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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

XIV Meeting of MED Unit and Regional
Activity Centres (RAC) on MAP programme

Athens, 3-4 March 1997

**REPORT OF THE XIV MEETING OF MED UNIT AND
REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRES ON MAP PROGRAMME**

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Introduction

1. The XIV meeting of MED Unit and Regional Activity Centres on MAP programme was held in Athens at MAP premises, on 3-4 March 1997. All RAC Directors were present. Mr. D. Drocourt expressed his apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. The list of participants is contained in **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda item 1. Opening of the meeting

2. The meeting was opened by Mr. L. Chabason, MAP Coordinator, who welcomed the participants and presented an overview of the important issues to be tackled during the present meeting. He expressed his thanks to Mr. Civili, Mr. Gabrielides and Mr. Hoballah for their cooperation during the intermediate period in relation to MED POL Coordination, administrative and financial matters, and the technical aspects of the MCSD respectively. He informed the meeting that the recruitment process for the post of Administrative Officer was in progress.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda

3. Following some discussion, the provisional agenda as contained in document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.122/1 was approved. (See **Annex II** to this report).

Agenda item 3: Programme and budget for 1998-1999

4. Mr. L. Chabason introduced this agenda item by pointing out that a panel composed of Mr. G. Gabrielides, Mr. I. Dharat and Mr. Ortega from Headquarters met on 28 February and 1 March 1997 and has made its recommendations to the Coordinator concerning the vacant Fund Management/Administrative post. He expects the finalization of this process will take about 2 to 3 months.
5. Mr. G. Gabrielides, Senior Programme Officer, briefly explained a proposal for the structure of the 1998-1999 budget and recommendations. He pointed out that the programme budget was not an addition of proposals, but an exercise aiming at promoting the priorities agreed upon by the Contracting Parties. These priorities result from the following:
 - (a) the new or revised legal instruments approved by the Parties. Emphasis should be given to the modified LBS protocol and the new protocol concerning specially protected areas and biological diversity.
 - (b) the establishment and functioning of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development. The first MCSD meeting in Rabat (December 1996) already identified priority themes. The short-term priority themes are the sustainable management of coastal zones, with particular reference to strategic and policy-making aspects and water, with particular attention to the management of demand. Six medium-term priority themes were also identified but not all will be promoted at the same level.

- (c) the priority fields of activities (1996-2005) approved by the Parties in 1995 in conjunction with the two previous paragraphs can be considered as a guideline for the identification of priorities.

6. He added that the first part of the programme budget document contains the Secretariat's recommendations. A distinction should be made between recommendations addressed to the Contracting Parties and decisions of the meeting which have to be implemented by the Secretariat. Any activities which are implicit in the budget should not be included in the recommendations. The number of recommendations and decisions should be kept to a minimum.

The budget proposals must be grouped according to the source of funding:

- (a) activities to be funded by MTF
- (b) activities to be funded by the EC voluntary contribution
- (c) activities to be funded by outside sources such as GEF, METAP, etc. The source will be selected taking into consideration priorities and criteria established by them.

7. Mr. Gabrielides continued to say that all budget proposals must fall within one of the following chapters of the budget. General items, such as information, could be included under various chapters.

- (a) Coordination

All funds under this chapter will be handled by MEDU. It will basically include the organisation of coordination meetings such as those of Contracting Parties, MAP focal points, Bureau of CPs, MCSD, Bureau of MCSD and RAC directors. General information on MAP, activities on legal framework, support to NGOs and training at MEDU will also be included here. Meetings of focal points should be included in the budget of the RAC or programme.

- (b) Pollution prevention and control

This chapter will include mostly the activities relevant to the implementation of the LBS, Dumping, Emergency, Offshore and Hazardous protocols. Activities of MED POL, REMPEC, CP/RAC should be included here. Relevant activities of other RACs will also be included in this chapter.

- (c) Protection of biological diversity

This chapter will mainly include the activities for the implementation of the protocol concerning SPA and biodiversity for which SPA/RAC is responsible. Relevant activities of other RACs will also be included in this chapter.

- (d) Sustainable management of coastal zones

This is one of the priorities of the MCSD. Relevant activities of RACs as well as CAMPs will be included in this chapter.

- (e) Sustainable management of natural resources

Management of water demand is one of the priorities set by MCSD.

- (f) Integrating environment and development

Sectoral activities will be included in this chapter. MCSD identified a number of priority themes such as tourism, industry and sustainable development, free trade and the environment etc. MEDO activities could be included in this chapter.

