

Athens, 3 - 4 November 1983

Mediterranean Action Plan
Progress report covering the period
April to October 1983

Introduction

The present report is being submitted to the Bureau as a Working Paper (English only) to facilitate its review of activities carried out by the secretariat since the previous meeting of the Bureau (7 - 8 April 1983).

1. Integrated planning and environmental management of the Mediterranean Basin

1.1 Blue Plan (ME/O503-80-01)

- The Co-ordinator and the Director of RS/PAC visited Sophia Antipolis on 23-25 August 1983. Agreement was reached with the GCS Executive Secretary on new dates for the Meeting of National Focal Points (Sophia Antipolis 24-27 January 1984), on the agenda and documentation.
- It was also agreed to reconvene the Group of Co-ordination and Synthesis (Sophia Antipolis, 8 October 1983) for it to endorse the proposals for Blue Plan Phase II. The meeting of the Group of Co-ordination and Synthesis was convened as planned on 8 October 1983. The Co-ordinator opened the meeting which was chaired by the Executive Secretary, Mr. Grenon.

The G.C.S agreed on the final text of the Synthesis Report of Phase I and reviewed the proposals for the Blue Plan Second Phase which will be submitted to the Blue Plan Focal Points in January 1984.

1.2 PAP (ME/O503-82-01; 83-05; 83-06)

- The WHO/PAP-RAC workshop on Housing Hygiene in Mediterranean countries was held at the PAP/RAC in Split from 9 to 13 May 1983. The Workshop was attended by 34 participants from 16 countries, including 11 on Southern Europe and the Mediterranean coastal area. The summary report (ICP/BSM 002(5)(S) has been issued.
- The Co-ordinator was in contact with the Yugoslav authorities concerning the nomination of a new Director of PAP/RAC in Split. A decision is expected shortly.
- The Co-ordinator and the Director, RS/PAC visited Split on 18 - 20 October 1983 and agreed with the Director and staff of PAP/RAC, and with representatives of Yugoslav authorities on regrouping of PAP projects and new activities.

- FAO, the Executing Agency for the UNDP-financed regional project on aquaculture (MEDRAP) invited the Unit to become a member of the Advisory Committee for MEDRAP, and to attend its first meeting in Tunis on 4 - 7 October. Mr. Gabrielides represented the Unit, accompanied by Mr. Z. Filic (Yugoslavia) PAP Consultant on aquaculture, whose travel was financed by the Unit.

1.3 ROCC (ME/0503-76-06)

- IMO has rewritten the job description of the ROCC Director, as requested by the Bureau in order to keep the post at P-5 level. An enquiry was received from France on this matter in September suggesting that the new terms of reference be discussed at the next Contracting Parties Meeting.
- A training course (MEDIPOL 83) is being organized by ROCC in Marseilles from 7-18 November 1983

- 1.4 - The Seminar on port reception facilities has been postponed indefinitely due to insufficient response from Mediterranean coastal States. The Unit was expected to support some participants with the \$ 5,000 allocation approved at Dubrovnik.

1.5 Specially Protected Areas

The project document to assist the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas in Tunis was submitted to the Environment Fund in September 1983. The practical arrangements for circulating the vacancy notice for the post of advisor in accordance with the decisions in Cannes will be taken up with the Centre Director.

1.6 Co-operation in the Mediterranean

- Preparations have started for the meeting of the contribution of bilateral and multilateral programmes to the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan (Brussels, March 1984). A questionnaire was distributed to Contracting Parties on 20 September 1983 giving a deadline of 15 November, for replies. A consultant has been identified to analyse the replies and draft a synthesis report. During a visit to headquarters, UNEP activities in Mediterranean coastal States relevant to MAP were identified.

1.7 Training course in Urbino, Italy (26 September-5 October 1983) (ME/0503-83-07)

- The training course organized by SOGESTA was held on schedule in Urbino. The ROCC Director gave a lecture. Twenty participants, 1 from Cyprus, 5 from Egypt, 1 from Malta, 3 from Morocco, 3 from Syria, 5 from Tunisia and 2 from Jordan attended the course.

1.8 The UNIPOL insurance company of Italy, in co-operation with the University of Rome, has announced five research grants of 1,000,000 lira each for studies related to carcinogenicity and mutagenicity of marine pollutants. These studies are conducted by a department of the University of Rome in the framework of MED POL - PHASE II, under the sponsorship of WHO and UNEP. The initiative arose from a visit by the Co-ordinator to a meeting on the protection of the environment organized by UNIPOL at Bologna in January 1983, as part of their public service programme.

