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Introduction

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was held at Cairo House, Cairo (Egypt) on 25 November 2004.

Participation

2. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, Mr. Corrado Clini, Director General, Department for Environmental Research and Development, Ministry of the Environment and Territory (Italy). The following members of the Bureau attended: H.E. Mr. Ethem Ruka, Minister for the Environment (Albania), Mr. Mohamed Si Youcef, Director-General of the Environment, Ministry of Land-Use Planning and the Environment (Algeria), Mr. Mohamed Borhan, Director-General of the Coastal Zone Management Division, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (Egypt), Ms. Soledad Blanco, Director for Water and Environmental Programmes, Directorate-General of Environment (European Commission), and Mr. Philippe Lacoste, Deputy Director of Environment, Department of Economic and Financial Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (France).

3. Mr. Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, and Mr. Baher Kamal, MAP Information Officer, represented the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan.

4. The full list of participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

5. Mr. M. S. Khalil, Chief Executive, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, welcomed participants to Cairo, emphasizing that the meeting of the Bureau provided an opportunity to discuss together how best to resolve environmental problems in the Mediterranean region. It is expected that the successful conclusion of MAP's activities relating to reporting and compliance, evaluation and civil liability and compensation, which were all on the agenda of the meeting, would see the adoption of measures that would enhance compliance with the Barcelona Convention. The progress report before the meeting highlighted one extremely important factor in building synergy between the activities of the European Commission and those of MAP, namely, improved coordination between the MAP and the European Community instruments.

6. In Egypt, environmental policy directives focused on the incorporation of environmental dimensions into other sectoral plans and support for the multilateral environmental agreements to which Egypt was a signatory, including the Barcelona Convention. The latter received support at the highest level in the Egyptian Ministry of Environmental Affairs so as to ensure that Egypt fulfilled its commitments within a reasonable time-frame.

7. The President expressed his appreciation to the Egyptian authorities for hosting the meeting, which was intended to assess the progress made on implementation since the 13th meeting of the Contracting Parties and to look forward to the 14th meeting, to be held in Slovenia in November 2005.

8. Mr. Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, thanked the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency for organizing the meeting and for its support.

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

9. The meeting adopted the agenda prepared by the Secretariat (UNEP/BUR/62/1) and the organization of work set out in the annotated agenda (UNEP/BUR/62/2). The agenda is attached as **Annex II** to the present report.

Agenda item 3: **Progress report by the Secretariat on activities carried out since the last meeting of the Bureau (1 June 2004 – 31 October 2004) (UNEP/BUR/62/3, Adds 1-3)**

10. The meeting agreed to take up the report section by section.

A. General review on the progress and outputs of the main activities

1. Legal and institutional issues

11. Mr Mifsud drew attention to the letter sent jointly by the Ministers for the Environment of Italy, as President of the Bureau, Spain, as depositary and the MAP Coordinator, urging countries that had not yet done so to accept the new or revised legal instruments.

12. He highlighted one extremely important development, namely, the ruling by the European Court of Justice on certain provisions of the Land-Based Sources Protocol. MAP's legal adviser had informed the Secretariat that the import of the ruling was that Article 6 (3) of the LBS Protocol and Article 6 (1) of the amended Protocol had direct effect and could be relied upon to prevent unauthorized discharges into saltwater marshes communicating with the Mediterranean Sea of substances which, although not toxic, might have an adverse effect on the oxygen content of the marine environment. It was binding on countries belonging to the European Union and signatory to the Barcelona Convention irrespective of whether they had defined, as yet, the applicable technical criteria.

13. As to the role to be played by MAP National Focal Points, he indicated that the first steps had been taken with a view to preparing a paper on the question.

14. Regarding the possibility of developing a legal instrument on pollution by pleasure-craft, the representative of the European Community informed the meeting that a European Union directive on the same issue would enter into force on 1 January 2005 and the Community would be unable to accept any MAP instrument that was not in harmony with that directive.

15. During the discussion on the role of National Focal Points, the need for a clear definition of the roles of the Secretariat, the Regional Activity Centres and the National Focal Points was underlined. The Focal Points for the various Regional Activity Centres should inform the National Focal Points of their activities and the Regional Activity Centres themselves had to work within the MAP framework and keep the Secretariat abreast of their activities.

