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Fifth Meeting of the Mediterranean
Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)

Rome, 1-3 July 1999

**REPORT OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (MCSD)**

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Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision taken by the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) at its Fourth Meeting (Monaco, 20-22 October 1998), the Fifth Meeting of the MCSD was held in Rome from 1 to 3 July 1999, at the kind invitation of the City of Rome.

Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by the following 30 members of the MCSD: Albania, Algeria, Association pour la Protection de la Nature et de l'Environnement de Kairouan (APNEK), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Centre des Régions Euroméditerranéennes pour l'Environnement (C.R.E.E.), Chambers Group for the Development of Greek Islands (EOAEN), City of Rome, Croatia, Cyprus, Ecomediterrania, European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC/EUROCHLOR), European Commission, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Medcities Network, Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), Monaco, Morocco, Municipality of Silifke, Mediterranean Water Network (Red Mediterranea del Aqua-RME), Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

3. The following Regional Activity Centres of MAP also attended the meeting: UNEP/IMO Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Blue Plan (BP/RAC), Priority Actions Programme (PAP/RAC), Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC), Environment Remote Sensing (ERS/RAC), Cleaner Production (CP/RAC) and Secretariat for 100 Mediterranean Historic Sites.

4. The following United Nations specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations attended the meeting as observers: UNEP/Technology, Industry and Economics Division (TIED), UNEP/Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Council of Arab Ministers responsible for Environment, League of Arab States (CAMRE/LAS), Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme (METAP) and RAMOGE.

5. A full list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

6. Mr V. Calzolaio, Under-Secretary of State for the Environment of Italy, welcomed the participants and thanked the City of Rome for hosting the meeting. UNEP, including MAP at the regional level, had made sterling efforts to protect the environment and he hoped that their fruitful work would continue in the future. Over the past decade, a large number of global environmental conventions had been signed, but it had to be acknowledged that in practice they were not all applied to the same extent. The Italian Government had set up two institutions to assess the impact of the conventions it had signed and he hoped that the MCSD would consider the harmonization of the provisions of such agreements at the Mediterranean level and identify financing sources to guarantee their effective implementation.

7. Ms L. De Petris, Deputy Mayor for Environmental Affairs, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Mayor of Rome. She emphasized that the Mediterranean was rich but vulnerable and the policies and measures adopted for its sustainable development had to be understood, accepted and implemented by all actors, whether public or private. The task would not be easy because collaboration had not hitherto been one of the main characteristics of the region, but it was essential. Since the UNCED, cities and local authorities around the Mediterranean had

shown increasing commitment to sustainable development and Rome had played its role in promoting Local Agenda 21 in the Mediterranean. The authorities of Rome reaffirmed the need to support urban development that was sustainable and a new definition of development and urban management policies.

8. Mr A. Hoballah, Deputy Coordinator of MAP, read out the statement of Mr K. Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP, who regretted that he was unable to attend the Meeting. The Executive Director observed that changes in the Mediterranean region required a refocus on the various elements constituting the region's overall security policy. The Mediterranean was becoming an even more important channel for the movement of vital resources and was developing into an integrated advanced economy with potential for major investment. Hence the need for ecological stability in the Mediterranean within a framework of sustainable development.

9. Since its inception in 1972, UNEP had given prime consideration to maintaining the integrity of the regional seas, with the Mediterranean as its first and most successful programme. Thanks to the willingness and commitment of the partners concerned, MAP had become an example for other regions. With its dynamic institutional structure, it had constantly sought to integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The revision of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols had contributed to the process by giving due consideration to the major environmental initiatives at the global and regional levels, in particular the adaptation of Agenda 21 to the Mediterranean context. The establishment of the MCSD had also played its part by providing a regional forum for dialogue and forming a bridge between global and regional actions on the one hand, and national and local efforts on the other. It offered a promising framework for the definition of a genuinely Mediterranean sustainable development strategy.

10. The Executive Director pledged UNEP's full support for MAP's activities by promoting them within the UNEP family and with all concerned partners, including United Nations agencies and the UNCSD. To that end, an efficient information and communication strategy would be needed in order to give new impetus and greater visibility to MAP. Together with the MCSD, MAP had a crucial part to play in protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development with a view to building a peaceful and prosperous region. Finally, the Executive Director expressed his deep gratitude to the Mayor of the City of Rome for organizing the Meeting and to the Italian Government for its continuous support of MAP.

11. Ms F. Kefi, Minister of Environment and Physical Planning of Tunisia, President of the MCSD Steering Committee, said it was a great honour to open the Fifth Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and she wholeheartedly thanked the City of Rome for its generosity. It was encouraging to note that cities were playing an increasingly active role in the MCSD process so that together all partners could succeed in the ambitious task of achieving sustainable development in the Mediterranean in the framework of Agenda MED 21. The Fifth Meeting demonstrated the continuing relevance of the MCSD as a forum for dialogue among all the partners concerned at the regional, national and local levels. Despite many difficulties, the MCSD had already produced effective recommendations and proposed actions on the management of water demand and the sustainable management of coastal zones. Its innovative structure had greatly contributed to its success.

12. After reviewing the items to be discussed, she pointed out that the Euro-Mediterranean processes and GEF offered genuine opportunities for cooperation, which the MCSD must seize. Her own country's national development programmes had been strongly influenced by the Commission's work. She launched an appeal for regional solidarity and concluded by wishing the Meeting every success.

Agenda item 2: Election of the Steering Committee of the Commission

13. In accordance with Rule 17 of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission elected the following Steering Committee:

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| President: | Tunisia |
| Vice-Presidents: | Chambers Group for the Development of Greek Islands (EOAEN) City of Rome Malta Monaco Turkey |
| Rapporteur: | World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) |

14. During a short discussion on the way in which the list of candidates for the posts of Vice-President had been compiled, several speakers, while not contesting the results of the elections, expressed the view that the process of consultation preceding the Meeting should be conducted in a more transparent manner.

15. Several speakers drew attention to the problem relating to the election of three non-Contracting Party members to the Steering Committee. If their membership of the MCSD was not renewed at the Meeting of the Contracting Parties to be held in Malta in October, the composition of the Steering Committee would have to be reviewed at that time. The solution would be either to elect the members of the Steering Committee until October, when the Contracting Parties would settle the matter, or to agree that the new MCSD would not take up its functions until a later date. In that connection, one representative suggested that the new Commission, with its new composition, should start work as from the Sixth Meeting, while another representative considered that the Commission could suggest to the Contracting Parties that the mandates of the three non-Contracting Party members of the Steering Committee should be renewed. In that connection it was pointed out that there was a need for both rotation and continuity in the membership of the Commission. Finally it was agreed that the matter would have to be left to the Contracting Parties to decide.

Agenda item 3: Adoption of the provisional agenda and organization of work

16. Mr Hoballah informed the participants that in order to assist the Working Groups on Indicators, Tourism and Information to finalize their recommendations, it was planned to set up ad hoc groups, as appropriate, to work outside the plenary sessions.

17. One speaker expressed the hope that such meetings would not be held simultaneously with the plenaries. A representative asked that item 5.5 be taken up during the afternoon session and it was stated that more time would be needed for examination of the strategic review for the year 2000. A speaker considered that the Commission should manage the limited time available to it according to needs: he particularly stressed the necessity of a detailed examination of working methods to ensure that the Commission's recommendations received proper follow-up.

18. In the light of those comments, the provisional agenda and organization of work were adopted.

Agenda item 4: Progress report by the Secretariat

19. Mr Hoballah, introducing document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.156/3, said that it was based on the results of the very useful Second Meeting of the Steering Committee held in Tunis on 8 and 9 March 1999. The participants had received two reports on that meeting (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.155/2 and 3), of which the former had taken a critical approach in order to provoke a lively discussion on the subject of methods of work, new subjects and selection criteria. Closer

cooperation with UNCSD had been requested. In that connection, he informed the Meeting that both members of the Secretariat and representatives of the MCSD members had participated in the work of UNCSD and had widely disseminated information on the Commission, as a result of which many requests for further documentation were being received.

20. While fully agreeing with the critical approach to certain aspects of the organization of work a representative stressed the need to highlight as well some of the positive results obtained. While taking due note of this comment, the Coordinator agreed that the tone of the report had been unusual, but the Secretariat had judged it necessary in this case, particularly in view of the concerns expressed during UNGASS (Rio + 5) in relation to the activities of UNCSD. MAP had therefore decided to try to bring out any shortcomings or failings as soon as possible, in order to take remedial action at an early stage. The approach had been a positive one, aimed at promptly identifying any adjustments that might be needed.

