



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



UNEP/BUR/70/Inf.5
15 April 2010
ENGLISH



MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

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

Rabat, Morocco, 5-6 May 2010

**REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP INCEPTION WORKSHOP/
FIRST STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
"STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA
LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM"
(17-19 FEBRUARY 2010, BUDVA, MONTENEGRO)**



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.345/8
08 March 2010
ENGLISH



MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

The Strategic Partnership Inception Workshop/First Steering Committee Meeting
“Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem”

17-19 February 2010, Budva, Montenegro

REPORT

**THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP INCEPTION WORKSHOP/
FIRST STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
“STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA LARGE MARINE
ECOSYSTEM”**

Together for the Mediterranean Sea

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Report of the meeting

Annex I: List of Participants

Annex II: Agenda of the meeting

Annex III: Conclusions and Recommendations

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Introduction

1. The Inception Workshop/First Steering Committee Meeting of the UNEP/MAP GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership) was held, at the kind invitation of the Government of Montenegro, at the Hotel Maestral, Milocer (Budva), Montenegro, from 17 to 19 February 2010.

Participation

2. The following Steering Committee members were represented: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, France, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, UNEP/MAP, UNEP/DGEF, World Bank, FAO, UNIDO, UNESCO-IHP, MEDPOL, SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC, INFO/RAC, CP/RAC, WWF MedPO, MIO-ECSDE, GWP-Med and the Project Manager.

3. The following observers were represented: Malta, ACCOBAMS, Union for the Mediterranean, GEF IW: LEARN,

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

Opening of the meeting

5. H.E. Mr. Branimir Gvozdenovic, Minister of Spatial Planning and Environment of Montenegro, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. The meeting marked the launching of a wide range of project activities supporting the accomplishment of a common vision of a clean, healthy and visually unique Mediterranean and calling for a resolute, efficient and concerted response to the challenges now faced and those that lay ahead. Montenegro attached particular importance to protecting the quality and integrity of marine biodiversity and to applying an integrated approach to coastal zone management. The current meeting was expected to prepare the ground and develop efficient mechanisms for the new Strategic Partnership, which, through the engagement of all relevant stakeholders involved in both the regional and investment components of the project within a broad framework of regional cooperation, would respond to the growing needs of the region and of individual States.

6. Ms Maria Luisa Silva Mejias, MAP Deputy Coordinator and Officer-in-Charge, thanked the host country authorities for their support in organizing the meeting, underlining Montenegro's commitment to promoting environmental protection and sustainable development. The Strategic Partnership was a tool to assist countries, particularly those most in need, in achieving the objectives of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and demonstrated the MAP system's capacity to bring about practical change through concrete policy reforms and targeted interventions, and to replicate successful actions. The concept of partnership, aimed at tangible impact, lay at the heart of what was a complex and ambitious project, involving as it did activities in 13 countries, operating through 12 implementing agencies with the financial support of 48 co-financing sources. Sustainability was guaranteed by embedding the project in the institutional and operational set-up of the Barcelona Convention. The Strategic Partnership was one of the largest partnerships ever established for the protection of the Mediterranean environment. The task ahead was a difficult one, as it meant changing attitudes, policies and ways of working. Future support from the general public and policy-makers would depend on the concerted action needed to deliver on the targets set.

Election of officers

7. Following the provisions of the Project Document, the meeting was co-chaired by the representative of the President of the Bureau of the Barcelona Convention Mr Azzeddine Daaif, Morocco, and Ms Maria Luisa Silva Mejias, MAP Deputy Coordinator and Officer-in-Charge.

8. The following officers were elected:

Vice-Chairpersons: Ms Jelena Knezevic (Montenegro)
Ms Samira Nateche (Algeria)
Rapporteur: Mr Dimitris Faloutsos (Global Water Partnership Mediterranean
- GWP-Med)

Adoption of the agenda

9. The agenda (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.345/1) and the annotated agenda (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG 345/2 Corr.1) were adopted. The agenda is attached as **Annex II** to the present report.

Introduction to the meeting: objectives, structure, methods of work, expected results

10. Mr Ivica Trumbic, UNEP/MAP Project Manager for the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem, which it was proposed should henceforth be named the "MedPartnership", retraced the background to the project and noted that the current meeting provided the first opportunity to bring together all the partners. The Steering Committee, whose role was particularly important on account of the complexity of the partnership, as reflected in its highly diverse composition, was the main policy body overseeing project execution. It would meet annually, in a different country each time in order to make for increased ownership by stakeholders. After outlining its main functions, he explained the reasons for holding the Committee's first meeting jointly with the Inception Workshop, including the time-lag between project preparation and implementation, noting, however, that separate inception workshops were planned for some specific project components.

11. The objectives of the meeting were to acquaint parties with project goals and activities; to ensure that no major issues or areas had been overlooked; to plan the coordination of actions to be undertaken under the Regional Component (UNEP/MAP and co-executing agencies) and the Investment Fund (World Bank); to present the roles, responsibilities and support services of stakeholders, national focal points and co-executing agencies; to discuss the Draft Inception Report, the Annual Work Plan and overall Work Plan and budget; and to review progress during the Project's inception phase. Expected results were the adoption of the revised overall and first-year Work Plans and budget, agreement on the extension of the project, adoption of a revised monitoring and evaluation plan, recommendations on a finalized Inception Report, awareness by all stakeholders of the implications of the project, executing agencies given the opportunity to plan implementation, and contacts established between all parties. Next steps would be the implementation of activities, the first concrete outcomes expected by the end of 2010, increased country participation in the MedPartnership and complementary activities generated.

12. On the basis of comments and proposals at the meeting, recommendations would be drafted and proposed for adoption.

Presentation of the project and status of project implementation

13. Mr Trumbic said that the MedPartnership's long-term goals were to facilitate countries' full implementation of the SAPs and NAPs, to assist countries in the implementation of the ICZM Protocol, to leverage long-term financing and to ensure the sustainability of project activities. Broadly, its objectives were to leverage reforms and catalyse investments addressing transboundary pollution reduction and coastal biodiversity conservation priorities identified in the SAP. Drawing attention to the two pillars of the partnership, the UNEP/MAP-led Regional Component and the World Bank-led Investment Fund, he explained that the objective of the former was to promote harmonized policy, legal and institutional reforms and fill the knowledge gap in order to reverse marine and coastal degradation in accordance with agreed SAP MED and SAP BIO priorities, and to prepare the ground for the future implementation of the ICZM Protocol, while the objective of the latter was to speed up implementation of transboundary pollution and biodiversity conservation measures in priority hotspots and sensitive areas and thus help achieve the SAP MED and SAP BIO targets.

14. The four components of the regional pillar of the MedPartnership, described in detail in the draft Inception Report, were expected to have concrete, quantified overall impacts in terms of legal, policy and institutional reforms, demonstration/pilot projects, stakeholder participation, and a replication, communication and sustainable financing mechanism. Turning to the status of project implementation, he recalled that the project had been endorsed by GEF in April 2008 and the Internal Cooperation Agreement (ICA) signed in October that year. The Project Management Unit staff had been recruited in 2009, a management system had been established and several meetings held. Legal agreements with partners had been signed, so that the legal framework was now in place. The project had effectively started on 1 May 2009, and implementation of activities was now under way. Financing had been secured and funds were regularly released.

Interventions by countries and donors

15. Mr. Azzeddine Daaif, Morocco, after welcoming the success of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties held in Marrakesh, emphasized the importance of the MedPartnership, which constituted a milestone in Mediterranean cooperation and in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention. He noted that all the related projects were in harmony with the biennial work plan adopted in Marrakesh, with particular reference to the implementation of the SAP-MED and the SAP-BIO. The new elements in the MedPartnership, and especially the structure that had been envisaged for the replication of projects and the investment machinery, were of particular importance and would allow more concentrated action than in the past. The pilot projects that were being undertaken allowed the countries concerned to take ownership of the activities.

16. The representative of Albania expressed great interest in the MedPartnership and the innovative methods that were being used for the implementation of project activities within the overall coordination structure. More detailed comments concerning the situation in Albania would be made at the next meeting.

17. The representative of Algeria welcomed the innovative MedPartnership programme. She noted that the project activities undertaken within the context of the MedPartnership in her own country were focused on a specific coastal area and were intended for demonstration purposes, with particular emphasis being given to the recycling of used lubrication oils. In view of the fact that coastal and marine areas were affected by multiple forms of pollution, it would be desirable

to extend the demonstration activities to encompass urban and industrial de-pollution, as well as adaptation to the effects of climate change, with particular reference to the rise in sea levels, with a view to further promoting the integrated management of coastal zones in accordance with the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol.

18. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed support for the MedPartnership project and hoped that it would produce great benefits. The activities undertaken in his country were being carried out in close cooperation with Croatia and offered a good opportunity for the inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders in the action taken. The authorities in his country were currently working on the national response to climate change, which was an essential issue that needed to be integrated into the MedPartnership. Although the coastline of his country was short, support was needed in the fields of capacity-building, financing and access to equipment. He added that his country was in the process of ratifying the three remaining Protocols to the Barcelona Convention, including the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol. He Expressed full support to the Project since it will assist the country in implementing the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

19. A representative of Croatia described the activities carried out in her country within the context of the Coastal Cities Pollution Control Project. Starting with Phase 1 of the Project, covering the years 2000 to 2004, she indicated that the main components of the Project had focused on the development of infrastructure, with particular reference to urban wastewater treatment, as well as on institutional strengthening and the development of a coastal monitoring network. Phase 1 had consisted of 36 projects, while the number of municipalities involved in Phase II would rise from 11 to 30, covering a total population of over 300,000. The total cost of the Project would be over €280 million, of which half would be provided by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and half by the Government of Croatia. Although a monitoring system was being established under the Project, it still needed to be improved and extended to more aspects of seawater quality and pollutants, with a view to determining comprehensive baseline conditions. The main conclusions of the monitoring concerned the need to increase the rate of connection to wastewater treatment systems from its current level of around 50 per cent. The Project was helping her country to come closer to meeting the environmental acquis of the European Union. Although progress was being made, challenges still remained.

20. The representative of Egypt expressed support for the activities carried out in the context of the MedPartnership, which were in accordance with national objectives. The strength of the MedPartnership was the involvement of all the stakeholders and it was important to further develop participation, while ensuring that there was no duplication of roles.

21. The representative of Lebanon emphasized the importance of the MedPartnership project and the opportunities that it offered to improve and strengthen partnerships among stakeholders. The objectives of the MedPartnership were in accordance with the national action plans developed in Lebanon for the implementation of the SAP-BIO and the SAP-MED, and included support for the management of marine protected areas. However, care would need to be taken to strengthen complementarity with existing activities and to avoid duplication, with particular reference to Component 3. Her country was also implementing activities with assistance from the World Bank in relation to Component 2. She therefore called for the development of a clear and precise system of coordination in the context of the MedPartnership covering all of the partners.

22. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya emphasized the importance of the MedPartnership in improving the present situation and ensuring the sustainable development of the Mediterranean for the benefit of future generations. In view of the depletion of resources in the region, cooperation was needed between the authorities of all Mediterranean countries. His country was therefore willing to implement the activities identified within the context of the MedPartnership. A National Steering Committee had been established for that purpose and the envisaged activities related to Component 2.3, with the involvement of the National Electricity Generation Company, and Component 3.1, although in view of the absence of marine protected areas in the country, the necessary arrangements would have to be envisaged at the national level.

