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Second Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution and its related protocols and Intergovernmental Review Meeting of Mediterranean Coastal States on the Action Plan

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INFORMATION PAPER PREPARED BY UNDP ON THE PRIORITY ACTIONS PROGRAMME

Introduction

1. The purpose of this information paper is to set out the status of UNDP's review of the various programme proposals which have been brought to its attention within the context of the Priority Actions Programme, and to touch upon some of the factors which necessarily influence that review process.

2. It will be recalled that UNDP and UNEP established a programme unit in Geneva in October 1978 in order to lend practical support to the formulation of regional co-operative projects in the PAP sectors. The UNDP contribution to the unit was channelled through a small regional project with terms of reference jointly agreed with UNEP. UNDP also made available the services of one of its staff members as Co-ordinator of the unit. As the work has evolved, UNDP has been able to reinforce this support by the financing of preparatory assistance projects in two sectors, by promoting programming work in a third sector and by examining, and finally discouraging the concept of a Mediterranean regional project for soil conservation. In the two remaining sectors of human settlements and tourism the support of UNDP through the joint unit has been indirect, in the sense that the unit has extended regular assistance to the Regional Activity Centre in Split in their activities in these two sectors.

3. UNDP has contributed at total of $708,700, of which $410,800 has been for preparatory assistance in two sectors and $297,900 for staffing and travel costs for the joint unit.

4. Information has been regularly given to coastal States and the EEC in successive intergovernmental meetings in Geneva in February 1979, in Barcelona in 1980, as well as at the meeting of Blue Plan Focal Points in October 1979 and at the recent meeting of Government Finance and Programming Experts held in January 1981 in Geneva. Detailed information will be found in paragraphs 82-114 of the Executive Director's Report to the present meeting (document UNEP/IG.23/4). This information will be supplemented by the Co-ordinator of the joint unit in a separate statement.

5. By way of specific background, UNDP is bound to draw the attention of the participants of the meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to the review mechanism which has been introduced at the request of governments for the definition and examination of programmes financed from UNDP's regional indicative planning figures (IPFs). Inter alia, these guidelines foresee a prominent role for governments in a particular region in the determination of priorities for regional programmes. In most cases this is taking the form of a consultative meeting with governments at which the draft proposals formulated by UNDP are scrutinized. As UNDP is now moving towards the Third Cycle of programme support covering the years 1981-1986 it will be readily understood that a succession of regional

meetings is taking place during the current year. Until these meetings have been completed it is difficult for UNDP to be precise about the sectors and projects in which substantial regional funds may be placed. In addition UNDP is not in a position at the present time to commit the full amount of the illustrative indicative planning figures (IPFs) allocated to regional programmes in the Third Cycle. It is therefore obliged to exercise caution in making extensive commitments at this stage.

Marine living resources - (Aquaculture)

6. The latest proposal formulated by the project co-ordinator were forwarded to UNDP in December 1980 and have been under careful review since that time. The estimated cost of the project is $2.66 million. In the interim, UNDP - in view of its own financial constraints - has requested governments to examine the possibility of making cost-sharing contributions to the large scale project. The priority of the aquaculture proposal will be established by the programming meetings referred to in paragraph 4 above to be held in 1981 for the Arab States and for the countries covered by the Unit for Europe.

Water resources management

7. The report of the Paris consultation in July 1980 has been forwarded to governments for their review together with eight project outlines which have been developed by UN specialized agencies since that time. UNDP considers that these project generally may be more suitable for implementation at the national level, and by recourse to national IPFs if governments so decide. In addition, it may be that some aspects of the package could be picked up on a sub-regional basis as, for example, in an existing project such as RAB/78/014 "Water Resources Development in North Africa".

Renewable sources of energy

8. Governments will be aware of the current status of the large scale project costed at $6.73 million which is the result of a preparatory exercise financed by UNDP in the first six months of 1980. It will be readily understood that UNDP is not in a position to finance the total cost of this project from regional funds, and it has therefore undertaken extensive negotiations with outside sources in the hope of securing co-financing. UNDP is not in a position to convey a final decision at this stage.

Soil conservation

9. UNDP's view of this sector will be already known to governments, and they are correctly summarized in paragraphs 106-107 of the Executive Director's Report. After careful technical analysis UNDP is convinced that the correct approach to this subject should be at the national level, and

it should also be noted that many projects have been financed by UNDP in this discipline in Mediterranean countries over the last twenty years. It goes without saying that other institutions may take a different view, but UNDP has informed UNEP and FAO that it will not become involved in programme activities in soil conservation at a regional level.

Human settlements and tourism

10. As regards the last two sectors of human settlements and tourism, UNDP is given to understand that these sectors are unlikely to be high on the priority list of sectors to be decided upon at the regional programming meetings referred to in paragraph 4 above. Although recognising that there is a potential for useful activities in these sectors, UNDP has informed UNEP that it would not be realistic to count on UNDP financing from regional IPFs for these sectors.