21. Another speaker welcomed the new tendency to speak out, but believed that the agenda for the Meeting should have reflected that innovatory approach. An opportunity should have been provided to discuss the philosophy of the MCSD's work, to find new ways of applying its recommendations through the involvement of civil society, and to explore new methods of work. The Working Groups themselves could reflect on ways of putting their recommendations into effect. In that connection, a speaker considered that it would be necessary to prepare a set of "specifications" setting out the responsibilities and functions of each actor in the Working Groups.

22. The representative of Turkey informed the Meeting that her Government was proposing to set up a Regional Activity Centre for training. A paper was being prepared, including provisions on financing and strategy, for submission to the Meeting of Focal Points to be held in September.

23. The Meeting noted the report contained in document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.156/3.

Agenda item 5: Activity reports by the Task Managers

5.1 Sustainable development indicators

24. Mr M. Ennabli (Tunisia), joint task manager for the theme with Mr S. Antoine (France), introduced the proposals of the thematic working group (pp. 1-10 of document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.156/4) and thanked the members of the Group for their constructive work. He emphasized the importance of indicators for sustainable development as a means of monitoring major social, economic and environmental changes in the region and assisting decision-makers in the formulation and implementation of sustainable development policies. The development of these indicators, which had been identified as a medium-term activity by the First Meeting of the MCSD in December 1996, was intended to promote a coherent approach to sustainable development throughout the Mediterranean region, in an initiative which lay within the framework of the Barcelona Convention, the Mediterranean Action Plan and Agenda MED 21.

25. He explained that, from an initial list of almost 250 indicators, a first set of 130 basic indicators had been developed. This common core of indicators took into account the indicators adopted by the UNCSD and the special features of the Mediterranean basin. For 55 of the indicators, the necessary data were available and it should therefore be possible to calculate them in the reasonably short term. However, for the rest of the indicators, further analysis of the availability of the required data would be needed.

26. The Working Group had developed a set of practical proposals for action, subdivided into two sections. The first of these concerned the development of a system of indicators for the Mediterranean region, while the second section consisted of the implementation of the system of indicators by the Contracting Parties. The implementation of the system was intended to help the Contracting Parties, local authorities and economic actors to measure the results of their

efforts and prepare future action, as well as to improve multilateral cooperation in the region and guide the future work of the MCSD. An important feature of the proposals for action would be the preparation of a report on sustainable development in the region every five years, starting in 2002. The Contracting Parties would also be invited to provide MAP with national reports prepared for the UNCSD, establish national environment and development observatories and develop action programmes, with emphasis on training, to build national capacities in the relevant areas.

27. Turning to the table of proposed indicators, he emphasized that they consisted of preliminary indicators which needed to be refined and confirmed. They had been submitted at the present time so that the Contracting Parties could take action as soon as possible on their implementation. Unnecessary delay should be avoided so that governments could make progress towards the achievement of sustainable development.

28. Mr Antoine paid tribute to the other partners, such as OECD, EUROSTAT, UNEP, EEA and the UNCSD, which had been associated with the activities of the Working Group. He also thanked Slovenia and Tunisia for testing the implementation of the indicators. He emphasized the importance of indicators for sustainable development for the Mediterranean region which, unlike groups of States such as the European Union, did not yet have the necessary structures in place for the compilation of information on sustainable development. Although the proposed indicators would need further refinement, he urged rapid action by the States in the region on this important issue.

29. In a broad-ranging discussion, all the speakers commended the Working Group on its concrete proposals and emphasized the importance of indicators for sustainable development for the Mediterranean region. By way of illustration, it was recalled that the development of such indicators at the level of the OECD had played a major role in promoting the integration of environmental factors into other policy areas. The proposals made by the Working Group therefore constituted a good starting point. However, it was extremely difficult to formulate mature indicators for sustainable development and further refinement would undoubtedly be needed.

30. In this connection, several speakers emphasized the need to ensure that the indicators did not merely reproduce existing national statistics, particularly on environmental issues. Indicators for sustainable development would only offer their true added value if they fully combined social, economic and environmental factors, including such aspects as employment and health. Further refinement would also be required for the indicators relating to water, which currently gave too much emphasis to water quality, particularly of drinking water, but tended to ignore the issue of the availability of water for such essential activities as agriculture. Indicators for information, awareness and participation should also be developed.

31. Several speakers also called for more work to be carried out on the proposals for action. The distinction made by the Working Group between the development of indicators and their implementation was not entirely valid, particularly with regard to capacity-building activities. Further refinements would therefore be needed to develop a dynamic and concise proposal for consideration by the next meeting of the Contracting Parties in October 1999.

32. A number of speakers raised the question of the availability of the national data required for the compilation of the proposed indicators for sustainable development. More work would be required to identify the indicators for which data could be obtained in the near future and to assess the comparability of the data. Several speakers also warned that capacities for the compilation of the required data varied widely between industrialized and developing countries. Care should therefore be taken to develop indicators for which data could be produced by countries at all levels of development.

33. The MCSD was informed in this connection that Turkey was establishing an environment and development observatory, which would greatly contribute to national efforts to achieve sustainable development, as well as increasing its capacity to collaborate with partners in other countries. Morocco was taking steps to establish a national database on sustainable development, which would be built up in collaboration with civil society giving due consideration to the recommendations of the MCSD. However, many speakers called for increased cooperation and assistance to build capacity at the national level and develop networking arrangements among the competent national institutions. The representative of the Blue Plan noted, in this respect, that a meeting of representatives of national observatories would be held in Tunisia in November with the very important objective of promoting networking in this field. He added that the indicators proposed by the Working Group had already been validated in Slovenia and Tunisia and that similar processes were now being undertaken in other countries in the context of capacity-building activities, including Morocco. Moreover, he informed the MCSD that the European Commission had recently entrusted Blue Plan with the implementation of an important project on environmental statistics in the Mediterranean region (MEDSTAT) for the next three years.

34. The members of the MCSD emphasized that, although the proposed indicators were by no means perfect, there came a moment when action had to be taken. The proposals of the Working Group should therefore be submitted to the Contracting Parties and, once approved, should be integrated into the programme of work of MAP. Although little regular budget funding was currently available, donors should be sought for a substantial project in this important area. A mechanism should also be developed so that the MCSD could continue its work in this field.

35. Responding to the discussion, the joint task managers welcomed the many constructive suggestions that had been made, particularly for the further refinement of the proposed indicators and proposals for action. Mr Ennabli re-emphasized the dynamic nature of the process of developing indicators "for" rather than "of" sustainable development and their vital role in promoting the adoption of integrated economic, social and environmental policies. He added that the Blue Plan was proposing to develop a glossary which would provide clear definitions of the various indicators and the methods to be followed for their compilation. A preliminary set of papers had already been produced for certain indicators which gave an idea of the possible form of the final results. He reassured those who had expressed concern about the capacity of developing countries to produce the necessary data and emphasized that this would be on a voluntary basis. Both joint task managers stressed the importance of encouraging the Contracting Parties to take action rapidly and of disseminating information on the indicators as widely as possible, for example on the MAP website.

36. The proposals for action on this theme were revised, in consultation with the members of the MCSD, to take into account the comments made during the discussion. It was agreed that the revised proposals for action would be submitted to the next meeting of the Contracting Parties in October 1999. The revised proposals for action are contained in Annex II.

5.2 Tourism and sustainable development

37. Mr G. Giourgas (EOAEN), joint task manager for this theme with Ms A. Rambla Gil (Spain), introducing the recommendations and proposals for action on the theme (pp. 11-17 of document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.156/4), emphasized the difficulties involved in developing coherent conclusions and proposals on such a vast subject as tourism, which was integral to life and culture in the Mediterranean basin and involved not only considerations of space and time, but also of human presence. The Working Group had endeavoured to develop innovative proposals which offered clear added value for this essential social phenomenon, in which it was so difficult to promote effective change. However, only a limited number of responses to the questionnaire had been received.

38. The complexity of tourism included the dangers of what was, in many cases, a sort of monoculture which could be very fragile, particularly in the event of crises such as conflicts and epidemics. In general, tourists themselves exerted a certain pressure for environmental improvement when they demanded satisfying tourist destinations. However, the situation with regard to tourism varied widely in Mediterranean countries, in terms of both its importance and the effectiveness of the policies adopted. In all cases, continued efforts needed to be made, particularly through training and the exchange of information, to improve capacities and awareness of how a sustainable development dimension could be integrated into the tourist industry. This was particularly important in the case of small island economies, which consisted of isolated micro-societies for whom the sustainable development of tourism was vital for their economic and social development, and even their human survival.

