point for all IC actions – while taking into account different Mediterranean cultures, traditions and values. It must be expressed as a simple statement and be accepted by all.

The highest common denominator of the MSSD communication strategy could be found in the following objectives:

- Creating a new alliance with nature that strengthens security and peace;
- Public governance: guaranteeing equal opportunities;
- Developing human capital: reducing poverty.

This procedure will provide a solid basis for the chosen language(s), vocabulary, context and presentation of the different messages that over time will need to be delivered by and from each sector outlined in the MSSD.

The core *values* implicit in the objectives of the MSSD should also filter into the core messages to be delivered, so they can be immediately perceived and gradually accepted by the wider community.

In a well-devised information strategy, these values should closely mirror region-wide objectives. They will constitute the platform for communication, which will allow greater consistency in the presentation of MSSD objectives.

The basic values implicit to communication may include:

- An openness of approach to information exchange;
- Promoting equality and solidarity of purpose – through the MSSD;
- Linking environmental and cultural conservation.

Whatever values are selected, they should be tested and validated by relevant institutions before becoming a common reference point for the MSSD and its IC Strategy.

## **1.8 The intended message recipients**

It is one challenge to frame and validate the core messages of the MSSD, but it is quite another to ensure they reach the most appropriate and/or important recipient audiences (target groups). Clearly, information must be adapted to local situations, languages and perceptions, as well as to the specific interests and concerns of target groups. The choice of these target groups should be made with the relevant institutions and Contracting States on each of the priority sectors of the MSSD.

The institutions responsible for the MSSD must practice targeted communication and learn from the experience and feedback. Information should be provided on at least two levels. Some information should target towards interested and partly-informed recipients, while other information should target indifferent and/or unaware recipients.

The challenge for the MSSD IC Strategy must be to 'reach out' to citizens beyond the usual circle of the initiated and/or informed.

Recipients should include not only public opinion-makers concerning the environment e.g. political representatives, civil society celebrities, the media, business-leaders etc. – but also specific target audiences e.g. young people, women, the fishing community in a region etc.

The younger generation are particularly important, as is the education sector, for disseminating and receiving the 'core messages' of the MSSD.

## **1.9 The need for combined action of available instruments**

The new information and communication strategy for the MSSD must necessarily take into account the resources and capacities available. These resources are rather limited, especially with regard to the internal capacities of UNEP/MAP.

Working partnerships with Contracting Parties and with different sectors of society is therefore of vital importance to the success of the strategy. Without the proactive support of local, national and/or regional authorities and actors, UNEP/MAP will not be able to reach out and raise awareness of the MSSD and its priority goals across the region.

The implementation of this strategy requires a joint-effort and commitment from the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and all UNEP/MAP Components:

- The IC objectives of each partner must be considered when developing a common reference system (denominator), targeted messages and key values for the MSSD;
- UNEP/MAP Components as well as Contracting Parties must commit to



being 'change-agents' rather than simply 'adopting' the MSSD IC Strategy by signature or consensus. This requires the training of individuals involved in the mechanisms and tools implicit to the IC Strategy;

- Working Partnership must be developed with each Contracting Party. They should not be confined by the usual legal-financial sphere of cooperation under the terms of the Barcelona Convention. Beyond the often rigid and laborious procedures, the dissemination of public information regarding the MSSD and establishment of regular and systematic relations with national (information) bodies should also be pursued towards this end.

This approach is certainly ambitious but feasible. Its success will depend upon the capacity for multi-sector and trans-national cooperation and partnership across the region, unified around a universally accepted MSSD IC Strategy.

### **1.10 Common information infrastructure for the Mediterranean**

Clearly, the existence and mobilisation of the MSSD IC Strategy will largely depend upon a common infrastructure for information (sharing) and communication across the region. The essential building blocks of this infrastructure exist in the form of the Internet and its many components.

Presently, a system design process is underway to shape this generic capacity to improve and enhance the information sharing capacity of UNEP/MAP stakeholders – local, national, regional and international. This is known as the *InfoMAP* initiative.

*InfoMAP* proposes a shared environmental information and observation network that in both institutional and technological aspects provides timely and quality-assured data, information and expertise for assessing the *state of the Mediterranean environment* and pressures upon it.

