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MEDU and RAC Directors meeting

Tunis (Tunisia), 26 February 2004

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MEDU AND RAC DIRECTORS

Introduction

1. The meeting of the MEDU and the RAC Directors, which was convened by the Secretariat in line with a decision on MAP activity programming meetings taken by the Thirteenth meeting of the Contracting Parties (Catania, 11-14 November, 2003), was held in Tunis (Tunisia) on 26 February 2004 at the premises of the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas.
2. The list of participants is contained in **Annex II** to this document.

Agenda item 1: **Opening of the Meeting**

3. Mr. Arab Hoballah, Deputy Coordinator of MAP, opened the meeting, emphasising the special circumstances surrounding it. Given the on-going uncertainty as to when the new Coordinator would take up his post, the Secretariat felt that without upsetting the smooth running of the programme it was not in a position to indefinitely postpone a meeting which was usually held each January in order to review the main forthcoming activities and to define the details. This was made all the more relevant by the fact that the Bureau meeting- usually scheduled for April or May- was also most likely to be postponed until June. Some activities required some pooling of thought and decisions needed to be taken as of now. The meeting was being held in Tunis having convened the previous year in Sophia Antipolis, since by visiting the Regional Centres in turn this would enable MAP to enhance solidarity and visibility amongst its components in the field. Moreover, since Mrs. Belkhir, the Director of SPA/RAC, had only recently taken up office, this was also a way of demonstrating to her and her team MAP's wholehearted support in the face of the considerable challenge the Centre was facing for the near future- implementing the "SPA and Biodiversity" Protocol, the first and only one of the new Barcelona instruments to have come into force so far, as well as implementing the SAP-BIO which it was hoped would attract a sizeable budget, as had SAP-MED.
4. More generally speaking, Mr. Hoballah pointed out that the Catania meeting had borne witness to the confidence which the Contracting Parties placed in the programme, reflected in particular in its sound financial situation, in which the switch to the Euro had also played a role. But in return this confidence meant that the Parties were required to correctly manage the funds and to perform well, directly raising the issue of MAP's overall external evaluation. This was to be one of the essential elements in the 2004-2005 biennium, and was to be discussed by the meeting. The next meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2005 would coincide with MAP's 30th anniversary and, symbolic aspects aside, particularly in view of the evaluation it would be an opportunity to give some thought to possible developments, and to what aspects of its structure and terms of reference would require reform to enable it to meet the new challenges in the region.
5. Finally, on the matter of attendance, the Deputy Coordinator informed participants that Mr. Benoit, the Director of BP/RAC, had sent his apologies at the last minute on health grounds. He had, however, sent participants the contents page of the "Environment and Development" report. The Barcelona-based CP/RAC was represented by Mrs. Santacana, since her Director, Mr. Victor Macia was stepping down from a post where his ability and efficiency had been unanimously recognised. As for Palermo's ERS/RAC which was undergoing restructuring and reshaping, it was represented by two people- Mrs. Fiamma Valentino from the Italian Ministry of the Environment, and Mr. Sergio Illuminato from the Region of Sicily.

6. Mrs. Zeineb Belkhir, Director of SPA/RAC, welcomed all participants to Tunisia and wished every success to the deliberations of all of MAP's components, which the Centre was delighted to be hosting on its premises.

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

7. Mrs. Tatjana Hema, MEDU programme administrator, briefly introduced the agenda and annotated agenda. The meeting then adopted both documents, it being understood that there was a large degree of overlap on many issues between the previous and current biennia, and that as such it would not be possible to stick faithfully to the order of items on the agenda. Moreover, it was decided that depending on how discussions progressed there would be the option of working later into the evening and doing away with the only session planned for the following morning, since some participants were leaving. The agenda is to be found in **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda items 3 and 4: Main issues arising from the last biennium and issues related to the Catania recommendations

Ratification

8. Concerning the legal framework, the Deputy Coordinator recalled that during the previous biennium the "SPA and Biodiversity" Protocol, which had come into force in December 1999, had been the only new or amended instrument to have received a sufficient number of ratifications. The delay in the adoption of the new Barcelona system had hung over the programme, but happily the gap between the effective and required number of ratifications was beginning to narrow, and the depositary country was expected very shortly to announce the entry into force of the "Prevention and Emergency" Protocol. The 2004-2005 biennium would very quickly have to become the biennium of ratification for at least three essential instruments- the Convention, LBS and Dumping Protocols- so that subsequently during the MAP evaluation it would be possible to establish the follow-up to the implementation of these new provisions. Thus, all of MAP's components and partners, including civil society, would need to mount a final awareness raising campaign aimed at producing the required number of ratifications. To this end, the Secretariat was preparing a letter of appeal signed by the President of the Bureau and the depositary country, which would be sent out to all the countries concerned, drawing their attention individually to whichever instruments they had not yet approved.
9. Mr. F. S. Civili, MED POL Coordinator, emphasised the role which the NGOs had already played in this respect at the Catania meeting, where they had broadcast an appeal to nine countries, urging them to ratify the LBS Protocol. It would be a good idea to remind the NGOs of their commitment, and to advise them on how to intervene further, particularly regarding the LBS Protocol, which dealt with the everyday issue of pollution.

Reporting System

10. Mrs. T. Hema addressed the issue of the MAP reporting system. Three major tasks needed to be completed during the current biennium to enable the submission to the meeting of the Parties in Slovenia in 2005 of the twenty-two national reports drawn up by the countries, a regional report on implementation of the Convention and its Protocols in 2002-2003, and a finalised report format, harmonised as closely as possible with the formats used by other conventions and legal systems. MAP would assist the countries in preparing their national reports, drawing on its own internal expertise (depending on each instrument, for example the Tunis Centre for the SPA

Protocol or REMPEC for the Malta Protocol), and an MOU had already been signed to this end with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Israel. There were plans to cooperate with the secretariats of other conventions to identify how the formats and reporting systems could be aligned, and some countries were prepared to conduct an exercise to assist in these efforts. Finally, the Secretariat would recruit an international consultant to tackle the preparation of the regional report.