39. One of the main concerns in developing the proposals for action had been that it was impossible to promote the sustainable development of tourism in a situation which was tantamount to anarchy. The inadequacy of the existing policy, institutional, legislative and technical framework was noted. Many measures could be taken to develop this framework, including the establishment of observatories covering the impact of tourism, the promotion of quality initiatives and environmental management systems, the establishment of networks of tourist professionals, the development of pilot tourist destinations and efforts to extend the tourist season all year round. A number of specific tools had been proposed to achieve the appropriate objectives, including the publication of a white paper on tourism and sustainable development in the Mediterranean, the development of guidelines on good environmental practices in the tourist sector and the establishment of financial mechanisms through which the sector could contribute to various initiatives and projects in this field.

40. The members of the MCSD welcomed the valuable work which had been achieved by the Working Group and expressed understanding that many different points of view had had to be taken into account. However, several speakers noted that environmental considerations, in particular with regard to the coastal and marine environment deserved more attention. The proposals, while constituting a good starting point, would therefore need further refinement with a view to placing greater emphasis on the integration of environmental and sustainable development issues into the framework of tourism. The proposals should also take into account the action which could be taken to promote specialized forms of tourism, such as cultural and environmental tourism, leisure activities, as well as national tourism, in addition to more conventional forms of international tourism. Moreover further work would be required to develop a more concise proposal for submission to the Contracting Parties.

41. Many speakers emphasized the great importance of tourism in the life and economies of Mediterranean countries. The tourist industry had a major impact on the Mediterranean environment, which meant that any effective action to improve the environment and promote sustainable development in the region needed to involve the industry very closely. However, tourism was a very complex industry, involving a multitude of actors, including those who were directly concerned with the industry, such as tour operators, hotels and restaurants, as well as their suppliers, other economic actors in adjacent areas and the public authorities at all levels. This complexity made it very difficult to bring together all the actors involved for the development of the global and integrated vision which was required to achieve a sustainable tourism sector. However, voluntary initiatives and self-control schemes offered potential for progress. For example, UNEP/TIED had been involved in a recent initiative bringing together a number of tour operators to analyse how voluntary schemes could be organized. Standardization projects, such as ISO 14000 could also be valuable, although emphasis needed to be placed on building the necessary capacity during their implementation in developing countries. When the proposals for action were reviewed, greater importance should be given to these aspects.

42. Several speakers emphasized the importance of directing action not only towards

Mediterranean countries, but also the countries of origin of tourists. Any serious improvement in the environmental performance of the tourist industry in the region would need to be demanded, in the sense that tourists would need to be made aware of the attitude and practices which needed to be adopted to promote the sustainable development of tourist destinations. They should not expect to be able to maintain the same levels of consumption, for example of water, as in their own countries. Reference was made to a number of initiatives which had been taken in this sense, including the preparation of a brochure for tourists to increase their awareness and involve them more fully in efforts to promote a more sustainable tourist industry. Tour operators which were based in the countries of origin of tourists also needed to be involved more closely in the related activities and should contribute more substantially to the balanced and sustainable development of tourist destinations.

43. Reference was also made to the importance of ensuring that the principles of sustainable development were fully taken into account by all the actors involved in the development and implementation of policies for land-use and development planning. In many tourist locations, holiday homes were built without any planning, or in avoidance of the relevant rules. It was particularly important in this respect, when developing new tourist destinations, both in developing countries and in hitherto undeveloped areas of industrialized countries, to make sure that the mistakes of the past were not repeated.

44. Many speakers focused on the need to promote further networking and exchanges of information, including between the competent bodies at the national level and NGOs active in the field. It was noted in this respect that the Coordinating Unit did not have sufficient resources to play an active role in managing and developing such networks. It should therefore fulfil the function of a facilitator to encourage the process. In this connection, care should be taken to build on the work carried out by other bodies. This included the recent meeting organized in Lanzarote by UNEP and the World Tourism Organization as a follow-up to the Barbados Conference to bring together representatives of small developing island States and other islands; the conclusions of the International Congress on Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, organized by MED Forum in October 1998; and guidelines with the necessary added value adopted in the Mediterranean context, such as codes of good conduct. In addition, the report of the Working Group should be communicated to the Euro-Mediterranean Forum on Tourism.

45. A few speakers welcomed the proposal to study the feasibility of setting up a Mediterranean support mechanism for sustainable development objectives in the tourist industry. It was noted that structures bringing together professionals in the tourist industry had been developed in other regions, such as the Caribbean, but not in the Mediterranean. However, it was also recalled that very careful consideration needed to be given to the real purposes and functions of any proposed new bodies or funds before any practical steps were taken for their establishment.

46. In view of the time which would be required to substantially review the proposed conclusions and recommendations to take into account the comments made during the discussion, the MCSD decided to entrust the Coordinating Unit and the two task managers, with the support of the Centres concerned, with the responsibility for adapting them to the comments which had been made. The revised texts would be sent out to all the members of the MCSD towards the end of September and they would be given two weeks to make any further comments that they considered necessary. The Meeting was informed that a working session would be held on 22 and 23 August 1999 so comments should be sent to the Coordinating Unit by the end of July at the latest. In this way, a substantive proposal could be submitted to the meeting of the Contracting Parties, which could then decide on the action to be taken to follow it up.

5.3 Information, awareness, environmental education and participation

47. Mr M. Scoullos (MIO-ECSDE), joint task manager for the theme, introduced the progress report on the Group's work and the proposed recommendations for the Contracting Parties (pp. 18-26 of document UNEP(OCA)/MED.WG.156/4), together with a background document produced using mainly MIO-ECSDE resources.

48. The background document analysed the present situation of information, awareness and public participation, and reviewed the role played by other partners in the dialogue.

49. Part A showed that, despite the fact that a high percentage of the public was worried about global environmental threats and thought that they should be tackled urgently, their perception of ways in which they could help to protect the environment was somewhat simplistic. The concept of sustainability was also very poorly understood. Environmental organizations were seen as the most trustworthy source of information on the state of the environment, whereas the public authorities appeared much further down the scale, highlighting a lack of confidence in the authorities, a trend that had to be reversed. The cost/benefit ratio of spending on information and education did not follow a linear progression: a large amount had to be invested initially in education and raising awareness before progress could be seen, but subsequently similar results could be achieved by spending smaller amounts. In most Mediterranean countries, the initial spending level had almost been reached so only a little more effort was needed before substantial progress could be made.

50. Part B of the background document described Mediterranean specificities and contained a review of the issues identified by major NGO conferences. It was interesting to note that the topics deemed most critical were, in order of importance, water, soil erosion, forest fires and waste, followed by pollution, biodiversity, and climate change.

51. The review of legal provisions in Part C was not yet complete, but the Aarhus Convention provided a comprehensive legislative framework.

52. One positive development noted in the document was the number of thriving environmental education programmes and the MCSD could do much to strengthen them still further.

53. Turning to proposed recommendations, he said that although the main task entrusted to the Working Group had been completed, it had to be made clear that the work should be pursued because the subject was both an important component of the work of the other Groups and a crucial element in itself.

54. During the ensuing discussion, the participants congratulated the Working Group on the quality of its work. One speaker underlined the importance of reviewing and adopting the approach to the issue of information, communication, education and participation. In order to be effective, it was suggested that awareness-raising techniques be adapted to gender and age and that environmental educators be given at least one month's training in how to put over their message. Existing structures that were familiar with local languages and customs should be used, rather than MAP, for the dissemination of the environmental message at the local level.

55. Some participants drew attention to the important role played by information and communication in promoting the ratification and implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Dissemination, using appropriate techniques, should be through the Focal Points and should take place before considering application of the Aarhus Convention. Several participants considered that the Working Group's recommendations should be implemented by the MAP Focal Points, taken into account by MAP in its work, and incorporated into the work of the MCSD thematic groups.

56. Several participants considered that four or five practical recommendations should be singled out for submission to the Contracting Parties. The other proposals could be taken into account for the MAP information strategy to be submitted to the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

57. The Coordinator recalled that pressure from the public and NGOs had been instrumental in the elaboration and adoption of environmental policies. Environmental education and information were vital and could help to resolve problems with minimum expenditure.

