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## Introduction

1. The meeting to review the long-term implementation of national action plans to address pollution from land-based activities was held at the Hotel Adriatik, Durrës, Albania, from 1 to 3 June 2006.
2. Representatives and experts from the following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention attended the meeting: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, European Commission, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Morocco, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey.
3. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations were represented: Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (UNEP/GPA), World Health Organization (WHO).
4. The following MAP Regional Activity Centres were also represented: Regional Activity Centre for the Priority Actions, Cleaner Production Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC) and INFO/RAC MAP.
5. The following nongovernmental organizations were represented: Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO/ECSDE) and ENDA/Maghreb.
6. The full list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

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

7. Mr Lufter Xhuvëli, Minister for the Environment, Forests and Water of Albania, welcomed participants to his country and to the meeting. He said that establishment of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) 35 years previously had been a visionary initiative. Nevertheless, the biological resources of the region would continue to be threatened if the national action plans (NAPs) for reduction of pollution from land-based activities were not implemented effectively. He outlined several measures taken by his Ministry to promote sustainable development in Albania. With the support of MAP and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the country had already prepared its national diagnostic analysis (NDA), its national baseline budget (NBB), its sectoral plan (SP) for coastal districts and its NAP, the main issues to be discussed at the present meeting.
8. Mr Paul Mifsud, MAP Coordinator, recalled that the NAPs of all Contracting Parties had been endorsed at the last meeting of the Parties. The present meeting had been called to promote implementation of the Plans. The GEF Strategic Partnership and the Horizon 2020 Initiative of the European Union to de-pollute the Mediterranean had been set up to assist countries to implement their NAPs. He said that action had been taken to ensure that there was synergy between the two initiatives and the NAPs.
9. Mr Francesco Severio Civili, MED POL Coordinator, said that the main objective of the meeting was to draw up a feasible, reliable, fair operational strategy for implementation of each country's NAP. The Meeting would also review the preliminary analysis made by the Secretariat of the national baseline budgets and of the content of the NAPs with a view at their compliance with the long-term objectives of the SAP. Finally, the ultimate objectives of the Meeting were to discuss and share ideas on the possible application of the 'burden-sharing' principle to the

pollution reduction process, outlined in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/3, and provide guidance to the Secretariat on how to proceed.

**Agenda item 2. Election of officers**

10. The meeting unanimously elected the following officers:

Chairperson:	Ms Etleva Canaj (Albania)
Vice-Chairpersons:	Mr Samir Kaabi (Tunisia) Mr Tarik Kupusovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Rapporteur:	Ms Sylvie Ravalet (France)

**Agenda item 3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

11. The meeting adopted the proposed agenda contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/1, which appears as Annex II to this report.

12. The Rules of Procedure for the meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related protocols (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI) applied *mutatis mutandis* to the meeting to review the long-term implementation of national action plans to address pollution from land-based activities.

**Agenda item 4. Review and analysis of the content of national action plans**

13. Mr Civili drew the attention of participants to three information documents (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/Inf.3, UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/Inf.4 and UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/Inf.5/Corr.1), which contained a preliminary analysis of the Secretariat of the national baseline budgets prepared by the countries as well as an analysis of the content of the NAPs, their compliance with the SAP objectives and the cost of the pollution reduction actions indicated by the countries. He called upon two MED POL regional experts to describe the results of the review.

14. Mr Michael Angelidis summarized the results of the regional review of NAPs by sector of activity and by substance, as presented in UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/Inf.4. He said that all NAPs had identified disposal of urban effluents as one of the most important problems, although difficulties in meeting various sub-targets in other sectors had also been reported. Public participation, including that of nongovernmental organizations and the private sector, was recognized as essential in implementing all activities. Many NAPs had provided only unspecific information about long-term activities up to 2025. It was clear from the NAPs that countries were concerned by the issue of pollution reduction, and the plans they had proposed were realistic. Nevertheless, some of the elements might not be achievable by 2010. The problems that countries would face in implementing their NAPs were acknowledged. It was now time to move to the implementation stage and identify which of the priority actions were ready to be undertaken.

15. Mr Civili opened the floor for comments on the presentation and the document, asking participants also to consider the possibility of making public the information contained in the document.

16. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Egypt said that the document was a good basis for countries to work together to improve the marine environment of the Mediterranean. He hoped that countries could move on from the planning stage and find mechanisms to implement the NAPs, working with the MAP Secretariat and initiatives such as Horizon 2020 of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and GEF.

