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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

16th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to
the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Marrakesh (Morocco), 3-5 November 2009

REPORTS OF THE BUREAU MEETINGS OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES DURING THE 2008-2009 BIENNIUM (BUR/67, BUR/68, BUR/69)



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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

Madrid, Spain 18-19 September 2008

REPORT

**OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND THE COASTAL REGION OF
THE MEDITERRANEAN AND ITS PROTOCOLS**

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Introduction

1. The 67th meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was held, at the invitation of the Government of Spain, at the Hotel Melia Castilla, Madrid, Spain, on 18 and 19 September 2008.

Participation

2. The meeting was chaired successively by Ms Alicia Paz Antolin, Director of the Coast and Sea Sustainability, Mr Javier Cachon de Mesa, Head of the Division for the Protection of the Sea and Prevention of Marine Pollution, and Mr Juan Carlos Martin Fragueiro, General Secretary for the Sea, Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain. The following members of the Bureau attended: Ms Odile Roussel, Deputy-director for the Environment, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (France) (Vice-President), Mr M. Abdelfetah Sahibi, Head of the Division for International Cooperation, Secretariat of State for Water and Environment, Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Directorate of Partnership, Communication and Cooperation, (Morocco) (Vice-President), H.E. Mr Mohamed Ridha Kechrid, Ambassador of Tunisia in Madrid and Mr Chaker Ouahada, Counsellor at the Embassy of Tunisia in Madrid, (Tunisia) (Vice-President), Mr. Sedat Kadioglu, Deputy Undersecretary, Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Turkey) (Vice-President); Ms Valerie Brachya, Senior Deputy Director General for Policy and Planning, Ministry of the Environment (Israel) (Rapporteur). The following participants from Spain also attended the meeting: Mr Sebastian Fraile Arevalo, Cabinet Director for the General Secretary for the Sea, General Secretariat for the Sea, Ms Ana Ruiz Sierra, from the Division for the Protection of the Sea and Prevention of Marine Pollution, Directorate for Coast and Sea Sustainability, and Ms Patricia Olmos Rodriguez, Division for the Protection of the Sea and Prevention of Marine Pollution Technical Assistant TRAGSATEC, S.A, Deputy Directorate for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Coastal and Maritime Affairs Unit

3. Mr Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, and Ms Tatjana Hema, MEDU Programme Officer, represented the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP).

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

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

5. The meeting was opened by Ms Alicia Paz Antolin, Director of the Coast and Sea Sustainability, Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine affairs of Spain. She welcomed participants and, reaffirming Spain's continued strong support for MAP, drew attention to the important developments that had taken place since the January Meeting of the Contracting Parties and Conference of Plenipotentiaries and the work ahead in implementing the decisions taken by the Contracting Parties. Among the points to which Spain attached particular importance were increased visibility of the Convention and MAP and awareness of their objectives, implementation of the tasks set out in the Governance Paper, cooperation with regional programmes and initiatives and MAP's role in furthering knowledge of the Mediterranean ecosystem. Spain welcomed recent developments in MAP legal instruments, particularly the signing of the new ICZM Protocol, a pioneering instrument.

6. The Coordinator and the members of the Bureau thanked the Spanish authorities for their hospitality and efficient organization of the meeting.

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

7. The meeting adopted the agenda prepared by the Secretariat (UNEP/BUR/67/1) and the organization of work set out in the annotated agenda (UNEP/BUR/67/2). It agreed that the questions covered by the addendum to the progress report by the Secretariat (UNEP/BUR/67/Add.1) would be dealt with under agenda item 3. The agenda is attached as Annex II to the present report.

Agenda item 3: Progress report by the Secretariat on activities carried out since the last Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention

8. Introducing the progress report (UNEP/BUR/67/3 and Add.1), the Coordinator drew attention to the new format, with a clearer presentation of goals, objectives, expected outputs, achievements, constraints and lessons learned, and recommendations.

Legal component

9. The Coordinator highlighted in particular the entry into force of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol and of the amendments to the LBS Protocol, and the signing of the new ICZM Protocol. With reference to the three Contracting Parties that had still not ratified any of the new and revised MAP legal instruments, he informed the Bureau that positive developments were reported from Lebanon and that he would be discussing the issue with the authorities of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on the occasion of a forthcoming visit. Regarding the ICZM Protocol, there were unofficial indications that several countries had undertaken ratification procedures. He noted the one-year deadline for adoption of the legally binding programmes, measures and time-frames for implementation of the amended LBS Protocol and reported on progress made in drafting those programmes.

10. The members of the Bureau welcomed the positive legal developments. The representatives of France and Spain confirmed that procedures were under way in their countries to ratify the ICZM Protocol. Non-ratification of MAP legal instruments remained, however, a cause for concern, particularly with the establishment of the Compliance Committee, since compliance monitoring could in effect put in an unfavourable position the Contracting Parties that had ratified the instruments over those that had not. It was stressed that energetic efforts should be made to encourage Contracting Parties to speed up the ratification process for all instruments, in particular the ICZM Protocol. Spain, as the Depositary State, was invited to approach the relevant Contracting Parties, and the Secretariat was requested to provide any assistance to them for that purpose upon request. The representative of Spain confirmed that such an approach would be made through diplomatic channels; the Secretariat for its part assured the Bureau that it would continue its own efforts to that end, including the transmission of the Bureau's message in that regard. It was suggested that a letter sent to the Ministry of the Environment as well as to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs might help expedite the process. The Status of signatures and ratifications of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols as at 11 August 2008 is presented in Annex III to this report.

11. Some concern was expressed about the tight deadline for the complex technical process of drafting and approving the legally binding programmes, measures and timetables following the entry into force of the amendments to the LBS Protocol, particularly for Contracting Parties that were European Union member States. The need for coordination and harmonization with European Union requirements was stressed. The Secretariat said that, aware as it was of the reporting burden on Contracting Parties, the binding measures to

be proposed to the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties were expected to concern only some, and not all, of the pollutants listed in the annex to the Protocol, and that they would furthermore be drawn up with due regard for the differentiated approach.

Promoting implementation and compliance

Compliance

12. The Coordinator, referring to paragraphs 17 to 22 of the progress report, informed the Bureau that the Compliance Committee, having successfully held its first meeting, now had draft terms of reference and a programme of work for 2008-2009. He drew attention to a number of issues concerning the Committee's future work which the Bureau was invited to consider.

13. The reported constraints prompted requests for clarification concerning Compliance Committee membership, possible difficulties in constituting a quorum and the status of participants in Committee meetings. The Secretariat pointed out that the Committee was on a "learning curve", and provided explanations about the difficulties that might arise – and had indeed arisen at the Committee's first meeting – in constituting the seven-member quorum decided upon by the Contracting Parties at their 15th meeting. It was recalled that members and alternate members were designated in their personal capacity and that only they should therefore enjoy full member status, with the right to vote. In order to ensure that a full quorum was attained, it was agreed that all alternate members, as well as members, should be invited to attend Committee meetings and that, in order to allow for greater flexibility for quorum purposes, members and alternate members should be counted on the basis of the group within which they had been designated rather than on a nominal basis. It was confirmed in response to a question that the selection of alternates within a group was for the group to decide.

14. In response to queries about the attendance of observers at Committee meetings, it was further explained that the compliance procedures and mechanisms adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties provided for participation by persons other than the members and alternate members. Contracting Parties that were not members could not, for example, be denied attendance. The Bureau confirmed that such participants should have the status of observer, but considered that in principle Committee meetings should be confined to members and alternates. It also agreed that the Committee should develop specific criteria for attendance by observers and in particular by a concerned Party at the normally closed meetings at which the findings and recommendations concerning non-compliance in respect of that Party were discussed.

15. The Bureau considered that, for reasons of continuity, the specific competence of designated members and alternates and the credibility of the Committee, members and alternate members should be replaced only in exceptional circumstances, such as in the event of resignation or incapacity. It agreed that the nominated replacement of such a member or alternate member should be subject to endorsement by the Bureau, in order to avoid a hiatus in membership pending endorsement by the Contracting Parties.

16. It likewise agreed that any amendments to the Committee's rules of procedure should be considered and adopted by the Bureau, subject to validation by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

17. The Bureau endorsed the nomination of Mr Abdelaâli Beghoura, a national of Algeria, as alternate member of the Committee. Noting that Lebanon had still not nominated an alternate member for half a term, it requested the Secretariat to communicate with the Lebanese authorities in order to expedite the process.

18. Noting that the Compliance Committee had proposed to add Arabic as its third working language, and following explanations by the Secretariat, the Bureau decided that a precedent should not be set, nor costs added, by providing for three working languages in a technical body such as the Committee, unless otherwise decided by the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

MAP reporting system

19. The Coordinator said that, on account of delays in delivering the new MAP on-line reporting system due to the shortfall in INFO/RAC's budget, it might not be possible for all Contracting Parties to comply with the deadline for submission of their national implementation reports for 2006-2007. The Bureau agreed to extend the deadline to February 2009 and meanwhile to call upon INFO/RAC to ensure that the system was operational by the end of December 2008. The system should be fully compatible with other international or regional information reporting systems operating in the region, in order to avoid duplication and unnecessary expense, and reports should be consistent with the format adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Institutional arrangements and coordination

Implementation of the Governance Paper

20. Following the presentation by the Coordinator, members expressed satisfaction that the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP), a very important development in the structure of MAP, was now fully functioning, having already held two meetings, with a third scheduled for the following week. The Bureau adopted the ECP's terms of reference as contained in Annex IV to this report. It recommended that the President of the Bureau should attend ECP meetings in order to strengthen the interrelationship between management and the Contracting Parties. It was suggested that the ECP should consider holding video-conferencing to facilitate communication among ECP members.

21. In the wider context of implementation of the Governance Paper, and noting the ECP's biennial programme of work, it was further suggested that, when considering cross-cutting priority issues, the sustainable use of natural resources should also be considered more broadly in economic and resource productivity terms and should extend across the MAP system rather than being specifically confined to the mandate of SPA/RAC.

22. Members further recalled that the development and refinement of the mandates of the MAP components was a crucial factor in improved, coordinated management. The ECP should make preliminary proposals, including a strategic orientation, for those mandates. The terms of host country agreements were key in that respect.

23. The Bureau agreed with the ECP proposal that the functions of the BP/RAC and INFO/RAC Focal Points be merged with those of the MAP Focal Points, and the competencies and functions of the meetings of those RACs transferred to the MAP Focal Points' meeting. However, it was stressed that such a decision was contingent on the elaboration of the mandates of those Centres and that, for the current biennium, the joint meetings would be maintained.

24. The Bureau felt strongly that the role and functions of INFO/RAC, in particular, must be clarified, and notably whether in conceptual terms it should be regarded as being required to provide an information base for all countries in the Mediterranean, in which case its information and communication technology (ICT) competence and facilities were crucial, or

whether its role consisted not in developing ICT but mainly in developing programmes to assist the Secretariat in such areas as on-line reporting and enabling MAP to operate more efficiently. The Secretariat and the ECP were requested to prepare a paper on the subject for consideration by the next Bureau meeting. The Coordinator, outlining recent developments, confirmed that the status of INFO/RAC vis-à-vis the Italian authorities remained unclear.

25. The Bureau adopted the proposed criteria and procedures for the selection of MCSD members representing the academic and scientific communities, regional IGOs and eminent experts, as set out in Annex V to the present report, on the understanding that such members were to be selected primarily for their expertise and, while coming from the Contracting Parties, need not be specifically from the Mediterranean Basin as such.

26. The Bureau endorsed the terms of reference for the financial and management audit of MAP, recommending that special emphasis should be placed on results accountability, efficiency and resource productivity by developing measurable indicators.

27. In the discussion on the ECP's proposals with respect to the organization of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, several proposals were put forward regarding possible topics for discussion in the ministerial segment, principally: sustainable use of natural resources, for example in terms of spatial planning, adaptation to climate change, depollution in the Mediterranean, and the role of MAP in the newly established Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean. On the latter subject, the Coordinator informed members of a forthcoming one-day informal brainstorming session to be held with UNEP, on which he would report to the Bureau. The need for consultation with the host country of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on all matters pertaining to arrangements for that meeting, including topics for discussion, was stressed. It was agreed that, on the basis of the Bureau's comments, the ECP should prepare a set of proposals after consultation with the host country. In response to a question, the Secretariat confirmed that it had confirmation from the host country that all Contracting Parties would be able to participate at the meeting.

28. The Bureau endorsed the proposal to shorten the duration of the 16th meeting by one day, agreeing to that effect that the decisions taken at the MAP Focal Points' meeting could be adopted as a package, provided that issues pending or subject to reservations could be re-opened for discussion. Noting that the proposed dates would clash with other important international and regional meetings, in particular the United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Copenhagen, it proposed that further consultations should be held with the host country with a view to bringing the dates forward to the first week of November 2009 and that a final proposal be submitted to the Bureau at its next meeting.

29. The possibility was raised of organizing the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties and the meeting of the EuroMed environmental ministers back to back. It was pointed out that it would be difficult to hold them back to back because of the different venues of those meetings.

30. It further agreed that more efforts should be put into ensuring broader media coverage of the Meetings of the Contracting Parties, and that the ministerial segment might be complemented by round tables.

Application of the ecosystem approach

31. The Coordinator drew attention to recent developments as set out in paragraphs 41 to 48 of the progress report. The Bureau examined the results of the second meeting of experts on the ecosystem approach. It welcomed the move from a sectoral to a horizontal approach, with responsibility for application of the ecosystem approach shifted from MED

POL to the MAP Coordinating Unit, but considered that further efforts were needed to that end, in particular by ensuring that socio-economic dimensions were taken fully into account in the delivery of marine and coastal ecosystems services. Furthermore, it requested the Secretariat to ensure the involvement and cooperation of all MAP components in the implementation of the tasks decided upon at the last meeting of experts. Several members suggested that consideration should be given to the development of pilot projects on a voluntary basis, at the expense of interested Parties.

Cooperation and partnership

Cooperation with United Nations agencies, the European Union and regional initiatives

32. Introducing paragraphs 49 to 59 of the progress report, the Coordinator highlighted, inter alia, recent developments concerning the GEF Strategic Partnership and MAP relations with the OSPAR Secretariat and, in particular, with the European Union's newly established Barcelona Process – Union for the Mediterranean initiative. He noted with regard to the latter that MAP participation in the Summit establishing the Union and the preparation and distribution at the Summit of a Blue Plan report on sustainable development in the Mediterranean had been instrumental in raising MAP's profile in the region, and that the forthcoming brainstorming session with UNEP to which he had referred would further clarify MAP's role in cooperation with the Union. Members, stressing MAP's legitimacy and added value, referred to its position as an acknowledged partner in the Horizon 2020 initiative. They considered that MAP, bearing in mind the need for close coordination in order to avoid duplication, should build on that role and strengthen its participation in all relevant regional and international initiatives and programmes on the basis of its longstanding experience and comparative advantages in the field of sustainable development policies in the region.

Cooperation with NGOs, MAP partners

33. The Bureau agreed with the proposed scope and objectives of the assessment of MAP's cooperation with civil society and reconfirmed its endorsement of the participatory approach, emphasizing that priority should be given to specific proposals and actions that would improve the system as a whole and make it more effective.

Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD)

34. Following the Coordinator's presentation, Bureau members took up the question of the NSSD formulation process in four additional countries, the failure to make progress in all but one of those countries and the consequent suggestion that the financial resources contributed by the AZAHAR programme of the Spanish Agency for Development and Cooperation might be re-allocated to support other interested countries. The representative of Spain said that the AZAHAR programme had its own internal procedures for re-allocation of resources to projects previously passed and he consequently pointed out that internal process had to be completed. In order to meet the requirements of those internal procedures, he suggested that the agency might be contacted directly to ascertain the outcome of the process.

35. Several speakers stressed the need to look into the reasons for the delays in preparing national strategies and into whether further assistance could be provided to the countries concerned. What was most important, however, was to see how the strategies were being implemented across the region, and therefore to foster an exchange of experience, not only in the preparation but primarily in the implementation of NSSDs at national and local levels, and to ascertain how socio-economic actors and the private sector were involved in the process.

