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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its Protocols

Athens, 29-30 April 1999

MAP INFORMATION STRATEGY

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Introduction

During their Tenth Ordinary Meeting (Tunis, 18-21 November 1997) the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention requested of the Secretariat to present to the Bureau a concrete action programme in the area of information within the MAP system. A report presenting such a programme was submitted by the Secretariat to the Bureau Meeting (Tripoli, 16-17 November, 1998) for its consideration. Following the review of the document presented, the Bureau requested of the Secretariat to convene a Working Group meeting on MAP Information Strategy.

This document represents the initial document presented, amended mainly as to its recommendations to reflect the conclusions of the Working Group Meeting on MAP Information Strategy, Athens, 1-2 April 1999.

1. MAP's mandate

In June 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) brought together in Rio de Janeiro, the greatest number of Heads of State and Government ever assembled in one place to discuss environment and sustainable development.

The "Rio Declaration" adopted, includes an important statement on the right of the general public to be considered in matters related to the environment. Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development states:

"At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes"

Recognizing the important role which public information and public awareness may play in the success of any MAP strategy in the protection of the Mediterranean environment and the sustainable development of the region, provisions were made in MAP Phase II, and various amendments have been introduced to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as well as three new protocols approved during the period 1994-1997.

These legal instruments should constitute the legal basis for a MAP Information and Public Awareness Strategy.

2. The role of MAP

The role which MAP is called to play on information is to coordinate action and act as a catalyst in the protection of the Mediterranean environment and the promotion of sustainable development in the region.

Specifically:

- 2.1 provide relevant information to decision makers in order to assist them in the promotion and the implementation of sustainable development and the protection of the environment:
- 2.2 provide information to the public in connection with the state of the environment of the Mediterranean region and the measures adopted for improvement in order that environmental awareness in the Mediterranean region be enhanced;
- 2.3 encourage public access and participation to information activities for the protection of the environment in the Mediterranean region;
- 2.4 mobilize participation and involvement of major actors concerned.

3. MAP's strategy on information and public awareness

In order to enable MAP to fulfill its role, a detailed MAP Information and Public Awareness Strategy should be formed. This strategy should describe the kind of information and the message(s) to be communicated to the MAP partners and the public at large as well as the most effective Environmental Communication procedure. Information may be defined as follows:

- 3.1 **Information for decision-making:** A critical component of environmental policy making. In fact, communication and development are inseparable. Policy makers, business and industry leaders and government officers soon came to realize that public sentiment had become an important consideration in matters related to the environment, and that policy decisions should be based on sound information.
- 3.2 **Public Information, general awareness raising:** The process of conveying information related to the public or sometimes to special target groups (e.g. schoolchildren, tourists, industrialists etc) with a view to enlisting their support for particular MAP objectives and to promoting general MAP aims. Participation is not a solitary thing, rather it refers to a combination of activities and outcomes.
- 3.3 **Public access and participation:** Publicizing the issues addressed, objectives pursued and breakthroughs made under MAP, to as large and mixed a public as possible through various means of communication, providing access to information and encouraging the public to participate and engage in dialogue.

In order to form a fundamental strategy with explicit public information and awareness objectives, and timetables for achieving them, the entire process must be sensitive to cultural, social, political and economic concerns of the region and adapt accordingly. Therefore different and strategic roles need to be assigned to the various categories of Focal Points of the Contracting Parties and to the Regional Activity Centres (RACs).

MAP Information and Awareness Strategy should be based on a well defined plan with clear objectives: WHAT, TO WHOM, HOW.

Recommendations

- Create a full time Information Officer post at MEDU;
- invite the Contracting Parties to appoint Focal Points on information. The Focal Points should be staffed by appropriate, qualified professionals;
- design and use a common MAP template (MAP brand identification) in all MAP (MEDU, RACs) publications including a MAP logo.

4. The Product: What is to be communicated

The Barcelona Convention, its mandate and MAPs profile and work. The activities, products and MAP's 20 years of experience in the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development in the region together with other selected and useful information in order to support decision making and enhance environmental awareness.

Recommendation

- The Contracting Parties should define the kind of information (legal, scientific) to be communicated.