16. The representative of Egypt feared that giving too much responsibility to Regional Activity Centres might lessen the responsibilities that should be assumed by the MAP. National Focal Points should constitute a single channel of communication and their role should be strengthened.

17. The representative of the European Community pointed out that for the Community not being a country, the word National presented a problem. Moreover, National Focal Points could only support activities under Protocols to which the country or body in question was party.

18. The representative of France considered that MAP's work was not sufficiently well known and suggested that the 30th anniversary of the Barcelona Convention be used to make a special effort to publicize the text of the Convention and Protocols, as well as the work of the MAP, and the National Focal Points had an important role to play in that regard.

19. The representative of Albania emphasized how difficult it was for a Ministry with limited resources to implement all the Protocols and recommendations.

2. Financial and personnel matters

- Financial matters

20. The Coordinator was pleased to report that MAP's finances were in a healthy situation. The Chairman in his capacity as the representative of Italy, informed the meeting that the outstanding contributions from Italy would be forthcoming.

- Personnel and security matters

21. The Coordinator informed the meeting that the Sustainable Development Officer had been selected and would start work in January 2005. He drew particular attention to the Secretariat's new role as the United Nations lead agency in Athens since the withdrawal of the United Nations Information Centre, and said that it had received financial assistance from Headquarters to upgrade security in its premises. The temporary post of security assistant was currently being funded by United Nations Headquarters, but it was felt that the post should become permanent and be funded under MAP's regular budget following the approval of the Contracting Parties. The Bureau raised no objection to this course of action.

- Other issues

22. The meeting welcomed the information that REMPEC would be moving to new premises and agreed that a note of appreciation should be sent to the Maltese Government.

3. Cooperation with partners

23. The representative of France considered that the cooperation between SPARAC and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in relation to the exportation quota for the great white shark was a good example of how MAP's activities could be linked to worldwide environmental activities.

4. Information, public awareness and participation

24. Mr Sergio Illuminato, Director of ERS/RAC, presented the new MAP website, which allowed documents and images to be accessed rapidly. The innovation was the new intranet service, which would allow direct interaction with the MAP Coordinating Unit. The website would allow any kind of information to be exchanged, the downloading of documents and, in the near future, also video-conferencing. The Coordinating Unit had full control of the website and could update the data at any time without external collaboration.

25. Mr. Baher Kamal, MAP Information Officer, said that the website would allow various levels of access for the general public and those directly involved in MAP's activities. It would be linked to some 700 other organizations. Apart from English and French it will also be in Arabic.

26. Regarding activities to celebrate the 30 years of the Barcelona Convention, Mr. Illuminato, Director of ERS/RAC, said that it was proposed to launch a Mediterranean

Environmental Award on the occasion of the meetings of the Contracting Parties, starting with the 14th ordinary meeting in Slovenia in November 2005. The award would be open to media professionals, individuals, educational and cultural institutions, and regional environmental organizations, with the objective of involving civil society to a greater extent in understanding the Barcelona Convention objectives. The audiovisual and photographic contributions submitted for the award would be the subject of a travelling exhibition around the Mediterranean region in 2006. The project for the award would be presented in Catania on 17 December 2004 during the meeting of the Focal Points and would be launched in Rome on 5 January 2005.

27. The Coordinator added that the proposal on the biennial award would be subject to approval by the Bureau at its meeting in 2005 and then by the Contracting Parties. To mark the 30th anniversary, it was also proposed to make a video presentation at the opening of the Contracting Parties' meeting and to publish a special edition of MED Waves. The Secretariat would also prepare a short article to be published by newspapers in Mediterranean countries. Contacts had been established with the UNEP Information Office in Nairobi to enlist their support in this promotion exercise.

5. Pollution prevention and control

28. The Coordinator said that the current GEF project would end in June 2005, but steps had already been taken to launch a new GEF project, whose first component would address the implementation of activities directly arising from the requirements of the SAP-MED at SAP-BIO. The other component would consist in the establishment of an investment fund. A concept paper had already been submitted to the GEF Council and was expected to be approved by the end of December 2004. A project development facility would then have to be prepared and it was planned to allocate US\$15 million for the first component, with an initial US\$80 million for the investment fund, to be supplemented by contributions from other sources, in order to address problems of pollution from land-based sources.