36. In response to queries about the distinction between the proposed Task Force and the working group on climate change, the Coordinator explained that the Task Force would be set up to steer the preparatory process for the MCSD meeting, while the proposed working group would be one of the regular working groups on thematic issues, but dealing with a theme that had thus far not been covered. The Bureau agreed to the establishment of the Task Force and of an MCSD working group on adaptation to climate change that would explore cross-sectoral issues.

37. Noting that, in the context of climate change, no specific mention was made in the proposed MCSD and working group tasks of risk assessment, it was recommended that a full analysis should be undertaken of possible risks associated with climate change in the region, which should include the identification of the most vulnerable areas, the magnitude of the risks and ways and means of addressing them at the regional, national and local levels. It was noted that some information on vulnerability to climate change was to be found in Contracting Parties' reports.

38. Bureau members observed that the topic of climate change was an important, but not the only, aspect of sustainable development, which was primarily concerned with mainstreaming environmental issues in development. It was pointed out that the work to be carried out at MAP level on climate change adaptation would help the Contracting Parties in identifying priority issues of Mediterranean concern and raising awareness about those issues at the global level. After an exchange of views, it was agreed, however, that the MAP approach to, and findings on, adaptation to climate change in the Mediterranean could make a unique contribution to the Copenhagen conference.

39. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to strengthen MCSD intersessional work by mobilizing the Steering Committee and maintaining regular contact between members.

Information and communication

40. The Bureau expressed appreciation of the Secretariat's work in the field of information and communication, but considered that further efforts were needed to improve the content of MAP website and electronic access to documents. It was commented that enhanced visibility might also help motivate the staff.

Financial, personnel and administrative matters

41. Among the points highlighted by the Coordinator in his introduction was the question of arrears in contributions due from Serbia and Montenegro. Taking into account the Contracting Parties' decision to admit Montenegro as a Contracting Party following the separation of Serbia and Montenegro, the Bureau agreed that the outstanding contribution should be written off.

42. The representatives of France and Spain announced that procedures were under way in their countries for the payment of their ordinary contributions to the Mediterranean Trust Fund.

43. The Bureau took note of the updated information provided on recruitment to the post of Deputy Coordinator and expressed the hope that the vacancy would soon be filled. In response to a concern expressed that the candidate's knowledge of French had become a secondary criterion, the Coordinator explained that the decision had been taken following

discussions with UNEP. It was agreed to revert to the requirements in the initial call for applications.

44. Concern was expressed by the representative of Israel about the findings of the mission report (document UNEP/BUR/67/3/Add.1) by the Director of the Division of Environmental Policy (DEPI) of UNEP following his two-day visit to the Athens Office in July. MAP had since its inception been recognized as a pioneering, flagship regional seas programme, and it was unfortunate to read in the report about discontent and demotivation among the staff. Teamwork and togetherness in the MAP family were to be encouraged, and the Bureau therefore agreed to a proposal to hold the next Bureau meeting at the seat of the MAP Secretariat and to set aside a special session at that meeting for dialogue with the staff as a means of expressing support and building confidence. The Coordinator observed that, in the matter of staff demotivation, the report findings were based on perception rather than reality. He added that this was the result primarily of the perception among the staff that recruitment procedures were not conducted in a transparent manner. The Coordinator assured the members of the Bureau that recruitment procedures were totally in line with the rules and regulations of UNEP.

Components

45. By way of general comment concerning reporting by MED POL and some RACs, members drew attention to some inconsistencies in the style and substance of reports and called for a clear, harmonized, truly results-based presentation of activities, showing their positive environmental impact and including budget details, in order to be able to assess components' respective functions and activities. Only on that basis, could decisions be taken on a possible re-allocation of resources which, it was suggested, should be effected in mid-term.

MED POL

46. The Bureau took note of the activities of MED POL (paragraphs 101-107 of the progress report). In reply to questions about the discrepancy between the small budget allocated to the financing of NAP implementation and the work required of countries, and about the apparent absence of information on desalination activities, the Coordinator said that he would report back on further budget details, and confirmed that desalination activities were being addressed by MED POL.

CP/RAC

47. Members appreciated the impressive range of activities carried out by CP/RAC (paragraphs 111-194). Noting that the Centre was now clearly dealing with chemicals, they pointed to possible overlap with the tasks of MED POL and the necessary synergy with other conventions and regional instruments covering the same field. The representative of Spain stressed that the potential and experience of CP/RAC would help bolster the Convention and MAP, and assured the Bureau that the significant expansion of the Centre's activities and work in areas covered by other conventions were being closely monitored by the Spanish authorities. It was noted more generally that the division of tasks among the MAP components and relations with other conventions and agreements would be examined when the mandates of the MAP components were addressed.

REMPEC

48. In their review of the activities of REMPEC (paragraphs 195-214), members of the Bureau commended the proven effectiveness and high international visibility of the Centre in preserving the Mediterranean environment.

49. The Bureau urged Contracting Parties to inform national shipowners' associations about the entry into force of the Special Area Status of the Mediterranean Sea under Annex V of the MARPOL Convention in order to comply with the new regulations coming into effect on 1 May 2009.

50. Noting that, although Contracting Parties members of the European Union were not entitled to funding under the GloBallast Partnership Project, their participation in the project was important for regional implementation, those Contracting Parties were encouraged to associate themselves with the implementation of the project. The question of enabling non-European Union Contracting Parties to benefit from the European Union's EMSA programme was also raised, and it was asked whether REMPEC had an inventory of acceptance facilities for ballast water.

51. The representative of Israel expressed Israel's interest in revitalizing the former trilateral arrangement between Egypt, Cyprus and Israel under the auspices of REMPEC.

SPA/RAC

52. In the course of the Bureau's review of SPA/RAC's activities (paragraphs 215-255), attention was drawn to the lack of funding for the SAP BIO Operational Plan and the possibility of a re-allocation of resources was raised. The Coordinator replied that funds were not available from the overall budget, but suggested that SPA/RAC might wish to prioritize its activities. In response to members' concern about the reported withholding of data for copyright reasons, he suggested that the matter should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

PAP/RAC

53. Members reiterated their interest in seeing the new ICZM Protocol enter into force rapidly. The representatives of France and Spain announced that their ratification procedures were under way.

54. Stressing the importance of PAP/RAC's role in the sustainable management of coastal zones and particularly in the implementation of the ICZM Protocol, and noting the realistic work programme outlined in paragraphs 256-282 and PAP/RAC's current funding difficulties, the Bureau agreed that the activities proposed by the expert group on ICZM should be implemented in the interim period pending entry into force of the Protocol, but considered that the necessary funding should be drawn from internal PAP/RAC sources. It was noted that the situation would be eased when the expected GEF funds became available.

55. With a view to facilitating the implementation of CAMP Morocco, the Bureau authorized the allocation to BP/RAC of funds from the MAP regular budget for 2008 for activities related to sustainability and prospective analysis. It was noted in that regard that a number of PAP/RAC's activities were carried out in conjunction with other RACs, notably BP/RAC.

BP/RAC

56. Reviewing BP/RAC's activities (paragraphs 293-302), members again drew attention to the need for greater coordination and cooperation among the MAP components and the need to define their roles more clearly. That was particularly relevant when considering BP/RAC's activities that were ostensibly to be carried out in conjunction with INFO/RAC and prompted the question whether INFO/RAC was needed at all. Such matters should be clarified by the ECP, in particular when determining the respective mandates of the Centres and considering a cross-cutting rather than a sectoral approach. The Secretariat specified as a preliminary comment that the role of BP/RAC was to produce data and that of INFO/RAC to disseminate it and make it accessible. The question of thematic issues previously carried out by PAP/RAC possibly now being duplicated by BP/RAC was also raised in that connection.

57. Following an exchange of views on the need for Blue Plan studies to provide a more specifically country-oriented breakdown of the state of the environment (SOE), the Bureau requested that, in the preparation of the SOE report, account should be taken of the Governance Paper requirement that SOE reporting should be a tool for monitoring results on the ground at the regional, subregional and possibly also national level.

58. The question of port development and the consequent impact on coastal areas was suggested as an important subject for study by BP/RAC.

INFO/RAC

59. The Coordinator, after drawing attention to the information contained in paragraphs 303 to 306 of the progress report and in the addendum, briefed the Bureau on the situation regarding INFO/RAC. Although the Italian authorities had informed the Secretariat in April that it would allocate the necessary resources to INFO/RAC to carry out its work programme for 2008 pending the transfer of its functions to a marine research institute, no funds had so far been forthcoming. The Secretariat had subsequently been informed that the institute in question had now been subsumed by another institution. As reported, a memorandum of understanding had been concluded between MEDU and INFO/RAC detailing specific activities to be conducted in 2008, and an amount of 66 000 euros allocated from the Mediterranean Trust Fund for that purpose, pending the disbursement of the agreed funds by the Government of Italy. The Secretariat was still awaiting clarifications from the Italian authorities.

60. Bureau members expressed deep concern about the current uncertain situation, which was embarrassing in terms of MAP's image and credibility and unsatisfactory in terms of continuity in MAP's programme of work. The future of information services in MAP was at stake. Some members recalled the reservations they had expressed at the time the decision had been taken to transform ERS/RAC into INFO/RAC. In the current climate of uncertainty, it could even be questioned whether the provisional budget allocation to INFO/RAC was a sound investment. Clearly the situation could not go on. While appreciating that the matter was delicate, the Bureau considered that strenuous efforts should be made to elicit a reply from the Italian authorities clarifying the situation and their intentions regarding INFO/RAC.

61. The Coordinator assured the Bureau that an official communication would be sent to the Italian authorities requesting clarification. Regarding the re-allocation of resources from one Centre to another, the transfer of funds from one budget line to another was subject to the authorization of the Contracting Parties. The amount transferred to INFO/RAC under the memorandum of understanding, which had been disbursed, was a complementary contribution for agreed specific activities.

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

62. The Bureau confirmed that its next meeting would be held in Athens, in early 2009, at suitable dates to be proposed after consultations. Another meeting would take place in May-June and a third, formal meeting held back-to-back with the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Agenda item 5: Any other business

63. No matters were raised under this item.

Agenda item 6: Conclusions and decisions

64. The meeting reviewed the draft decisions prepared by the Secretariat and adopted them slightly amended. The decisions are presented in Annex VI to this report.

65. Mr Juan Carlos Martin Fragueiro, assuming the Chair, commended the Bureau on the fruitful results of its meeting, which would be instrumental in furthering the aims of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and of MAP. The decisions taken at the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties indeed presented a challenge to all Contracting Parties. The recent developments in MAP legal instruments augured well for the future, and Spain as the Depositary State would make every effort to encourage full entry into force of all of those instruments. Outlining the main developments reported in the progress report considered by the Bureau, he said that good progress had been made on many fronts.

66. The Coordinator took the opportunity of the presence for the first time in a MAP meeting of Mr Juan Carlos Martin Fragueiro, the new General Secretary at the Spanish Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs, to express, on behalf of MAP, his thanks and appreciation to the Spanish Authorities for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to all the Members of the Bureau and the Secretariat.

67. Thanking participants, he declared the meeting closed at 2.00 p.m. on Friday 19 September 2008.

ANNEX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****SPAIN
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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work
3. Progress Report by the Secretariat on activities carried out since the last Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention
4. Date and place of the next meeting of the Bureau
5. Any other business
6. Conclusions and decisions
7. Closure of the meeting

ANNEX III

Signatures and Ratifications of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols as at 11 August 2008

Contracting Parties	Barcelona Convention 1/			Dumping Protocol 2/			Emergency Protocol 3/		New Emergency Protocol 4/	
	Signature	Ratification	Acceptance of Amendments	Signature	Ratification	Acceptance of Amendments	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification
Albania	-	30.05.90/AC	26.07.01	-	30.05.90/AC	26.07.01	-	30.05.90/AC	-	-
Algeria	-	16.02.81/AC	09.06-04	-	16.03.81/AC	-	-	16.03.81/AC	25.01.02	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-	01.03.92/SUC	-	-	01.03.92/SUC	-	-	01.03.92/SUC	-	-
Croatia	-	08.10.91/SUC	03.05.99	-	08.10.91/SUC	03.05.99	-	08.10.91/SUC	25.01.02	01.10.03
Cyprus	16.02.76	19.11.79	15.10.01	16.02.76	19.11.79	18.07.03	16.02.76	19.11.79	25.01.02	18.01.08
European Commission	13.09.76	16.03.78/AP	12.11.99	13.09.76	16.03.78/AP	12.11.99	13.09.76	12.08.81/AP	25.01.02	25.06.04
Egypt	16.02.76	24.08.78/AP	11.02.00	16.02.76	24.08.78/AP	11.02.00	16.02.76	24.08.78/AC	-	-
France	16.02.76	11.03.78/AP	16.04.01	16.02.76	11.03.78/AP	16.04.01	16.02.76	11.03.78/AP	25.01.02	02.07.03
Greece	16.02.76	03.01.79	10.03.03	11.02.77	03.01.79	-	16.02.76	03.01.79	25.01.02	27.11.06
Israel	16.02.76	03.03.78	29.09.05	16.02.76	01.03.84	-	16.02.76	03.03.78	22.01.03	-
Italy	16.02.76	03.02.79	07.09.99	16.02.76	03.02.79	07.09.99	16.02.76	03.02.79	25.01.02	-
Lebanon	16.02.76	08.11.77/AC	-	16.02.76	08.11.77/AC	-	16.02.76	08.11.77/AC	-	-
Libya	31.01.77	31.01.79	-	31.01.77	31.01.79	-	31.01.77	31.01.79	25.01.02	-
Malta	16.02.76	30.12.77	28.10.99	16.02.76	30.12.77	28.10.99	16.02.76	30.12.77	25.01.02	18.02.03
Monaco	16.02.76	20.09.77	11.04.97	16.02.76	20.09.77	11.04.97	16.02.76	20.09.77	25.01.02	03.04.02
Montenegro	-	-	19.11.07	-	-	-	-	-	-	19.11.07
Morocco	16.02.76	15.01.80	07.12.04	16.02.76	15.01.80	05.12.97	16.02.76	15.01.80	25.01.02	-
Slovenia	-	15.03.94/AC	08.01.03	-	15.03.94/AC	08.01.03	-	15.03.94/AC	25.01.02	16.02.04
Spain	16.02.76	17.12.76	17.02.99	16.02.76	17.12.76	17.02.99	16.02.76	17.12.76	25.01.02	09.08.07
Syria	-	26.12.78/AC	10.10.03	-	26.12.78/AC	11.04.08	-	26.12.78/AC	25.01.02	¹ AC-
Tunisia	25.05.76	30.07.77	01.06.98	25.05.76	30.07.77	01.06.98	25.05.76	30.07.77	25.01.02	-
Turkey	16.02.76	06.04.81	18.09.02	16.02.76	06.04.81	18.09.02	16.02.76	06.04.81	-	04.06.03