5. The Target: Whom the Product is to be communicated to

The term Target, in this context, is referred to the public at which MAP information and awareness outputs are aimed. This public should be the beneficiary of MAP's information strategy and are grouped as follows:

- 5.1 Decision-makers (eg. Contracting Parties, Governments agencies, MAP Focal Points):
 - IGOs (UNEP, UNDP, IOC, IMO, FAO, WHO, European Commission, Convention Secretariats etc.).
- 5.2 Economic and social sectors:
 - business community/private sector;
 - Universities, libraries, scientific community;
 - NGOs.
- 5.3 Children and youth;
 - the mass media:
 - tourist population.

In order to reach all target groups the key element is "nationalization". The Regional Activity Centres and the Contracting Parties must be supported in information capacity building, and be urged to assist both in the preparation and dissemination of MAP information. It is unlikely that MAP and its human resources, however efficient, could be effective in reaching regional, national and local audiences without the assistance of competent authorities on a regional and national level.

However until the necessary assistance to the present staff is actually funded (to be defined in relation with the scope of adopted MAP information strategy), improvements could indeed be implemented by the existing MAP human resources.

- The existing Focal Points should become more active in promoting MAP awareness within their own Ministries in particular, and governments in general;
- the target groups should be broadened and updated periodically according to the needs;
- the MEDU, the RACs and the prospective Information Focal Points should play an active role in the dissemination of MEDU and MAP information on the international, regional, national and local levels;
- the MEDU, the RACs and the prospective Information Focal Points should ensure that the MAP mailing list is properly reviewed and routinely updated and that cooperation between MEDU and RACs, regarding the mailing list and the dissemination of information in general, is enhanced:
- RACs should ensure the timely deposit of all publications and reports with the MEDU library;
- whenever the relevant bodies within the Contracting Parties issue publications on the environment, these publications should refer to MAP and MAP activities when related.

6. The Means: Ways and resources to be used

The following should be taken into consideration:

Conditions for the wide dissemination of MAP information vary greatly from country to country within the region. Apart from cultural, economic geopolitical and language differences, there are very distinct differences in the technology for the accession, management and dissemination of information among the MAP countries.

The Contracting Parties differ in their receptivity to information about MAP. For example, political and public sensitivity to environmental issues is much keener in some countries than in others, and some have much longer-established tradition, institutions and means for the dissemination of information.

Public Information varies greatly in different parts of the region. Certain issues which are of great public concern in some Contracting Parties, may have little or no relevance in others.

The processes in reaching the public vary from country to country, and certain media are more developed than others in different countries and situations.

Presently, the Target groups are reached through a mailing list containing approximately 1714 entries and compiled by the Athens MEDU and by the RACs. The following means are being used or have been used:

6.1 Publications

- a. SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS
 - MAP Technical Report Series (MTS)
 - Convention and Protocols
 - MAP and RACs Reports of Meetings
 - RACs publications

b. GENERAL INFORMATION MATERIAL

- MedWaves
- Brochures and Leaflets
- Posters and Stickers

a. SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

MAP Technical Report Series (MTS)

The series contains selected reports resulting from the various activities performed within the framework of the components of MAP. So far 124 volumes have been published which have been disseminated as per the MEDU mailing list, and on request.

- Upgrade the presentation of MTS; immediate action to be taken on the presentation of the MTS. In the medium term the MTS should be systematically proofread and edited by a qualified editor, preferably with a scientific background, prior to publication;
- encourage RACs to publish in the MTS;
- urge National Focal Points to assist MEDU in the enhancement of the MTS mailing list by supplying a list of national NGOs and libraries.

Convention and Protocols

- Mediterranean Action Plan and the Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the Coastal States of the Mediterranean Region for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea, 52 pages. United Nations, New York 1980. Languages: English, French, Spanish, Arabic.
- Mediterranean Action Plan Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the Coastal States of the Mediterranean Region for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution from Land-Based Sources. Final Act and Protocol, 18 pages. Published by the United Nations, New York 1980.
- Protocol concerning Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas, 32 pages. MEDU, Athens, 1986. Languages: English, French, Spanish, Arabic (in one volume).
- Mediterranean Action Plan and Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols, 61 pages. MEDU, Athens, 1992. Languages: English, French, Spanish, Arabic.
- Mediterranean Action Plan and Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols, Informal Document. MEDU, Athens, 1997.