11. The Director of the SPA/RAC also stressed how important it was to harmonise reporting systems, and that the formats should take account of the commitments which countries had made in Johannesburg, particularly regarding the millennium goals for sustainable development, and of requirements under other conventions such as the CBD. Mrs. Hema informed participants that the Secretariat intended to organise a meeting in Lebanon or Tunisia in cooperation with the ESPO Convention to discuss this issue, with emphasis on the countries to the South. Moreover, assisting countries in preparing their national reports would also encourage them to ratify the Barcelona legal instruments. For his part, the Deputy Coordinator added that harmonising with other conventions would help lighten the workload on national administrations, since it would be possible to design a versatile basic format to which two or three pages specifically relating to Mediterranean requirements could be added for the Barcelona system.

Evaluations

12. Introducing the evaluation issue, the Secretariat recalled that the last two evaluations had covered the SPA/RAC and REMPEC in 2003. Follow-up would now have to be provided for all these evaluations, including the BP and PAP, coming back to the recommendations they had made to see which of them fell within the scope of the Directors of Centre, the host countries or the UNEP/MAP Secretariat, and subsequently to establish at meetings of the Bureau the extent to which they had been implemented. Through the "task force" the MCSD had produced an evaluation exercise, which had been conducted at a tricky time when questions were being raised about the terms of reference and the future of this body, but which had led to a set of useful proposals being drawn up which had been adopted post amendment by the Contracting Parties. These proposals reflected the complex nature of sustainable development at all levels and some, such as the setting-up of an informal inter-organisational platform, would need all stakeholders to put in some serious thought and consultation before they could be implemented, and should be included in the overall evaluation of MAP. An initial effort had already been made to assess MAP within the Bureau framework in the course of three meetings of a think tank, and the resulting document would be the first major source of input for the external evaluation requested by the Parties for their 2005 meeting. Finally, three evaluations were planned for the CP/RAC, the ERS/RAC and MED POL, as well as a follow-up to the assessment of the "100 historic sites". They would all be conducted on two levels- the past record and planned changes for each programme, in other words for the CP/RAC becoming the "Centre for Industry and Sustainable Development", the ERS/RAC the Centre for Information and Communication Technology, MED POL III becoming MED POL IV, and the "100 historic sites" becoming a programme on cultural heritage and sustainable development.
13. Concerning MED POL, Mr. Civili pointed out that the programme had been evaluated three times in the past, but that the assessments had largely focused on technical aspects. The novelty for the evaluators this time round was that they were being called upon to evaluate MED POL's role as an instrument for sustainable development. As phase III was due to conclude in 2005 and phase IV would need to be prepared before then the assessment would need to be conducted in parallel and within a relatively short time, since it would be needed for the preparation. Three

experienced consultants- from Greece, France and Syria - had already been recruited and had been given terms of reference drawing on the methodological part of the preceding four RAC evaluations. The evaluation was expected to be ready by late summer 2004 at the very latest.

14. In response to a question from Mrs. Hema on what role the eco-systemic approach would play in the MED POL evaluation, the MED POL Coordinator stated that in any case this new concept was less related to the evaluation than to the shaping of phase IV but that in spirit, given the highly divergent and sometimes vague definitions given depending on the programmes and conventions, it involved MAP in its entirety, and areas such as biodiversity or coastal management, for example. The Deputy Coordinator fully shared this view, feeling that the eco-systemic approach issue naturally slotted into the overall evaluation of MAP and its prospects.

Integration of activities

15. Mr. Civili had some personal comments to add to this discussion. There was no doubting the fact that over recent years MAP had come on leaps and bounds in terms of image, visibility and political clout. Its success on this front was borne out by how seriously the Contracting Parties, the EU, and large scale international bodies such as the GEF now viewed and approached the programme. However, MAP was still suffering from a lack of integration. It was, for example, "ridiculous" that a programme like MED POL should not be working with the SPA/RAC, REMPEC, the PAP, or the MCSDD's thematic groups, not only in close cooperation and coordination with them, but through the genuine integration of their work, for example on the effects of pollution on biodiversity, integrated coastal area management, urban management, etc. The only example of any efforts being made on this front was the collaboration established between the CP/RAC and MED POL, which had allowed the CP/RAC to become effectively involved with the SAP, and MED POL to grasp the problems of industry which until then had been beyond its scope. MAP should become a single entity, whose organisational chart showed interaction between all components and at all levels.
16. Four speakers came back with different and lengthy comments on this plea for integration. Indeed, other efforts to integrate had been made in the past, such as the Coastal Area Management Programmes (CAMPs), although they had not always been conclusive. According to the Director of the PAP, the "Environment and Development" report could have provided an opportunity for this type of integration, but it had not been grasped- wrongly so, to his mind, judging by the draft report before the meeting. The various programmes overlapped on many issues: for example, contingency plans for protecting SPAMIs involved the impact of pollution on marine resources and coastal area management. REMPEC had contemplated cooperation in joint areas with the SPA/RAC and the ERS/RAC, and restructuring the latter to render it more efficient could not but encourage such prospects. Finally, integration should in the future become a performance indicator for the programme, compared with other programmes which also covered the Mediterranean; and since the overall assessment of MAP would need to take account of this, it should be borne in mind that some Parties had not properly grasped the evaluation which the Bureau had decided upon and conducted in 2003. They had to some extent confused "evaluation" with "strategic vision", and questioned a "closed door operation" conducted without consulting other countries.
17. The Deputy Coordinator felt that this initial exchange of views provided a very good preamble for discussing MAP's external evaluation. The programme had some good achievements to its credit, but there were also shortcomings, including the lack of integration just mentioned. The evaluation would provide an excellent opportunity to

promote integration, providing that it was designed not merely in the form of joint activities, but particularly as an overall political and strategic framework agreed upon by all those components whose joint activities would stem from it. It should also involve fresh working methods, fresh responsibilities, integrated activity reports, indicators with the requirement to produce results, a new role for the MEDU, careful choice of partners, etc. From this point of view, the overall evaluation of MAP would no longer be a traditional assessment along the lines of the previous ones, aimed at proposing improvements and answers to the shortcomings; it would focus on genuine change within the programme design and the relations between the various actors. Such a serious type of evaluation would therefore take several months, with interim meetings being held along the way, to enable a pre-draft to be submitted to the meeting of the Focal Points in September 2005. It would therefore need to be launched sometime around October 2004 at an experts meeting, and once a preparatory document had been submitted to the Bureau with a set of criteria regarding the terms of reference to be given to the evaluators.

