



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN



Towards Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region



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The MEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION on SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The **Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP)**, born in 1975, is the spearhead of the UNEP Regional Seas Programme. It is an effort involving 20 countries bordering the Mediterranean sea as well as the European Community. Through the MAP, they are determined to meet the challenges of environmental degradation in the sea, coastal areas and inland and to link sustainable resource management with development, in order to protect the Mediterranean region and contribute to an improved quality of life. To that end, a coherent and evolving legal framework has been built up.

Overall, MAP's work over the last ten years has been characterised by its willingness to embrace the drive towards sustainable development. This regional effort of trying to align business development more closely with considerations for the preservation of the Mediterranean region's limited natural resources has also involved MAP in facing up to the region's developmental imbalances reflected in the differing abilities of developed and developing states to comply with environmental agreements.

Set up in 1996, the **Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSDD)** exists to bridge the gap between the desire for sustainable development and its realisation in the Mediterranean region. The MCSDD is a think-tank on policies for promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean Basin and focuses on key issues in its drive for tangible outcomes. It seeks to translate the need to integrate environmental considerations and economic development into practical actions thereby accelerating the realisation of sustainable development throughout the Mediterranean. The Commission functions by allocating dedicated working groups to look into specific sustainable development issues. It has already produced recommendations and proposals for action on water demand management, sustainable development indicators, the sustainable management of coastal areas, tourism and sustainable development, and public participation and awareness-raising. It is soon to issue proposals on industry, free trade, and urban development. Possible issues in the pipeline could concern waste management, agriculture, governance, local management and international cooperation.

Assessing the political and institutional progress made towards sustainable development, the **Strategic Review** represents the first self evaluation for MAP and the MCSDD. It offers a frank analysis of teething problems, and assesses how the measures agreed upon by the Mediterranean community have effectively been implemented. It also contains encouraging updates from Mediterranean countries charting the steady permeation of a sustainable development way of thinking. Overall, it lays the ground for the forthcoming sustainable development strategy for the Mediterranean.



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FOREWORD

This publication outlines the ground covered by Mediterranean States in the pursuit of sustainable development in the region in the decade since the Earth Summit in Rio, reflecting the contribution of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) to the UN Sustainable Development process and paving the way for a Mediterranean share in the Johannesburg Political Declaration and the Plan of Implementation.

Starting with a thorough look at the challenges addressed by the MAP, the publication goes on to discuss the work of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), and finally offers a synopsis of the Strategic Review, itself an assessment of the prevalence of sustainable development in the region.

It also shows how the region has sought to act in conformity with and to amplify the sustainable development principles articulated during and following the Rio Summit. These efforts encompass moves to align the region with the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Sustainable development is a promising concept that presents the environment as a positive, mainstream concern, opening it up to society and human activities. Essentially, it reflects a greater grasp of the linked, often competing demands on nature, and the fact that segmented solutions to environmental problems are less effective. It provides a framework under which communities can use resources efficiently, create capable infrastructures, protect and enhance their quality of life and create new business to strengthen their economies.

In the Mediterranean, the pursuit of sustainable development is often an uphill struggle. This is likely because this concept still exerts only a limited influence on the policies of many partners in the Mediterranean beyond its environmental protection component so that environmental policies have still a limited impact on development policies. Economic efficiency continues to be the driving force behind policy for most Mediterranean countries while current international trends associated with globalisation and technological progress only intensify the pressure towards this end.

Despite these difficulties, the Mediterranean region has embarked upon a number of local, national and regional sustainable development initiatives involving wider society, ranging from those within a political and institutional setting, to endeavours at a more grassroots, local level.

This publication aims to offer a snapshot of Mediterranean advancements in promoting and advancing the regional sustainability process over the last decade, and draw orientations for a more consistent implementation of Agenda 21 as well as Agenda Med 21 at the regional level. It also offers an overview of the MAP series of seven publications, prepared on the occasion of the Johannesburg Summit, focussing each one of them on one specific field of the key MAP activities targeting sustainable development in the region.

INTRODUCING THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Through the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), established in 1975 as the first of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Seas Programme, countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, and the European Union (EU), have been cooperating to improve their common Mediterranean environment.

Run by an Athens-based Coordinating Unit, MAP comprises a Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), a MED POL Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution and six Regional Activity Centres (RACs), and a Programme for the Protection of Historic Sites.

Twenty Mediterranean countries and the European Community are Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the MAP legal framework that commits them to a dedicated environmental course of action for the Mediterranean. This Convention is accompanied by six Protocols that are binding legal instruments addressing specific aspects of environmental protection.

FOR A CLOSER FIT BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPECT

Over the last decade, MAP has evolved in response to the heightened contemporary understanding of the close relationship between conservation and development. MAP's work now focuses on the sustainable management of marine and coastal resources and on integrating the environment into social and economic development and land use policies. MAP sets in motion corrective and preventative programmes, pushing green measures and sustainability higher up the list of national priorities.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, global developments in environmental approaches in the post-Rio era, conformed and supported MAP's widening brief, in particular, Agenda 21.

MAP responded in 1994 with the presentation of Agenda MED 21, adapting Agenda 21 to the Mediterranean context, and featuring a specific chapter dedicated to tourism. It reflects the rising concern for the Mediterranean environment and the allegiance of Mediterranean states to the ideal of sustainable development.

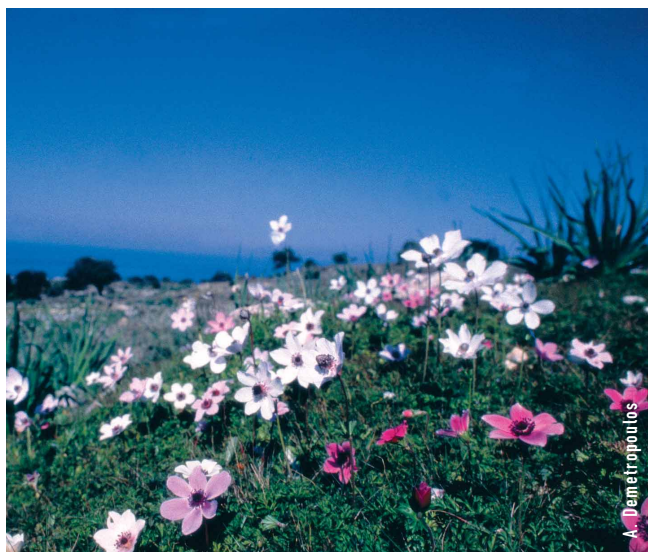
The year 1995 also saw the adoption of priority fields of action that continue to steer MAP's progress. These in-



A. Demetropoulos

clude integrated water management, the management of forests and plant cover and that of marine living resources, the integrated management of coastal areas, waste management, industry and energy, tourism and urban development, marine pollution and conservation of nature.

MAP's remit was officially widened in 1995 to reflect the heightened contemporary understanding of the close links between conservation and development. Entering a new phase, MAP Phase II, it was renamed the Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development of the Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean.



Transnational and pan-Mediterranean sustainable development drives must work against a demanding backdrop of developmental, economic, political and religious differences. The main objective of MAP Phase II is the im-

provement of the institutional capabilities of the Mediterranean countries in the management of their environment. More national legal instruments and environmental infrastructure investments are sought and these need to be accompanied by a marked change of attitude towards the protection of the environment at the policy-making level.

MAP is prioritising the need to integrate environmental considerations into all aspects of Mediterranean development. It studies, for example, present and future environmental and developmental interactions in the Mediterranean Basin on the basis of several hypotheses related to growth in areas such as population, urbanisation, trade and energy use, while considering their related impacts on natural resources. The wealth of published *fascicules* is a testament to this realised objective.

MAP has also instigated the Mediterranean Environment and Development Observatory (MEDO) to enhance the regional understanding of these links. MEDO assesses the state of the environment and the MAP countries' capacities for action, providing decision-makers with data in support of sustainable development. It induces and assists countries in establishing National Observatories.

Strategies for sustainable development are being mapped out for key economic areas and for the management of natural resources generally. Ways forward include methods of increasing agricultural productivity using environmentally friendly techniques and encouragement of the use of new energy sources for domestic, industrial, public and private use.

THE PROTOCOLS:

MAP'S FLEXIBLE LEGAL FOUNDATION

Once MAP entered its new phase in 1995, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols were made more stringent, representing MAP's shift from expressing environmental goals as desired principles to formulating these goals within measurable frameworks, with compliance monitoring as a key aspect.

These new texts impose a strict ban on nearly all-dumping operations, protect the most vulnerable species and habitats and clamp down on many instances of the movement of hazardous wastes. They give the public new rights on matters regarding information and participation and advance more effective coordination and cooperation at all levels.

The MAP Protocols also take account of recent developments in international environmental law such as the Polluter Pays Principle. In the last year, the Emergency Protocol has been superseded by one that extends its remit to encompass routine operational discharges into the Mediterranean Sea. Adopted in January 2002, once ratified, this Protocol will constitute the most advanced legal instrument aimed at preventing shipping accidents and oil pollution. It will cover leisure activities linked with nautical tourism, a growing source of Mediterranean pollution.



CURBING POLLUTION

While individual countries and the region as a whole have made considerable progress in the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against chronic or accidental pollution, coastal regions remain under considerable stress as a result of human activity. MAP employs a multifaceted approach to launch a strong offensive on these complex pollution problems. Through five of the Protocols of the Barcelona Convention, MAP countries have dedicated themselves to tackling pollution on several fronts.