23. The representative of Montenegro welcomed the holding of the first Steering Committee of the MedPartnership in her country and the fact that the MedPartnership was becoming operational. She emphasized that, with the increase in tourism, her country faced a considerable challenge in developing the necessary infrastructure, based on its National Action Plan, and particularly with regard to the installation of the necessary wastewater treatment plants. Although an investment portfolio had already been developed, partnerships and support were needed, for some of the projects included in this, especially in the fields of project design and feasibility studies, in order for their implementation to initiate. The CAMP project that will be undertaken in her country will play a crucial role in improving institutional capacities, which were necessary for the replication of the necessary activities throughout the country. However, there was as yet no appropriate structure within the Ministry for that purpose and much still needed to be learnt in relation to the technical and financial aspects of projects carried out in other countries. She therefore expressed great interest in contacting possible partners for the improvement of the activities that were currently being implemented, in addition to those that were already active in the country, such as the World Bank. Synergies should also be sought at the regional level, for example between the MedPartnership and the Horizon 2020 initiative.

24. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic observed that, in view of its geographical position, the pollutants released into the Mediterranean reached the coast of his country. The MedPartnership was therefore of great importance in strengthening coordination between countries at the regional level. His country, which had ratified most of the Protocols to the Barcelona Convention, was in the final stages of finalizing a study on environmental degradation, which would be of great importance for the implementation of the LBS Protocol. For that purpose, it needed to strengthen its capacities, monitoring system and financial support.

25. The representative of Tunisia, who had followed the GEF project from the beginning, emphasized the importance of the MedPartnership in terms of: the visibility and implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols; the multiplicity of the partners involved, which however implied a great burden of coordination for MAP; and the integration of environmental issues into national development plans, with a view to the elimination of hot spots, the reduction of pollution from land-based sources and the achievement of targets for the reuse of treated wastewater. The progress achieved in his own country included the adoption in 2009 of legislation on marine protected areas and the development of a national strategy for ICZM, in the preparation of which a broad series of actors had been involved at the national level. The procedure for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol was also progressing. Finally, he added that adaptation to climate change should also be included in the MedPartnership project.

26. The representative of Turkey emphasized the importance of the Inception meeting, particularly in view of the opportunities that it provided for the sharing of knowledge and experience. He expressed full support for the implementation of the MedPartnership, with its

objectives of the effective implementation of the SAP-MED and the SAP-BIO. The aim was to ensure effective national and regional governance in the development of a regional response to ensure the less damaging use of natural resources. He agreed with other speakers that the MedPartnership should be extended to include climate change issues with a view to promoting the best available practices in terms of both adaptation and mitigation.

27. The representative of France welcomed the concrete and ambitious initiative of the MedPartnership. It was significant that it was becoming operational during the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity. The MedPartnership was a very complex long-term project, and it was really necessary for it to be a success in view of the extent of the problems faced in the Mediterranean. He recalled that his country had already ratified the ICZM Protocol and that, through the FFEM, it was contributing to two types of activities, the development of new marine protected areas in the Mediterranean and the management of coastal aquifers in Tunisia. He also favoured the extension of the MedPartnership to include the response to climate change.

28. The representative of Italy confirmed the support provided by her country under Component 1.1 relating to the management of coastal aquifers and groundwater and congratulated the Secretariat on the preparation of the Inception Report. She added that further clarifications would be useful on specific costs, especially those covered by co-financing.

29. The representative of Malta mentioned the importance of working together within the context of pan-Mediterranean cooperation, stressed that all the challenges being addressed by the project are also Malta's challenges, and proposed that Malta should be considered as an observer member of the Steering Committee. However Malta will not be involved in the project activities directly because it is not a GEF-eligible country. He added that the MedPartnership was a highly ambitious initiative in which programme management was of crucial importance.

30. The representative of ACCOBAMs recalled the commitment made by all the countries of the Mediterranean to maintain a favorable conservation status for cetaceans. To do so, it was necessary to implement measures to minimize the negative effects of fishing on cetaceans and to establish marine protected areas of importance for cetaceans, using the provisions of the Barcelona Convention. In accordance with the commitment made under the ACCOBAMS Agreement, a draft Protocol had been formulated on the evaluation of by-catch and degradation in relation to cetaceans, which would be submitted to the Contracting Parties to the Agreement later in the year. Several projects on the subject were currently being developed in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. In view of the close relations between ACCOBAMS and the Barcelona Convention, with particular reference to SPA/RAC, she proposed that all of the above activities should be integrated into the MedPartnership and that synergy should be promoted in future activities.

31. The representative of the Conservatoire du Littoral (CDL) described the activities undertaken by his organization in collaboration with many partners in small islands in the Mediterranean. Although there were between 10,000 and 15,000 small islands in the region, there were only 40 managed archipelagos. The activities undertaken for the integrated environmental management of small islands constituted excellent pilot activities, which needed to take into account a variety of issues, including tourism, conservation and biodiversity. The experiences obtained could then be replicated elsewhere. The partners involved in those activities included the FFEM, WWF, Blue Plan and MEDPOL.

32. The representative of UNEP DGEF indicated that, within the UNEP's GEF portfolio, the present project was unique in terms of the number of activities and partners. It was an ambitious

undertaking and it was not surprising that it had taken some time before it was up and running. She therefore welcomed the fact that it was now operational, that many of the agreements had been signed and that certain activities were now being implemented. With regard to the integration of climate change issues, she observed that the GEF financing for the MedPartnership was currently being provided within the context of its International Waters Project, which did not cover adaptation to climate change. However, she noted that UNEP MAP had requested additional funding to cover climate change and variability, for which an amount of USD 2.3 million was being made available, which could well prepare the ground for a broader adaptation project to be undertaken in the future.

33. Mr Trumbic, in response to the discussion, welcomed the support expressed by the participants for the MedPartnership. He hoped that such support, which was essential for the success of the project, would be maintained. He also noted that certain projects using investment funds had started some years ago and were already well advanced. Other project activities were in the pipeline. With regard to climate change, he noted that while there were some limitations within the context of GEF for the financing of activities relating to adaptation to climate change, he hoped that other solutions could be found. It should be possible, in cooperation with other partners in the region, to disseminate the most positive experiences.

34. The representative of Morocco called for the innovative pillars of the MedPartnership to be strengthened. These included the replication strategy, based on the definition of what constituted a pilot project. It would be useful to prepare project descriptions for the 35 pilot projects and annex them to the Inception report. With regard to financing, he noted that GEF financing would end with this (second) project. In contrast, the Sustainable Mediterranean project was just starting up and benefited from substantial financing. It was therefore necessary to start thinking about the mobilization of financing for the MedPartnership with a view to the further replication of the project activities undertaken.

Complementary initiatives in the Mediterranean region

35. The representative of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) recalled that UfM was a wide-ranging initiative co-chaired by Egypt and France and that one of its six themes was sustainable development, offering broad scope for synergies with the MedPartnership. Another shared concern was its methodological approach, based on practical projects. The Union was now up and running and looked forward to mutually beneficial cooperation with the MedPartnership. The latter's participation in two forthcoming ministerial meetings on water and the environment would be welcome, and the Declaration to be made by the Heads of State and Government at their meeting in June 2010 was expected to include a reference to the MedPartnership.

36. The representative of the GEF International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN) explained that IW-LEARN was a partnership implemented by the GEF agencies to share knowledge and build the management capacity of the international waters (IW) portfolio of projects and partners. He drew attention to IW-LEARN's support for the MENARID programme focused on land, agriculture and groundwater management in North Africa, regional dialogue processes in the Mediterranean, support to IW Project delivery and results dissemination, and finally to the 2011 6th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference to be held in the Mediterranean region, coinciding with the mid-term phase of the MedPartnership and providing an opportunity to present and share results with the rest of the GEF IW portfolio. GEF's twentieth anniversary in the autumn of that year would also afford an opportunity for fruitful exchanges.

Component 1

37. The representative of UNESCO, informing the meeting of new initiatives since the approval of the project, drew attention to the GEF-UNDP regional project "Protection and Sustainable Use of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System" (DIKTAS) and to the UNESCO-IHP executed subcomponent on coastal aquifers and groundwater. Interlinkages and synergies with, inter alia, the MedPartnership, should help to identify the causes of degradation of water resources contained in the highly vulnerable transboundary aquifer system of the Dinaric Karst, and lead to agreement on the corrective measures needed. Other GEF-funded projects with scope for synergy were the project "Development of a methodology for the Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme (TWAP)", whose groundwater component was executed by UNESCO-IHP and the Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) component by UNESCO-IOC, and the global project "Expanding the Scientific Basis for GEF International Waters Projects (IW:Science)". Another noteworthy development was the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2008 of a resolution on the law of transboundary aquifers.

38. The representative of PAP/RAC drew attention to a number of supporting activities relating to ratification and harmonization of national institutional arrangements with the ICZM Protocol, such as the preparation of an Explanatory Guide of the Protocol and analysis of national legislation to determine conformity with the Protocol requirements. Many activities initiated through the regular PAP/RAC work programme would also contribute to the MedPartnership's subcomponent 1.2, such as a regional analysis of spatial planning systems and stock-taking exercises for ICZM. PAP/RAC was also a project partner in PEGASO (People for Ecosystem based Governance on Assessing Sustainable Development of Ocean and Coast), an FP7 EU project for the preparation of an ICZM governance platform for which PAP/RAC was responsible. The platform would represent a user-friendly tool for sustainable governance of coastal zones and would be linked to the MedPartnership's network. Within the CAMP Montenegro, which is the project under preparation, certain complementary activities would be linked to the MedPartnership, such as an institutional analysis with particular reference to the planning system and documents in Montenegro, and would be used for the regional workshop as another case study.

39. The representative of the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-MED) noted that, despite the similar challenges faced throughout the Mediterranean region, different regimes for water resource governance prevailed and there was no unified scheme on national water governance and integrated water resources management (IWRM) planning. Among the processes and initiatives working towards that end were UNDP, GEF, MED EUWI, the African Water Initiative and donors. Key operational synergies were seen with the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative, the Petersberg Phase II/Athens Declaration Process on Transboundary Water Resources Management, and the Union for the Mediterranean's proposed Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean. Those initiatives enjoyed the active support of donor and partner countries and a wide range of stakeholders. They were technically facilitated by GWP-MED.

Component 2

40. The representative of MED POL reported that, in preparing the project proposal for the MedPartnership, MED POL had made a thorough review of all related initiatives being carried out by other regional or international actors and those being implemented by MED POL within MAP, for the purpose of ensuring possible synergies and avoid overlapping. Regarding the identification of the magnitude of riverine inputs of pollutants into the Mediterranean, MED POL

had established close cooperation with the FATE Scenarios initiative of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the EU. The initiative, expected to prepare a long-term analysis of land-based nutrient loads in European Seas, represented an opportunity for exchange of data relevant to the MED POL proposal and thus a contribution to its implementation. In planning the work programme related to the management and disposal of PCBs, MED POL took into account the work carried out in Lebanon by the World Bank with funding from the Canadian Development Agency (CIDA) and its activities in Lebanon were accordingly conceived as complementary to those being implemented, filling existing gaps. The implementation of the SAP MED and the NAPs being a MED POL priority, all the activities proposed in the pollution reduction component of the MedPartnership were designed to help meet their objectives. Finally, MED POL considered the MedPartnership objectives as being very close to those of the capacity-building and pollution reduction components of Horizon 2020 in which MED POL was fully involved, and the specific activities of MED POL in the two initiatives were therefore analysed with a view to streamlining the work programmes and covering gaps.

41. The representative of CP/RAC recalled that the Centre collaborated closely with MED POL in the cooperative endeavours concerning pollution reduction described above, notably in the management and disposal of PCBs and in the assistance given to countries in implementing their NAPs. Every effort was being made to develop further synergies and avoid overlap through cooperation under the Stockholm Convention and CP/RAC's partnership with Horizon 2020, notably in terms of planned capacity-building activities.

42. The representative of UNIDO said that there was no major ongoing complementary activity to report, but that an environmental programme currently in the pipeline on industry in Tunisia, funded by the EU and executed by the Tunisian Ministry of the Environment was relevant to MedPartnership activities and was being prepared with due regard for avoiding any overlap and ensuring synergies with existing initiatives.