17. The representative of France said that the exercise of reviewing the NAPs by sector was useful for orienting future actions to be undertaken by countries in the implementation phase, especially in the framework of Horizon 2020. The document in question highlighted: similarities in the NAPs of different countries; the various approaches to implementation that could be taken; the possible convergence of efforts; and the variations in the estimates of implementation costs. She considered that a sectoral approach made it easier to involve industry and the other actors concerned. She also emphasized the importance of regulatory measures in combating pollution. She said that the two wastewater treatment plants in Marseilles and Montpellier, described in France's NAP, already existed and that the plan proposed upgrading them rather than constructing them from scratch.

18. The representative of Israel noted that the 16 wastewater treatment plants mentioned in Israel's NAP were existing structures all including secondary treatment. No new plants were to be constructed as suggested in document. Instead, all 16 plants were to be upgraded to tertiary treatment plants.

19. The representative of Spain explained that her country had often had difficulty in collecting data that accurately reflected the national reality. Spain intended to improve its reporting and to provide more reliable data.

20. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya said that he welcomed the opportunity to update the information found in the NAPs, to include any new data that had been collected since preparation of the document. That would be particularly important if the document were to be published.

21. The representative of Lebanon pointed out that the costs included in her country's NAP were not precise; they had been estimated. An inability to provide precise figures was a problem faced by many countries.

22. Mr Angelidis agreed that cost estimates were provided in the NAPs in varying degrees of detail. Although it might be possible to give a precise cost for a specific planned action, the costs of implementing activities that had not yet been clearly defined would have to be estimated. He was sure that more accurate cost estimates would be available at the next stage of the process.

23. In response to a concern expressed by the representative of Lebanon about dealing with the sludge resulting from wastewater treatment plants, Mr Angelidis agreed that disposal of sludge would be important during implementation of plans relating to such plants, especially if the sludge contained heavy metals.

24. In response to a question by the representative of ENDA Maghreb, Mr Angelidis explained that, although pesticides were dealt with in the NAPs, fertilizers had not been addressed because, as non-point sources, they were not included in the reduction targets.

25. The same representative also proposed integrating the treatment of solid waste into wastewater treatment and drew attention to the lack of appropriate techniques in some countries for dealing with compost and the difficulties of adequate sorting of waste. Mr Angelidis pointed out that many countries had opted for the compost solution but that more plants were needed and the practice had to be promoted.

26. Mr Civili said that any of the proposals put forward by the representatives could be taken up by countries in revising their NAPs, as countries had ultimate responsibility for the content.

27. Mr Mifsud explained that in the past there had been reluctance to publish reports and data, especially within MED POL. He considered, however, that it was imperative to raise awareness among governments of the priority issues of pollution reduction. Publishing a document such as the one under review was a way of doing so. The information contained in the reports had to be accurate and credible and it was Parties' responsibility to provide such information. He agreed that countries should have the opportunity to update the information contained in their NAPs, within a set time frame. He also stressed the need to identify the real priorities and to ascertain which elements of the NAPs were ready to be implemented. Countries had to make sure that the priorities identified in the NAPs were those of their national governments, to ensure investment in their implementation.

28. Mr Jordi Pon, Enresa Enviro Chair of Sustainability and Waste Management, presented a preliminary analysis of compliance of the NAPs with SAP targets, as set forth in UNEP(DEPI)MED WG.289/Inf.5/Corr.1. That document contained an analysis of normalized data from the NBBs; a review of the pollution reduction priority actions contained in the NAPs; and an assessment of compliance of the actions listed in the NAPs with the SAP targets for the year 2010. He said that the analysis of national releases had been normalized to the industrial gross domestic product (GDP) for each substance on the selective list, using as a basis the country data provided. Useful for fine-tuning purposes, the general findings were that countries did not contribute equally to pollutant loads and that release intensities also varied significantly. As for the sources of releases by activity, major contributors were animal farming, oil refining and the manufacture of metals and fertilizers. Air releases were dominated by energy production, transport and oil refining.

29. Mr Civili said that, despite its obvious limitations, the NBB database was of fundamental value as a starting point in pollution reduction, insofar as it indicated the differing responsibilities and priorities to be taken into account. Longer-term improvement of its quality and reliability would, however, be essential.