Assistance was regularly provided to Mediterranean states for pollution monitoring and control and the drafting of actions aimed at reducing and ultimately eliminating pollution from land-based sources, as well as capacity-building programmes concerned with, for instance, management training.

The research component has been restructured to allow it to respond more dynamically to arising pollution issues. Current research themes include innovative sewage treatment technologies for island mountain villages and cost effective methods of recycling. Information is being centralised on technical databases making it more easily accessible to Mediterranean countries.

Strategic Action Programme

The Strategic Action Programme (SAP), a new initiative deriving from the terms of the MAP Protocol concerning land-based pollution sources, has a timetabled approach to eliminating such pollution by facilitating the restructuring of domestic priorities to address pollution issues. The SAP works towards the phasing out of inputs of substances in the Mediterranean Sea that are toxic, persistent and liable to bioaccumulate, targeting the region's 109 identified pollution hot spots.

Mediterranean countries, with the support of MAP, are midway through a three year comprehensive capacity building programme financed mainly by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the French GEF and the Contracting Parties. Last Autumn, the Contracting Parties adopted the Operational Strategy for the implementation of the SAP.

This first stage, to be up and running by 2003, will involve riparian states in estimating the quantities of every SAP-targeted pollutant being realised from coastal areas – particularly industrial sites. The process of the reduction of pollutants under SAP's stringent criteria is set to start in earnest in 2005.



MANAGING COASTAL AREAS

In recent decades, Mediterranean coastal areas, including those of the region's many islands, have borne the brunt of rapid development. Problems of overcrowding and pollution are fanned by urbanisation and industrialisation. Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM) is a holistic environmental approach that sets out to deal with the web of coastal area problems collectively on the understanding that they are interlinked. It relies on the involvement of a range of stakeholders and administrative levels. Through ICAM, MAP is

working to reverse the negative coastal trends, so often the result of a shortsighted focus on immediate economic advantage.

Coastal Area Management Programmes (CAMPs) are practical MAP initiatives lasting an average of 3-4 years aiming at the introduction of ICAM at local or national levels and institutional strengthening and capacity building in an effort to

rehabilitate areas with a series of environmental problems.

Implemented mainly by the countries themselves, with MAP financial and technical assistance, these projects, 13 of which have been realized since 1992, are a form of advanced collaboration between MAP, national and local authorities and international financial bodies.

CAMPs have kick-started a range of actors and sectors into working together. Analyses show, for example, that on the Greek island of Rhodes, in Kastela Bay, Croatia, and on the Syrian coast, CAMPs have sparked follow-up projects carried out by other actors.

The significant improvement in institutional capacity (particularly in Albania, Izmir bay, Turkey, and on Rhodes) and thus in the sense of *ownership* of the projects, along with extended local environmental awareness, are considered to be the CAMPs' best achievements.



In 2001, MAP brought out a White Paper on coastal zone management in the Mediterranean intended to focus attention and stimulate debate on ICAM and to propose solutions and strategic directives for implementation. It highlighted persistent problems such as soil erosion and the increasing water consumption in coastal areas, whilst documenting the major efforts being made with a myriad of state and commercial actors, as well as NGOs, especially since the 1992 Earth Summit, to counter unfavourable

trends in coastal development and to orient coastal areas towards sustainable development.

SAFEGUARDING NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Mediterranean's natural and cultural heritage is subject to intense pressure from human activity including tourism, urbanisation, coastal zone overcrowding and transport. MAP has been spearheading a range of remedial strategies. Over the last decade, for instance, an intensified action plan for the conservation of the five species of endangered Mediterranean Sea turtles has been implemented.

Activities to date have included field studies to assess marine turtle nesting in close collaboration with several NGOs and a turtle-tagging programme. Meanwhile enhanced cooperation has been sought between fishermen and conservationists, as well as an improved information flow between scientists and the wider community.

A NEW, DYNAMIC INFORMATION STRATEGY

MAP recognises the potential pivotal role of wider Mediterranean society in the area's future rehabilitation. Having identified public awareness as a prerequisite for action, MAP has embarked upon an ambitious international and local awareness strategy.

This aims to reach out to broader audiences such as consumers, the private sector, and especially youth, using dissemination methods like the Internet and multilingual literature.

MAP output:

Serving a range of audiences

- > MAP literature has undergone a makeover. Clear and informative multilingual brochures and leaflets are now available. On the occasion of the **World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002)** the MAP produced a new series of specific brochures and leaflets focussing on each of its major fields of activity.
- > **MedWaves:** MAP's multilingual quarterly magazine has been restyled and with progress reports from *the field*, and interviews with some of the heavyweights in Mediterranean conservation, it continues to be a good read and is widely distributed.
- > **MAP Technical Reports** focus on socio-economic, scientific and legal issues relating to MAP's work.
- > MAP regularly publishes **State of the Mediterranean Environment Reports** providing a snapshot of the region's marine and coastal environment.
- > Thoroughly restructured, the MAP website <http://www.unepmap.org> caters to in-depth and more basic research needs.

LOOKING AHEAD TO A GREENER AND THRIVING MEDITERRANEAN REGION

At the beginning of a new millennium, Mediterraneans –the descendents of great civilisations– are working together, intent upon reclaiming their environmental awareness.

At the 12th MAP Ordinary Meeting in 2001, Dr. Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, analysed MAP's achievements over the last decade highlighting that:

“The Mediterranean Action Plan has always been dynamic [...]. An Agenda MED 21 was adopted and the Barcelona Convention was revised in 1995 to give legal substance to the commitments made in Rio [...]. At the same time, the MAP has upgraded its key legal instruments [...] and established the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development [...]. In all these fields the Mediterranean has been the pioneering region, thanks to the commitment of the Contracting Parties [...]. The MAP is THE pilot project”.

Adopted at the above-mentioned meeting was the Mediterranean Declaration for the Johannesburg Summit. This reiterates the dedication of MAP's Contracting Parties to the principles of sustainable development and to the accelerated realisation of the imperative of intertwining regional development with environmental considerations.

Its headings are indicative of crucial themes stressed by MAP in its drive for sustainability and requiring intensified work in the region: social development; the management of natural resources and pollution prevention; an institutional and legal framework; governance, decentralisation and participation; cooperation and partnership, and financing. Furthermore, it stresses the commitment of MAP Contracting Parties to take account of the conclusions of the Johannesburg Summit in these spheres.

THE MCSD: FACILIATING REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The establishment of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) in 1996 demonstrated the commitment of Mediterranean states to working towards integrating the environment and development in the entire region.

The MCSD was set up as an advisory body, a forum for dialogue and the creation of proposals for MAP member countries and their partners for the purpose of defining a regional sustainable development strategy in the Mediterranean taking into account the decisions of the Earth Summit and the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development.

A think-tank on policies for promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean Basin, it exists to bridge the gap between the desire for sustainable development and its realisation in the Mediterranean region.

Its official remit is *“To identify, evaluate and assess major economic and social problems set out in Agenda MED 21, make appropriate proposals therein to the meetings of the Contracting Parties (to the Barcelona Convention), evaluate the effectiveness of the follow-up to the decisions of the Contracting Parties and facilitate the exchange of information among the institutions implementing activities related to sustainable development in the Mediterranean”*.

Significantly too, it exists *“To enhance regional cooperation and rationalise the inter-governmental decision-making capacity in the Mediterranean Basin for the integration of environment and development issues”*.

The MCSD offers its recommendations to MAP members on future actions related to key Mediterranean issues for the promotion of sustainable development. Its proposals on the formulation and implementation of a regional sustainable development strategy take due account of problems related to the integration of the environment into development policies. All MCSD proposals therefore address the boosting of national capabilities and the identification of innovative technological developments that would further this aim.



Today, the Commission is globally regarded as a model actor in the acceleration of sustainable development strategies as it is proving to be a forum for constructive dialogue and the pooling of experiences.

It has recently brought out its first Strategic Review critically examining the progress made so far to further sustainable development in the region. It continues to strive towards the shared vision of the Mediterranean region as a peaceful, economically vibrant and ecologically healthy one.



A. Demétopoulos

TAILORED TO MEDITERRANEAN NEEDS

The MCSD is in tune with a host of uniquely Mediterranean challenges. These include overcrowded coastal areas, water scarcity, fragile ecosystems including those of the region's many islands, numerous small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with few links between them, and a pan-Mediterranean dependency on tourism.

It must also engage with the wider social, political and economic particularities of a region which encompasses developed and developing societies, several making the transition from planned socialist systems, with a number emerging from conflicts.

As greater equity is a core concern, the MCSD sets out to strengthen MAP's cooperation with international institutions present in the Mediterranean and with the European Union.

