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## MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

18<sup>th</sup> 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

Istanbul (Turkey), 3-6 December 2013

## Report 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development



**United Nations  
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Programme**



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**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

15th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission  
on Sustainable Development

Malta, 10-12 June 2013

**Report  
15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development**

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## **Introduction**

1. At the kind invitation of the Government of Malta, the Fifteenth Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) was held at Hotel Grand Excelsior, Malta from 10 to 12 June 2013.

## **Participation**

2. The meeting was attended by the following members of the Commission: Association of Italian Local Agenda 21, Centre for the Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, ENDA Maghreb, France, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Malta, Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, RAED-Arab Network for Environment and Development, Tunisia, Turkey, UMCE-Business Med and the World Bank.
3. The following components of UNEP/MAP were also represented at the meeting: Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC), Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC), Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), Cleaner Production Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC) and the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC).
4. The following intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other partners attended the meeting as observers: APNEK-Tunisia, Friends of the Earth (Malta), Global Footprint Network, International Ocean Institute (IOI), IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med), KOPIN, Mediterranean Water Institute (IME), Nature Trust Malta, The Network of MPA Managers in the Mediterranean (MEDPAN), PROJECT PEGASO, Research Group Interfase – UAB, Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).
5. A full list of participants is contained in Annex I to the present report.

## **Agenda item 1:       Opening of the meeting**

6. The meeting was opened at 9:30 a.m. by Ms Jelena Knezevic, outgoing President of the MCSD Steering Committee, who welcomed participants and thanked the authorities of Malta for hosting the meeting.
7. In his welcoming address, H.E. Mr. Leo Brincat, Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change of Malta highlighted that the importance of the Mediterranean region and the Barcelona Convention cannot be underestimated, at least on six counts: the contribution of environmental cooperation to stability in the

Mediterranean; the intrinsic value of the Barcelona process itself; the importance of the Mediterranean region to Malta and of the participants gathered at the opening session; the changes underway within a Mediterranean context - regionally and nationally on both sides of the Sea itself; the future of the MAP system, compounded by the need to do more with less as well as the need to reaffirm our commitment to sustainable development in the Mediterranean as a region. He also advised that when formulating a roadmap one should avoid the pitfall of not cross-checking the implications of actions in one sector on another. He said that cross-sectoral conflicts needed to be resolved, not fuelled further. He referred to the High-Level Political Forum as part of the UN system and that the MCSD could evolve into a platform that reviews and monitors MAP, which would promote both green and blue growth in the Mediterranean region. He said that a win-win situation would only evolve when each one of our member countries shouldered responsibility at national, regional and global level and this could only be achieved with a three-pronged strategy in place: in terms of the budget considerations, in terms of governance and in terms of the programme of work. He concluded that it is our duty to come up with solutions and this could be done in the coming days, in an efficient, coherent and sustainable way.

8. Ms Maria Luisa Silva Mejias (UNEP/MAP Executive Secretary and Coordinator) welcomed participants and thanked the Government of Malta for hosting the current session of the MSCD. She mentioned the three concepts which guide MAP's activities: the Mediterranean is a large and complex ecosystem; environment and sustainable development are intrinsically linked and MAP is a governance framework. She recalled that the MCSD was an important part of the governance infrastructure in terms of the MAP system and had an essential statutory role in the MAP governance structure. She also stated that this meeting was very relevant in terms of timing since it related to the broader framework of action in terms of sustainable development. She referred to Rio+20 where it was agreed that the world would develop Sustainable Development Goals and it was recognized that sustainable development needed a dedicated platform to discuss related matters. She said that the MCSD had had good success: it established itself as the main forum to discuss sustainable development in the Mediterranean; it led to the adoption of the MSSD; but also suffered from similar problems faced by the global structure for sustainable development. She concluded with her expectations for a constructive discussion, recalling that the Ministers would meet at COP 18 in December 2013, and auguring that this meeting would provide clear recommendations to them.