*InfoMAP* (and its operational modules) should enable policy makers at different administrative and spatial levels to make informed decisions and take appropriate measures for protecting the environment (in line with policy/legal requirements) and to monitor the effectiveness of the policies and actions implemented on the ground. Making priority information accessible to the public and specific target audiences is also a major objective of *InfoMAP*.

Although such an infrastructure is still in the planning stages, there are existing operational and proven systems that could be rapidly adapted and 'ported' to the Mediterranean situation. This process and the incrementally evolving infrastructure would play a key role in enabling the MSSD and its IC Strategy.

## **2. PRIORITY INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND INSTRUMENTS**

Approved in November 2005, it is obvious the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)* remains an anonymous and widely unknown reality for the larger Mediterranean community. However, over the past two years, pilot activities were launched to evaluate a range of information and communication tools/approaches with respect to the MSSD.

It is now appropriate to develop and define guidelines including adequate tools for the Information and Communication strategy that will assist Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, MCSD members, UNEP/MAP Components and partners, Mediterranean institutions, and partners in civil society who wish to promote and/or apply the MSSD.

The overall goal of the Information and Communication (IC) Strategy is to make the MSSD better understood, more widely known and, above all, closer to specific audiences, such as high level decision-makers. In so doing, it would increase the chances for its political/public support and, as a consequence, its effective implementation.

Key areas of focus include:

- Institutional Communication. Aiming to increase the visibility of the MSSD, its values, and its mission, and to assert the identity of the MSSD by increasing its overall credibility;
- Internal Communication. Oriented toward improving relationships among the parties involved in the implementation of the Strategy; to continually test the capacity for coordination and optimization of resources, and improve the sense of common 'corporate' loyalty (towards the MSSD mission);
- External Communication. Focused on improving the relationship with the wider community, especially through the mass media highlighting the capacity to reach out, meet and gauge the feelings of target audiences;
- Economic-Financial Communication. Aiming to improve the relationship with specific stakeholders interested in the measurement of impacts for example, by highlighting cost/benefits associated with the MSSD implementation and actions implicit to the IC Strategy.

### **2.1 Institutional communication**

Institutional communication should be initially facilitated through the authority and reputation of the institutions responsible for the MSSD's drafting and adoption namely: UNEP/MAP, the European Community (EC) and the Mediterranean States. This should include:

- a. An identifying **BRAND** should be adopted for the MSSD and its different forms of communication, which should refer to the logo/mark and the criteria for its use and its association with the logos of institutions, as stated by a specific **CORPORATE IDENTITY MANUAL**.
- b. General information that strengthens awareness of the MSSD, enhancing its image and perception, should be achieved through an **ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN** to be conveyed through a mix of direct and indirect communication channels. Subsequently, targeted campaigns should focus on large projects and themes of the MSSD, which the Mediterranean institutions translate into priority actions.
- c. In the medium-long term, the MSSD must establish its own authority and credibility through a specific, public domain output. This could be achieved through the drafting of a **biannual REPORT on the state of environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean**, based mainly on the work and data provided by the various UNEP/MAP Components and Barcelona Convention members, each responsible for its own sector of interest/focus. The Report may provide the opportunity (common focal point) for holding a series of regional **PRESENTATIONS, POLITICAL MEETINGS, and MEDIA CONFERENCES** in different Mediterranean countries, capable of stimulating wide public interest and debate on the most urgent themes of the MSSD.
- d. A dedicated **WEBSITE** and targeted **PUBLICATIONS** and **PUBLISHING MATERIALS** will serve to support the actions planned in the institutional communication area.