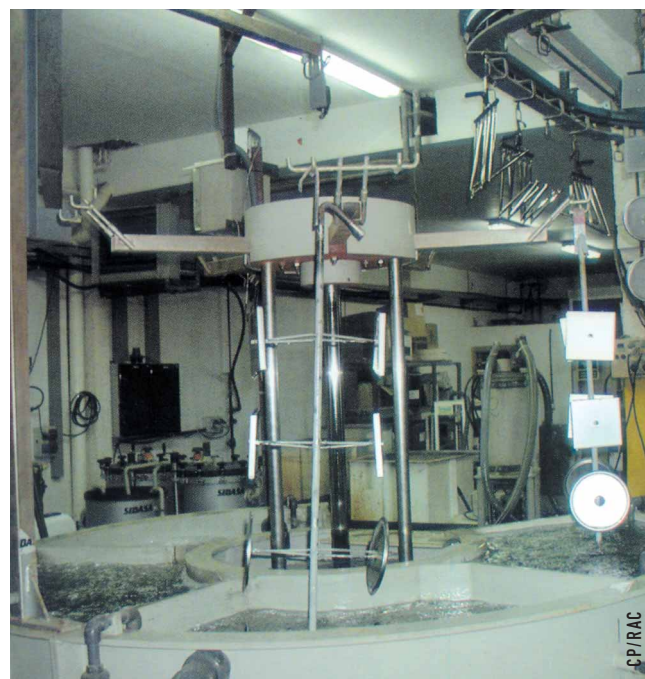
The MCSD is also keenly aware of emerging Mediterranean-specific problems. Rapid urbanisation in many Southern Mediterranean countries, for example, is resulting in the frequent inability to meet basic infrastructure requirements, particularly regarding public transport and waste disposal.

A BROADER-BASED MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

The MCSD's pioneering structure embodies the sustainable development outlook that the intermingling of the environment and development requires the participation of society as a whole.

The Commission puts key local development decision-makers on a par with 21 representatives of Mediterranean states and the EU. It is made up of 36 members, consisting of representatives from each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention, and 15 representatives of local authorities, socio-economic actors and environmental NGOs, that help ground the MCSD in the everyday realities of social life.

Local authorities are set to play an increasingly important role as Mediterranean countries are following the global trend for decentralised power and increased privatisation. With expanding decision-taking powers, legal authority and resources, they can facilitate positive changes while benefiting from any visible improvement to the environment. They are also essential partners in sustainable development because regional and national goals are actualised at the local level.



Business actors are obvious key players in the drive to tie commerce to conservation concerns. It is crucial to mobilise them for long-term sustainable development in the region, as all activities and initiatives depend on the autonomous decisions of economic actors and governments. While some groups are well organised, with a history of participating in public affairs, the prevalence of SMEs and the strong presence of public sectors and multinationals make networking harder.

Raising awareness among entrepreneurs about the need to integrate environmental concerns into business development is vital, however, to halt economies from expanding without due regard for the environmental repercussions of commercial growth.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) provide an energising, critical and demanding vision that adds to the quality of the regional debate on the environment and sustainable development. They broaden its audience, taking these concerns out to the public upon whom effective sustainable development depends.

Recent years have witnessed a proliferation of NGOs with specific concerns as well as pan-Mediterranean NGO networks. In itself, this growth reflects the rising grassroots concern for the Mediterranean environment. NGOs are key partners both because of their specialist knowledge and due to their outreach potential. They have also proved competent at highlighting examples of good practice.



WORK METHOD

The Commission functions by allocating dedicated working groups to look into specific sustainable development issues corresponding to some of the priority needs of the Mediterranean region. Institutions and experts from related governmental ministries (environmental, tourism, finance, development and industry) are involved, while this exploration has often encompassed workshops and other information-sharing activities.

Thematic group meetings involve participants in extended dialogue with key players such as water and tour operators. They are always open to feedback, both positive and critical.

These working groups go on to submit recommendations and proposals for action to the MCSD and then for adoption by the Contracting Parties. Recently, a methodological framework and some guiding principles have been designed to make recommendations more *user-friendly*, and enable their implementation to be more easily monitored and assessed.

PARTNERSHIPS

Effective sustainable development hinges on the cultivation and maintenance of a web of partnerships. This has prompted the MCSD to cultivate effective informal structures and networking activity. All MAP partners including representatives from UN agencies and other inter-governmental bodies as well as of organisations directly concerned with environmental and sustainable development issues, are involved with the MCSD.

The MCSD cooperates with national and regional sustainable development commissions. The list of important and active MCSD partners also takes in: The United Nations through some of its specialised agencies including UNEP and its Regional Offices, UNCSD, WHO, IMO, WMO, UNESCO, UNDP, UNIDO, FAO and the World Bank; and regional programmes as well as bodies such as METAP, CEDARE, and the League of Arab States.

SIGNPOSTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In its relatively short life, the MCSD has produced recommendations and proposals for action that encompass ones on water demand management, coastal area

management, tourism, public participation and awareness raising, and sustainable development indicators.

A key recommendation with respect to tourism, for instance, is its diversification to take in year-round and new forms such as inland, rural and cultural ones. Recommendations related to the management of water demand, for example, offer a league table of potential water savings revealing that after improvements in the irrigation sector, the most substantial savings of this precious commodity stand to be made from better recycling by industry. MAP Contracting Parties recently resolved to strengthen their follow-up work on MCSD recommendations.



P. Xynias

The MCSD strives to stay at the cutting edge of exploring paths to sustainability in the region. It recently presented MAP Contracting Parties with the fruits of detailed investigations into the relationship between sustainable development and three areas: Urban Management, Industry, and Free Trade and the Environment in the Euro-Mediterranean Context.

A further investigation concerning the implementation and follow-up to MCSD recommendations and proposals for action was also given due attention, whilst recommendations concerning each of these four areas were adopted by the Mediterranean states.

Issues now being examined include agriculture and rural development, urban waste management and consumption patterns and national and historical heritage. Valuable MCSD interest areas are continually cultivated, such as exploring the links between capital markets and cooperation for sustainable development. This area is of major interest because investment issues are an integral aspect of the region's sustainability drive.

Currently, in the Mediterranean, for instance, investments in environmentally sensitive sectors such as tou-



ris, irrigation, and private transport receive far more attention than more sustainable investments such as public transport.

As a recent feasibility study on local governance for the MCSD points out, successful local management, as it is nowadays considered within a context of sustainable development, is highly connected with the emergence and implementation of new forms of concerted action, often termed as *governance*.

What is particularly interesting is that this shift from *Government* to *Governance* denotes new forms of interwoven relations between the public sector, private actors and NGOs and overlapping types of regulation taking in the market, networks and institutions in a multi-level action context. This means that assorted groups are already participating in cooperative forms of decision-making for local service delivery.

Local management and sustainable development is a crucial issue for the Mediterranean, especially as many environmental problems are highly localised.

The MCSD working groups examining coastal and urban issues have thus given the highest priority to these issues.

THE MCSD TODAY

Aided by a recent review of its organisation and work method, the MCSD is considering ways of improving upon the follow-up to adopted MCSD recommendations and proposals for action, as a means to sharpen its effectiveness.

Alongside the frank documentation of obstacles to date, some very significant achievements have been highlighted. For instance, the fact that in some cases, the actual process of preparing and contributing to MCSD activities had impacted on the way that involved actors dealt with issues –particularly the management of water demand, tourism and indicators. This represents a form of implementation in advance of formal adoption.



The MCSD will also seek to improve on its promotion of sustainable development, bolstering its links with all concerned national actors and regional partners, whilst

facilitating the creation of National Commissions on Sustainable Development to ensure this concept can become more entrenched in practice.

The MCSD is a pioneering entity, and boosted by its pluralism, participatory approach, frank discussions, innovative thinking and flexible work method; it has evolved into a point of reference for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region. Its recommendations, informed by the latest applied research, help countries to further integrate environmental concerns with development and thus to implement viable and practical sustainable development measures.

It strives to help regional states tackle obstacles such as institutional incapacity and to heighten public and commercial sector awareness. Additionally, at a time when decentralisation could jeopardise national abilities to modernise institutions to manage growth and development successfully, it bolsters partnerships to push environmental measures and sustainability higher up the list of national priorities.

As it is proving to be a hub for the exploration and advancement of realistic sustainable development initiatives, the MCSD continues to publicise its work, including its reports and success stories, during major international and regional events, in order to further boost exchanges of sustainable development information and experience. This should also highlight the importance of the regional level as a necessary bridge between global and national levels for building up environmentally and socially sound sustainable development strategies.

MEDITERRANEAN DECLARATION FOR THE JOHANNESBURG SUMMIT

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION,
MEETING IN MONACO FROM 14 TO 17 NOVEMBER 2001
IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN,

CONSIDERING the Draft Declaration prepared by the Members of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, meeting in Tunis from 14 to 17 November 2000,

HAVING EXAMINED the progress towards sustainable development at the regional level, in the light of the three pillars of sustainable development —economic, social and environmental— and the need for an integrated approach,

RECOGNIZING that good governance, based on democratic processes, respect for human rights, especially of women and children, the promotion of justice and international law, the eradication of poverty and empowerment of concerned people, and the establishment of peace and security, based on international legitimacy, is a prerequisite for sustainable development,

STRESSING the importance and unique nature of the Mediterranean as an eco-region and an arena for solidarity, as well as its vocation for bringing different cultures closer to each other,

ALSO STRESSING the need to promote sustainable development strategies for eco-regions such as the Mediterranean, as well as associated regional commissions,

RECOGNIZING the contribution of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development's activities and recommendations to the promotion of sustainable development,

WELCOMING the increasing role and the active networking of the Mediterranean non-governmental organisations, the socio-economic groups, the local authorities, the scientific educational community and the media as actors and partners in sustainable development,

STRESSING the impact of globalization and the intensification of economic, cultural and tourist exchanges, and the risks to which the natural and cultural heritage and the unique character of the Mediterranean are exposed,

CONCERNED BY the pressures on the environment and biodiversity, the deterioration of forests and wetlands, desertification and land degradation the persistence of practices that are not sustainable in the long term, such as littoralization, the excessive exploitation of vulnerable natural resources, and particularly of water, the concentration of tourist activities, the increased production of solid domestic and industrial waste, the growing consumption of fossil fuels, contributing to the greenhouse effect, and related natural and technological risks, as well as the spread of non-sustainable production and consumption patterns,

CONCERNED BY the growing disparity between the human and financial resources available and the challenges to be faced,

AGREE THE FOLLOWING :

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The widening income gap between countries of the North and South of the region and between rich and poor sectors of society within each country should be addressed. They affirm their commitment to achieve and surpass the 2015 targets for poverty reduction of the Millennium Summit, by designing and implementing appropriate regional and national gender equitable policies, strategies and programmes to address poverty effectively. This will include issues emerging from migration trends and economic transitions, which have created new forms of poverty.