**Agenda item 2: Election of the Steering Committee**

9. In accordance with Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure and following the customary consultations, the Commission elected its new Steering Committee as follows:

President: Ms Marguerite Camilleri (Malta)

Vice-Presidents:

President of the Bureau of the Contacting Parties (France till COP18 and then Turkey)

Mr Bernard Brillet (France)

Mr Atwa Ahmed Atwa (Egypt)

Ms Jelena Knezevic (Montenegro)

Mr Souleymane Thierno Bah (ENDA-Maghreb)

Mr Larbi Sbai (IUCN-Mediterranean)

**Agenda item 3: Adoption of the agenda**

10. The agenda contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG. 383/2 was adopted. The agenda appears as Annex I to the present report.

**Agenda item 4: Rio+20 and its implications for the revision of the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development (MSSD)**

11. The purpose of this section was to discuss the possible implications of Rio+20 on Sustainable Development Strategies and the opportunity to revise the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development (MSSD) 10 years after its adoption, as well as a possible roadmap for the revision process.
12. The session started with two keynote presentations “Environment in the Sustainable Development Goals” delivered by Mr. Atila Uras, UNEP/MAP and “The Global Sustainable Development Network and Solutions for the Mediterranean Region” delivered by Professor Cristina Capineri, representing the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Mediterranean Region.
13. Mr. Hugues Ravenel, director of Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre delivered a presentation on Rio+20 and its implications for the revision of the MSSD. In his proposal, the Plan Bleu director proposed to maintain the current seven priority fields of action, focusing attention on MSSD being more effective, with monitoring, consolidating MAP relationships with other regional actors and laying the ground for the next prospective study on sustainable development in the Mediterranean. He acknowledged that there was a difficulty in linking indicators to actions, hoping that in the next MSSD there would be a better articulation of MAP actions with those of other

relevant actors. He made a reference to the document entitled “20 years of sustainable development in the Mediterranean: review and outlook” which explained the main Mediterranean processes in terms of legal frameworks, strategic frameworks and approaches, action plans, cooperation initiatives, information and assessment tools as well as support networks.

14. During the discussions following the presentation, MCSD members agreed on the need for implementing the Rio+20 outcomes in the Mediterranean region, as well as for revising the MSSD, considering that this was the right time to do this, also considering the decisions taken in this regard at COP 17 in Paris. It was mentioned that the MSSD should be revised to take into consideration Rio+20 outcomes, but should also build on past experiences and practices. It was important that the new MSSD would be more action oriented and include a better monitoring and review system. Some considered that the MSSD should reflect SDGs at regional level while others suggested that the MSSD could inform the SDG development process;

#### Conclusions of Agenda item 4

- a. The MCSD members considered that the global processes following RIO+20 that better embed sustainability, required the Barcelona Convention to renew the MSSD;
- b. The new MSSD should have a long time-frame (10 years) and contain both visionary and action oriented elements;
- c. The new MSSD should act as a tool to facilitate the ecological transition by influencing social and economic activities;
- d. It should be articulated with global, regional and MAP processes. It should be results-oriented, simple and based *inter alia* on the assessment of the impact of the current MSSD and of national sustainable development processes, as well as on a shared vision of sustainable development challenges facing the region;
- e. The current themes were considered valid but work should take place on their structure and articulation. Integration of MAP’s priority fields of action such as ICZM and relevant processes such as the Ecosystem Approach should be secured. Consideration of other issues such as waste management, environmental education, the circular economy, the green economy and governance, were needed;
- f. Ensuring stakeholder participation and ownership was key and the roadmap should specify how this would happen;

- g. As a follow-up, MCSD members would submit further comments on the MSSD revision to the Steering Committee of the MCSD via MAP Secretariat by end of June 2013. The Steering Committee would consolidate views for submission to COP18, after exchanging views with the MCSD. All comments received would be shared;
- h. Members recalled that the new MSSD could enable a new development of MAP and perhaps lead to a MAP Phase III (a new generation MAP where cooperation would be reinforced among partners in terms of both strategies and actions); and,
- i. MSSD would be directly linked to MCSD, while a revised MSSD required a reformed MCSD.