## 2.2 Internal communication

As for *internal communication*, adequate ICT capacity should bring core MSSD partners closer together and facilitate the coordination and routine exchange of information. For this to occur, the following tools would prove useful:

- a. A **MEDITERRANEAN PORTAL** integrated into the UNEP/MAP Web Site, intended to strengthen the sharing of information and communication capacity of Barcelona Convention and its Components and stakeholders throughout the Mediterranean, offering a one stop shop for the most important information concerning the Mediterranean and its sustainable development challenges. This is an integral component to the *InfoMAP* system design already under development.
- b. A definitive and accessible **DIRECTORY “Who’s Who of the Mediterranean”**, to create an online database of the main institutions, organizations, NGOs, companies, and universities working in environmental protection and sustainable development in the Mediterranean, with their contact info, phone numbers, addresses, websites, profiles etc.
- c. The institution of a **PRIZE** for the best public and/or institutional

communication initiatives (focused on the MSSD), with a vocation for innovative ideas that make a real difference. This instrument may prove useful in spurring partners to improve their public communication approaches to meet the needs of the local community. Through the Prize, the intention is to create a virtuous circle of *best practices*, examples and/or models that are conducive to replication and improvement.

- d. **ONLINE NEWSLETTERS, BULLETINS** and **DIRECT MAILING** are effective, direct and mediated communication tools which, at limited costs, if targeted and produced regularly ensure a continuous, informed contact among partners.
- e. **ONLINE NEWSGROUPS, FORUMS** and **COMMUNITIES** are among the most engaging and useful interactive ‘listening’ instruments, in addition to interviews and questionnaires, for assessing the effectiveness and measuring the success of information and communication activities.

### 2.3 External communication

The **mass media** remains essential for *external communication*, even though trends are witnessing a progressive customization of user-driven channels and outlets e.g. YouTube, many supported by the Internet. Nevertheless, the continued strong growth of radio and television services makes their use possible, but sometimes complex and costly.

Media Strategies should be developed that are capable of adapting the MSSD core messages to target audiences through the mass media.

One of the challenges is using and applying “**cross-media**” namely:

- rendering IC contents accessible on several media platforms, enabling them to support each other and share both the communication structures and informational values;
- carrying out integrated information - entertainment - advertising and communication campaigns, across the media allowing them to interact with each other and engage the wider public.

At the centre of “cross-media” initiatives for the MSSD is **MEDday (BLUEweek)**. This is a major annual event devoted to sustainable development in the Mediterranean, including a festival to engage the citizens and countries bordering the sea. Twenty-one countries, 450 million inhabitants, 46,000 kilometres of coastline, just one sea, and a day for organizing a large and shared **media event** and networking initiatives, with events, public meetings and volunteer activities. **MEDday (BLUEweek)** offers a unique stage for the MSSD. This event offers an important occasion for connecting and enhancing the existing initiatives/perceptions of communities and grassroots associations; the business

world, local and national administrations, as well as the more formal regional institutions engaged in positive actions that support the MSSD.

The communication strategy in this area should include:

- a. **PRODUCTION OF AUDIOVISUALS**, on MSSD themes.  
Taking into account the significant investment required in economic and professional terms, there is huge potential in the audiovisual medium to assemble multiple contributions from partners and disseminate a universal product on the main national and local media. If the output is of high quality and entertainment/informational value it can foster public debate and highlight national and regional experiences regarding sustainable development in the Mediterranean.
- b. **FILM FESTIVALS** and **NETWORKS**, offer powerful 'listening' vehicles and expressive platforms, especially for the creative-younger generations that may be engaged in MSSD-related themes of topical interest e.g. climate change, sea level rise, pollution etc.
- c. Wide use of the Web for the creation of special up-to-date and exhaustive educational **MULTIMEDIA PROGRAMMES** on the MSSD and related activities (with interviews, forums, editorials, experimental training projects, blogs etc.). Also offering links to more traditional media outlets such as TV, the press, and the radio.
- d. **RADIO** and **TV NEWS, CAMPAIGNS** and **SPECIALS** addressing the mass media and information professionals, as go-betweens for reaching the "general public", especially young people. This is especially important when an MSSD theme or issue becomes the focus of attention of international news headline e.g. whale swimming up the Thames in London; Lebanon war and bombing cause massive pollution etc. Rapid response with precisely the right materials to take advantage of these rare but powerful media 'moments' is essential.
- e. Particular attention should also be paid to **RELATIONS WITH JOURNALISTS** for:
  - Participation in the regional media agenda;
  - Knowledge of the MSSD and dissemination of its objectives;
  - Development of themes that may be linked to ongoing news events;
  - Assertion of the MSSD value and its 'news worthiness;'
  - Consolidation and increase in visibility of the MSSD, its partners, actions and real world impacts.
- f. This activity also comprises the **TRAINING** of journalists and editors working in the media to appreciate the scope and depth of the MSSD and its potential social impacts across the region, including the use of related informational materials.