Health protection and development and the wise use of healthcare resources are essential components for the sustainable development of the region.

The region needs to invest in capacity building and empowering its young population. Mediterranean countries are committed to review, reform and / or develop sound educational and appropriate information, communication and training strategies to develop the human capital needed to fuel sustainable development. Access by all people to general education should be secured, including education for environment and sustainability.

MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND POLLUTION COMBATING

Actions at international, regional, national and local levels with collaboration between all the actors are needed in order to protect effectively the quality of this unique marine environment, to facilitate integrated management of coastal areas, to promote integrated management of water resources at watershed level, to sustain the precious biodiversity of the region and to combat desertification and land degradation efficiently.

Considering that the Mediterranean region attracts one third of international tourism, sustainable tourism respecting the environment and natural landscapes should be promoted.

Natural and technological risks should be systematically addressed, adopting prevention measures at all governance levels, ensuring safety for people and their property, as well as the natural environment and cultural heritage.

Clean and safe water, land productivity and food security should be addressed at regional and national levels by promoting sustainable agricultural practices and environmentally friendly consumption patterns.

The share of environmentally-sound renewable energy, particularly solar, wind and geothermal energy, in total primary energy production and use should be significantly increased, and energy efficiency technologies should be promoted.

Policies for safe management and, where possible, elimination of industrial pollution and hazardous chemicals in the region should be promoted and implemented.

Monitoring networks, observatories and data collection systems should be efficiently linked for the purpose of analysing long-term trends and elaborating appropriate management policies.

INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Sustainable development requires that economic, social and environmental considerations be integrated into decision-making processes, planning procedures and law-making at all levels.

Institutional and legal frameworks must provide for public access to environmental information, participation in decision-making and access to justice. The implementation of the precautionary and the polluter pays principles and the principle of common and differentiated responsibility is essential in all relevant policies.

The Contracting Parties support efforts to strengthen global environmental governance and will contribute towards it in the Mediterranean region.

Increasing the effectiveness of the international legal framework foreseen at the Rio Conference requires countries to implement their commitments under the UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC, as well as to ratify and implement the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention, the Cartagena Protocol and the Kyoto Protocol. The progress made on the latter at COP 7 of the UNFCCC, hosted in Marrakech by a southern Mediterranean country, is a valuable contribution to sustainable development, to whose implementation the Mediterranean Action Plan should contribute.

The regional level is extremely important in promoting sustainable development. To this end, the Contracting Parties have renewed the Mediterranean Action Plan, revised the 1976 Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, adopted new Protocols and agreed on a reporting mechanism to monitor progress in implementing their commitments. The Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development is proving to be a valuable instrument for promoting partnership with major groups, notably through its working groups on water, tourism, and industry. The Parties are also seeking to strengthen ties between the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Mediterranean Action Plan.

GOVERNANCE, DECENTRALIZATION AND PARTICIPATION

The role of Mediterranean regional, national and local levels of governance and participatory decision-making structures should be strengthened.

Countries should facilitate the implementation of recommendations and action plans deriving from local Agendas 21, establishing appropriate institutional frameworks by providing or facilitating access to adequate means by local authorities.

All countries and major groups of the region should develop and implement practicable and targeted Sustainability Strategies at various levels of governance, including Integrated Water Resources Management and Integrated Coastal Zone Management, in particular aiming at decreasing pressures on coastal areas.

CO-OPERATION, PARTNERSHIP AND FINANCING

As globalization is a rapid, irreversible, powerful process, Mediterranean countries are determined to reap its benefits and address effectively any adverse side-effects on social cohesion, environmental quality and cultural identities in order to promote sustainable development, in particular in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the forthcoming Free-Trade Area and the proposed enlargement of the European Union.

Scientific knowledge on achieving sustainable development and promoting eco-efficiency should be shared and the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies should be encouraged; Mediterranean regional centres have an important role to play in this regard.

Domestic resources, trade liberalization compatible with environmental protection and private financial flows, notably foreign direct investment, are fundamental in generating resources for sustainable development. National financing should be considerably increased while incentives for environmentally and socially responsible investments should be promoted and environmentally damaging subsidies should be gradually removed.

Multilateral and bilateral international or regional funding available under public development aid should be considerably increased and better adapted to the programmes for the protection of the environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean.

The international community should strive to reach the accepted UN aid target of 0.7 per cent of GNP as soon as possible. The commitment of the European Union Heads of States and Governments, in June 2001, to make concrete progress towards reaching this target before the Johannesburg Summit is welcomed.

New and additional resources of funding and innovative financial mechanisms respecting sustainable development principles, such as debt for nature and sustainable development swaps, as well as the Clean Development Mechanisms in the Kyoto Protocol, should be promoted.

These initiatives constitute innovative mechanisms of solidarity for real and effective Mediterranean partnership.

TO THIS END, THE CONTRACTING PARTIES DECIDE TO :

- draw up or revise their own sustainable development strategies in the light of the results of the Johannesburg Summit and the agreements reached above;
- elaborate policies for regional development, including an efficient management of natural capital;
- implement appropriate institutional, fiscal and legal reforms to promote the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan as renewed in 1995, with due attention to socio-economic considerations particularly in eastern and southern Mediterranean countries;
- promote the work of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and its contribution to the promotion of sustainable development in the Mediterranean region in the framework of the Barcelona Convention, and take the necessary measures to implement its recommendations and proposals for action;
- promote the establishment of information, monitoring and evaluation systems on the State of the Environment and sustainable development at regional, national and local levels;

AND INVITE :

THE MEDITERRANEAN GOVERNMENTS to increase the resources devoted to meet these commitments;

THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY to improve allocated resources, increase synergies and mutual support between their programmes of intervention in the Mediterranean, so as to meet more effectively the needs of the region;

THE UNITED NATIONS to consider the needs and resources of eco-regions, such as the Mediterranean, when addressing sustainable development issues.



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THE STRATEGIC REVIEW

Assessing the political and institutional progress made towards sustainable development in the Mediterranean, the already published Strategic Review represents the first self-evaluation of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) and particularly of its instrument for fostering regional sustainable development, the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development.

The Review offers a frank analysis of the teething problems of what is a complex and ambitious remit, and assesses how the measures agreed upon by the Mediterranean community have effectively been implemented.

It also contains encouraging updates from Mediterranean countries charting the steady permeation of a sustainable development way of thinking into Mediterranean countries. It is hoped that it will inject renewed political impetus into regional sustainable development endeavours and represent a realistic guide to real challenges for other global regions seeking to translate sustainable development principles into concrete actions.

Overall, it lays the groundwork for the forthcoming Mediterranean Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Strategic Review reflects the feedback to detailed questionnaires sent to 20 Mediterranean states and the European Union (EU) as well as a number of other key regional actors such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local authorities. It is also informed by studies on Mediterranean regional cooperation, major groups in society, and on MAP's relationship to sustainable development.

Among the major stumbling blocks the Review highlights are the fact that environmental policies still have too little an impact on development policies, remaining too compartmentalised to address themes constituting integrated policy.

Sustainable development policies also depend too exclusively on the public sector, when they need to foster partnerships between the public and private sectors, forming the type of new cooperative

decision-making processes themselves increasingly in demand in the spheres of governance and local management. The Review emphasises that the needs of future generations, and thus a long-term view of development, often fall by the wayside in the drive for the short-term accumulation of wealth and accelerated change.



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The difficulty, at national level, in giving concrete expression to sustainable development measures decided on by the Mediterranean community, shows that this new concept hasn't yet managed to mobilise all spheres of society and that states have been slow to implement some of the decisions taken. It therefore encourages the creation of more National Commissions for Sustainable Development.

The Strategic Review highlights several basic elements that would boost the success of a Mediterranean sustainable development strategy. These include the need for states to draw on all elements of civil society, tourists included, to safeguard natural resources and the vitality of natural ecosystems with the aid of an ambitious public awareness drive.



THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC REVIEW

The Review is intended to provide the basis for the preparation of a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development and the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as well as for broader information of concerned countries and partners on Mediterranean context vis à vis sustainable development.

A mismatch continues to exist between the scale of global environmental damage highlighted, for example, by the UNCED at the Earth Summit in 1992, and the inadequate mobilisation of political and socio-economic actors for the environment and sustainable development.

