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Blue Plan, MAP's regional activity center specialised in sustainable development, is fully committed to combat greenhouse gas emissions.

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Italy Launches National Conference On Climate

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OZONE TREATY'S ROLE IN COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE DISCUSSED AT 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF MONTREAL PROTOCOL

New science and technical assessments indicate that speeding up a freeze and phase-out of hydro chlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and their related by-products could not only assist in the recovery of the ozone layer, but an acceleration could also play an important role in addressing another key environmental challenge—namely climate change.

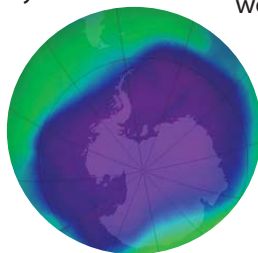
Nine countries—developed and developing—submitted six different proposals on this issue that were discussed in Montreal when up to 191 governments met between 17 and 21 September. The negotiations occurred during the 20th Anniversary celebration of the world's Ozone Treaty, the Montreal Protocol.

The Protocol was negotiated in response to growing international concern over the emergence of a hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica from the use of ozone-depleting chemicals in products from hair sprays to fire fighting equipment. Under the Montreal Protocol, use of HCFCs is set to cease in developed countries in 2030 and in developing ones in 2040.

However, scientists and many governments are now studying a range of options for a more rapid freeze on consumption and production of these replacements and the bringing forward of the final phase-out by around 10 years.

Research indicates that acceleration could, over the coming decades, deliver cumulative emission reductions over the equivalent to perhaps 18 to 25 billion metric tonnes of carbon dioxide (18 gigatonnes-25 gigatonnes). Annually, it could represent a cut equal to over 3.5 per cent of all the world's current greenhouse emissions.

An accelerated freeze and phase out of HCFCs might therefore offer governments 'quick wins' in addressing climate change and build confidence that a new international regime on greenhouse gas emissions can be agreed before the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012, UNEP suggests.



Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, said: "In doing so the treaty will also underline the often overlooked fact that multilateral environment agreements like the Montreal Protocol and the Kyoto Protocol have far wider environmental, social and economic benefits than perhaps are fully recognized when they are initially agreed. In short, treaties working together can do far more, more rapidly and at a lower cost".

The Montreal meeting was held in advance of a Heads of State event on climate change hosted by the UN Secretary General, Mr Ban Ki-Moon at UN Headquarters in New York on 24 September.

This high-level event was aimed at building consensus at the highest level on the need for climate action and a global emission reduction agreement to come into force when the Kyoto Protocol expires in five years time.

FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE: UNEP SASAKAWA PRIZE 2007 GOES TO SOUTH AFRICA AND BANGLADESH



Ms. Jeunesse Park of South Africa and Bangladeshi NGO Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha are the co-winners of the UNEP Sasakawa Prize 2007, a \$200,000 prize

awarded yearly to individuals or institutions who have made a substantial contribution to the protection and management of the environment.

The four-member jury chose the co-winners, at a meeting at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, and the award ceremony will be held on 27 October 2007 at the Museum of Natural History, Rose Center for Earth and Space, in New York, USA.

The UNEP Sasakawa Prize acts as an incentive for environmental efforts that are sustainable and replicable in the long-term. It recognizes innovation, groundbreaking research and ideas, and extraordinary grassroots initiatives from around the world. The candidates' scope of activities is associated with the environmental theme of the year, which in 2007 is climate change.

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director, said: "Leadership is urgently needed if the international community is to rise to the challenge of climate change—leadership from the United Nations; governments, scientists; business and cities, but also leadership from individuals and civil society organizations working on the ground".

"These two outstanding winners of the Sasakawa Prize 2007 embody leadership in its finest form - namely creative and determined action that demonstrates real and tangible difference to the people and communities they serve. In doing so our award winners are proving that combating climate change is not only do-able but links to the wider environmental, social and economic aims enshrined in targets such as the Millennium Development Goals," said UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

The UNEP Sasakawa Prize is sponsored by the Japan-based Nippon Foundation, an independent, non-profit grant-making organization that supports both domestic and international philanthropic projects. The UNEP Sasakawa Prize was originally established in 1982 by the late Ryoichi Sasakawa. The Prize was re-launched in its current format in 2005, and is currently chaired by Mr. Sasakawa's son, Yohei Sasakawa.

MAP COMPONENTS and BARCELONA CONVENTION

ITALY AND UNEP/MAP AGREE ON INITIATIVES TO PROTECT THE MEDITERRANEAN

The strengthening of existing cooperation through the organisation of a technical bilateral meeting on the 17th September and the development of innovative strategies to protect the Mediterranean region were the result of the discussions held between the Italian Minister for the Environment Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio and MAP Coordinator Paul Mifsud on 14th September at MAP's premises in Athens.

Minister Pecoraro Scanio proposed to UNEP/

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MAP the setting up of regular technical meetings to define appropriate urgent actions tackling the environmental situation in the Mediterranean. The Italian Government is also willing to develop joint activities with UNEP/MAP in the course of 2008.

Of particular concern to Italy is the issue of improving the Mediterranean situation in relation to climate change through sustainable adaptation and mitigation, with emphasis on the development of renewable energies and technologies, the elimination of land-based sources of pollution (LBS), the coordinated control of marine traffic, the collection of data on the marine biodiversity situation and the export of marine technical and scientific know-how to other countries in the region.