- g.** Also, the MSSD **WEBSITE**, complete with Portal, Intranet, Extranet and CMS, is a fundamental tool to facilitate access to information resources directly connected with priority MSSD sectors promoting real dialogue with various users and beneficiaries.
- h. TRADITIONAL PUBLICATIONS** continue to be an important source of information and knowledge for a large part of the Mediterranean population. In light of the strategy proposed, adequate guidelines will need to be considered for applying traditional publishing tools where appropriate.
- i.** Lastly, in each Mediterranean country there is the chance to work with high profile **OPINION LEADERS** – who can be engaged to act as highly effective information multipliers – that can help make the MSSD (or derived media products) more understandable and visible to the citizens (including television audiences and at the local level).

## 2.4 Economic-Financial communication

Economic-financial communication addresses those who ‘invest’ in the implementation of the MSSD and concerns the use of objective information regarding the results, impacts, cost/benefits and value of the actions undertaken.

Faced with the growing need for resources and competition for the same, measurement of performance is an important indicator to verify the effectiveness and efficiency of MSSD-related activities.

While developing this type of information is more complex and analytical, its creation and dissemination to target audiences (investors, donors, funders etc.) can be extremely powerful.

There are numerous tools available for economic-financial communication, some borrowed from public relations and marketing sectors, while others developed specifically for the needs of the environmental-valuation field. Among these tools are:

- **Econometric BULLETINS** for stakeholders including periodic updates;
- **MEETINGS** with financial analysts, the specialized (business) media and stakeholders for a presentation of the most significant actions, risks, cost/benefits, fiscal implications etc., especially in high value sectors such as tourism which is highly impacted by environmental degradation etc.;
- A bi-annual **REPLICATION STRATEGY** document, which highlights what has worked best and where (in terms of MSSD-related actions) and how it could be applied and replicated in other areas with further positive impacts-financial and other.

## 2.5 Responsible coordination

The implementation of the proposed Strategy requires “coordination” that guides and directs the entire process. UNEP/MAP must be able to undertake this responsibility, so as to attain greater coordination, not only with external institutions and the Contracting Parties, but also within itself, among the MAP Components. This is a prerequisite.

UNEP/MAP should also seek to implement a long-term campaign of information and communication activities, so as to ensure the necessary continuity and sustainable impacts. Improved information sharing and communications should be seen as a strategic initiative and not a discrete, short term project.

The challenge is clearly large and the resources available are limited. A realistic and gradual approach is proposed, resting on two axes:

- The capacity of UNEP/MAP to elaborate and disseminate consistent core ‘messages’ adapted from the MSSD and targeted towards priority sectors;
- A responsible and operational partnership with the Contracting Parties to ensure combined and coordinated actions of Member States, complementing the actions of UNEP/MAP.

The annual MSSD meeting should define the general (policy) guidelines and priorities of the information policy; assess the coordination of central and decentralized IC activities with established benchmarks and, on the basis of a report by UNEP/MAP, establish priorities for the coming year.

UNEP/MAP should consolidate its coordinating and programming role, but also better define the tasks and resources of MAP Components in conformity with their mandates. In this strategy, it is evident that INFO/RAC should play a central role. It would involve providing IC know-how and value-added services for the other MAP Components, institutions and the Contracting Parties. INFO/RAC should act as the de facto IC service provider to the Barcelona Convention and the MCSD, with the coordination of the UNEP/MAP Secretariat to ensure its services target and support MAP Centres (RACs) responsible for sectoral activities of relevance to the MSSD.

## 2.6 Monitoring and assessment

Closing the circle of the communication process, so the information and communication actions undertaken have a real and confirmed effectiveness, requires regular monitoring and assessment. These assessments must be subject to objective and comparable measures of impacts ideally in collaboration with other institutions involved to avoid self assessment.