Component 3

43. The representative of WWF-MedPO drew attention to cooperation with several ongoing and planned initiatives and projects in the Mediterranean with which synergies were sought or identified, notably the Med-RAS project, a joint initiative between the Marine and Species Programmes of IUCN-Med with a pilot project in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Small Islands of the Mediterranean project implemented by the Conservatoire du Littoral, UNEP/MAP Blue Plan's work programme on marine areas, and the Network of Managers of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (MedPAN), including the planned parallel projects targeting EU MPAs. WWF was working in close cooperation with SPA/ RAC in a number of areas.

44. The representatives of SPA/RAC said that many of the activities carried out by the Centre under its biannual work programmes were complementary to project component 3, noting that project activities represented only a small part of SAP BIO developed over many years. SPA/RAC was in favour of opening the project to other partners that wished to be associated with it, such as ACCOBAMS. They emphasized in particular the project "Identification of possible SPAMIs in the Mediterranean areas beyond national jurisdiction", the programme of work on marine and coastal protected areas in the Mediterranean region, SAP BIO updating on vulnerability and impacts of climate change on marine and coastal biological diversity, joint activities with RACs and other partners, including BP/RAC, PAP/RAC, the Conservatoire du Littoral, UN-FAO, the GFCM and the MedPAN Association, UNDP activities in Croatia, Albania and Turkey, the ACCOBAMS programme on marine protected areas and the MedRAS project of the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med).

45. The representative of FAO drew attention to initiatives complementary to the fisheries component of the project, implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries in the Mediterranean. He stressed the guiding principles underlying FAO's approach: activities should be country-driven and should be based on existing networks and successful cooperation projects; the adaptive approach adopted, enhancing the involvement of concerned stakeholders, especially fishers, and the linkages to be established between fisheries, environmental and marine agencies in the countries concerned. He described the network of FAO Med Regional Projects, covering the CopeMed, AdriaMed, MedSudMed and EastMed projects, which aimed at maintaining the sustainability of marine resources and the ecosystem in the western, central and eastern sub-regions of the Mediterranean, strengthening national capacity to obtain statistical data on catch and effort, strengthening fisheries scientific research and reinforcing institutional capacity at the national level. Details were also given of FAO's MedFisis, ArtFiMed and Black Sea projects. The main focus and benefits of those activities were to develop the capacity of fisheries institutions in partner countries, with all Mediterranean countries covered, to reinforce regional networking, coordination and cooperation, and to raise awareness of sustainable fisheries management according to the ecosystem approach. FAO also engaged in regular coordination with the FI Strategic Partnership, sharing the common objective of sustainable fisheries management.

Component 4

46. The representative of Horizon 2020 reviewed Horizon 20/20's background, aims and activities. H2020 and the MedPartnership could be seen as complementary initiatives of the MedPartnership, sharing a similar structure and the same concerns. It was one of the major programmes taken up by the Union for the Mediterranean and is the EU's flagship programme for de-pollution of the Mediterranean. It had been designed taking into account the achievements of the Barcelona Convention, and continued to operate in a spirit of partnership with other similar initiatives, including UNEP/MAP, filling gaps where it could bring added value. After outlining its structure and consortium of partners, he described its main proposed activities, notably its comprehensive programme of capacity-building activities, observing that the capacity-building needs already identified under other initiatives, strategies or action plans would be taken fully into consideration. Regarding synergies with the MedPartnership, he pointed to the need to identify entry points for synergy and streamlining, to avoid overlapping capacity-building activities, to implement activities jointly or co-organize them, to coordinate regional events and to cooperate on communication strategies. Further synergies could be created through the Horizon 2020 CB/MEP missions to partner/beneficiary countries. It should be noted that the Project Management Units of the two initiatives were already engaged in close cooperation.

47. Mr Trumbic noted the many comments and suggestions regarding complementary initiatives, the strong desire for a mutually beneficial two-way partnership and the clear concern to avoid duplication of activities. Further details of the activities were available in the draft Inception Report.

The "Sustainable Med" programme and its relationship with the MedPartnership

48. A representative of the World Bank explained that the Sustainable Med programme was still currently in the process of being defined. In order to explain the background to the new programme, he briefly reviewed its predecessor, the Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Program (METAP). She recalled that METAP had been in operation for 20 years and was coming to an end during the course of 2010. She recalled the principal objectives of

METAP, which consisted of strengthening the institutional and legal structure of environmental management in the region, formulating environmental policies and developing a pipeline of environmental projects. The achievements of the METAP over that period included: assisting in the establishment of ministries of environment; the establishment and support for legal frameworks; the formulation and analysis of policy based on the cost assessment of environmental degradation; and the development of a strong pipeline of environmental projects. The environment was now a major issue in the region and a substantial set of investment projects had been identified. He added that there were now a multiplicity of actors in the field of environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean and that the World Bank wished to continue investing in the countries in the region. The rationale for the new programme was based on recognition of: the accentuated pressure on natural resources in the region, with particular reference to water and land, due to economic and population growth; the costs of environmental degradation; food shortages; increased water stress from droughts; climate change risks; the continued need for institutional strengthening; and the renewed and strengthened regional political commitment, including the creation of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The Sustainable Med programme was therefore being developed as a continuation of METAP, with the MedPartnership, co-funded by GEF, as its water pillar. The overall goal of Sustainable Med was to integrate environment within the economic development agenda of the Mediterranean, based on the adoption of a shared common vision. Its principal components would be governance, knowledge generation and technical assistance and investment. The specific objective of Phase 1 of Sustainable Med would be to enhance and accelerate the implementation of transboundary pollution reduction, improved water resources management, and biodiversity conservation measures in priority hotspots and sensitive areas of selected countries of the Mediterranean. In the field of governance, the aim would be to engage governments at the highest level to translate the vision into a commitment to reforms and investment. This would include supporting the integration of the environmental dimension within and among economic sectors, including tourism, agriculture and energy. Emphasis would also be placed on stimulating the commitment of financial resources by "key ministries" responsible for budgeting, such as ministries of planning, finance, international cooperation and the economy.

49. Another representative of the World Bank referred in particular to the development of the knowledge generation component of the Sustainable Med programme (Know Med). While the specific programme had not yet been finalized and was still under consultation, the main aims would include the strengthening of centres of expertise in southern and eastern Mediterranean countries and the improvement of cooperation. They would also cover knowledge generation, transfer and regional dissemination, and targeted capacity building at the country level on the sustainable management of natural resources, pollution abatement and responses to climate variability.

50. During the discussion that followed this presentation, the representative of Malta commented that he had hoped to learn that all the various initiatives in the region would dovetail nicely together. However, he now saw much overlapping and it was not at all clear where one initiative ended and another started. The representative of Montenegro recalled the complementarity between the proposed activities for the protection of biodiversity and the action that was being carried out with UNDP support for protection against alien species. She emphasized the importance of the involvement of SPA/RAC in such activities and she requested further support from SPA/RAC for the identification and development of marine protected areas in her own country, in the context of which three areas had been identified. Consultations were needed on the action to be taken for the identification of partners and to avoid duplication. It would be helpful in that respect to develop a database of all the related action that was being

undertaken by all the partners concerned. The representative of Algeria called for further assistance from METAP in the form of training to determine the cost of the degradation of coastal areas. The representative of Morocco draw attention on the the essential aspect of avoiding duplication in all the activities that were being implemented as well as these planned. He welcomed the enthusiasm that had been expressed for the project as a whole.

51. In response to the discussion, Mr Trumbic admitted that there was a danger of overlapping activities, as it was not always possible to draw very clear boundaries between the different project components. However, he recalled that the Sustainable Med programme was still in the definition phase. He therefore undertook to work in close collaboration with the World Bank to find a common language and to avoid duplication. A representative of the World Bank observed that that was entirely consistent with the approach that was being adopted to the Sustainable Med programme, for which many of the details were still to be worked out. The representative of SPA/RAC added that it was envisaged that support would be provided to Montenegro for the definition and management of marine protected areas and that details of the planned activities would be provided in due course.

Introduction to the draft Inception Report and major findings

52. Mr Trumbic, introducing the draft Inception Report of the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership) (document UNEP(DEPI/MED WG.345/3), recalled that much time had elapsed between the approval of the project document and the actual implementation of the project, during which circumstances had changed in the region. One of the major purposes of the Inception phase, including the Inception Report, was therefore to take such changes into account and to chart new development efforts in the region. The objectives of the Inception phase included the coordination of the activities that were to be undertaken under the Regional Component, by UNEP/MAP and the co-executing agencies, and those of the Investment Fund, as such linkages were critical for the success of all the action taken. The Inception phase also allowed the Project Management Unit (PMU) to take ownership of the project and to establish close working relationships with all the co-executing agencies and the countries. The Inception phase, which was about to end, had seen the PMU become operational, the Inception Report prepared and discussed by the Steering Committee, the detailed first-year work plan finalized and a one-year extension to the project requested, agreements signed with the project partners and the start of the implementation of a number of activities. The outcomes at the end of the Inception phase were that the initial strategic guidelines were unchanged, although corrections and adjustments had been made to a number of activities. It had been observed that the MedPartnership operated in a complex environment, involving many complementary activities, with their inherent constraints and opportunities. Although the total project budget had remained unchanged, changes within the budget reflected adjustments in activities and certain systemic problems.

Presentation of project activities and their revision by the project partners

Component 1: Integrated approaches for the implementation of the SAPs and NAPs: ICZM, IWRM and the management of coastal aquifers

53. The representative of UNESCO-IHP, with reference to Sub-component 1.1, recalled that coastal aquifers and groundwater constituted important sources of high quality water in Mediterranean coastal zones for drinking water, agriculture and industry, while sustaining coastal freshwater ecosystems such as coastal lagoons, wetlands and submarine discharge areas.. However, they were subject to the dual stress of over-extraction and subsequent salt

water intrusion, as well as to the effects of land-based pollution, which reduced water quality. These stresses are affecting the integrity of groundwater dependent coastal ecosystems, compromising their ability to provide valuable environmental services. He observed that the issues of coastal aquifers and groundwater had not been taken into account in the original TDA, the SAP-MED and SAP-BIO, or in the ICZM Protocol. The first objective of the activities was therefore the inclusion of issues related to groundwater in the legal and institutional framework of the UNEP Regional Seas Programme. The practical objectives included: the reversal of trends for the over-extraction and degradation of the quality of coastal aquifers, based on policy interactions to provide the appropriate capacity and technology for groundwater management; and the filling of knowledge gaps. For that purpose, an assessment would be carried out of the risks to coastal aquifers and the associated uncertainties. A regional action plan would be prepared and demonstration actions carried out in the context of ICZM and IWRM. Legislative, policy and institutional reforms would be developed. In addition, a cross-cutting activity aimed at the application of remote sensing techniques to support the assessment, case studies and monitoring efforts was presented. He then reviewed the specific project activities that would be carried out in that context, including case studies and vulnerability mapping in specific sites. Finally, he noted that the overall budget, as set out in the Inception Report, remained the same, although changes had been made to individual budget items, including an increase in project personnel costs to reinforce, among others, the legal component which is of crucial importance for the sub-component. In contrast, the envisaged budget for training activities had been reduced, although it was hoped to secure further external funding for training to make up for the reduction.

54. After this presentation, the representative of Italy stated that her country could adopt the work plan and the related budget revision on UNESCO's activities. However she reiterated that her country looked forward to receiving from the PMU in collaboration with the executing partner further clarifications on how the co-financing was used and which countries it would benefit and that it was reflected in the finalized Inception Report.