58. Mr Scoullos (MIO-ECSDE) pointed out that the recommendations were intended to be a framework for the necessary legal and institutional provisions for enhancing mobilization and participation, which could not be done through just a few small concrete recommendations. The proposals could perhaps be divided into two lists so as to provide the Contracting Parties both with the framework suggested by the Working Group and with a small number of practical recommendations while at the same time keeping in mind the general picture. He explained that the reason why certain issues continued to appear was the need to remind people that they were still pending and had not yet been resolved.

59. Finally, the task managers were asked to consult with concerned colleagues and identify four or five concrete recommendations for submission to the Contracting Parties, taking into account the views expressed during the meeting and these are attached as Annex III.

5.4 Free trade and environment

60. Mr R. Salman (Lebanon), task manager for the theme, introduced the proposed programme of work (pp. 27-33 of document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG/156/4), underlining the particularly complex nature of the issue and the fact that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was a special factor to be taken into consideration in this respect. The Working Group proposed that the key sectors to be analysed should be agriculture, industry, and consumption patterns, taking into account national studies as well as sectoral studies at the national and regional levels. Comparative studies to be carried out in certain Mediterranean countries and retrospective studies of other free trade zones would lead to a better understanding of the impact of environmental policies on free trade in the region and of the legal, institutional, economic and technical factors affecting the balance between free trade and the environment in the Mediterranean. They would also provide data, facilitate decision-making and ensure that the issue was included in the sustainable development agendas of the countries concerned.

61. After describing the case study for Lebanon, he outlined the proposal for an action plan. During Phase I, from July 1999 to June 2000, the future European Union study envisaged by the European Union might contribute towards increasing knowledge of free trade and environment policies in the 12 non-Community Euro-Mediterranean partners. The research axis to be elaborated by each Mediterranean country according to its specificity would be defined and the practical lessons to be learned from other regional and national experiences would be drawn. The information spectrum would be extended to cover the whole Mediterranean through data collection, compilation and analysis. It was also proposed that a Mediterranean workshop on free trade, environment and sustainable development be held. The initial results of the work and proposed guidelines would be submitted to the next MCSD meeting.

62. In the course of Phase II, from June 2000 to June 2001, all the agreements entered into by Mediterranean countries would be assessed in terms of local and regional policies. Proposals on financial mechanisms, economic instruments and public policies to enhance the balance between free trade and the environment would be developed and practical recommendations would be prepared for Mediterranean decision- and policy-makers. In order to reinforce the

synergy between free trade and sustainable development, the capacities of Mediterranean countries would have to be strengthened. The Working Group's observations, findings and proposals would be put before the seventh meeting of the MCSD.

63. Some activities would be ongoing in both phases, for example, collaboration with other similar initiatives, the exchange of experience, the identification of available mechanisms and funds, the involvement of all Mediterranean countries as well as relevant actors and policy-makers, and broad dialogue and consultation between the public and private sectors.

64. The difficulty of gathering standardized homogeneous data for the purposes of comparison, time constraints and the availability of funds were potential problems that might affect the Group's work. Lastly, networking and involving all the actors were two of the factors that would determine the success of the programme.

65. During the ensuing discussion, the participants congratulated the Working Group on the quality of its work. Several participants drew attention to the scale of the task before the Group and wondered whether it would be able to carry out such an ambitious programme. The Group was urged to collect information on the environmental impact of other free trade areas and it was pointed out that any free trade model that did not take into account Mediterranean specificities was doomed to failure and might even have a negative impact. The work being done in other international organizations on trade and environment, for example, the work within the WTO on the effects of environmental measures on trade, should be reviewed.

66. One participant noted the absence of a social dimension in the proposed programme of work and expressed the view that services should be included in the programme of study in place of consumption patterns and that the effect of the single European currency on trade should be added. Other participants warned against an excessively broad approach and recalled that some of the subjects were already being dealt with elsewhere.

67. Another representative conveyed his concern that environmental and cultural aspects had been neglected in the financial components of the association agreements concluded between the European Union and the members of the future Mediterranean Free Trade Area. The Contracting Parties, and particularly their ministries of finance, should be urged to call for the involvement of ministries of environment and culture, as well as representatives of civil society, in the discussion and conclusion of agreements on financial mechanisms. The Working Group was also encouraged to include more countries among its members because they were ultimately responsible for elaborating trade policies.

68. The representative of METAP, which had also provided support to the task manager, explained the methodology followed in conducting case studies on several Mediterranean countries. The impact of free trade was felt in two stages: in the first place, environmental regulations had an impact on the price of exports, but subsequently the effects were felt by imports, so competitiveness within southern Mediterranean countries could be affected.

69. The representative of CAMRE/LAS informed the MCSD that the General Secretariat of the LAS was planning to hold an Arab Regional Seminar on "Trade and Environment" from 5-7 September 1999 in cooperation with the Egyptian Agency for Environmental Affairs, UNEP and CEDARE

70. The Commission endorsed the programme of work proposed by the Working Group and expressed the wish that it would be given priority by the Sixth Meeting of the MCSD.

5.5 Industry and sustainable development

71. Mr G. Guerrieri (Italy), joint task manager for this theme with Mr M. Si Youcef (Algeria), surveyed the Group's work since the Fourth Meeting of the MCSD, drawing particular attention to the use made of external experts (pp. 34-38 of document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.156/4). The overall objective had been to analyse the implications of the entry into force of the revised LBS Protocol and its Strategic Action Programme (SAP) in the context of sustainable development. The Group's aims had been highly practical, with special attention being given to identifying concrete action to stimulate governments and local authorities to launch policies that would encourage domestic enterprises and competitiveness. A second aim had consisted in identifying motivations for small and medium-sized enterprises to invest in re-organizing their production methods so as to be in line with the requirements of the LBS Protocol and the SAP. The Group attached great importance to industry outreach, the exchange of information and capacity-building for "actors for improvement". He drew the Meeting's attention to the report of the Workshop on Industry and Sustainable Development held in Massa on 14 and 15 May 1999.

72. Referring to the Work Plan, he pointed out that under each proposed activity the participants would find a project manager, project partners, the expected output and a timetable. He proceeded to outline the various projects contained in the report, expressing his confidence that all documents and activities relating to specific issues would be presented as draft projects at the proposed date by the project managers to the task managers and then sent to the members of the Thematic Group for final approval and implementation during the coming biennium. After inviting the Meeting to endorse the Work Plan, he stated that a further consultation meeting might be needed to finalize all the tasks and hoped that funding could be found for it either in the MAP budget or from extra-budgetary sources.

73. The representative of CP/RAC said that the Work Plan should refer to the promotion of cleaner production itself, not just to the promotion of the International Declaration on Cleaner Production, and offered to share CP/RAC's experience on the issue. Moreover, he offered the CP/RAC experience for training activities in cooperation with UNIDO/ICS.

74. The representative of UNEP/TIED offered her organization's continued cooperation in developing specific activities for the Mediterranean. She was pleased to note the International Declaration on Cleaner Production, but pointed out that signing it was a first step only; it had to be implemented in practice. In that connection, she referred to the need to educate professionals in small and medium-sized enterprises.

75. The representative of the Italian National Environmental Protection Agency drew attention to a second version of the report on cleaner production in the Mediterranean and said that a final version would be presented to the international seminar that would be organized with UNEP/TIED and ECOMED and would be held at the end of 1999. In this connection, she called for a reinforcement of collaboration with CP/RAC, also taking into account the possibility of bilateral agreement.

76. In the course of the discussion, all speakers congratulated the joint task manager on the detailed and practical proposals he had presented. Some questions were raised concerning the cost of the proposed activities, and in particular the financing of those carried out by CP/RAC under a budget provided by Spain. Several representatives drew attention to the importance of encouraging small and medium-sized enterprises. A participant stressed the need to examine the whole question of industry and sustainable development in the Euro-Mediterranean context, as well as to pay particular attention to the social implications. With reference to the proposed training workshop for managers of large industrial zones, a participant suggested that the focus should also be on individual small and medium-sized enterprises that were not incorporated in large zones, which was generally the case throughout the Mediterranean area.

77. Mr S. Civili, MEDPOL Coordinator, referring to the financing of the proposed activities,

said that where MEDPOL was concerned, funds were available under the current budget, and he believed that this was also the case with regard to UNIDO and CP/RAC. As far as small and medium-sized industries were concerned, the Massa workshop had felt that they might be the relevant issue in the future. He pointed out that the term "large industrial zones" referred normally to large areas grouping several small enterprises under a single environmental management.