6. Conservation of biodiversity

29. The Coordinator drew attention to the various action plans which were being implemented to conserve biodiversity. He mentioned in particular the Med MPA Project, which had proved extremely successful but would come to an end in December 2004.

7. Environment and development

30. The Coordinator said that the Mediterranean Forum on Integrated Coastal Area Management held in Cagliari had been highly successful and there would be a follow-up meeting for legal experts in Athens in January 2005. He confirmed that the host country agreement between UNEP/MAP and the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Territory in respect of ERS/RAC had been signed.

31. In response to concerns regarding the responsibilities of ERS/RAC, the Coordinator said that it was intended to use ERS/RAC to promote activities in the region and not to duplicate the work being done by the Information Officer at MEDU. As far as the 30th anniversary of the Barcelona Convention was concerned, there would be cooperation between ERS/RAC and the MAP Information Unit to give a higher profile to UNEP/MAP on this occasion. The evaluation of ERS/RAC was being carried out but it was hoped that it would focus more on coordinating all the information available and managing a data bank.

32. The representative of the European Community considered that information should logically be coordinated by the MED Unit and the representative of Egypt wondered what role would be played by the Blue Plan database.

B. Specific issues

(a) Legal issues

1. Entry into force of the amendments to the Barcelona Convention

33. The Coordinator underlined the need for compliance with Article 29 of the Convention, which prescribed that countries could not accede to the Convention without being party to at least one of the Protocols and that, conversely, they could not accede to any of the Protocols without being party to the Convention. According to MAP's legal adviser, several Contracting Parties are inconsistent with Article 29. The issue would have to be addressed and the Secretariat also sought guidance from the Bureau on what measures the Secretariat and the depositary country should take to promote accession. The credibility of the whole Barcelona process was at stake.

34. The President suggested that the Secretariat ascertain the reasons for which countries were not acceding to the Protocol and the representative of France suggested that countries that had good bilateral relations with another Mediterranean country could assist in obtaining ratification of the Convention. The representative of the European Community pointed out that there were specific reasons why certain countries could not ratify some of the Protocols, and the representative of Algeria drew attention to bureaucratic problems, emphasizing that countries needed assistance in facilitating ratification.

35. The Coordinator said that the Secretariat would be assisted by its legal adviser when discussing the matter with the depositary country. Countries were not obliged to state why they had decided not to ratify. It was the Secretariat's intention to identify problems jointly with the depositary country, because in some instances not being in compliance with Article 29 might simply be an oversight.

DECISION

The Bureau invited all Contracting Parties to organize events focusing on the entry into force of the revised Convention and requested the Secretariat to provide any assistance in this regard, emphasizing also the necessity for the entry into force of other MAP legal instruments.

The Bureau also requested the Secretariat to explore, together with the depositary country, why some countries had not ratified the legal instruments and to propose ways and means to assist and encourage countries to move ahead with the ratification process.

2. New legal instrument on integrated coastal area management

36. The Coordinator said that preparation of the Protocol was still in its early stages because it was a very delicate issue. A further meeting would be held on 4 and 5 January 2005, but in his view it would be difficult to achieve a legally-binding document for adoption by the Contracting Parties in 2005.

37. The representative of the European Community considered that one of the key issues would be the definition of the coastal area. In its pertinent recommendation, the European Community had adopted a flexible definition and she suggested that MAP might consider doing the same.

3. Compliance mechanism and reporting

38. The Coordinator said that the first meeting on a possible compliance mechanism had already been held and there would be a consultation process with National Focal Points. The focus would be on assisting compliance and not on imposing sanctions.

DECISION

Due to the extensive work required for the preparation of the first national report on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, the Bureau urged the Contracting Parties to submit their reports on time so that the first regional report on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention for the 2002-2003 biennium could be finalized successfully.

4. Liability and compensation

39. The Coordinator said that it was important for the Bureau to give the Secretariat support in approaching countries with a view to preparing a feasibility study on liability and compensation.

40. The representative of Egypt indicated that a manual on the subject existed under the Basel Convention and the MAP Secretariat might perhaps want to take it into account.

