



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/5
8 March 2007

ENGLISH



MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN



Second Meeting of the Advisory Committee
of the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation
of Biological Diversity (SAP BIO) in the Mediterranean Region

Tunis, 1 March 2007

**REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE OF THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (SAP BIO)
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

CONTENTS

MEETING REPORT

Annex I: List of participants

Annex II: Agenda of the Meeting

Annex III: Definitive composition of the SAP BIO Advisory Committee for the biennium 2006-2007

Annex IV: Progress made since the last Advisory Committee meeting to develop and implement the SAP BIO

Annex V: Options surveyed regarding the presentation to GEF of the Protected Areas Project Sub-Component

Annex VI: Recommendations of the Meeting

REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (SAP BIO) IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

The following organisations nominated representatives to act as Committee Members:

- The Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS)
- The Council of Europe (Secretary of the Bern Convention)
- The GEF Strategic Partnership (represented by the Project Management Unit at UNEP-MEDU)
- The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation)
- The UN-FAO
- The Coordinating Unit of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP MEDU)
- REMPEC (Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea)
- The World Wide Fund for Nature (formerly World Wildlife Fund) – WWF European Policy Programme – Int. Ass. Rome Branch (WWF Mediterranean Programme Office: WWF MedPO)
- The MedPAN (Network of Managers of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean)
- The MedWet Initiative, under the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971)
- The IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN Med)

The RAC/SPA acted as the Secretariat of the Meeting.

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

Introduction

At their Fourteenth Ordinary Meeting (Portoroz, November 2005), the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention invited the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA): (I) to further integrate the SAP BIO (Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region) into its programme of activities, (II) to prepare project proposals and seek funding for its implementation through the GEF support and also by exploring possibilities with external donors, and (III) to continue to cooperate with all relevant organizations, agencies and institutions for its implementation.

As a follow-up of these recommendations, the RAC/SPA is reactivating the implementation of the SAP BIO Programme and convened, on that line, its Second Advisory Committee Meeting.

Agenda item 1 – Opening of the Meeting

The Meeting was opened at 9.20 a.m. on Thursday, 1 March 2007, by Mr Abderrahmen Gannoun, Director of RAC/SPA, who welcomed participants and presented the context and objectives of the Meeting.

Agenda item 2 – Rules of Procedure

The Meeting agreed that the Rules of Procedure adopted for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its Protocols (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI) would apply *mutatis mutandis* to its deliberations.

Agenda 3 – Election of Officers

The Meeting elected a Chairman, Mr Jordi LLEONART (FAO), a Vice-Chairman, Mr Abderrahmen GANNOUN (RAC/SPA) and a Rapporteur, Ms Alessandra POME (WWF). The other members were introduced.

Agenda item 4 – Adoption of the Agenda and Organisation of Work

The Provisional Agenda, proposed by the Secretariat and distributed in annotated version as UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/2, was adopted by the members (Annex II).

Agenda item 5 – Advisory Committee membership for the current biennium

The composition and term of the Advisory Committee was discussed. The inclusion of other bodies was considered, some being economically, politically or otherwise attractive. It was decided that at the next Meeting the RAC/SPA Secretariat should present a list of further candidates which should be fairly restricted. For the present mandate (2006-2007) the definitive composition was defined as the members present at this Meeting (Annex III). It was also decided that the mandate should be adjusted to fit the MAP biennium (2008-2009).

Agenda item 6 – Presentation by RAC/SPA on the progress so far made on the implementation of SAP BIO

The Secretariat introduced document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/Inf.3 and reported on the progress made by RAC/SPA and partners in pursuing SAP BIO, both nationally (Algeria, Libya, Montenegro, Tunisia), at regional level, and on transversal support (Annex IV). Other members mentioned work that their organisations had done (by-catch, fisheries, etc). A suggestion was made that RAC/SPA should circulate a questionnaire to Committee members, using a common format, for information on current and planned projects/programmes that contribute to the implementation of SAP BIO. This information will enable RAC/SPA to prepare a report on such progress for the next SPA FP Meeting.

Regarding transversal support, RAC/SPA reported on the preparation of training courses on project design. It was recommended that these should adapt to the concerns of potential donors. FAO mentioned cooperation projects including training components and involving CopéMed, EastMed and MedSudMed. Since NAPs are usually large they require major donors, such as the World Bank.

The Meeting emphasized the importance of organising a meeting of donors called by MEDU to

raise sufficient funds for SAP BIO in its entirety.

Agenda item 7 – Presentation by RAC/SPA, FAO and WWF MedPO on the finalisation of the SAP BIO regional proposal to GEF through a PDF B

The PDF project partners RAC/SPA, FAO and WWF MedPO presented their contribution to the final version of the PDF B regional project component, portrayed in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/Inf.4 (Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Biological Biodiversity of Vulnerable Coastal and Marine Resources of the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem) and document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/Inf.5 (Mediterranean countries' needs for legal, policy and institutional reforms to strengthen the management of existing marine protected areas).

The FAO representative recalled that FAO and GFCM would lead fisheries activities within the GEF project. He reported that in 2006, 3 fisheries restricted areas were set up in IWs; through the GEF project, they could be further promoted as MPAs.