18. One participant felt that integration should not be seen as a magic wand, which would solve all problems at one fell swoop. It was a modest, gradual approach at everyday practical level. Joint activity between two Centres on a given subject was already a form of integration, and there was no need to imagine a merger of all components decided from on high. Generally speaking, integration was not part of people's habits, even within one and the same country, however developed, and it was rare to see officials from different ministries sitting down around a table to discuss a joint issue. It would have been preferable to set up some form of mechanism allowing for the active participation of all the programme's components in each of the chapters within their competence. The implementation strategy for the Prevention and Emergency Protocol which had been drawn up under REMPEC's guidance and covered a twelve year period with a specific timetable would lend itself to this type of collaboration between Centres in several fields. One participant felt that the solution to the two apparently opposing views emerging from the discussion on integration - either top-down and starting with policy-shaping, or bottom-up and gradually introducing sporadic forms of collaboration which would in the long run become widespread - would be to find the "happy medium".
19. Summing up, the Deputy Coordinator felt that this was probably the first time that the integration issue had been explicitly and openly tackled within MAP. Integration boiled down to the goodwill of everyone involved in the programme. Goodwill was not something which could be imposed, but rather had to be ushered in gradually within the framework of methodical thinking and dialogue. It would be a good idea to discuss integration again, for example at the forthcoming RAC Directors meeting in July, as it was set to become a key issue in the evaluation.

Agenda item 5: Specific Issues

(Evaluations, continued...)

20. The Deputy Coordinator described the background to the evaluations currently underway for the CP/RAC, the ERS/RAC and the 100 historic sites programme. Regarding the first two, which historically speaking were Centres which had been "offered" to MAP by the respective countries, with no impact on the Trust Fund, their particular status had proven beneficial for the Barcelona Centre which had been actively involved in MAP to the extent that it was now in a position to seek to broaden its terms of reference to "Industry and sustainable development". It had, however, proved a handicap for the ERS/RAC whose structure was too complex, and which henceforth was to be an exclusively public body with the Italian authorities determined to provide it with the budget required for its mission. In both cases, the evaluation

would in principal be conducted by two experts- one from the North, the other from the South- with draft terms of reference having been forwarded to the ministries concerned. In the case of the 100 historic sites, this was not a RAC but rather a programme which could be curtailed or extended, and the Contracting Parties had invited France and Tunisia to look into the possibility of it becoming a programme on the theme of "Cultural heritage and sustainable development in the Mediterranean", in consultation with the City of Marseilles. Given current circumstances the three aforementioned evaluations could be expected to be ready in September 2004.

21. Finally, Mr. Hoballah pointed out that, apart from in the case of REMPEC, with its special status under the aegis of the IMO, only two RACS (PAP and SPA) had host country agreements and that the situation of the others, which were not covered by any such officially signed agreement, would need to be sorted out.
22. Mrs. Mar Santacana, representing the CP/RAC, firstly explained that Mr. Victor Macia was stepping down following the recent change of government in Catalonia in the wake of regional elections in November 2003. The new director designate was expected to take up office at any moment, and came from a business background. The operation of the Centre depended on the signing each year of a document by the Ministry of the Environment in Madrid, a procedure which this year was going to be slightly delayed because of the general elections to the Cortes on March 14 2004. Thus, Mrs. Santacana pointed out, the CP/RAC could not promise its evaluation by any set date, although the Centre would do its best to proceed with the evaluation bearing in mind the afore mentioned deadlines. An active process was already underway, however, and the Ministry of the Environment was in contact with the Centre on this point and was contemplating a more detailed methodology than the basic one.
23. Mr. Sergio Illuminato, representing the ERS/RAC, pointed out that the evaluation would be conducted under the dual aegis of the Italian Ministry of the Environment and the Region of Sicily to which the Palermo Centre was now answerable in operational terms, with a budget to match its mission. The evaluation would provide an opportunity to redefine this mission, enlarging it in accordance with the Catania recommendation to include Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The Centre would thereby become an organic UNEP/MAP instrument, offering its creativity to the other RACs. A document laying out the activities for the coming two years was in the pipeline, in consultation with MEDU, and would be submitted to the partners at a meeting to be organised in Palermo in October 2004.
24. On the question of the new mission to be entrusted to the Palermo Centre, the Deputy Coordinator pointed out that it was part and parcel of a general United Nations policy through their regional offices in Asia and Africa in particular, aimed at developing Information and Communications Technology in relation to poverty, sustainable development and the millennium development goals.
25. Mr. Ivica Trumbic, Director of the PAP/RAC, drew the meeting's attention to the potential future importance of training through the Internet. The Split Centre was endeavouring to introduce it for training courses in coastal area management, which would make for considerable savings. He felt that one of the major issues raised by the planned new ERS/RAC mission was not only to promote and spread Information and Communication Technologies, but also to bring in the level of computer provision required to support them in all Mediterranean countries, particularly in the administrations of developing countries.
26. Mr. Daniel Drocourt, Coordinator of the 100 Mediterranean historic sites Programme, endeavoured to bring out all the interfaces between the long-standing work of the

Marseilles Atelier du Patrimoine and the main themes behind the reshaping of the 100 historic sites programme as presented by France in Catania, focusing on the central theme of "Cultural heritage and sustainable development": saving resources, active participation of the population, one generation handing over to the next, sparking the interest of young people, managing tourist flows, training cultural tourism operators, seeking international funding, etc. Unesco and the Council of Europe in particular were participating in the restricted Council proposed in order to pilot the reorientation programme, the Atelier working with them on an on-going basis, as it also did with the European Commission. Indeed, at the current moment it was doing so on the theme of "cultural heritage from the perspective of the integration of the nine Balkan countries". Similarly, on waste treatment and sanitation in historic districts, the Atelier had been active under the Sfax CAMP, in Tetouan and in the Kashbah in Algiers, and it was cooperating closely with the Mediterranean communities as had recently been the case for protecting the Beyoglu district of Istanbul. The objectives being set for the programme reorientation thus identified with the Atelier's basic activity. It was up to MAP to draw from this whatever conclusions it might feel useful for implementing its programme.