Accession = AC

Approval = AP

Succession = SUC

¹ Pending notification from Depository country

Contracting Parties	Land-Based Sources Protocol 5/			Specially Protected Areas Protocol 6/		SPA & Biodiversity Protocol 7/		Offshore Protocol 8/		Hazardous Wastes Protocol 9/	
	Signature	Ratification	Acceptance of Amendments	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification	Signature	Ratification
Albania	-	30.05.90/AC	26.07.01	-	30.05.90/AC	10.06.95	26.07.01	-	26.07.01	-	26.07.01
Algeria	-	02.05.83/AC	-	-	16.05.85/AC	10.06.95	² AC	-	-	01.10.96	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-	22.10.94/SUC	-	-	22.10.94/SUC	-	-	-	-	-	-
Croatia	-	12.06.92/SUC	11.10.06	-	12.06.92/SUC	10.06.95	12.04.02	14.10.94	-	-	-
Cyprus	17.05.80	28.06.88	18.07.03	-	28.06.88/AC	10.06.95	15.10.01	14.10.94	15.10.01	-	-
European Commission	17.05.80	07.10.83/AP	12.11.99	30.03.83	30.06.84/AP	10.06.95	12.11.99	-	-	-	-
Egypt	-	18.05.83/AC	-	16.02.83	08.07.83	10.06.95	11.02.00	-	-	01.10.96	-
France	17.05.80	13.07.82/AP	16.04.01	03.04.82	02.09.86/AP	10.06.95	16.04.01	-	-	-	-
Greece	17.05.80	26.01.87	10.03.03	03.04.82	26.01.87	10.06.95	-	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Israel	17.05.80	21.02.91	-	03.04.82	28.10.87	10.06.95	-	14.10.94	-	-	-
Italy	17.05.80	04.07.85	07.09.99	03.04.82	04.07.85	10.06.95	07.09.99	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Lebanon	17.05.80	27.12.94	-	-	27.12.94/AC	-	-	-	-	-	-
Libya	17.05.80	06.06.89/AP	-	-	06.06.89/AC	10.06.95	-	-	-	01.10.96	-
Malta	17.05.80	02.03.89	28.10.99	03.04.82	11.01.88	10.06.95	28.10.99	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	28.10.99
Monaco	17.05.80	12.01.83	26.11.96	03.04.82	29.05.89	10.06.95	03.06.97	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Montenegro	-	-	19.11.07	-	-	-	19.11.07	-	-	-	19.11.07
Morocco	17.05.80	09.02.87	02.10.96	02.04.83	22.06.90	10.06.95	-	-	01.07.99	20.03.97	01.07.99
Slovenia	-	16.09.93/AC	08.01.03	-	16.09.93/AC	-	08.01.03	10.10.95	-	-	-
Spain	17.05.80	06.06.84	17.02.99	03.04.82	22.12.87	10.06.95	23.12.98	14.10.94	-	01.10.96	-
Syria	-	01.12.93/AC	11.04.08	-	11.09.92/AC	-	10.10.03	20.09.95	-	-	-
Tunisia	17.05.80	29.10.81	01.06.98	03.04.82	26.05.83	10.06.95	01.06.98	14.10.94	01.06.98	01.10.96	01.06.98
Turkey	-	21.02.83/AC	18.09.02	-	06.11.86/AC	10.06.95	18.09.02	-	-	01.10.96	03.04.04

Accession = AC

Approval = AP

Succession = SUC

² Pending notification from Depository country

	Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol 10/	
Contracting Parties	Signature	Ratification
Albania	-	
Algeria	21.01.08	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-	
Croatia	21.01.08	
Cyprus	-	
European Commission	-	
Egypt	-	
France	21.01.08	
Greece	21.01.08	
Israel	21.01.08	
Italy	21.01.08	
Lebanon	-	
Libya	-	
Malta	21.01.08	
Monaco	21.01.08	
Montenegro	21.01.08	
Morocco	21.01.08	
Slovenia	21.01.08	
Spain	21.01.08	
Syria	21.01.08	
Tunisia	21.01.08	
Turkey	-	

STATUS OF ENTRY INTO FORCE

Legal instruments	Place and date of Adoption	Entry into force date	Place and date of adoption of amendment, if any	Entry into force of amendments
Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution, amended as Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention)	16 February 1976, Barcelona	12 February 1978		
			10 June 1995, Barcelona	9 July 2004
The Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (Dumping Protocol), amended as The Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft or Incineration at Sea (Dumping Protocol)	16 February 1976, Barcelona	12 February 1978		
			10 June 1995, Barcelona	Not yet in force
The Protocol concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency (Emergency Protocol)	16 February 1976, Barcelona	12 February 1978	—	—
The Protocol concerning Co-operation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (Prevention and Emergency Protocol)*	25 January 2002, Malta	17 March 2004	—	—

* According to paragraph 2 of Article 25, this Protocol as from the date of its entry into force (17 March 2004) shall replace the Emergency Protocol (of 1976) in the relations between the Parties to both instruments.

Legal instruments	Place and date of Adoption	Entry into force date	Place and date of adoption of amendment, if any	Entry into force of amendments
The Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution from Land-based Sources, amended as The Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol)	17 May 1980, Athens	17 June 1983		
			7 March 1996, Syracuse	11 May 2008
The Protocol Concerning Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas (SPA Protocol)	3 April 1982, Geneva	23 March 1986	—	—
The Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA & Biodiversity Protocol)**	10 June 1995, Barcelona	12 December 1999	—	—
Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil (Offshore Protocol)	14 October 1994, Madrid	Not yet in force	—	—
Protocol on the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Hazardous Wastes Protocol)	1 October 1996, Izmir	18 January 2008	—	—
Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM Protocol)	21 January 2008, Madrid	Not yet in force	—	—

** According to paragraph 2 of Article 32, this Protocol as from the date of its entry into force (12 December 1999) shall replace the SPA Protocol (of 1982) in the relationship among the Parties to both instruments.

ANNEX IV

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EXECUTIVE COORDINATION PANEL

Background

The 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Almeria, Spain 15-18 January 2008) approved the Governance Paper which provides inter alia for the setting up of an Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) to enhance accountability, collaboration and coordination across the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) system.

Mandate

Taking into account the goals and principles outlined in the Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development of the Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean adopted in 1995, and in the Governance Paper approved by the Contracting Parties at their 15th Meeting in Almeria, Spain, and considering also the terms of reference of the Regional Activity Centres as outlined in the respective Protocols or Host Country Agreements, the Executive Coordination Panel is mandated to:

1. Identify and propose to the Contracting Parties a five-year working programme highlighting the priorities and goals based on the Convention, its Protocols, the MSSD, regional thematic policies and the decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties;
2. Prepare and propose to the Contracting Parties a two-year programme of work for MAP. This programme of work shall reflect thematic priorities of MAP and identify cross-cutting issues, bearing in mind the need to ensure synergy and complementarity among MAP components. The programme of work shall also reflect the activities carried out by the various MAP components, together with the proposed budget allocations;
3. Review the status of implementation of the programme of work and budget and decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties and propose necessary measures and actions for their successful and timely implementation;
4. Ensure the effective functioning of the MAP information system;
5. Act as a forum for exchanges of views on policy issues of MAP relevance and on methods and means to tackle operational issues;
6. Propose to the Bureau and to the meetings of the Contracting Parties a coherent platform for joint action and cooperation with other concerned actors and initiatives at the regional and international level.

Membership

The members of the ECP shall be the Coordinator, the Deputy Coordinator, the MED POL Coordinator and the Directors of REMPEC, BP/RAC, SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC, CP/RAC, INFO/RAC and the 100 Historic Sites programme. In the event that they are unable to attend the meetings, their deputies shall represent the members of the ECP. Other officials from the Coordinating Unit and the RACs may be invited to attend the ECP meetings.

The meetings of the ECP shall be chaired by the Coordinator and, in his absence, by the Deputy Coordinator. The Coordinating Unit shall provide the secretariat for the meetings of the ECP.

Modus operandi

The members of the ECP shall meet in principle four times a year, on dates to be agreed upon in advance. Each meeting shall last for one or two days depending on the agenda and shall be conducted in a results-driven, flexible and cost-effective manner. In the interim periods, the ECP members shall maintain constant communication among themselves, using modern telecommunication technologies.

The ECP shall meet on the premises of the Coordinating Unit in Athens and of the different Centres on a rotation basis or back to back with other MAP meetings. The secretariat of the Centre hosting the meeting of the ECP shall provide the conference facilities, including interpretation into English and French and other secretarial support. Travel and accommodation costs shall be borne by the ECP members themselves.

The ECP may establish *ad hoc* working groups on specific issues with precise terms of reference. If need be, external experts may be involved.

Reporting

The ECP shall draw up a report of its deliberations and decisions, to be written in telegraphic style, point by point. It shall be approved at the end of each meeting. The report shall then be submitted to the Bureau for information. The reports of the meetings of the ECP shall be published on the MAP website and circulated among MAP Focal Points.

ANNEX V

SELECTION CRITERIA AND METHOD OF NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES REPRESENTING NEW CATEGORIES OF MCSD MEMBERS

Background

This document is guided by the decisions made by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Almeria, Spain, 15-18 January 2008), particularly those contained in the Governance Paper that concern the MCSD composition (Decision IG 17/4).

The MCSD is a forum for debate and exchange of experience on sustainable development issues that concern all interested parties in the Mediterranean region. It would therefore be appropriate to involve the greatest possible variety of national actors in the work of the Commission, so as to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the concepts promoted by the MCSD.

In addition to representatives of the Contracting Parties, local authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and socio-economic stakeholders, three new categories have been agreed upon, representing:

- the scientific community;
- intergovernmental organizations working in the field of sustainable development;
- eminent experts specializing in the topics on the MCSD meeting agenda.

In order to implement the decision, the Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat to propose to the Bureau of the Contracting Parties for approval, following prior consultation with the MAP Focal Points and MCSD members, the criteria and procedures for the selection of the MCSD members from the academic and scientific community, the intergovernmental organizations and eminent experts as provided for in the Governance Paper.

As indicated in the Almeria report, in determining the proposed criteria and procedures for the selection of representatives of the new categories, efforts should be made to ensure participation of representatives from both the environmental and the development sectors related to the topics on the agenda of each meeting of the MCSD, and also to ensure appropriate geographical representation, and media participation, as requested by the Contracting Parties.

1. Criteria

General criteria

- *Have a broad vision and a Mediterranean focus;*
- *Represent or be an active member of a national or Mediterranean network or knowledge community;*
- *Have relevant expertise in issues of importance to the MCSD, including priority areas and cross-cutting issues;*
- *Be active in the field of sustainable development;*
- *Be willing to share and exchange with other members their expertise and experience, on the occasion of MCSD meetings and during intersessional periods (e.g. through contribution to specific working groups);*

- *Be willing to engage in MSSD implementation in their domain of influence;*
- *Have an explicit interest and effective involvement in Mediterranean activities.*

Specific criteria for the scientific community

- *Be the author of a significant list of publications in domains that are relevant to the MCSD work programme and MSSD priority areas of action: energy and climate change; information and communication; integrated coastal management; management of water demand, marine pollution; sustainable development indicators; sustainable tourism; sustainable agriculture; urban development;*
- *Be familiar with the MAP programme of work and activities;*
- *Be familiar with the Barcelona system;*
- *Have contributed or contribute consistently to increased understanding of environmental, social or economic issues at stake in the region through collaborative action-oriented research or teaching.*

Specific criteria for intergovernmental organizations working in the field of sustainable development

- *Be engaged in significant regional or country-level programmes of relevance to the MCSD work programme and MSSD priority areas of action;*
- *Be involved in regional or subregional cooperation frameworks, facilities, policies or financial mechanisms.*

Specific criteria for eminent experts

- *be distinguished Mediterranean personalities recognized in the environmental, social or economic domains;*
- *have recognized policy influence at the regional or country level;*
- *entertain connections with decision makers and policy leaders.*

2. Methods of nomination

In the selection process for the categories "scientific community" and "eminent expert", the principle of balanced geographical representation between the North, South, East and West will be carefully respected.

Scientific community

The representatives of the scientific community will be selected on the basis of proposals made by the MAP components and partners that transmit the candidatures to the Secretariat of MAP. Spontaneous candidatures may also be solicited and considered by the Secretariat.

Intergovernmental organizations

The representatives of the intergovernmental organizations will be selected through proposals made by the Secretariat of MAP that will solicit candidatures directly.

Eminent experts

Cooptation will be encouraged among the Contracting Parties. Expressions of interest will be solicited directly by the MAP Secretariat.

ANNEX VI

DECISIONS

1. Legal component

1.1 Status of ratification and entry into force

1. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to speed up the ratification process for all MAP legal instruments and, in particular, take all necessary action towards ratifying the new ICZM Protocol with a view possibly to having it in force by the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties.
2. The Bureau invites Spain in its capacity as Depositary to approach through diplomatic channels those Contracting Parties which have not yet accepted the 1995 amendments to the Convention and its related amended or new Protocols to do so, and requests the Secretariat to provide any assistance to them for that purpose upon request.

1.2 Promoting implementation and compliance

Compliance

With the view to ensuring full effectiveness of the work of the Compliance Committee and in conformity with decision IG.17/2 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, and after reviewing the conclusions of the first meeting of the Compliance Committee, the Bureau recommends the following:

1. In order to ensure a quorum at meetings of the Compliance Committee, all alternate members, as well as members, shall be invited to attend such meetings and when constituting a quorum the members and alternate members should be considered on the basis of each respective group as a whole.
2. Only the individuals elected by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties as members and alternate members of the Compliance Committee shall attend its meetings in such a capacity.
3. In accordance with paragraph 13 of the compliance procedures and mechanisms contained in the Annex to Decision IG.17/2 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, any other participant in the meetings of the Compliance Committee shall have the status of observer.
4. Although the session at which the findings, recommendations and measures of the Compliance Committee with respect to a non-compliance situation of a concerned Party is normally closed, the Committee should develop criteria on the basis of which a concerned Party may be invited to attend that session.
5. If a member or alternate member of the Compliance Committee resigns or is otherwise unable to complete his or her term of office, the Party which nominated that member or alternate member shall nominate a replacement to serve for the remainder of that member's or alternate member's mandate, subject to endorsement by the Bureau of the Contracting Parties.

6. Any amendments to the rules of procedure of the Compliance Committee adopted by consensus by the Committee shall be submitted for consideration and adoption by the Bureau, subject to endorsement/validation by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.
7. Mr. Abdelaâli Beghoura, a national of Algeria, is endorsed as alternate member of the the Compliance Committee for a full term.
8. The Secretariat should communicate with Lebanon in order to ensure that its candidate as alternate member of the Compliance Committee for half a term is proposed to the next Bureau meeting for endorsement.

MAP reporting system

1. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to submit their national reports on measures taken for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols for 2006-2007 according to the format adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.
2. The Bureau calls upon INFO/RAC to ensure that MAP's new on-line reporting system design is fully compatible with other information reporting systems operating in the region under various international or regional organizations, and to proceed on time and make it operational on line by the end of December 2008, in order for the Contracting Parties to submit their reports on line by February 2009 at the latest.

2. Institutional arrangements and coordination

1. Acknowledging the usefulness of the Governance Paper and in particular the establishment of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) as an important management body, the Bureau adopts the terms of reference for the ECP and recommends that its President attends the ECP meetings.
2. In accordance with decision IG.17/5 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the Governance Paper, the Bureau adopts the criteria and procedures for the selection of MCSD members representing the academic sector and the scientific community, regional IGOs and eminent experts, contained in Annex V to this report, as amended.
3. The Bureau endorses the terms of reference for the financial management audit of MAP, suggesting that special emphasis should be placed on MAP results accountability, efficiency and productivity by defining measurable indicators.
4. The Bureau welcomes the proposals of the ECP with respect to the organization of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, in particular:
 - a) The following topics could be considered by the ECP with a view to preparing a final proposal for the consideration of the next Bureau meeting:
 - Sustainable use of natural resources
 - Adaptation to climate change
 - Depollution of the Mediterranean
 - The role of MAP in the newly established process of the Union for the Mediterranean;

- b) With the view to shortening the duration of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, the proposed decisions could be adopted en bloc provided that no issues are pending from the meeting of the MAP Focal Points;
5. The Bureau recommends that the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties might be held in the first week of November 2009. The Secretariat and the host country should further consult on the dates for a final proposal for submission to the next meeting of the Bureau.
 6. The Bureau welcomes the proposal of the ECP that the functions of the BP/RAC and INFO/RAC Focal Points be merged with those of the MAP Focal Points, as well as to transfer the competencies and functions of the meeting of those RACs Focal Points to the MAP Focal Points meeting. However that proposal should be considered in close conjunction with the exercise to be carried out by the ECP on the elaboration of mandates for those MAP components. Only on that basis should a decision be taken on the matter.
 7. The Bureau reconfirms that for this biennium the meeting of BP/RAC, INFO/RAC and PAP/RAC Focal Points should be held as per usual practice.
 8. The Bureau requests the Secretariat and the ECP to prepare a paper defining the role and functions of INFO/RAC for consideration by the next Bureau meeting.