This process and its outputs should not only measure if predetermined goals have been reached but also if and how many stakeholders have been involved or 'touched,' if the messages have actually reached and been internalised by the target audiences, and has this led to any tangible change and/or actions that forward the goals of the MSSD. This entails, again, the capacity and mechanisms for listening to citizens and evaluating their feedback and perspectives.

Various tools can be applied to evaluate this important process since if the wider citizenry have been engaged in issues related to the MSSD, then this is a significant measure of success. On the basis alone, feedback can lead to the strengthening and improvement of IC campaigns or approaches that work best in terms of the communication initiatives and instruments applied based on local needs and conditions.

The two-year IC Plan must therefore, comprise a systematic verification of feedback from citizens following communication initiatives. Choosing the most informative internal and external **monitoring** and **assessment techniques** is important. This may require a **cost benefit analysis**; a **press review** to measure the degree of media exposure (quality, content analysis, quantity...), and/or **public opinion surveys**, to monitor the evolution of opinion among target audiences.

Further monitoring and assessment tools include:

- Surveys among reference-target groups;
- Drafting of analyses/surveys;
- Study of small sample groups;
- Media analysis;
- "Score card" evaluation;
- Research on the Internet/Portal 'hits' and other metric analysis of on-line materials (including data, links, etc.) that attract the greatest user interest.



### 3.1 MSSD LOGO & CORPORATE IDENTITY

The history of the logo can be traced back to man's need for seeking immediate recognition and to his quest for uniqueness. The complexity and the volume of information and communication exchanged by contemporary society leads to devoting special attention to the logo of a product, a service, an institution or simply an idea. It enables agents to heighten the credibility of their products among users/consumers and to improve their identification.

For it to be effective, a logo should be legible and immediately identifiable. The value of strategic communication consists in creating awareness, and in making the product or service it represents appealing, as well as a value to uptake. Therefore, in the creation of an image or character, bearing in mind it should strike a balance between the functional and symbolic values it represents, the logo is the first, fundamental step towards the set of suggestions that jointly evoke the promise contained within the product itself.

Clearly, the great promise advocated by the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)* is an abstract and dynamic concept, and its logo, unable to refer to any specific characteristic, should mostly evoke general cooperation, setting itself in the context of the Mediterranean of the future.



In the specific case of the MSSD, the graphic design was devised to render it recognisable in the different languages it will be used.



Furthermore, the first information and communication initiatives of the MSSD - EcoMedia Magazine, MED Award, MEDday (BLUEweek) and the Forum - have equally been contained in similar graphic symbols, whose perimeter derives from the main logo: a frame formed by the four colours of the MSSD brand, to strengthen the sense of belonging to a common and

shared strategy, to a unity of intents pursued with transparency, order and coherence.



The MSSD brand “fixes” the acronym of the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development* (or equivalent, depending on the language) using four squares contained in a larger square. The square is the symbolic representation of the concepts of security, reliability and positivism and becomes a vehicle for conveying stability and solidity.

The colours are blue, immediately reminiscent of the sea; green, signifying the fruits of the earth; yellow-orange, symbolising energy and warmth; magenta, implying respectful modernity and sustainable urban development. The white background behind each square visually calls to mind purity and transparency.

### Positive version



The MSSD brand/Logo is the founding element of visual identity. The main composition extends horizontally and is characterised by four squares on the left hand side and the logo *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development* to the right (mirror version for Arabic), contained in a white rectangle with a blue border: this arrangement is to be preferred in all applications.



The vertical composition (with the squares arranged on top and the writing below) is a secondary version, to be adopted only when the available surface area is limited and undermines the visual effectiveness of the Brand/Logo.

Duplicates should only be made using the electronic file distributed by the graphic design office of INFO/RAC or downloaded from the official MSSD website ([www.medstrategy.org](http://www.medstrategy.org)).

### Positive version on pale background



The positive version should be used when the Brand/Logo is applied to a pale background. The rectangle with the blue border and the MSSD initials contained within the coloured squares should be transparent. When applied, the Brand/Logo should not be positioned between lighter and darker shades, because this would decrease its visual impact.



### Black version



This version is used when the only printing colour available is black (for instance on newspapers and faxes) and the coloured version cannot be employed. 100% Black.