**Agenda item 5: Launching a Regional Process on SCP policies:**

- 15. In the light of reflections on Rio+20 follow-up, the session focused on ways to spearhead progress on SCP in the Mediterranean. A presentation by CP RAC was made on SCP on the development of the strategic process to consolidate the Mediterranean's role in the shift to sustainable patterns of consumption and production, namely the drafting of an SCP roadmap for the Med (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.383/4).
- 16. SCP was enshrined within MAP as a major cross-cutting objective to attain sustainable development; as one of the thematic pillars of the UNEP/MAP 5 year programme and PoW; and as a commitment in the Paris Declaration adopted by COP 17 (2012) to "support, at Mediterranean level, capacity building and other activities associated with green economy as means to achieve sustainable development, such as the promotion of sustainable production and consumption patterns".
- 17. MCSD members and observers welcomed the progress of work on SCP in the Mediterranean in light of the Rio+20 conclusions, as well as the first draft of the roadmap.
- 18. Discussion followed on different aspects of the SCP Med Roadmap including the main rationale behind the prioritization of the operational objectives and priorities reflected in the MSSD strategic pillars as well as in the various protocols under the Barcelona Convention.
- 19. The active participatory process pursued in the development of the SCP Med roadmap, including private sector and civil society involvement and the cooperation between the RACs in identifying common SCP priorities and tools to effectively implement the obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, was



acknowledged by the MCSD. Participants requested to further contribute to the content and the process of the development of the SCP Med Road map.

20. MCSD members welcomed the technical assistance to Mediterranean countries offered by the EU-financed SWITCH Med programme and requested the possibility of exploring the extension of the TA offered under the SWITCH Med programme beyond the current beneficiary countries of the Southern Mediterranean to the Balkans and Turkey.
21. The need for visibility of SCP-related activities was emphasized with special emphasis on awareness raising and education, such as through the forthcoming SWITCH Med networking facility.
22. The commitment by countries to implementing SCP actions and policies in the Mediterranean was acknowledged, such as the green public procurement policy successfully implemented in Malta for all government sectors and the university, as well as innovative SCP approaches proposed such as the creation of new business models such as sustainable entrepreneurship.

#### Conclusions on Agenda item 5

- a. MCSD members recognized the need to develop a Road Map through which Mediterranean countries would commit to implementing SCP measures and objectives addressing the region's common priorities for sustainable development, including pollution reduction. It was noted that a Med SCP Roadmap would provide the Mediterranean with a unique framework for SCP supporting global initiatives such as the 10-year framework of programmes (10YFP) on sustainable consumption and production adopted by UNEP as a follow-up to Rio+20 (Rio+20 Outcome Document "The Future We Want") recognizing that fundamental changes in the way societies consume and produce are indispensable for achieving global sustainable development;
- b. It was agreed that a SCP Mediterranean Roadmap would further and more systematically integrate SCP within actions implementing Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, increasing resource efficiency and decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, creating new job/market opportunities to achieve a socially inclusive, low-carbon economy. Members also called for the strengthening of regional partnerships in view of a shared and complementary implementation of the SCP Med Roadmap on issues such as urban development, the private and financial sectors, energy and land use;

- c. MCSD members recommended that the Road map be developed based on a broad participatory process involving policy makers, private sector, civil society, local governments, research institutions and, educational bodies, requesting that the implementation of the Road map take advantage of the added value provided by MAP components and the MCSD in supporting SCP through their respective mandates and ensured coordination and collaboration among them;
- d. Members urged that SCP measures and objectives be clearly and concretely identified in the review process of the MSSD;
- e. Members recommended further integrating formal and informal educational tools, including expertise on consumer behavior/household and adding related means of collecting, sharing and disseminating information and knowledge;
- f. Members recommended that synergies and cooperation with other international and regional organizations and financial institutions be further explored and that SCP-related actions be developed through key regional cooperation programmes, EuroMed flagship initiatives and local communities;
- g. It was suggested to further develop indicators to monitor progress building on CP/RAC's initial work taking into consideration the circular economy and employment/job creation dimensions to provide solutions to the current challenges related to employment and job creation.
- h. MCSD members were asked for written comments on the document and the first draft of the Road Map circulated by CP/RAC to Steering Committee through the Secretariat by the end of June 2013, after exchanging views with MCSD. All comments received would be shared.