2. Co-ordinated Programme for Pollution Monitoring and Research in the Mediterranean Sea (MED POL)

2.1 PHASE I (FP/ME-0503-75-04; 75-05; 75-07; 76-03; 76-04)

- Documentation relevant to PHASE I of MED POL has been prepared:

- Programme Description has been issued in the Reports and Studies Series No.23
- Individual Scientific Reports have been edited and printed and are ready for distribution as drafts.
- Decision was taken at a meeting in Geneva (9-12 August) between the Director of RS/PAC, the Co-ordinator of MAP and the Senior Marine Scientist of MAP to close down all project documents relevant to MED POL - PHASE I.

2.2 PHASE II (ME/0503-81-01)

- Agreements covering the National Monitoring Programmes and the modalities for co-operation with the Government of Israel and Turkey have been cleared and agreements with the Governments of Morocco and Tunisia are being processed. Under these, and the previous agreements with Cyprus, Lebanon, Malta and Yugoslavia, the following assistance has been provided or committed for a total of about US \$300,000:
 - Supply of new analytical and sampling equipment.
 - On-job training for scientists involved in the programme.
 - Fellowships for scientists attending meetings.
 - Maintenance through IAEA of analytical equipment.
- Preparations for the Second Meeting of the Working Group on Scientific and Technical Co-operation have proceeded:

- A decision was taken at the above-mentioned meeting (Geneva 9-12 August) to postpone the meeting until 21-25 November 1983 in view of the difficulties to have documents in the two official working languages.
- Documents for the meeting were prepared by the MED Unit in co-operation with the relevant agencies, and in close consultation with RS/PAC:

Report on the implementation of the monitoring activities during 1981 - 1983 and proposals for 1983 - 1985. (Document UNEP/WG.91/3).

Report on the implementation of the research activities during 1981-1983 and proposals for 1983-1985. (Document UNEP/WG.91/4).

Assessment of the present state of pollution by mercury in the Mediterranean Sea and proposed control measures. (Document UNEP/WG.91/5).

Assessment of the present state of microbial pollution in the Mediterranean Sea and proposed control measures. (Document UNEP/WG.91/6).

Report on the implementation of the Protocol concerning co-operation in combating pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by oil and other harmful substances in case of emergency. (Document UNEP/WG.91/7).

Report on the implementation of the Protocol for the prevention of pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft. (Document UNEP/WG.91/8).

- Letters of invitation and cables announcing the new dates were sent to all members of the Working Group (17 National Co-ordinators for MED POL, Libya has not yet designated one), including agenda and annotated agenda.
- Letters of invitation have been sent to all Co-operating Agencies (FAO, WHO, UNESCO, IOC, WMO, IAEA) and to IMO.
- Preparations for the Meeting of Experts on the implementation of the Protocol on Land-based sources of pollution have proceeded in close co-operation with WHO.
- Forms for reporting the results of the monitoring activities have been developed and distributed to National Co-ordinators. Processing of data reported through the programme has been carried out at the MED Unit in support of the preparation of documents UNEP/WG.91/5 and UNEP/WG.91/6.

- Intercalibration exercises have been organized through IOC/UNESCO for petroleum hydrocarbons, through IAEA for heavy metals and organohalogens, and through WHO for microbiological methods.
- Development of reference methods has continued in close co-operation with RS/PAC and the Co-operating Agencies, and a testing exercise for methods on heavy metals and organohalogens has been launched in co-operation with FAO and IAEA. The following reference methods have been published:

Determination of faecal coliforms in sea-water by the membrane filtration culture method. Reference Methods for Marine Pollution Studies No. 3/Rev.1, UNEP 1983.

Determination of faecal streptococci in sea-water by the membrane filtration culture method. Reference Methods for Marine Pollution Studies No. 4/Rev.1, UNEP 1983.

Determination of faecal coliforms in bivalves by multiple test tube method. Reference Methods for Marine Pollution Studies No. 5/Rev.1, UNEP, 1983.

- Research activities are well under way and about sixty-five research agreements for a total of about US \$160,000 have been signed between the relevant Co-operating Agencies and the research centres participating in the programme (see document UNEP/WG.91/4).
- A Workshop on Jelly-fish blooms is being convened in Athens 31 October - 4 November 1983), and preparations for it are advancing.
 - Announcements were sent to about 500 Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean scientists.
 - Answers with twenty-two announced contributions have been received.
 - A "Bibliography on Jelly-fish Blooms and related Organisms", and reports on "Monitoring of swarming of Scyphomedusae" and "Occurrence of Jelly-fish Blooms in the Mediterranean", have been, or are being prepared for the meeting.
- Other documents on MED POL, issued or being prepared by the MED Unit, RS/PAC and the Co-operating Agencies are:
 - Long-term Programme for Pollution Monitoring and Research in the Mediterranean (MED POL) - PHASE II. UNEP Regional Seas Reports and Studies No.28.

