



United Nations Environment Programme



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Intergovernmental Meeting
On the Protection of the
Mediterranean

Barcelona, 26 January to 4 February 1975

Annotations to the provisional agenda and organization of the work of the Meeting

I. Introduction

1. At its second session held in Nairobi from 11 to 22 March 1974, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme decided that the Programme should "encourage and support the preparation of regional agreements or conventions on the protection of specific bodies of water from pollution, particularly from land-based sources."^{1/} It further stated that "high priority should be given to supporting activities to protect living resources and prevent pollution in the Mediterranean."^{2/} The Governing Council also decided that "in view of the many activities of numerous other agencies in this field, UNEP should concentrate on the co-ordination of these activities and on the protection of the marine environment"^{3/} and that "priority should be given to regional activities, with the possible establishment of programme activity centres in the Mediterranean."^{4/}

2. In response to these directives, and to the numerous initiatives of governments and international organizations in the Mediterranean region, UNEP has undertaken to convene an Intergovernmental Meeting on the Protection of the Mediterranean.

3. The following annotations to the provisional agenda are intended to facilitate the proceedings of the Intergovernmental Meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1. Opening of the Meeting

The meeting will be opened by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.

^{1/} and ^{2/} See UNEP/GC/26, Annex I paragraph 4(iii), page 94.

^{3/} See UNEP/GC/26, Annex I, paragraph 4(i), page 93.

^{4/} See UNEP/GC/24, Annex I, paragraph 4(ii), page 93.

Item 2. Organization of the Meeting

1. Rules of procedure

The rules of procedure of the Governing Council as contained in document UNEP/GC/3/Rev.1 will be used mutatis mutandis as provided for in Rule 62.

2. Election of Officers

The meeting should elect a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall constitute the Bureau of the meeting.

3. Establishment of working committees

It is proposed to establish two working committees, one to consider the comprehensive development and scientific aspect of the Plan of Action for the Mediterranean, the other to consider the legal aspects of the Plan.

Item 3. Agenda and suggested time-table

The provisional agenda suggested by the secretariat has been circulated under symbol UNEP/WG.2/1. In the light of subsequent consultations, it was felt that more time should be devoted to the work of the Working Committees and that initial discussion in Plenary could be limited to the opening day. A revised time-table was thus circulated under symbol UNEP/WG.2/1/Rev.1.

Item 4. Plan of Action for the Mediterranean

UNEP has prepared, in co-operation with various Specialized Agencies of the United Nations, a series of documents which describe the type of action which could be undertaken to protect the Mediterranean against pollution. A major objective of this meeting will be to discuss these papers, and in light of these discussions to prepare an Action Plan identifying activities that could be usefully undertaken for the protection of the Mediterranean.

The Action Plan should lead to the initiation in the Mediterranean region of development styles based upon the optimal use of the resources in the area for the development of the coastal states in a manner which does not lead to the destruction of these resources (Agenda item 4.1). The Action Plan should also outline the ways and means for the development of co-ordinated programmes in the Mediterranean on research and monitoring (Agenda item 4.2). Additionally, detailed guidance for the final preparation of a framework convention and related protocols and technical annexes for signature at a subsequent plenipotentiary conference should also be included (Agenda item 4.3). The Plan should present specific recommendations for action in each of these three areas.

The Executive Director will introduce the documents under this item to the opening plenary session and will endeavour to indicate the expected outcome of the meeting. It is hoped that the comments of delegations during the general discussion in the plenary session of 28 January 1975 will be confined to the issues raised in the Executive Director's address. These comments should then serve as guidance for the working committees in their subsequent discussions.