### Negative version



The negative version of the Brand/Logo should be used on black or dark backgrounds.



### 3.2 MSSD WEB SITE

The Web Site intends to promote and support the MSSD by providing a better insight into the activities, challenges, priority indicators, and the progress made in the 7 priority fields of action in support of the 4 main objectives that have been identified and outlined in the framework of the MSSD. Monitoring the MSSD implementation and facilitating linkages to the National strategies for sustainable development and related activities within the Programmes of the Barcelona Convention will be key areas of Web Site focus.

This will help strengthen regional (and local) corporate participation and encourage stakeholders' involvement in building up the knowledge capacity, improve information access, as well as enhance communication on the priority fields of action and main objectives. The Web Site, which includes an intranet and a Content Management System (CMS), will over time become more closely linked to the UNEP/MAP web site, the *InfoMAP* initiative and *Horizon 2020*.

The following list outlines the main areas of activities and focus:

- Continue to provide a platform to help promote and improve the level of understanding of the issues, challenges and priorities of the MSSD;
- Provide tools to help institutional information exchange – meeting proceedings, calendar of events, reports and publications;
- Promote and improve public awareness by targeting specific audiences through various media campaigns, newsletters, and other outreach programs;
- Promote and disseminate related information on the joint activities and projects undertaken by the MAP Components, Partners, and other Mediterranean stakeholders;
- Promote the biannual Report on the state of the environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean;
- Implement an online directory and profile of the main institutions, organisations, academia, NGOs, private sector companies working in environmental protection and sustainable development in the Mediterranean;
- Preparation of regular online magazines, newsletters, and bulletins on the various issues and activities relating to the priority areas and objectives of the MSSD including the building of partnerships and project initiatives.
- Provide collaborative community-based tools such as forums and newsgroups to facilitate knowledge sharing and awareness amongst partners.
- Promote the bi-annual replication strategy document to lobby support for the mobilization of financial resources.

The MSSD Web Site will help facilitate cooperation and linkages between ongoing and planned regional, national, and local MSSD programmes.

This aims at integrating MSSD objectives, orientations, and actions into national policy frameworks and instruments.

Encouraging cross-sector partnerships, increasing visibility, and supporting a multilingual approach (including Arabic) will be important in further advancing the MSSD website. Complementarities to, or coordination with, the other MAP Components web sites will be key to strengthening coordination and avoid fragmentation and redundancies.

To ensure cooperation is sustained and the activities mentioned above are carried out, continual strong UNEP/MAP coordination in support of INFO/RAC's leading role will be important. This will ultimately guarantee the overall success of the website in supporting the MSSD.

### **3.3 MEDday – MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENTAL DAY**

Celebrations for the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development*, alongside the promotion of the Mediterranean Action Plan and the Barcelona Convention, are planned to take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June of every year. They will be celebrated/advertised as *MEDday – Mediterranean Environmental Day*.

The *MEDday* will provide a unique opportunity and an exceptional arena to connect the 21 countries, 450 million inhabitants, 46.000 kilometres of coastline bordering the Mediterranean Sea, and to coordinate their international, national and local initiatives, exhibitions, public events, educational and awareness-raising activities related to environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The fact that *MEDday* will be placed 1) between other world environmental appointments (biodiversity, world environment day, desertification, etc), and 2) during the summer months, gives the assured advantages of:

- Putting emphasis on the crossing-cutting nature of environmental issues, and specifically of the Barcelona Convention and its six Protocols;
- Facilitating joint awareness raising/information initiatives and partnerships with other conventions - organisations;
- Favouring the organisation of activities that can attract a wider audience and engage participation from stakeholders and the public.

This decision on the proclamation of the *MEDday – Mediterranean Environmental Day* is to be put forward for approval at the forthcoming COP 15 in Almeria, Spain in December 2007.

The decision is all the more timely and necessary in this particular historical phase, in which the Mediterranean region has been in the spotlight for its strategic, geopolitical role.

Meeting point of three continents that share parallel needs and self-evident differences in the availability of natural resources, the Mediterranean may find in the *environment* a basis for interaction and agreement, namely a catalyser of stability and peace.