DECISION

The Bureau urged the Contracting Parties to contribute to the preparation of the feasibility study on liability and compensation and to provide the information requested by the Secretariat in a timely manner.

(b) Institutional matters

1. Evaluations

- MAP

41. The Coordinator drew attention to Annex II to UNEP/BUR/62/3/Add.1, which described the proposed approach and methodology for the external evaluation of the MAP.

DECISION

The Bureau invited all MAP National Focal Points to participate in the meeting to launch the MAP evaluation, to be convened in Athens on 9 and 10 December 2004, and to take an active part in this important exercise.

- MED POL

42. The Coordinator said that the evaluators had held their last meeting on 16 and 17 November 2004 and it was expected that the evaluation would be finalized by the end of November 2004.

43. The representative of Egypt indicated that the evaluation could affect the programme of work under the GEF project and asked whether the evaluation's findings had been taken into account when finalizing the GEF project.

44. In response, the Coordinator said that it would be necessary to await finalization of the report before taking any decisions on its conclusions.

- **ERS/RAC**

45. The Coordinator said that the first draft of the evaluation would be discussed at the meeting of the Focal Points to be held in Catania in December 2004.

DECISION

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to submit to the next Bureau meeting its comments on the ERS/RAC evaluation, especially with regard to the main findings and recommendations in the report.

- **CP/RAC**

46. The Bureau noted that the Secretariat would report to its next meeting on the evaluation of CP/RAC.

2. Preparations for the 14th ordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties

47. The Coordinator explained that, for logistical reasons and in order to encourage ministers to attend, it might be preferable to hold the meeting in a more easily accessible site such as Ljubljana instead of Portoroz. The choice of venue for the meeting is being discussed with the Slovenian authorities.

48. The Bureau emphasized the importance of high-level attendance at the 30th anniversary meeting of the Contracting Parties, which would also see the adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development and the identification of emerging issues.

DECISION

The Bureau called on the Contracting Parties to organize events at the national level to mark the entry into force of the amendments to the Barcelona Convention and the 30th anniversary of MAP.

(c) Cooperation with Partners

1. Accreditation to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

49. The Coordinator said that the Executive Director of UNEP had suggested that one of the Regional Seas Secretariats in turn could be a member of the UNEP delegation to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development; therefore, it was not necessary to pursue the question of accreditation.

DECISION

Members considered the advice of the Executive Director of UNEP on the issue of MAP's accreditation to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and agreed not to pursue the matter further.

2. Cooperation with the European Commission

50. The representative of the European Community referred to a number of issues that raised concerns and said that further work with the Secretariat was required, but it was expected that the

procedure for reaching agreement would be lengthy. She indicated that a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed between the European Commission and UNEP and any programme would have to be consistent with it and with all EU policies and agreements.

51. The Coordinator said that the Secretariat wished to identify with the European Community measures on which they could work together.

52. The President considered that any agreement should focus on transboundary and cross-sectoral issues. A meeting of the Bureau, the European Community and the Secretariat would be helpful in order to identify what activities could be carried out in cooperation. In addition, it would perhaps be possible to explore with the European Environment Agency the possibility of incorporating some RACs in the Agency's network, with an agreement based on specific activities.

DECISION

The Bureau invited the MAP Secretariat and the European Commission to discuss the content of a joint work programme, on the basis of the first draft prepared by the MAP Secretariat, and to keep the Bureau informed of the progress made. The Bureau also agreed that all Contracting Parties should be kept informed of the discussions and participate as soon as a more mature draft joint work programme became available.

3. New GEF Strategic Partnership

53. The Coordinator recalled the timetable for implementing the new Partnership and said that he would keep the Bureau informed of any further developments.

(d) *Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)*

1. Progress on the preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development

54. The Coordinator said that Blue Plan had been entrusted with the technical preparation of the report and document UNEP/BUR/62/3/Add.3 contained the first part of the Strategy in French. The draft would be subject to peer review.

55. The representative of the European Community supported the principle of the Strategy, but wished to see what the end result would be and what value-added it provided. The Strategy went beyond purely environmental concerns and should perhaps involve ministries of foreign affairs in the Euro-Med community in order to obtain their commitment.