Regarding legal and policy issues for marine and coastal protected areas, the RAC/SPA representative said an initial study on legal and policy issues had been done, and was intended to trigger policy reforms to better promote and manage protected areas in the region. This study had been requested by MEDU to enrich the GEF project proposal. Asked by IUCN about the protected areas component and the lack of an ecoregional assessment to ensure ecological representativeness, RAC/SPA stated that habitats would be mapped in pilot areas, identifying those habitats that are most representative.

The MEDU officer urged that to assess SAP BIO progress, implementation indicators needed to be identified, plus other ways of reporting. It was suggested that partners, when reporting on the implementation of SAP BIO, include wherever possible indicators they have already identified.

Agenda item 8 – Presentation by the GEF/PDF B Regional Expert (UNEP-MAP) on the current situation of the Regional Project proposal and the biodiversity partners component

The representative for the GEF Project Coordinator presented her report about the funding situation. She referred to the strategic partnership between the World Bank Investment Fund and the UNEP-MAP regional component. She explained the various stages that the full project proposal had to go through (timetable, etc.), and the constraints that the biodiversity component (marine protected areas subcomponent) faced owing to RAF issues. Two alternative possibilities, she said, existed at present:

1. Extract biodiversity from the present submission
2. Submit the proposal including biodiversity as it is, but clearly indicating that we are not requesting the GEF Council to review this part of the project

She made it clear that there should be an attempt to mobilise co-funding for biodiversity in order to help the protected area activities remain within the full project.

Agenda item 9 – Discussion on the project proposal developed with GEF. Comparison with the SAP BIO full implementation needs, as adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention

Based on documents UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/Inf.4 and UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/4 (Priorities and future implementation of SAP BIO), a long debate took place about how to present requests to GEF – how should the MPA subcomponent appear? It was necessary to further work on convincing countries that, though the biodiversity component had a regional character, it would bring future benefits to them at country level.

A long, constructive debate followed after which it was agreed to ask for further information from the GEF Coordinator and UNEP-MAP on the feasibility, advantages and disadvantages of a number of options so as to enable also the Advisory Committee to contribute appropriate advice to RAC/SPA.

The options included removing the MPA sub-component, or leaving it in various permutations (Annex V).

It was agreed that there was a need that the countries consider the MPA subcomponent, and SAP BIO implementation in general, as having priority within RAF. The Committee proposed that RAC/SPA and MEDU encourage them to this end, perhaps using missions

Agenda item 10 – Review of priority actions of SAP BIO aimed to integrate these within the programme of RAC/SPA activities for the biennium 2008-2009. Modalities and means of implementing SAP BIO

On activities to be implemented through SAP BIO, shown in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/4, the Meeting was invited by the Secretariat to give its opinions and orientations to overcome constraints and activate ways and means of implementation to prepare activities for the coming biennium.

The Secretariat said that there was an imbalance between what had been done and what remained to be done, regarding implementation of the entire SAP BIO, and a problem of funding. Funding the SAP BIO required over US\$ 100 million, whereas available funds were much smaller for 15 years of activities. Countries that hoped for GEF funding had to consider their priorities; they should recognise SAP BIO as a priority and not let things drift. GEF was a catalyst in the sense that it assisted countries to implement actions but did not cover these fully. Some SAP BIO activities could be achieved through collaboration with outside partners – e.g. ballast water (REMPEC), tourism (UN-WTO), trade in species (CITES) etc. and increased synergy was hoped for.

The Meeting agreed that the implementation of SAP BIO was a task that should be shouldered by all the regional organisations working for the conservation of the Mediterranean. RAC/SPA was a coordinator, but it needed assistance from other bodies able to take the lead in specific fields for which they are specialised.

The members thought regional networks could collaborate on many projects. But as the scope of SAP BIO was so large, to implement SAP BIO in its entirety an Operational Plan was urgently needed to fill gaps and rationalise implementation.

It was suggested that a short Joint Operational Plan listing priorities, funding possibilities etc., should immediately be prepared as a road map and presented, including comments from the SAP BIO National Correspondents, to the forthcoming SPA FP meeting.

The MEDU representative stressed that SAP BIO required more resources and attention and

that MEDU could have a role in initiating suitable reforms.

RAC/SPA itself needed greater funds and more commitment by countries. National involvement can be very effective in the implementation of SAP BIO, and countries like Libya and Albania are examples of this. RAC/SPA and ACCOBAMS recalled successful work with Libya on 2 National Action Plans where no funding had come from outside, except for expertise supported by RAC/SPA. SAP BIO being a strategic plan to implement the Protocol, countries should not just wait for outside funding. The Meeting hoped that countries would show increased commitment; SAP BIO might figure as a top priority in their decision-makers' planning programmes.

Agenda item 11 – Any other matters

No other matters were raised.