78. Mr Guerrieri recalled that it was necessary for small and medium-sized enterprises to be fully aware of the benefits of eco-efficiencies and the proactive approach to making environmental improvements. It was generally recognized that the larger chemical industry groups had made significant contributions to reducing emissions and pollutants through a mixture of regulatory and voluntary instruments and measures. In that sense, it was important to have the cooperation of CEFIC/EUROCHLOR, whose members were already engaged in voluntary initiatives as "responsible care", which also involved smaller companies.

79. Special attention had been given to the formulation of activities, taking care to avoid additional costs. The proposed activities were designed to fit as far as possible into existing programmes for which budgets were already available. If for any reason shortfalls should occur, alternative funding would be sought.

80. The MCSD agreed that there was a broad consensus in favour of pursuing the various practical activities set forth in the Work Plan, but in close cooperation with partners such as UNEP/TIED and professional associations, with a view to submitting the results to the Sixth Meeting of the MCSD.

5.6 Management of urban development

81. Mr J. Parpal (MEDCITIES), joint task manager for the theme, introduced the proposed programme of work (pp. 39-42 of document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG/156/4), for which a large part of the financial resources had been committed by Contracting Parties or international institutions. The Group had decided to evaluate the present situation in order to identify the set of issues that would serve as a framework for the preparation of recommendations to the Contracting Parties. It had also decided to prepare a methodology and a programme and to identify the methods of implementing them. As could be seen in the report, three meetings had already been held. At the initial experts' meeting held in Seville, it had been decided to focus on the general and sectoral aspects, and ways of promoting cooperation in training, exchange of experience, best practices, and indicators *inter alia*. The agenda and documents for the first expert meeting held in Split were listed in the report. This meeting had concluded that, bearing in mind the economic and institutional capacity constraints, rapid urban growth could cause functional imbalances that were often extremely serious and had an impact on natural resources, economies and living standards in cities.

82. The Working Group proposed three axes for its programme: firstly, institutional strengthening of local authorities, particularly as regards the supply of services, urban planning and upkeep, and participation; secondly, various sources of financing for cities; lastly, the exchange of experience and cooperation.

83. Mr Antoine, at the request of Mr Parpal, informed the Commission that at the First meeting held in Split with PAP/RAC a number of alternatives had been suggested for the types of action to be proposed. He further indicated that some 70 cities could set up an observation network for topics in which they had the necessary capacity and for exchanges of data and experience, notably relating to good practice.

84. One participant underlined the need to involve all actors with urban development-related responsibilities or tasks and encouraged the Working Group to strengthen collaboration with the

other Groups.

85. Ms Mourmouris (European Commission) said that the European Union already had a communication on the issue and was at an advanced stage of preparing a manual for urban development and it was willing to share its experience with others. She added that the subject was so vast that the Working Group would have to focus on certain action-oriented aspects. She also requested the Group to ensure that the questionnaire it proposed to send called for information that the recipient was able to provide and that was relevant to the outcome sought.

86. Mr Parpal (MEDCITIES), responding to a question on the cities to be studied, said that it was proposed to study large cities, medium-sized cities that were rapidly expanding, and hot spots. The number would be limited by financial constraints.

87. The representative of ERS/RAC informed the meeting that the Centre was monitoring expansion of cities in Europe and offered its support to the Working Group.

88. The Commission endorsed the programme of work proposed by the Working Group.

Agenda item 6: Method of work and follow-up of recommendations

89. The Coordinator, introducing the Steering Committee's conclusions on method of work and follow-up of recommendations contained in Annex 1 to document UNEP(OCA)MED WG.156/3, said that the Steering Committee had called for further progress in three areas : the clearer identification and preparation of themes, improved planning of activities by objectives and better implementation and follow-up of recommendations. He pointed out that after three years of practical experience, more time was now available for the preparation of themes on the basis of added value and Mediterranean specificity. The task managers should state the main objectives of the activities and think in terms of execution and valorization, i.e. they should adopt an operational approach to implementation.

90. Some themes might lend themselves to strategic action programmes and it was also suggested that the Secretariat could help to propose ways in which the Contracting Parties might implement the recommendations. In addition, the Secretariat and the regional centres could develop the use of demonstration programmes. Lastly, it was suggested that greater visibility could be ensured by circulating information by all appropriate means.

91. Moreover, it would be important to take into account in MAP's budget actions and recommendations adopted by the Contracting Parties following proposals by the MCSD and to contribute as far as possible to their implementations.

92. While appreciating the quality of the Steering Committee's proposals, and bearing in mind the need to remain strictly within the mandate of the MCSD as an advisory body and also to avoid any confusion concerning roles, the participants agreed on the need to take into consideration the following points in relation to the three areas referred to above:

- C the proposers of new themes should make a thorough study of the available information, identify the possible value added, assess what results were to be expected and review the potential for funding;
- C a few themes, although not necessarily such a large set as when the MCSD had commenced its activities, should be selected and allowed to "mature" for one or two years before being taken up;
- C themes should be selected in the light of the concrete results they were expected to deliver;

- C for the sake of the credibility and visibility of the MCSD, the products of its activities needed to be concrete and promote new initiatives;
- C more emphasis should be placed on the social dimension;
- C smaller ad hoc groups could be set up for a limited period of time to deal with specific issues;
- C follow-up measures should be envisaged by the Contracting Parties when adopting proposals for action and recommendations put forward by the MCSD;
- C It was suggested in this connection that the Contracting Parties should adopt a system of reports on implementation and that these should be communicated to the MCSD;
- C there should be more systematic contacts with other bodies and more regular progress reports;
- C communication with the Contracting Parties and other partners should be improved, for example by use of the Internet and by drawing up an information and communication strategy, to ensure that the MCSD's activities benefited from a multiplier effect;
- C rather than strategic action programmes, a pilot-project approach should be adopted.

Agenda item 7: New subjects and selection criteria

93. The Commission considered the criteria for the selection of new themes for its programme of work over the next two or three biennia on the basis of the information and matrix for new themes set out in Annex II of document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG. 156/3. Mr Hoballah explained that the limited responses to the questionnaire had shown that three of the proposed themes had received most support from those responding. These were local management and sustainable development; consumption patterns and waste management; and agriculture and rural development.

94. In the discussion on this issue, certain speakers expressed a preference for choosing one or more themes immediately so that preparations for work on them could begin in the near future. However, it was also pointed out that the MCSD still had a heavy workload for the next year or two with the themes on which it was continuing to work and the strategic review for the year 2000. Moreover, several speakers expressed interest in the other four themes on the matrix and the possibility was evoked of important new themes emerging in the next year or two. At the proposal of the Secretariat, it was therefore agreed that the Coordinating Unit would evaluate the feasibility of the seven proposed new themes, laying stress on waste and agricultural and rural development in order to assess for each of them the value added which could be expected from the MCSD and the work currently being carried out on each subject by other bodies. Three additional themes would also be covered by this preliminary appraisal namely natural disasters, poverty alleviation and international cooperation for sustainable development, on the understanding that new themes might emerge from the strategic review for the year 2000. The Coordinating Unit would enlist the help of the members of the Commission in carrying out the feasibility studies. It was noted in this respect that CREE had offered its assistance for the agriculture and rural development theme and WWF for the sustainable management of maritime natural resources, as well as for the desertification and deforestation aspects of agriculture and rural development. The purpose of this appraisal phase was to guide the selection of themes at the Sixth Meeting of the MCSD.

Agenda item 8: Strategic review for the year 2000

95. The Coordinator recalled, that pursuant to the Commission's terms of reference, it was proposed to undertake a four-year strategic review of the implementation of the principles of the Agenda MED 21 programme by members and observers of the MCSD.

96. Mr. Hoballah, introducing the draft terms of reference for the strategic review for the year 2000 contained in Annex IV to document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.156/3, began by pointing out that the review was not concerned with the state of the Mediterranean environment, but with an assessment of the actions taken by all the partners concerned; it would cover such factors as decision-making, capacities and governance. The review would not be limited to the activities of MAP and the MCSD, but would briefly assess the work of other partners, including the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, METAP and CEDARE, as well as civil society. The review would be carried out at several levels : the Euro-Mediterranean level; the regional level, where MAP was the largest component, with an assessment of MAP II actions and MCSD activities; the national level, with an assessment of legal and regulatory reforms undertaken by governments and of the participation of the Contracting Parties in Mediterranean programmes; the local level, under Local Agenda 21 activities; and lastly the level of civil society and NGOs.