### **3.4 MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD - ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK**

The *Mediterranean Environmental Award* (MED Award) is a film and photography festival, focusing on the different and numerous forms of sustainable development. It is a voyage in the immense richness that the environmental, cultural and artistic heritage of the Mediterranean Sea has to offer, to be enjoyed through the emotional language of images, an innovative communication tool for the institutional context.

The festival consists of short films, documentaries, experimental videos and photos, covering stories about different peoples, cultures and their environmental challenges. These tools are chosen to better capture the views of that part of civil society that has already committed to environmental protection, but also to engage a wider audience.

Furthermore, they will be used to disseminate the idea that sustainable development can be the result of a heartfelt change, while making every citizen aware that the environmental, natural, historical and cultural resources of the Mediterranean need to be protected.

The MED Award is open to film production and distribution companies, to film directors, photographers, academic institutions and environmental organizations. It comprises an international jury which will award prizes for best short film, best documentary and best photograph.

In particular, the AWARD aims at giving visibility and higher profile to the contents of the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development* (MSSD). Each prize will consist of a special acknowledgement statuette, as well as a personal computer, or in alternative, a video camera or a photographic camera.

The *Mediterranean Environmental Award* was created in 2003 to promote the Mediterranean Action Plan and the Barcelona Convention. The festival was organized as a side event within the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the *Barcelona Convention* (COP 13), held in Catania, Italy, from 11 to 14 November 2003.

The event was so successful and had such an impact on the public that it paved the way for its second edition, which was held from 1 to 5 June 2005 in Rome, Italy. The prize-awarding ceremony, on the other hand, took place during COP 14 (8 -11 November 2005) in Portorož, Slovenia, alongside celebrations for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNEP/MAP.

In 2006, during the launch of MEDday (BLUEweek) and in conjunction with celebrations for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Barcelona Convention, the third edition of the *Mediterranean Environmental Award* was organised in Antalya, Turkey (17-19 September).

The fourth edition, currently in preparation, will be held in Spain in 2007, on the eve of COP 15, to ensure maximum and positive media/public exposure.

The MED Award also leads the *Environment and Sustainable Development Network*, linking the main Euro-Mediterranean festivals that now include in their regular programme an additional UNEP/MAP section on the environment, even though they are not necessarily focused on environmental issues.

The *Environment and Sustainable Development Network* intends to establish itself as a forum for debate and a floor to exchange experiences on the cross-sectoral and coordinated actions that promote training and environmental communication projects at the national, regional and international level.



### 3.5 AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTIONS

How can one adequately explain the profound meaning of the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development*? How will water resource management, coastal zone management, agriculture or tourism evolve in the near future in the name of environmental protection? Furthermore, what are the regional initiatives in this domain and what is the role played by regional, national and local organizations? How can single individuals take part in these actions?

There are many questions that require an answer and many stories to tell on how the Mediterranean is working towards tangible environmental protection and conservation, adopting guidelines and actions prescribed by the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development*.

The universal language of images is fundamental for keeping the public opinion informed and for reaching out to the younger generations living at different latitudes within the Mediterranean region.

UNEP/MAP can now count on the professional and technical capacities of INFO/RAC, which possesses 4 years experience in the production of audiovisual materials of proven and recognised quality. With the help of the 21 MAP National Focal Points, INFO/RAC has embarked upon the production of numerous multilingual productions filmed in many Mediterranean countries, as well as the collection of images for a historical Mediterranean archive linked to MSSD themes.

Following is a list of some of the multilingual productions:

- Institutional adverts such as *The Sea deserves our voice* produced for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNEP/MAP;
- Video interviews to Barcelona Convention stakeholders, carried out during COP14 and during celebrations for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Barcelona Convention;
- Institutional videos carried out during the approval of the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development*, and during celebrations for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Barcelona Convention.
- Documentaries such as MEDITERRANEA, a trip through the Mediterranean in search of solutions to solve the many environmental problems.

The videos are available free of charge, in different formats (Beta Digital, Beta SP, DVD, Mpeg) and can be used by television networks, film festivals, media events, universities and schools, to encourage critical thinking and to foster discussion on environmental issues, which are constantly gaining ground.