27. The Deputy Coordinator noted that the impressive number of activities which Mr. Drocourt had just listed were not as yet included in the Atelier's activity programme under MAP, where the Atelier du Patrimoine was actually only responsible for the 100 historic sites programme. Obviously though there was some convergence between the aims of the planned reorientation and the Atelier's daily objectives. Over coming months, therefore, there was a need to identify how those activities currently outside MAP could be integrated in a structured fashion, and how the Atelier could meet the expectations expressed in Catania, making best use of the linkages and avoiding setting up a parallel programme which would amount to duplication. It was up to the two task managers- France and Tunisia- in consultation with MEDU, to establish whether this was a valid prospect. If so, an experts meeting along the lines of the one being planned by the ERS/RAC in Palermo for October 2004 could be held in Marseilles at around the same date in order to validate the new programme.
28. In answer to Mrs. Belkhir's wish that the 100 sites programme should provide support for the implementation of the cultural aspects of the "SPA and Biodiversity" Protocol, which would be a first, Mr. Drocourt answered that he was ready to look into the details with the Tunis Centre of this type of collaboration concerning the links between "natural" and "cultural" in the inventories of species, sites and landscape elements.

ICAM Protocol

29. Mr. Ivica Trumbic mentioned that preparatory work had already got underway on a draft protocol on the integrated management of coastal areas. The feasibility study had been conducted and would provide a sound basis should the work be continued. If this were to be the case, over the next two years the objective would be to produce the provisional text to be submitted to the meeting of the Parties in Slovenia in 2005. The Parties would then give their views on what follow-up should be forthcoming. Some difficulties were to be expected given the reservations expressed by certain countries as to whether this new instrument was appropriate, even though the situation in this respect had clearly improved over recent years, as shown by the fact that the relevant recommendation had been adopted in Catania. The first activity which PAP was proposing thanks to the funds left over from the preceding exercise, was to organise a major meeting of stakeholders with experience and ability in coastal management in the region, to establish what added value they saw in the protocol. In principle the meeting should receive backing from the WWF office in Rome and the Italian government, should be held in Cagliari (Sardinia) on 28-29 May, and was expected to attract a least a hundred participants. The next step would be to

set up a select group of experts to prepare the pre-draft for submission to a meeting of government-appointed legal and technical experts to be held some time in spring 2005. The project would subsequently be finalised and submitted to the Parties in late 2005.

30. The Secretariat emphasised the fact that it was a huge challenge to prepare an instrument to meet the current expectations of some countries, when its actual theme was more complicated than that of the other protocols in the Barcelona system. A clear position therefore had to be established on the basis of the feasibility study, which left various options open, ranging from the status quo through to a binding instrument. Lessons no doubt needed to be learned from the preparation of three previous Protocols: LBS, SPA and Biodiversity, and Prevention and Emergency, and, if needs be, a list should be drawn up for the stakeholders meeting of important issues, overlaps and clashes to be avoided between the three instruments and a fourth which, by very definition, included some of the same aspects, added value and complementarity. This would save time in what was a very tight schedule. Finally, the Secretariat expressed the view that in parallel to the preparation of the protocol an operational document on the implementation of the protocol should also be drawn up, explaining its main provisions, the impact they would have upon coming into force, and preparing the actors and partners and smoothing the way for their approval, even prior to any legal consensus being reached on the text at the meeting of government-appointed experts.
31. Mr. Chedly Rais, Scientific Director of SPA/RAC, felt that given the largely technical substance of the protocol it would be better to limit- to two, for example- the number of legal experts in the select drafting group compared with the number of technical experts. On the operational document, he felt that starting to prepare it as of now for submission to the Parties and adoption along with the actual protocol and its annexes would simply confuse the Parties, creating the impression that corners were being cut. Responding to this objection, the Secretariat answered that there was no question of submitting the document for adoption- it would be an unofficial document intended to illustrate the practical implications of the provisions foreseen in the protocol. Mrs. Khodjet El Khil (REMPEC), questioned the idea of limiting the number of legal experts within the select group- the issues dealt with by the protocol were of a cross-cutting nature, which set it right apart from the other existing instruments, and this would raise a very tricky problem of legal drafting.

SAP-MED

32. Without giving a detailed progress report on the Strategic Actions Programme (SAP), which was quite widely known, the Coordinator of MED POL stressed how important the preceding biennium had been in laying the foundations for long-term implementation, and producing a huge set of guidelines and regional plans on the various aspects of pollution reduction, most of which had been drawn up by MED POL and the CP/RAC. Two important tasks had been prepared and implemented by virtually all countries as a prelude to their national action plans- the national baseline assessments (BA) for emissions/release of pollutants for 2003, which would provide a reference for calculating subsequent reductions in pollutants, and the national diagnostic analysis (NDA). The 2004-2005 biennium was therefore going to be crucial, as countries were expected to draw up their national action plans (NAPs) including specific commitments on the measures to be taken and their cost. Meanwhile, in order to be in a position to implement, they would need to set up the mechanisms for seeking alternative forms of internal or external funding, given the amounts in question. The MED POL/GEF Secretariat was currently working on this. A training course on drawing up NAPs was to be organised in Izmit (Turkey) in early March 2004, in order to facilitate the work of the countries, including a practical

exercise using a fictitious country. Moreover, an exercise was currently being conducted with PAP's assistance in seven countries, aimed at identifying economic instruments (eco-taxes, tax incentives, etc.) which would be an important factor in terms of the SAP's sustainability. In the same field, the GPA was planning to launch a SAP support project, using the original concept of a "Mediterranean Investment Advisory Facility" (MIAF), a sort of trading post for putting stakeholders, donors and potential investors in contact.