8. Finally, he stressed that the budget increase planned to be requested from the Contracting Parties will be minimal (2-3%) and therefore there is no point in suggesting creation of new posts. As regards to salary increases, they should be confined to those which are compulsory by rules and regulations.
9. At the ensuing general discussion, the issue of undertaking national projects within MAP programme or only concentrating on regional projects, was raised. It was mentioned by some participants that MAP should implement only projects on the regional level, and other related projects on the national level be financed from outside bilateral sources. Others were of the opinion that we should not neglect projects of national character, as many countries would like to see tangible results of MAP activities at the national level. However, a balanced approach to satisfy both interests (national and regional) was favoured.
10. All participants requested a clear indication from MEDU on how funds will be allocated to the various centres and programmes, the reallocation of funds in view of the new developments within MAP and the procedures and the strategy to be followed in relation to soliciting outside funds. On this last point, it was stressed that projects should be well prepared, combining MAP interest with those of the donors. In order to do this, a proper contracting parties strategy is to be envisaged in order to combat the strong competition in the open market for these outside funds. As MAP relations with EU, WB and EIB is quite good, Mediterranean countries and MAP programmes should utilise this momentum and submit concrete projects to these organisations.
11. At the end of the discussion on this agenda item it was decided that MEDU should inform the centres on the structure of the budget, requesting their suggestions as early as possible in order to analyse the suggestions and finalise the programme budget for submissions to the forthcoming meeting of the National Focal Points (Athens, 7-9 July 1997).

Agenda item 4: Preparation for the meeting of the Ad-hoc Group on MED Unit, MED POL and RACs structure

12. Mr. I. Dharat, Senior Programme Officer introduced this agenda item and presented document UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.122/2 "Secretariat proposal for the analytical review of the status, structure, functions, financial and personnel aspects of the MED Unit, MED POL and RACs". He briefly explained the main philosophy behind this document, its contents and main specific issues raised.

13. At the ensuing discussion, various participants expressed their views on the various parts of the document. It was mentioned that the first part of the document concerning the inputs of the Centres and Programmes, was not presented in a harmonious way. Each part had been done in a different style. Therefore, it was recommended that, in future, a better reporting system is to be envisaged in order to avoid such a situation. As the main objective of this exercise was to make a functional analysis and review of the structure, status, role of MED Unit, MEDPOL and RAC's, the document should not have included a detailed reference to activities, while others felt that the document was too long and the language of the second part of the documents should be in a less imperative tone.
14. With regard to the issues of Host Country Agreements, Mr. Batisse informed the meeting that such agreement does not exist in France as there are no international staff, but only foreign staff. He suggested that MAP should not burden itself with bureaucratic procedures. An exchange of letters between the country and MAP would be sufficient for this purpose.
15. Others felt that it would be important to prepare a unified host agreement for all centres in order to avoid various discrepancies within MAP system. This approach has been confirmed by MAP Phase II.
16. The Coordinator stressed the importance of having agreements relevant to the RACs in order to specify the responsibilities of both the host country and those of MAP.
17. With regard to the role of the national focal points, it was pointed out that we should improve the qualities and the level of the focal points for RACs, in order to be able to technically advise the centres and follow-up their respective programmes. The issue of creating national MAP committees to improve coordination and follow-up of MAP activities was raised. It was also mentioned that considering BP/RAC and PAP/RAC context and fields of expertise, it would be worthwhile making the MCSD assume the role of focal point structure for activities of both centres.
18. In this connection, the Coordinator pointed out that it is the Contracting Parties meetings which decides on the programme budget and its priorities and the role of the national focal points is to follow-up the technical implementation of the programme. He added that, the responsibility of the technical implementation of the newly approved protocols on Hazardous Wastes and the Offshore has been delegated to the MED POL programme for Hazardous Wastes, and to REMPEC, (concerning Articles 18 and 26 of the Protocol) and MED POL for the Offshore Protocol, under the overall authority of MED Unit.
19. During the debate, certain modifications, corrections and additions were proposed which would be reflected in a revised version of the document for submission to the meeting of the Ad-hoc Group scheduled to be held in Athens, on 26-27 March 1997.

Agenda Item 5: *CAMPs apportionment of funds 1997-1999*

20. Mr. I. Trumbic, introduced this agenda item by giving a brief progress report on the status of CAMP projects under PAP/RAC responsibility, i.e. Sfax, Fuka, Albania and Israel projects. He noted that the Albanian CAMP was considered completed. With regard to the Sfax and Fuka projects, notable progress has been achieved lately after some delays. As for the Israel project, the Agreement relevant to it has been signed

recently by the MAP Coordinator and the Israeli Ministry of the Environment.