55. A representative of PAP/RAC, with reference to Sub-component 1.2 on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, recalled the recent activities of the Centre, which had focused on the provision of support for the development of national ICZM strategies and national action plans and their harmonization with the ICZM Protocol, the preparation of an explanatory guide to the ICZM Protocol and the development of a national case study in Croatia. Support had also been provided for the application of the ICZM approach at the national level and for a transboundary application of ICZM in Montenegro and Albania in the Buna/Bojana delta. The 2010 work plan within the context of the MedPartnership included research into the role of ICZM as a policy framework and support for the preparation of ICZM strategies, particularly in Algeria and Albania. A draft national case study would be prepared for Croatia, focusing on the harmonization of national institutional arrangements and legislation with the ICZM Protocol. A document would be prepared for vulnerability assessment to climate change impacts and draft outlines and ICZM plans would be prepared for a transboundary demonstration area (Albania/Montenegro) and a wetland-marine area of high biodiversity value (Reghaia in Algeria). Finally, he reviewed the proposed budget changes.

56. A representative of the Global Water Partnership Mediterranean (GWP-Med), with reference to Sub-component 1.3 on integrated water resource management, noted that water management in the region was subject to different regimes and conditions, but that similar problems were faced almost everywhere. The countries on the northern shore that are members of the European Union were covered by the EU Water Framework Directive and so are European Union accession countries, while many of the others were aiming at voluntary

compliance with the Directive. In the countries of the South and East of the region there was no unified regime for national water governance, with the result that IWRM planning processes differed. In response to that situation, the activities set out in the work plan focussed on several areas. The first consisted of the provision of support for the process of developing an overall water strategy for the Mediterranean region, which had involved meetings of experts and stakeholders, with a view to the submission of a draft strategy to a meeting of Mediterranean ministers responsible for water management in April 2010. A second area was composed of activities to encourage action, build capacities and develop national IWRM plans in four countries. An IWRM plan would be prepared for a transboundary demonstration area. Finally, he reviewed the activities undertaken and planned at the national and local levels in Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, Tunisia and the transboundary project concerning the Drin river. In conclusion, he noted that the total funding envisaged for the Sub-component was US\$ 1.5 million.

57. Following all the presentations, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic raised the question of the manner in which countries were selected for the implementation of project activities. It appeared that there were very few projects in certain countries. For example, ICZM projects were being carried out in several countries, but were needed throughout the region.

58. In response, Mr Trumbic recalled that the distribution of project activities was more complex than it might appear at first sight. Moreover, projects varied greatly in size and the investment required for several small projects might not be equivalent to that of one large project. He noted that the location of projects often depended on a series of factors, which might include the individual conditions in a specific country or the response received from national or local authorities. Many of the projects now incorporated into the work plan of the MedPartnership had originally been identified many years ago in the context of the TDA. He also recalled that project selection did not end with the completion of the first list and he called upon the co-executing partners to ensure that the criteria for the selection of projects were set out clearly in future, including in the case of project replication activities. The representative of GWP Med indicated that it had not been possible during the prioritization process carried out in 2005 to respond to all demands for IWRM support activities. The activities selected had therefore tended to be projects that were already well developed or which would contribute a specific outcome. Moreover, it was necessary to identify project activities that would make a significant contribution to a country IWRM process. The representative of PAP/RAC added that an effort would be made to ensure that support was provided to the Syrian Arab Republic in the field of ICZM, if not through the MedPartnership, then in the context of the regular PAP/RAC activities. The representative of MIO-ECSDE also emphasized that most projects tended to be selected at a very early stage in the life of a programme. He therefore called upon those countries that wished to be included in project activities in the context of the Horizon 2020 initiative to come forward as soon as possible.

59. The representative of Morocco said that if there were countries in the situation of not benefiting from project activities within the context of the MedPartnership, they should come forward. There should be no eligible countries in which there was no project.

60. The Deputy Coordinator noted that the Steering Committee had approved the overall revised work plan and budget of the Component 1 and in particular the work plan and budget for 2010, with the changes as outlined. It was noted that any changes to the work plan and budget for 2011 onwards will need to be presented to and approved by the Steering Committee at its next regular meeting.

Component 2: Pollution from land-based activities, including Persistent Organic Pollutants: implementation of SAP MED

61. The representative of MED POL reported on activities under Sub-components 2.1 on facilitation of policy and legislative reforms for SAP MED, 2.3 on environmentally sound management of equipment, stocks and wastes containing or contaminated by PCBs in national electricity companies of Mediterranean countries, and 4.14 on financing NAPs, outlining their objectives geared principally to policy reform and stressing the participatory, consultative approach adopted in MED POL's strategy and its close cooperation with CP/RAC. In response to an earlier question about criteria for the selection of projects and beneficiary countries, he pointed to the wealth of information gathered by MED POL from the NAPs and the SAPs and its inventory of industrial resources as valuable guides to priority-setting. With regard to the demonstration project on fertilizers (Subcomponent 2.1.1), implementation had been delayed on account of Lebanon's failure so far to confirm its willingness to host the demonstration site. Should Lebanon decline, the activity might be transferred to Tunisia with that country's agreement or, alternatively, activities transferred to Subcomponent 2.3. Good progress had been made in the implementation of the tanneries demonstration project under subcomponent 2.1.2. Similarly, the activity concerning industrial permitting, inspection and compliance systems (2.1.7) was well under way in 8 countries, with the outcome expected in 2013. Preparatory work on the demonstration projects on lubeoil (2.1.3) and on lead batteries (2.1.4) had been completed and implementation was on schedule. Regarding subcomponent 2.3, carried out in close cooperation with CP/RAC, details were provided in the draft Inception Report (paragraph 140); it remained to be ascertained whether Lebanon wished to be associated with subcomponent 2.3.4 on technical capacity for ESM of PCBs equipment related to development of a joint PCB awareness workshop and training courses. Croatia, which had expressed its interest, might be requested to join the project either in place of Lebanon or in addition to it. Regarding the cluster of activities relating to the facilitation of development of regional policy for pollution control (2.1.5 and 2.1.6), implementation was proceeding according to plan, as could be seen from the tables projected. Under Subcomponent 4.1, ensuring sustainable strategic financial planning of NAPs, an innovative approach was being adopted to help countries implement their own NAPs and priority activities. In conclusion, he stressed the importance of contributions and collaboration from national authorities as crucial to the success of activities.

62. The representative of CP/RAC reported on the Centre's implementation of subcomponent 2.3: Environmentally sound management (ESM) of equipment, stocks and wastes containing or contaminated by PCBs. After explaining the rationale behind the project, implemented in coordination with MED POL, including the lack of detailed information on the releases and use of PCBs in the region, he noted that confirmation of the participation of Lebanon was still awaited and that Croatia might possibly be included. The expected outcome was the initiation of NAP/NIP implementation for the ESM of PCB-contaminated equipment, stocks and wastes. CP/RAC participation was aimed at raising awareness in five countries of ESM of PCBs and strengthening their technical and political capacity in that regard, verification through awareness-raising workshops and training course reports and active participation of all stakeholders in the awareness and capacity-building activities and distribution of awareness materials. Outcomes under subcomponent 2.3.3 included the development of national PCB websites and the production of a PCB awareness video and brochures on POPs and PCBs. In terms of capacity-building, awareness-raising workshops and training courses were planned in each participating country; tasks completed so far included staff recruitment, identification of existing awareness materials, strengthened coordination with MED POL, initial contacts with countries, identification of training experts and revision and updating of project activities. Finally, he reported on forthcoming activities and changes in the budget.

63. The representative of UNIDO reported on the implementation of the MED TEST project for the transfer of environmentally sound technology to the South Mediterranean region (subcomponent 2.2). Its purpose was to address pollution from industrial land-based sources, the overall objective being to build national capacities in the UNIDO-TEST integrated approach and conduct pilot projects in priority industrial areas to demonstrate water productivity and environmental/economic performance. The project was being carried out in Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco. In response to the concern expressed at the meeting about selection criteria, she said that one criterion was the relevance of countries to industrial pollution discharge into the Mediterranean, and another the presence in the countries concerned of a cleaner production structure. Budget constraints limited the number of beneficiary countries to three. The scheduled preparatory work had been completed by the end of 2009: national contractors had been selected, national advisory boards had been established, capacity had been built on TEST methodology, a project website had been developed and information material produced, technical site reviews of 75 industries had been conducted and 42 demonstration sites selected. The latter were principally SMEs that were financially viable, under pressure to improve their environmental performance and responsible for direct or indirect discharge to Mediterranean hotspots. Outlining planned activities, she said that the expected results phased in the forthcoming years were to identify and implement no cost/low cost technical solutions to increase water productivity and reduce wastewater discharges and pollution loads; to introduce environmental management standards and accounting tools; to prepare feasibility studies for cleaner technology (EST-BAT), including EoP; to promote EST/EoP investments within existing financial schemes; to induce enterprises to sign up for the Global Compact; to promote national scale-up, increased demand for environmental services and commercial uptake of TEST tools; and to ensure regional dissemination and replication. Among the constraints faced were the lack of interest in the project by local industries and the risk of withdrawal during implementation, the high cost of the EST solution and the lack of financing for EST/EoP.

64. In the ensuing discussion, speakers welcomed the collaboration between MED POL and CP/RAC and highlighted the need for reliance on the Centre in terms of organization. Emphasis was placed on cooperation with other organizations, such as UNIDO on Subcomponent 2.3 and WHO on microbiological quality control under the MED POL programme. The representative of the Horizon 2020 initiative looked forward to concrete synergies with the MedPartnership on capacity-building programmes throughout Component 2. Responding to a question by the representative of Montenegro on the possibility of extending participation in the MED TEST project to other countries, the representative of UNIDO explained that participation in the current advanced implementation phase could not be envisaged, also for budgetary reasons, but that in the third phase provision was made for replication in other countries, particularly those with an existing cleaner production structure, such as Montenegro, Turkey and the Syrian Arab Republic. Interest was expressed by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic in participating in the demonstration project on fertilizers (Subcomponent 2.1.1) should Lebanon withdraw. The representative of Tunisia drew attention to important developments in his country, with the establishment of national advisory bodies in accordance with the requirements of the Dumping and Hazardous Wastes Protocols, and confirmed Tunisia's wish to join the project on Subcomponent 2.1.1 either together with Lebanon or in place of it should that country withdraw. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, reporting a recent power plant accident with the release of PCBs into Neretva river and subsequently into the sea, expressed an interest in being associated with relevant projects under component

65. Summing up the discussion, Mr Trumbic welcomed the willingness of Horizon 2020 to cooperate with the MedPartnership on capacity-building activities and proposed that contacts

should be established without delay to that end. He noted the interest expressed by several countries in taking part in demonstration projects, and expressed concern that Lebanon had not yet confirmed its participation, which left the matter open and precluded finalization of the Inception Report. The representative of Lebanon gave assurances that careful consideration was being given to the matter and that a reply would be forthcoming within a month.

66. The Meeting adopted the Component 2 work plan and budget, as revised.

Component 3

67. The representative of WWF-MedPO, referring to Subcomponent 3.1 on conservation of coastal and marine diversity through the development of a Mediterranean MPA Network, presented the MedPAN South Project, noting that the project received no GEF funding, being co-funded by FFEM, the Mava Foundation and the EC through UNEP. The work plan covered demonstration projects on MPA management planning and regional activities, including capacity-building and communication activities. He noted that only 42% of MPAs had a management plan and that the demonstration projects, in Algeria, Croatia, Tunisia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Turkey, were designed to correct that shortcoming and to strengthen capacity-building. The countries were selected on the basis of GEF criteria and the capacity to deliver. Regarding regional activities, he outlined the objectives of the capacity-building programme and drew attention to the target groups – MPA managers and practitioners, government officials and NGOs – and partners, with whom synergies were sought. The work plan covered the Mentor Programme (training of trainers), Mediterranean MPA regional workshops, the implementation programme, operational tools and communication activities. To date, the institutional and staff structure and the legal framework were in place and preparatory work for the demonstration projects had been completed. Under the regional capacity-building programme training and Mentor Programme workshops had been held. He outlined the key changes in the project since its preparation and the activities proposed for 2010.