33. Mr. Civili then mentioned the new GEF Project currently being negotiated, which was requested to take the "biodiversity" and "pollution" aspects on board and to focus its work on the eco-systemic approach and drainage basin management, based on the "cross-border diagnostic analysis" document which had been specially drawn up for the Project. The Project would have two major components. The first, a traditional one, would focus on capacity building throughout the entire Mediterranean but with particular emphasis on the Adriatic countries which, according to GEF's analysis, represented the region's only cross-border area. The second component would consist of setting up an "environmental trust fund" sustained by the World Bank, from which countries could draw mainly in the form of loans, in order to implement the SAP-MED and SAP-BIO. As an indication, the appropriations earmarked for the first component would amount to between 25 and 30 million US dollars, and between 80 and 100 million for the second. A meeting of all the parties (MAP, METAP, GPA, RAC, countries, etc.) was scheduled for September 2004 at the GEF headquarters in Washington.
34. The representative of REMPEC took the opportunity to remind the Secretariat that the Centre submitted a project proposal (Cleanmed) to MEDU for its inclusion in the new GEF project and that REMPEC was still awaiting for a reply. It was agreed that the issue would be given all consideration by MEDU after the Meeting.
35. Having noted several questions or comments following his presentation of the GEF Project, Mr. Civili explained that: 1) the concept document would be prepared after the stakeholders' meeting, and probably along the same lines as for the first GEF MED Project; 2) indeed, countries did not always find the WB loans system attractive, preferring to resort to bilateral funding and that, for reasons of SAP credibility, when the investment portfolio was drawn up other financing bodies such as the EIB, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, etc. should be drafted into the process as early as possible; 3) a distinction needed to be drawn between the eco-systemic and the pollution hot spots approach, the hot spots being essentially based on pollution levels, whilst the eco-systemic approach meant integrating all pollution-combating aspects, even socio-economic ones.

SAP-BIO

36. Mrs. Zeineb Belkhir, Director of SPA/RAC, expressed her concern following the presentation of the new GEF Project. In accordance with the Parties' requests in Catania and following their adoption of the SAP-BIO, the Tunis Centre was due to begin a preparatory stage, polishing the investment portfolios in particular. This was due to conclude in October 2004 with a seminar to launch the effective implementation of the SAP-BIO. The provisions foreseen by the GEF- for example the emphasis on Adriatic countries- raised a whole series of questions. The SAP-BIO accepted in Catania was different to the SAP-MED as it already contained national action plans and brief investment portfolios with a cost assessment for the activities. Now the operational strategy needed to be finalised, and this needed to be done essentially at national rather than regional level, as was the case for SAP-MED. This would entail numerous missions, negotiations, inventories, etc. In this respect the countries and organisations competent on Mediterranean biodiversity matters

involved in the process had major expectations, since the SAP-BIO was not merely a SAP under MAP, but covered the whole of the Mediterranean region. To what extent could SAP implementation be placed under GEF guidance? What role would the other donors such as the French GEF have to play, France having announced in Catania that it would contribute? What of the contribution from the GEF's Biodiversity component, which had not as yet been mentioned, since for the time being the "International Waters" component had a stranglehold on the SAP-BIO?

37. The Secretariat proposed and the meeting recommended that an internal MAP meeting be organised in Athens in the near future- in a month or so - to identify an approach for the following months until the launch of the new GEF Project. In the meantime, the SPA/RAC was invited to send a letter to the MEDU listing all its questions so that the Secretariat could track down the necessary information, and contact Washington and Nairobi and hear their views. This would save time and provide a sound basis for discussion at the Athens meeting.

Strategy for the Implementation of the new "Prevention and Emergency" Protocol

38. Introducing this agenda item, Mrs. Lilia Khodjet El Khil stated that the imminent entry into force of the "Prevention and Emergency" Protocol would make the implementation strategy for this new instrument which had been adopted in January 2003 absolutely topical. Since the "prevention" aspect constituted the novelty in the new Protocol, this was where most of the strategy was based, with two pillars: prevention of operational pollution (or from shipping) and prevention of accidental pollution from sea traffic. The actual strategy had been the subject of an initial document drawn up by a consultant, submitted to the REMPEC correspondents' meeting where it had been amended, and then submitted to the Parties in its new form. There had been tremendous feedback, which reflected the Parties' awareness and involvement- particularly that of the European Commission. A meeting of experts intended to finalise the document was scheduled for June 2004, to be attended by REMPEC's usual correspondents, plus those which had recently been appointed by the national port and maritime authorities.
39. Asked to provide clarification regarding the content of the strategy, the representative of REMPEC explained that it was directly related to the articles of the Protocol and their structure, as well as to the new terms of reference and role of the Centre, that it set out in detail the operational activities over fifteen years, also giving an indicative timetable, and that in its final version it would also indicate the cost of implementation. On the 17 points in the Catania Declaration which specifically concerned the implementation of the Protocol and had given rise to intense negotiations before they were adopted, they were particularly well reflected in the strategy since the first strategy document had in fact been used to formulate them before Catania. Finally, there were two fundamental REMPEC projects which needed to be highlighted, in response to two of the Catania recommendations, where the Centre was leaning towards external funding: monitoring in the Mediterranean and combating breaches, and evaluating shipping in the Mediterranean and its associated risks.
40. Finally, there were two fundamental REMPEC Projects which needed to be highlighted, in line with the Strategy and in accordance with two of the Catania recommendations, where the Centre was leaning towards external funding: the CleanMed project on monitoring illegal oil discharges and prosecution of offenders in the Mediterranean, and the Mediterranean Project on the assessment of maritime traffic in the Mediterranean and related risks.