3. Application of the ecosystem approach

1. The Bureau considers that there is still a need for reorientation of the work done so far by following a more horizontal approach, and in particular, by making sure that the socio-economic dimensions of marine and coastal ecosystems services are taken fully into account in the application of the ecosystem approach by MAP.
2. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to ensure the participation, cooperation and involvement of all MAP components in the process of the implementation of the tasks that have been decided upon at the second meeting of experts on the ecosystem approach, held in Athens, Greece on 9-10 July 2008.

4. Cooperation and partnership

1. The Bureau appreciates that the substantial role of the Mediterranean Action Plan in the EuroMed Horizon 2020 Initiative is fully recognized. It also recommends that MAP should strengthen its active participation in the Barcelona Process - Union for the Mediterranean initiative on the basis of its longstanding experience and comparative advantages in the field of sustainable development policies in the region.
2. The Bureau agrees with the proposed scope and objectives of the assessment of the cooperation of MAP with civil society as well as its participatory approach. In particular, priority should be given to the elaboration of proposals and actions that would improve the whole system and make it more effective.

5. Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development

1. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to strengthen the MCSD intersession work by mobilizing the Steering Committee and maintain regular communication between members.
2. The Bureau recommends that the Secretariat facilitates an exchange of experience gathered in the region not only in the preparation of NSSDs but primarily in their implementation at national and local levels, and in particular how socio economic actors and the private sector are involved in the implementation of sustainable development policies.
3. The Bureau is in favour of the establishment of a Task Force to prepare the next MCSD meeting that will emphasize adaptation to climate change, and of the establishment of an MCSD working group on climate change that would explore cross-sectoral issues.
4. The Bureau recommends that the MCSD undertake a full analysis of possible risks associated with climate change in the Mediterranean region, including the identification of the most vulnerable areas, the magnitude of the risks and necessary measures and actions to be taken at the regional, national and local levels in this regard.

6. Information and communication

The Bureau, while appreciating the work done by the Coordinating Unit in the field of information and communication, requests the Secretariat to step up its efforts to improve the MAP website and the access to the documents.

7. Financial, personnel and administrative matters

Taking into account the decision of the Contracting Parties to admit Montenegro as a Contracting Party following the separation of Serbia and Montenegro, the Bureau agrees that the outstanding contribution of 36000 euros from Serbia and Montenegro to the Mediterranean Trust Fund be written off.

COMPONENTS

1. REMPEC

1. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to inform the national shipowners associations about the entry into force of the Special Area Status of the Mediterranean Sea under MARPOL Annex V in order to comply with the new regulations coming into effect on 1st May 2009.
2. The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties, members of the European Union, to associate themselves in the implementation of the Globallast partnership project in order to achieve the goal of a regional implementation.

2. PAP/RAC

1. The Bureau agrees that the activities proposed by the expert group on ICZM held on 18-19 June 2008, in Split, Croatia, are implemented in the interim period until the Protocol enters into force provided that the necessary funds are drawn from internal PAP/RAC sources.
2. The Bureau authorizes the Secretariat to allocate 10 000 euro from its regular budget for 2008, to Blue Plan for carrying out activities related to sustainability and prospective analysis in respect of CAMP Morocco.

3. Integrating Environment and Development (Blue Plan)

The Bureau requests the Secretariat and MAP components, when preparing the State of the Environment report for the Mediterranean to take fully into account the requirement of the Governance Paper that considers SOE reporting as a tool to monitor results on the ground at regional, sub/regional and possibly at national level.

4. INFO/RAC

The Bureau requests the Secretariat to approach the Italian authorities on the issue of INFO/RAC in order to clarify the situation and their intention vis à vis the Centre.

OTHER MATTERS

1. With a view to ensuring a more harmonized reporting by the MAP components, for the preparation of the progress report on activities to the Bureau meetings, the Bureau requests the Coordinator to address this issue at the ECP meeting.
2. The next meeting of the Bureau will be held at the seat of the Coordinating Unit in Athens at the beginning of 2009.



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



UNEP/BUR/68/4
18 March 2009
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

Athens, Greece, 10-11 February 2009

REPORT

**OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT
AND THE COASTAL REGION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND ITS PROTOCOLS**

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Introduction

1. The 68th meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was held, following the decision taken at the previous Bureau meeting, at the Hotel Crowne Plaza, Athens, on 10 and 11 February 2009.

Participation

2. The meeting was chaired by Mr Jose Buceta, Head of the Marine Environment Protection and Pollution Prevention Division, Directorate General for the Sustainability of the Coast and the Sea, Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain. The following members of the Bureau attended: Ms Odile Roussel, Deputy-Director for the Environment, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (France) (Vice-President), Mr M. Abdelfetah Sahibi, Head of the Division for International Cooperation, Secretariat of State for Water and Environment, Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Directorate of Partnership, Communication and Cooperation (Morocco) (Vice-President), Mr. Nouredine Ben Rejeb, Director General, and Mr. Habib Ben Moussa, Director, at the National Agency for Environment Protection, Agence Nationale de Protection de l'Environnement (Tunisia) (Vice-President), Ms Valerie Brachya, Senior Deputy Director General for Policy and Planning, and Ms Ayelet Rosen, Acting Director, Division of International Relations, Ministry of the Environment (Israel) (Rapporteur).

3. The meeting was also attended by Ms Jacqueline Alder, Coordinator of the Marine Ecosystem and Coastal Branch (MECB) of the Division for Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

4. Mr Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, and Ms Tatjana Hema, MEDU Programme Officer, represented the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP).

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

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

6. The meeting was opened by Mr Jose Buceta Miller, Head of the Marine Environment Protection and Pollution Prevention Division, Directorate General for the Sustainability of the Coast and the Sea, Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain. Welcoming recent developments in MAP legal instruments, he stressed the efforts of the Spanish Government, as Depositary of the Convention and its Protocols, to achieve their ratification and entry into force and to promote implementation of their policies nationally and internationally. It was hoped that the new Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) would enter into force by the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

7. Among the activities and issues covered in the Progress Report by the Secretariat on activities carried out since the last meeting of the Bureau, he drew particular attention to the implementation of the Governance Paper, improving the visibility, transparency and efficiency of the MAP system and its components, the important role of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP), the template for a Host Country Agreement for the Regional Activity Centres (RACs), the impact of climate change on the Mediterranean environment, cooperation and participation in regional projects, particularly MAP's relationship with the Union for the Mediterranean, the work of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) and the implementation of national strategies for sustainable

development (NSSDs), and the crucial activities of the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) and MED POL.

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

8. Following a request for clarification of the position on the agenda of a number of matters not specified in the provisional agenda before the Bureau, the Coordinator explained that most of those matters would be discussed under the relevant chapters in the progress report. Regarding a special session for dialogue with the MAP staff that had been requested by the Bureau and was the reason why the Bureau had decided to meet in Athens, the Coordinator stated that he had raised this matter with the Director of DEPI and was advised that personnel matters should be dealt with by UNEP, not by the Contracting Parties.

9. The meeting adopted the agenda (UNEP/BUR/68/1) and the organization of work set out in the annotated agenda (UNEP/BUR/68/2). The agenda is attached as Annex II to the present report.

Agenda item 3: Progress report by the Secretariat on activities carried out during the period July – December 2008 and specific issues (UNEP/BUR/68/3 and Add.)

10. The Coordinator introduced the sections of the progress report dealing with the legal component, implementation and compliance with obligations, including reporting, and the development of effectiveness indicators.

Legal component: status of ratification and entry into force

11. The Coordinator reported on efforts made to promote ratification and entry into force of MAP legal instruments, referring in particular to the ICZM Protocol, which required only six ratifications to enter into force. An interesting example of a Contracting Party initiative had been the meeting hosted by France in Nice in December 2008 to promote the ICZM Protocol. The Bureau called upon Contracting Parties to speed up the ratification process for all MAP instruments, in particular the new ICZM Protocol. The success of the Nice meeting was applauded by Bureau members, and members representing France, Tunisia and Morocco reported that ratification procedures for that Protocol were under way in their countries, which gave cause for optimism that the Protocol might enter into force by the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties. It was noted that the European Commission (EC) on behalf of the European Community had signed the Protocol in December 2008. As a way of inducing Contracting Parties that had not yet ratified the legal instruments to do so, it was suggested that the Depository country might send a periodic letter, annually or biennially, informing Contracting Parties of the status of ratification and entry into force of the Convention and its Protocols. The Bureau further requested the Secretariat to provide assistance and support for ratification to any Contracting Party that so requested.

Implementation, compliance and reporting

12. Following the introduction by the Coordinator of the relevant sections of the progress report, members stressed the crucial importance of effective implementation and hence the significance of effectiveness indicators in determining what had been achieved. The Bureau invited the Contracting Parties to participate actively in the consultation process for finalizing the set of effectiveness indicators that had been developed. Emphasizing the need for a coherent set of environmental indicators, it welcomed the information that the indicators will be further developed in coordination with the Horizon 2020 initiative and the GEF Project,

and further recommended coordination with the European Environment Agency (EEA) in that connection. Members were informed by the representative of UNEP that, with a view to harmonizing reporting systems, the forthcoming UNEP General Assembly would be discussing national, regional and global reporting frameworks for assessing the marine environment. That exercise could provide guidance to MAP for Contracting Parties to report on their performance in a wider context. Bureau members further requested that there should be a clearer differentiation between general performance indicators and specific results-based indicators in order to assess concrete achievements on the ground, pointing out that the overriding objective was to effectively improve the environmental status of the marine and coastal area of the Mediterranean. Some concern was expressed about the lack of technical means in some countries to effect measurements in response to indicators, and it was agreed that assistance should be available to those in need.

13. Bureau members expressed satisfaction that the on-line reporting system was now operational and hoped that that would speed up the submission of reports. Noting the low rate of return, they called upon Contracting Parties to submit their 2006-2007 implementation reports by the extended deadline of 15 March 2009, possibly on line. Reports from some Contracting Parties about what appeared to be uncoordinated requests for data from various MAP sources prompted the Bureau to recommend that the Secretariat and the RACs should harmonize the reporting exercise, particularly in terms of timing, in order to avoid any unnecessary duplication of work. By way of general comment, it was pointed out that failure to comply with reporting obligations or to make data available had wider implications in terms of non-compliance and liability and compensation, for which mechanisms were now in place. However, as the Coordinator stressed, the purpose of establishing the various reporting and compliance mechanisms was not to "name and shame", but to help Contracting Parties comply with their obligations.

14. In connection with the membership of the Compliance Committee, the Coordinator reported that the Lebanese authorities had given assurances that its alternate member would soon be designated.

Liability and compensation

15. Following the presentation by the Coordinator of progress in the implementation of the MAP/Barcelona Convention liability and compensation Guidelines and the update on the main outputs of the third meeting of the Working Group on Liability and Compensation, contained in the addendum to the progress report, the Bureau took note of the Working Group's conclusions. In response to the Secretariat's request for a mandate to proceed with work on implementing the Guidelines, the Bureau invited Contracting Parties that had not yet replied to the questionnaire to do so by the agreed deadline in order to ensure that the assessment report was as comprehensive as possible before submission to the Parties. Having noted that there was no need for another meeting of the Working Group but that further work on the implementation of the Guidelines was needed, including capacity-building and studies, it agreed that the funds allocated for such a meeting would be used to provide assistance to Contracting Parties at their request for related activities. The representative of Israel stated that her country had reservations on the proposed Guidelines, which provided for a very different liability and compensation regime from that in force in her country.

Institutional arrangements and coordination

Implementation of the Governance Paper

16. Bureau members, while welcoming the preparation of a draft model Host Country Agreement (HCA), observed that the HCA and the mandates of the RACs, which were closely linked, should not be too restrictive but should allow for initiative and innovative

action. The HCA should be flexible enough to enable the RACs to engage in activities not strictly confined to the MAP system but relating, for example, to other regional or international environmental conventions, for reasons of added value and funding. In any event the model was but a first draft and would require examination at the national level, with Contracting Parties' comments taken into account in the final version.

17. The draft mandates of the MAP components, set out in document UNEP/BUR/68/Inf.4, prompted a number of comments. It was pointed out that there were significant discrepancies between the mandates as drafted, including the core principles common to all components, and the strategic vision and Strategy Declaration prepared by the Working Group of the Contracting Parties established by the Extraordinary Meeting of MAP Focal Points held in Catania in 2006 and the principles and requirements of the Governance Paper. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to revise the draft mandates and core principles to bring them into line with those documents.

18. Bureau members acknowledged the specificity of the components' tasks, linked as they were to the respective legal instruments for which they were responsible, but drew attention to the unduly restrictive concept of the mandates; to the lack of a holistic, integrated vision, with the attribution of certain tasks to one component that should more properly be assigned to another; to the need in general for a clearer statement of outputs and, in the case of BP/RAC, for a more focused presentation of tasks; and to the absence of a draft mandate for INFO/RAC. Another matter raised was the question of inadequate coordination among national Focal Points, which might be resolved by merging the functions of the BP/RAC and INFO/RAC Focal Points with those of the MAP Focal Points.

19. The Coordinator assured members that those comments would be taken up by the ECP and with the respective components. In response to questions about the meaning of the "differentiated approach" adopted by MED POL, he explained that it did not apply to the obligations under a Protocol, but to the timeframe for compliance. The drafting of a mandate for INFO/RAC had been kept on hold pending a final decision by the competent Italian authorities on the status of the centre.

20. The Bureau considered that both the components' Focal Points and the MAP Focal Points should be involved from the outset in drafting the mandates in order to ensure that both the individuality of the components and effective integration among them were taken into account.

21. The Bureau noted that its recommendation that the President of the Bureau should attend ECP meetings had not been followed up and requested the Secretariat to ensure that an invitation to attend was extended to the President in future. The President expressed his interest in participating in the ECP meetings. The Coordinator informed the Bureau that the ECP had expressed reservation about this decision because the President had a political role while the ECP was a management meeting.

22. The Bureau pointed out the absence of the all-important theme of biodiversity from the main themes selected for the five-year strategic programme of work. It should feature as a central, separate area of work and not be subsumed under climate change or resources.

Organization of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties

23. The Bureau agreed with the proposed dates of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties: 4-6 November 2009 and further agreed with the proposed calendar of the other main institutional meetings of MAP in 2009. The representative of Tunisia observed with regret that the dates of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties coincided with elections in his country. The representative of Morocco confirmed that all Contracting Parties would be able

to participate in the Marrakesh meeting. After a discussion on the theme of the ministerial segment, the Bureau, while acknowledging the importance of cooperation with the Union for the Mediterranean and of determining MAP's role in that regard, opted for the theme "Adaptation to climate change in the Mediterranean: challenges and experiences", for which discussions at the MCSD meeting in June 2009 would provide useful input. In addition, a suggestion was raised to consider the "greening of economy of the Mediterranean" as a possible topic for the ministerial segment of the Contracting Parties meetings in the future.

INFO/RAC

24. The Coordinator briefed the Bureau on the latest developments in the situation regarding the Italian regional activity centre (INFO/RAC) (paragraphs 39-43 of the progress report), updated by the receipt, on the previous day, of a copy of the formal agreement signed between the Italian Ministry of Environment, Territory and Sea and the Regional Department for Industry of the Sicilian Region providing for funding by the Ministry for agreed 2008-2009 activities pending the transfer of the centre's functions to the Italian Higher Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA).

25. Bureau members again expressed regret about the unfortunate situation that had arisen over INFO/RAC and stressed the continued need for a high-quality information technology system, delivered by a qualified centre, for the whole of the MAP system in order to provide all Contracting Parties, MAP and its components and the public with a sound information base. For that purpose, it recommended that a needs assessment should be carried out by the Secretariat with a view to implementing the relevant decisions taken by the Contracting Parties in Catania, Portoroz and Almeria, and in particular the Governance Paper, with regard to the information and communication component of MAP.

26. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to thank the Italian authorities for making the funding available for implementing the programme of activities approved for 2008-2009, but also to inform them that a long-term strategic plan, including a programme of work for 2010-2011, together with a draft mandate for the centre, should be prepared for consideration by the meetings of the MAP Focal Points and the Contracting Parties, scheduled respectively for July and November 2009.