97. The Chairperson indicated that the underlying objective of the strategic review was to explore the sense of commitment of all partners at the local, national and regional levels, thus creating a whole new impetus. Her own country, in which the preparatory work for the MCSD had been initiated, had high hopes of the exercise and appealed to all participants to do their utmost to make the review a success.

98. In the ensuing discussion, strong support was expressed for the strategic review and the Tunisian Government was commended for its initiative. One representative considered that the review would constitute a high point in the work of MAP by offering an opportunity to all partners to reconfirm their commitment to a shared vision and brighter future for the Mediterranean. Another participant referred to the need for a new impulse and considered that the choice of the year 2000 was of great symbolic value. The representative of Tunisia, after recalling that his country was to host the next meeting of the MCSD, believed that the symbolic year 2000, five years after the adoption of Agenda MED 21, was an excellent occasion for a strategic review and appealed for a strong ministerial segment. Tunisia firmly intended to make every possible effort to ensure the success of the Sixth Meeting, which would be held in November 2000, to give more time for the preparation of this important strategic review.

99. The Meeting agreed on the following methodology:

1. The Working Group composed of Tunisia and Greece for the Contracting Parties and the City of Rome, EOAEN and MIO-ECSDE for the three categories would be responsible for:
 - a) preparing a model of the report to be provided by members and observers of the MCSD (see 2. below);
 - b) collecting and summarizing the reports provided;
 - c) circulating a preliminary synoptic report to members and observers of the MCSD two months before its Sixth Meeting;
2. Preparation by the members and observers of the MCSD of the report on the methods of implementing the principles of the Agenda MED 21 programme in their respective fields of competence.
3. In view of the timetable and methodology selected, the Secretariat would propose a draft budget to the Contracting Parties in Malta within the framework of the 2000-2001 programme budget.

The Contracting Parties were invited insofar as they were able to contribute to the financing of this exercise on a voluntary basis.

100. Taking into account the comments expressed during the discussions the President concluded that it has been agreed to finalize the "Strategic Review" in the year 2000, and to address potential donors a recommendation concerning funding in order to allow the elaboration of a consistent and detailed report.

Agenda item 9: Cooperation and fund raising

101. Due to lack of time, there was no discussion under this agenda item.

Agenda item 10: Sixth meeting of the MCSD

102. Tunisia confirmed its offer to host the Sixth Meeting of the MCSD to be held in

November 2000. In this connection, it was proposed to organize a meeting of the Steering Committee before the end of 1999 to make preparations for the next Meeting of the Commission, in particular its budget and the follow-up to ongoing activities, including the preparation of the strategic review and the outcome of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Malta.

Agenda item 11: Any other matters

103. There was no discussion under this agenda item.

Agenda item 12: Adoption of the meeting's report

104. The Meeting adopted the report prepared by the Secretariat after making a number of amendments.

Agenda item 13: Closure of the meeting

105. The Chairperson expressed her deep satisfaction at the quality and nature of the work carried out by the Meeting and, after the customary exchange of courtesies, declared the Meeting closed at 14.00 hours on Saturday, 3 July 1999.

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ANNEX II Appendix I

INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Proposals

The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with the support of actors from civil society, are invited to set up on a voluntary basis a Mediterranean system of indicators for sustainable development for use by:

- C Mediterranean riparian States;
- C Actors in multilateral co-operation in the region ;
- C Actors from civil society (local authorities, companies, associations, ...).

1. **Adoption of a common set of indicators:** A first set of 130 basic indicators (of which 55 are more easy to calculate in view of the relevance and availability of data for an adequate number of countries) would be submitted to the Contracting Parties. Each country would compile them, where possible and on a voluntary basis, for the purposes of work at the Mediterranean level. This list may be changed in accordance with tests carried out in the countries,¹ and in accordance with guidance and requirements expressed by the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development.
2. **Complementary indicators:** The indicators selected in the common core set cannot alone make up an adequate framework for an in-depth examination of various subjects and for work on sustainable development policies on special fields or territories. MAP, the States and local authorities will endeavour to propose, test and record complementary pressure, state and response indicators.
3. **Harmonization and dissemination of indicators to facilitate work at the national level:** MAP will create a "glossary" which sets out definitions and the methods for drawing up indicators. MAP will also keep an up-to-date dossier illustrating all selected indicators, including a table of trends by country and at regional level from 1960 onwards with graphical illustrations, in addition to comments on difficulties in collection and possible interpretations. MAP will disseminate this work on the Internet.
4. **Mediterranean report:** The Contracting Parties are invited to contribute effectively to the production and publication by MAP of a report on sustainable development in the Mediterranean. The first report shall be drawn up in the year 2002. This report will be based in particular on indicators for sustainable development.

It will show the unity and diversity of situations in the region, current efforts towards sustainable development, difficulties encountered, good practices, etc.
It will be submitted by the MAP to the Contracting Parties and the MCSD.

5. **National reports:** States are invited to supply MAP with the national reports prepared for the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development, and to facilitate comparative studies on Mediterranean issues undertaken by Blue Plan (series of Mediterranean Country Profiles).

¹To be specified.

These national summaries will indicate result-based goals in the medium and long term, which are clearly stated and adopted by States, as well as examples of good practice.

6. **Capacity Building:** The Contracting Parties are invited: to mobilize national statistical institutions and instruct environment and development observatories, or equivalent agencies, to monitor and enhance indicators at the national level; and to develop them into preferential links at the Mediterranean level.
They are invited to develop appropriate programmes, possibly with regional financial support, to build their capacities:
 - C to promote the use of indicators for sustainable development;
 - C to harmonize environmental and socio-economic statistics; and
 - C to ensure coordination with all the institutions concerned
7. **Follow up:** MAP will follow up this work through the activities centres, and particularly the Blue Plan. It will supplement the work with new activities to examine specific themes in greater depth in collaboration with other competent national and international organizations. The MCSD will follow the work and, where necessary, will call on the task managers, who may propose the holding of the appropriate meetings.

ANNEX II
Appendix II

INFORMATION, PUBLIC AWARENESS, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION

Proposals

(a) Framework conditions

- C The strengthening of the role of civil society requires the urgent and systematic review, amendment and revision of national and local legal and institutional frameworks in most of the Mediterranean countries.
- C The members concerned took note of the principles of the Aarhus Convention(1998);
- C Regional and local authorities, NGOs and other civil society organizations must be encouraged and supported. "Dialogue fora" should be promoted and participatory schemes with active involvement of NGOs should be introduced and/or enhanced. Such schemes may include the participation of NGOs in EIA procedures and in specific projects such as biotopes management, training, monitoring, etc. as well as in sustainability plans through Local Agendas 21 and similar initiatives. Funding provision for such activities should be included in the budget.

Public Awareness, information, participation and mobilization for the environment and sustainability, need to start at an early stage. Therefore relevant issues should be introduced in the curricula of schools and adequate time provision should be made; educators should be trained appropriately; suitable pedagogical material should be produced and disseminated; the media and the Internet could be used by establishing sites on education for the environment and sustainability, with links to other sites.

(b) Specific actions proposed:

- C A number of the specific actions recommended by the Thematic Group are closely linked with the planned MAP information and communication policy and the MAP Secretariat should, therefore, be encouraged to utilize the input of the Thematic Group, as appropriate.

Information:

1. A reliable cost assessment of the needed additional capital investment for infrastructure as well as for running costs etc. for the achievement of comparable, reliable information throughout the Mediterranean.
2. A 2-year state-of-the-art exhibition, held in each Mediterranean country in the national language, which will remain in the country. The information will be provided for the most part by UNEP/MAP and EEA and will focus on the state of the Mediterranean environment as well as the means and mechanisms that are either in place or are needed for its improvement and for the promotion of a truly sustainable development. Part of each exhibition will be dedicated to the respective country in which it is taking place. The exhibitions will be handled by partnership between Governments and NGOs.

Awareness:

3. Organization of a systematic opinion poll and statistically sound assessment of the awareness views, perceptions behaviour and aspirations of the Mediterranean public in the areas of environment and sustainable development, in a mode compatible with the one employed by "Eurobarometer" for Europe.
4. Invitation to the Contracting Parties to develop and implement national strategies and action plans for awareness, as integral components of their national sustainability plans, in collaboration with NGOs, in order to enhance the efficiency and credibility of the information provided. The Secretariat, eventually with the input of the Thematic Group, may provide an "Information and Awareness Strategy Framework" as a support for the work of the Contracting Parties.

