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Introduction

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its Protocols was held in Nicosia (Cyprus), on 3-5 May 2001, at the "Holiday Inn" hotel.

Participants

2. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Francis Zammit Dimech, Malta's Minister for the Environment and President of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties. It was attended by: Mr. Jahia Awaidah, State Ministry for Environmental Affairs (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Gabriel P. Gabrielides, Director of the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research (Cyprus), Mr. Pierre Roussel, Secretary General of the General Inspectorate for the Environment, Ministry for Land Planning and the Environment (France), in their capacity as Vice-Presidents of the Bureau, and Mr. Ehtuish F. Ehtuish, Secretary of the People's Committee, General Environmental Authority (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), in his capacity as Rapporteur. H.E. Mr. F. Zammit Dimech was accompanied by Mr. Paul Mifsud and Mr. Andre Vassalo Grant, officials from the Maltese Ministry of the Environment. Mr. Yahia Awaidah was accompanied by Mrs. Reem Abad Rabbah and Mr. Moustafa Kosay, officials from the State Ministry for Environmental Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic.

3. Mr. Lucien Chabason, Coordinator, and Mr. Humberto Da Cruz, Programme Officer, were representing the Coordinating Unit of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), and acted as Secretariat to the meeting.

4. A complete list of participants is contained in Annex I to this report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

5. Mr. Lucien Chabason, MAP Coordinator, informed the meeting that the Vice-President representing Italy had apologized for not being able to attend the meeting, as his country was in the midst of an election campaign. H.E. Mr. Farouk Adli, State Minister for Environmental Affairs (Syrian Arab Republic) had also let him know that he had been detained in Damascus by governmental duties.

6. H.E. Mr. Francis Zammit Dimech, President of the Bureau and Minister for the Environment of Malta, opened the meeting, stating that he was delighted to be in Cyprus. On behalf of the Bureau and also in his own name he wished to thank the Cypriot government and in particular Mr. Costas Themistocleous, Minister for Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, for their warm welcome and the perfect way in which the meeting had been organized.

7. Recalling the wealth of Cyprus's historical, cultural and natural heritage, the President of the Bureau drew a parallel between the host country and his own: both Cyprus and Malta were island states with small populations; they were both located at one end of the Mediterranean, in an exceptional geographic position; both had been part of the Roman empire and, in a more recent past, the British empire, before gaining their independence. Finally, both countries were now deeply involved in the process of joining the European Union, following official acceptance by the EU of their candidature for the next wave of enlargement. It was therefore fair to speak of a common destiny, both in the past and for the future.

8. Mr. Zammit Dimech indicated that the Bureau's term of office would be coming to an end next November, and he thanked all members for having endeavoured to perform the tasks entrusted to them by the Contracting Parties over the last two years. He mentioned several of the decisions which had been adopted at the two previous meetings in Malta and Damascus. He himself had had the honour of opening the second meeting of legal and technical experts on the revision of the "Emergency" Protocol one month earlier in Monaco. He felt that this had progressed well, thus opening up the possibility of holding the plenipotentiaries conference in Malta for the adoption of the new instrument. As the text provided for an enhanced role, greater responsibilities and challenges for REMPEC, he took this opportunity to solemnly assure the Bureau that the Maltese government was fully committed to providing REMPEC with all the necessary logistical and other support it may require in order to effectively fulfill its mission.

9. The President of the Bureau stressed two further items on the agenda for the meeting. Firstly, the question of harmonizing the system of reports, which the Contracting Parties were required to submit to the Secretariat under MAP's legal component. These reports were a means of evaluating the progress made towards jointly agreed-upon objectives, and of communicating with other regional institutions and organizations. It was therefore necessary to harmonize these reports without complicating them or increasing the workload for national administrations, and to seek a flexible and consistent notification system, compatible with other organizations and conventions which covered overlapping areas and required the same type of information. Secondly, there was the question of MAP's participation in the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, scheduled to be held in Johannesburg in 2002. The work already done by MAP in the MCSD with the adoption of the "Strategic Review" and the forthcoming development of "strategic guidelines" should allow the Mediterranean to make a sound, exemplary contribution to the Summit, reflecting the work which had effectively been jointly undertaken over the past 25 years, with the full involvement of all the components of civil society, especially the NGOs.