Strategy on Information, Awareness and Public Participation

41. Mr. Baher Kamal, MAP's Information Officer, ran through the activities which had been conducted in the areas of information, awareness and participation. Regarding information, which addressed a wide audience, MAP was boosting the publication drive it had begun two years previously, particularly with the newly styled *MedWaves* magazine which had become more receptive to outside input; it was upgrading the website, which was due to receive some strong backing from Italy, particularly through the ERS/RAC and the annual sum of 20,000 E uros. This would make it more operational, bring in more languages and a greater number of links. Boosting information flows between the MEDU and the RACs had already prompted a mission and an on-site exercise at the CP/RAC in Barcelona, then at the PAP/RAC in Split, with the other RACs set to follow suit shortly. As far as public participation was concerned, this was a more political and delicate issue. It was backed by the legal trump-card of article 15 of the Convention, which rendered it mandatory for the Parties, and had a two-pronged strategic outline, one component of which was intended for the Arab countries, and the other for the rest (with the exception of the European countries which came under the Aarhus Convention). These two sub-regional components had been merged and in early March would serve as guidelines for participation in a training course organised in Izmit (Turkey) on preparing national action plans within the SAP framework. In addition, in accordance with the Catania recommendation, a draft strategic approach for information, awareness and public participation which would apply to all Mediterranean countries was to be drawn up on the basis of these initial contributions. In the interim, a provisional document was shortly to be addressed to all the RACs for comment, before a meeting of experts reviewed the draft for finalisation and submission to the focal points meeting and subsequently to the meeting of the Parties in 2005. Finally, Mr. Kamal explained how important it was for all MAP components to equip themselves with an Intranet with various tools such as document lists, consultants, focal points, etc. A brief document would shortly be sent out on this issue to all members of MAP.
42. The MAP Deputy Coordinator mentioned the progress which MAP had made over the last two years on the information front. Its publications had been updated, rendered more accessible and attractive (*MedWaves*, MAP Series of technical reports, and brochures), and a high-performance network had been established with the media. On this point, the Catania meeting had seen unprecedented media attendance, largely due to this new policy. Mr. Illuminato's role should not be forgotten. However, there needed to be a contact within each MAP component for this drive, who would need to consider ways of using the expertise now available to the MEDU in Mr. Kamal. Everyone in MAP would therefore have to carefully study the document on participation which was to be sent out shortly. It could reasonably be hoped that 2004 would see the entry into force of the Convention and of at least one other amended Protocol, such as LBS. This should be an opportunity for the region's media to really herald the event, also in civil society where the NGOs had long been spearheading the struggle for participation.
43. The representative of REMPEC announced that the Centre's website had become operational again some days previously. It had undergone a complete overhaul and boasted two interactive tools, one allowing countries to access the information posted to update or amend it, and the other intended for their use in emergencies, showing a decision-taking tree (depending on the products involved, position of the vessel, etc.).
44. It was one participant's view that websites did not require a "facelift" more than once each year, but that the photo issue often arose, and it would be good to open up the websites to photo libraries on the various areas covered by MAP. He also suggested that a future edition of *MedWaves* should be dedicated to the issue of "integration" as

just discussed. A further participant was against this idea, at least until the new Coordinator had taken up office. In this respect, two participants would like to have seen *MedWaves* dealing with this type of issue, to which the Information Officer retorted that he personally would like to see a publication which was more open to the public, journalistic, and with less institutional look, because when it came down to it MAP information and data could be consulted on the website anyway. Finally, as to whether the document on participation which was to be presented in Izmit should be seen as a GEF document, his answer was that this was purely a MAP document, but that it was used on-and-off by GEF which, to his understanding, supported a goodly number of MAP activities and was not an autonomous body for MEDU.

“Environment and Development” Report

45. In the absence of the Director or any other Blue Plan representative, the Deputy Coordinator felt that it was not feasible to open discussions on the contents page for the “Environment and Development” report before it. Moreover, looking at the table it was clear that it would raise problems in relation to the strategy for sustainable development (MSSD), and that once again it was unfortunate that none of the RACs had been involved in drafting the document, starting with the PAP/RAC for the chapter on coasts. This once again boiled down to the issue of “integration”. The Secretariat announced that presentation of the document would be postponed, but that the presentational meeting for the document was due to take place shortly.
46. In response to a question from the Director of the PAP on the scope of the document-information or application- the Deputy Coordinator stated that, pending a closer reading of the text before he could give a definite answer, at the outset the document had been purely informative, like the first Blue Plan report in 1989. Gradually, though, with the preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development in prospect, for which it was expected to provide input, it had taken on a strategic nature and taken account of recent developments such as the Johannesburg conclusions or the European Commission’s strategy. In other words, it was also following an application and results approach.

Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)

47. The Secretariat recalled that from the outset it was established that all of MAP’s components and the Mediterranean actors should be closely involved in preparing the MSSD. A workshop similar to the one held in Barcelona in March 2003 was to be organised in Morocco in early May 2004. The workshop would take the “Vision” and “Orientations” as they now stood, in other words reworked to reflect comments made by the countries, and use them as a reference framework in order to define the specific objectives corresponding to the challenges listed, bearing in mind the millennium development goals, the Johannesburg recommendations, the Mediterranean context and the “Environment and Development” report. It would also be required to define and assign the various drafting roles, some of which could be entrusted to teams in which a country was paired up with a RAC. Preparation of the MSSD would also require a clear commitment from the European Commission and the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, in accordance with the recommendations from the July 2002 Athens Ministerial Conference. For their part, the NGOs were preparing their contribution by organising meetings on this subject between the governments and civil societies in each country, whilst the chambers of commerce were expected to provide the same driving force in the world of business.
48. There would be three points on the agenda of the MCS D meeting scheduled for June in Italy, the venue of which was still undecided: 1) Review and progress report on the MSSD preparation process; 2) The MCS D’s medium term work programme; 3) Draft

report on the theme of "financing and cooperation" and/or if it was not sufficiently ready, presentation of the "Environment and Development" report. The MCSD Steering Committee which would be meeting in the interim would also concentrate on the process related to the strategy.