The obstacles are well known and include difficulties in correctly grasping the concept of sustainable development and in overcoming short-term interests, the persistence of non-sustainable consumption and production patterns, the excessive use of natural resources, the debt burden, as well as difficulties in solving questions of funding and the transfer of ecologically rational technologies.

This Review seeks to evaluate the sustainable development progress made in recent years in this eco-region and the degree to which the concept has mobilised members of civil society. To what extent have Mediterranean states applied themselves to implementing decisions made in terms of effective reforms, genuine integration of environmental concerns in development programmes and capacity building? Is it feasible to envisage a mode of production-related growth and development that is more respectful of the Mediterranean eco-system and its threatened natural resources within the context of the current

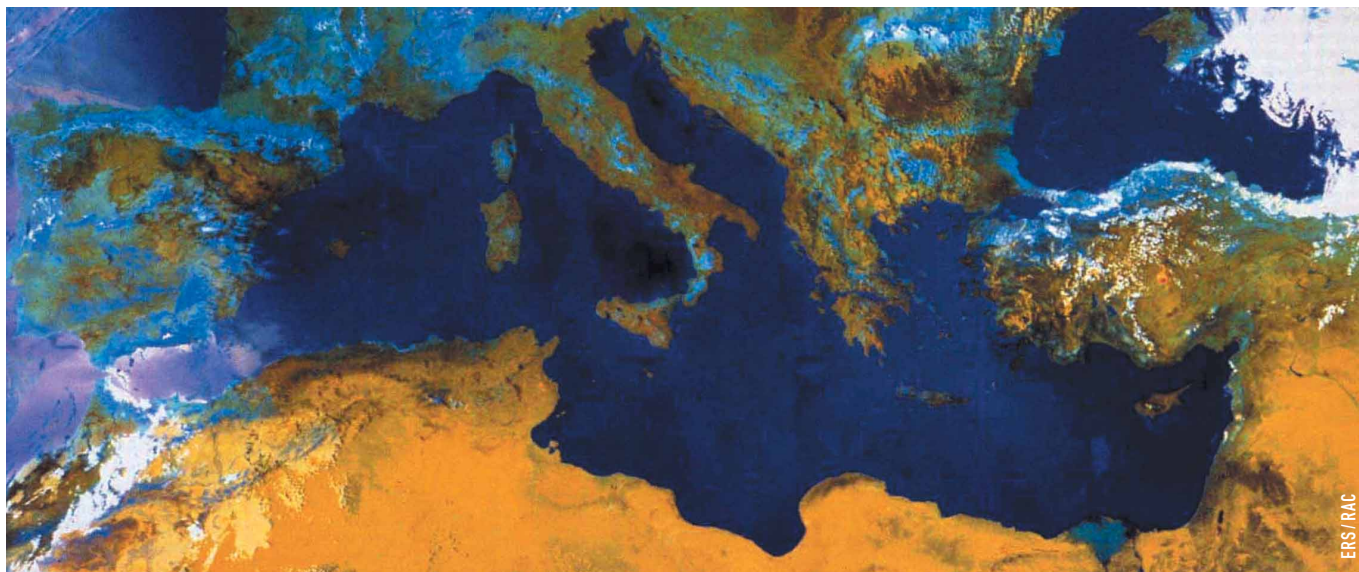
relations between Europe and the developing countries in the region and the widening gulf in terms of demographic, economic, technological and socio-cultural terms which exist between North and South?

The Mediterranean, as an area of North-South and East-West partnerships, is after all a very apt arena in which to test and apply the sustainable development concept. The presence of shared resources such as the sea and coastal zones demand that ecological issues be commonly managed, and in contrast, the unequal development of economies and neighbouring countries, the presence of pockets of poverty, and the existence of conflict and tension represent major handicaps to this common approach.

Implementation by the countries of measures towards sustainable development requires:

- > Greater practical understanding of what sustainable development requires.
- > Consistency between the mechanisms to be established and the aims set.
- > A certain degree of authority to influence the behaviour and encourage the support of all citizens, as well as their actual involvement.
- > Cohesion and conviction on the part of the human capacity responsible for decision taking and implementation.

It is vital that reform packages are multifarious, bundling statutory, fiscal, financial, commercial and economic measures as only these are able to tally with the far-reaching and widespread changes that sustainable development needs. Such reforms would also encourage growth, alleviate poverty and reduce income inequality.

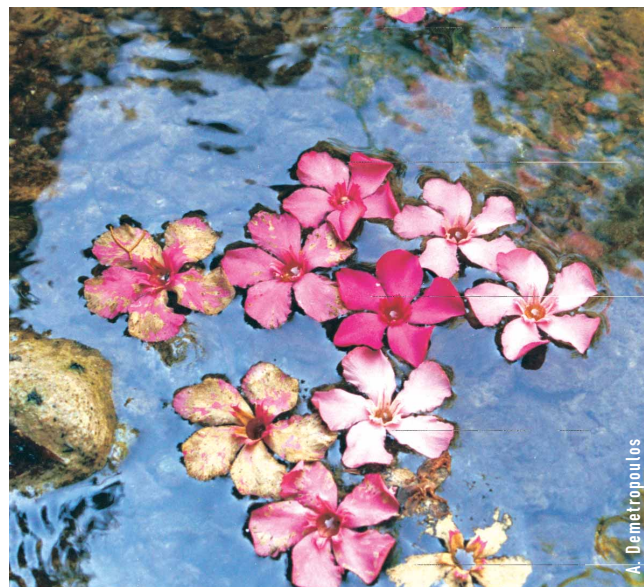


Underlying the reforms and decisions to be taken is the pursuit of efficiency in terms of rationalising economic activity and creating equity in terms of social justice and shared well-being, and preserving the natural resource base in terms of recovering the real cost of their use. Planning reforms related to sustainable development remains a delicate matter since it lies at the heart of the country's institutional and economic policy, raising sensitive issues such as the redistribution of profit, participation in decision-taking and compensation.



DEVELOPMENT STAKES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The preparation of regional sustainable development must engage with the given backdrop of the Mediterranean context. Thus the Strategic Review devotes some attention to outlining several key aspects of Mediterranean life.



At the crossroads of three continents, and as an eco-region, the sea, the coast and the land have multiple significance to the spirit and the lives of Mediterraneans. Its natural resources are an asset—for example its wealth of flora comprising around 25,000 species and 46,000 km of coastline. However these resources are also vulnerable. For instance, its native species have been widely affected by human pressure and a decline in forest areas, now only representing 5% of their initial size.

Development is intensifying competition for natural resources. Agriculture, conditioned by limited natural resources and highly dependent on irrigation, consumes 75% of water drawn in the region, which is having to cope with encroaching soil salination in the South, due to poor drainage and high levels of evaporation. This is accompanied by rapid industrialisation, now making itself felt on the Southern rim, and competing with urbanisation for the coastline, as well as a flourishing tourism industry –now with over 150 million international and domestic visitors and growing by more than 5% per year– and expanding sea, land and air transport services.

Island ecosystems are vulnerable, constituting an unstable balance between the environment, economy and society. They vary widely in terms of size, ease of access, population density and political status but share a strong local identity, a rich cultural heritage and an outstanding environment. They tend to lag behind in terms of development and face fluctuations in their economies. They are under intense pressure from tourism, to the detriment of their environments that nonetheless remains the main source of income for many.

Sustainable development will need a strategy adapted to the needs of the region’s many islands.



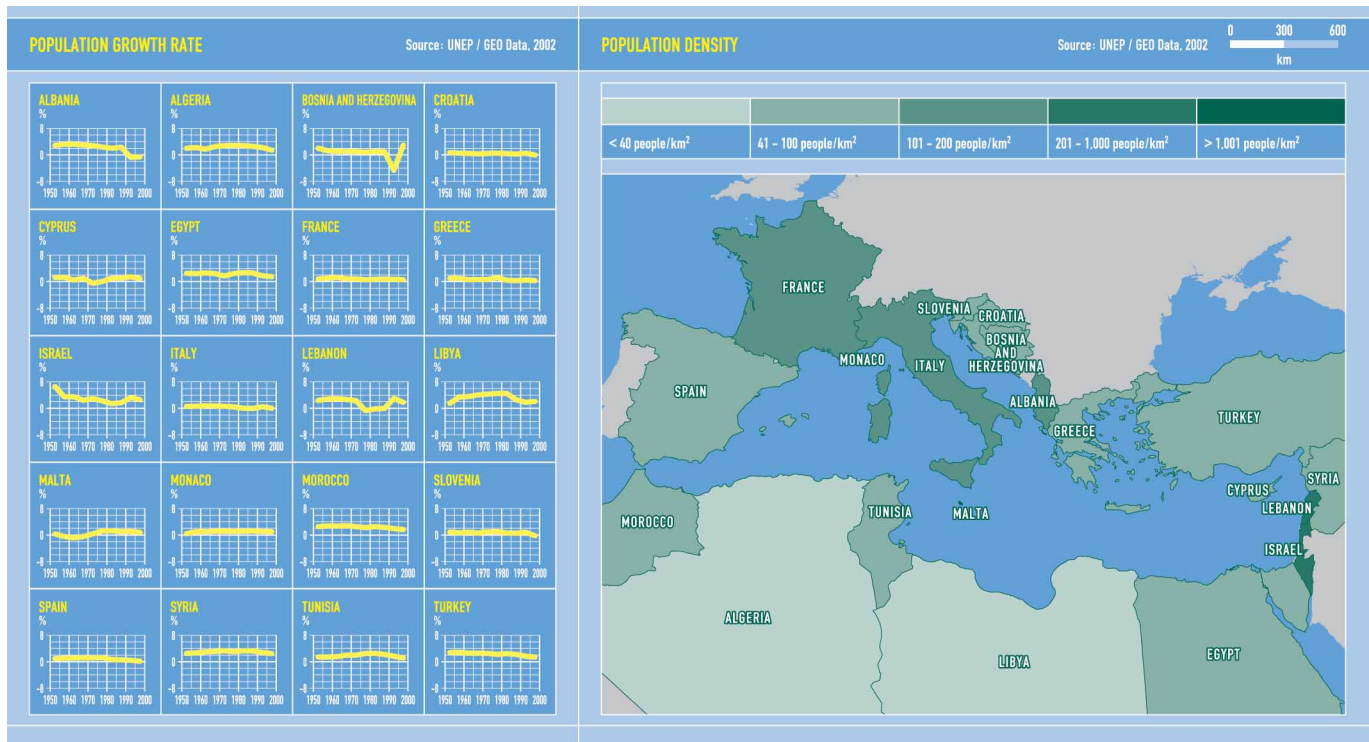
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In the **macro-economic context**, a pattern of weak growth rates prevails in line with world averages, together with shaky public finances and rising debts even though all the indicators of human development, such as health, educational level and per capital income have followed positive trends throughout the region, which still enjoys a lower-than-average share of absolute poverty. Significantly, economic disparity between the countries has grown overall, with a marked and increasing divide between the countries in the Northern and Southern Mediterranean.