The multimedia catalogue of the productions can be looked up and downloaded on the following website [www.medstrategy.org](http://www.medstrategy.org)

The aim is to strengthen the visibility and recognition of the political action carried out by the Barcelona Convention system, by increasingly promoting the image of the convention on Euro-Mediterranean television programmes, and to progressively become a reference point for the distribution of data and information throughout the region.

Future productions:

- Video on the *MSSD* and its seven main themes: Water, Energy-Climate, Mobility, Tourism, Agriculture, Cities, Coasts and Biodiversity
- Video on the *Horizon 2020 Initiative*;
- Video on GEF's *Strategic Partnership for the Large Marine Ecosystem*;
- Video on the *MED Award* and on the *Environment and Sustainable Development Network*.

### 3.6 *InfoMAP*

*InfoMAP* is an ongoing initiative to enhance the information sharing and communications capacity of UNEP/MAP and its stakeholders across the Mediterranean.

The *InfoMAP* concept is to develop a common infrastructure to be shared by a range of users giving them the ability to search, access, explore and use various information resources that support the sustainable development goals of the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development.

*InfoMAP* is still in the design stages, which includes a comprehensive user requirements survey and a data inventory of existing data resources available across the region. The goal is to ensure the final system design fully 'connects and integrates' priority users of *InfoMAP* with the most valuable information and databases.

These 'users' may include professionals in UNEP/MAP and its Components, government agencies, NGOs (non-governmental organisations), the mass media as well as citizens with simple access to the Internet. Over the long term, *InfoMAP* envisages providing a 'one-stop shop' for essential information about the Mediterranean and its sustainable development challenges.

The design process is drawing on the experience of similar initiatives worldwide and applying the lesson learned to the requirements of the Mediterranean. Throughout 2007-2008, a comprehensive design process will continue, which includes the delivery of prototype operational components of *InfoMAP*. These will include:

- Web Portal that provides a common 'gateway' for users to search, discover and access information covering various themes derived from a variety of sources;
- Data Catalogue and Registry that acts as an on-line directory to indicate what data is where and 'owned' by whom, and to highlight its characteristics so that users can evaluate its usefulness and relevance to a particular problem;
- Baseline Database that contains a limited number of essential data sets that have universal relevance to users across the Mediterranean. This may include digital (map) boundaries of countries and coastlines; the location of protected or environmentally sensitive areas key indicators; bathymetry (depth and landscape) of the sea basin; and the locations of key industrial sites, infrastructures such as oil terminals and ports, including heavily populated areas;

- Activities Database showing all project activities being executed across the Mediterranean under the auspices of UNEP/MAP and related programmes that address environmental and development issues of public concern.

While the *Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development* (MSSD) provides a comprehensive strategy for sustainable development, it is hoped that over time, *InfoMAP* will deliver the enabling information sharing and communications infrastructure - by providing access and adding value to essential information and the development prospects of the fragile Mediterranean.

#### 4. PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CPs

1. To adopt the *Information and Communication Strategy* of the MSSD to strengthen the MSSD Agenda at regional, subregional and national levels.
2. To cooperate and provide technical and financial resources for the implementation and evaluation of the *IC Strategy* of the MSSD at regional, subregional and national levels.
3. To integrate, as appropriate, the objectives and actions outlined in the *IC Strategy* of the MSSD within existing National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) and in those being prepared.
4. To entrust INFO/RAC with the finalization and implementation of an *IC Programme of Work* for the *IC Strategy* of the MSSD, under the coordination of the UNEP/MAP Coordination Unit, and in cooperation with the MAP Components, together with an *ad hoc* MCSD *Permanent IC Advisory Group* comprised of national/local authorities, socio-economic organizations, NGOs/IGOs and other MCSD actors.
5. To support INFO/RAC in the creation of sustainable working partnerships for the implementation of the *IC Strategy* of the MSSD to be launched under the framework of the *Horizon 2020 Initiative* of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the *GEF's Mediterranean Strategic Partnership for the Large Marine Ecosystem*, in coordination with related UNEP/MAP activities, as well as with other international organisations and interested parties/stakeholders.