49. A discussion arose concerning the role of various themes within the MSSD, with biodiversity being quoted as an example. According to the Deputy Coordinator, there were two options for preparing the document: it could either be exhaustive and leave nothing out, which could seriously undermine its effectiveness on implementation, as it was impossible to "do everything", or it could focus on the priority objectives, inevitably laying itself open to criticism. Biodiversity was covered by a particularly thorough document in the SAP-BIO, as was combating pollution in the SAP MED, and even a theme such as water was dealt with in depth by the MCSD. Rather than rehashing the theoretical and operational aspects of these documents and simply duplicating them, it would possibly be more advisable for the MSSD to recognise these officially adopted texts, quoting them as references, and providing some added value where justified. Mr. Civili recalled, on the contrary, that the MSSD was intended as a document for the entire Mediterranean, not just for MAP, that it would be a self-sufficient unit based on previous work conducted in various contexts, but that it was not possible to leave out certain themes on the pretext that they were dealt with elsewhere.

MAP Cooperation with its Partners- Projects to be submitted for external funding

50. The Secretariat noted that several organisations were now seeking cooperation with MAP. Good cooperation was being built up with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe/REC, with the prospect of some joint activities being organised. Good prospects were also opening up with the Euro-Arab management Centre in Spain, and with the Baltic 21 and MedWet programmes. Genuine prospects were still lacking in terms of civil society and the NGOs, politically and strategically speaking. Cooperation in that field was limited to sporadic MAP assistance for activities or meetings. Civil society in the Mediterranean had developed in leaps and bounds, and was nowadays capable of rallying major resources and abilities. In this context the work of the international chamber of commerce should be flagged up, which was a member of the MCSD. At its proposal a project was jointly being prepared in Croatia to rally the private sector in the country around specific examples of sustainable coastal management, and the project would be presented next June to the annual Congress of the international chambers of commerce to be held in Marrakech.
51. In terms of cooperation with the European Union- EC and EEA- there were delays with the timing due to the lack of a Coordinator, but in the hope that this issue would quickly be resolved, the problem was to first and foremost reach a political agreement on the basis of which a work programme would subsequently be built up. The European Commission now recognised MAP as a fully-fledged partner, and it was a question of breaking away from a system where one-off projects were constantly being churned out in competition with other organisations. The political conditions essential to the institutionalisation of cooperation were gradually being built up, thanks to the decisions taken by the Euromed ministers in Athens and the Contracting Parties in Catania - EC inclusion in the implementation of the SAP-MED and SAP-BIO, in the preparation of the MSSD and the implementing strategy for the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea, MAP's active involvement in the preparation and implementation of the European marine strategy, and MAP's participation in the implementation of the European strategy for integrated coastal area management. There had already been fruitful cooperation with the EEA in

drawing up the report on the state of the Mediterranean environment. The BP/RAC and REMPEC regularly collaborated with the EC in the SMAP and LIFE contexts, as did other RACs on a more sporadic basis. This was an achievement which could be counted on, and work was currently underway on a SMAP-coastal management project, involving major funding from Finland.

52. In response to questions as to whether the Commission was genuinely interested in cooperating with a MAP which was seen as just one applicant amongst others, the Secretariat stated that with the current economic circumstances within the EC looking promising, this was yet another reason for pressing for a political agreement which would bring about a change of mentality. Moreover, there should be no hesitations about lobbying Brussels as other organisations did. For individual projects for a given RAC, these should not be submitted in a disorganised fashion in competition with the other MAP components. This was why it was useful if the Unit could be apprised in good time of what projects the RACs intended to submit, so that they could be ranked according to the political support it would be in a position to provide in order to convince Brussels. For the time being, and with an eye to the next SMAP tender, the priority lay with the coastal management project since it involved the participation of all of MAP's components with the PAP playing a central role, and it swung in with the prospect of the new ICAM instrument and its implementation strategy.
53. The Deputy Coordinator also mentioned another major source of funding for the Mediterranean- the AZAHAR programme (Programme for cooperation concerning sustainable development, environmental protection and conservation of natural resources in the Mediterranean), with an annual budget of 18 million euros, which was sustained exclusively by funds from the Spanish government and regions. AZAHAR was conducting some major projects in the countries of the Maghreb and in Palestine. If commitments were made for the current year, projects could be submitted for 2005 and would be seriously considered, since it was quite clear that those running the programme were very open to cooperation with MAP.
54. The representative of the CP/RAC pointed out that under the AZAHAR programme the Spanish agency for international cooperation to which it was answerable had contacted the Barcelona Centre concerning the submission of a project for representatives from Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco on preventing pollution in the tanning sector, related to the SAP provisions and hot spots. The project had been approved and the corresponding funds received, and the CP/RAC was to organise a course on capacity building in this sector.

Agenda item 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

55. The Secretariat recapped on the main issues and drew the meeting's attention to those points which were more related to activities in the near future, such as the following:

Ratification

- a) The Secretariat would transmit to the President of the Bureau and to the depositary country for signature the letters which would subsequently be addressed to the countries concerned, drawing their attention individually to those instruments which they still had to approve.
- b) The NGOs should be reminded of their commitment and advised on how to intervene in order to speed up the ratification process, particularly regarding the amended Convention and the LBS Protocol.

Reporting System

The Secretariat should continue to work towards harmonising reporting systems, taking account in the new formats to be prepared of the commitments which countries made in Johannesburg, and of requirements under other conventions.

Evaluations

- a) The evaluations planned for the CP/RAC, the ERS/RAC, MED POL and the "100 historic sites" should cover their past record and the changes foreseen for each programme:
 - CP/RAC becoming the "Industry and Sustainable Development" Centre;
 - ERS/RAC becoming the Centre for Information and Communication Technology;
 - MED POL IV, a specific programme of assistance for the countries in order to reduce pollution;
 - "100 historic sites" becoming the Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development Programme.
- b) Efforts should be made to ensure that the three evaluations of the Centres and the historic sites programme were ready by October 2004, and for MED POL by the end of summer 2004 at the latest.
- c) In order to support the implementation of the cultural aspects of the "SPA and Biodiversity" Protocol, the 100 historic sites programme and the Tunis Centre should review the details of their collaboration in this area as quickly as possible.