30. Pointing out that there were discrepancies in the data provided during the presentation, the representative of the European Commission requested further information about the method used for the analysis, in which he was supported by the representatives of France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta, Spain and the Syrian Arab Republic. Other representatives agreed that the data were not comparable and that in certain cases they were misleading. Population was mentioned as another possible parameter to normalize the absolute value of releases instead of industrial GDP, and the need for a fine tuning of the NBBs was strongly emphasized.

31. Mr Fouad Abousamra, MED POL Programme Officer, explained that a common and flexible methodology had been adopted for use as a guideline for the preparation of NBB and NAPs that would take into account the differing socioeconomic conditions, development plans and economic priorities of the 20 countries concerned, on the basis of the available and estimated data.. In short, it was essentially policy-oriented science, the ultimate objective and key consideration being implementation of NAPs. Under those circumstances, industrial GDP was the factor most relevant for the normalization process.

32. Mr Pon added that the graphs shown during his presentation gave the total releases reported by countries, whereas the preliminary analysis tables contained in document UNEP(DEPI)MED WG.289/INF.5/Corr.1 showed releases as a percentage of the total, or, in other words, normalized to industrial GDP, which accounted for the discrepancy in data mentioned. Responding to a query from the representative of Greece concerning the omission of data submitted by her country, he said that the data would be reviewed in order to rectify that

situation. Responding to a query from the representative of Egypt, he said that the analysis had excluded municipal waste facilities because the analysis was concentrated on industrial point sources

33. The representative of the European Community said that it was important to keep the final objective in sight during all processes, to which end a method that was unanimously agreed and gave rise to no difficulties should be used. In other words, it was essential that different parameters be taken into account in order to produce comparable data. Others highlighted the need for caution if the findings of the analysis were to be subsequently used as a point of comparison. Earlier concerns about the use of industrial GDP as an indicator were repeated, and the question of validating the data provided by each country was also raised.

34. Mr Civili said that the industrial GDP had been selected as the normalization index on the understanding that it would offer the most meaningful analysis at the current stage. However, it was just one of many possible bases for future work, and use of an alternative index could be discussed and agreed in another forum, such as a working group, a suggestion that was favoured by a number of representatives.

35. Mr Abousamra emphasized that the preliminary analysis of the NBBs was not intended for publication. As for validation of the data, there were clearly limitations to those currently available. Acceptance of responsibility for pollution, however, was one step towards burden-sharing and eventual improvement of the Mediterranean environment.

36. Mr Civili added that countries were trusted to submit accurate information to the Secretariat, which simply acted as a facilitator and coordinator. He further stressed that the NBBs had been prepared as a reference point to track pollution reduction and that, after a necessary fine tuning, could represent a basis for the application of any differentiation approach.

37. The representative of the European Commission, supported by the representatives of Italy and the Syrian Arab Republic, said that a differentiated approach was vital and that it should be eventually adopted. However, there were technical difficulties surrounding the results of the preliminary assessment, insofar as no consultation had taken place about the method and the type of data to be used. In the absence of an agreed method, he would regrettably be in no position to make any further contributions.

38. Mr Civili said that the NBBs were of fundamental importance: they had served as the basis for the NAPs and for setting priorities and could now be used as the basis for an adequate, viable strategy for implementing the NAPs. Use of the flat rate could not be continued in the long run, and the Contracting Parties had asked the Secretariat to investigate the implications of application of the differentiated, or burden-sharing, approach. In order to do so, the relative responsibilities of countries for the burden had to be assigned, and that could indeed be done on the basis of NBBs. There were a few methodological problems with the NBBs as they stood, which, in his opinion, could be solved rapidly. However, the method proposed by the Secretariat for calculating NBBs had been successfully used by 95% of countries.

39. A number of representatives countered that the methodological problems associated with the NBBs might not be as minimal as thought; for instance, comparing estimates with the results of monitoring was not a valid practice. Although the NBBs might be useful at the national level, the data should not be used as for between-countries comparisons. Furthermore, aspects other than the baseline budget should be taken into consideration in the differentiated approach, including environmental quality and the economic consequences of assigning responsibility. One representative suggested that a financial expert be hired for that purpose.

40. Several representatives said that agreement should first be reached on use of the differentiated approach. The index to be used in that approach could be decided upon later.

41. The representatives of Egypt and of the European Commission suggested that a working group be formed to set more precise criteria for which data from the NAPs were to be included in the differentiated approach and also to define indicators for the development status of countries and the pollution they generated. The differentiated approach comprised political, scientific and economic aspects, and all should be taken into consideration.