Auditing and financial management

27. The Bureau recommended that preparation of the Financial and Management Audit Report should be expedited and that the final report should be circulated without delay to Bureau members and be placed on the agenda of the next Bureau meeting. The representative of UNEP said that the audit was being taken very seriously by UNEP, that discussions had been held with officers in various MAP services and that UNEP saw the exercise as an opportunity to improve the performance of MAP.

Application of the ecosystem approach

28. The Coordinator, reviewing progress made in applying the ecosystem approach throughout MAP and in following up the recommendations of the Bureau at its previous meeting, drew attention in particular to the meeting of all MAP components held in Split in September 2008, to the endorsement of that meeting's conclusions by the third ECP meeting and to agreed EC funding for the relevant activities. He added, in response to a question, that a replicable pilot exercise was to be launched. The Bureau expressed gratitude to the EC for the allocation of funds and urged all Contracting Parties to participate actively in implementation. It also requested UNEP/DEPI to assist MAP in that process and received

assurances from the representative of UNEP that it could assist MAP in that project and could also offer capacity-building.

Cooperation and partnership

29. Following the Coordinator's presentation of cooperation with United Nations agencies, the European Union (EU) and regional initiatives (paragraphs 54-73 of the progress report), emphasis was placed on MAP's continued and strengthened involvement in, more particularly, UNEP's Regional Seas programmes, the GEF Project's Mediterranean initiative and EC initiatives. Among the latter, the Union for the Mediterranean recently established by the European Union, the Horizon 2020 initiative and the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive provided signal opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation and synergies.

30. The Bureau, noting the policy paper on MAP/civil society cooperation (UNEP/BUR/68/3/Add.), agreed to give its views and advice to the Secretariat by mid-March 2009 on the policy paper which, revised accordingly, would be submitted to MAP Partners and the MAP Focal Points and re-submitted to the Bureau for further consideration at the next Bureau meeting. By way of preliminary comment, members considered that the paper, which was somewhat administrative and legalistic in tone, should make it clear how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should be actively involved and harnessed to help promote and improve the environment in the Mediterranean. Their benefit to MAP should be a prime consideration. The important role of NGOs as relays at the national level was also stressed, as was the question of criteria for admission as a MAP Partner. The idea of preparing a charter of rights and responsibilities or a code of conduct for the MAP Partners was viewed favourably.

Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD)

31. With regard to the NSSD formulation process, the Bureau noted that little progress had been made in the first three of the four countries benefiting from AZAHAR funding – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon and Tunisia – and encouraged those three countries to embark on the development of their NSSDs. Regarding the studies launched on adaptation to climatic change in anticipation of the theme of the next MCSD meeting, one member remarked that it might be judicious to conduct such studies in countries which did not yet have NSSDs.

32. After a discussion regarding membership of the Commission representing the three new categories, it was recommended that the nomination procedure should be re-opened, with the deadline extended until the end of April 2009 in order to consider other candidates fulfilling the criteria approved at the 67th meeting of the Bureau and possessing expertise in climate change adaptation which is the theme of the MCSD meeting. In order to enable the nominated experts to participate in the June MCSD meeting, they would be approved by the Bureau following consultation by electronic means. The Bureau approved the nominations for the IGO category.

Information and communication

33. Noting the promotional activities carried out in Greece, the Bureau encouraged the Secretariat to pursue such activities to create awareness about the Convention and its Protocols, with assistance provided to the Parties at their request. It noted with pleasure the offer by Bosnia and Herzegovina to host such an event.

Financial, personnel and administrative matters

34. The Coordinator updated the Bureau on the post vacancies regarding the Deputy Coordinator of MAP, now down to two short-listed candidates, and the GEF Project Management Unit, for which interviews were scheduled the following day. Regarding the Programme Budget of MAP, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to submit to it at its next meeting a breakdown of the budget allocation for MAP activities by Contracting Party, in order to ascertain the geographical balance of activities.

Components

MED POL

35. The Bureau took note of the activities of MED POL (paragraphs 121-132 of the progress report). Commending MED POL's work on monitoring and stressing the importance of monitoring for compliance, the Bureau urged Contracting Parties that had not yet established a monitoring programme to do so, and requested the Secretariat to provide financial support for that purpose if required. It further requested Contracting Parties to submit the monitoring data by the required deadlines, and in that connection emphasized the importance of measuring the effectiveness of implementation at the national level.

36. Ongoing work by MED POL on the development of indicators was welcomed as a crucial tool for focused monitoring, and further cooperation with other regional initiatives was encouraged.

37. Bureau members were reluctant to commit funds for a possible additional meeting of experts to finalize the text of the action plans and programmes required by article 15 of the LBS Protocol, but agreed that, if need be, an additional day would be added to the MED POL Focal Points' meeting to resolve any pending issues and finalize the text for approval by the MED POL Focal Points.

38. The Bureau requested that MED POL prepare and submit to the next Bureau meeting a paper clarifying the meaning of the proposed "differentiated approach", being of the view that the application of such an approach should relate to the timeframe only where that was strictly necessary for implementation and should not compromise the achievement of the overriding goal of reducing pollution in the Mediterranean. The Coordinator again confirmed that the proposed "differentiated approach" referred to the timeframe.

39. Following a discussion about whether MED POL was best fitted among MAP components to conduct activities relating to the pollutant resource and transfer register (PRTR), since PRTR related to all pollutants and wastes and not only releases to the marine environment, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to discuss at the next ECP meeting the issue of the handling by MAP components of PRTR-related activities. It was suggested that those tasks might more appropriately be entrusted to CP/RAC. The Coordinator pointed out that MED POL had a mandate to carry out those tasks under the MED POL Phase IV programme.

40. Several members advocated further work on the effects of desalination-related activities in the light of the water shortage in Mediterranean countries and the growth of such activities.

41. The Bureau approved the preparations for the Marine Litter Management Strategy, for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points. It further considered that MED POL should play an important role in developing the indicator on marine litter, considered a good

environmental status indicator, in the framework of implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

CP/RAC

42. The Bureau took note of CP/RAC's activities as presented in the progress report (paragraphs 133-154) and introduced by the Coordinator. In response to a question, members were informed that CP/RAC was carrying out activities within the SAICM framework for the sustainable management of chemicals.

REMPEC

43. The Bureau took note of REMPEC's activities as reported in the progress report (paragraphs 160-181) and outlined and updated by the Coordinator. He informed members, inter alia, that a solution had been found to the problem raised at the previous Bureau meeting about the non-eligibility of some countries for the GloBallast Partnerships project: the project would now also be open to participation by countries other than GEF-eligible countries. Noting that the return rate on questionnaires sent to Contracting Parties by REMPEC was very low, the Bureau requested the REMPEC Focal Points to do their utmost to ensure that the questionnaires in respect of preparedness and response (shoreline, clean-up assessment, waste management, sunken oil) were completed and sent back to REMPEC.

SPA/RAC

44. The Bureau took note of the activities of SPA/RAC as contained in the progress report (paragraphs 187-225) and presented by the Coordinator. Satisfaction was expressed with the work achieved. It was suggested that, in discussions on the effects of climate change on biodiversity, SPA/RAC might look into the impacts on biodiversity of action suggested for greenhouse gas reduction. Regarding invasive species, several members suggested that SPA/RAC might concern itself with jellyfish invasions, a major problem in the waters of many Mediterranean countries, especially in regard to tourism. The representative of Tunisia said that SPA/RAC had conducted some studies on the subject and would be asked to make that information available. In response to a question about long-term monitoring, he confirmed that such monitoring was in progress. Another member, recalling the recommendation in the Almeria Declaration about the need to put in place a coherent network of marine protected areas by 2012, noted some advances reported in the progress report, but expected to see more specific action taken in response to that recommendation. The Coordinator explained that the project would be launched shortly as soon as GEF Project funds were available and the project management was in place.

PAP/RAC

45. Noting PAP/RAC's activities as contained in the progress report (paragraphs 226-235) and introduced by the Coordinator, the Bureau welcomed the information that PAP/RAC had now received the funds to proceed with the SMAP Project. Bureau members asked if the position paper on financing sustainable development in coastal areas, referred to in paragraph 233 of the report, could be made available for information. In response to a question about the lack of sufficient funding of PAP/RAC's activities, which had given cause for concern, the Coordinator explained that no funding had been provided for in the previous budget because the ICZM Protocol had not yet been approved, and that GEF funding for capacity-building in the context of the CAMPs would be available once the GEF Project was launched.

46. In response to a question about delays in CAMP Morocco, the Coordinator responded that progress had been made and that he would report back on specific action.

Bureau members further requested that PAP/RAC make background information and promotional materials available to Contracting Parties to enable them to prepare for activities to celebrate Coastal Day.

47. The Bureau took note of the progress made in Spain, reported by the President speaking as representative of Spain, on the appointment of the General Coordinator of CAMP Levante de Almeria and requested Spain to finalize the process as soon as possible.

BP/RAC

48. Reviewing Blue Plan's activities as contained in the progress report (paragraphs 236-259) and introduced by the Coordinator, the Bureau considered that there should have been a clearer presentation of outputs and results, noting, for example, that in the case of some objectives a budget had been allocated but no spending was recorded. Members stressed the importance for national decision-makers of receiving the results of workshops and other activities, and some reported deficiencies in that regard.

49. Noting, in the constraints reported under the section "Sustainable agriculture and rural development", the problems encountered in data collection, members again stressed the importance of reliable data produced on the basis of effectiveness indicators.

50. Attention was drawn to objective 4 – "Impact of transport in the Mediterranean", a critical issue on which little specific information was given. The Bureau requested BP/RAC and other concerned components to work together in synergy and to broaden the scope of activities related to transport to include port expansion and, as an alternative where possible, efficient use of existing port infrastructure, and the impact of such expansion on biodiversity. Under the objective "Urban mobility", it was suggested that BP/RAC might look specifically into restraining the use of the private car as well as the use of public transport. Another suggested theme for study by BP/RAC, ideally suited to its mandate, was "greening the economy".

51. Regarding the report on climate change under preparation, it was recommended that the focus should be on climate change adaptation and mitigation, as input to the MCSD and the Meeting of the Contracting Parties. The representative of France, supported by other members, drew attention to the successful outcome of the seminar on climate change held recently in Marseille, as a first step towards the debate at the MCSD and Contracting Parties meetings.

52. Members highlighted the importance of the Report on Environment and Sustainable Development and the input it would provide for the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Synergies were likewise to be expected with the European Environment Agency (EEA), which was working on a new report on the status of the Mediterranean.

INFO/RAC

53. Bureau members acknowledged that, given the situation regarding INFO/RAC, its activities in the current biennium, which it was now committed to implement, would be reported on in the next progress report. It was noted that INFO/RAC could be credited with delivering the on-line reporting system, together with a guide for its use.

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

54. The Bureau agreed that the alternative dates for the next Bureau meeting would be between 8 and 10 June or 15 and 19 June 2009, to be determined after consultations. If no

offer to host the meeting was forthcoming from a Contracting Party, the venue of the meeting would be Athens.

Agenda item 5: **Any other business**

55. No matter was raised under this item.

Agenda item 6: **Conclusions and decisions**

56. The Bureau reviewed the draft decisions prepared by the Secretariat and adopted them with some amendments. The decisions are attached as Annex III to this report.

Agenda item 7: **Closure of the meeting**

57. The President commended the Bureau on the fruitful outcome of the meeting. He particularly welcomed the agreement reached on the theme of the ministerial discussion at the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties; the steps taken towards resolving the situation regarding INFO/RAC and putting in place the necessary information and communication activities to improve MAP's visibility and efficiency, including the on-line reporting system; advances made in cooperation with other United Nations agencies, the European Commission and other regional initiatives; progress made in the ratification, entry into force and ratification of the ICZM Protocol; and the work done by the MAP components. He concluded by urging support for the Bureau's decisions.

58. Ms Jacqueline Alder, representative of UNEP/DEPI, welcomed the opportunity to have attended the Bureau meeting, which had given her insights into the challenges and complexities faced in meeting the goals of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. She assured MAP of UNEP's continued support.

59. The President declared the meeting closed at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 February 2009.

ANNEX I
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work
3. Progress Report by the Secretariat on activities carried out during the period July-December 2008 and specific issues
4. Date and place of the next meeting of the Bureau
5. Any other business
6. Conclusions and decisions
7. Closure of the meeting

ANNEX III

Decisions

1. Legal component

Ratification and entry into force of MAP legal instruments

1. The Bureau calls upon the Contracting Parties to speed up the ratification process for all MAP legal instruments and especially urges them to take all necessary action towards ratifying the new ICZM Protocol with a view to its possible entry into force by the next Contracting Parties meeting.
2. The Bureau requests the Depositary country to inform the Contracting Parties of the status of ratification and entry into force of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols on a regular basis, urging Contracting Parties that have not yet ratified them to do so.
3. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to provide assistance and support for ratification to any Contracting Party on request.

Other legal issues

1. The Bureau requests the Contracting Parties to participate actively in the consultation process for the finalization of the set of effectiveness indicators with a view to its submission for approval by the meetings of the MAP Focal Points and the Contracting Parties. It also recommended that there should be a clearer differentiation between general performance indicators and specific results-based indicators in order to assess concrete achievements on the ground and their effectiveness in improving the environmental status of the marine and coastal area of the Mediterranean region.
2. The Bureau calls upon the Contracting Parties to submit their 2006-2007 reports on measures taken to implement the Convention and its Protocols according to the format agreed by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties by mid-March 2009, possibly on line. It also requests the Secretariat and the RACs to harmonize the reporting exercise, notably in terms of timing, in order to avoid any unnecessary duplication.
3. The Bureau approves that the funds allocated by the Contracting Parties under the 2009 budget for the Working Group on liability and compensation will be used to provide financial, legal and technical assistance to the Contracting Parties upon their request for activities related to the implementation of the liability and compensation Guidelines.

2. Institutional arrangements and coordination

1. The Bureau agrees that the topic for discussion at the Ministerial Segment of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties shall be "Adaptation to climate change in the Mediterranean: challenges and experiences". The choice of this theme would enable the discussions at the MCSD to serve as input for the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

2. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to revise the draft mandates of the MAP components, in particular the common introduction, by fully reflecting the strategic vision and draft Strategy Declaration prepared by the Working Group of the Contracting Parties established by the Extraordinary Meeting of MAP Focal Points, 2006, as well as the principles and requirements contained in the Governance Paper.
3. The Bureau suggests to the Secretariat and the ECP that, in elaborating the mandates of each MAP component, both the individuality of the components and the need to ensure effective and realistic integration among them should be taken into account and any overlapping avoided. For this purpose the consultation process with regard to the mandates should, from the outset, involve the MAP Focal Points and the components' Focal Points.
4. The Bureau agrees with the calendar of the main institutional meetings of MAP in 2009 as proposed by the Secretariat.
5. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to undertake a needs assessment in the field of information and communication technologies with a view to implementing the relevant decisions taken in Catania, Portoroz and Almeria, and in particular the requirements of the Governance Paper with regard to the information and communication component of MAP.
6. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to express its thanks and appreciation to the Italian authorities for making available the necessary funding to the Regional Department for Industry of the Sicilian Region – INFO/RAC for the implementation of the programme of activities approved by the Contracting Parties.
7. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to inform the Italian authorities that a long-term strategic plan, including a biennial programme of work 2010-2011, together with a draft mandate for the information and communication technologies component of MAP, should be prepared for consideration by the MAP Focal Points and the Contracting Parties meetings, scheduled respectively for July and November 2009.
8. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to circulate to Bureau members the Financial and Management Audit Report as soon as the final version is available and agrees that the question should be on the agenda of the next Bureau meeting.

3. Application of the ecosystem approach

1. The Bureau thanks the EC for allocating funds to the Secretariat in order to carry out activities for the implementation of the road map for the application of the ecosystem approach by MAP.
2. The Bureau encourages all Contracting Parties to participate actively in the implementation of the road map for the application of the ecosystem approach. It also requests UNEP/DEPI to assist MAP in this process.