These have been distributed to a selected group of the MAP family (Focal Points, Government experts, IGOs, NGOs, libraries) and, upon request, to institutions and the media.

Recommendations

- Improve the presentation (easy-to read, easy-to-access, easy reference);
 the medium term goal should be a common design template and potential MAP logo;
- publications should be available in English and French and, if possible, in Arabic and should be distributed at an information stand during meetings.

MAP and RACs Reports of Meetings

All MAP Meeting reports and documents, 1975 to present, are deposited with the MEDU library, and constitute the MEDDOC database. *A MAP List of Meetings and Documents* is published and distributed biennially.

Reports of MAP meetings are distributed to a selected group of the MAP and RAC family (focal points, Government experts, IGOs, NGOs) and upon request, to Institutions, academics, researchers, students as well as the mass media.

RACs Publications

- Encourage RACs to upgrade their publications as they produce and distribute their own:
- RACs publications to conform to the common design template (MAP brand identification) and include MAP logo in the long term.

b. GENERAL INFORMATION MATERIAL

MedWaves (MW)

The first issue of MedWaves was published in July 1985 in English and French. Since 1990, following the decision of the Contracting Parties, MedWaves has been published in English, French and Arabic. The first issue of MedWaves in Arabic is no 19, January 1990. MedWaves magazine is issued three to four times annually and mailed by MEDU to nearly 2000 recipients in multiple copies worldwide. It is distributed to Focal Points, Government experts, libraries, scientists, NGOs, IGOs, journalists and others upon request.

Recommendations

- Place electronic version of MedWaves on the MAP Web Site;
- improve the design and layout of MedWaves, though progress has already been made. Restructure contents (analytical part, per major theme and per issue, activities, achievements, RAC/NGO information, list of meetings etc.);
- ensure the timely delivery of reports to the MW Editor by the Focal Points and other sources:
- allocate a one or a one-half page for each RAC and one page for NGO-MAP Partners, and make these contributors responsible for providing the text for the updating of the page;
- send MW to RACs, Focal Points and NGOs, and urge them to distribute MW to National/local NGOs and libraries, institutions, scientists and the media;
- appraise the feasibility of increasing the frequency of MW publication (6 issues per year) in conjunction with reducing the number of pages.

Brochures and leaflets

- The first MAP brochure, the *Mediterranean Action Plan*, 28 pages, was prepared and published in 1985 by MEDU in all Mediterranean languages. It has been distributed by MEDU to international recipients and by the Focal Points on a national level.
- Genoa Declaration on the Second Mediterranean Decade, prepared and published by MEDU in 1988. Languages: All Mediterranean languages (in one volume).
- *High and Dry brochure*, 48 pages, designed and published by MEDU and OCA/PAC (Nairobi), in 1991. Languages: English, French, Arabic.
- MAP brochure, the *Mediterranean Action Plan*, 40 pages, prepared for the Rio Summit, compiled and published by MEDU in 1991. Languages: English and French.
- MAP brochure on MCSD, *Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development: A Regional Channel for Agenda 21*, prepared and published by MEDU in 1997. Languages: English and French (in one volume).
- MAP brochure, the *Mediterranean Action Plan: A Contribution to Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Basin*, 36 pages, prepared and published by MEDU in 1996. Languages: English, French.
- MAP leaflet, four-fold prepared and published by MEDU in 1997. Languages: English, French.
- Various Blue Plan and SPA/RAC brochures.

- Update the institutional MAP brochure as necessary; possibly with the addition of a back page pocket for inserting updated information. Languages: English, French, Arabic:
- create a) promotional, analytical eye-catching, easy-to-read, easy-to-absorb brochure b) leaflet with focus on the Mediterranean environment.

Languages: English, French, Arabic; all Mediterranean languages in the long term.

- create a special brochure for children and youth (seek the assistance of a country with proven experience in such types of brochures), possibly as part of a comprehensive educational pack. Languages: All Mediterranean languages.