21. With regard to the METAP evaluation report on coastal management, he informed the Meeting that the second draft of the report was under finalisation, with the target date of October 1997 for the final report in English and French.
22. During the ensuing debate, the issue of the need for evaluation of the CAMP exercise was stressed by some participants. Others felt that CAMP objectives should be clear and the evaluation should be based on whether these objectives are met. On this point, Mr. Trumbic pointed out that the METAP evaluation report will include a section on an assessment of few CAMP projects. Several participants considered that RACs should be given the opportunity of reviewing the METAP evaluation report before its finalisation. Some participants felt that a CAMP project evaluation is the responsibility of the governments concerned, while others felt that CAMPs are not an academic or preinvestment exercise, but rather a capacity building process. They suggested that funding would be easier, if objectives are reviewed jointly by MAP and the investor.
23. A point was raised to the effect that the level of each country's participation in the CAMP projects has not been clear. CAMPs should be compatible with the host country's master plan/land use plan and synergy between MAP activity and host country planning should be sought and maintained if the CAMPs are to succeed. The importance of preparing a feasibility study for each CAMP project was stressed. The study will identify problems, targets and actors involved.
24. As for the Lebanon CAMP project, Mr. Hoballah pointed out that he plans to visit Lebanon during April 1997, and meet with the new Minister of the Environment, during which he will raise the issue of CAMP project for Lebanon. He inquired about the cost of the feasibility study for the project. He was informed that the 1997 budget has already incorporated funds for such activity. In this connection, Mr. Sainlos expressed the view that REMPEC is to be involved in this CAMP in relation to the activities relevant to ports in Lebanon. As for who will be responsible for the coordination of the CAMP/Lebanon, Mr. Glass suggested and the meeting accepted, that Mr. A. Hoballah (BP) is the suitable person for that job.
25. With regard to the Fuka/CAMP, Mr. Dharat pointed out that the delays in the past in the implementation of the various activities was mainly due to the non-availability of funds, bureaucratic procedures at the national level, and changing of teams involved. However, progress has been achieved in the last few months. Contracts were signed with international, national and local consultants, with a fixed objectives and timetable. It was expected that June or at latest September 1997, will be the final presentation meeting and the closure of the project.
26. Mr. Raimondi, pointed out that the Fuka project has been a very interesting project. His centre (ERS/RAC) has been closely cooperating with PAP/RAC. A joint document integrating common views and results has been developed.
27. Finally, in a reply to a request for information on fund appropriation, the Coordinator pointed out that funds would be allocated on the basis of needs and progress achieved.

Agenda item 6: Any other matters

28. Mr Civili briefly presented the activities being implemented by MEDU in the framework

of the Project Development Facility (PDF) grant supported by GEF for the preparation of a Strategic Action Programme to address pollution from land-based activities. He explained that the Programme would be formulated on the basis of the data and information already made available through MAP activities and would be prepared on the results and the indications provided by a report on the regional pollution hot spots and a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis. The Strategic Action Programme would also contain a list of priority actions included in an investment portfolio which would lead to the preparation of a full project document to be presented at the end of the year to donors for consideration.

29. He further explained that the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis, as requested by the GEF secretariat, should have a much larger coverage than the Strategic Action Programme since it was intended to be used as a platform of information and data on the major problems of the region, the remedial actions and their cost, which could be utilised for future activities in the region.
30. Mr Sainlos explained to the Meeting the reasons for which REMPEC did not accept to be involved in the present GEF activities which mainly included the very short deadlines for the activities, the lack of available staff at the Centre, and the fact that these activities had not been foreseen in the work programme.
31. Mr Chabason deeply regretted such decision underlining that all the other Centres involved had accepted to cooperate in spite of the heavy workload and the strict deadlines and that he had considered the participation in the project as an obligation of all Centres as members of the MAP Secretariat.
32. Mr Civili informed the participants on the activities carried out by MEDU in the field of information. He recalled the in-house publication of the new issue of MEDWAVES in English and French and the preparation of the Arabic version, the new issues of MAP Technical Report Series (which had reached No.114) and the new developments concerning the entering in Internet with a MAP home page. On this subject, he circulated a copy of the draft home page for comments and he added that it was foreseen to connect it in future with possible home pages of the various RACs.

Agenda item 7: Adoption of the report of the meeting

33. The meeting agreed that a draft report of the present meeting should be sent to all participants for comments before its finalization.

Agenda item 8: Closure of the meeting

34. After thanking all participants for their contributions, the Coordinator closed the meeting at 13.00 hrs on 4 March 1997.

ANNEX I

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS**

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Programme and budget for 1998-1999
4. Preparation of the meeting of the *Ad-hoc* group to undertake an analytical review of the status, structure and functions of the Coordinating Unit, MED POL and the RACs
5. CAMPs' apportionment of funds for 1997-1999
6. Any other matters
7. Adoption of the report of the meeting
8. Closure of the report of the meeting