56. The President said that the Strategy should integrate national strategies into a regional strategy and build a common structure for sustainable development. It could be a guide for future activities and cooperation in financing them. As to the future, until the next meeting of the Contacting Parties, efforts should be made to obtain mutual recognition of the role of the Strategy in guiding the future action of the Euro-Med Partnership in the area of sustainable development and environment. In Italy's experience, too many objectives and actions did not facilitate implementation so Italy was now focusing on key issues. Countries needed to be helped to identify priorities and European experience could prove valuable in that respect.

57. The representative of Algeria said that countries needed a regional strategy in order to develop or reorient their own national strategies, while the representative of Egypt considered that the Strategy was not simply a document but an ongoing process that had to be endorsed at the highest level.

58. The Coordinator pointed out that the Secretariat was already assisting countries to develop their own national strategies and the Secretariat would help them to organize meetings with public

participation to explain the Strategy. There would also be consultations with the non-governmental organizations involved in the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development. Regarding the involvement of other ministries, it was the responsibility of countries themselves to set up whatever mechanism was needed.

DECISION

The Bureau took note of the first part of the draft Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), which was circulated at the meeting in French, and decided to await the finalization of the full text of the draft MSSD and discuss it at the next meeting of the Bureau, taking into account the outcome of the consultation processes planned, including the peer review exercise, before the MSSD is submitted for adoption to the 14th meeting of the Contracting Parties.

- National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs)

59. The Bureau noted that Italy and Monaco were already providing MEDU with financial assistance to be used, together with resources from the Mediterranean Trust Fund, to facilitate the preparation of National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSSDs) in Egypt, Serbia and Montenegro, Morocco and the Syrian Arab Republic. The terms of reference were being prepared and the necessary administrative steps taken. It was expected that the related activities would be launched in November-December 2004 so that the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties could be informed of the progress made.

DECISION

The Bureau encouraged other countries to provide technical and financial support to enable all Mediterranean countries to prepare National Strategies for Sustainable Development and to establish National Commissions for Sustainable Development. The Bureau thanked Italy and Monaco for their support.

- Programme of work of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development

60. The representative of the European Community queried the value-added of the MCSD when Blue Plan was working on the same subject. She had some concerns regarding the future of the Commission and, at the next meeting of the Bureau, would make some recommendations; until then the Commission should pursue the work planned. It was important to have an in-depth discussion in June in order to make recommendations on the next phase after the 14th meeting of the Contracting Parties.

61. The representative of France proposed that the future of the MCSD be raised at the meeting of the National Focal Points and subsequently at the meeting of the Contracting Parties.

62. The Coordinator said that clear indications from the Bureau were needed as to whether the Secretariat should bring the matter to the attention of the Contracting Parties.

DECISION

The Bureau decided that the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development should continue its work as planned until the 14th meeting of the Contracting Parties. The Bureau would consider, at its meeting in June 2005, a recommendation to be proposed to the 14th meeting of the Contracting Parties on the future of the MCSD. The Bureau also decided that this issue should be addressed in the MAP evaluation process.

2. Report on the Environment and Development (RED)

63. The Coordinator informed the meeting that the report was almost ready and would be made available to the 14th meeting of the Contracting Parties. He emphasized that it was for information and reference only and not for adoption. It was intended to have different language versions, but originally the report would only be in English and French and the publication of other language versions would depend on financial resources. He confirmed that the report would be placed on the MAP website.

64. The representative of the European Community requested that, in view of the length of the report, a brief executive summary be prepared for wider distribution.

DECISION

The Bureau emphasized the value of the Report on the Environment and Development and invited the Contracting Parties to facilitate its finalization, assume responsibility for its translation where necessary, and ensure its broad distribution. The Bureau thanked the European Commission, which had helped to finance the report.

3. Financing and cooperation for sustainable development

65. The Bureau was informed that a regional workshop of experts on financing and cooperation for sustainable development had been held in Sophia Antipolis on 3 and 4 June 2004 and had prepared an analytical paper that had subsequently been submitted to the 9th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development. The workshop had put forward a number of proposals addressed to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, other donors and countries. It had recommended that Ministers for the Economy in countries belonging to the Partnership discuss how best to integrate sustainable development objectives in their decisions and had urged stronger support for the commitments on sustainable development made by the European Investment Bank, other donors and MEDA. Finally, the workshop had suggested that Blue Plan draw up financial indicators in order to monitor progress over time and also collect instances of good practices.