42. The representative of Tunisia emphasized the importance of standardizing the information in the NAPs in order to implement them. He considered that the proposed working group should include participants from both southern and northern Mediterranean countries, the European Union and the Secretariat.

43. Mr Pon continued his presentation, explaining his analysis of potential reductions of pollution through implementation of actions in the NAPs, as described in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/Inf.5/Corr.1). He indicated the inclusion criteria that had been used for different kinds of data and the assumptions that had been made in the method used for estimating potential reductions, presenting several examples.

44. Mr Abousamra added, in response to a question from the representative of Lebanon, that only industrial emissions were quantifiable, as cities were fulfilling their commitments to reduce emissions within other frameworks.

45. Mr Pon finished his presentation, describing his preliminary analysis of costs related to implementation of NAPs. He pointed out that very different costs could be estimated for the same reduction in different countries. He emphasized the important contribution of cleaner production methods and use of best practices and of alternative products; those methods had also been shown to be cost-effective.

46. The representatives of Israel, Lebanon, Malta and Turkey pointed out factual errors in a number of tables in the document. The representatives of Morocco and Tunisia enquired about the pertinence of the tables in which many cells were blank owing to inadequate data in some NAPs. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya added that it would be essential to check the accuracy of the data in the document before it was made available to a wider readership.

47. Disappointed that the present meeting was concentrating mainly on industrial-waste pollution, the representative of Serbia and Montenegro pointed out that his country's priority was municipal-waste pollution. Nevertheless, hotspots relating to heavy metals had been identified.

48. Mr Civili asked the representative of the European Commission and other interested parties to draw up the terms of reference of the proposed working group on definition of criteria and indicators for implementation of the differentiated approach.

#### **Agenda item 5. The application of the burden-sharing principle in pollution reduction in the framework of SAP: options and implications**

49. Mr Civili introduced document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/3, which contained a proposal for a new strategy for the long-term implementation of the NAPs by applying the burden-sharing principle. He explained that in 2001 when the operational plan for implementation of the SAP had been adopted, no information had been available on the sources, type and quantities of pollution being released. The only way of proceeding had therefore been to adopt a flat-rate approach to pollution reduction, whereby all countries had the same the reduction target. However, after further analysis of the flat-rate approach, the Secretariat had concluded that it would not be sustainable in the long term. The recent collation of data and information on sources gathered country by country through the preparation of the NDAs and the NBBs had



opened new prospects that allowed the Secretariat to propose a more realistic and fair strategy for the implementation of the NAPs, i.e. the application of a differentiated approach. He stressed that participants were now being asked for their feedback on the principle of the new strategy, not on methods of its application. That would come at a later stage.

50. In a further presentation, Mr Abousamra gave a more detailed account of the background to the proposal. Since adoption of the operational plan for implementation of the SAP, valuable data and information on the sources and types of pollutants released had been generated and major efforts in analysis had been made by the MED POL coordinators, national experts and regional consultants.

51. Mr Abousamra highlighted some important considerations regarding implementation of the SAP. Acting at national level was the best way to achieve regional objectives; NBBs and NAPs would therefore be the backbone of future actions. He stressed, however, that implementation of the SAP should not be detrimental to countries' national development plans: some countries would need to release pollutants as part of those plans. The cost benefits should be clear: actions should incur the lowest level of expense and have as little impact as possible on standards of living. He also mentioned the need for effective financial instruments to ensure cost recovery.

52. A mechanism to ensure the transfer of technology was of paramount importance if countries were to have the capacity to implement their NAPs. Similarly, it was necessary to ensure fairness and equity in dividing release-reduction obligations among the Contracting Parties and in distributing benefits. The Secretariat believed that the flat-rate approach could not ensure that fairness. In the presence of the asymmetric interests of the Parties, symmetric obligations could be both inefficient and inequitable.

53. Believing that a differentiated approach would ensure equity, the Secretariat had considered many possible options and had concluded that the most advantageous one was the one based on the cost of pollution reduction. The proposal also involved prioritising the SAP pollutants –on the basis of the information contained in the NDAs, NBBs and NAPs- into three categories that corresponded to short-, medium- and long-term reduction targets: those to be reduced by 2010; those to be reduced by 2015; and those to be included in a dynamic selection process for reduction by 2025.

54. Agreeing that the NBBs and NAPs would be the basis for future action and that both had been produced on the basis of data for 2003, the representatives of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt and Spain requested the opportunity to review and fine tune those data within a set timeframe and to submit updated information to the Secretariat.