Also important are **socio-economic aspects** –such as demographic pressure– the Mediterranean population is

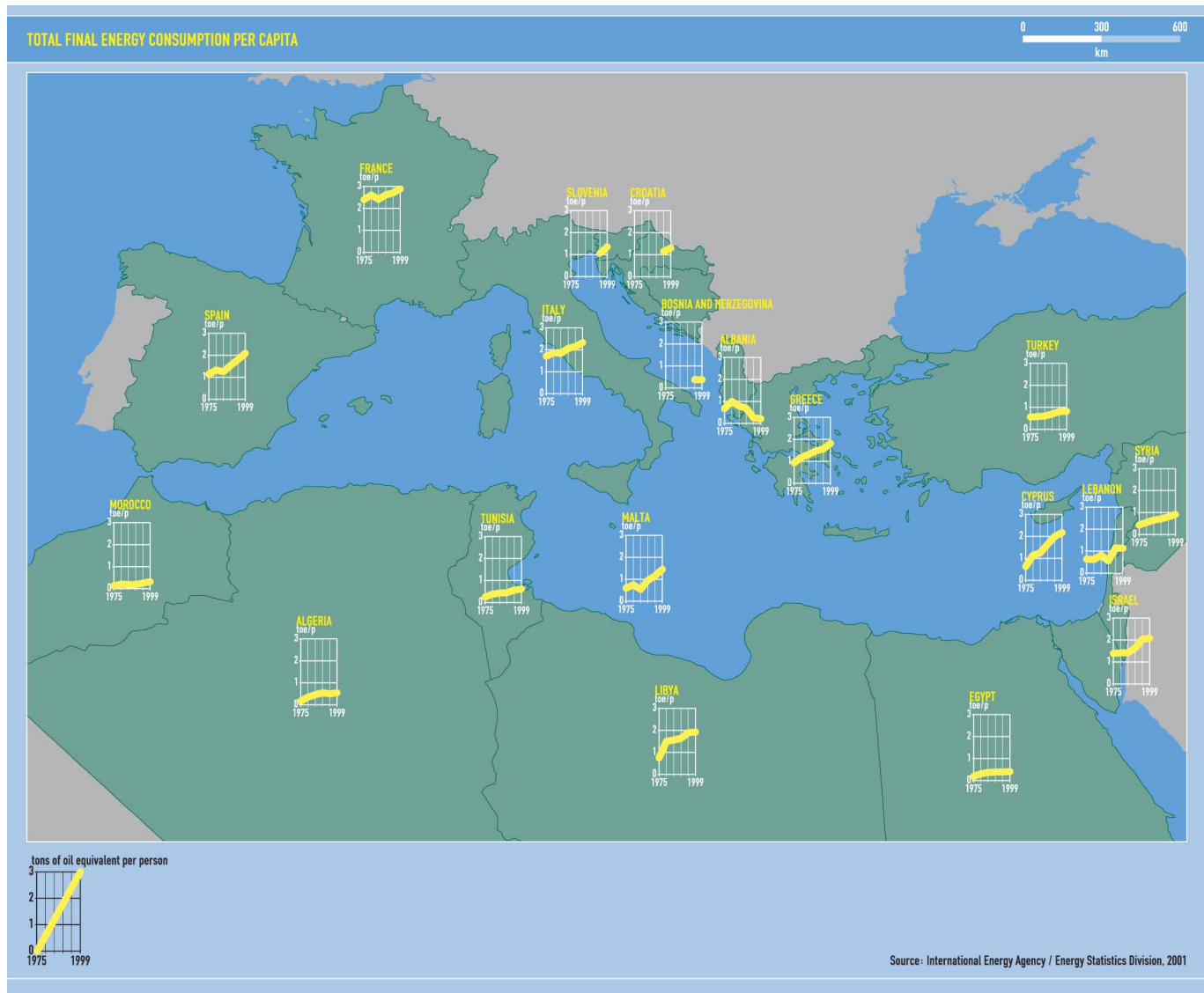
forecast to reach 550 million by 2025. The Northern countries, which accounted for 2/3 of the total population in 1950, will only account for 1/3 in 2025, while the population on the Southern rim will have increased fivefold.

This swing will be accompanied by ageing in the North and rejuvenation in the South, with a rise of job-seekers in coastal towns due to faster littoralisation and urbanisation which is set to affect more than 75% of the population in 2025. This intensifying development will mean considerably greater demand on the countries of the Southern rim for food, industrial goods, energy, housing, water etc. and in turn on the environment.



The **indicators** presented in the MCSD Strategic Review zoom in on prevailing regional trends relating to sustainable development. These indicators include ones

on annual per capita energy consumption and non-sustainable water production.

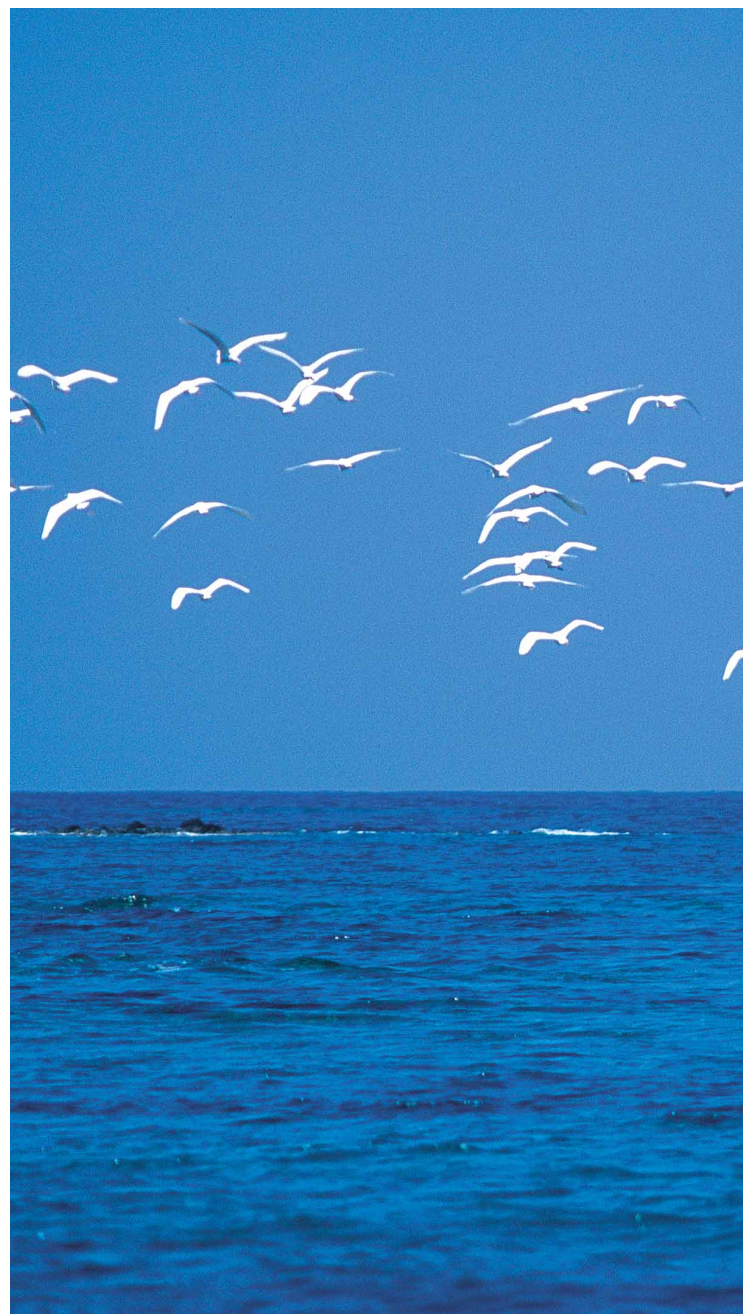


MECHANISMS AND REGIONAL ACTORS WORKING TOWARDS MEDITERRANEAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The sustainable development concept integrates economic, ecological, social, cultural and political dimensions. An assessment of the route to sustainability needs to refer to these five dimensions in both a systemic and holistic manner. The useful indicators that help assess this process include, for example, the strengthening of inter-sectorial policy coordination, and the creation of political, management, assessment and monitoring instruments for the sustainability process.