Posters and Stickers

- Turtle poster
 Printed in Athens in 1986 by MEDU. Photograph A. Demetropoulos. 5000 copies;
- Monk Seal poster
 Printed by Water Branch, UNEP, Nairobi in 1998. Design by J. Lamb. 10000 copies were sent to MEDU;
- Dolphin poster
 Printed in Athens in 1985 by MEDU. 1000 copies;
- MEDUNIT poster (Art)
 Printed in Athens in 1986 by MEDU. 1000 copies.

Stickers mentioned hereunder were financed by Water Branch, UNEP, Nairobi. It must be noted that none of these stickers were originally designed to serve MAP purposes.

- SOS Message in a bottle: Designed and printed in two sizes by MEDU, in 1984, 100000 copies. Reprinted in 1985, 1986 and 1993.

It must be noted that this sticker is being used by UNEP for the "Year of the Ocean 1998" and appears in the UNEP letterheads;

- Dolphin: Designed and printed by MEDU in 1984. 150000 copies. Reprinted in 1985, 1987, 1991, 1993;
- *Pink Whale:* Designed and printed by MEDU in 1985. 50000 copies. Reprinted in 1985 and 1993:
- *Keep our Seas Alive:* Designed and printed by MEDU in 1985. 150.000 copies. Reprinted in 1987 and 1993;
- Help Stop Global Warming and Sea-level Rise: Designed by the Water Branch, Nairobi. Printed in Athens by MEDU in 1988. 100000 copies. Reprinted in 1991.

Recommendations

- A well designed series of posters and stickers is an excellent way to reach the general public. The impact should be mainly visual and include the MAP logo. Where textual message exists this should be in the local language.

6.2 The MEDU Library

The MEDU library, established in May 1986, houses a small special collection of monographs, scientific periodicals, technical reports and reference publications on marine pollution, sustainable development, environmental policy and law, climate change and other related topics. It serves as a depository for RACs publications and reports as well as for UNEP and other UN Agencies scientific and technical publications, and maintains a complete official documents collection and data base of meetings organized and convened by MAP from 1975 to present. Designated for the use of the MEDU staff, the library, despite its limited resources, has continued to offer assistance and to provide reference services and training to the Mediterranean scientific, professional and student community.

Recommendations

- Define the policy and set guidelines regarding the MEDU library status, services, as well as its potential in the framework of MAP and MAP policy on information;
- organize the library's collection in electronic form in order to facilitate collection management and development and enhance library services;
- design and compile a MAP library database of MEDU and RACs library holdings (documents, publications). Make the database accessible and searchable via conventional means and via the Internet;
- create a MAP library information network with the MEDU library serving as the Focal Point and the active participation of RACs for effective information exchange and dissemination:
- enhance the MEDU library's presence on the MAP Web Site;
- support the library and the library's role in order that its growing responsibilities as a Centre for the deposit/acquisition, management and dissemination of environmental information in the region, be met. To that end, full time library staffing and a librarian's post should be established.

6.3 MAP Web Site

The MAP Web Site was designed by Data Processing and the Library and was uploaded to UNEP server in August 1997, upon approval by the professional staff meeting. It consists of, Information on MAP; History and Milestones; Legal Framework of MAP; Institutional Structure; Partnerships; Programme of Activities; Publications; and up-to-date news as well as glossary of terms. Moreover, it provides downloading option for copies of selected MAP meeting reports, the Barcelona Convention and Protocols, copies of 73 MAP Technical Reports and various other documents and publications. The Web Site may be accessed at: http://www.unepmap.org and is updated approximately, every three weeks.

Recommendations

- Assign responsibility for the contents and updating of the MAP Web Site to the prospective MEDU Information Officer;
- recruit professional services for enhancing the Web Site design;
- make contents of Web Site bilingual, English and French.

6.4 Mass media

The press is contacted through, press releases, interviews, direct contact with individual journalists, press conferences on the occasion of the Contracting Parties meetings.

It must be taken into consideration that the Mass Media (Newspapers, magazines, written publications, radio, television) is a very special target group, as they have the potential of reaching a great number of people.