55. The representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon and Tunisia considered it necessary to look more critically at the results of the analysis of NDAs, NBBs, SPs and NAPs. It would also be useful to obtain data from countries that had not yet provided any in order to ensure a comprehensive overview of the situation in the Mediterranean.

56. The representatives of France, Italy, Morocco and Spain questioned whether the existing information was a sufficient basis for taking a decision; technical, financial and policy issues should also be addressed and closer consideration of the proposal was required, both among Contracting Parties and at national level. The representative of Italy advocated ensuring a more comprehensive scientific basis for the approach and offered to assist in setting up a working group to examine the issue. He also stressed the need to secure funds for the process, drawing attention to the possibility of using multilateral and bilateral funding mechanisms.

57. The representative of the European Commission also expressed concerns regarding the proposal. He emphasized the need to consider the possibilities from a technical, and not only cost, point of view.

58. The representative of France underlined the importance of positioning the objectives within their legal framework rather than simply as part of the SAP. Furthermore, she believed that implementation of the NAPs should not be interrupted by the present discussion. They should proceed as planned.

59. Drawing attention to the existing flat-rate approach whereby all countries had to reduce their release of pollutants by 50% by 2025, the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina questioned how to deal with a situation in which, in order to achieve a regional reduction of 50%, a country might have to reduce its individual releases by more than 50%. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya pointed out that the targets to be set by the Secretariat for reductions of certain pollutants in 2010, 2015 and 2025 might not coincide with a country's own priorities.

60. The representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Syrian Arab Republic suggested using GDP as a basis for differentiating costs. The former also pointed out that, although issues of cost and cost effectiveness were being discussed, there was no mention of who was going to cover the expense: government, industry, the private sector, public service providers or other actors concerned.

61. The representative of Israel warned against an outright rejection of the flat-rate approach, believing that the information in the document was not sufficient to prove that the differentiated approach was better than any other. He advocated a simple approach that would be easy to apply. He believed that the ultimate goal of protecting the Mediterranean had been obscured by too much concern for protecting economic interests. Transfer of technology was essential. The technology was available but its transfer was dependent on market forces: industry would seek new technologies if it had to adapt in order to survive.

62. Mr Mifsud stressed the need to work together in addressing common issues. Consideration of the new approach had just begun and a regional vision was required. He recognized the differences between developing and developed countries but advocated solidarity between all countries. Highlighting the phenomenon of economic migration from southern to northern Mediterranean countries, he warned of possible environmental migration: people moving from south to north as result of desertification or scarcity of water, for example. He recalled the Millennium Development Goals, stating that countries had a moral responsibility to work together to achieve those and other objectives for improving the situation in the Mediterranean, including those in the NAPs.

63. After providing their general comments on the Secretariat proposal, the discussion continued on specific sections of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/3), which contained the basic elements of the new proposed strategy and provided a building block for future work.

64. The representative of France said that this document could be the incentive to launch discussion on the differentiated approach. Bearing in mind, however, that the objective was to control pollution and ensure implementation of the relevant protocols, it was necessary to define regional and subregional priorities. The need for pollution-control regulations, adequate institutional tools and long-term funding, should also be mentioned. The synergies between national, regional and international policies, covered in section 2 (b) were a need rather than an option and the monitoring and compliance mechanisms covered under section 2 (f) were essential. In that context, the existing mechanisms should be used.

65. The representative of Israel said that present shortcomings should be clearly specified in order to show the reasons underlying the proposed choice of characteristics.

66. The representative of the European Commission agreed with the two previous speakers, adding that consistency with other relevant goals, international commitments and national developments was a pre-requisite for success.

67. The representative of France, supported by the representatives of Israel, Italy and Turkey, said that actors could be more readily identified if sectors were prioritized rather than substances. Variable targets could then be defined by country in accordance with development levels, problems relating to competition could be avoided and technology transfer would be easier. She had no predetermined list of sectors in mind. However certain sectors could be grouped into clusters. She agreed with the representative of Tunisia that the clustering could be first based on the nature of the releases/emissions "solid waste, liquid releases, atmospheric emissions" then on their sources "urban, industrial, agriculture.

68. The representative of Spain suggested that the targets should comprise a combination of substances, sectors and hotspots, taking into account the commitments already made under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), for instance, with a view to paving the way for future discussion. Mr Angelidis said that he agreed with that combined approach and the representative of Italy concurred that hotspots should be taken into account, bearing in mind the amount of pollution which they generated.