Agenda item 12 – Conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting

It was concluded and agreed that an Operational Plan should be prepared, with eventual comments by National Correspondents, and submitted to the SPA FP ; that the document containing the four options depicted in Annex V would be sent at the end of the meeting to the GEF project manager(UNEP-MEDU) to elicit feedback (to be included in the same Annex), allowing improved advice from the Committee to RAC/SPA on the topic; It was agreed that RAC/SPA would collect information (Standard Questionnaire) from the members and their collaborators on the state of implementation of SAP BIO, including available indicators to inform the SPA focal points on the topic; It was agreed that a donors' conference is needed to achieve sound funding for SAP BIO. At this conference, countries should arrive with an updated investment portfolio. Regarding the Advisory Committee composition, the one shown in annex III was agreed for the present MAP biennium (2006-2007). It was decided that, at the next Advisory Committee meeting, the RAC/SPA Secretariat should present a list of further candidates which should be fairly restricted. It was also decided that the mandate should be adjusted to fit the MAP biennium (2008-2009).

The recommendations by the meeting to RAC/SPA regarding SAP BIO implementation are presented in Annex VI

Agenda item 13 – Closure of the Meeting

After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Meeting was closed by the Chairman at 7 p.m. on Thursday 2 March 2007.

ANNEXES

Annex I
List of Participants

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS OF THE BLACK SEA, THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND THE CONTIGUOUS ATLANTIC AREA (ACCOBAMS)

Mr. Chedly RAIS

Consultant
ACCOBAMS Secretariat
Jardin de l'UNESCO, les terrasses de Fontvieille
MC 98000 Monaco
Tel : 377 93 15 80 10
Fax : 377 93 15 42 08
chedly.rais@accobams.net

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Ms. Carolina LASEN DIAZ

Secretary of the Bern Convention
Biological Diversity Unit. Directorate General IV
Council of Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 (0)3 90 21 56 79
Fax +33 (0)3 88 41 37 51
E-mail: carolina.lasen-diaz@coe.int
www.coe.int/biodiversity

IUCN

Ms. Sophie MOREAU

Coordinatrice du Programme Aires Protégées
IUCN - World Conservation Union
IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation
Parque Tecnológico de Andalucía,
Calle Marie Curie 35
29590 Málaga - Spain
Tel.: (34) 952 028 430
Fax: (34) 952 028 145
Mobile: (34) 615 441 408
sophie.moreau@iucn.org
www.iucnmed.org

MEDWET INITIATIVE

Mr. Néjib BENESSIAH

Policy Advisor
MEDWET
Villa Kazouli, Kifissias & Lambraki 1.
Kifissia 145 61 Greece
Tel: +30 697 2273600
+30 210 8089270
Fax: +30 210 8089274
nejib@medwet.org

THE MEDITERRANEAN PROGRAMME OFFICE OF THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF MedPO)

Ms. Alessandra POME

Head of Marine Unit
WWF Med PO
Via Po 25/c
00198 Rome - Italy
Tel: 39 06 844 97 227/443
Fax: 39 06 841 38 66
apome@wwfmedpo.org

MedPAN: NETWORK OF MANAGERS OF MARINE PROTECTED AREAS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Ms. Alessandra POME

Head of Marine Unit
WWF Med PO
Projet MedPAN
WWF France
6, rue des Fabres
13001 Marseille - France
Tel : 33 4 96 11 69 46
Fax : 33 4 96 11 69 49
cpiante@wwf.fr

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

Ms. Ana Persic

Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences
Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)
1, rue Miollis
75732 Paris Cedex 15, France
Tel: (+33-1) 45.68.40.47
Fax : 0033 14 568 58 04
a.persic@unesco.org
www.unesco.org/mab

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (UN-FAO)

Mr. Jordi LLEONART

Fisheries Management and Conservation
Service (FIMF) F-321, FAO
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome - Italy
Tel: 39 06 5705 6354
Fax: 39 06 5705 3020
Jordi.Lleonart@fao.org

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME (UNEP)**

**COORDINATING UNIT FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN
(UNEP/MAP)**

P.O. Box 18019
48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
11635 Athens
Greece

Ms. Tatjana HEMA

Programme Officer
Tel: + 30 210 72 73 115
Fax: + 30 210 72 53 196/7
thema@unepmap.gr

**GEF PROJECT FOR THE STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM**

Ms. Giovanna AGOSTINELLI

GEF/PDF-B Regional Expert
Tel: + 30 210 72 73 146
Fax: + 30 210 72 53 196/7
giovanna.agostinelli@unepmap.gr

**REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR
SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS (RAC/SPA)**

Boulevard du Leader Yasser Arafat
B.P. 337 – 1080 Tunis Cedex
Tunisia
Tel: 216.71 206 649 / 485 / 651
Fax: 216.71 206 490
car-asp@rac-spa.org

Mr. Abderrahmen GANNOUN

Director
gannoun.abderrahmen@rac-spa.org

Ms. Christine PERGENT-MARTINI

Scientific Director
christine.pergent@rac-spa.org

Mr. Daniel CEBRIAN

SAP BIO Programme Officer
daniel.cebrian@rac-spa.org

Ms. Lobna BEN NAKHLA

Programme Officer
lobna.bennakhla@rac-spa.org

Ms. Souha EL ASMI

Programme Officer
souha.asmi@rac-spa.org

Mr. Atef OUERGHI

Programme Officer
atef.ouerghi@rac-spa.org

Ms. Naziha BEN MOUSSA

Administrative Assistant
naziha.benmoussa@rac-spa.org

**REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION
EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)**

Ms. Cristina FARCHI

Manoel Island
Gzira GZR 03
Malta
Tel : 356 21 337 296/8
Fax : 356 21 339 951
rempec@rempec.org