10. H.E. Mr. Costas Themistocleous, Minister for Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment for Cyprus, welcomed all the Bureau members to Cyprus and assured them that no efforts would be spared to make their stay as pleasant as possible. He thanked the President for his kind words about his country, and shared his vision of the common future of Malta and Cyprus, in particular regarding their prospect of joining the European Union. He had hoped to be able to announce to the Bureau the ratification by Cyprus of the new or amended instruments in the Barcelona system, but the dissolution of the Cypriot Parliament on 17 April last had put an abrupt end to a process that was nearing completion. He was, however, certain that this announcement would be made at the next meeting of the Contracting Parties in November 2001 in Monaco.

11. Mr. Themistocleous referred to his country's main achievements in the environmental field. The goal of integrating the environmental dimension in all sectors of economic policy had been included in Cyprus's Strategic Development Plan. Currently, all his government's efforts were focused on the implementation of the national programme for the adoption of the "acquis communautaire" in the environmental field, with the transposition of relevant directives into national legislation and the adoption of necessary resources in areas ranging from water and air quality protection, management of chemical products, nature conservation, noise, pollution prevention and control, the requirement to produce environmental impact studies, and public access to environmental information. In addition, Cyprus had ratified a number of international conventions, such as the Basel and Ramsar conventions on biodiversity and climate change, and was making every effort to close the "environment" chapter as rapidly as possible at legal level.

12. Mr. L. Chabason, on behalf of the Secretariat, followed in turn by the members of the Bureau, thanked the Cypriot authorities for their hospitality and their desire to demonstrate

the tangible results of their environmental action through a visit to the nature reserve on the Akamas peninsula, scheduled to take place on the last morning of the Bureau's meeting on Saturday, 5 May.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

13. The meeting adopted the proposed agenda contained in document UNEP/BUR/56/1, having first been reminded by the Coordinator that, in accordance with the practice adopted at the beginning of the current biennium for all Bureau meetings, summary conclusions would be adopted at the end of the meeting, with a report reflecting the detailed contents of discussions being sent to all members at a later stage.

Agenda item 3: Progress report by the Coordinator on activities implemented since the last meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, and draft recommendations on specific activities

14. The MAP Coordinator introduced Mr. Humbert Da Cruz to the members of the Bureau, a Spanish national who has been appointed by UNEP's Executive Director to replace Mr. I. Dharat as Programme Officer specially responsible for the legal component, relations with the RACs and the NGOs.

15. Mr. Chabason indicated that he would follow the order of his report in presenting the various activities implemented since the meeting in Damascus or currently being conducted, focusing on those which came with draft recommendations from the Secretariat, and on which the Bureau was expected to come to a decision.

Legal Framework

Ratification Process

16. The Coordinator noted that the situation in respect of the ratification of the new or amended legal instruments in the Barcelona system showed no significant change since Damascus, since the table produced on 12 March 2001 and annexed to the progress report did not contain any new elements. The most that could be said was that some progress had been made in the process, which needed to be confirmed – as in the case of Albania and Algeria – and that one new fact had recently emerged, which would be announced by a member of the Bureau.

17. The Vice-President representing France then stated that his country had indeed approved the amendments to the Barcelona Convention and the "Dumping" and "LBS" Protocols, and had ratified the new SPA/Biodiversity Protocol, following a vote in Parliament on 15 March. Both the approval and the ratification had been notified to Spain, the depository country.

18. The Vice-President representing the Syrian Arab Republic pointed out that the Special Committee which had been set up to examine the instruments was proceeding with its work, and that ratification could take place within the next two months. The Rapporteur, representing the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, spoke of the specific procedure adopted by his country, underlining the fact that Libya had recently ratified the Basel Convention on the transboundary movement of hazardous waste.

19. The Coordinator felt that the confirmation which had just been given by a Contracting Party of its approval/ratification of four instruments was good news but that, on the whole, the

process was still very slow. It would, however, be highly advisable to go to the Johannesburg World Summit with the amended or new instruments already in force, in view of the fact that at world level the Barcelona system represented a major legal advance, which would certainly be enhanced by its actual implementation.

20. The President concluded from this discussion that the scope and exemplary nature of the revised Barcelona system could be effectively underlined only if its instruments were in force, and that the Bureau should again appeal to those Contracting Parties which had still not ratified them.