68. The representative of SPA/RAC drew attention to the rationale behind Component 3, with the objective of maintaining the long-term function of the Mediterranean large marine ecosystem through an ecologically coherent network of protected areas combined with the sustainable use of renewable marine resources, the new international focus on marine and coastal areas and RAC/SPA's responsibility, in conjunction with WWF, for Subcomponent 3.1 concerning the conservation of coastal and marine diversity through the development of a Mediterranean Network: MedMPAnet and MedPANSouth projects. RAC/SPA's work programme included promoting the establishment of new MPAs in accordance with countries' needs and requests and with the SAP BIO, identifying stakeholders and potential partners, assessing new site options for national networks, improving MPA management, conducting a financial analysis of new MPA needs and demonstration projects on financial sustainability mechanisms, and carrying out pilot projects on the establishment of MPAs in four countries. To date, SPA/RAC had conducted a regional study on countries' reform needs and a preliminary assessment survey of the coast of Montenegro, undertaken coordination activities for the development of an MPA network in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, conducted national training workshops in Syria, a regional one in Tunisia, and was in the process of selecting project staff. Finally, he reported changes in the budget for project activities.

69. The representative of FAO referred to the subcomponents for which it was responsible: 3.2.1 concerning application of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management, 3.2.2 on addressing bycatch of regionally important species and 3.2.3 on supporting fishermen participation in monitoring and management of coastal MPAs, with a total of five countries

involved, fewer than initially planned in order to ensure better geographical focus. The other major change was the emphasis on the ecosystem approach, reflecting the evolution in the concepts related to sustainable fisheries management in the international arena and in line with the current lines of work of FAO. Changes had been made to the formulation of the subcomponents' work programmes and titles in order to reflect that approach, to highlight FAO's comparative advantage and to secure fishers' cooperation in management. He outlined the work plan and timeframe of activities and reported on work accomplished so far, including the coordination and planning of activities in cooperation with other partners, consultations with fisher representatives and fisheries institutions and awareness-raising and capacity-building activities. Among the obstacles and challenges faced were insufficient human capacity for the large number of projects involved, the short timeframe for institutional change, shortcomings in institutional cooperation, with conflicting messages being sent out on conservation versus sustainable use of fisheries, the different national ministries and research institutes involved, a lack of political will and the difficulty of securing stakeholder involvement.

70. The representative of France drew attention under Component 3 to the implementation by the Conservatoire du Littoral of a programme on Small Islands of the Mediterranean programme, with partial funding by FFEM and input by SPA/RAC and Blue Plan.

71. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of SPA/RAC said in response to a question by the representative of Lebanon about Subcomponents 3.1.2.3 and 3.1.2.4 that the activity under the former involved a national survey of the coast to identify areas to be preserved or suitable to form part of a network. The difference with Subcomponent 3.1.2.4 was that the latter concerned work in areas already identified. In response to questions raised by the representative of Tunisia, the name of Tunisia had erroneously been omitted from participants in pilot activities and that error would be corrected; the activity concerning the mechanism for financing MPAs had merely been moved to another chapter and, there again, the name of Tunisia would be added. He concurred with a comment by the representative of Montenegro about the need for a specific MPA for the transboundary area of Montenegro and Albania and for greater synergies in that respect.

72. Mr Trumbic recalled, with respect to the three components already discussed, the emphasis placed by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic on the importance of convergence and coordination among partners within any one component. Aware as he was of the impression of overlap that might be given, he urged partners within a component and within the project as a whole to make every effort to ensure that all partners spoke with one voice. A harmonization meeting that had been held on Component 1 had yielded good results, and that example might be followed for other components.

73. The Meeting adopted the work plan and budget for Component 3, as revised.

Component 4: Project coordination, replication and communication strategies, management and monitoring and evaluation

74. Mr Trumbic recalled that Programme Management Unit (PMU) had been fully staffed as of August 2009, about one year later than envisaged in the project document. However, work had started earlier in the year on setting up the legal system and on the conclusion of agreements with partners. The first task of the PMU had been the holding of the Coordination Meeting in September 2009, which had decided to go ahead with the preparation of the Inception Report. Almost all the legal agreements had now been signed, except that with FAO,

which should be concluded shortly, and the one with INFO/RAC, which had been delayed due to the change in partners in the Centre.

75. Ms Hart, referring to the climate variability component, observed that when the project had originally been prepared there had not as yet been a wealth of information concerning the impacts of climate change in the region. As the absence from the project document of action on climate change had been recognized as a weakness, it had been proposed to develop a regional project focussing on climate variability and a request for funding for USD 2.5 million had been approved by GEF. The project was still in the preparatory phase and it was planned to develop a final proposal for approval by the next Steering Committee.

76. Mr Trumbic then reviewed in greater detail the main activities of the PMU, which included the preparation of Steering Committee meetings at the end of each year, the holding of executing partners' Coordination Meetings each year and the recruitment of an officer responsible for the sustainability of financing for project activities, with a view to ensuring the long-term sustainability of activities beyond the lifetime of the project. With regard to the perceived lack of convergence between the various activities covered by the MedPartnership, one instrument that had been used to promote closer coordination between the partners had been the holding of inter-agency technical meetings, which had already been organized for Components 1 and 2, in addition to the Coordination Meeting in September 2009. He added that a mid-term stock-taking meeting was planned for the second half of 2011, when all the project activities would have been commenced, and the mid-term evaluation would be carried out before the end of 2011. Finally, the PMU would run a country focal points support programme. In that respect, he called on any countries that had not yet done so to appoint their national focal points for the MedPartnership.

77. The representative of MIO-ECSDE addressed the issue of the involvement of NGOs in the MedPartnership. The objectives of the activities undertaken would be to: facilitate NGO involvement in the project on the basis of an NGO Involvement Plan; achieve increased awareness among NGOs of the objectives and components of the MedPartnership; contribute to the overall transparency of the project; enhance the commitment of civil society and other stakeholders; and promote effective public access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making. The key element of the activities was firstly to make space for NGO involvement throughout the MedPartnership, which would include capacity-building and training activities, and secondly to ensure that civil society took advantage of the opportunities for participation that were available. After reviewing the activities already undertaken, she outlined the obstacles and challenges to NGO involvement in the MedPartnership, which included: a lack of recognition of the role of NGOs; the absence of processes for social discourse and consensus, reflecting a lack of deeper understanding of governance and the importance of partnerships; the distance between verbal declarations or even genuine good intentions and practical commitments by public bodies or officials; slow rates of change in attitudes; low adoption rates of innovative action; strong vested interests; insufficiently specialized journalism; and country specific issues.

78. A representative of INFO/RAC, with reference to Sub-component 4.2 on information and communication strategy, emphasized the cross-cutting nature of the Sub-component, the successful implementation of which would benefit the MedPartnership as a whole, but which also required the close cooperation and integration of all the components and partners from the very beginning. The basis for the activities was the development of a knowledge platform, through which the knowledge obtained could be put to better and more effective use, particularly with a view to the replication of successful activities and approaches. The communication

strategy then needed to be developed carefully and in a targeted manner for the effective dissemination of the information to achieve the objectives, among others, of influencing decision-makers, facilitating fund-raising and disseminating research data. A few key messages, and principally the need to conserve water, keep the Mediterranean healthy, protect wetlands and biodiversity and combat pollution, would need to be carefully targeted at specific groups for optimal effect. The primary tool for that purpose would be the website for the MedPartnership, although other channels of communication would also be used, such as the media, conferences and meetings, campaigns and the development of networks. Finally, he reviewed the short-term objectives of the communication strategy, namely: raising awareness, particularly among politicians and citizens; systematic networking for the promotion of projects; the provision of updated environmental information to the general public; increased visibility of the MedPartnership; and the implementation of activities targeted at school children.

79. Another representative of INFO/RAC presented the replication strategy, which was a novel element of the MedPartnership. He outlined the roles of the Project Replication Team (PRT), the Replication Advisory Panel (RAP), which would be composed of relevant technical experts from executing agencies and from eligible countries, and the Local Project Replication Groups (LPRGs), which were the on-site teams. He observed that replication was not easy to achieve. It did not just consist of copying projects, as the same conditions and context would not apply as in the original project. It would therefore be necessary to shift the focus from single projects to good practices. There would need to be flexibility in identifying project elements that could be reused, which might include legislation, organizational set up, policies, infrastructure, technologies or attitudes. With regard to the expected outputs, over the five-year period covered by the work plan, it was anticipated that around 20 reports would be drawn up outlining the methodology for the replication of specific project activities, with the development of five replication proposals. Finally, he outlined the reasons for the changes proposed in the budget allocation, although the overall budget remained the same, and in the activities and their timetable. He recalled that there had been a change in the management of INFO/RAC, which was now under the responsibility of the Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA), as well as changes in the context and composition of the MedPartnership since the initial design of the project.

80. Mr Petridis (PMU) presented the budget revision template and explained the procedure for recording changes in budgetary allocations, although the total figures for the budget would remain the same. He emphasized that it was necessary to show the justification for the changes proposed. The main reasons for changes in the budget were due to the adaptation of activities to new complimentary initiatives and national projects and priorities, along with other considerations such as the depreciation of the US dollar as well as adjustments on fixed administrative costs. He summarised that during this revision process, all partners had sought to ensure cost-effectiveness in planning their budget and work-plan, in terms of administrative costs and organisation of meetings and training.

81. During the discussion that followed the presentations, it was pointed out that it might be necessary to develop a stakeholder analysis in which the various stakeholders were categorized with a view to facilitating their involvement and as basis for the preparation of the communication strategy. Moreover, it would be a complex task to target communication effectively in view of the broad differences in cultural settings in which messages would have to be disseminated. The question was also raised as to whether the target of the replication of five projects over the five-year period of the MedPartnership meant that each project would just be replicated on one site, or on several sites. It was observed that, while there was agreement on the need for transparency and participation in the process of replication, the criteria that were to be used for

the determination of replicable practices were less clear. Finally, it was emphasized that all the components included a communication element and that it was therefore of great importance for all the partners in the MedPartnership to develop links between their respective communication strategies and activities.

82. A representative of INFO/RAC agreed that the issues of stakeholder participation and the criteria for replicability would need to be looked at closely during the current scoping exercise in relation to the communication and replication Sub-components. With regard to the expected outputs, the idea was that some 10 per cent of the projects undertaken could be replicated in different countries. The idea behind the replication activities was to build bridges for the future so as to ensure the sustainability of projects through the identification of project activities and the preparation of proposals for financing. He invited the partners to participate in an informal working session on communication and replication.

83. The importance was also emphasized, from the viewpoint of communication and replication, of translating important documents relating to the activities of the MedPartnership into both French and Arabic.

84. The Deputy Coordinator indicated that the Coordinating Unit would decide which official documents were to be translated into the various languages. She noted that the Steering Committee had approved the request for the one-year extension of the MedPartnership until 2014 and that it had approved the work plan and budget for 2010 for Component 4 with the modifications that had been outlined.

Coordination of actions between the Regional Component and the Investment Fund

85. The representatives of the World Bank, presenting an overview of activities under the Investment Fund (IF) and the Sustainable Med programme, said that the main programme elements of the World Bank's support to the MedPartnership were the Investment Fund and support to sustainable finance, replication, communication and coordination. Under the Investment Fund, the first tranche had been approved by GEF in two installments in 2006 and 2007, and investment projects had been selected on the basis of eligibility criteria and each country's development dialogue with the World Bank, in accordance with countries' development priorities. It should be recalled that the World Bank was a multilateral lending institution for public sector investment. A main function of the MedPartnership was to help support that dialogue with countries, which was informed by SAP MED and SAP BIO requirements. The eligibility criteria were as set out in the Project Document approved in 2006. Details of the four investment projects identified for support from the first IF tranche were given in the draft Inception Report.