**Agenda item 6: Best Practices: Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean**

23. With a view to inspiring and disseminating best practices on sustainable development, this session focused on learning from implementation experiences including legal and policy approaches, processes and specific solutions.
24. Ten best practices at the regional, national and local level were presented in two groups followed by discussions. The titles and the presenters of the best practices were as follows:
  - i. "Malta – A New Beginning in Sustainable Development", presented by Mr. Alfred Quintano, Chairman – Sustainable Development Network Board;

- ii. "France's new Sustainable Development Policy Approach", presented by Mr. Bernard Brillet, Inspector General, Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, France;
  - iii. "Sustainable development in Lebanon, presented by Mr. George Akl, Chief of Protection of Nature Resources Department, Ministry of Environment, Lebanon
  - iv. "Développement Durable au Maroc: Bilan des Réalisations & Perspectives de Rio à Rio+20", presented by Ms. Fatiha El Mahdaoui, Responsable de l'Observatoire National de l'Environnement du Maroc;
  - v. "The Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI)", presented by Mr. Alexandros Koulildis, EIA Expert, Hellenic Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change;
  - vi. "Egypt and Lebanon Environmental Pollution Abatement Projects", presented by Ms. Tracy Hart, Senior Environmental Specialist, The World Bank;
  - vii. "ICZM Strategy and the Plan of Montenegro -policy framework for Sustainable Development of the coastal area of Montenegro", presented by Ms. Jelena Knežević, MAP Focal Point, CAMP Montenegro Coordinator;
  - viii. "Building Resilient Cities: the ACT Project", presented by Emilio D'Alessio, former president and board member of Coordinamento Agende 21 Locali Italiane;
  - ix. "Developpement durable: Au delà des strategies, de l'action", Souleymane Thierno Bah, Coordinateur Assistant, Responsable Communication et Développement Durable; Enda Maghreb; and,
  - x. "The Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD)", presented by Ms. Anastasia Roniotes, Head Officer, Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE).
25. The richness of the presentations provided and their learning and networking value was highlighted by several MCSD members who considered this as a dimension of the MCSD's work to be further strengthened. The presentations showed dynamism in sustainable development strategic and legal approaches with many countries entering into their third generation of sustainable development policies and strategies. All the presentations would be available at MAP's website as of 17 June 2013.
26. In addition, the Global Footprint Network gave a presentation regarding its work on The Ecological Footprint with a Mediterranean perspective, which was welcomed by the participants.

## Agenda item 7: MCSD operations and reform

27. The implications of outcomes of Rio+20 on the MCSD regarding the upgrading of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) into a High-Level Political Forum for the reform of the MCSD was discussed under this agenda item. The Decision IG20/13 of COP17 was recalled regarding strengthening of MCSD. The UNEP/MAP Secretariat's background document to facilitate the discussion among MCSD members was presented at the beginning of this session.
28. During the discussions by MCSD members, following issues were raised:
- a. The position of the MCSD in the MAP system and where possible in the wider regional community should be strengthened, in line with the outcome of Rio+20 and the COP17 decision;
  - b. There was a need to redefine the success of the MCSD, including on the interface between environment and development;
  - c. A participant suggested that regarding the future of MCSD at least two modalities could be developed: either focusing on the set of issues that facilitated the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols or to position the MCSD as the regional SD body, which would require involvement of other actors (UN Agencies and others);
  - d. In terms of the periodic review of national implementation of the MSSD, a simplified peer-review mechanism was suggested by several participants as a way to upgrade the very useful role of the MCSD as a regional platform for exchanges of experiences on sustainable development which the MCSD had always been useful for;
  - e. A reformed MCSD should be focusing on the review and monitoring of the implementation aspects of the MSSD among other tasks;
  - f. The MSSD should follow the global dynamics but should also bear in mind its history. Before looking at the future of the MCSD, one should also consider the 20 years of its operations at the Mediterranean level;
  - g. While a member considered that the MCSD should be upgraded into a political body, another participant recalled that even though the MCSD was not a decision-making body, being a subsidiary body of the COP, it had an important role in making direct recommendations to the meeting of the Contracting Parties;
  - h. MCSD should have a new start improving its efficiency and visibility;
  - i. Development was usually in the mandate of other ministries than the Ministries responsible for the environment: MCSD was a catalyst for

sustainable development actions in the region. Therefore, it should serve to mobilise a wider network of actors;

- j. There was a need to look at the representations on the MCSD: representation of environmental organisations was not sufficient. Local communities and cities should also be represented together with consumer NGOs as well as unions and economic actors;
- k. One way of bringing in other actors would be to involve employer and worker organisations such as labour unions in MCSD deliberations. This could be done in tandem with collaborating more closely with wider Mediterranean processes, something that the MAP Secretariat was already working on but needed to involve the MCSD more.