Recommendation:

- **The Bureau welcomed the announcement by the representative of France of his country's approval/ratification of the amendments to the Barcelona Convention, the two Protocols and the new SPA Protocol, as well as the announcement by the representative of Libya of the ratification by his country of the Basel Convention on the transboundary movement of hazardous waste. It also took note of the progress of the ratification process in several countries.**
- **However, noting that many countries have not yet completed the ratification process, it reiterated its appeal to them to complete ratification as quickly as possible, emphasizing that it was extremely important for MAP to attend the World Summit in 2002 and to be able to speak of the revision of the Barcelona legal system and its actual entry into force.**

"Emergency" Protocol

21. The Coordinator informed the meeting of the results of the second meeting of legal and technical experts which was held in Monaco on 2-6 April for the purpose of amending the text of the Protocol. The meeting had unquestionably been a success, since the experts were able to agree on a text without any disputed passages or brackets – a rare event in MAP's legal history – which made major headway in the field of maritime law, by focusing on the prevention of accidents, and extending REMPEC's terms of office. Moreover, the experts had opted for the formula of a "new" rather than an "amended Protocol". At its last meeting in Damascus, the Bureau had agreed to come to some decision on the conference of plenipotentiaries. Given the outcome of the Monaco meeting, the Secretariat was now of the opinion that the Bureau had good grounds for convening this conference and proposing the venue and dates. However, before any final decision was taken, the report of the 2nd experts' meeting and the revised text of the Protocol should be sent for comment to the National Focal Points before their September meeting, and thereafter submitted to the 12th Meeting of the Contracting Parties with the two options, i.e. "New Protocol", or "Amended Protocol".

22. The President stressed the success of the experts' meeting. The new text had undergone extensive change, which fully justified the recommendation in favour of a new Protocol. He felt that the question of the Contracting Parties' observations and therefore of the deadline for forwarding the amended text was very important to allow the meeting of Focal Points in September and that of the Parties in November to come to a decision. Malta further reiterated its offer to host the diplomatic conference.

23. A delegate from Syria remarked that para. 11 of the Monaco report mentioned that one of the aims of the Protocol was to reduce pollution from ships, which meant that adequate numbers of port reception facilities should be available in the countries; moreover, financial support should be given to some of them for that purpose. It was also mentioned that an Egyptian expert would provide translation into Arabic. Where did this initiative stem

from? Finally, did the Protocol only cover pollution from commercial ships or did it also include pollution from land-based sources?

24. The Coordinator took note of Syria's remark concerning para. 11 of the report from the experts' meeting, stating that it would be taken into account in the future. Concerning the translation of the Protocol into Arabic, it was clear that this was strictly the Secretariat's responsibility, and that all the necessary arrangements would be made to ensure that this was done by the official UN legal translator; the Egyptian expert's offer should be understood as a useful check which would provide added value. Finally, regarding what form of pollution was covered by the Protocol, the new element in the revised text was that it encompassed pollution from all ships, including pleasure craft, but not pollution from land-based sources, which was covered by the Syracuse Protocol.

25. A brief discussion ensued on the venue and dates of the conference of plenipotentiaries. Malta's offer having been accepted by all Bureau members, the Coordinator recalled that, as decided by the Bureau at its last meeting, the conference would be funded for the most part from the additional resources of the revolving fund for the 2000-2001 biennium. However, the financial regulation allowed only one month for the use of these funds during the next financial period. Consequently, the Secretariat's suggestion was that the conference of plenipotentiaries should be held before the end of January 2002.

26. The President proposed that specific deadlines should be set for forwarding the four language versions of the draft Protocol, with the third week of January being pencilled in for the time being for the diplomatic conference in Malta, subject to the agreement of the other Parties; the Bureau agreed with this proposal and adopted the following resolution-recommendation.

Recommendation:

- **The Bureau welcomed the results of the 2nd experts' meeting in Monaco on the revision of the "Emergency" Protocol, which reached consensus on a text which represents significant progress.**
- **In view of the extensive revision of the text, the Bureau reaffirmed its attachment to the "New Protocol" formula, in preference to an "Amended Protocol", which would facilitate its coming into force; this Recommendation would have to be submitted to the meeting of the Contracting Parties.**
- **The Bureau asked the Secretariat to send the English and French versions without delay and, before the end of May, the Arabic and Spanish versions, to allow the Contracting Parties to present their comments on the text by 31 July 2001 at the latest. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries responsible for adopting the Protocol would be convened in Malta, preferably during the third week of January 2002, with the relevant budget approved at the last Bureau meeting.**

Reporting System

27. Concerning the document on national reporting requirements which emerged from the Athens meeting of February 2001, the three Bureau members pointed out that they had only just seen it and that their respective countries would need some time to reflect on it before formulating their observations.