86. Sustainable Med, considered the second tranche of the Investment Fund, had been approved in June 2008 with a defined pipeline of investment and regional capacity-building projects – five approved to date, as detailed in the draft Inception Report - and the goal of further emphasizing the need to integrate the environment within the economic development agenda of Mediterranean countries. Another four pre-pipeline projects, not yet submitted to GEF, had been identified.

87. With regard to support to sustainable finance, replication and coordination, each of the investment projects had the obligation to provide data for replication, a crucially important aspect of the programme. Other key aspects were the mobilization of additional resources for the implementation of MedPartnership activities – which should be linked to activities identified for

replication - and coordination with other donors and agencies in order to facilitate linkages, avoid overlaps and capturing opportunities for synergies. Potential additional partners would be sought. The World Bank intended to continue effective participation in the coordination mechanisms foreseen by the Regional Component and harmonization of communication tools. A website had been developed describing Sustainable Med projects.

88. Although the overall project had evolved considerably in the several years that had elapsed since it was first proposed, including the establishment of the new Sustainable Med programme as a complement to the MedPartnership, the conceptual design remained the same, based on the need to give effect to decisions taken by countries, to implement the ICZM Protocol and to ensure that individual action was supported by regional action. The general structure of the partnership reflected that design, with its two pillars: the Investment Fund on the one hand, and the Regional Component on the other. Coordination among agencies was not easy, but an innovative approach was being put in place which might indeed be replicated in other GEF projects. Resources were dedicated to facilitating interagency coordination, communication and dissemination of information, enhancing the visibility of the partnership and implementing regional replication mechanisms. The World Bank participated in Steering Committee and in the Coordination Group meetings of the project. Under the communication and information strategy, it contributed to the information and communication network, its meetings and workshops, and to the project websites. It would cooperate with INFO/RAC on the further refinement of the communication strategy. In terms of the replication strategy, cooperation between the World Bank and the Regional Component and UNEP/MAP would be pursued as it is being crucial to its success.

89. Regarding the replication strategy, one of its main outcomes was expected to be for the MedPartnership to catalyse the replication of stress reduction practices – technologies, infrastructure, behaviours, approaches, policies, laws and organizational set-ups, not projects as such, which remained in the hands of governments – that were demonstrated and successfully tested by the investment projects or through the pilots. The aim was to enhance visibility and thus provide tools to assist governments in identifying best practices. New and additional funding and political commitment was thus expected to be leveraged to address key transboundary concerns. All project countries would be engaged in replication activities, demonstration centres for capacity-building would be established and replication reports published. The replication strategy would proceed from overall portfolio assessment to the identification of potentially replicable practices, selection of high priority practices and the design and implementation of replication activities. Close linkages with the communication and information strategy, possibly through joint yearly work programmes with INFO/RAC, would be critical for the success of replication activities. Of particular importance were collaboration with UNEP/MAP on initial overall portfolio assessment and identification of replicable practices, and providing to UNEP/MAP periodic updates on sub-project execution. Regarding execution arrangements, an ad hoc technical advisory panel of experts for specific areas should closely monitor replication and information and communication activities. It should further be noted that replication could extend not only to countries, but also to the private sector and NGOs. Mention was made, finally, of a very similar UNDP/World Bank partnership project in the East Asia Seas, from which lessons might be learned in terms of comparative advantage. In response to a question by the representative of UNIDO about the selection of replicable practices and the timing of that selection, it was explained that selection could begin early, on the basis of an assessment made on the strength of project documents, in other words starting out with a list of potential good practices and then narrowing them down.

90. In the ensuing discussion, Ms Hart stressed the importance, for replicating best practices, of making the most of the value added of the wealth of experience and knowledge brought to the partnership by its many partners and stakeholders. The representative of Horizon 2020 said that, while he was impressed by the presentations and the enthusiasm displayed, he had some misgivings, from his own experience of the difficulty of creating synergies, about effective access by potential beneficiaries to all the activities and opportunities for cooperation on offer, a concern he knew was shared by a number of NGOs. His comment was not directed at the World Bank, but stemmed from a sense of “beneficiary fatigue” that should be guarded against. Several speakers favoured a more optimistic attitude, noting that a good deal of consultation had gone into preparing the project, which was now mature, and into the methodology adopted. Ms Silva and others considered that the forceful presence of the World Bank, with its experience and expertise, was a further asset. Mr Trumbic acknowledged the need for clarification and streamlining of any remaining complexities in procedures and governance structure, a point reiterated by Ms Silva, but stated his optimism about the future of the partnership.

Roles, functions and responsibilities of project stakeholders and project National Focal Points

91. Ms Hart said that a project of such magnitude and complexity necessarily required a careful assessment of the roles and involvement of executing partners and stakeholders, including NGOs. A section on stakeholder involvement was incorporated into each of the four components of the Regional Project, and a draft stakeholder involvement plan had been prepared during the preparatory phase. Work on compiling a database of all stakeholders involved was now in progress, but that was clearly not sufficient, and it was necessary to assess and track stakeholder involvement and build their capacity throughout project implementation. Under the Country Support Programme, agreements would be concluded with each country, with a yearly allocation, to ensure national-level coordination between project and other Focal Points and regular project inter-ministerial committees, and also to ensure communication between national-level stakeholders, together with a feedback mechanism to allow for adaptive management. In order to assist Focal Points, clear ToRs would be developed, a database of organizations, experts and other stakeholder groups would be available by September 2010, an analysis would be made of all activities by country and location, and all relevant documentary material would be provided by UNEP/MAP and executing partners. An effective mechanism was needed for coordination between National Focal Points and inter-ministerial coordination structures, and to ensure good communication at the national level with the UNEP/MAP Project Management Unit and among all activities at the regional and national levels. The MedPartnership Focal Point would be the hub for communication and feedback.

92. The representative of the World Bank welcomed the information on the Country Support Programme and looked forward to receiving it, considering it a very valuable tool for the discussion of activities and priorities on a country basis with the country management team.

93. The question of Focal Point coordination prompted a number of comments and requests for clarification. One representative pointed out that the Focal Point being pivotal to the success of a project, unity would indeed be achieved by designating a Focal Point specifically for the MedPartnership, but in that case there would be a need for a small secretariat to work with ministries or the inter-ministerial committee. However, several others expressed misgivings about the designation of yet another Focal Point, specifically for the MedPartnership, adding another layer to the existing network of Focal Points for each project and Protocol, in addition to the MAP Focal Point, and accordingly further complicating coordination. Following a discussion, Ms Hart made the point that what was important was to have coordination at the national level,

and that the matter should be discussed – for example on the occasion of Mr Trumbic's visits to the countries - with each country to see how best its authorities considered that should be done. Mr Trumbic added that it would be difficult at the present stage to reverse the decision to designate a specific project Focal Point, as was the usual practice, that the country authorities were at liberty to designate the MAP Focal Point as the MedPartnership Focal Point if they saw fit, and that all project partners were required to inform the MedPartnership Focal Point about the implementation of activities. With suitable coordination mechanisms in place, no problems should arise.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

94. Ms Hart observed that the purpose of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan was to track effectively the progress of the Partnership in the implementation and achievement of the outcomes and objectives that had been established. It would enable each project to assess the effectiveness of the activities undertaken and to identify best practices, and it would allow for adaptive management so that activities could be changed if necessary. She recalled that the overall framework involved one Partnership, with two projects: the Regional Component, with 11 Sub-Components and approximately 70 indicators; and the Investment Fund/Sustainable Med, with ten projects. In accordance with standard GEF practice, the various stages of monitoring and evaluation would include half-yearly progress reports, yearly project implementation reviews and half-yearly finance reports, which would provide the basis for assessing the progress made and proposing any necessary changes for approval by the Steering Committee. There would also be independent mid-term and final evaluations, led by the UNEP Evaluation and Oversight Unit. She observed that two main issues arose in the monitoring and evaluation of such a large and complex project: how to capture the main results of the MedPartnership; and how to measure the impact on the ground. The measurement of environmental stress reduction and any improvement in environmental status would require funding and coordination and it would be necessary to see how the partners could work together to collect the necessary data and information to assist in measuring changes in the quality of the Mediterranean environment, in accordance with the indicators established on the basis of the SAP-MED, the SAP-BIO and the TDA.

Report of co-financing of the project

95. Mr Petridis presented the template that would be used to record cash and in kind co-financing contributions to the MedPartnership. He recalled that the necessary information would have to be provided within one month of the project implementation reporting period, namely by the end of July each year. The data needed to capture what had been undertaken in relation to the commitments made. For that purpose, two columns were used, one for planned contributions, and the other for those actually made. To facilitate the process of following the provision of co-financing contributions, he indicated that the PMU was prepared to develop, in collaboration with the co-executing agencies, a tracking tool to follow up all the in-kind contributions received. He noted that the partners would be responsible for reporting the co-financing contributions received by the countries, in close collaboration with the national focal points.

Presentation of the project's website

96. The representative of INFO/RAC presented the website that was being prepared for the MedPartnership and which would be launched in April 2010. He described the navigation bar, which included sections on: about us, partners, documents, dataset and multimedia. The main

sections, or business areas, of the website would be under the headings of: integrated water management and aquifers; ICZM; coastal and marine biodiversity; sustainable fisheries; and land-based pollution. Initially, there would be more material in English, but the volume of material in Arabic, French and Italian would progressively increase. Parts of the website, including a You Tube section, would be completely open, allowing any interested party to post material and to participate actively in the dissemination of information. Other parts would be more controlled, with the possibility of posting information being restricted to certain users. There would be a press room, which would just be for the use of the media. The software used would mainly be open source, and would therefore be available to the community. One of the functions of the website would be to disseminate material for use in training, which would in turn facilitate the replication of good practices. In conclusion, he recalled that the collaboration of all partners was required to ensure that all the relevant materials were available on the website.

Date and place of the next Steering Committee and Coordination Meeting

97. Mr Trumbic indicated that the next Coordination Meeting involving the co-executing agencies would be held sometime in September 2010. With a view to reducing costs, it was hoped that it could be held back-to-back with the MAP Executive Coordination Panel, probably outside Athens. It was envisaged that the next Steering Committee would be held around the first week of December 2010 and he welcomed the offer by the Syrian Arab Republic to host the meeting.

Concluding interventions

98. The representative of Tunisia presented the action taken in his country with a view to adaptation to climate change. He indicated that the envisaged scenarios included a rise in sea levels, which according to the most extreme projections might rise by over 2.5 metres over the course of the next century, as well as an increase in temperatures and a fall in precipitation. A number of studies had been undertaken to identify the impacts of climate change in various areas, including health and agriculture. Some of the main impacts identified included: a major decline in precipitation in the South of the country, which was likely to result in drought and disputes over the use of water resources; existing port structures would not be useable; difficulties would emerge in draining water; certain areas were likely to be submerged; the coastline would be likely to retreat; and coastal aquifers were likely to be affected by salination. A national strategy had therefore been prepared for adaptation to climate change, which would ensure that the impact of climate change and the necessary adaptation measures were taken into account in national planning in the various sectors affected. A study was also being undertaken of any modifications that would be required to national legislation. The overall objective was to progress from crisis management to the management of the respective risks, with action being taken in a series of principal areas: monitoring; adaptation in low areas; adaptation measures to combat coastal erosion; the artificial replenishment of aquifers; the adaptation of infrastructure, particularly sanitation plants; and the raising and strengthening of port infrastructure. Projections had been made of the potential losses due to the impacts of climate change. The sectors that would be most affected were tourism, with a possible loss of 5 per cent of the volume of activity, and agriculture, where the loss could be as high as 2 per cent. It was estimated that adaptation measures would cost around 40 per cent of the projected total losses, with the adaptation of low-lying areas being the most costly element. In conclusion, he indicated that certain pilot activities were already underway, including the refilling of an aquifer and restoration measures on the beaches of Djerba and Sousse.