DECISION

The Bureau underlined the importance of pursuing this activity in the Mediterranean and recommended that the issue be discussed in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's economic forums.

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to approach the European Commission with a view to encouraging the European Investment Bank, which had a growing number of activities in the Mediterranean, to incorporate environmental concerns to a greater extent.

- Workshop on sustainable development policies and indicators

66. In May 2004, Tunis had organized a workshop on sustainable development indicators attended by some 12 countries and BP/RAC. The latter had undertaken to organize a workshop on sustainable development policies and indicators in May 2005 to assess the results of the activities on indicators carried out since 1999 and to make proposals on refocusing them in order to provide stronger support for sustainable development policies. The workshop would also be expected to select a series of indicators to be used to monitor the progress of the future Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development. One priority for MAP and BP/RAC should be to establish a longer-term programme with the European Environment Agency and Mediterranean countries for monitoring progress in sustainable development terms. In order to enhance integration of sustainable development in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and in countries, a more structured agreement should be elaborated among MAP/BP/RAC, the EEA and countries.

DECISION

The Bureau underlined the importance of improving the structure of relations with other organizations in the area of information on sustainable development and requested the Coordinator and BP/RAC to approach the European Commission, and in particular the European Environment Agency, for this purpose in order to explore ways of implementing ongoing cooperation.

The Bureau encouraged the Contracting Parties and the MAP Secretariat to prepare an assessment of the implementation of recommendations on sustainable development indicators in preparation for the workshop to be held in May 2005.

Agenda item 4: Date and place of the next meeting of the Bureau

67. The Bureau discussed whether it would be preferable to hold its next Meeting back-to-back with the Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development in June 2005 or separately and decided that further consideration was required before taking a final decision on the venue.

DECISION

The Bureau decided that its next meeting should take place in June 2005, at a venue to be decided.

Agenda item 5: Any other issues

68. The representative of France requested that the Secretariat prepare a timetable of all M AP meetings. He also proposed that MAP's commemorative medal to be launched should be entitled the Michel Batisse medal to mark the latter's untiring work in favour of the environment in the Mediterranean.

DECISION

The Bureau decided to recommend to the Contracting Parties that the MAP medal be named after the late Michel Batisse for his invaluable contribution to the Mediterranean through his active involvement in the work of MAP.

Agenda item 6: Conclusions and decisions

69. The Bureau reviewed, amended and adopted the summary of decisions prepared by the Secretariat. The full summary of decisions is attached as **Annex III** to the present report.

Agenda item 7: Closure of the meeting

70. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the President declared the meeting closed at 5.20 p.m. on Thursday, 26 November 2004.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

**ITALY
ITALIE**

President

Mr Corrado Clini

Director General
Department for Environmental Research and
Development
Ministry for the Environment and Territory
Via Cristoforo Colombo, 44
Rome 00147
Italy

Tel : + - -

Fax : +39-06-57223470

E-mail : pia-sdg@minambiente.it

Ms Annalidia Pansini

Pansini.Annalidia@minambiente.it

Ms Angelica Carnelos

Ms Fiamma Valentino

Mr Mario Lionetti

Ms Claudia Beretta

Mr Claudio Valentini

**ALBANIA
ALBANIE**

Vice-President

H.E. Mr Ethem Ruka

Minister of Environment
Ministry of Environment
27 Rruga e Durrës
Tirana
Albania

Tel: 355-4-225134

Fax: 355-4-270625

Ms Mirela Kamberi

Director of Preventing Pollution
Ministry of Environment
27 Rruga e Durrës
Tirana
Albania

Tel: 355-4-224985

Fax: 355-4-270625

E-mail: mkamberi@icc-al.org

**ALGERIA
ALGERIE**

**Vice-President
M. Mohamed Si Youcef**
Secrétaire Général
Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire, et de
l'Environnement
rue des Quatre Canons
16000 Alger
Algeria
Tel: 213-21-432802
Fax: 213-21-432845 or 49
E-mail: dgemsiyoucef@hotmail.com

