



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

Proposal by the Mediterranean Action Plan for a Partnership/Initiative (Type II Outcomes) in the framework of the WSSD

Title: Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development for the Mediterranean: Policy and Tools

The Mediterranean is potentially one of the eco-regions in which the concept of sustainable development could be implemented, as a regional test case, due to its rapid development, the scarcity of its natural resources, the different levels of development between riparian States, and also because of certain quite spectacular developments which are very specific to the region, such as tourism development and competition for the coastal region.

The Mediterranean context

Both the Mediterranean Sea and the countries fringing it, particularly their coastal areas, face heavy pressures, most of them the result of human activities related to uncontrolled and rapid development. The resident population of the Mediterranean countries has jumped from 246 million in 1960 to 427 million in the year 2000. Urbanisation, overcrowding in coastal regions, evolution of consumption patterns, intensive agriculture, mass tourism, and unrestricted coastal area development combine to assault the natural environment - marine, terrestrial and water resources. These factors interact to cause pollution loads that endanger peoples' quality of life. Pollution hot spots are typically found in coastal areas with semi-enclosed gulfs and bays near important harbours, big cities and industrial areas. They constitute a major Mediterranean problem and a potential threat.

An important quantity of untreated wastewater and many toxic substances are discharged into the semi-enclosed Mediterranean Sea. Transport and industries cause atmospheric pollution that is damaging to human health, nature and archaeological sites. Increasing sea transportation of oil and hazardous materials poses threats of accidental pollution. The delicate Mediterranean ecosystem is disturbed in a variety of ways from the contamination of fish by industrial effluents to the destruction of the habitats of endangered species by tourism.

Through the UNEP/Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea and the European Union have been cooperating since 1975 to improve their common Mediterranean environment.

Over the past 25 years, UNEP/MAP has evolved in response to the improved understanding of the close relationships between environment, conservation and development. It has expanded its remit, and no longer focuses solely on Mediterranean Sea pollution but also concerns itself with pollution generated on land due to the development process with integrated coastal zone planning and natural resource management as the key tools through which solutions are being sought. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, global developments in environmental approaches confirmed and supported MAP's widening scope, in particular, Agenda 21. MAP responded in 1994 with the presentation of Agenda MED 21, adapting

Agenda 21 to the Mediterranean context and incorporating the Rio Declaration Principles in the revised Barcelona Convention (1995).

Throughout the history, the regular and intense exchanges and inter-relations between the riparian countries, which created a series of common concerns and a certain sense of Mediterranean identity, have characterized the Mediterranean. This provided a solid basis for the cooperation in the region, notably through UNEP/MAP, for the protection of the sea in the beginning and progressively for the protection of the marine and coastal environment as well as for the promotion of sustainable development. Early enough and certainly in the 90s, the Contracting Parties have developed a real sense of ownership for their MAP, providing it with regular financial support and showing real interest in the preparation, planning, monitoring and evaluation of its programme of activities. This positive situation has then provided opportunities for substantial additional financial resources either from partners on a voluntary basis or through projects, mainly from the European Union and GEF

Since the creation of MAP and mainly since the result of its activities in late 80s and early 90s, several regional programmes were established, aiming at further promoting MAP objectives through more practical projects; among these programmes the most visible ones are the Mediterranean Environment Technical Assistance Programme (METAP) and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and its Short and Medium Term Priority Environmental Action Programme (SMAP).

The establishment of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development/MCSD in 1996 demonstrated the commitment of MAP Contracting Parties to further working towards integrating environment and development in the entire region. The MCSD is composed of 36 members representing the 20 Mediterranean Countries, the EC, the NGOs (5), the Socio-Economic Actors (5) and the Local Authorities (5), the later 15 being renewed every two years to ensure a wider representation of the Civil Society and Major Groups. The recent preparation and endorsement of the Strategic Review for sustainable development in the Mediterranean together with the decision to prepare a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development as a contribution to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the follow up of the WSSD, are two other indicators of the willingness of Mediterranean Partners to protect their environment and promote sustainable development.

These commitments were clearly expressed in the recent Mediterranean Declaration for the Johannesburg Summit prepared as a contribution to the preparatory process of the WSSD, by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention at their recent meeting (Monaco, 14-17 November 2001).

A quarter-century of activities has seen lot of progress and achievements, but there is still a long way to go towards a satisfactory protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development in the Mediterranean. To progress further towards our goals, a series of achievements are required; the proposed Partnership/Initiative is expected to contribute to the further promotion and implementation of sustainable development in the Mediterranean Region, in conformity with the Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration goals.

This proposal is a completely new partnership initiative, agreed upon by concerned partners as a contribution to the implementation of Agenda 21 and a contribution to the preparatory process and then the follow up of WSSD; if necessary, it would be reviewed in line with the results of the Johannesburg Summit.

Name of Partnership/Initiative: Preparation of a Regional Sustainable Development Strategy for the Mediterranean: Policy and Tools

Expected date of initiation: September 2002

Expected date of completion: - December 2005 for the preparation and adoption of the Strategy by concerned Partners;
- December 2010 for the implementation of specific time-bound targets.

Partners involved:

Governments: 20 Mediterranean bordering Countries, Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

Intergovernmental Organisations: UNEP/Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), European Commission, as Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention and Partner to METAP and EMP/SMAP, World Bank, UNDP and EIB as METAP Partners.