99. The representative of Morocco, speaking as President of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, welcomed the support expressed for the MedPartnership. The spirit of cooperation shown and the feeling of human solidarity boded well for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea. In order to be able to take the necessary measures, it was first essential to have a common vision of the real situation in the region. He added that his own country was currently very much involved in developing its response to the pressing environmental and climatic situation through the preparation and adoption of a national environmental charter. In conclusion, he congratulated the Secretariat for the work involved in the preparation of the documents and once again thanked the Government and people of Montenegro for hosting the meeting.

100. The Deputy Coordinator, in her concluding remarks, welcomed the success of the Steering Committee and noted that it had adopted the work plan and budget for the current year, with the proposed modifications. She expressed the belief that important progress had been made in increasing the transparency of the MedPartnership with the receipt and inclusion in the Inception Report of the contributions of all the various partners involved. She thanked the partners for sharing the relevant information. In view of the complexity of the project and the number of partners involved, she emphasized the need for coordination in order to ensure that the action taken was effective, and observed that the PMU bore great responsibility in that respect. She further noted that there was still a need to clarify relations with complementary initiatives in the region, with particular reference to the World Bank's Sustainable Med programme and the European Union's Horizon 2020 initiative. In view of the wishes expressed by many countries to participate in demonstration projects, she reaffirmed the need for flexibility for the addition of new project activities and for efforts to be made by all those involved to seek further financing for such activities. Because of the time that had elapsed since the approval of the project, one of the fears had concerned the degree of ownership by countries of the activities involved. However, those fears had been allayed by the enthusiasm shown by all those present at the Steering Committee.

Conclusions and recommendations

101. The Steering Committee examined a set of decisions and recommendations prepared by the Secretariat, which it adopted with the necessary modifications. The complete text of the decisions and recommendations is attached as Annex III to this report.

Closure of the meeting

102. Following the usual exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed at 4 p.m. on Friday 19 February 2010.

ANNEX I

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS**

Countries

ALBANIA ALBANIE	<p>Ms Elkida Sinani Head of Integration and Projects Tel: +35542225101 E-mail: esinani@moe.gov.al</p> <p>Mr Redi Baduni Director of Environment Protection Email: rbaduni@moe.gov.al Albanian Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration Rr e Duresit n 27 Tirana, Albania</p>
ALGERIA ALGERIE	<p>Ms Samira Natéche, Sous Directrice de la Préservation du Littoral, du Milieu Marin et des Zones Humides Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire, de l'Environnement et du Tourisme Rue de 4 Cannons Algiers, Algeria Tel :+213 21 432875 Fax : +213 21 432875 E-mail: natechesamira@yahoo.fr</p>
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA BOSNIE HERZEGOVINE	<p>Mr Senad Oprasic Head, Department for Environment Protection Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Musala 9 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina Tel: +387 33 552365 Fax: +387 33 445911 E-mail: senadoprasic@yahoo.com senad.oprasic@mvteo.gov.ba</p>
CROATIA CROATIE	<p>Ms Nevia Kruzic Head of Department for Sea Protection Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction Division of Environmental Protection Uzarska Ulica 2/I 51000 Rijeka, Croatia Tel: +385 51 213499 Fax: +385 51 214324 E-mail: nevia.kruzic@mzopu.hr</p> <p>Ms Marija Vizner Adviser of the General Manager's Office</p>

	<p>Croatian Waters Ulica grada Vukovara 220 10000 Zagreb, Croatia Tel: +385 1 63 07 620 Fax: +385 16307657 E-mail : marija.vizner@voda.hr</p>
<p>EGYPT EGYPTE</p>	<p>H. E. Mawaheb Abou-El Azm Deputy Minister Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs Chief Executive Officer Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) 30 Misr-helwan Agriculture Road, Maadi Cairo 11728, Egypt Tel : +202 5256445 Fax :+202 25256454 E-mail : mawaheb@eeaa.gov.eg</p> <p>Ms Heba Sharawy Director of International Organization Department Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) 30 Misr-helwan Agriculture Road, Maadi Cairo 11728, Egypt Tel: +202 25256452 Fax: +202 25266016 E-mail: Heba_shrawy@yahoo.com</p>
<p>ITALY ITALIE</p>	<p>Ms Federica Sprovieri Adviser Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea Department for Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Energy Tel: +39.06.5722 8183 Fax: +39.06.5722 8178 Email: Sprovieri.federica@minambiente.it</p> <p>Ms Monica Alessandra Bonfanti Coordinator of Task Force for Central Eastern Europe in Montenegro Department for Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Energy Tel : +382 20 20 51 00 Fax: +382 20 20 52 00 Mobile: +39 3358142571 Email: bonfanti.monica@minambiente.it bonfantimonica.first@gmail.it Via C. Colombo 174 00147 Rome, Italy</p>
<p>LEBANON LIBAN</p>	<p>Ms Lara Samaha Head of Department Department of Natural Wealth</p>

	<p>Ministry of Environment Tel: +961 1 976 555 Fax: +961 1 976530 E-mail: I.samaha@moe.gov.lb</p>
LIBYA LIBYE	<p>Mr Nuri Almezughi Director of Technical Cooperation Office Environment General Authority Tripoli 00218, Libya Tel: +218 21 487 21 88 Fax: +218 21 4872188 E-mail : almezughi@yahoo.com</p>
MALTA MALTE	<p>Mr Sergei Golovkin, Manager International Projects Team EU & Multilateral Affairs Unit Malta Environment and Planning Authority Hexagon House, Spencer Hill, Marsa, MS 1000, PO Box 200, Malta Tel : +356 22907305 Fax : +356 22902295 E-mail : Sergei.golovkin@mepa.org.mt</p>
MONTENEGRO MONTENEGRO	<p>H. E. Branimir Gvozdenovic Minister</p> <p>Ms Jelena Knezevic Advisor to Minister Tel: +38220228516 Fax: +382 20 228512 E-mail: Jelena.knezevic@gov.me</p> <p>Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment Rimski trg 46 Podgorica 20000, Montenegro</p> <p>Ms Aleksandra Ivanovic Head of Sustainable Development Department P.E. for Coastal Zone Management Tel : +38233452709 Fax : +382 33 452 685 E-mail : Aleksandra.ivanovic@morskodobro.com</p>
MOROCCO MAROC	<p>Mr Azzeddine Daaf Administrateur en charge du dossier FEM Departement de l'Environnement / Secretariat d'etat charge de l'Eau et de l'Environnement 9 Avenue Al Araar, Secteur 16, Hay Riad-Rabat Rabat 10100, Maroc Tel: +212 05 37576638 Fax : +212 05 37570648 E-mail : Daaif_azdine@yahoo.fr</p>

SYRIA SYRIE	<p>Eng Imad Hassoun Deputy Minister of State for Environment Affairs Syria, Damascus Yousef Al-Azmah seq P.O.box - 3773 Tel: +963 11 2319167 +963 11 2396213 Fax: +963 11 2311895 Mob:+963 944 78 53 50 Email:imadhassoun51@gmail.com Email: imadh@gmx.net</p> <p>Mr Hasan Morjan Director Ministry of State for Environment affairs, Directorate of environment of Tartous Syria Tel: +963 43 321916 E-mail: Hassan8855@yahoo.com</p>
TUNISIA TUNISIE	<p>Mr Mohamed Ali Ben Temessek, Chef de service a la direction Générale de l'Environnement et de la Qualite de la Vie Direction Générale Environnement et Qualité de Vie Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable Centre Urbain Nord, Batiment I.C.F. B.P. 1080 Tunis, Tunisie Tel: +216 70 728644 Fax: +216 70 728 655 E-mail:mtemessek@yahoo.fr</p> <p>Mr Habib Ben Moussa Directeur Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable Agence de Protection et d' Aménagement du Littoral 2, Rue Mohamed Rachid Ridha, Belvedere B.P. 280 2045 Tunis, Tunisie Tel: +216 71840177 Fax: +216 71 848 660 E-mail: h.bmoussa@apal.nat.tn</p>
TURKEY TURQUIE	<p>Mr Emrah Manap Biologist Ministry of Environment and Forestry Environmental Agency for Special Areas Alpaslan Turkes Caddesi 31.Sok 10 No'Lubina 06510 Bestepe/Yenimahalle Ankara 06510, Turkey Tel: +903122221234 Fax: +903122222661 E-mail: emrah.manap@gmail.com</p> <p>Mr Veysel Aslan Head of Marine and Coastal Management Department</p>

General Directorate of Environmental Management
Ministry of Environment and Forestry Dış İlişkiler ve AB
Dairesi Başkanlığı, Çevre ve Orman Bakanlığı, Söğütözü Cad.
No:14/E Beştepe
Ankara, Turkey
Tel: +903122076678
Fax: +902076695
E-mail: vaslan@cevreormn.gov.tr

Ms Rahime Polat

Deputy Expert
Foreign Relations & EU Department
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Dış İlişkiler ve AB Dairesi Başkanlığı, Çevre ve Orman
Bakanlığı, Söğütözü Cad. No :14/E Beştepe
Ankara, Turkey
Tel: +90 312 207 54 46
Fax: +90 312 207 54 54
E-mail: rpolat@cevreorman.gov.tr

Observers

IW LEARN	<p>Mr. Mish Hamid Project Officer (Acting Manager) UNDP/UNOPS (the GEF IW LEARN project) Grosslingova 35 Bratislava, Slovakia Tel:+ 421 2 59337168 E-mail: mish@iwlearn.org</p>
CDL-CONSERVATOIRE DU LITTORAL	<p>Mr. Fabrice Bernard Délégué Europe et International Conservatoire Du Littoral Aix en Provence 13100, France Tel : +33 4 42 91 28 35 Fax : +33 4 42 91 64 11 E-mail: F.Bernard@conservatoire-du-littoral.fr</p>
SECRETARIAT OF ACCOBAMS	<p>Ms Marie Christine Grillo Executive Secretary 2, Terrasses de Fontvieille, Monaco Tel:+377 98 98 80 10/2078, Mob:+33 6 80 86 75 44, E-mail: mcgrillo@accobams.net</p>
UNDP TURKEY	<p>Mr Harun Guclusoy Project Manager UNDP Turkey c/o OCKKB, Alparslan Türkes Cad. 10 No'lu Hizmet Binası, Bestepe, Yeni Mahalle Ankara 06510, Turkey Tel: +90 312 222 1234 / Ext 342 E-mail: harun.guclusoy@undp.org</p>
HORIZON 2020 CAPACITY BUILDING/MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME	<p>Mr Michael Scoullos Team Leader E-mail: scoullos@mio-ecsde.org</p> <p>Mr Emad Adly Deputy Team Leader E-mail: e.adly@raednetwork.org</p> <hr/>

Executing Partners and PMU

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME
COORDINATING UNIT FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

**PROGRAMME DES NATIONS
UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT
UNITE DE COORDINATION DU
PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA
MEDITERRANEE**

Ms. Maria Luisa Silva Mejias

MAP Officer in Charge and Deputy Coordinator

Tel: +30 210 7273126

Fax: +30 210 7253196/7

E-mail: maria.luisa.silva@unepmap.gr**Mr. Ivica Trumbic**

Project Manager

UNEP/MAP GEF Strategic Partnership for

The Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (PMU)

Tel: +30 210 7273102

Fax: +30 210 7253196-7

E-mail: ivica.trumbic@unepmap.gr**Ms. Virginie Hart**

Marine and Coastal Expert,

UNEP/MAP GEF Strategic Partnership for

The Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (PMU)

Tel: +30 210 7273122

Fax: +30 210 7253196-7

E-mail: virginie.hart@unepmap.gr**Mr. Giorgos Petridis**

Administrative Assistant

UNEP/MAP GEF Strategic Partnership for

The Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (PMU)

Tel: +30 210 7273125

Fax: +30 210 7253196-7

E-mail: giorgos.petridis@unepmap.gr**Mr Francesco Saverio Civili**

MED POL Coordinator

Tel: +30 210 72 73 106

E-mail: fscivili@unepmap.gr**Mr Fouad Abousamra**

MED POL Programme Officer

Tel: +30 210 72 73 116

E-mail: fouad@unepmap.gr

UNEP/MAP, 48, Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
11635 Athens, Greece