Item 4.1. Integrated planning of the development and management of the resources of the Mediterranean Basin

Any Plan of Action which may be adopted should integrate the activities carried out in the Mediterranean at the national, regional, and international level. It is particularly important to harmonize the policies adopted in the region for development (industry, agriculture, tourism) and for the protection of the environment. A policy of eco-development for the Mediterranean may, in the long-term, contribute to the maximum development of and benefit from the natural resources of the area without exhausting their potential. Among the principal resources of the Mediterranean whose development should be incorporated into a sound development style are soils, water, and the sun. Land consolidation and protection, reforestation, recycling of wastes, tourism development and the use of solar energy are all factors which should be incorporated into the long-term management of the Mediterranean region.

In the short-term, recommendations set forth in the Plan of Action should include directives for research and technical studies for the further understanding of the potential in natural resources of the Mediterranean. Also, it is important to integrate the activities of international organizations and UN Specialized Agencies in the region. The experience gained from projects which have a beneficial environmental impact should be freely available to all the coastal States so that the entire region may benefit. For those activities which may be identified as having a detrimental effect on the environment, it is proposed that timely action be taken so as to reduce the risk or level of harmful effect. An important factor in this area is the free exchange of information and data, and the integration of all activities which affect the environment of the Mediterranean.

Item 4.2. Co-ordinated programme for research, monitoring, and exchange of information and assessment of the state of pollution and of protection measures

Under the joint auspices of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean (GFCM), and the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean (ICSEM), UNEP supported an international workshop on marine pollution in the Mediterranean (Monaco, 9-14 September 1974). The workshop identified particular research and pilot projects by which to speed co-ordinated monitoring and assessment activities by scientific institutions and laboratories in the region. As a follow-up of the workshop, the GFCM working party met again (Monaco, 16-18 September 1974) to draw up a plan of implementation of several of the suggested pilot projects. UNEP continued its participation in these activities by commissioning two experts to carry out a survey of research and monitoring facilities in the Mediterranean region. The report of this mission is available to the meeting (UNEP/WG.2/Inf.6).

It is suggested that the meeting begin the process of implementing these projects through the adoption of concrete recommendations. Several recommendations are presented in the experts' report; particularly important is the proposal that governments should agree to convene scientific meetings to plan in detail the implementation of and participation in the proposed projects presented in document UNEP/WG.2/3. The Action Plan adopted by the meeting could enable co-ordinated programmes of a scientific and technical nature to go forward without delay.

Item 4.3 Framework convention and related protocols with their technical annexes for the protection of the Mediterranean environment

Under this item the meeting will discuss the possibilities of formulating a framework convention and related protocols with their technical annexes for the protection of the Mediterranean environment. The meeting has before it for information a draft Framework Convention (UNEP/WG.2/Inf.3), a draft Protocol on co-operation in combatting pollution of the Mediterranean by oil and other harmful substances (UNEP/WG.2/Inf.4), and a draft Protocol for the prevention of pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft (UNEP/WG.2/Inf.5).

It is suggested that the Action Plan include in this area an agreement by governments that UNEP, in co-operation with FAO and other Specialized Agencies concerned, take necessary action for the convening of a conference of plenipotentiaries to adopt a framework convention and related protocols and technical annexes.

The paper presented under this item recommends that UNEP convene working groups of governmental experts and representatives of international organizations concerned and consultants to consider and review legal drafts prepared as information documents for the Barcelona meeting.

In addition, working groups could be convened by UNEP of governmental experts and representatives of international organizations concerned and consultants to start preparations for the other protocols and technical annexes envisaged in the framework convention, including instruments relating to land-based pollution, sea-bed exploration and exploitation, and liability and compensation.

In order to facilitate the formulation and adoption of final texts of the framework convention and related protocols and technical annexes, UNEP could convene a meeting or meetings of governmental legal experts and representatives of international organizations concerned to review the instruments from the legal drafting point of view and to consider all provisions of a legal or institutional nature.

It would also be desirable for the Action Plan to include an indication of timing for these subsequent working groups and conferences; for example, calling on UNEP to ensure that at least a certain number of working groups are convened before a maximum period of time has elapsed.

Item 4.4 Institutional and financial implications of the Action Plan

Information will be presented in light of the recommendations made by the working committees.