- Co-ordinated Mediterranean Pollution Monitoring and Research Programme (MED POL) - PHASE I: Programme Description. UNEP Regional Seas Reports and Studies No.23.
- Proceedings of the VI ICSEM/IOC/UNEP Workshop on Marine Pollution of the Mediterranean, Cannes, 2-4 December 1982. ICSEM/IOC/UNEP. In preparation.
- Waste Discharge into the Marine Environment. Principles and Guidelines for the Mediterranean Action Plan. WHO/Pergamon Press.
- Report on the Consultation Meeting on the Evaluation of Methylmercury in Mediterranean Populations and related Health Hazards, Athens, 13-17 September 1982. WHO.
- Report of the Consultation Meeting of Methods for Monitoring selected Pollutants in Sewage Effluents and Coastal Recreational Waters, Rome, 24-26 November 1982. WHO.

- 2.3 On 21 April 1983, the Government of Monaco officially placed at the disposal of the International Atomic Energy Agency, free of charge, an additional 400 m² of space for the International Laboratory on Marine Radioactivity. The space will be mainly used for intercalibration of the MED POL Programme and will also permit to train technicians in laboratory practices. The Deputy Director-General of IAEA officially accepted the new offices. The Unit was represented at the ceremony by the Co-ordinator.
- 2.4 The Unit supported the initiative of the Government of Greece to convene a seminar on jelly-fish in Athens (6-8 June 1983). The participation of Mr. V. Axiak (Malta) and Mr. A. Benovic (Yugoslavia) was financed by the Unit. In addition, the Regional Seas/PAC financed the participation of Mr. R. Hartwick (Australia).
- 2.5 The Permanent representation of Libya to UNEP has expressed appreciation to the Executive Director for the report of the advisory mission which was headed by Dr. Cruzado in 1982.
- 2.6 On 22 June 1983 the Greek Press and television reported an incident in the international waters of the Aegean Sea off the coast of Crete, involving the Turkish research vessel Piri Reis. The vessel had been intercepted by units of the Greek Navy while carrying out investigations on the continental shelf.

The Greek Ambassador in Ankara presented a protest and was informed that the vessel was conducting research as part of the MED POL Phase 2 programme.

At a meeting held on 23 June 1983 with the Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Greece, Mr. Yannis Kapsis, the Co-ordinator informed the Greek Authorities that the Unit had received no prior notice of the intended cruise of the Piri Reis, but that visits to several stations in international waters of the Aegean were included in the Turkish National Monitoring Programme. The programme had not been approved by the Unit, which was awaiting the Greek monitoring programme. Mr. Kapsis informed the Co-ordinator that the Greek Government would resist with any available means research on the Greek continental shelf by foreign vessels of any nationality. He promised that the Greek national programme would be submitted to the Unit by the end of July 1983. (Not yet received).

From 6 to 8 July 1983 the Co-ordinator visited Ankara and discussed the Piri Reis incident with Turkish authorities. The latter informed the Co-ordinator that Turkey was abiding by the Greek-Turkish Agreement signed in 1976 and had no intention of conducting seismic or other research on the Aegean Continental shelf. Study of sediments would, however, be continued under either MED POL or under some of the other research programmes. The incident can now be considered as closed.

3. Barcelona convention and related protocols

3.1 - On 17 June 1983, the Protocol on Land-based Sources of Pollution entered into force upon ratification by Algeria, Egypt, France, Monaco, Tunisia and Turkey. (Spain informed us only in August 1983).

- This is to be considered a most important development.

3.2 - Spain informed us that Tunisia had ratified the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas on 26 May 1983, and Egypt on 8 July 1983. Eleven Parties have signed the Protocol.

4. Institutional and financial implications

4.1 UNEP Governing Council

The Co-ordinator attended the 11th Session of the Governing Council in Nairobi (11 - 24 May 1983). Several delegations from Mediterranean and other countries praised the Mediterranean programme. For the first time the U.K. delegation spoke in favour and recorded the support its country gives to the programme through its participation in the E.E.C.