Important MAP partners in the pan-Mediterranean quest for sustainability are:

- > The Euro-Mediterranean partnership, through the EU and its MEDA support programme, and with the support of the EIB, aiming to nurture an area of shared prosperity.
- > The METAP, a technical assistance programme for the protection of the Mediterranean environment.
- > Regional bodies such as CEDARE (Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe) and the League of Arab States.
- > The United Nations through its assorted specialised agencies including the WHO, IMO, WMO, UNESCO, the IAEA, UNDP, FAO and the World Bank.
- > The main groups from society, particularly the NGOs, professional organisations, and business actors, local authorities and associations.





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The European Union, the Mediterranean and sustainable development

The EU has often played a pioneering role, principally via its *towards sustainability* action programme. However its sustainability projects wield an inadequate influence on the rest of EU policy, still driven by economic concerns.

The impact of the Single Market on the development of Mediterranean countries is a double-edged sword. While increased consumption, prosperity and living standards are a welcome aspect to this economic integration, its negative environmental impacts have been caused by increased goods transport, the production of domestic waste and the spread of non-sustainable consumption patterns.

The main groups from within society

The role of environmental NGOs, local authorities, scientists, women and economic actors has been highlighted, and indeed embodied in the tapestry of Mediterranean environmental initiatives over the last decade.

Post Rio, the UNCSD officially adopted the sustainable development concept, whose social dimensions include the prioritising of awareness-raising, education and participation. The commitment and involvement of the main groups in society was then felt to be essential to the implementation of Agenda 21 and hence the decision by the MAP Contracting Parties, at an early stage, to express the spirit of this change at regional level. In the Mediterranean, such participation has already been seen in the areas of information, public awareness, environmental education, tourism, sea turtles, cetaceans, and marine plant life.

Key audiences

Alongside local authorities, business people and environmental NGOs outlined earlier in this report, the value of other social groupings in sustainable development endeavours should not be underestimated. Consumer associations wield considerable influence on family consumption patterns, while the media enjoy a captive audience. Children and youth represent the largest share of the population in Southern rim countries and as such feature prominently in Agenda MED 21. More input from scientific and academic experts would also be welcome.

MEDITERRANEAN STATES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

What has been the extent of Mediterranean national governments' backing for the implementation of sustainability-oriented projects and activities, their ad hoc institutional reforms and capacity building and the proactive integration of environmental concerns into development programmes? How have these been translated into policy?

The following summary of decisions, measures and actions is based on the information contained in the



questionnaires completed by all MAP Contracting Parties as well as a number of other MCSD members.

Overall, as regards controlling pressure on the environment, most Mediterranean countries have either adopted or are preparing actions to combat pollution from a range of sources, or to prevent the pollution of sea and water resources and to protect forests and other key areas.

The feedback reveals that the existence of international or institutional cooperation frameworks has proved an important catalyst for increased awareness of the stakes involved and a trigger for action. With reference to some environmental pressures, such as combating desertification and greenhouse gases, action is still in its teething stage. Progress also needs to be stepped up in several key areas such as controlling urbanization, urban waste management, and transport, all of which require efficient administrative systems, major investment and quasi-coercive measures.

As far as the integration of the environment and development is concerned, political declarations have rarely been followed by specific action, while there is some administrative inertia regarding the changes demanded by a strategic approach to sustainable development.

Recently, however, initiatives towards such integration have been launched, particularly through the establishment of new consultation and coordination mechanisms (National Commissions for Sustainable Development, observatories), or the preparation of policy frameworks (national or local Agenda 21s). The priority still lies with development fuelled by an economic impetus in most countries.



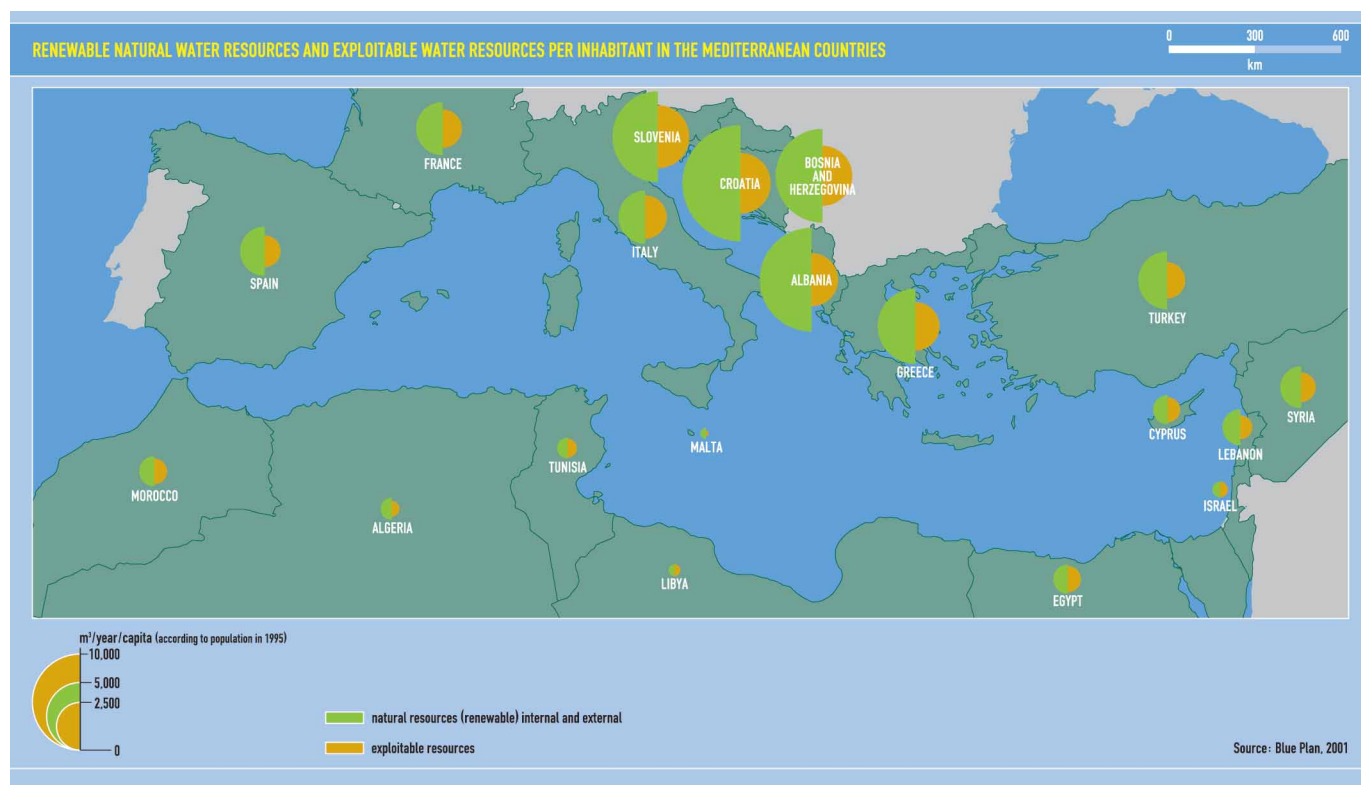
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Sustainability policies and particularly their implementation, are still at a relatively early stage, echoing the disparity in development levels between the two banks of the Mediterranean, a degree of inertia, and the persisting compartmentalisation of green priorities which stifles their outreach role to development. Policies have to adapt to a new emerging consensus about revised social equity interpretations and concerns about the environment of future generations, despite financial and institutional capacity shortfalls.

In terms of content, most relevant sustainable development policies in the Mediterranean have not managed to face up to three important problems:

- > Reforming policies in the key sectors, particularly agriculture and tourism.
- > Controlling urbanisation and littoralisation.
- > Developing infrastructure while respecting local resources and heritage.

The Review, however, in its frank analysis of progress made to date, highlights the willingness of main Mediterranean actors to accelerate policy successes.

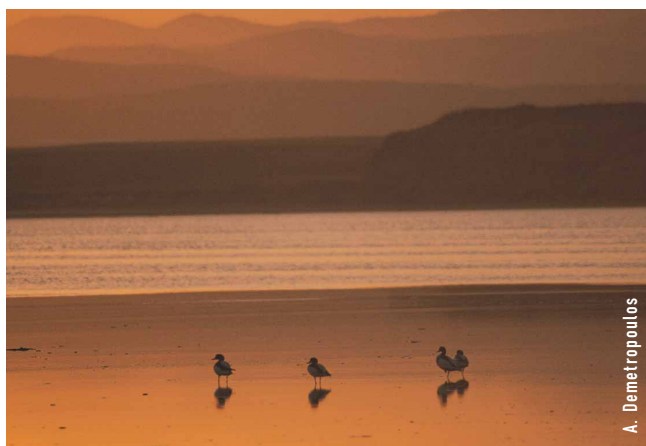


A COMMON VISION AND A REGIONAL STRATEGY

The Review offers a number of pointers that MAP could follow to optimise of regional sustainable development. These include that legal assistance be assured to states to facilitate the adoption of new legal instruments and that it develop a new strategy for sourcing external funding. To foster a more bottom-up approach that focuses on specifics rather than general commitments, it needs to sharpen its information dissemination role.