28. The representative of France was of the opinion that discussion should not be limited to questions related to the drafting, presentation and distribution of the reports, but that their

utilisation should also be stressed. In other words, there should be feedback from the Secretariat to the Contracting Parties; the reports should not be a one-way process.

29. The Coordinator endorsed this view, stating the Secretariat's opinion that the reporting system would completely change the way it had worked thus far; apart from the accidents notified to REMPEC and the areas proposed for inclusion on the list of SPAMIs, the Secretariat had no information on the legal instruments and joint measures adopted by the Contracting Parties; from now on, based on data received through this channel, it would be in a position to prepare summary reports for the countries.

30. The representative of Cyprus said that this was a very sensitive issue for a number of countries, whose administrations would be faced with increased reporting requirements to MAP, the European Union, and the Secretariats of various international environmental conventions. Thus there was a problem of infrastructure, in other words of resources and the ability to meet these obligations. Under these conditions, it was for the Contracting Parties and not the Bureau to arrive at a decision on this question during their next meeting. The representatives of Syria and Libya supported this point of view, feeling that the text should first be submitted to the national Focal Points, revised on the basis of any observations they might present for their September meeting, and that financial assistance should also be provided for the preparation of their reports to any countries so requesting.

31. The President took note of these requests and the meeting approved the following recommendation.

Recommendation:

- **The Bureau took note of the results of the Athens meeting of February 2001 on the reporting system within MAP; in view of the complexity of the subject and the multiplicity of existing reporting procedures under other conventions, it was requested that the text should be sent immediately to the Contracting Parties for their observations before the end of June 2001, and that a revised draft should be submitted to the meeting of National Focal Points in September, and thence to the Contracting Parties meeting in November 2001 for final approval.**
- **The Bureau invited the Secretariat to include funds for assisting developing countries in the preparation of their reports in the budget for the next biennium.**

Financial and Institutional Matters

32. The Coordinator reviewed the situation of the Mediterranean Trust Fund, noting that it was generally satisfactory. A number of countries had paid their contribution for 2001 and major contributors were about to do so before the summer, as per usual. The contribution of the host country (Greece) had been received. An agreement had been reached with Libya on the staggered payment of their arrears.

33. The Libyan representative thanked the Secretariat for its understanding as reflected in the agreement on his country's arrears. In his opinion, MAP should focus its activities on those countries which needed to increase environmental awareness. The representatives of France and Syria announced that their contribution would be paid before the end of the month.

Information

34. The Secretariat introduced the efforts being undertaken by MAP in this area, which had been intensified since the appointment of the Information Officer. As a follow-up to a workshop organized in Cairo in October 2000, with the support of the EC, on "Information, awareness raising and participation in the field of sustainable development in Arab countries", attended by 17 countries, several NGOs and regional institutions, a more elaborate regional strategy would be presented in October 2001.

35. The representatives of Syria and Libya availed themselves of the opportunity provided by this presentation in order to raise the issue of Arabic, which they felt should be included as a working language for most MAP meetings. The Bureau should therefore formulate a recommendation to that effect to the Contracting Parties. As Arab countries represented one third of the countries in MAP, it seemed reasonable to recognise this right.

36. The representative of Cyprus stated that he perfectly understood the position of the Arab countries, but that the problem was mainly financial since there would be a huge increase in costs with four interpretation booths instead of two, in view of the fact that Spain would also wish its language to be used for the meetings of the Contracting Parties. Then, if the logic of language representativity were to be followed, English would have no place in the Mediterranean, whilst other countries might insist on imposing their language because of their demographic clout, etc. This question had already been extensively discussed at the UN. It would certainly be useful to include Arabic at subregional meetings, on a case by case basis, depending on the nature of the meeting, and of course to continue the efforts already underway concerning the translation of documents.