The print medium, most often available to a mass audience, is the newspaper. However, it must be noted that:

- Environmental journalists are often presented with technical and sometimes conflicting information and are required, under deadlines, to make sense of material referring to complex issues and make it readable and comprehensible. This leads to a confusing picture for the public and, at times, undermines the credibility of journalists on environmental issues:
- there is too much press release journalism, crisis-oriented, inconsistent, lacking in followup and not enough analysis of the issue;
- MEDU has to manage the press for maximum efficiency in promoting the goals and activities of MAP.

Recommendations

- Improve liaison with mass media through the prospective Information Officer at MEDU;
- prepare a press kit with basic information on MAP goals and activities for distribution at press conferences, during Mediterranean Environment Week etc.;
- issue periodic MAP press releases and feature stories in English, French and Arabic;
- utilize prospective MAP Information Focal Points for the dissemination of MAP information to the local media.

6.5 Other means

- Exhibitions
- TV/Video Film outputs
- special events

Exhibitions

MAP has organized the following exhibitions:

- The 1983 Exhibition panels:
 In 1983 T. Farcas, consultant, Water Branch, Geneva, created an exhibition consisting of
 12 light-weight panels, which was shown in 1983 during the meeting of the Contracting
 Parties in Dubrovnik.
- The 1985 Exhibition panels:
 - In 1985, a new MAP exhibition was created by Mr. N. Gabrielli, architect and consultant of the Municipality of Genoa. The exhibition consisted of 35 plastic-coated aluminum panels, each weighing 5 kilos. This exhibition was shown at the 1985 meeting of the Contracting Parties in Genoa; in Athens, December 1985 as part of the celebrations for the 10th anniversary of MAP; in Algiers, March 1986; in Tunis, November 1986; in Nairobi (French Cultural Week), March 1987; in Malta, July 1988; and in Tripoli (Libya), February 1989.

In March 1990 MAP discontinued the used of this exhibition since the data shown had become obsolete.

- The 1992 Exhibition panels:

In 1992, a new MAP exhibition was created by M. Caparis, consultant, and the Senior Information/Conference Assistant. The exhibition consisted of 18 light-weight, easy to transport panels, 43 pictures with photographs and texts. It was shown at the Thessaloniki International Fair, September 1992; in Piraeus at the Music, Vision, Media Exhibition in November 1992; in Athens at the Multimedia Exhibition in December 1992; and at the HELECO Exhibition in April 1993; in Nicosia, in September 1993; at the Thessaloniki International Fair in September 1993; in Antalya, in October 1993; at the Thessaloniki International Fair in September 1994. In January 1995, MAP discontinued the use of this exhibition since the data shown had become obsolete.

- Computer slide show on MAP:

Prepared by Data Processing and shown to the delegates in Barcelona, at the Contracting Parties Meeting, in Barcelona, in 1995.

- UNEP Photo Exhibition:

On loan by UNEP Nairobi, 60 photographs, no text. Shown at the Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Athens, in September 1994. Inaugurated by the Coordinator and the Deputy Mayor of Athens.

It should be taken into consideration that these exhibitions intended as a portable display for frequent use around the region, are in fact, only barely mobile and costly to transport.

Recommendations

- Develop a good set of transparencies and/or slides for the use of professional staff and RACs:
- discontinue such type of exhibitions which are costly to transport;
- encourage and support exhibitions organized on a national and local level, especially exhibitions for children.

TV/video Film output

- MAP produced a video in 1995, 15 minutes long, which follows closely along the thematic lines of the MAP first booklet.
 - This video lacks creative and local appeal and is outdated.
- Television Trust for the Environment (TVE) produced in 1990, a 52 min. video: "Mucking up the MED". The video, a great success, is now outdated.

Recommendations

- Secure funds (external) for an updated video and TV spots on the Mediterranean environment and the Mediterranean Action Plan, promoting MAP and Its activites;

Special Events

World Environment Day

The material regarding the World Environment Day is prepared, produced and disseminated directly by UNEP Headquarters. It must be noted that this material reaches the Contracting Parties and RACs late in May.