29. In terms of alternative ways of operation, better use of information technologies to aid communication via email, the UNEP MAP website, and teleconferencing should be considered. The SC should also meet during the biennium.

#### Conclusions of Agenda item 7

30. The objective of a strengthened MCSD should be the integration of the environment pillar into other public policies, thus building on its successes and potential.

31. In terms of core functions, it is important for the MCSD, with the support of the MAP Secretariat to:

- i. Revise the MSSD, regularly monitor it on biannual basis and evaluate its implementation, using the MSSD indicators but also possibly other means such as monitoring implementation through actions (legal, programmes and projects);
- ii. Forge partnerships and coordination between various actors, including other UN actors besides UNEP;
- iii. Encourage the exchange of good practice, for which a simplified peer review could be a tool; and,
- iv. Prepare input for COP sessions on Sustainable Development, including priority and emerging issues.

32. Since a revised MSSD requires a reformed MCSD, there is a need for a new action-oriented vision of MAP, probably in the form of a MAP Phase III, which would be in line with the global considerations after Rio+20 in the same way as previous MAP phases reflected major global conferences of the past: (Stockholm and Rio 92). In particular this would reflect a new generation where cooperation would be reinforced among partners in terms of both strategies and actions.

33. There is a need for enhanced cooperation with other international and regional organizations and financial institutions such as the World Bank, the UfMS and the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in particular in view of on-going negotiations to adopt a legally-binding new global climate change regime at the end of 2015. It was agreed to invite other UN specialized agencies and programmes to ensure the representation of the economic and social pillars of sustainable development, as well as local governments.
34. With a view to raising political attention on SD in the MAP, proposals to regularly discuss sustainable development matters at the Conference of the Parties, for example once every four years, were broadly endorsed.
35. While we should learn from the past, it is important to look at the future as well. MCSD should have a strengthened role in monitoring the progress of the MSSD, as well as monitoring related programmes in the whole Mediterranean. The MCSD recommended that sufficient Plan Bleu resources be allocated to this task.
36. There is a need to balance ambition and realism, especially since so far the MCSD has had a relatively limited budget. However, many things may be done in a true cooperative spirit, matching purpose and financial resources.
37. The MCSD Steering Committee was tasked to prepare a proposal by end of July 2013 and therefore all members were encourage to send their comments with reference to the questions existing in UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.383/5 by end of June 2013, after exchanging views with MCSD. All comments received would be shared.

**Agenda item 8: Next MCSD meeting and other matters**

38. The Secretariat will announce the site of the 16th Meeting of the MCSD in the coming months.

**Agenda item 9: Adoption of conclusions and recommendations**

39. Participants were invited to consider a set of draft conclusions and recommendations, formulated on the basis of the discussions held during the course of the meeting. Following comments and amendments, the conclusions and recommendations were adopted, on the understanding that a revised version incorporating the proposed amendments would be circulated electronically for final approval.

**Agenda item 10: Closure of the meeting**

40. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed at 17.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 12 June 2013.



**Annex I**  
**List of participants**





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**Annex II**  
**Agenda**



## Agenda

- Agenda item 1:** Opening
- Agenda item 2:** Election of the Steering Committee
- Agenda item 3:** Adoption of the Agenda and organization of work
- Agenda item 4:** Rio+20 and its implications for the revision of the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development (MSSD)
- Agenda item 5:** Launching a Regional Process on SCP Policies
- Agenda item 6:** Best Practices: Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean
- Agenda item 7:** MCSD operations and reform
- Agenda item 8:** Next MCSD meeting and other matters
- Agenda item 9:** Adoption of Conclusions/Recommendations
- Agenda item 10:** Closure of the meeting