37. Since the problem appeared to be mainly a financial one, a delegate from Syria proposed that the Arab countries' contribution could be increased, and the Rapporteur representing Syria suggested that certain activities could perhaps be reduced to release funds.

38. In the opinion of the French representative, this was not a matter of principle, but a matter related to practical and cost considerations. Syria's proposal to change the contributions scale did not seem very realistic, as it could lead to unfortunate situations, with each country attempting to promote one or other of its interests in return for an increase of its contribution. This could prove a dangerous path to follow.

39. The President, following the Secretariat's proposal, was of the opinion that for the time being, a feasibility report should be prepared on the use of Arabic at MAP meetings, and submitted to the Contracting Parties for their decision on this matter. He noted that efforts were already being made for the translation of MAP documents into Arabic, and that matters should be allowed to proceed in easy stages, without rushing into anything.

Recommendation:

In response to a request from the Arabic-speaking countries on the use of Arabic as a working language at certain important MAP meetings, the Secretariat was invited to prepare a feasibility report on the use of Arabic for the Contracting Parties, and to continue the efforts currently being made to have more documents translated into Arabic. A gradual approach should be adopted.

MCS D

40. Following the Secretariat's progress report on the MCS D's activities, the representative of Syria stated that his country wished to be involved in the work of one of the thematic groups.

41. The Coordinator replied that Syria's participation would be welcome and that it could be made official at the MCS D's next meeting in Antalya, in November 2001, when it would join one of the thematic groups that were still ongoing. One difficulty at present was the financing of the implementation and follow-up of the recommendations already adopted by the MCS D, since there were no funds for that purpose in MAP's budget. A proposal had been presented to the European Commission, in the context of the Euromediterranean partnership, for an amount of 3 to 4 million euros to finance the implementation of the recommendations on tourism and sustainable coastal area management (a proposal which included Syria) and the Secretariat expected a favourable answer for the coming autumn.

Cooperation with the NGOs and other partners

42. Mr. Humberto Da Cruz, Programme Officer at the Coordinating Unit, presented the revised report drawn up by the Secretariat, as requested by the Bureau at its last meeting in Damascus. He reported on the meeting which had been held in Barcelona, on 19 April 2001, to discuss this document with the main organizations. Concerning the new criteria, under the chosen system for ranking each NGO, the results obtained would lead to the removal of a number of NGOs from the list of MAP partners.

43. The representative of Cyprus felt that the method selected for applying the criteria was somewhat contradictory, since the same criteria would naturally apply both to the new NGOs admitted, and those remaining on the list. Additional criteria should therefore be accepted for those NGOs already on the list, to check their record, that they had an elected bureau, etc.

44. The representative of Libya pointed out that partner status was not obtained once and for all. It should be possible to revise the list at each Bureau meeting, on the basis of a report by the Secretariat using objective criteria for retaining or deleting an NGO. The representative of Syria supported this proposal.

45. In the opinion of the French representative, there were in fact two types of criteria involved: criteria of existence and criteria of operation; the former were necessary and sufficient for inclusion on the list whilst the latter could only be assessed with time, based on the NGO's behaviour and performance.

46. The Coordinator stressed the interest of such a discussion on how to apply the criteria and the need for a regular revision of the list of partners by the Bureau itself, on which a consensus was emerging. However, under MAP's present system, it was the Contracting Parties which decided on the composition of the list and they should therefore be asked to delegate this task to the Bureau. A draft recommendation to that effect could be prepared for the meeting of the national Focal Points.

Recommendation:

- **Concerning the criteria for including and retaining associations on the list of MAP Partners, the Secretariat was invited to group them in a single list so that they could be applied, as appropriate, both for the inclusion of new and the maintaining of old partners on the list. In future, the Bureau might be authorized by the meeting of the Contracting Parties to revise the partners list.**

- **The proposal on the new classification of partners (intergovernmental organizations, local authorities, socio-economic actors, NGOs, educational and university institutions) was accepted.**
- **The discussion on the strategy of cooperation with the partners from civil society was postponed until the meeting of the Contracting Parties.**

Proposal for the creation of a new Regional Activity Centre on “Tourism and the Environment” in Turkey

47. The Secretariat informed the meeting of a Turkish paper on the creation of a new RAC on “Tourism and the Environment” at the University of Antalya.