69. The representative of Lebanon raised the question of whether the heavy metals listed under the liquid releases relating to the proposed 2010 targets would also be included among the proposed 2025 targets on the basis of their persistence. She also queried the omission of solid waste as a target.

70. The representative of Morocco said that future updating of the NBBs was mentioned in connection with the proposed 2015 targets, whereas they should be updated in line with the proposed 2010 targets. The focus should remain on substances, which should be considered comprehensively in the light of methods developed by NGOs and industry.

71. The representative of Israel said that the relevant sections of the document should be combined or linked in order to highlight the shortcomings of the current strategy and the reasons for proposing a new one. He added that the table contained in section 3.2 was misleading in that it failed to specify the targets relating to the investments concerned. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina pointed out that data for his country was missing from the table.

72. Mr Civili invited comments on the section of the document, which concerned application of the differentiated approach to meet the SAP commitments and explored a number of possible options. The Secretariat had drawn the conclusion that differentiation on the basis of cost of abatement was the best way forward. On the other hand, the hypothetical country "bubble" combinations cited in section 3.3.2.1 were to be considered as an example of a methodology and by all means should not be seen as a specific proposal. The principle of bubble groupings on the basis of each objective might, in fact, prove useful.

73. The representative of the European Community said that the issue of the differentiated approach was the crux of the matter. It was imperative to give thorough consideration to that approach and discuss its ramifications in the light of the commitments, timetables and quality of environment in different countries. He failed to understand why differentiation on the basis of cost of abatement was the preferred option. Other possibilities should first be explored, as it was extremely difficult to make cost estimates in advance without crucially taking into account the special characteristics of the Mediterranean.

74. Mr Civili said that the main objective of the working group to be established was to review all possible options, the practical implications of which would be revealed when the data were tested.

75. Mr Abousamra stressed the need to be realistic. Cost of abatement had been among the options explored by two groups of international experts, which had concluded on the basis of the data provided by countries that cost was an important consideration.

76. The representative of France said that the differentiated approach should not be based on cost but on objectives. In that context, differentiated commitments would be an interesting avenue to explore. The representative of Spain added that it was important to take all elements into consideration rather than cost alone.

77. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, supported by the representative of Egypt, said that the application of any differentiated approach was a long-term process and that the working group was the most appropriate means of attempting to resolve differences of opinion concerning alternatives to the flat-rate method.

78. The representative of Morocco said that the working group would explore all the options and might also conclude that cost abatement was the best approach. The cost of proposed actions was indeed a prime consideration.

79. At the end of the discussion, Mr Civili, while taking note of the almost unanimous agreement of the countries on the need to gradually proceed towards the application of a differentiated approach for the regional implementation of the SAP objectives, stressed that the proposed new strategy was simply the start of a relatively long-term process. He therefore urged the participants to prepare detailed terms of reference of the Working Group so that it could organize its meeting; as extra-budgetary resources were necessary he appealed for funding.

#### **Agenda item 6. Ensuring financial stability for long-term implementation of national action plans**

80. Mr Civili said that the process of ensuring financial sustainability to the actions to be undertaken by countries within their NAPs was a major issue, and the Secretariat was committed to assisting countries in that respect, although the responsibility lay primarily with the countries themselves. GEF had dealt with the issue already during the first Project recently completed through specific activities coordinated by the Regional Activity Centre for the Priority Actions Programme (PAP/RAC).

81. Mr Ivica Trumbic, PAP/RAC Director, presented work done for the development of economic instruments for sustainable implementation of the SAP MED, which had included an analysis of the financial instruments being used by Mediterranean countries that were eligible for GEF funds. The objective had been to identify, develop and assist in implementing economic instruments for combating land-based pollution of the Mediterranean Sea. Economic instruments were defined as any instrument that aimed to induce a change in behaviour, by internalizing environmental or depletion costs through a change in the incentive structure of those agents. The types of economic instruments included charges, subsidies and fees. In 2001, 178 economic instruments had been in use in the Mediterranean, 116 (65%) being reported in Croatia, Tunisia and Turkey. Charges represented the commonest type of instrument (70%), subsidies (25%) and deposit refund (5%). The areas of application were mainly water and wastewater and solid wastes, as it was in those areas that charges were usually applied.