OBSERVERS

Mr Habib BEN MOUSSA

National Correspondent of Tunisia to SAP BIO
Programme
Directeur
Agence de Protection et d'Aménagement du
Littoral (APAL)
2, rue Mohamed Rachid Ridha
1002 Le Belvédère
TUNISIE
Tel: 216.71.840.177
Fax: 216.71.848.660
Mobile : 216.98 642 495
E-mail : h.bmoussa@apal.nat.tn

Annex II

Agenda

AGENDA

- Agenda item 1 - Opening of the Meeting
- Agenda item 2 - Rules of Procedure
- Agenda item 3 - Election of Officers
- Agenda item 4 - Adoption of the Agenda and organisation of work
- Agenda item 5 - Advisory Committee membership for the current biennium
- Agenda item 6 - Presentation by RAC/SPA on the progress so far made on the implementation of SAP BIO
- Agenda item 7 - Presentation by RAC/SPA, FAO and WWF MedPO on the finalisation of the SAP BIO regional proposal to GEF through a PDF B

Annex III
Definitive composition of the SAP BIO Advisory Committee
for the biennium 2006-2007

ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

COORDINATING UNIT FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (UNEP/MAP)

PO Box 18019
48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
11635 Athens
Greece
Tel: 30 72 73 123
Fax: 30 72 53 196/7

GEF PROJECT FOR THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP OF THE MEDITERRANEAN LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM

P.O. Box 18019
48 Vassileos Konstantinou Avenue
11635 Athens
Greece
Tel: +30 210 72 73 122
Fax: + 30 210 72 53 196/7

REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS (RAC/SPA)

Boulevard du Leader Yasser Arafat
B.P. 337 – 1080 Tunis Cedex
Tunisia
Tel: 216.71 206 649 / 485 / 651
Fax: 216.71 206 490

REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)

Manoel Island
Gzira GZR 03
Malta
Tel : 356 21 337 296/8
Fax : 356 21 339 951

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (UN-FAO)

Fisheries Management and Conservation
Service (FIMF)
F-321, FAO
Viale delle Termi di Caracalla
00153 Rome - Italy
Tel: 39 06 5705 6354
Fax: 39 06 5705 3020

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION UNESCO

Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme
1, rue Miollis
Paris 75732 Cedex 15
France
Tel : 0033 14 568 40 67
Fax : 0033 14 568 58 04

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS OF THE BLACK SEA, THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND THE CONTIGUOUS ATLANTIC AREA (ACCOBAMS)

ACCOBAMS Secretariat
Jardin de l'UNESCO, les terrasses de Fontvieille
MC 98000 Monaco
Tel : 377 93 15 80 10
Fax : 377 93 15 42 08

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Biological Diversity Unit / Unité de la diversité
biologique
Directorate General IV / Direction Générale IV
Council of Europe / Conseil de l'Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 (0)3 90 21 56 79
Fax +33 (0)3 88 41 37 51

IUCN

IUCN - World Conservation Union
IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation
Parque Tecnológico de Andalucía,
Calle Marie Curie 35
29590 Málaga – Spain
Tel. +34.95.202.8430
Fax. +34.95.202.8145

MEDWET INITIATIVE

Villa Kazouli, Kifissias & Lambraki 1.
Kifissia 145 61 Greece
Tel: +30 697 2273600
+30 210 8089270
Fax: +30 210 8089274

**THE MEDITERRANEAN PROGRAMME
OFFICE OF THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR
NATURE (WWF MedPO)**

WWF Med PO
Via Po 25/c
00198 Rome - Italy
Tel: 39 06 844 97 358
Fax: 39 06 841 38 66

**MedPAN: NETWORK OF MANAGERS OF
MARINE PROTECTED AREAS IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN**

MedPAN
WWF France
6, rue des Fabres
13001 Marseille - France
Tel : 33 4 96 11 69 46
Fax : 33 4 96 11 69 49

Annex IV

**Progress made since the last Advisory Committee
meeting
to develop and implement the SAP BIO**

PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE LAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (Tunis, 19 April 2006) TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE SAP BIO

Introduction

RAC/SPA is working to launch the process for the implementation of SAP BIO. The 2nd meeting of the SAP BIO Advisory Committee (Tunis, 1 March 2007) has been organised in this context.

Background

SAP BIO is a fundamental baseline strategy to preserve the Mediterranean Sea biodiversity in the coming years, adopted by 21 riparian countries, plus the European Union. Since its adoption on 2003, SAP BIO launching has not taken place owed mainly to the fact that the expected funding for the preparatory phase had not been obtained, after being attempted since late 2003. A new different approach initiated by GEF, allowing the integration of SAP BIO activities within a new “**Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem**”, extended in time the initial planning by MAP to launch SAP BIO, but opened new expectations regarding the possibility of obtaining GEF support on 2006 both for SAP BIO and SAP MED implementation launching for 12 of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention, plus the Palestinian Authority.