48. The representative of Cyprus wished to make a general statement: the Bureau had no mandate to take such a decision or even examine the contents of the proposal which should have been included, in his opinion, under “any other business”. Any prospect of MAP’s enlargement meant an additional workload. The RACs themselves operated under different statutes and funding arrangements. As to the proposed theme – tourism - it could be argued, assuming that it were to be considered again within MAP, whether it would not be more suitable for a programme, with clearly specified objectives, activities and a timetable.

49. The representative of Syria indicated that he had just seen Turkey’s paper and he had had immediate reservations. Was it wise to increase the number of RACs when funding was limited? The paper referred to “hotel management”: was that really a question of interest for MAP? The programme formula suggested by Cyprus struck him as being more realistic and, anyway, since the Blue Plan had already dealt with that subject, it could resume its work on it within a wider context.

50. The representative of Libya also expressed reservations albeit along completely different lines: contrary to the two previous speakers, he believed that there should be no objections to the creation of new RACs, which could be a source of enrichment for MAP. For that matter, Libya itself intended to propose hosting a RAC on continuing education, to enable it to be organized in a more consistent manner at regional level. The problem with Turkey’s proposal, in his view, was the inadequate and cursory nature of the document which supported it.

51. In the opinion of the representative of France, the importance of the “tourism and the environment” theme was unquestionable; one had only to think of the negative impact of this industry on the region’s coastal area. However, a five-page paper was too short to form an opinion on the intentions of the country wishing to create the new centre, especially since it contained no information on costs or funding arrangements.

52. The President concluded from this discussion that this was only a preliminary exchange of views, that the Bureau lacked sufficient data on the substance of the proposal, and that the Secretariat should write to the Turkish authorities and request more information, in particular regarding costs, funding and operation, and the role of the University of Antalya, without dismissing Syria’s suggestion to call upon the Blue Plan to organize, for example, a joint workshop with the University of Antalya or a comprehensive programme. The creation of new RACs should be seen within MAP’s overall strategy, which would be considered by the Contracting Parties at their next meeting.

Recommendation:

Having noted with interest Turkey's proposal, the Bureau invited the Secretariat to request from the Turkish authorities additional information on the running, costs and methods for financing this new centre, to allow a proper study of the proposal, whilst also taking into account the terms of reference and ability of existing RACs and integrating it within a wider consideration of MAP's evolution and structure.

Preparation of the meeting of MAP Focal Points and the meeting of the Contracting Parties

53. The Coordinator indicated that he intended to submit a strategic document on MAP's future to the meeting of the Contracting Parties, with data on its cost/effectiveness, added value, and the MCSD's role (which had given rise to a lively discussion during the 6th meeting in Tunis). Perhaps MAP should refocus its activity on more specific objectives, whilst the meeting of national Focal Points should deal with more technical aspects, to allow the Contracting Parties to concentrate on political and strategic issues, as they themselves had repeatedly requested.

54. Following this intervention, a general discussion ensued on MAP's strengths and weaknesses. The representative of Cyprus strongly supported the Secretariat's intention, considering that a programme could not include everything and should set itself objectives of regional importance. In this respect, the SAP/GEF project was highly promising, as it was aimed at well-defined, concrete activities. In the opinion of the representative of Libya, MAP had not fully complied with its terms of reference; it needed to increase its activities and provide better information to the countries. The representative of Syria pointed out that the experience of the "Syrian coastline" CAMP had been very positive for his country and that MAP could be most useful to countries through this type of study.

55. The Coordinator underlined the fact that it was the Secretariat's constant concern to ensure that MAP was involved in each country; however, this was only possible on the country's request and the budget could not satisfy all existing needs. Outside sources of financing had to be found and this was why GEF had been contacted, producing some positive results which were well-known.

56. At the end of the discussion, the members of the Bureau gave their full support to the Secretariat's intention to provide the meeting of the Contracting Parties with a strategic basis for its discussions.

Recommendation:

The Bureau endorsed the Secretariat's intention to submit to the meeting in Monaco (November 2001) a strategic document on MAP's future, taking into account its results and the regional and international context.

MED POL

57. Introducing the activities of the MED POL programme, the Secretariat extended its warmest thanks to the Italian municipalities of Sorrento and Catania which had hosted and funded two important meetings on the informal network and the implementation of the SAP, in March 2001, and the municipality of Venice which in late May was due to welcome the meeting of MED POL National Coordinators.