Major Groups:

Some 20 Organisations from the Major Groups and Civil Society will be involved in the preparation of the Strategy, most of them being already active Partners to MAP and the MCSD such as the networks of the Mediterranean NGOs (MIO-ECSDE, MEDFORUM, ENDA, Friends Of the Earth, RAED, most of them already accredited to ECOSOC), network of Local Authorities (MEDCITIES) and of Private Sector (ASCAME, ICC, etc)

Leading Partner: UNEP/MAP (Mediterranean Action Plan).

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Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative:

The main objective of this proposal is to prepare a Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development for the Mediterranean, involving all concerned actors, most of them already active partners in MAP and the MCSD; in addition to the Mediterranean Countries, this initiative will be actively supported by Mediterranean representatives of the Major Groups and Civil Society, as well as, Regional Actors such as EMP/SMAP and METAP (these last two Partners are expected to provide substantial financial support for the preparation and later on the implementation of the Regional Strategy).

The preparatory process of this Regional Strategy will make appropriate use of relevant information and analysis, available at regional and national levels, notably the Strategic Review prepared recently as an assessment of activities related to Sustainable Development at national and regional levels in relation with the implementation of Agenda 21, following the CSD request in the framework of the preparatory process for the WSSD. This Regional Strategy will focus on relevant policies and practical tools necessary for building up a coherent Strategic Programme with time bound and implementable results.

The MCSD has proved to be an interesting forum for dialogue and partnership. By promoting its visibility at the global level, the MCSD could be strengthened and its regional case as a bridge between global and national/local levels could be shared with other regions that could draw lessons and adapt similar structures to their contexts.

Moreover, building on its large knowledge of the environment and development inter-relations in the Region, as well as the commitments of the Mediterranean Partners, the preparation of the Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development could be launched soon; its preparatory process will be a participatory one, involving all concerned actors, most of them being members of or partners to the MCSD; such process will then induce countries and concerned partners to prepare National/Local Sustainable Development Strategies. The Regional Strategy will also include a series of time-bound targets.

Expected results:

- Better preparation at national and regional levels to ensure that the environment and trade policies are mutually supportive, in view of the Euro-Mediterranean Free-Trade area;
- Better coordination and use of national and external investments in the Region;
- Strengthening of the MCSD through a stronger implication of concerned Major Groups;
- Exchange of experience among multi-stakeholders on sustainable development;
- Publications related to and international workshops on the Mediterranean Regional case for exchange of experience and possible replication;
- Awareness raising and capacity building in the field of sustainable development;
- Coherence between regional and national approaches for sustainable development;
- Strengthening of existing networks (MAP, METAP, SMAP, Major Groups networks) and interlinkages among them.

Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievements:

To induce and assist Mediterranean Countries and partners in:

- Establishing National Environment and Development Observatories or similar information and decision making tool (5-8 countries by 2010);
- Establishing Cleaner Production Centres (7-10 countries by 2010);
- Preparing and implementing Local Governance through coastal management and participatory approach (5-8 countries by 2010);
- Halting the decline of biodiversity by managing specially protected areas of Mediterranean importance;
- Developing and implementing plans for integrated management of the water demand, putting special emphasis on drinking water and irrigation;
- Encouraging the establishment of National Commissions on Sustainable Development and the adoption of National Sustainable Development Strategies;
- To develop and implement a Regional Strategic Action Plan on Tourism and Sustainable Development (by 2006);
- To prepare and implement a Regional Information, Awareness and Public Participation Strategy (by 2006).

Coordination and Implementation mechanisms:

Under the supervision of the Steering Committee of the MCSD, the implementation will be coordinated by the Secretariat with the support of its members.

Following the WSSD in Johannesburg, a group of experts would meet by the end of September 2002 to launch the preparatory process for the preparation of a Mediterranean Strategy starting with the elaboration of coherent "orientations" related to the three pillars (more precisely these would concern: "economic development and social equity", "natural resources and environment", "policies, institutions and governments") in close coordination so as to give the necessary importance to integration and synergy among them.

A major meeting of qualified experts representing all concerned partners would be then organized in early 2003 to discuss and agree on the "orientations" for the Strategy before launching the detailed preparation of the Strategy itself that will be in any case a large participatory exercise involving all stakeholders.

Arrangements for funding:

US\$ 100,000 from MAP budget and US\$ 100,000 from Spain for 2002-2003 for launching the process. Similar amounts expected from MAP budget and from donor countries in addition to relevant projects to be submitted to funding agencies, such as: the European Commission, the World Bank, UNDP and the European Investment Bank.

Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer:

Throughout the period of the project, several workshops for exchange of information, awareness raising and capacity building will be organized on specific issues such as:

- Preparation of national Sustainable Development Strategies;
- Exchange of experience on governance for sustainable development at the national and local level;
- Planning for sustainable development policies in relation to some critical fields: tourism, urban and rural development;

Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and /or regional:

The preparation of the Regional Sustainable Development Strategy will take into account the developments within the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, more specifically the establishment of a Free Trade Area in the Region as well as the on going GWP Med. Initiative type II on "Water and Poverty " in the Mediterranean.

Monitoring arrangements:

A set of monitoring and performance indicators will be identified and a reporting system established, to be regularly reviewed, assessed and evaluated by the MCSD and the Steering Committee (at least twice a year) and members/partners at the regular institutional meetings.

Other relevant information:

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