Education:

5. Strengthening of the Mediterranean network of environmental educators and relevant Mediterranean networks on education for environment and sustainability.
6. Assessment of the resources needed for the training of 50 per cent of Mediterranean educators of primary schools in the most productive alternative schemes and 30 per cent of those of secondary schools by the year 2004.
7. Encouragement for the establishment of a Mediterranean register with Internet links on teaching materials, particularly audiovisual.

Participation:

8. Invitation to the Contracting Parties to identify at least one pilot participatory and mobilization project per country with the active involvement of the public. These projects at national or local level will be studied, monitored and documented in order to be publicized as possible examples of good practice. Invitation also to States to collaborate with local authorities.
9. Publication and translation of a series of manuals in various Mediterranean languages on the following issues:
 - (a). participation practices and techniques
 - (b). consensus-building methodologies
 - (c). already existing "success stories" in the area of public participation and mobilization.

**Speech by Dr Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP
at the Fifth meeting of the
Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development
Rome, 1 July 1999**

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am really pleased and honoured to address this important meeting through MAP.

This is indeed an extraordinary assembly of governments, local authorities, business leaders, and representatives of non-governmental organizations from throughout the Mediterranean region.

My contribution here on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme must be taken as its commitment to the shared vision of the Mediterranean region as peaceful, economically vibrant and ecologically healthy region.

The Mediterranean region has a powerful historic legacy. The Mediterranean Sea and its adjacent bodies of water have been an inviting passageway to the movement of people. The Myccad, Dorian and Scythian tribes, the Egyptian, Greek and Persian civilizations, the Roman Empire, and successive waves of Germanic and Slavic peoples, Arabas, Mongols and Turks - all moved toward the Mediterranean. They sought to use its waters and coastal plains to extend the range of cultural influence, economic activity and political domination.

For nearly a thousand years, the Mediterranean region has been a fertile ground of ideas and concepts that has guided us to this very day. We can find in this region historic notions of a common space, common concerns and a common heritage. There is enough commonality in the region to make dialogue and cooperation an effort worth undertaking.

Ladies and gentlemen,

There is no doubt that the issues dominating the Mediterranean region are changing. They require a refocus on the elements that constitute the overall security policy of the region. It is a security policy that takes into account the developments in the economic, social, ecological, cultural, and humanitarian spheres.

The current economic trends indicate that the Mediterranean will become even more important than ever as a channel for the movement of vital resources. The trends also indicate that the region is on the way to becoming an integrated advanced economy, with potentials for large investment inflows in the coming decades.

All these economic forecasts and initiatives require an overall sense of ecological stability in the Mediterranean within an overall framework of sustainable development. Massive investment in the area go forward with a sense of long-term security of the ecological resources in the area.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since its establishment in 1972 UNEP has given prime consideration to the maintenance of the ecological integrity of the Regional Seas. The Mediterranean was UNEP's first regional seas programme. And I am proud to say its most successful one.

We need not look far to ascertain the reasons for the success of the Mediterranean Regional Seas programme. The countries bordering the Mediterranean together with European Commission realised very early the need for regional cooperation for protecting the sea against pollution and for paving the way to sustainable development. It was due to the willingness and commitments of concerned partners, that UNEP's Mediterranean Action Plan has become an example for other regions and programmes.

There were other reasons as well for its success. First, the dynamic institutional structure with UNEP's Regional Coordinating Unit and the Various Regional Activity Centres. These institutions covered a wide range of important issues from observation and evaluation to management of resources and capacity building.

Also with time, this regional seas programme evolved from monitoring, assessment and prevention of marine pollution to the use and management of natural resources in coastal regions. Its overall aim has always been a virtuous integration of social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The revision and revitalization of Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and the Action Plan have also aided in this process. They have given due consideration to the major environmental initiatives, actions and changes at the global and regional levels, especially the various Multilateral Environment Agreements. I must mention here the adaptation of Agenda 21 to the Mediterranean context, at the initiative of Tunisia, immediately after the Earth Summit in 1992, and the preparation of Agenda MED 21.

You will agree with me when I say that the establishment of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development was also part of this process of evolution. As a regional forum for dialogue and a think tank for strategic issues, the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development constitutes a bridge between global and regional impetus and decisions and the efforts of countries at the national and local levels.

It definitely represents a promising framework for the definition of a genuinely Mediterranean sustainable development strategy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the framework of the revitalization of the Regional Seas, UNEP will continue to provide full support to the activities of the Mediterranean Action Plan. We will do this by enhancing their scope and achievements. We will promote them not only within UNEP's Family but also with all concerned partners including UN Agencies and UNCSD. I am sure that other regions and institutions will doubtless benefit from this UNEP/MAP experience and expertise.

For this, we will require an efficient information and communication strategy. This will,

in return give a new impetus to MAP-s activities and improve MAP-s visibility. UNEP-s experience, expertise and networks are at the Mediterranean Region-s disposal not only for enhancing information dissemination but also for strengthening cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am convinced that UNEP-s Mediterranean Action Plan and its Commission on Sustainable Development have, probably more than ever before, a crucial role in protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development to build a peaceful and prosperous Region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Mayor of the Comune di Roma for organizing this meeting and to the Italian government for its continuous support to MAP.

**Speech given by H.E. Mrs. Faiza Kefi, President of the MCSD,
at the opening of the fifth meeting of the MCSD
Rome, 1-3 July, 1999**

Secretary of State for the Environment for the Italian Government,
Representative of the City of Rome,
Representative of FAO,
Secretary General,
Members of the MCSD,
Representatives of partner institutions and those supporting cooperation for the Mediterranean,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My pleasure at being here with you is equaled only by the honour I feel at taking part in and leading the work of this, the fifth meeting of the MCSD.

I take particular pleasure in congratulating the City of Rome on its initiative, this Mediterranean capital with 27 centuries of history behind it, which is today playing host to our meeting, and in expressing special thanks to Mr. Francesco Rutelli, whose commitment to the environmental cause is known to us all.

Thanks to him, the cities of the Mediterranean are actively subscribing to the MCSD process. I am sure that the other members and partners of the Commission will follow his lead in order to strengthen the MCSD and MAP, so that, with the support of UNEP, all of us together, governments and civil society, may successfully achieve our ambitious aim of sustainable development for the Mediterranean within the framework of the Agenda MED 21 programme.

I would also like to pay tribute to those who with such tirelessness are working so selflessly in order to build an effective and methodical basis for our activities. Here I would mention Mr. Chabason and the MAP Secretariat team.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The fact that the MCSD is today holding its fifth meeting since being set up in 1995 bears witness to its relevance, and shows just how solidly it is anchored in the system of MAP and the Barcelona Convention. The smooth running of this Commission, which involves all those affected by questions related to the environment and development in the Mediterranean at regional, national and local level, has greatly contributed to the creation of a forum for concertation and constructive dialogue. In spite of the constraints and the many difficulties encountered in the search for a difficult compromise between the legitimate needs of development and the delicate environmental balances in our region, and thanks to the participation of everyone concerned, the Commission has managed to produce serious, in-depth analyses and thinking, and operational recommendations and proposals for action on such sensitive and crucial themes as water demand management and the sustainable management of coastal areas. The active participation of the various MCSD members, particularly the representatives of local authorities, socio-economic groups and NGOs in the work of the

Commission and its thematic groups has played a major role in achieving these results.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The rich and varied agenda before us here in Rome bears witness to the Commission's will to forge ahead.

During its meeting last March, which Tunisia had the honour of hosting, the Steering Committee looked at many aspects of our activity. The results of this study are now before us, faithfully transcribed into the documents of our meeting by the MAP Secretariat.

We will be discussing some practical proposals, particularly those related to working methods, and the follow-up and implementation of the recommendations with the aim of reaching agreement on appropriate ways of ensuring that the Commission functions correctly within MAP.

We will be called upon to examine the recommendations for action proposed by the groups responsible for the themes of indicators of sustainable development, tourism and sustainable development, information, and public participation and awareness-raising, with an eye to their adoption.

We will also be studying the proposals from the groups responsible for continuing examination of the following themes: industry and sustainable development, free trade and the environment, and sustainable urban development.

Finally, we will be debating the terms of reference and the working framework for the strategic assessment for the year 2000.

The drawing-up of this assessment, which will inform us about the implementation of sustainable development in the region, is strategic for our countries as well as for MAP. The choice made to draw up the assessment and have it presented in the year 2000 is significant in more than one respect, and we hope that this important event can effectively be staged in the year 2000.