58. The presentation of the document on the management of brine discharges from desalination plants was an opportunity for the representatives of Cyprus and Malta to communicate certain data from their experience in this field. Cyprus, which has been suffering a water shortage since 1993, with aquifer depletion, has resorted to the reverse osmosis technique and had to re-examine its desalination facilities to avoid the effects of discharge. Malta, for its part, has introduced a policy of safe technologies, with detailed impact assessment studies.

Agenda item 4: Date and Place of next Meeting

59. The members agreed on the following: in order to have a final exchange of views before the informal meeting of heads of delegations which traditionally always precedes the opening of each meeting of the Contracting Parties for the purpose of reaching a consensus on the Bureau's composition for the next biennium:

Recommendation:

The Bureau will hold its next meeting in Monaco, on the morning of 14 November 2001, before the opening session of the 12th Ordinary Meeting.

Agenda item 5: Any other business

60. Under this agenda item, the Secretariat presented an annex to the Progress Report detailing the preparatory work for the World Summit on Global Development to be convened in Johannesburg (South Africa) in July 2002. It noted that the Mediterranean was not present as a geographical entity in the preparatory process at regional level, as it formed part of three continents – Africa, Western Asia, Europe – within this somewhat complicated country-based participation. The Secretariat, however, believed that it was extremely important for the Contracting Parties to participate actively in the various meetings and the work of their geographical area. The President supported this view and invited the Bureau to make an appeal, which is reflected in the following recommendation.

Recommendation:

The Bureau took note of the progress of the preparatory process for the 2002 World Summit, as well as the preliminary work which the Secretariat is envisaging as a contribution. It endorsed the work programme and called upon all Contracting Parties and MAP partners to become fully involved in this process (cf. Annex II to this Report).

Agenda item 6: Closure of the meeting

61. A summary of conclusions was submitted to the meeting and adopted with several changes. The Secretariat reminded members that they would be receiving a full-text report, once it had been submitted to the Rapporteur for any comments or amendments.

62. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the President declared the meeting closed on Friday, 4 May, at 12.15, recalling that it would, however, continue on the next morning with a field visit to the Akamas reserve planned for Bureau members, at the invitation of the Cypriot government.

ANNEX I

**PROVISIONAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
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ANNEX II

MAP PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (WSSD)

The General Assembly of United Nations decided in December 2000 to call the world's leaders to a summit to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development agreed in 1992 in Rio.

- (1) The World Summit will be held in July 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- (2) The General Assembly stressed that the preparatory process and the Summit would involve actively all stakeholders.
- (3) In order to start the preparatory process a high-level Steering Committee has been established, chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary General, and different National and Regional meetings have been scheduled.
- (4) For what concerns the National Preparations in the Mediterranean Region, several countries have started the process and the Coordinating Unit for MAP could provide some support for the publications.
- (5) The Regional and Sub-regional preparations will be held during 2001 in the following agreed dates concerning the Mediterranean:

Africa: 28-31 August (tentative) Nairobi, (preceded by a sub-regional meeting to be held in Tunis, 11 to 14 June)

West Asia: 28-30 October, Cairo

Europe: 24-25 September, Geneva

Contributions were sent by MAP to the bodies responsible for the preparatory reports (UNEP regional offices and Regional UN Commission).

It is the intention of the Secretariat to participate to this regional exercises.

- (6) The Coordinating Unit for MAP, following the recommendation of a bottom-up preparatory process involving all the major groups, is actively supporting NGOs initiatives, specially a general meeting to prepare Mediterranean NGO input to the World Summit organized by RAED, Medforum and MIO-ECSDE, and several other sub-regional and sectorial activities.
- (7) In addition to the synthesis of the Strategic review under preparation, the Coordinating Unit will prepare during 2001 five documents concerning the achievements of MAP in the following aspects:
 - Combating pollution from land-based activities (under publication),
 - Biodiversity and Protected Areas,
 - Integrated Coastal Management,
 - Maritime Pollution Prevention Activities,
 - Renovation of MAP legal instruments.

In addition, input was sent to UNEP for the preparation of GEO-3.

- (8) The Strategic review on sustainable development as adopted by the MCSD at its last session will be published and widely disseminated.
- (9) Orientations for a regional strategy for sustainable development in the Mediterranean will be prepared in 2001-2002.