<u>Mediterranean Environment Week</u> (Genoa Declaration 1985)

Until today, the Mediterranean Environment Week has been occasionally observed. However,

it could become the highest expression of Contracting Parties solidarity. Mediterranean Environment Week is a unique opportunity to bring MAP alive for its public.

In order to achieve results, careful planning as well as production of relevant material, timely dissemination and careful planning of events should be organized by MEDU in close cooperation with the Contracting Parties and RACs.

- Engage schools with a painting competition, the awards to be given during the Mediterranean Environment Week;
- consider instituting special awards, e.g. "Most Environment-Conscious Business Enterprise".

ANNEX

Introduction

These recommendations were finalized and approved at the conclusion of the meeting of the Working Group on MAP Information Strategy (Athens, 1-2 April 1999). They are arranged in short, medium and long term action and are referred in the main body of the document by Topic.

Recommendations

Short Term (0-12 months)

- Create a full time Information Officer post at MEDU;
- create a full time Librarian post at MEDU;
- invite the Contracting Parties to appoint Focal Points on Information. The Focal Points should be staffed by appropriate, qualified professionals;
- enhance MAP's visibility by urging the existing MAP Focal Points to become more active in promoting MAP awareness within their own Ministries in particular, and governments in general;
- upgrade the presentation and the printing quality of MTS;
- recruit professional services for enhancing the MAP Web Site design:
- place electronic version of MedWaves on the MAP Web Site;
- assign responsibility for the contents and updating of the Web Site to the prospective MEDU Information Officer:
- each RAC to assign responsibility on information to a designated staff member:
- in cooperation with the prospective Information Focal Points and the RACs, ensure the proper review and the regular updating of the MAP mailing list for more efficient use;
- ensure the timely deposit of all RACs reports and publications with the MEDU library;
- develop a good set of transparencies and/or slides for the use of professional staff and the RACs.

Medium Term (12-24 months)

- Design and use a common MAP template (MAP brand identification) in all MAP (MEDU, RACs) publications including a MAP logo;
- improve the design/layout of MedWaves. Appraise the feasibility of increasing the frequency of publication (6 issues per year) in conjunction with reducing the number of pages;
- allocate a one or one-half page for each RAC and one page for NGO-MAP Partners, and make these contributors responsible for the updating of the page;
- update the institutional MAP brochure as necessary, Languages: English, French, Arabic;
- create: a) a promotional, analytical, eye-catching, easy-to-read, easy-to-absorb brochure,
 b) a leaflet with focus on the Mediterranean environment. Languages: English,
 French, Arabic; all Mediterranean languages in the <u>long term</u>;
- organize the MEDU library's collection in electronic form in order to facilitate collection management and development, and enhance library services;
- enhance the MEDU library's presence on the MAP Web Site;
- make contents of the Web Site bilingual, English and French;
- improve liaison with mass media through the prospective Information Officer at MEDU;
- issue periodic MAP press releases and feature stories in English, French and Arabic;

- utilize prospective MAP Information Focal Points for the dissemination of MAP Information to the local media:
- prepare a press kit with basic information on MAP goals and activities for distribution at press conferences, during Mediterranean Environment Week etc;
- engage schools with a painting competition, the awards to be given during Mediterranean Environment Week;
- have MTS proofread and edited by a qualified editor, preferably with a scientific background, prior to publication.

Long Term (24-36 months)

- Make MAP publications available in English and French and, if possible, in Arabic and distribute them at an information stand during meetings;
- create a special brochure for children and youth, possibly as part of a comprehensive educational pack;
- design a series of posters and stickers, as an excellent way to reach the general public, with the impact being mainly visual, and include the MAP logo. Where textual message exists, this should be in the local language;
- create a MAP library information network with the MEDU library serving as the Focal Point and the active participation of RACs for effective information sharing and dissemination;
- organize training programmes on information management and public awareness for nationals of developing Mediterranean countries;
- secure funds (external) for an updated video and for TV spots on the Mediterranean environment and the Mediterranean Action Plan, promoting MAP and its activities;
- consider instituting special awards, e.g. "Most Environment-Conscious Business Enterprise".