82. PAP/RAC had supported pilot use of a number of economic instruments in some countries, through various activities. One aspect had been to strengthen capacity, public awareness and involvement, through courses and publication in six languages of a brochure on the advantages of using economic instruments.

83. The lessons learnt included the importance of public disclosure of the objectives and use of revenues and the importance of preparing a plan for use of revenues. The results included an improved database on economic instruments, capacity-building, awareness raising, political will for change; indications of changes in national legislation in support of economic instruments; and enhanced interest in economic instruments in the region.

84. Mr Civili described the new GEF Strategic Partnership, which would be a multidisciplinary initiative to assist the implementation of concrete actions for the implementation of the SAP MED and the SAP BIO. The partners to the Project included all MAP RACs, UNESCO, UNIDO, FAO, GWP-MED, WWF, UNEP/GPA and UNEP/RS, the World Bank and METAP. The initiative would have two components: a regional component for capacity-building and the creation of an investment fund managed by the World Bank to provide favourable loans for implementation of NAPs.

85. As ensuring sustainable financing to the process of implementation of SAP MED, SAP BIO and the NAPs was a fundamental element of the new Strategic Partnership, several initiatives were included in the work plan. As a result, MED POL was proposing to set a long-term mechanism/platform to bridge countries/projects with international financial institutions/donors.

86. General interest for the proposed mechanism was voiced by the participants. Clarification of its operation was requested from the representatives of Egypt, France, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Tunisia.

87. The representative of France also assured MED POL of the formal interest of FFEM in participating in the Strategic Partnership and assisting the implementation of the activities.

88. The representative of the European Commission briefly described the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership initiative Horizon 2020, which, he said, was addressing reduction of municipal and industrial pollution and management of waste. General agreement was voiced by the participants on the need to ensure effective synergy between the Horizon 2020 and the SAP MED and the NAPs as they were addressing the same long-term objectives.

#### **Agenda item 7. Other matters**

89. The representative of UNEP/GPA recalled that the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA would be in Beijing, China, in November 2006. The purpose of the meeting was to review the work done and to provide guidance on the programme of work for the UNEP/GPA Coordination Office for the period 2007-2011. On the agenda of the first day was consideration of the NAPs and the new GEF Strategic Partnership. She therefore invited countries to prepare reports on their NAPs, sharing their experiences and lessons learned. The reports would then be posted on the website dedicated to the meeting and might be used in the preparation of poster displays and other promotional materials.

90. In response to a suggestion that it might be better to amalgamate into a single document the experiences of countries in preparing their NAPs in order to demonstrate the scale of the work carried out by MAP as the flagship of the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, the representative of UNEP/GPA reiterated her interest in receiving separate reports. It would be advantageous to be able to see each country's individual experience of the process.

91. Mr Civili indicated that there would be a substantial MAP representation at the Beijing meeting, through the GEF Strategic Partnership and the NAPs. The Secretariat would also prepare some documents for the GPA website.

92. Responding to a request that countries be given the opportunity to correct the errors that had come to light in the documents prepared for the present meeting, Mr Civili explained that, apart from the documents UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/inf.3 and UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.289/inf.4, none of the meeting's documents would be made public and would not, therefore, be updated. Any corrections that Parties had brought to the attention of the Secretariat during the meeting would however be taken into account in the elaboration of future documents. Regarding correction of the two documents intended for publication, countries that had not already submitted their amendments to their Secretariat were requested to do so within the two weeks following the meeting.

93. The representative of Israel wished to highlight his country's Clean Coast project to combat marine litter pollution. He drew attention the website of the Israeli Ministry of the Environment which provided a more detailed account of the project.

#### **Agenda item 8. Conclusions and recommendations**

94. Mr Civili introduced a series of draft conclusions of the meeting and a proposal for the terms of the reference of the working group. The conclusions and terms of reference were amended and adopted as contained in annex III to the present report.

#### **Agenda item 9. Closure of the meeting**

95. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 15,30 hours on Saturday, 3 June 2006.