MAP Evaluation

- a) MAP should be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:
 - Include two levels of analysis: past record and planned objectives, in other words optimal integration between the components of MAP;
 - Integration should not only be seen in the form of joint activities, but more particularly as an overall political and strategic framework agreed upon by all components, which would also involve new working methods, new responsibilities, integrated activity reports, indicators with a requirement to produce results, a new role for the MEDU, and careful choice of partners;
 - The eco-systemic approach issue should be included in the overall evaluation of MAP and its prospects;
 - The evaluation should be conducted using an open, participative process.
- b) MAP should be evaluated over several months, with mid-term meetings. For this purpose, the Secretariat should:
 - Submit to the Bureau a preparatory document with a set of criteria and an evaluation methodology, including the terms of reference for the evaluators;
 - Launch the evaluation around October 2004 at a meeting of the appointed experts;
 - Submit a pre-draft evaluation document to the meeting of the national Focal Points in September 2005.

ICAM Protocol

- During the preparatory stage, lessons should be learned from the preparatory processes for three previous Protocols: "LBS", "SPA and Biodiversity", and "Prevention and Emergency";
- If needs be, a list should be drawn up of important issues, overlaps and clashes to be avoided between the three instruments and the fourth, which would take some of the same aspects on board, and the added value and complementary nature of the new protocol should be highlighted.
- It would also be useful to have a process for preparing an operational document for the implementation of the protocol running in parallel to the preparatory process for the protocol itself; in this way the main provisions and their impact on coming into force could be explained, actors and partners prepared, and their support be more readily secured.

SAP-MED/SAP-BIO

- Following a proposal from the Secretariat and a recommendation from the meeting, an internal MAP meeting should be organised in Athens in the near future- in a month or so – to discuss the matter of the new GEF project and the involvement of the SAP-BIO;
- The SPA/RAC was invited to address a letter to the MEDU listing all relevant questions to enable the Secretariat to track down the necessary information, establish contact with Washington and Nairobi and gather their views.

Strategy on Information, Awareness and Public Participation

- In accordance with the Catania recommendation, a draft strategic approach to information, awareness and public participation applicable to all Mediterranean countries would be drawn up on the basis of preceding contributions;
- A provisional document would be addressed in the near future to all RACs for comment, before a meeting of experts reviewed the draft for finalisation and submission to the meeting of national focal points and subsequently the meeting of the Parties in 2005.

MAP Cooperation with its Partners- Projects to be submitted for External Funding

- The Secretariat should not hesitate to lobby Brussels, as did other organisations;
- In a drive for improved internal coordination, project requests should not be submitted in a disorganised fashion, in competition with other MAP components;
- With an eye to SMAP's next call for tender, the coastal management project should be given priority, since it involved the participation of all MAP components with a central role reserved for the PAP, and swung in with the prospect of the new ICAM instrument and its implementation strategy.

Agenda item 7: Any Other Business

56. The Information Officer proposed that for MAP Intranet websites there should be a special search box for all projects currently underway, planned or proposed, showing their corresponding activities and meetings. Since they were mushrooming it was obvious that the members or components of MAP were often largely unaware of what the others were doing.
57. On matters administrative, the Deputy Coordinator reminded all RACs that by the end of the month at the latest those who had not yet done so were requested to provide the MEDU with their activity reports, self-evaluation fact sheets and final reports.
58. Less of a constraint, but nonetheless useful for the programme's image, the Deputy Coordinator made the point that it would be helpful if all RACs or programmes could keep in table form a precise and on-going statement of all the additional funding they received in cash and kind from all sources, whether this be a minor amount (a few hundred euros) or a major one. The general table showing these donations would be widely circulated throughout MAP, to the Bureau and meetings, and would reflect MAP's basic gratitude. It would also show how some countries which were able to pay a modest contribution into the Trust Fund were actually major contributors to the programme through their donations (Monaco's case), and that some major contributors to the Fund were actually paying in much higher amounts by hosting a large number of meetings and supporting activities outside the budget (Italy).
59. The Deputy Coordinator also stressed the point that for nominations for vacancies strict criteria had to be applied (fair geographical distribution, a vacancy notice sent by the MEDU to all the Contracting Parties, consultation), as set out in Annex IV, appendix I "Recommendations concerning the structures of the MEDU, MED POL and the RACs", Report from the Tenth ordinary meeting in Tunis in 1997. These criteria would be explicitly stipulated in all host country agreements. As for the recruitment on a two year basis of the officer responsible for sustainable development matters, the terms for this post would be circulated in the near future.
60. Regarding the budget adopted for the biennium, it was noted that not all MAP components have re-assessed their personnel and operating costs in line with the impact of the conversion from the dollar to the euro at the applied rate of \$ 1 for Eu. 1.1 ; Consequently, local salaries increment for 2004 should not exceed 5% of local salaries received in 2003 ; moreover, the differences in terms of saving in respective budget lines cannot be used to hire consultants in the short term before this is being clearly reflected in the next budget revision

Agenda item 8: Closure of the Meeting

Following the usual courtesies, the meeting was declared closed at 19h45 on Thursday, 26 February 2004.

ANNEX I

Agenda of the Meeting

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda and organisation of work
3. Main issues arising from the last biennium
4. Main issues and expectations from the recommendations of the Catania meeting
5. Specific issues
 - a. Evaluation of RACs and MAP
 - b. ICAM Protocol
 - c. SAP-MED
 - d. SAP-BIO
 - e. Strategy for the implementation of the new Prevention and Emergency Protocol
 - f. Strategy on Information, Awareness and Public Participation
 - g. "Environment and Development" report
 - h. MSSD/MCSD
 - i. EU/MAP cooperation
 - j. Projects to be submitted for external funding
6. Conclusions and recommendations
7. Any other business
8. Closure of the meeting

ANNEXE II**Liste des participants****REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRES AND PROGRAMMES OF THE
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**MAP SECRETARIAT FOR 100
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