4. Cooperation and partnership

1. The Bureau supports and encourages the further strengthening of MAP/EC partnership and cooperation in view of its importance in achieving necessary synergies for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. It also recognizes that MAP and Barcelona Convention experiences are very important for the European countries which are parties to the Barcelona Convention with the view to ensuring synergy and sharing experiences in the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
2. The Bureau encourages cooperation between MAP and the Union for the Mediterranean on issues related to environment protection and sustainable development in the Mediterranean.
3. The Bureau agrees to provide its views and advice to the Secretariat by mid-March 2009 on the proposed policy paper with regard to MAP/civil society cooperation. On the basis of the Bureau's suggestions, the policy paper on MAP civil society will be revised by the Secretariat and submitted for comments and discussion to MAP partners and MAP Focal Points for further consideration by the next Bureau meeting.

5. Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development

1. The Bureau encourages Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Lebanon to embark on the development of their NSSDs.
2. The Bureau approves CEDARE, UN-WTO and the World Bank (Department for sustainable development), representing IGOs, as members of the MCSD with a view to their participation at the Meeting of the Commission in Cairo in June 2009.
3. With regard to the other categories, the Bureau recommends that the Secretariat extend the deadline for the nominations until the end of April 2009 taking into consideration the criteria approved at the last Bureau meeting (BUR67) as well as the theme of the MCSD: "Climate Change Adaptation". In order to enable the nominated experts to participate at the next meeting of the MCSD they will be approved by the Bureau following consultation through electronic means.

6. Information and communication

1. The Bureau encourages the Secretariat to carry out activities to create awareness about the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and promote their ratification and entry into force. For this purpose, the Bureau requests the Secretariat to provide assistance to the Parties at their request. The Bureau notes with pleasure the offer by Bosnia and Herzegovina to host such an event.

7. Financial, Personnel and administrative matters

1. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to submit to its next meeting a breakdown of MAP activities according to geographic distribution criteria.

COMPONENTS

1. Land-based Pollution (MED POL)

1. The Bureau requests that MED POL prepares and submits to the next Bureau meeting a paper in order to clarify the meaning of the proposed differentiation approach and strongly supports the view that the application of such an approach should only relate to the timeframe where found necessary for implementation and should not compromise the achievement of the main goal with regard to pollution reduction in the Mediterranean.
2. The Bureau agrees that if need be, an additional day would be added to the MED POL focal points meeting in order to resolve any pending issues and finalize the text of the action plans and programmes required by article 15 of the LBS Protocol for subsequent approval by the meeting of the MED POL focal points.
3. The Bureau urges those Contracting Parties that have not yet established a monitoring programme to do so, and request the Secretariat to provide financial support if required.
4. The Bureau requests the Contracting Parties to submit the monitoring data according to the respective deadlines in order to measure the effectiveness of implementation at the national level.
5. The Bureau approves the preparations for the Marine Litter Management Strategy for submission to the meeting of MAP Focal Points for their consideration. It also considers that MED POL should play an important role with regard to the development of the indicator on marine litter, considered as a good environmental status indicator in the framework of the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
6. Since PRTR covers broader issues than those related to the releases to the marine environment, the Bureau requests the Secretariat to discuss at the ECP meeting the issue of the handling by MAP components of PRTR related activities.

2. Sustainable Management of Coastal Zones (Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC))

1. The Bureau takes note of the progress made in Spain on the appointment of the general coordinator of CAMP Levante Almeria and requests Spain to finalize this process as soon as possible.

3. Environment and Development (Blue Plan)

1. The Bureau requests Blue Plan and the concerned components to work together in synergy and broaden the scope of activities related to transport in order to incorporate port expansion and efficient use of the existing infrastructure and their impacts on Biodiversity.

4. Dates and venue of the next Bureau meeting

1. The Bureau agreed that the alternative dates for the next Bureau meeting would be between 8 and 10 June or 15 and 19 June 2009. If no offer to host the meeting was forthcoming from a Contracting Party, the venue of the meeting would be Athens.

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Introduction

1. At the invitation of the Government of Turkey, the 69th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols was held on 18 and 19 June 2009 at the Golden Park Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey.

Participation

2. The following members and alternate members of the Bureau attended the meeting: Mr Buceta Miller (Spain), Ms Roussel (France), Mr Benyahia and Mr Faridi (Morocco), Mr Ben Rejeb (Tunisia), Mr Kadioglu (Turkey) and Ms Rosen (Israel).

3. UNEP and the MAP Coordinating Unit were represented by Ms Jacqueline Alder, Coordinator, Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Branch, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation of UNEP, Ms Maria Luisa Silva Mejias, Officer-in-Charge and Deputy Coordinator of MAP, and Ms Tatjana Hema, MAP Programme Officer.

4. The list of participants is attached as **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

5. The President of the Bureau, Mr Buceta Miller (Spain), opened the meeting, welcomed the participants and thanked the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey for hosting the meeting. He congratulated Ms Silva Mejias on her appointment as Deputy Coordinator of MAP and extended his best wishes for the future to the former MAP Coordinator, Mr Mifsud, upon his recent retirement. He recalled that one of the principal tasks of the Bureau at its present meeting would be to prepare for the meeting in July of the MAP Focal Points and the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, to be held in November in Marrakech, Morocco.

6. Ms Silva Mejias warmly welcomed the opportunity to join the staff of MAP and undertook to serve the organization and the Parties in accordance with the highest standards of professionalism, efficiency and sincerity, in conformity with her oath of office. She emphasized the need to undertake reforms to ensure that MAP achieved greater relevance and took effective action to protect the Mediterranean as a whole. She looked forward to establishing close relations with the members of the Bureau, as well as with the Contracting Parties in general, and assured them that their guidance would of great value and would be given careful consideration. Finally, she thanked the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey for hosting the meeting and her colleagues for all their efforts in preparing for the present meeting.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work

7. The meeting adopted the agenda and annotated agenda contained in documents UNEP/BUR/69/1 and 2. The agenda is attached as **Annex II** to the present report.

Agenda item 3: Progress report by the Secretariat on activities carried out during the period January-June 2009

8. The meeting examined the Progress Report (UNEP/BUR/69/3) section by section.

Legal component

9. Ms Silva, reviewing the information contained in the Progress Report on the legal instruments, emphasized the recent entry into force of the amended LBS Protocol and the

Hazardous Wastes Protocol. She indicated that one additional country (Lebanon) had accepted the amendments to the Barcelona Convention, pending notification of its acceptance by the Depositary. Several countries had also indicated that the procedures for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol were well advanced and it was hoped that the Protocol would enter into force in 2010. With regard to compliance mechanisms and procedures and the strengthening of the reporting system on the implementation of the Convention, she outlined the issues that required particular attention by the Bureau. These included the relationship between the Compliance Committee and the meeting of MAP Focal Points with regard to the former's decisions and recommendations on situations of non-compliance by individual Contracting Parties. With reference to the reporting system, she noted the difficulties that had arisen with regard to meeting the deadline for the submission of the 2006-07 reports on the measures taken to implement the Convention and its Protocols. The fact that eight Contracting Parties had not yet submitted their reports made it difficult for the Secretariat to prepare a regional analysis of the status of implementation in 2006-07 and to highlight any potential general situation of non-compliance for consideration by the third meeting of the Compliance Committee in October 2009.

10. Ms Roussel (France) welcomed the progress achieved recently in the ratification and acceptance of the amendments to MAP instruments. Her country was one of those in which the procedure was well advanced for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol, although the exact timing of the ratification would depend on the parliamentary schedule. She added that MAP instruments, and particularly the ICZM Protocol, had served as an inspiration to the broad and inclusive consultation processes that had been undertaken in her country, known as the *Grenelle de l'environnement* and the more recent *Grenelle de la mer*. Moreover, MAP's arsenal of legal texts was a model that could be exported to other regional seas, with particular reference to the ICZM Protocol. With regard to the failure of certain Contracting Parties to submit their 2006-07 implementation reports on time, she noted that the web-based reporting format had been put up rather late, but agreed that the delay in reporting made the work of the Secretariat more difficult.

11. Mr Ben Rejeb (Tunisia) recalled the exemplary record of his own country in ratifying MAP Protocols. The recent adoption of a Decree on the management of hazardous materials, including in the high seas, showed the importance that his country attached to compliance with the commitments deriving from these instruments. He raised the question of how the data contained in the implementation reports would be exploited by the Secretariat to ensure that useful feedback was provided to the Parties.

12. Mr Benyahia (Morocco) indicated that the ratification process of the ICZM Protocol was advancing in his country and that the national implementation report was nearing completion and would be forwarded to the Secretariat in the near future.

13. Mr Kadioglu (Turkey) explained that, following the acceptance of the amendments to the LBS Protocol by his country, plans were being made for its implementation, with priority being given first to areas near river mouths. The ratification of the ICZM Protocol by Turkey was still under discussion and the Secretariat would be invited to provide information and explanations concerning the Protocol at a meeting to be held on that subject in the next few weeks. Finally, he emphasized the need to analyse the problems faced by those countries that had not yet submitted their 2006-07 implementation reports.

14. Ms Rosen (Israel) said that her country had notified the Depositary country of its acceptance of the amendments to the LBS Protocol a few days earlier and she hoped that it would ratify and accept other Protocols soon. With regard to the Guidelines on Liability and Compensation developed by the three meetings of the Working Group on that subject, she referred to the statement made by the representative of her country at the third meeting of the Working Group in January 2009 indicating that the basic legal assumptions on which the

Guidelines were based were not in accordance with the principles that were in effect in her country.

15. The President emphasized the importance of securing the entry into force of the amended Dumping Protocol, for which a further two acceptances of the amendments to the Protocol were needed. He recalled that the process of amending the Protocol had been undertaken in parallel with that of the London Convention. It might be the case that certain Contracting Parties had ratified the London Convention but had not yet accepted the amendments to the Dumping Protocol for administrative reasons. He added that the preparations had now been completed for the submission of the ICZM Protocol to Parliament in Spain.

Institutional arrangements and coordination, application of the ecosystem approach and cooperation and partnership

16. Introducing these three subjects covered by the Progress Report, Ms Silva drew attention to the draft mandates that had been prepared for each of the MAP components, in accordance with the Governance Paper, as well as the preparation of the draft Host Country Agreement (HCA) template with the assistance of the MAP Legal Adviser. She added that the meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) had been instrumental in developing a more integrated approach to the programme of work of MAP as a whole. Moreover, it was planned to recruit a consultant to assist in the implementation of the road map for the application of the ecosystem approach and the Blue Plan had started work on a socio-economic analysis of the goods and services provided by the ecosystem and the cost of degradation of the marine and coastal environment in the region.

17. Ms Roussel (France), referring to the work carried out by MAP and its components, as well as its five-year rolling programme of work, noted the importance placed on climate change, which was evidently an essential subject and would be the focus of the next meeting of the Contracting Parties. However, she observed that climate change cut across the areas in which MAP traditionally worked and that it was also important to provide information on the specific activities carried out to implement the programme of work in all those areas so as to ensure that the focus on climate change did not result in other fields being neglected.

Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development

18. Ms Silva reviewed the preparations for the next meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), which would be held at the end of September in Cairo, as well as the progress made by the various countries in the formulation of National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs). The Secretariat had launched an overall assessment of the actions taken by Mediterranean countries for the mainstreaming of sustainable development in national policies. It had also sent out a questionnaire on adaptation to climate change, which would be the main theme of the next meeting of the MCSD, but the response had so far been disappointing, with replies being received from only seven countries.

Information and communication

19. Introducing this section of the Progress Report, Ms Silva reviewed the information and communication activities undertaken by MAP in recent months. With a view to implementing the requirement set out in the Governance Paper that the MAP Information and Communication Strategy should be updated regularly, she indicated that the Secretariat had launched an independent evaluation of the current status of MAP communication outreach and needs. She added that the delays in the implementation of the work programme of

INFO/RAC, which would be discussed later, had had an impact on the implementation of the Secretariat's communication activities.

Financial, personnel and administrative matters

20. Ms Silva provided figures on the situation with regard to the payment of contributions to the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) as at 15 June 2009, which showed that six Contracting parties had already paid their pledges for 2009. However, eight countries were still in arrears with their 2008 pledges. The total amount of arrears for 2008 amounted to €727,749.

21. Ms Roussel (France) called on UNEP headquarters in Nairobi to send out reminders for the payment of contributions earlier in the year, and in any case before the onset of the summer holiday period.

22. Mr Benyahia indicated that the necessary administrative steps had been taken for the payment of his country's contribution, which should be received in the near future.

23. The President, with reference to the selection process for the GEF Project Manager, noted that UNEP Nairobi had originally selected an expert from Australia with the necessary skills and experience profile. However, after consultation with the President of the Bureau, who had recalled the long-standing Bureau decision that all MAP personnel should be recruited from the region, the decision had been reconsidered and Mr Trumbic, former Director of PAP/RAC, had been appointed to the post.

MAP Components – Land-based pollution (MED POL)

24. Ms Hema, in reviewing the information provided on MED POL activities, highlighted the agreement reached at the meeting held in Aix-en-Provence in November 2008 concerning the implementation of the National Action Plans (NAPs) required under Article 15 of the LBS Protocol on the basis of the differentiation approach. This would help countries with lower levels of economic and technical resources to implement the Convention more easily in a manner that was more adapted to their level of economic development. It had also been decided that implementation of the Protocol should focus at first on three regional plans/programmes covering the reduction of BOD from municipal wastewater, the elimination of the substances contained in Annex I of the Stockholm Convention and the phasing out of DDT. She enumerated the assistance provided to countries to further the implementation of the Protocols covered by MED POL, namely the LBS, Dumping and Hazardous Wastes Protocols, including the establishment of national Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) systems. She further noted the cooperation with the IMO-London Convention/London Protocol Secretariat in relation to the Dumping Protocol and with the Basel Convention Regional Centre in Egypt in relation to the implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol.

25. Ms Rosen (Israel) welcomed the important role played by MED POL in recent years in combating pollution in the region. However, she recalled the concerns raised at the meeting of MED POL Focal Points concerning the legal status of a number of the instruments developed for the implementation of the LBS Protocol, including the National Action Plans (NAPs), and in particular the differentiation approach, which had simply been decided upon by a meeting of experts. One particular concern was that the objectives set in the plan for the reduction of BOD from municipal wastewater were lower than those previously promoted by MED POL.

26. During the discussion of MED POL activities, it was recalled that consensus had not been reached concerning the differentiation approach and that it could not therefore be

proposed for adoption by the next meeting of the Contracting Parties. The approach had been developed by a technical seminar, not by a legal body of MAP. Further reflection would therefore be needed, firstly by the Meeting of MAP Focal Points.

27. The members of the Bureau welcomed the support offered by the Secretariat at the national level for the development of the PRTR system and noted that this could be harmonized with the activities carried out by the Secretariat of the Basel Convention. They also drew attention to the importance of circulating the findings of the reports provided to the Secretariat so that countries were aware of what was happening elsewhere in the region, with particular reference to the pollution loads of rivers and the release of treated wastewater by certain industries. The results of regional monitoring should be published.

28. The President observed that a reporting system on this type of data had been set up under the OSPAR Convention. He also provided explanations concerning the risk assessment for CO₂ sequestration in submarine geological structures in the region, which had been requested by the last meeting of the Contracting Parties and had been launched with the financial and technical assistance of the Government of Spain. As discussed at the meeting of MED POL Focal Points, the assessment would lead to the preparation of three documents: a technical and scientific study of the principal characteristics of CO₂ sequestration, a risk assessment and draft guidelines. These documents would be discussed by a technical seminar to be held in Spain in 2010. He observed that the findings of the assessment might well raise the issue of the need to amend the Dumping Protocol, which had not yet come into force. In legal terms the amendment of an instrument that had not come into force might be difficult, but was not impossible. He added that one of the main obstacles to CO₂ sequestration in the region was likely to be the level of seismic activity. It would be possible to provide fuller information on this subject to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in November, by which time the assessment would be more advanced.

Sustainable consumption and production (CP/RAC)

29. In reviewing the full information provided in the Progress Report on the work of CP/RAC, the Secretariat focussed on the project activities carried out at the national and regional levels in such areas as eco-labelling, the creation of associations of key stakeholders in sustainable production and consumption (SCP) and the development of brand recognition through such activities as the GRECO strategy and report on green competitiveness.