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION
COMMISSION EUROPEENNE**

**Vice-President
Ms Soledad Blanco**
Director of International Affairs
DG Environment
European Commission
Office: BU9 05/201
1049 Bruxelles
Belgique
Tel: 32-2-2954388
Fax: 32-2-2994123
E-mail: Soledad.Blanco@cec.eu.int

**EGYPT
EGYPTE**

**Vice-President
Mr Mohamed Borhan**
Director General of Coastal Zone Management Division
Tel: 20-2-5256483
Fax: 20-2-5256483
E-mail: noscp@link.net

Ms Maissa El Gohary
Undersecretary for International Affairs
Tel: 20-2-5256452
Fax: 20-2-5266016
E-mail: maissaelgohary@yahoo.com

Ms Yasmine Fouad
Director, International Conventions Department
Tel: 20-2-5256452
Fax: 20-2-5266457
E-mail: yasminefouad@link.net

Ms Christine A. Iskandar
International Affairs and Technical Cooperation
Tel: 20-2-5256452
Fax: 20-2-5266457
E-mail: christineiskandar@yahoo.fr

Cabinet of Ministers
Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)
30 Misr-Helwan El-Zyrae Road
P.O. Box 955 Maadi
Cairo
Egypt

**FRANCE
FRANCE**

Rapporteur

M. Philippe Lacoste

Sous-Directeur de l'environnement
Direction des Affaires économiques et financières
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
37 Quai d'Orsay
75007 Paris
France

Tel : 33-1-43174432

Fax: 33-1-43175745

E-mail: philippe.lacoste@diplomatie.gouv.fr

**UNEP/COORDINATING UNIT
FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN
ACTION PLAN (MAP)
PNUE/UNITE DE
COORDINATION DU PLAN
D'ACTION POUR LA
MEDITERRANEE (PAM)**

Mr Paul Mifsud

MAP Coordinator
P.O. Box 18019
48, Vassileos Konstantinou Av.
116 10 Athens
Greece

Tel: +30-10-7273100 (switchboard)

Tel: +30-10-7273101 (direct)

Fax: +30-10-7253196/7

E-mail: paul.mifsud@unepmap.gr

Mr Baher Kamal

Information Officer
P.O. Box 18019
48, Vassileos Konstantinou Av.
116 10 Athens
Greece

Tel: +30-10-7273126

Fax: +30-10-7253196/7

E-mail: baher@unepmap.gr

**REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN
CENTRES D'ACTIVITES REGIONALES DU PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA
MEDITERRANEE**

**REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR
ENVIRONMENT REMOTE SENSING
CENTRE (ERS/RAC)
CENTRE D'ACTIVITIES REGIONALES
POUR LA TELEDETECTION EN MATIERE
D'ENVIRONNEMENT (CAR/TDE)**

Mr Sergio Illuminato
ERS/RAC
Director General
40, Via Cagliari
00198 Rome
Italy
Tel: 39-06-85305147
Fax: 39-06-8542475
E-mail: director@ers-rac.org

Environment Remote Sensing/Regional
Activity Centre (ERS/RAC)
Via F. Pecoraino,
Z.I. Brancaccio c/o ASI
90124 Palermo
Italy

ANNEX II

AGENDA OF THE MEETING

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work
3. Progress on main activities carried out by the Secretariat during the period 1 June - 30 October 2004.
 - A. General review on the progress and outputs of the main activities**
 - B. Specific issues**
 - a. Legal Issues
 1. *Entry into force of the amendments to the Barcelona Convention*
 2. *New legal instrument on ICAM*
 3. *Compliance mechanism and Reporting*
 4. *Liability and Compensation*
 - b. Institutional matters:
 1. *Evaluations: MAP, MED POL, ERS/RAC; CP/RAC*
 2. *Preparations for the 14th CPs meeting*
 - c. Cooperation and Partners
 1. *Cooperation with the EC*
 2. *Progress of negotiations for a new GEF Strategic Partnership*
 - d. Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)
 1. *Progress on the Preparation of the MSSD and the Report Environment and Development*
 2. *Financing and cooperation for sustainable development*
4. Date and place of the next meeting of the Bureau
5. Any other business
6. Conclusions and decisions
7. Closure of the meeting

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

1. Entry into force of the amendments to the Barcelona Convention

The Bureau invited all Contracting Parties to organize events focusing on the entry into force of the revised Convention and requested the Secretariat to provide any assistance in this regard, emphasizing also the necessity for the entry into force of other MAP legal instruments.