4.2 Relationship with host country Greece

Ratification of the host country Agreement, signed on 11 February 1982, has not taken place despite constant reminding at high level and repeated assurances received. Application of the Agreement by the Greek authorities has been affected by this. The Co-ordinator addressed a letter to the Minister of Housing, Physical Planning and the Environment, Mr. Tritsis, on 15 September 1983, visited the office of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs on 19 September 1983, and discussed the matter on the same day with the senior officer designated by the Minister for Environment to act as liaison with the Unit. A note was sent to the Executive Director who conveyed his concern to the Permanent Representative of Greece to UNEP on 29 September 1983. The President of the Contracting Parties, H.E. Mr. Kovacevic, was informed by telephone of the situation.

4.3 The Co-ordinating Unit

- The FAO Senior Fishery Officer (marine pollution), Mr. G.P. Gabrielides of Cyprus (P.5) joined the Unit on 16 September 1983.
- A secretary (Ms. H. Geralis), locally recruited, joined the Unit on 19 September 1983. The MED POL team within the Unit is now complete.
- The classification section in New York has accepted the classification of the Economist at P.4. The job description was circulated by the Personnel Section, Nairobi.
- No final response was received from New York on the up-grading of the post of Co-ordinator to D-2, approved by the Contracting Parties at the Dubrovnik meeting, with effect from 1 January 1983.

4.4 Attendance at meetings and travel of staff

A. Manos:

- Attended 11th Session of UNEP Governing Council, Nairobi (11 - 24 May 1983).
- Represented UNEP at UNDP Regional Meeting for Europe in Ankara, Turkey, (6-9 July 1983). The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Administrator of UNDP, Mr. Arthur G. Brown. The Co-ordinator presented the Action Plan and requested UNDP support for relevant regional (Aquaculture, renewable sources of energy) and national projects. A modest contribution for MED RAP, Tunis was promised, but no funds were to be expected for the energy project for which, according to UNDP officials, Arab countries have not shown strong interest.

- Visited IMO Headquarters in London (27 June 1983) to discuss the ROCC project and the seminar on port reception facilities.
- Visited the European Office of WHO in Copenhagen (28-29 June, 1983) to discuss the participation of WHO in the MED POL and other components of MAP. A note prepared by WHO/EURO was circulated to the Bureau members on 30 June 1983.
- Consultation with RS/PAC, Geneva (in conjunction with home leave) (9-11 August 1983).
- Consultation with Blue Plan, Sophia Antipolis (23-25 August 1983).
- Represented UNEP at MESAEP meeting in Heraklion, Greece, (6-7 September 1983).
- Attended opening of Thessaloniki International Fair, Greece, (11 September 1983).
- Visited UNEP Headquarters for consultation with Programme and Fund (23-30 September 1983).
- Opened and attended the meeting of GCS at Sophia Antipolis (8 October 1983).
- Visited PAP/RAC Split for programme review (18-20 October 1983)

A. Cruzado:

- Visited Geneva (26-29 July) (in conjunction with annual leave), to discuss with the Director of RS/PAC the preparations for the Second Meeting of the Working Group for Scientific and Technical Co-operation, and to have a consultation with WMO staff on the follow-up of MED POL and GESAMP activities.
- Visited Geneva (9-12 August) to discuss with the Director of RS/PAC and the Co-ordinator of MAP, the progress in the preparations for the Second Meeting of the Working Group on Scientific and Technical Co-operation and other related matters.
- Visited Monaco (5-6 September) to discuss with the IAEA staff on the follow-up of MED POL activities, and to Lerici, Italy (7-11 September) to attend the IOC meeting on the results of MEDALPEX, and an UNESCO sponsored workshop for the development of a programme for meteorological and oceanographic processes in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.
- Attended the First Meeting of the GESAMP Working Group No.23 on the Methodology and Guidelines for the Assessment of the Impact of Pollutants on the Marine Environment (ASSIP), Rome (26-30 September).

L.J. Saliba

- Visited Algiers, Oran and Mostaganem to assist in establishment of health-related monitoring programme. A special mission report submitted to the Algerian authorities has now been de-restricted. (1 - 5 May 1983).
- Visited Rome to have discussions with FAO and Italian institutions on Methylmercury project. (6 - 8 May 1983).
- Visited Split to attend WHO/PAP/RAC Workshop on Housing Hygiene in Mediterranean countries. (9 - 13 May 1983).
- Visited Zagreb to have discussions with Yugoslav institutions on Methylmercury project. (12 May 1983).
- Visited Cairo and Alexandria to have discussions with Egyptian institutions re MED POL programme and with WHO/EMRO re the same programme. (27 May - 2 June 1983).
- Visited Copenhagen to have discussions with WHO/EURO on MED programme and compile data on WHO/EURO programmes of relevance to MAP. (12 - 16 June 1983).