30. Several general issues were raised during the discussion. It was noted that the question of corporate image should not be left entirely to the individual MAP components, although each RAC could also develop its own image within the context of MAP. The meetings of the ECP in particular offered the opportunity for a close examination of the action of the various components, although the Secretariat still needed to make further progress in the development of an integrated approach to cross-cutting issues, which was of vital importance in increasing the visibility of MAP as a whole. It was further observed that the descriptions provided of the activities of the different centres gave no indication of the priorities attached to these activities, their hierarchy in relation to the time and resources devoted to them and their respective budgetary allocations. This type of information would give a better overall vision of the activities carried out.

Sea-based pollution (REMPEC)

31. The Secretariat recalled that, as REMPEC had been the first Regional Activity Centre to hold its meeting of Focal Points (April 2009), much of the information set out in the Progress Report related to the latter half of 2008. She reviewed the assistance provided by REMPEC for the preparation and review of national marine pollution contingency plans; the

main developments in terms of cooperation with relevant bodies and programmes, with particular reference to the tools developed by the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG), for which REMPEC acted as the Secretariat; and the plans to improve the dissemination and exchange of information, including the development of a new REMPEC website, the Geographic Information System (GIS) on maritime traffic flows and related risks in the Mediterranean and the updating of the database on alerts and accidents in the Mediterranean.

32. During the discussion of REMPEC's activities and programme of work, the President, with the support of Mr Kadioglu (Turkey), suggested that, perhaps for the next biennium, there should be a reconsideration of the scope of REMPEC's activities, which were currently confined to pollution occurring at sea. There might be a case for broadening its mandate to include all activities, such as industrial plants on the shoreline that could cause pollution, particularly from oil, to the coast. Such activities were fully within the scope of the amended Convention and its Protocols, which covered the whole of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal area.

Conservation of biodiversity (SPA/RAC)

33. The Secretariat observed that SPA/RAC's activities were principally intended to give effect to the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity (SAP BIO). The main activities were focused on monitoring and the improvement of knowledge; protection and conservation of habitat and species included in the regional action plans for endangered species approved in the framework of MAP; the provision of assistance to countries for the creation of SPAs and SPAMIs, including on the high seas thanks to a project funded by the EC. Partnerships had been strengthened for the implementation of the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol, for example through the conclusion of agreements with the GFCM and IUCN-Med.

Sustainable management of coastal zones (PAP/RAC)

34. The Secretariat reported on the progress achieved by PAP/RAC in the implementation of Coastal Area Management Programmes (CAMPs) and the activities carried out to prepare the ground for the implementation of the ICZM Protocol, particularly through the development of policy approaches in a series of countries for the application of ICZM. The progress achieved in this field was illustrated by the recent adoption of a national ICZM strategy in Egypt. She recalled that PAP/RAC was working closely with other MAP components, and particularly the Blue Plan, with a view to the implementation of the ICZM Protocol and was providing active assistance for the implementation of the MSSD.

35. Mr Kadioglu (Turkey) commended PAP/RAC on its leadership in the field of ICZM. He called for more information to be shared on the large number of project activities undertaken by the Centre and on the lessons learned.

Environment and development (Blue Plan)

36. The Secretariat emphasized the key importance to MAP of the information products developed by the Blue Plan, and particularly the *Report on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean (RESD)*, which was produced every two years before the meeting of the Contracting Parties. It was crucial for this report to be successful, as it was the chief instrument through which MAP gave back to the region the information that it gathered from the Contracting Parties, among other sources. The Blue Plan was also taking the lead in the integration of climate change throughout MAP's programme of work, while its thematic activities in such fields as sustainable agriculture and rural development, tourism and water management were beginning to have a significant impact at the regional level, as

demonstrated by the role of Blue Plan for the preparation of the future Mediterranean Water Strategy.

37. Ms Alder (UNEP) emphasized the importance of the Regional Seas strategy as the framework for assessing all Regional Seas activities, including those relating to reporting on the state of the environment. Links in relation to these activities should be strengthened with such major actors as the European Union and the GEF International Waters Programme.

38. During the discussion of Blue Plan's activities, emphasis was placed on the great value of its work in informing all countries and other stakeholders on the current situation of the environment and sustainable development in the region. Further options should be explored to communicate this information more directly and in a readily understandable manner. One suggestion was the production of a short film on the RESD, although this might be costly and might not be achievable in the short term. It was also pointed out that the European Environment Agency (EEA) was preparing a report on the state of the Mediterranean, which was due to be released early in 2010. In view of the difference in the coverage of the EEA in comparison with MAP, the sources of information used would be different from those of the Blue Plan. It was therefore important to improve contacts with the EEA and develop further synergies, as it would be damaging if the conclusions of the two reports on the state of the environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean differed widely.

INFO/RAC

39. The Secretariat recalled the discussions at the previous two meetings of the Bureau concerning the difficulties experienced by INFO/RAC, which had prevented the implementation of its approved programme of work for 2008-09. She recalled that, following contacts with the Italian Ministry for Environment, Territory and the Sea, the first instalment of a revised budgetary allocation for the implementation of a reduced programme of work had been provided in May 2009. An attempt would therefore now be made to implement as much of the approved programme of work as possible, including the development by the end of the year of the online reporting system, the photo database for the MAP website and the MED POL information system. Work would also be continued on the information system for SPA/RAC and the REMPEC GIS database. A new draft mandate for INFO/RAC was being developed.

40. During the discussion, the question was raised as to whether a fuller report on the work of the Centre would be submitted to the meeting of MAP Focal Points. The Bureau raised the question as to what type of body INFO/RAC is and it was emphasized that in the same way as all other MAP components, INFO/RAC should be an independent body and not part of a governmental structure. The situation therefore needed to be fully clarified with regard to the Centre. It was also recalled that, although INFO/RAC had recently turned to new information and communication activities, it would be very useful if it could once again take up its former activities in the fields of remote sensing and teledetection, as suggested at the meeting of MAP Focal Points in Madrid two years ago.

41. In response, the Secretariat expressed the hope that INFO/RAC would now enjoy a productive future. She indicated that the Secretariat would try to obtain a fuller progress report on the Centre for submission to the meeting of MAP Focal Points. Ms Silva added that the situation of INFO/RAC was not entirely in the hands of the Secretariat and hoped that the Centre would be able to start out again with a clean sheet.

Agenda item 4: **Specific issues**

Relationship between the Compliance Committee meetings, the Meetings of the MAP Focal Points and the Contracting Parties

42. Ms Silva, introducing the *Report by the Secretariat on specific issues* (document UNEP/BUR/69/4), indicated that during the first two meetings of the Compliance Committee, which had focussed on procedural matters and the adoption of its rules of procedure, two issues had arisen. She recalled that it was normal procedure for all MAP documents to be submitted to the Meetings of the MAP Focal Points prior to being presented to the Meetings of the Contracting Parties. This would be possible for the Compliance Committee's report on general issues, covering its operation, rules of procedure, guidelines, measures and decisions on general issues of non-compliance, which could be submitted in the normal way to the MAP Focal Points. However, for reasons of sensitivity and timing, it was proposed that the Compliance Committee's report on the measures proposed in cases of non-compliance by individual Contracting Parties should be submitted directly to the Meetings of the Contracting Parties. Among other reasons, this would allow more time for the country concerned to attain a situation of compliance. It was further proposed that its reports would be submitted by the Chairperson of the Compliance Committee to the meetings of the MAP Focal Points and of the Contracting Parties, respectively.

43. The members of the Bureau agreed with the proposals outlined above. They also urged Contracting Parties that had not yet done so to submit their 2006-07 implementation reports and called on the Secretariat to commence its assessment of the information contained in these reports so that the Compliance Committee could address any general non-compliance situations at its third meeting in October 2009.

Implementation of the Governance Paper

44. Ms Silva recalled that one of the issues covered by the Governance Paper was the clarification and harmonization of the status of the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) in their host countries with a view to ensuring that they could operate more effectively and strengthening their links with the Coordinating Unit. In consultation with UNEP legal experts, a draft model host country agreement had been developed (document UNEP/BUR/69/Inf.3) and was submitted to the Bureau for its views.

45. During the discussion of this issue, emphasis was placed on the need to ensure the independence of the RACs by providing them with a common framework guaranteeing their status and autonomy of action. Many of the RACS were at present not entirely free to take action in such fields as recruitment and seeking resources. It was recalled in this respect that, while it was necessary to resolve the question of the legal status of the RACs, this was only one aspect of improving their effectiveness. The issue was also raised of whether a host country agreement was the only possibility. UNEP's legal unit preliminary views suggested that as the RACS were not fully-fledged UNEP organizations, a host country agreement was not appropriate and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) might perhaps be a more suitable instrument. Several speakers expressed doubts as to whether MoUs offered the necessary level of legal commitment to guarantee the situation of the RACS, as MoUs offered more of a political than a legal commitment and might be more susceptible to variation in the event of changes of government.

46. Ms Silva noted the clear agreement on the need to ensure the effectiveness of the RACs and to provide them with a degree of independence. She suggested that the members of the Bureau might consult their legal advisers and revert in two weeks to the Secretariat on

the issue of the host country agreement, as well as the feasibility of MoUs. Ms Alder added that any further feedback from the members of the Bureau would be reviewed by UNEP's legal advisers and that alternative legal instruments providing the necessary guarantees could be considered.

47. With reference to the draft mandates of the MAP components (document UNEP/BUR/69/Inf.4), Ms Silva indicated that, as suggested by the Bureau, the common introduction had been revised and the draft mandates had been submitted to the meetings of the respective Focal Points, and amended accordingly. She added that the sections on "Visibility" were not yet fully satisfactory and that they should be further developed.

48. With reference to the draft mandates, the members of the Bureau welcomed their combination of harmonization, specificity and flexibility, and noted that they would help to redefine the institutional architecture on which MAP depended. However, they agreed that further flexibility should be introduced to allow the integration of emerging issues and that greater emphasis should be placed on the mainstreaming of ecosystem based management. As a horizontal issue, it was also suggested that greater coherence still needed to be achieved in the management of the wealth of knowledge that had been created since the establishment of MAP; the responsibility of which belongs to the Coordinating Unit.

49. With regard in particular to the draft mandate for INFO/RAC, which was being submitted to the Bureau for the first time, the President of the Bureau recalled the importance of remote sensing and satellite images, which had formed part of the mandate of the predecessor to INFO/RAC. He also emphasized the need to enhance the exchange of information with the European Union, and particularly the EEA. He therefore proposed three additions to the draft mandate of INFO/RAC: the addition of the following text at the end of section 4(I) "Construction of a UNEP/MAP spatial data infrastructure with basic and reference environmental information and data for UNEP/MAP, its components and the Contracting Parties"; and the following two texts at the end of section 4(III) "Definition of a sustainable policy for monitoring and vigilance of the Mediterranean Sea and its coast according to the requirements and needs of UNEP/MAP and its components, compatible with the EU Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and Global Monitoring of Environment and Security (GMES) programme" and "Development of a homogenous inventory of the land occupation state in a coastal strip of 100km around the Mediterranean relating to land occupation and the characteristics of the environmental indicators in this area". He added that these ideas had been proposed at the Meeting of MAP Focal Points two years previously and that the Government of Spain had offered to collaborate in their implementation.

50. During the discussion of the draft mandate of INFO/RAC, the Secretariat was urged to consult the Italian authorities regarding the issues raised and the amendments proposed by Spain. The mandate and status of INFO/RAC would need to be discussed by the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points.

Organization of the meetings of the Focal Points of the MAP components

51. Ms Silva indicated that there had been lively discussions during the meetings of the Focal Points of the various MAP components on how best to organize such meetings in future so as to optimize the integration of their work, without losing its specificity. She recalled that MED POL, SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC and CP/RAC were entrusted with responsibility for the implementation of specific Protocols. A number of alternatives were proposed for the organization of the meetings of the Focal Points of the MAP components, namely: the holding of separate meetings for the RACs that were responsible for Protocols, together with the integration of the meetings of the Blue Plan and INFO/RAC Focal Points into the meeting of the MAP Focal Points; the holding of a joint meeting of the Focal Points of all the

components consisting of both joint sessions and of specific sessions relating to technical aspects of the implementation of the Protocols and other technical issues; and the holding of a joint meeting for all the Focal Points of the MAP components.

52. In their consideration of these proposals, the members of the Bureau recognized the dilemma inherent, on the one hand, in developing greater integration and harmonization in the work of the MAP components through joint meetings of their Focal Points and, on the other, in dealing adequately with the specific aspects of their work, particularly with regard to the implementation of the Protocols for which they had specific responsibility. It was recognized that a joint meeting would help to save time and resources and would strengthen the sharing of information and the development of synergies. If the option of a joint meeting were pursued, the question would arise of the difference between the meeting of the Focal Points of the MAP components and the meeting of the MAP Focal Points. In this respect, it was pointed out that the Focal Points of the MAP components were responsible for focussing on more technical issues, while the MAP Focal Points covered more global matters, with particular reference to budgetary issues. It was further recalled that a number of joint meetings of the Focal Points of specific MAP components had been held in the past in an attempt at rationalization. The feeling emerged from the discussion that the organization of a joint meeting of the Focal Points of all the MAP components, with separate sessions covering technical aspects, and particularly the implementation of the Protocols, would be the best solution to cover the needs of the MAP components. However, it was also emphasized that when discussing and presenting their programmes of work, the Focal Points of the components should take fully into consideration the relative priorities to be accorded to the various activities proposed.

Preparation of the five-year rolling programme of work

53. The President noted that the discussions at the meetings of the ECP on the five-year rolling programme of work had only been conclusive with regard to the programme of work on climate change, which could be submitted to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points for discussion. He emphasized the importance of concluding the process of developing the whole programme of work before the Meeting of the Contracting Parties. The Secretariat was therefore proposing that consultation sessions with the MAP Focal Points and the members of the Bureau on the rest of the programme could be envisaged by electronic means in September-October 2009. He emphasized the need to ensure that there was sufficient time for consultation before the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Organization of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties

54. Ms Silva indicated that the Secretariat had held very productive meetings with the host country of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on both logistical matters and the substance of the Ministerial Session.

55. During the discussion, it was recalled that it was very important to start the process of preparing the Marrakech Declaration as early as possible. It would greatly facilitate progress in this respect if a preliminary draft of the Declaration could be discussed by the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points. It might be effective to set up an ongoing working group with the participation of Morocco and the Secretariat. It was of great importance that the Marrakech Declaration sent a strong message from the region as a whole that could be used in the Copenhagen Summit.

56. With regard to the invitations to the Ministers, it should be recalled that they had very full agendas and that the invitations should be sent out as early as possible. In cases where the Ministry of the Environment was not the ministry specifically responsible for climate change issues, it might be necessary to issue duplicate invitations. Although Ministers of

Finance were of great importance in action on climate change, it would be very difficult to obtain their involvement. It was also noted that it would be better to confine the Ministerial Session to a single day. It was proposed that the Ministerial Session should be held on 4 November, the second day of the Meeting, which would allow time to make any necessary changes to the Declaration following the Ministers' interventions. A number of proposals were discussed on the format and content of the Ministerial Session. These included the division of the day into several sessions examining specific topics, with experts being invited to speak on those topics. The members of the Bureau were invited to send their suggestions to the Secretariat and to the host country concerning the specific issues to be covered during the Ministerial Session and experts to lead the discussions.

57. With respect to the topic of the Ministerial Session, the discussion centred on whether it should be focussed on adaptation to climate change or on both mitigation and adaptation. During the discussion it was suggested that the Ministerial Session would highlight the vulnerability of the Mediterranean to the effects of climate change and the position of the region as a microcosm reflecting what was happening elsewhere in the world, with the differences in climatic conditions and levels of development between Mediterranean countries. With its very advanced legal framework, its participatory bodies, and particularly the MCSD, and some of the initiatives that were being taken, such as the solar energy plan, it could also be a model in some ways for other regions and offered a conducive environment for international cooperation. It was further noted that, even if the Ministers were requested to address one aspect of climate change rather than another, they would almost certainly cover both adaptation and mitigation in any case and for many issues it is difficult to determine whether they are adaptation or mitigation measures. On this basis, it was proposed to shorten the title of the proposed topic of the Ministerial Session to "Climate change in the Mediterranean: Challenges and experiences", with the deletion of the words "Adaptation and mitigation in".