SAP BIO activities at national level along the bienium 2006-2007

Direct support to National Action plans implementation

Several Parties have asked RAC/SPA for direct support for the implementation of their NAPs and their request has been attended as follows:

Algeria

National Action Plan for setting up a programme to collect data on the Monk seal

RAC/SPA supported the University of Oran for a field mission in the western coastal area of Algeria., in line with the implementation of the National Action Plan prepared by this country within the framework of the SAP BIO Project. The mission was carried out by a national team to identify the eventual critical habitats for the monk seal.

National Action Plan for setting up a network for monitoring of Posidonia oceanica meadows

In partnership with the Total Corporate Foundation for the Biodiversity and the Sea,

RAC/SPA elaborated a 3-year Project to develop the inventorying, mapping and monitoring of *Posidonia* meadows in four southern Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Turkey).

Libya

National Action Plan on proposed new marine and coastal protected areas and national parks

The development of MPAs in Libya aims at identifying sites of conservation interest along the Libyan coast and setting up a mid-term programme for establishing a representative network of MPAs.

A process for the creation of two first marine and coastal protected areas was launched, in Libya. This activity is implemented in the framework of the joint MoC between EGA, RAC/SPA, IUCN and WWF. It aims at identifying sites of conservation interest along the Libyan coast and setting up a mid-term programme for establishing a representative network of MPAs.

In this direction, a field mission was carried out in June 2006 to collect data on the two identified sites: Farwa Lagoon and Gara Island. The proposal concerning these two sites was finalised end 2006. Following the same methodology used for the preparation of these two first proposals, EGA will be preparing, beginning 2007, three other proposals concerning two islands in the Gulf of Sirte and the coastal lagoon of Ain Al Ghazala.

National Action Plan for the conservation of marine and coastal birds

In order to identify the existing colonies of *Sterna bengalensis*, which seem to exist only in Libya within the Mediterranean, a special field mission was conducted in Ghara and Elba Islands and Benghazi Lake (Libya, 1-7 August 2006). A second comprehensive survey and census in Libya was carried out in January 2007 in order to search for the endangered and threatened Mediterranean bird species; to build a better idea of bird density and diversity at certain important sites; to raise awareness among local people about waterbirds and wetlands, and the threats they face; and to strengthen ornithological research and data recording structures in Libya.

National Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles and their habitats

Nesting sites monitoring was undertaken in Sirte (Libya) The preliminary results of the survey, show that the Libyan coast might hold the biggest nesting population of loggerhead turtle in the Mediterranean.

Montenegro

National Action Plan on inventory and mapping of sensitive areas

Agreement has been reached with the Montenegrin Ministry of Tourism and Environment to support initial actions for this Plan on 2007

National Action Plan for the identification of new protected areas needing appropriate status of protection on the coastal zone

In the same line, catalysing actions for the creation of Katici island MPA as the first MPA of this country will start on 2007.

Tunisia

National Action Plan for a pilot monitoring of Posidonia meadows

This Action Plan was supported through its consideration for the four countries project mentioned above (under Algeria title heading).

Transversal support to National Action Plans implementation

The activities included in the regional project (aimed to a general support for protected areas management improvement, including training in selected local sites) have a different character from eventual national proposals which Parties may address to GEF through the Investment Fund or to other donors, for the creation or reinforcement of specific MPAs or for the implementation of the National Action Plans (NAPs) developed by each country as part of SAP BIO. Those national projects need stronger targeting of work and funding at national level, focused even in infrastructure.

In this context, RAC/SPA is going to provide assistance to countries for the preparation of funding requests aimed at implementing the NAPs of SAP BIO: Expertise on Project Cycle Approach and Logical Framework will be raised through a RAC/SPA seminar cycle addressed to officers from the Parties¹. The goal of the seminars is to improve those officers capacity to properly formulate project proposals to donors to address the implementation of their SAP BIO NAPs and other priority actions on Biodiversity. The cycle will comprise two seminars, one in English and another one in French both on the above subject, intended for Spring 2007.

SAP BIO activities at Regional level since the first SAP BIO Advisory Committee meeting

¹ riparian countries may have the opportunity to search for additional funding to undertake SAP BIO agreed actions from donors supporting the region. The GEF beneficiary countries plus three recent EU members (Cyprus, Slovenia and Malta) prepared SAP BIO National action Plans as well as priority issues to be addressed to preserve the Mediterranean biodiversity in a national context. The main constraint identified (expressed during the SAP BIO National correspondents meeting which took place last spring 2006 in Alicante, Spain) is the need of qualification on project design within the state agencies in charge of implementing the SAP BIO.

The main activities developed by RAC/SPA, in collaboration with its partners, since the first SAP BIO Advisory Committee meeting up to end February 2007 were the following:

The activity regarding SAP BIO, in particular through the support provided by GEF to develop a PDF B Project was focused on preparing a full sized regional project addressing:

- the development of a network of marine protected areas in the Mediterranean,
- the support to the strengthening of existing MPAs
- the support to the creation of new MPAs
- conservation and sustainable management of vulnerable or endangered fish and invertebrates, and sustainable related fisheries

A meeting of SAP BIO National Correspondents (Alicante, Spain, 12-13 May 2006) was organised to consult with them about the next steps to take on the implementation of SAP BIO (Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.292/4).