Conscious as I am of the difficulties involved in completing the assessment on target, I would appeal to all members and partners to support the MAP Secretariat and the MCSD in order to release the means needed to complete this project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The last few years have been marked by many important events in our region. The Euromediterranean and GEF projects, which are gaining ever more momentum, are providing genuine possibilities for cooperation. These should be seized and used to their best effect to the benefit of the implementation of the regional, national and local programmes within the framework of the MCSD's recommendations.

Before concluding, I would like to stress what great store Tunisia lays by the recommendations of the Commission, and their realization within the framework of the national development

programmes. I would like to stress the importance of regional solidarity in achieving the aims of sustainable development. Allow me once again on your behalf to thank the organizers for all the effort they have put in, as well as the City of Rome, which has provided the best possible working conditions for our meeting, to which I wish every success.

**ADDRESS BY THE MAYOR OF ROME AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 5TH
MEETING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT, Capitol, Rome, 1 July 1999**

The Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development has above all acted as a forum where all the interests and social concerns of the Mediterranean region can come together and be confronted.

The Mediterranean is both rich and vulnerable and needs pragmatic policies and measures for sustainable development that are understood, accepted and implemented by all actors, whether institutions or not, public or private.

This is not an easy task in a region that is not characterized by a high degree of cohesion, but it is inescapable if it is hoped to orient the profound transformation of the development model according to sustainability criteria.

This is the nucleus of our task and our work. We must be able to find the point where we can come together, the common factors that will allow our communities to move towards the objective of social, economic and of course environmental development. This is sustainable development.

The countries, regions, cities, public authorities, NGOs and the private sector are here to work together, using their experience, and above all their commitment to put into effect the strategies we will formulate together within their fields of competence and activity.

As one of my predecessors said in this same hall, may God help us.

It is particularly apt that the Commission on Sustainable Development should include cities, their networks and local authorities among its members.

Moreover, this recognition is above all the result of the responsibilities these bodies have deemed it their duty to assume and the ongoing efforts made in recent years, notably in the Mediterranean, which have promoted and encouraged a large number of measures.

The commitment to sustainable development by cities and local authorities, particularly since the Rio Conference, has at the same time accentuated their awareness and their action and this has had an impact both at the local and global levels.

It is with some pride that I can draw attention to the effective contribution made by Rome, which has taken part in all the major initiatives and in some cases has taken on the responsibility for directly promoting them.

I take the opportunity to mention some of the measures taken by the city I represent, albeit briefly.

At the global level:

Participation in the *Cities for Climate Protection* Campaign for the implementation of the Convention on Climate Change, and the follow-up to all the five objectives and the commitments

assumed by countries taking part in the Campaign, reaffirmed in the Nagoya Declaration of 28 November 1997.

Together with the UNCCD and IFAD, promotion and organization of the 1st Forum of Mayors of Cities against Desertification, in parallel with the Conference of the Parties to ratify the Convention against Desertification, 3-4 October 1997, and the 3rd Forum held on 11 and 12 June last in Bonn.

At the Mediterranean level:

Support for the promotion and dissemination of Local Agenda 21 in the Mediterranean, with particular emphasis on cities in the southern and eastern Mediterranean, through participation in the programmes and projects of the European Union and other international organizations and institutions, the organization of international conferences and the formulation of partnership agreements and initiatives such as those with the city of Tunis and the Tunisian Ministry of the Environment. In collaboration with UNEP/TIED, preparation of the 1st report on cleaner production in the Mediterranean region in 1995 and of the 2nd report, which you have received, with the participation of the National Environmental Protection Agency (ANPA). Membership of Medcities, the only permanent network of cities in the Mediterranean aimed at promoting sustainable development, of which I presently have the honour to be President. The establishment of an operational instrument such as the Ecomed Agency, which has assisted and supported all these initiatives in recent years.

In Europe:

Accession to the Alborg Charter and to the European Sustainable Cities Campaign, participation in the preparatory committees for the Lisbon and Seville conferences promoted by the Campaign.

In Rome:

The initiation and strengthening of the Local Agenda 21 process. In your files, you will find the essential information and a progress report. In this connection, I should just like to mention one politico-administrative act that is particularly relevant in my view, namely, the establishment of the Office for Citizen Participation.

The City Council has approved a Plan that sets aside 64 per cent of communal land as protected areas.

Rome has breathing space of 82,000 hectares of green zones, comprising agricultural land, protected nature reserves, parks and historical villas.

The creation of Roma Natura, the body which administers 20 of the parks and nature reserves totalling 51,000 hectares.

All the above underlines the commitment of Rome and its authorities to the promotion of global processes to orient urban development towards sustainability and has led to a new definition of development and urban management policies.

Speech of Mr Valerio Calzolaio, Under-secretary of State for the Environment of Italy at the opening of the fifth meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, Rome 1-3 July 1999.

Good morning to all the representatives of the Governments, of the Councils, of the non-governmental organisations and of the social forces.

In the last few years the rhythm of the launch of the International Conventions on the Environment has slowed down. Till 1971 there were 58 of them. Between 1972 (with the novelty of the 1st Conference and the birth of UNEP) and 1992 they got to 171, an average of 5-6 a year.

In 1998 we reached 175 and the "last" are perhaps the most important ones for the future; biodiversity, climatic changes, desertification, intimately connected, with "global" implications, impossible to be carried out without an ecological re-conversion of the development pattern of the North and the exchange reasons of the South.

At the Summit of Rio in '92 the Conventions on climatic changes and on biodiversity were signed. There started the negotiations for the Convention on the fight against desertification (signed in Paris in 1994) and new impulse was given to the Mediterranean Action Plan and to the Convention of Barcelona – eventually ratified by Italy in its new version, with the relative protocols– thus stimulating the preparation of the Agenda 21 for the Mediterranean, the creation of this Mediterranean Committee for Sustainable Development.

As we know, the existence of a Convention does not guarantee that national relations and undersigned commitments will be respected in form, in terms and in substance; or that sanctions will be applied to transgressors. Yet, they induce dialectics, they set us to concentrate and to verify, they allow us to ask Governments to account for their actions.

For the last few months, with the new Government, the Ministry of Environment has decided to give more relevance, and in a more complete and organic way, to the protection of the Mediterranean and to the relative national and international set of laws. I myself verified the existence of multiple political and institutional pertainances, administrative offices, scientific and research institutes, often not well co-ordinated among them.

For this reason we entrusted the ICRAM and the ENEA with a survey on the degree of application of the principal conventions for the protection of the Mediterranean and on the principal instruments of international collaboration, premises of a proposal of a unitary political and administrative trend.

The survey made by the ENEA and the ICRAM does not pretend to be exhaustive ; it intends to allow a joined evaluation of some significant aspects on the subject of protection of the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment, subjected to a traditional fragmentation of national and international laws as well as of technical, administrative and organisational competencies to their realization. The task will need to be verified, enlarged and gradually updated. Only a deep knowledge of the available instruments, of their strength and weakness, can allow us to accomplish a better national preparation for a more organic and incisive presence in the different international seats, where programmes are decided and launched and so are the practical tools for the environment and sustainable development. We must think of

a unique direction seat for “marine” policies, both for national policy and for the Italian contribution to the international policy.

Italy and the other Mediterranean countries fall into a framework of environmental crisis with problems linked to climatic variations with prolonged periods of drought, to the presence of grounds with a marked tendency to erosion, to the high frequency of forest fires with destruction of the forestry resources, to the conditions of crisis of traditional agriculture and the consequent desertion of vast areas that become marginal, to the excessive exploitation of water resources and to the massive concentration of the economical activities along the coastline, to the strong aggregations of urban areas, to tourism and to intensive agriculture with negative consequences that are reflected on all the “Mediterranean ecosystem” that meanwhile suffers from a process of “tropicalization”.

In the Mediterranean the “greenhouse effect” and “ desertification effect” become the same. Both in a certain way specular effects, triggered off by multiple causes which are linked to energy production and consumption as well as to the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. In the years to come the update of the MAP (Mediterranean Action Plan) and the definition of the PAND (Program of the National Action for the fight against desertification) will allow a better coordination of the governmental and interministerial policy.

I hope that this precious preliminary work will be useful to identify concrete measures, to support the realization of national and regional programmes for the sustainable management of the natural resources of the Mediterranean basin as well as to develop suitable community and co-operation policies.

Valerio Calzolaio
Under-secretary
Ministry of Environment