G. P. Gabrielides

- Represented the Unit at the first meeting of the Advisory Committee of the FAO Regional Aquaculture project (MEDRAP) in Tunis (4-7 October 1983)

F.S. Civili

- Represented the Unit at the Meeting of Experts in Regional Development in the Mediterranean at Delphi, Greece (28 September 1983) and presented a paper on regional co-operation in the Mediterranean.
- Visited University of Trieste, at request of its Rector, (11-12 October 1983) to assist in the review of a proposal for a programme on jelly-fish.
- Attended Seventh Meeting of the Scientific Group on dumping at IMO (24 - 28 October 1983).

4.5 Public information

- On 12 April 1983 a press conference was held by the Co-ordinator at the Foreign Press Association in Athens on the Mediterranean Action Plan and the decisions of the Intergovernmental meeting in Dubrovnik. Over fifty media representatives attended, showing great interest in the programme.

- Naftiliaki, a publication concerned with the shipping world, has devoted a 20-page feature article in the July 1983 issue to the Mediterranean Action Plan.
- The Unit distributed locally the press release issued in Geneva on the entry into force of the LBS Protocol (24 August 1983).
- The Unit was the main exhibitor in the UN Stand at the 48th International Fair in Thessaloniki which opened on 11 September 1983. Information material on the Action Plan and the Regional Seas Programme was displayed and distributed.
- Der Spiegel, the German weekly magazine, published a story on the Mediterranean in its 17 October 1983 issue.

4.6 Other matters

- The Secretary-General of the Intergovernmental Maritime Organization, Mr. C.P. Srivastava, visited the Unit on 22 September 1983. He addressed the staff underlining the success of the Mediterranean programme and IMO's willingness to co-operate in it.
- Arrangements were made on behalf of INFOTERRA for the holding of the meeting of the Advisory Committee at the seat of the Unit (Athens, 17-20 October 1983). The Meeting was opened by UNEP's Deputy Assistant Executive Director for Programme, Mr. H. Mattos de Lemos.
- A short paper was transmitted to the UN Economic Commission for Europe to be distributed at the seminar on Ground-water Protection Strategies and Practices held in Athens 10-14 October 1983, to which UNEP was invited. The paper called attention to the implications of the Land-based Sources Protocol to ground-water protection in the Mediterranean coastal States.
- The Executive Council of the European Environment Bureau, which co-ordinates non-governmental organizations from European countries, met in Athens on 24 - 25 October 1983 with the current President of the European Ministers of the Environment, Mr. A. Tritsis. In co-operation with the newly established Mediterranean Committee of the European Environment Bureau (EEB), the Unit invited the following representatives of other Mediterranean countries to attend an expanded meeting: Mr. A. Theodosiadis (Cyprus), Mr. I. Tamir (Israel), Mr. S. Benjelloun (Morocco), Mr. M.A. Abroughi (Tunisia) and Dr. J. Cicek (Yugoslavia).
- The Executive Council unanimously adopted a resolution inviting the Community to pay greater attention to the problems of the Mediterranean and to provide more practical support to the Mediterranean Action Plan. It further decided to convene a meeting of NGO's from European and Mediterranean countries to be held in Brussels in the spring of 1984 in conjunction with the MAP meeting on co-operation.

4.7 Mediterranean Trust Fund

- The request of the Contracting Parties to extend the Mediterranean Trust Fund through 1985 (UNEP/IG.43/6, Para. 98) was endorsed by the 11th Session of UNEP's Governing Council and approved by the Controller of the United Nations.
- Unpaid pledges amounted to US \$813,579 only out of US \$2,833,000 plus US \$54,393 due for 1982. However, the additional Greek special contribution in drachmas (US \$400,000) has not yet been paid, causing the Unit to transfer dollars from the New York account to pay for local expenses. Meanwhile the computer and interpretation equipment approved in the budget could not be ordered.
- On 27 October 1983 the Central Bank of Greece granted an exceptional advance of 4 million drachmas to the Unit account, to meet a critical cash shortage due to delayed transfer of funds from New York.

5. Conclusion

The Bureau is invited to take note of this progress report and to record in its report - which will be distributed to all Contracting Parties - its observations and recommendations.