The drafts for the Full Sized Project topics related to MPAs network, new protected areas, fisheries and transversal activities were prepared through the collaboration between WWF, RAC/SPA and FAO. The activities related to the MedPAN network were developed in close cooperation with the MedPAN/WWF France Project Coordinator.

RAC/SPA acted as official coordinator, on behalf of MAP, amongst WWF MedPO, FAO, MedPAN and all the consultants engaged in the preparation of the biodiversity proposal for the Full Sized Project, including mutual reviews of others' works. Fluent communication with other PDF B project partners was maintained, notably through MAP

Two meetings with MAP, FAO, GFCM and WWF MedPO took place at FAO Headquarters in Rome (7 – 10 June 2006 and 26 – 30 June 2006) addressed to work on the merging of the different components of biodiversity for the elaboration of the PDF brief (development of existing protected areas, creation of new ones, networking, improved fisheries management to benefit biodiversity) and its further adaptation to GEF requirements

An expert on GEF proposals, was engaged by FAO and RAC/SPA to aid the final formatting of the biodiversity proposal to the GEF requirements. The final draft for the Full Sized Project component related to biodiversity was timely prepared. It was sent to MAP end July 2006, and is shown as Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/Inf.4, including the review inputs provided by countries. The draft was merged by MAP with the components sent by the other members of the Strategic Partnership along August

Additional reviews and thorough detailing regarding the GEF project on budgeting of activities, staff costs, etc, requested from UNEP-DGEF were done in collaboration with GEF- MAP officers. Refined indicators requested by UNEP DGEF to monitor future performance of the project were defined and their baseline values were

estimated

Activities which would benefit the 12 GEF beneficiary countries have been designed. In addition, and in order to be fully functional, the MPAs proposal designed needed to have field activities, either in already existing marine and coastal protected areas or in the ones which the countries have expressed their willing to create, within the adopted SAP BIO document and/or their national reports. That method will allow to facilitate from MAP some practical actions in each country accordingly (training, technical support, etc.).

The final draft of the whole full project and its annexes were transmitted to all the parties for eventual comments. A review of the pilot actions proposed on biodiversity was undertaken with the collaboration of the beneficiary countries and amendments requested by countries were integrated.

Additionally to all the above, an assessment by two regional experts appointed by RAC/SPA was developed on Mediterranean countries' needs for legal, policy and institutional reforms to strengthen the creation and management of marine protected areas. The legal assessment was finished on November 2006 and is presented as Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/Inf.5

Overview of the Regional Component: Implementation of agreed actions for the protection of the environmental resources of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas”.

The Project includes one Biodiversity component entitled '**Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Biological Diversity of Vulnerable Coastal and Marine Resources of the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem**' (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.309/Inf.4).

The overall development objective of this project is to 'maintain the long-term function of the Mediterranean LME through the use of an ecologically-coherent network of protected areas combined with the sustainable use of renewable marine resources'. This will effectively expand the current MedPAN MPA management 'network' to include the rest of the Mediterranean to cover as yet unprotected regionally important areas of biodiversity and vulnerability. This project essentially provides an implementation phase to the Strategic Action Plan for the Conservation of Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity (SAP BIO) that was adopted by the party countries to the Barcelona Convention (all the Mediterranean riparian countries) in 2003.

Being a GEF project, beneficiary countries are 12 of the Mediterranean Parties to the Barcelona Convention (i.e. Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey); plus the Palestinian Authority

Priority actions will depend upon a number of short-term measures that will be developed and disseminated through replicable demonstration activities in representative areas of the Mediterranean. Longer-term sustainability will be ensured

through (I) a series of targeted capacity-building and enabling activities that will focus on both national and sub-regional levels to improve capacity for policy development and its subsequent transfer into recurrent management, as well as (II) ensuring the financial and legislative support that underpins their implementation.

To satisfy the overall development objective, the project has two Sub-components that are designed to complement the twin thrust of the GEF Biodiversity Focus Area OP2 Program objectives: (I) *Sub-Component 1: Conservation of Coastal and Marine Diversity through Development of a Mediterranean MPA Network* and (II) *Sub-Component 2: Promote the sustainable use of fisheries resources in the Mediterranean through ecosystem-based management approaches.*

Main focuses of action within the Regional Component regarding biodiversity and fishing resources:

Development of a functional network of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas

- Establishing regional mechanisms for a co-ordinated network
- Planning an extended MPA network
- Improving MPA management
- Developing a regional MPA monitoring system
- Helping to ensure financial suitability of MPAs
- Support to legal updating, harmonization and governance improvement

Sustainable use of fisheries resources

- Regional ecosystem approach to fisheries management
- By-catch reduction at fleet level
- Addressing unsustainable fishing practices in MPAs

The major expected results from the implementation of these two components include (I) the strengthening of the effective conservation of regionally important coastal and marine biodiversity through the creation of an ecologically coherent MPA network in the Mediterranean region; and (II) increasing the ability of coastal nations to utilise coastal and high seas resources through the adoption of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management and the application of targeted interventions to reduce by-catch and other unsustainable fishing practices.

