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**PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE THEME:
"SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL ZONES"**

Task Managers: Morocco and MEDCITIES

Introduction

During the first meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) held in Rabat from the 16th to the 18th December 1996, it was decided to set up thematic working groups which would focus on a limited number of subjects for specific periods of time. One of these working groups, which would study the sustainable development of coastal areas, had to commence its work as soon as possible, because sufficient work had already been carried out to allow the formulation of policy and strategy proposals to be submitted to the third meeting of the Commission to be convened in France in October 1997. Morocco and the MEDCITIES Network assumed the responsibility of task manager of this thematic group, with support from MAP and the RACs, especially PAP/RAC.

General framework

The Mediterranean coasts are a unique living and cultural heritage, which today is severely threatened. One hundred and twenty five million people, or 35% of the population of the coastal states, already live in the coastal fringe. By 2025, according to the medium case scenario of the Blue Plan, this number will have almost doubled. In 1985, 14,000 km² had already become urbanized, and the figure will increase to 30,000 by the year 2025. This "littoralisation" phenomenon brings excessive pressure on both the natural resources and the landscapes and generates an after mediocre urban environment.

To the industrial and urban pressures one must add a tourist explosion (100 million) which is an essential factor of the diffusion of urbanization and its expansion towards the coast; in certain areas there is an almost uninterrupted wall of concrete which disfigures the landscape, blocks access to public maritime space and brings about erosion problems which are linked to the destruction of the natural balance between the beach and the hinterland.

The complexity of the problems and their impact on the future development of the Mediterranean require appropriate action through integrated management where all concerned protagonists are involved, in order that resources, which are limited, can be used in a sustainable way through planning and the appropriate regulatory framework.

The Mediterranean countries, cognizant of the seriousness of the challenges linked to the protection of their coasts, have already launched the process of integrated planning; however several indicators show that there is still a serious gap between the countries that have already acquired solid experience and have sufficient capacity to bring about good integrated coastal management, and those where such issues are not yet mature enough to allow integrated coastal management to be launched.

The multiplicity of protagonists, the non-involvement of local authorities and the people at the grass-roots level, the lack of appropriate technical tools and the expertise needed are some of the problems which impede the implementation of integrated management of coastal Mediterranean areas.

Scope of the study

On the basis of an evaluation of the experience acquired and the very large bibliography on the issue, a synthesis report on current policies and strategies in respect of integrated management of the coastal Mediterranean areas must be prepared.

This synthesis report must include a critical analysis of the various experiences of integrated management of the coastal Mediterranean areas and provide information on the level of

management acquired so far, the results obtained and the measures to be taken to improve the current situation, while taking into consideration that the concept of sustainability is fundamental in the context of integrated management of coastal areas.

The report must include the following elements:

I. Existing policies and strategies for integrated coastal areas management:

In this respect, the report must provide information on :

1. The main problems of the coastal Mediterranean areas with an evaluation of available resources and capacities to solve them. Particular attention must be paid to assessing the availability and reliability of existing data.
2. Planning in the coastal areas of the Mediterranean countries: type, degree of integration of the various sectors, adoption of the concept of sustainable development etc.
3. The main obstacles to the implementation of integrated development plans: technical, socio-economic, political etc.
4. Legal framework: implementation, level of integration of international commitments, incentives used.
5. Instruments and techniques in use.
6. Coordination and consumerism mechanisms and procedures that are implemented and their degree of success.
7. Level of integration of the various decision taking levels (national, regional, local) and level of participation of the civil society.
8. Donor institutions involved in the region: assessment of their actions.

II. Elements to be included in the regional strategy of sustainable development of the coastal Mediterranean areas, taking into consideration the concept of sustainable development which has been adopted: proposals

Special attention must be paid to the following elements:

- identification of the main sectors and participants which have a strong impact on the management of the development of the coastal areas;
- methods and instruments recommended for the application of the concept of sustainable management;
- the recommended legal and institutional framework;
- the methodological tools for planning and monitoring (observatories, impact studies, follow-up, assessment) that should be proposed;
- proposals for emergency measures to be taken with respect to degraded areas and for medium and long term preventive measures in respect of areas still

relatively preserved;

- possibilities and modalities of training and officials and reinforcement.

III. Problems and constraints

To propose measures for a more effective implementation of integrated management of coastal areas as one of the most suitable approaches ensuring coordination among sectors and integration of tools.

IV. Cooperation guidelines among Mediterranean countries in the field of integrated management of coastal areas: exchanges of experience, training, research etc.

In the medium term and on the basis of the study to be prepared it would be useful to launch a certain number of demonstration projects following the criteria which would be established by the working group: such projects would be based on the cooperation of all interested parties in order to draw useful and practical conclusions.

Methodology

It is expected that the working group will prepare several documents which will be used in the drafting of the final report to be submitted to the Commission, mainly:

- a preliminary report containing the description of the current situation in terms of sustainable management;
- progress reports to be submitted to the Commission;
- a synthesis report to be prepared by an expert to be selected;
- a final report, which would include *inter-alia*:
 - a description of the current situation as concerns sustainable management
 - priority elements of management policy;
 - proposals for the detailed development of such elements;
 - common elements concerning the implementation of management policy.

In order to accomplish its task, the working group will profit from both the experience acquired and the documents prepared by its members and the other members of the Commission. An expert will be recruited to draft the basic document on current policies and strategies concerning integrated management of the Mediterranean coastal areas.

In order to minimize travel costs, communication among the members of the group will be carried out by electronic means (telephone, fax, electronic mail). The meetings of the working group will be organized within the framework of the Commission meetings and other meetings in which the members of the group will participate. A workshop (final meeting of the working group) will be organized to adopt the document to be submitted to the Commission.

It should be pointed out that each group member must consider him/herself as a catalyst and seek out the reactions of his/her national and local partners involved in the theme studied.

During the preparation of the report, the expert must collaborate with the members of the working group, especially PAP/RAC which will provide basic documents, such as:

- UNEP/MAP, Directives concerning integrated management of coastal areas, with particular reference to the Mediterranean basin, 1995;
- report of the Workshop on Policies for Sustainable Development of Mediterranean coastal areas (Santorini, 26-27 April 1996);
- METAP/MAP, evaluation of ICAM initiatives in the Mediterranean

Implementation/timetable tasks of the expert

- to prepare the synthesis report and submit it to the working group before the end of April 1997;
- to present the report to the meeting of the working group to be convened in May 1997;
- to amend the report on the basis of the recommendations of the working group (end of June 1997);
- to participate in the workshop which will be convened to finalize and adopt the final report of the working group (July-September 1997); and
- to participate in the MCSD meeting (October 1997).