The Bureau also requested the Secretariat to explore, together with the depositary country, why some Parties had not ratified the legal instruments and to propose ways and means to assist and encourage countries to move ahead with the ratification process.

2. Compliance mechanism and reporting

Due to the extensive work required for the preparation of the first national report on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, the Bureau urged the Contracting Parties to submit their reports on time so that the first regional report on the Implementation of the Barcelona Convention for the 2002-2003 biennium could be finalized successfully.

3. Liability and Compensation

The Bureau urged the Contracting Parties to contribute to the preparation of the Feasibility Study on Liability and Compensation and to provide the information requested by the Secretariat in a timely manner.

4. MAP evaluation

The Bureau invited all MAP National Focal Points to participate in the meeting to launch the MAP evaluation, to be convened in Athens on 9 and 10 December 2004, and to take an active part in this important exercise.

5. ERS/RAC evaluation

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to submit to the next Bureau meeting its comments on the ERS/RAC evaluation especially with regard to the main findings and recommendations in the report.

6. Preparation for the Fourteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

The Bureau called on the Contracting Parties to organize events at the national level to mark the entry into force of the amendments to the Barcelona Convention and the 30th Anniversary of MAP.

7. Accreditation to ECOSOC and CSD

Members considered the advice of the Executive Director of UNEP on the issue of accreditation of MAP to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the

United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and agreed not to pursue the matter further.

8. Cooperation with the European Commission

The Bureau invited the MAP Secretariat and the European Commission to discuss the content of a joint work programme, on the basis of the first draft prepared by the MAP Secretariat, and to keep the Bureau informed of the progress made. The Bureau also agreed that all Contracting Parties should be kept informed of the discussions and participate as soon as a more mature draft joint work programme became available.

9. Progress on the preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development

The Bureau took note of the first part of the draft Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), which was circulated in French only at the Meeting, and decided to await the finalization of the full text of the draft MSSD and discuss it at the next meeting of the Bureau, taking into account the outcome of the consultation processes planned, including the Peer Review exercise, before the MCSD submit it for adoption to the Fourteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

10. National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs)

The Bureau encouraged other countries to provide technical and financial support to enable all Mediterranean countries to prepare National Strategies for Sustainable Development and to establish National Commissions for Sustainable Development. The Bureau thanked Italy and Monaco for their support.

11. MCSD Programme of Work

The Bureau decided that the MCSD should continue its work as planned until the next meeting of the Contracting Parties. The Bureau would consider at its meeting in June 2005 a recommendation to be proposed to the Fourteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the future of the MCSD. The Bureau also decided that this issue should be addressed in the MAP evaluation process .

12. Report on Environment and Development

The Bureau emphasized the value of the Report on Environment and Development and invited the Contracting Parties to facilitate its finalization, assume responsibility for its translation where necessary, and ensure its broad distribution. The Bureau thanked the European Commission for its support.

13. Financing and cooperation for Sustainable Development

The Bureau underlined the importance of pursuing this activity in the Mediterranean and recommended that the issue be discussed in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's economic forums.

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to approach the European Commission with a view to encouraging the European Investment Bank, which had a growing number of activities in the Mediterranean, to incorporate environmental concerns to a greater extent.

14. Workshop on Sustainable Development Policies and Indicators

The Bureau underlined the importance of improving the structure of relations with other organizations in the area of information on sustainable development and requested the Coordinator and BP/RAC to approach the European Commission, and in particular the European Environment Agency, for this purpose in order to explore ways of implementing ongoing cooperation.

The Bureau encouraged the Contracting Parties and the MAP Secretariat to prepare an assessment of the implementation of recommendations on sustainable development indicators in preparation for the workshop to be held in May 2005.

15. Commemorative Medal

The Bureau decided to recommend to the Contracting Parties that the MAP medal be named after the late Michel Batisse for his invaluable contribution to the Mediterranean through his active involvement in the work of MAP.