Current situation: process followed by the full project at GEF level

The full regional project (all partners included) was sent to UNEP/DGEF on September 2006 to get their review comments, aimed to eventually amend it before being considered for discussion on the December Council. The achievement of the deadline was fully acknowledged by GEF (International Waters) to all the partners. However, through the consultation between the Officer-in-Charge of UNEP/DGEF and GEF CEO, it was confirmed that the workplan for the December 2006 Council would be small in size. Further, there were several issues related to Resource Allocation Framework in biodiversity and climate change that needed further clarification before relevant projects could be appropriately reviewed.

With the above in mind, UNEP/DGEF management had to estimate that the Mediterranean Strategic Partnership - Regional Project, which is a multi-focal area regional project of a rather large budget would not fit into the proposed workplan constitution for the December Council. UNEP/DGEF communicated to MAP that the project, once revised, would be sent to the GEF Council for evaluation at the first meeting to be held in 2007, planned for May.

The full regional project (all partners included) sent to UNEP/DGEF had to go through a re-pipelining exercise (an equivalent to being pre-selected again as a project feasible to be supported) by submitting new information, because of changes in GEF after the new Chief Executive Officer took office. The Mediterranean seemed not to be among the new main priorities of GEF, but thanks to the efforts of GEF officers at International Waters in Washington, UNEP-DGEF at Nairobi and last but not least good GEF/MAP project management at Athens the project succeeded the re-pipelining. That is very important, since a long further delay to get GEF support to the full project has been avoided this way.

The difficulties faced had nothing to do with the quality of the Project Brief, which was never questioned. In fact, the proposal was judged to be excellent both by UNEP and GEF internal mechanisms (STAP Review, DROC Committee, Peer reviewer, GEFSEC). The problem was purely a matter of new priorities aroused at GEF.

However, through the consultation between the Officer-in-Charge of UNEP/DGEF and the new GEF Chief Executive Officer, it was confirmed that there are still several issues related to Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) in Biodiversity and in Climate Change that need further clarification in 2007, before relevant projects can be appropriately supported through this mechanism. That restriction affects the biodiversity component of the full project, notably the protected areas subcomponent. In addition, the budget has undergone further cut.

The full project may have 10.5 millions USD from IW and 2.9 millions from POPs. Originally its budget was as follows: 10.9 millions from IW, 5 millions from Biodiversity, 650 thousands from Land Degradation and 2.9 millions from POPs.

That means that components depending on Land Degradation and Biodiversity funds cannot receive the GEF funding required at this moment. The problem affects among others: the management component, the UNESCO subcomponent and our protected areas (RAC/SPA and WWF) subcomponent. The subcomponent related to fisheries (FAO) may keep its course by passing together with the components initially included within the International Waters focal area; but the protected areas section of the Mediterranean Strategic Partnership - Regional Project, is affected by the RAF and keeps depending in GEF Biodiversity area.

This does not necessarily mean that the protected areas subcomponent has to be suppressed from the full project (again the cutting of GEF funds input has nothing to do with the quality of the proposal but with the RAF, which will keep the GEF-Biodiversity Focal Area funds not available for the moment). If it can be supported by co-financing it may remain in the full project. Such co-financing can be also in-kind.

If the beneficiary countries certify before mid March 2007 their willing to provide in-

kind contribution to the protected areas subcomponent the subcomponent can be kept within the full project already pipelined. That is crucial to keep the biodiversity activities accepted within the full project and facilitating that whenever the RAF issues are clarified at GEF, the biodiversity project will not have to pass again through a long and difficult selection procedure. Further written engagement of funding contributed by external donors will reinforce even more the permanence of the protected areas activities in the full project.

Finally, regarding the time schedule, the full project will be re-submitted on March 2007 for the May Council. The active involvement of the beneficiary countries is crucial at this date, so as to allow the biodiversity (protected areas) subcomponent to be kept within the full project.

Annex V

Options surveyed regarding the presentation to GEF of the Protected Areas Project Sub-Component

Options surveyed regarding the presentation to GEF of the Protected Areas Project Sub-Component

The Committee proposed the following four options for analysis of their feasibility, advantages and disadvantages by the UNEP/MAP Secretariat and the GEF PDF-B project manager, in order to allow the Committee to give advise to RAC/SPA on the most suitable option for the MPAs sub-component:

1. Extract MPA sub-component from the present submission (June 2007) and submit it to the GEF separately, once the next RAF is approved
2. Submit the proposal as it is, including MPAs sub-component, but clearly indicating that we are not requesting GEF Council to review this part of the project (waiting for RAF). The co-funding raised by UNEP/MAP-RAC/SPA and WWF should be allocated to the MPA sub-component
3. Submit the proposal as it is, including MPA sub-component , and ask for a potential contribution from International Waters or other GEF Focal Areas to support seed activities of this sub-component by also using co-financing possibilities until the RAF is approved
4. Submit the full project to the GEF Council of November 2007, provided that there is no risk of losing GEF support for the Strategic Partnership

The GEF PDF-B project manager promptly answered the information request done by RAC/SPA with the letter included in this annex:



UNEP



United Nations Environment Programme Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement

COORDINATING UNIT FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

UNITE DE COORDINATION DU PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA MEDITERRANEE

Ref. F8b/57/716

5 March 2007.

Subject: Requests of the SAP BIO Advisory Committee regarding the GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem.