MAP/civil society cooperation and partnership

58. Ms Silva recalled that, following its assessment of MAP/civil society cooperation and partnership, the Secretariat was preparing a draft decision for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points on the strengthening of cooperation and partnership with civil society organizations, including criteria and procedures for the admission of international and national civil society organizations and a code of conduct for such organizations.

Regional cooperation

59. Ms Silva informed the Bureau of two regional cooperation initiatives in which MAP would be closely involved: the GEF-UNEP/MAP "Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem – Regional Component: Implementation of agreed actions for the protection of the environmental resources of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas" (UNEP GEF Med LME) and the new World Bank GEF Mediterranean Environmental Sustainable Development Programme ("Sustainable MED"). Both programmes were of great importance for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols and she therefore urged all Contracting Parties to participate fully in the related activities. The Secretariat welcomed the initiatives, although it would endeavour to ensure that there was no duplication of activities that were already being undertaken.

60. Mr Benyahia (Morocco), while welcoming the large-scale projects that were being undertaken in the region by the GEF, expressed certain difficulties in understanding the large number of different initiatives with their complex organizational logic. He hoped that MAP's involvement in these initiatives would ensure that they became models of collaboration between GEF donors and beneficiaries.

Audit recommendations – impact of the budget freeze and the lack of an operating reserve on the delivery of the programme of work

61. Ms Silva referred to the finding by the 2008 Audit Report that the freeze in MAP's regular budget since the changeover to budgeting in euros in 2003 had affected its capacity to deliver its programme of work at a time when the volume of work that it was expected to undertake was continuing to expand, particularly in view of the adoption of the ICZM Protocol and the entry into force of several amended instruments. The freeze in contribution rates had prevented the continuation of inflation-related increases in contributions and had made it necessary to run down the reserves to be able to implement the agreed programme of work. The Bureau was therefore requested to give its views on an increase of 10 per cent in the ordinary contributions and the replenishment of the operational reserve.

62. The members of the Bureau recognized that the MAP budget was becoming increasingly difficult to cover its programme of work and endorsed in principle the need to unfreeze the contributions. However, the other side of the audit process was that MAP also needed to introduce economies of scale. Nevertheless, while it was clear that an increase was indeed needed in the MAP budget, the countries could not envisage a rise of 10 per cent, as proposed, especially at a time when their own resources were being reduced as a result of the financial crisis which made it difficult to persuade Finance Ministers of the need for any rise at all in the contributions paid to international organizations. A more realistic approach would be to take into account the overall average inflation rate since the budget had been frozen. While it was important to unfreeze MAP's budget, it was necessary to take into account the fact that arguments would therefore need to be carefully developed to justify the need for an increase in contributions.

63. Ms Silva observed that MAP was being called upon to carry out a steadily increasing number of tasks, while new personnel were needed to manage the additional workload resulting, for example, from the Compliance Committee, the ICZM and other Protocols and the integration of the many cross-cutting issues. Instead, because of the freeze, personnel costs were taking up an ever increasing proportion of the budget, leaving less for project activities. As the rise in personnel costs since the freezing of the budget had been around 12 per cent, the figure of 10 per cent was less than what was needed, and therefore constituted a minimum. She however proposed that two budgets should be prepared: one for a 0 per cent increase and a second for a figure reflecting the respective inflation rate, which might be around 5 per cent for the period under review. She further recalled that the Secretariat was fully committed to implementing rapidly the other measures recommended by the Audit, including the collection of arrears in contributions, the elimination of financial irregularities and the development of the RAC mandates and host country agreements, as discussed earlier.

64. The members of the Bureau welcomed the Secretariat's commitment to give effect to the recommendations contained in the Audit Report. However, with reference to paragraph 10 of the Audit, they noted the emphasis on consultation in the preparation of the programme of work and the corresponding funding levels. They therefore called for budgetary information to be attached to the various items of the programme of work so that priorities could be identified and the implementation of the activities monitored more effectively. This should also apply at the level of the MAP components, and even for such RACs as CP/RAC, for which the entire budget was currently covered by the Spanish Government. The budgets allocated to the MAP components should be in relation to the work undertaken. It was therefore important for the Focal Points of the various MAP components to be provided with budgetary information so that they understood the priority that was being given to each proposed activity.

65. Ms Silva explained that the current budget proposals already contain some efficiencies, such as transforming the G4 post carrying out security functions into a P3 post to address the increased legal and MSSD responsibilities. She further committed the Secretariat to work on an integrated planning framework during the next biennium which would address the concerns of the Bureau. The members welcomed these proposals and requested the Secretariat to provide budgetary details during the MAP Focal Point Meeting.

Main directions of the programme budget 2010-2011 and Geographical distribution of activities during the current biennium

66. Ms Silva briefly reviewed the main focus of the programme budget for the next biennium, when continued emphasis would be placed on strengthening the overall governance system of MAP, the development of a more integrated, coherent and strategic approach to its cooperation activities, the reinforcement of partnerships with other actors, including NGOs, and the strengthening of compliance procedures. In view of the intensification of partnerships at the international level, the Secretariat would be especially vigilant to ensure that they resulted in the development of synergies and did not duplicate activities that were already being undertaken. The main transitions would be carried out in close dialogue with the Bureau, especially when the new Coordinator was appointed. Finally, she indicated that the table on the geographical distribution of activities had been provided for information purposes. However, she warned that many of the activities undertaken in a particular country were for the benefit of the region as a whole, or in some cases a subregion. The listing of activities under a specific country was not therefore necessarily a reflection of the volume of assistance provided to that country.

67. During the discussion clarification was sought on which new areas of work were being proposed for the next biennium and which of the activities were continuations of past efforts.

Agenda item 5: Any other business

68. It was decided that the next meeting of the Bureau would be held immediately prior to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Morocco, either on the morning of the first day of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties (3 November 2009) or, if there were more substantive matters to discuss, on the day prior to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Agenda item 6: Conclusions and decisions

69. The Bureau considered a set of conclusions prepared by the Secretariat. The conclusions of the meeting, as amended by the Bureau, are contained in **Annex III** to this report.

Agenda item 7: Closure of the meeting

70. Following the usual exchange of courtesies, the President closed the meeting at 1.30 p.m. on Friday 19 June 2009.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organization of work
3. Progress Report by the Secretariat on activities carried out during the period January-June 2009
4. Specific issues
 - a. Relationship between Compliance Committee and the meeting of the MAP focal points
 - b. Institutional aspects of the implementation of the Governance Paper with regards to host country agreements, mandate of MAP components, and other issues
 - c. Update on developments related to regional cooperation
 - d. Preparation of the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties
 - e. Proposal on the new members of the MCSD
 - f. Main outcomes of the assessment of MAP/Civil Society Cooperation and Partnership
 - g. Main directions of the proposed program of work for 2010-2011 biennium
 - h. Implementation of recommendations of the audit of UNEP/MAP financial performance
 - i. New "legally binding" measures and programmes in accordance with Article 15 of the revised LBS Protocol to implement a different approach with regard to pollution reduction from land based activities
 - j. Breakdown of MAP activities according to geographic distribution area
5. Any other business
6. Conclusions and decisions
7. Closure of the meeting

ANNEX III

Conclusions and decisions

Status of ratification and entry into force

The Bureau, appreciating the progress achieved with regard to the ratification and entry into force of the LBS and Hazardous Wastes Protocols or their amendments, highlighted the need for the rapid entry into force of the other Protocols, and particularly the ICZM Protocol, and called upon the Contracting Parties to accelerate the respective ratification and/or acceptance procedures with a view to making the MAP legal basis/cooperation stronger and more effective.

Compliance procedures and mechanism

1. The Bureau, having considered the proposal of the Compliance Committee with regard to its relationship with the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points, agreed that:
 - a) *the Compliance Committee's general report addressing general non-compliance issues, rules of procedure, guidelines etc., would be submitted to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties through the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points*
 - b) *The Compliance Committee's report on specific situations of non-compliance of individual Contracting Parties would be submitted directly to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties; and*
 - c) *The Chairperson of the Compliance Committee would present these reports to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points and the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.*
2. The Bureau added that:
 - a) *a clear distinction should be made between the role of the Secretariat and the role of the Compliance Committee in the implementation of the compliance procedures and mechanisms and*
 - b) *that the objective of the compliance procedures and mechanisms is to facilitate the achievement by the Contracting Parties of full compliance with their obligations under the Convention and its Protocols for which clear mechanisms of communication between the Contracting Party in situation of non-compliance and the Compliance Committee are defined.*
3. The Bureau called upon Contracting Parties that have not yet done so to submit their reports on the measures taken in 2006-2007 to implement the Convention and its Protocols and the decisions taken by the Meetings of the Contracting Parties as soon as possible, but not later than the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points in July 2009.
4. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to proceed with the assessment of the information contained in the 2006-2007 implementation reports submitted by the Contracting Parties in order to enable the Compliance Committee to address any general non-compliance issues at its third meeting in October 2009.
5. The Bureau also emphasized the need for the Secretariat and the MAP components to share the information provided by the Contracting Parties in the framework of the MAP reporting system and the results achieved in the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols as a means of encouraging the Contracting Parties to participate actively in this process and fully comply with reporting obligations.

Host country agreement

1. The Bureau noted the information provided by UNEP headquarters on the arrangements in force concerning the status of the Regional Activity Centres and their relationship with their host countries as well as the discussion concerning the relative merits of host country agreements and memoranda of understanding.
2. The Bureau invited its members to provide information to the Secretariat within two weeks on whether MOUs within their legal system can achieve the objective of the harmonization of the status of the RACs and the other objectives set out in the Governance Paper and on any similar legal arrangement or precedent made so far for other institutions.

Mandates of the MAP components

1. The Bureau suggested that the mandates of MAP components should reflect more closely the purpose of their establishment either by the Meetings of the Contracting Parties or in the framework of the various Protocols to the Barcelona Convention for which they are particularly responsible, while allowing at the same time some elements of flexibility in order to accommodate emerging issues.
2. The Bureau noted that the RACs and MEDPOL have over the years produced and gathered a large volume of information and knowledge, which needs to be properly managed by the Coordinating Unit. The Bureau also recommended that cross cutting-issues related to all the MAP components, such as the ecosystem approach, should be coordinated and managed by the Coordinating Unit in order to avoid the application of sectoral approaches.
3. The Bureau also agreed to move the chapter on enhancing MAP's impact and visibility to the common introduction part of the Mandates with a view to ensuring a corporate approach covering MAP as a whole, while also acknowledging the contribution of each MAP component.

Organization of the Focal Points meetings of the MAP components

1. The Bureau acknowledged the need to enhance coordination and integration among the MAP components with regard to the preparation of their Focal Point meetings and in particular in the preparation of their programmes of activities.
2. The Bureau, after having discussed different options presented by the Secretariat, recommended the option of the organization of a common meeting of the Focal Points of all the MAP components with joint and separate sessions. This would allow joint discussion of the progress achieved during the current biennium and the preparation in an integrated manner of the programme of activities for the forthcoming biennium for all MAP components, as well as separate sessions on technical issues specific to each Component. The effectiveness of this practice would be reviewed as appropriate.

5-year programme of work

The Bureau agreed that more time is needed for the Secretariat to work on and deliver the 5-year MAP programme of work for direct submission to and consideration by the 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties. However, the Bureau requested the Secretariat during the preparation of this programme of work to engage in a proactive consultation process with a view to ensuring the full involvement of the Members of the Bureau and the MAP Focal Points in the process.

Organization of the Ministerial Session of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, Marrakech, 3-5 November 2009

1. The Bureau agreed that the topic for discussion during the Ministerial Session would be "Climate change in the Mediterranean: Challenges and experiences";
2. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a discussion paper which, while focusing on climate change, identifies the direct and indirect links of the subject with the subject areas dealt with by the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and MSSD. The discussion paper should also include a list of questions/issues to stimulate and guide the interventions by Ministers. To that end, the Bureau invited its members to propose to the Secretariat within two weeks time any further suggestions on priority issues to facilitate the mobilization by the Secretariat of high-level experts to moderate the sessions.
3. Regarding the format of the meeting, the Bureau agreed that high-level experts should be invited to moderate the Ministerial Session, which could be divided into two or three sessions to be held in plenary on the basis of the questions and issues identified.
4. The Bureau emphasized that the Marrakech Declaration that will come out of the Meeting should be a vehicle for a strong message from the region to the Copenhagen Summit. The content of the Declaration should be based on the UNFCCC COP 13 decision [related to the Bali Action Plan], as well as building on the Almeria Declaration by highlighting MAP's achievements and challenges, including its direct and indirect contribution to the issue of climate change.
5. The Bureau agreed that the host country would take the lead in the preparation of the draft Declaration, with the participation of the other Contracting Parties and full support from the Secretariat. A first draft could be submitted to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points in July 2009, which would also establish a working group to continue the work through electronic means. Special sessions could be also held in Marrakech during the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, if need be, with a view to finalizing the discussions and the text for adoption by the Ministers at the end of the Ministerial Session.
6. The Bureau agreed that every effort should be made by the host country, UNEP and the Secretariat to ensure high-level ministerial participation at the meeting.

Draft decision on MAP cooperation with civil society

The Bureau agreed on the approach proposed by the Secretariat with regard to the preparation of the draft decision entitled "Strengthening MAP/civil society partnership for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols", which should contain the following elements:

- a) *The preamble will recall the relevant Articles of the Convention and the other decisions of the Meetings of the Contracting Parties on MAP civil society cooperation, as well as the need to establish an effective partnership between MAP and civil society.*
- b) *The body of the draft decision will contain the criteria and procedures for the admission of international and national civil society organizations as MAP Partners and a code of conduct for MAP Partners.*

- c) *As well as specific requests to the Secretariat, and particularly that it undertakes an assessment of the current list of MAP partners with a view to implementing the new criteria for admission for consideration by the Bureau during the next biennium.*

GEF Strategic Partnership

1. The Bureau encouraged the relevant Contracting Parties to fully participate in the project activities of the UNEP GEF Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem in order to ensure national ownership of the results and the long-term sustainability of the actions taken.
2. The Bureau also encouraged the Contracting Parties to review the project documents endorsed by GEF and to provide any comments to the Secretariat and the project management unit (PMU) and to notify them of any new national initiatives and projects with which the project may need to be coordinated.

The new WB GEF Mediterranean Environmental Sustainable Development Programme (Sustainable MED')

The Bureau welcomed the new World Bank Project as an opportunity to further strengthening the existing sustainable development-related governance structures already established in the framework of the Mediterranean Action Plan, and in this context encouraged all the Parties to avoid the proliferation of other similar initiatives in the region with a view to increasing synergy and join forces for sustainable development in the Mediterranean.

Impact of the MAP budget freeze and the lack of an operating reserve in the delivery of the Programme of Work

1. Recognizing the impact of the budget freeze since the 2005-2006 biennium on the full implementation of the programme of work of MAP, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to further continue and strengthen any actions required to improve MAP's effectiveness, efficiency and accountability.
2. The Bureau recommended the Secretariat to prepare alternative programmes of work based on a zero budget increase and an increase equal to the average inflation rate over 2007 and 2008 of around 5%. It also requested the Secretariat to highlight in the proposed programmes of work areas where savings could be made through greater efficiency and the better integration of the activities of the MAP components.
3. The Bureau agreed on the need for an annual increase of ordinary contributions to reflect the inflation rate as is the practice in different international conventions
4. The Bureau, appreciating the measures taken and planned by the Coordinating Unit to implement the recommendations contained in the audit report, requested the Secretariat to report regularly on the progress achieved. It also emphasized the need to undertake a strategic prioritization exercise of the programme of work during the next biennia, in accordance with the Governance Paper and the recommendations of the audit report.