<p>THE WORLD BANK</p> <p>BANQUE MONDIALE</p>	<p>Mr. Andrea Merla Advisor, World Bank E-mail: merla.andrea@gmail.com</p> <p>Ms. Amy Evans Advisor, World Bank Europe and Central Asia E-mail: Aevans1@worldbank.org</p> <p>Ms. Tracy Hart Senior Environment Specialist E-mail: Thart@worldbank.org</p> <p>Mr. Guillaume Meyssonier Junior Program Officer Environment Department Email: gmeyssonier@worldbank.org</p> <p>The World Bank, MSN H5-503 922 244 Str NW Washington</p>
<p>UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION INTERNATIONAL HYDROLOGICAL PROGRAMME (UNESCO IHP)</p> <p>ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE PROGRAMME HYDROLOGIQUE INTERNATIONAL</p>	<p>Mr. Holger Treidel Assistant Programme Specialist Tel: +33 1 4568 3943 E-mail: h.treidel@unesco.org</p> <p>Mr. Bo Appelgren UNESCO-IHP Senior Consultant E-mail: appelgrenbo@gmail.com</p> <p>Mr. Francesco Rizzo Programme Specialist E-mail: f.rizzo@unesco.org</p> <p>International Hydrological Programme UNESCO - Division of Water Sciences 1, rue Miollis 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France</p>
<p>UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (UNIDO)</p> <p>L'ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR LE DEVELOPMENT INDUSTRIEL</p>	<p>Ms. Roberta De Palma Chief Technical Advisor Cell. (IT): +39 339 8547 882 E-mail: roberta.depalma@exima.dk</p> <p>Water Management Unit Environmental Management Branch Programme Development and Technical Cooperation</p>

<p>REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS (RAC/SPA)</p> <p>CENTRE D'ACTIVITES REGIONALES POUR LES AIRES SPECIALEMENT PROTEGEES (CAR/ASP)</p>	<p>Mr. Abderrahmen Gannoun Director E-mail: gannoun.abderrahmen@rac-spa.org</p> <p>Mr. Daniel Cebrian Menchero Marine Biology Expert SAP BIO Programme Officer E-mail: daniel.cebrian@rac-spa.org</p> <p>B.P. 337 1080 Tunis Cedex, Tunisie Tel: + 216 71 206 649 / + 216 71 206 485 Fax: + 216 71 206 490</p>
<p>REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR THE PRIORITY ACTIONS PROGRAMME (PAP/RAC)</p> <p>CENTRE D'ACTIVITES REGIONALES DU PROGRAMME D' ACTIONS PRIORITAIRES (CAR/PAP)</p>	<p>Mr. Marko Prem Director a.i. E-mail: marko.prem@ppa.htnet.hr</p> <p>Ms. Daria Povh Skugor Environmental Economist Email: daria.povh@ppa.t-com.hr Kraj Sv. Ivana 11, P.O. Box 576 21000 Split, Croatia Tel: +385 21 340 470 Fax: +385 21 340490</p>
<p>REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR CLEANER PRODUCTION</p> <p>CENTRE D'ACTIVITÉS RÉGIONALES POUR UNE PRODUCTION PROPRE</p>	<p>Mr. Alfred Vara SCP Programme & GEF Project Manager Email: avara@cprac.org</p> <p>Ms. Vanessa Rodriguez Specialist E-mail: vrodriquez@cprac.org</p> <p>C/ Dr. Roux, 80 08017 Barcelona – Spain Tel:+34 93 553 8790 Fax. +34 93 553 87 95</p>
<p>GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP MEDITERRANEAN (GWP-MED)</p>	<p>Mr. Vangelis Constantianos Executive Secretary (GWP-Med) E-mail: vangelis@gwpmed.org</p> <p>Mr. Dimitris Faloutsos Programme Officer (GWP-Med) E-mail: dimitris@gwpmed.org</p> <p>12 Kyrristou str. 105 56 Athens , Greece T: +30210-3247490, -3247267 F: +30210-3317127</p>

<p>WWF MEDPO</p>	<p>Mr. Paolo Lombardi Director E-mail: plombardi@wwfmedpo.org</p> <p>Ms. Giovanna Agostinelli Marine Unit Administrator Email: gagostinelli@wwfmedpo.org</p> <p>Ms. Catherine Piante Interim MedPAN South project manager E-mail: cpiante@wwf.fr</p> <p>Via Pò, 25/c 00198 Rome, Italy Tel: + 39 06 84497381 Fax: + 39 06 8413866</p>
<p>INFO/RAC</p>	<p>Mr. Claudio Maricchiolo Head E-mail: claudio.maricchiolo@isprambiente.it</p> <p>Ms. Astrid Raudner E-mail : astrid.raudner@isprambiente</p> <p>Ms. Stefania Fusani Email :stefania.fusani@isprambiente.it</p> <p>Mr. Arthur Pasquale E-mail :arthur.pasquale@isprambiente.it</p> <p>INFO-RAC (ISPRA – Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale) Via Vitaliano Brancati 48 00144 Rome, Italy Tel: +39 06 5007 2177 Fax:+39 06 5007 2221</p>
<p>MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION OFFICE FOR ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (MIO-ECSDE)</p>	<p>Ms. Anastasia Roniotes Head Officer E-mail : roniotes@mio-ecsde.org</p> <p>Ms. Thomi Vlahogianni Programme Officer E-mail : vlachogianni@mio-ecsde.org</p> <p>12, Kyrristou str, 105 56 Athens, Greece Tel: +30 210-3247490, -3247267 Fax: +30 210-3317127</p>

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED**

**NATIONS/ORGANISATION DES
NATIONS UNIES POUR
L'ALIMENTATION ET
L'AGRICULTURE**

Mr. Kyriakos Kourkoulotis

Programme Officer, FAO
Fisheries Management and Conservation Service (FIMF)
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Tel: +39 06 57053715
E-mail: kyriakos.Kourkoulotis@fao.org
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME DIVISION OF
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT
FACILITY COORDINATION (DGEF)**

**PROGRAMME DES NATIONS
UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT
DIVISION DE FONDS POUR
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL
(DFEM)**

Ms. Kelly West

Task Manager
International Waters
Division of GEF Coordination
United Nations Environment Programme
Tel: +254 20 762 4147
E-mail :kelly.west@unep.org
P.O. Box 30552-00100
Nairobi, Kenya

ANNEX II

AGENDA

Agenda

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2010

- 09:00 - 09:30 Registration of the participants
- 09:30 - 09:45 Opening of the meeting and welcome addresses
- 09:45 - 10:00 Election of officers
- 10:00 - 10:15 Adoption of the agenda of the meeting
- 10:15 - 10:30 Introduction to the meeting: Objectives, structure of the meeting, method of work, expected results
- 10:30 - 11:00 Brief presentation of the project and status of the project's implementation
- 11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30 - 13:00 Intervention by the countries
- 13:00 - 14:30 Lunch break
- 14:30 - 14:45 Introduction to the Draft Inception Report and major findings
- 14:45 - 15:15 Complementary initiatives in the Mediterranean Region
- 15:15 - 16:00 The "Sustainable Med" programme and its relationship with the Strategic Partnership
- 16:00 -16:15 Coffee break
- 16:15 -18:00 Presentation of project activities and their revisions by the project's partners: Activities, overall workplan (including detailed first annual workplan) and overall budget (including detailed first annual budget), discussion and adoption
- 18:00 Presentation of the "Strategic Partnership" video

DAY 2: THURSDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2010

- 09:00 - 11:00 Presentation of project activities and their revisions by the project's partners (continued)
- 11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break

- 11:30 - 13:00 Presentation of project activities and their revisions by the project's partners
(continued)
- 13:00 - 14:30 Lunch break
- 14:30 - 15:00 Coordination of actions between Regional Component and Investment
Fund/Sustainable Med
- 15:00 - 16:00 Roles, functions, and responsibilities of project stakeholders and project's
National Focal Points
- 16:00 - 16:15 Coffee break
- 16:15 - 17:00 Monitoring & Evaluation Plan
- 17:00 - 17:30 Reporting of co-financing of the project
- 17:30 - 17:45 Presentation of the project's web site
- 17:45 - 18:00 Date and place of the next SPSC and SPCG meetings and any other business
- 18:00 - 18:30 Conclusions and recommendations

DAY 3: FRIDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2010

- 9:00 - 13:00 Field trip to Kotor
Preparation of the report
- 13:00 - 14:00 Lunch break
- 14:00 - 16:00 Adoption of the report
- 16:00 Closure of the meeting

ANNEX III

DECISIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

THE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEDPARTNERSHIP INCEPTION WORKSHOP/FIRST REGIONAL MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Inception Workshop/First meeting of the MedPartnership Steering Committee, held in Budva, Montenegro on 17 to 19th February 2010, commending the efforts made by UNEP/MAP and all executing partners during the Inception Phase, made the following decisions and recommendations:

1. *Takes note* of the proposal to use the name MedPartnership as the shortened name for the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem, which will make the Partnership clearly recognisable and regionally more distinguishable.
2. *Acknowledges* with appreciation the Draft Inception Report which details the rationale for revision of the project activities in order to better achieve the outcomes and objectives of the MedPartnership, in particular the Regional Component.
3. *Acknowledges* the innovative nature of the MedPartnership to implement joint actions in a coordinated approach, and the challenge that the MedPartnership faces in terms of coordination of such a large and complex project.
4. *Acknowledges* the expression of interest of Malta to be further engaged in the MedPartnership through the continued participation in Steering Committee meetings and the exchange of best practices and technologies.
5. *Commends* the efforts undertaken so far by UNEP/MAP coordination of the MedPartnership as well as all executing partners in its hitherto implementation..
6. *Welcomes* the new UNEP/MAP project on climate variability in the Mediterranean, which was approved by GEF for financing, as a complement to the MedPartnership.
7. *Underlines* the importance of stakeholder assessment as the basis for the successful execution of the communication and replication activities.
8. *Recommends* that the UNEP/MAP Project Management Unit liaise with participating countries for the finalisation of agreements for the Focal Points/National Coordinators.
9. *Recommends* that other relevant organizations and projects (such as ACCOBAMS and IW-Learn) continue to be invited to attend Steering Committee meetings and receive the yearly draft work plans so that potential synergies and exchange of best-practices can be secured.
10. *Recommends* that the relationship between the MedPartnership, Horizon 2020 and the Sustainable Med Programme is further elaborated.
11. *Requests* that UNEP/MAP and all executing partners finalise the draft Inception report, taking into consideration all comments and recommendations made by the Steering Committee.
12. *Requests* that *UNEP/MAP and* all executing partners seek solutions and/or potential additional financing to respond to the request of countries who wish to participate in demonstration projects or activities, not originally planned in their country, and to address the issue of adaptation to climate change.

13. *Requests* that detailed information on the World Bank managed Investment Fund projects as well as the Regional Component demonstration projects are clearly presented and made publicly available.
14. *Requests* that UNEP/MAP and executing partners provide further detailed information on the activities executed in each participating country.
15. *Requests* that important technical documents of the MedPartnership are translated into French and Arabic.
16. *Requests* that those participating countries that have not yet nominated their project Focal Points/National Coordinators do so without delay.
17. *Agrees* that UNEP/MAP should send a request to UNEP/DGEF as Implementing Agency to approve a one year no-cost extension of the project to August 2014.
18. *Adopts* the overall Work plan and Budget for the Regional Component of the MedPartnership, taking due considerations of the recommendations made by the Steering Committee.
19. *Adopts* the 2010 detailed Work plan and Budget for the Regional Component of the MedPartnership, and calls for the implementation of the Work-plan taking due considerations of the recommendations made by the Steering Committee.