Dear Mr. Gannoun,

In reply to your letter dated 2nd of March, and addressed to Mr. Paul Mifsud, UNEP/MAAP Co-ordinator, regarding requests for clarification by the SAPBIO Advisory Committee on the SP for the Mediterranean LME, I have the pleasure to provide you with the following comments:

First of all, I regret for not being able to attend the meeting as all the questions mentioned in your letter on behalf of the SAP BIO Advisory Committee would have been clarified on the spot. In any case, I take this as a good opportunity to clarify things and I am happy to provide you with the following comments:

As you very well know, RAF allocation to the countries is still being discussed between GEF's CEO and individual countries. This process is far from being finalized, as to my knowledge two out of the thirteen countries involved in our project have been so far contacted, namely Albania and Montenegro. In view of this on-going process, countries are not in a position to allocate funds from their GEF allocation (which as I said is still unknown) to the Biodiversity Component of our Project.

The various options at hand on how to proceed with the submission of the project to the next GEF Council in June (submission deadline 23rd of March) were extensively discussed between UNEP/DGEF in Nairobi, GEFSEC in Washington and PDF-B Management Unit in Athens. It was decided that the way to proceed would be to submit the whole Regional Component of the SP for the Mediterranean LME including the Biodiversity Component but with one very important closure: It will be clearly stated that only the parts related to IW and POPs are being submitted for review and approval. It will also be very clearly stated that the Biodiversity Component is still there (as an information) text to show what was the original intention of the project, namely the implementation of both SAPMED and SAPBIO.

It was judged that if we extracted at this stage the Biodiversity (SAPBIO) component and submitted only the remaining part (SAPMED) this would have two main consequences :

- Firstly it would severely distort the whole intention of the Project which was conceived to support both SAPs. The fact that SAPBIO is not officially submitted is a case of “force majeure” imposed by the delays in RAF allocations to the countries.
- Secondly, it was judged both by Mr. Nakamura and Mr. Merla that if the Biodiversity is completely detached from the rest and be submitted as a totally independent project it would have very few chances of being accepted as it would loose any connection with the other activities already present in the project such as ICM, Fisheries, Sustainable financing mechanism, Replication Strategy etc.

Based on the above arguments, it has been decided that we would follow option 2 of your letter. Option 1 was not considered as being a good option. Option 3 is not workable as it is impossible to allocate funds from other GEF Focal areas to Biodiversity, since our Biodiversity is not (and cannot at this stage) being requested to be reviewed. Finally, option 4 is totally out of question as the later we submit, the fewer chances we have to go through.

I am very pleased to note that the efforts of SPARAC to seek co-financing from Spain (Madrid and Andalusia) are very promising and that an important amount might be soon secured. If this is the case, and if we succeed in our contacts with FFEM as well, then activities in our Project's BD Component could start together with the rest of the project without having to wait for the RAF allocations from the countries.

I kindly ask you to bring the content of this letter to the attention of the other members of the SAPBIO Advisory Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Alex Lascaratos
Project Manager
GEF PDF-B

Annex VI

Recommendations by the meeting to RAC/SPA regarding SAP BIO implementation

Recommendations by the meeting to RAC/SPA regarding SAP BIO implementation

In order to mitigate the problems encountered to launch SAP BIO since its adoption (on November 2003), the advise of the Committee is that RAC/SPA and MEDU should concentrate efforts on pursuing the following:

- Political engagement by countries to sound implementation of the SAP BIO considering it among their priorities and envisaging the necessary human and financial needs
- Promoting the integration of the priority activities identified within the SAP BIO project into all the Contracting Parties
- Favouring the identification and development of projects to be implemented by countries unified by thematic and/or sub-geographical fields, and eventually merging within them complementary actions on species included in current regional action plans, so as to further apply the Ecosystem approach also to MAP species-focused plans (cetaceans, turtles, birds, etc)
- Mobilisation of other sources and mechanisms for financing the SAP BIO to reach the real level of means and support needed for a full implementation. It was agreed that a donors' conference is needed to achieve sound funding for SAP BIO. At this conference, countries should arrive with an updated investment portfolio
- Elaborating an operational plan for the implementation of the whole SAP BIO. The operational plan should (I) be a joint initiative of the relevant organisations (in particular those participating in the Advisory Committee), (II) provide for the sharing of responsibility among the organisations (each organisation would ideally lead the implementation of one component of SAP BIO) and (III) include an updated investment portfolio whenever initial financial engagement by donors has been achieved. The sharing of responsibilities might be elucidated within a one-month timeframe, in order to allow RAC/SPA to present the initial proposal to its next meeting of National Focal Points