Other scope for improvement lies in the provision of more quantitative information, the highlighting of examples of good practice, intensified environmental awareness-raising, consumer action bolstered by media support and more local Agenda 21 exercises.

Apart from a clear political impetus, any shift towards sustainable development also requires reference models tailored to the Mediterranean region that identify and convey a shared vision, as well as a coherent strategy capable of guiding the various stages of its implementation.



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To this end the MCSD and its Strategic Review invite Contracting Parties and concerned partners to prepare a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, within the framework of MAP. Paying particular attention to the implementation of the MCSD's proposals gleaned from key areas examined, this Regional Strategy should:

- > Take account of the diversity of existing political, social, economic, cultural and environmental systems.
- > Allow states and local authorities to play their full role.
- > Respect the multiple values of Mediterranean societies.
- > Draw on all elements of society.
- > Promote social equity.
- > Ensure respect for the integrity of ecosystems.
- > Apply a participatory approach.
- > Identify and promote adequate methodologies and tools.
- > Promote the transfer and mastery of cleaner technologies.
- > Promote bilateral and regional cooperation.
- > Take due account of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.
- > Encourage complementarity and synergies with other relevant programmes.
- > Express at the Mediterranean level the aims and proposals for action laid down by major global conventions, as well as the UNCSD's and the World Summit's recommendations.
- > Facilitate implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and MAP recommendations.
- > Build the required capacities to effectively meet the above-mentioned goals.

Mediterranean states are also invited to draft or revise national sustainable strategies, drawing upon MCSD proposals, as soon as possible. They are urged to set up National Commissions on Sustainable Development or similar bodies, representative of wider society, to boost coherence and convergence in action. These constitute part of the vital follow-up process to MCSD proposals, which it is in the interests of states to implement and report back on.

As regards the legal framework for sustainable development, for instance, states are invited to update and implement their national legal frameworks in line with international agreements they have ratified and to facilitate access to justice at a national level to ensure that en-

vironmental law is heeded. Given the strategic importance of coasts, and the need for the implementation of integrated coastal zone management, the granting of further powers to local authorities and guidelines for new national legislation need to be considered.

Mediterranean countries are also invited to promote a closer North-South partnership by strengthening the voluntary contributions made by countries, particularly to fund pilot projects and capacity building.

Meanwhile, monitoring and assessment tools need to be streamlined and optimised, bearing in mind that sustainable development is a medium-to-long-term process with no instant results.



CONCLUSION

This publication is entitled Towards Sustainable in the Mediterranean Region, a title acknowledging that this process requires the adoption of a longer-term perspective, as it is still in its gestation period.

Though most countries in the region recognise its importance, there can be no *one size fits all* approach to sustainable development. Each state needs to chart its own course in line with its specifications and priorities. However, some critical sustainable development challenges are clearly regional, and require collaboration by all partners as well as concrete responses at the local / national and regional / institutional levels.

Designing a Regional Strategy would require a common and comprehensive vision of a more sustainable Mediterranean, with specific time-bound measures and performance indicators.

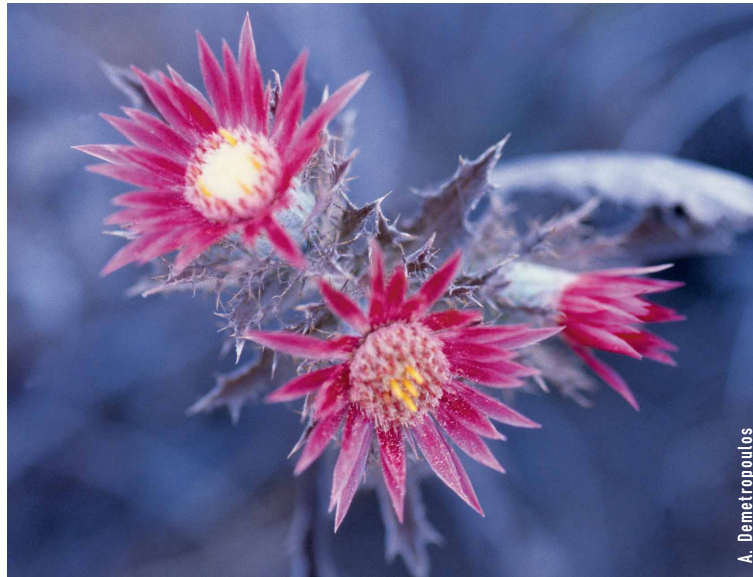
Though sustainable development concerns all areas of economic, social, environmental and political life, a

Mediterranean Sustainable Development Strategy would do better to zoom in on a small number of problems posing severe or irreversible threats to the region, the well being of its people and regional cooperation, so as to bridge the gap between an ambitious vision and practical political action.

Advocates of sustainable development in the Mediterranean agree that the environmental, economic and social cost to be borne in the short term by certain countries

within a context of liberalisation favouring market mechanisms, can only be acceptable if serious accompanying measures are adopted in order to cushion the impact on the least powerful sectors of society and the region's natural resources, and which will guarantee more long-term sustainability.

The ongoing efforts to promote tourism, for example, given its environmental impact, should be closely monitored to ensure that the desire of some countries to alter their balance of payment deficits, does not lead them to exceed the tourist carrying capacity of the natural environment and to sacrifice natural areas and landscapes.

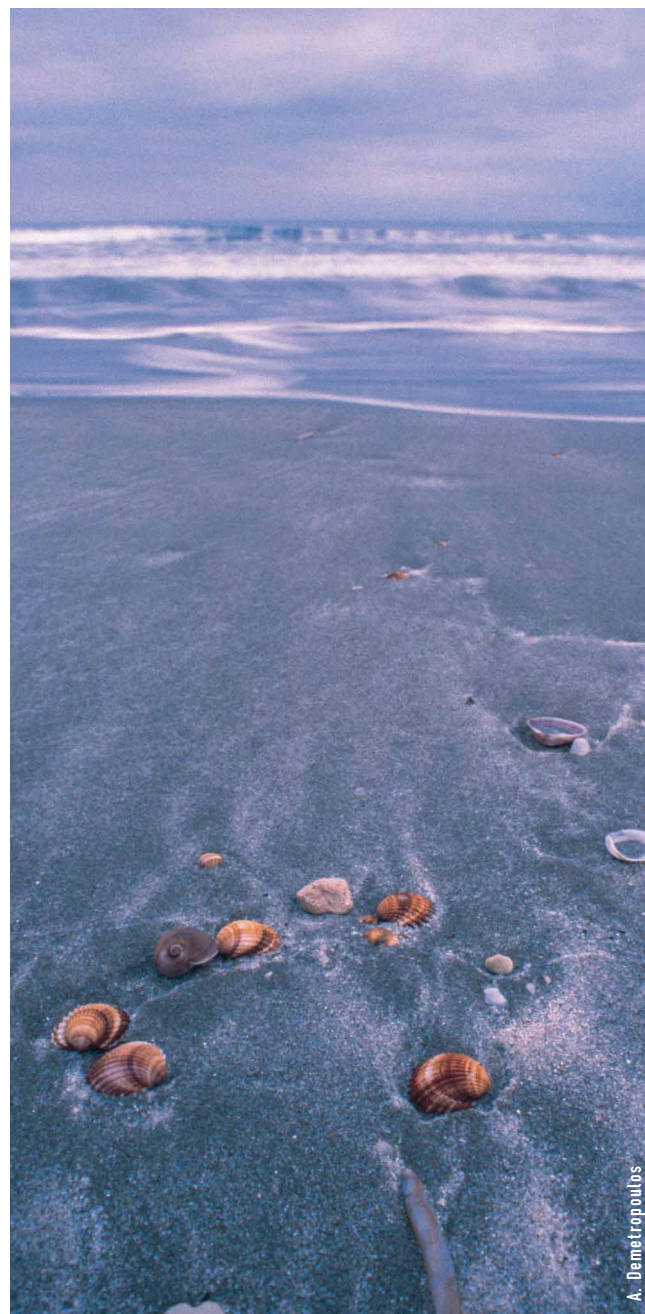


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Strategies for sustainable development with respect to key economic areas and for the management of natural resources are being continuously developed. For instance, plans for enhanced urban management and the development of rural areas incorporating respect for natural resources that these communities depend on, will help revitalise rural societies, curbing the exodus to coastal cities, while protecting forests and biodiversity.

The concept of sustainable development clarifies why merely tackling ecological concerns relating to pollution, waste management, etc. and assessing their environmental impact in a compartmentalised fashion is insufficient. Only once all human activities are marked by an environmental approach, can sustainability really come into its own.

It is encouraging that, at the start of the new millennium, the emerging driving forces in the Mediterranean region are positive ones. They include the overwhelming public environmental awareness, highly pluralistic decision-making processes and transparency, the presence of new actors and grassroots initiatives, strong national political environmental agendas and the UN Sustainable Development Agenda. MAP, the MCSD and the plethora of other Mediterranean actors dedicated to the advancement of regional sustainable development, will continue to pay close attention to the conclusions and recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and to incorporate them into their shared Mediterranean sustainable development quest.



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