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**ANNEX II  
AGENDA**



- Agenda item 1. Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2. Election of Officers**
- Agenda item 3. Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 4. Review and analysis of the content of NAPs**
  - Item 4.1. Review of Baseline Budgets of pollutant emissions and releases
  - Item 4.2. Review of NAPs and analysis of pollution reduction actions, their cost and their correspondence with the SAP targets
- Agenda item 5. The application of the burden sharing principle in pollution reduction in the framework of SAP: options and implications**
- Agenda item 6. Ensuring financial sustainability to the long-term implementation of the NAPs**
- Agenda item 7. Other business**
- Agenda item 8. Conclusions and recommendations**
- Agenda item 9. Closure of the Meeting**





**ANNEX III**

**CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**



The MED POL coordinators and national experts, meeting in Durres, Albania, 1-3 June 2006 to review the process of the long-term implementation of the NAPs,

*Aware* of the importance of the contribution of the SAP adopted in 1997 and the related NAPs to regional pollution reduction and to implementation of the MSSD;

*Noting* with satisfaction that all Mediterranean countries have prepared the NDAs and NBBs that were used in preparing NAPs;

*Aware* that implementation of the NAPs, which will require adequate financial resources will enhance economic, technological and social development at local and national levels;

*Considering* the present socioeconomic differences between the Mediterranean countries, the varying ability of countries to achieve pollution reductions and their differential responsibilities vis-à-vis releases of specific pollutants,

*Bearing in mind* that the LBS amended Protocol provides that, within one year of its entry into force, the Contracting Parties shall adopt measures and regional programmes containing measures and timetables for their application;

*Considering* that Parties have to take appropriate measures to make use of the possibilities offered by the Horizon 2020 Initiative and the GEF Strategic Partnership in order to achieve the objectives of the LBS Protocol, SAP and NAPs;

*Taking into account* the draft analysis prepared by the Secretariat of the content of the NBBs and recognizing the value of the NBBs, but also their limitations;

*Considering* that the implementation of the NAPs represents a fundamental step towards actual reductions in pollution;

*Considering* the need to formulate a new strategy for sustainable implementation of the LBS Protocol, the SAP and the NAPs, on the basis of the analysis by the Secretariat of the risk that their regional targets will not be met by application of the present strategy;

*Aware* that, in view of the different contributions to environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities,

*Decided:*

- 1- to acknowledge the opportunity provided by the Secretariat to initiate discussion on how to apply a differentiated approach and on its implications;
- 2- to continue to elaborate a differentiated approach with a view to its application; and, to this end, to establish a Working Group to discuss technical and policy issues, as indicated in the terms of reference contained in the Annex;
- 3- to agree to the process of identifying priorities in the new strategy for implementation of the LBS Protocol, the SAP and the NAPs, in particular on the basis of the identified hot spots and relevant sectors of activity, according to Annex I to the LBS Protocol, and to entrust the Working Group with the task of further elaborating the prioritization;

- 4- to continue implementing the pollution reduction activities contained in the NAPs; and
- 5- to communicate to the Secretariat prior to the meeting of the Working Group any change to their NBB in relation to total releases.

### Terms of reference of the Working Group

#### Taking into account

that the new LBS Protocol, once it enters into force, will require Parties to adopt short-term and medium-term regional action plans and programmes containing measures and timetables that will become binding (hereinafter referred to as the new SAP);

that the last meeting of the Parties requested the Secretariat to formulate the elements that will constitute the above-mentioned measures and timetables, inspired from the current SAP MED, bearing in mind all relevant international developments;

that the MED POL evaluation carried out in 2005 indicated that Parties and the Secretariat should take any relevant measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of SAPs (both current and future ones);

that the polluter-pays, precautionary and differentiation principles are embedded in the principles and obligations of the LBS Protocol and the SAP; and

that the MED POL programme has generated a good deal of information on pollution loads to the Mediterranean Sea,

**The main task of the Working Group would be to propose how to apply the differentiated approach and to explore their implications, thus contributing to a smooth transition between the existing SAP and the new SAP as regards formulation of measures and timetables. The following subjects should be discussed and agreed upon by the Working Group:**

the nature of measures: load reduction?; environmental quality objectives? (combination of both)?; sectoral activities and/or individual substances?; priority areas?; links to the ecosystem approach?;

information requirements that would enable different choices for formulation of the measures and timetables and elaboration of the new SAP principles:

- identification of relevant international conventions, agreements and protocols in the field;
- the kind of additional information needed to supplement existing information (e.g. MED POL programme): socioeconomic conditions?, historical trends?, monitoring data?
- ways of using the information (existing and additional) to identify the relative positions of the Parties with respect to their contributions to the pollution load and their capacity to abate those contributions.

**On the basis of the outcome of the Working Group's deliberations, the Secretariat will elaborate propositions for the formulation of the new SAP which would be submitted to the Contracting Parties for consideration and possible adoption.**

The Working Group should be composed of representatives of all Parties and international experts.