"We don't want to turn the Mediterranean into the Black Sea", said Minister Pecoraro Scanio. "We are still in time to prevent this from happening by acting immediately. All states in the region must put words into action now. We want to cooperate with UNEP/MAP, a strongly-established regional organisation, in order to build on existing knowledge and devise concrete actions."

In particular, Italy suggested the launch of a joint activity in 2008 looking at the situation in the Adriatic Sea, where the sea currents have happened irregularly, even stopping in the winter 2003, because of the rise in water temperature, and the decreasing influx of river water due to climate change. The Italian ICRAM and Dorn Institutes, specialised on the Mediterranean, have been proposed to develop a specific study on all Italian seas.

Italy also recommended that at the next meeting in January 2008, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, MAP's legal framework, adopt the Strategy Declaration and the Governance Paper. Such reform will strengthen MAP' status and its role in the region.

The bilateral discussions with MAP also included the development of more international

and transnational marine protected areas in the Mediterranean region, in addition to those already established in the Sicilian Channel in cooperation with Malta and Tunisia, the marine park in the Ligurian Sea, and the offshore reserve developed by the Sardinia Region and Algeria.

"Since MAP's establishment over thirty years ago, Italy has played a major role for the protection of the Mediterranean marine environment, and I took this opportunity to thank the Italian Government for its outstanding support over the years. Italian expertise



has proven invaluable, and its financial support has made it possible to launch significant projects in the region", said MAP Coordinator Paul Mifsud. "I am looking forward to strengthen this cooperation and I welcome Italy's proposal to start immediately with technical discussions on future actions"

The bilateral meeting took place the day after the closing in Rome of the national conference on climate change organised by the Italian Ministry of the Environment, where participants discussed the threats to the Mediterranean provoked by global warming.

PERSGA DELEGATION VISITS ADRIATIC COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES



Between 3 - 10 September 2007, a delegation from PERSGA, based in Saudi Arabia, visited PAP/RAC and the whole Adriatic region, in particular Croatia, Italy, Montenegro and Slovenia. The participants came from Sudan and were accompanied by an expert from the Equipe Cousteau, France.

PERSGA is an intergovernmental organisation for the conservation of the environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, including the following member states: Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Yemen. The organisation is dedicated, among other activities, to coastal zone management, spatial planning and to the issue related to development of tourism.

Planning in coastal area and tourism development are at present the main issues in the PERSGA region, especially in Sudan where PERSGA is currently developing an ICZM (international coastal zone management) plan for the entire coast of Sudan.

An important mission of PAP/RAC, MAP's regional center for coastal zone management programmes, is to share experience and cooperate on common issues with other Regional Seas Programmes of UNEP, and other intergovernmental organisations.

The core of the PERSGA programme involved a visit to the PAP/RAC projects in the Adriatic countries. The aim was to share the experience from sustainable tourism projects, environmental and ICZM policies in related countries, protected areas, as well as to meet with local experts and institutions on the ground to get first hand information and data.

SAFEMED PROJECT FUNDS TRAINING FOR VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICES (VTS) OPERATORS FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN

MAP's Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) has organized two five-day induction courses on Vessel Traffic Systems (VTS) between the 3 and the 14 September.

The training courses were organized within the context of SAFEMED, the EU-funded MEDA Regional Project "Euromed Cooperation on Maritime Safety and Prevention of Pollution from Ships". The SAFEMED Project is being implemented by REMPEC



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Blue Plan offset CO₂ emissions linked to professional travel of its employees

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in ten Euromed Mediterranean partners, namely Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

Eighteen government officials from the Mediterranean region have benefited from these training courses at South Tyneside College (STC), United Kingdom, which is accredited for VTS Training by the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) of the United Kingdom.

The main objectives of the training courses were for participants to acquire thorough and sufficient knowledge of the International (IMO & IALA) Guidelines and Recommendations for VTS, to master the basic principles of VTS (i.e. services that a VTS



can provide to shipping and the resources to provide those services, and VTS communication procedures),

to acquire knowledge on applicable legislation, recommendations and policy aspects at European level. And finally to be able to utilize the acquired knowledge in their job as VTS Operators and/or Managers.

The participants gained hands-on experience during the simulation exercises using state-of-the-art simulation equipment. Attendees were continuously monitored and assessed. At the end of the training sessions they received an attendance certificate confirming their successful completion of the Induction Course in VTS.

Recognising the important contribution of VTS personnel towards maintaining the safety of life at sea and the protection of the environment, SAFEMED has been implementing a number of activities related to the safety of navigation through the development of traffic monitoring systems.

VTS related activities were previously organized under the SAFEMED Project, including an Information Day on Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System (VTMIS) held in Trieste, Italy in October 2006 and fact-finding field missions to the beneficiaries during the second half of 2006.

BLUE PLAN OFFSET CO₂ EMISSIONS LINKED TO PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL OF ITS EMPLOYEES

Blue Plan, MAP's regional activity center specialised in sustainable development, is fully committed to combat greenhouse gas emissions.

The estimated CO₂ emissions resulting from means of transport used, and from covered distance, will from now on appear on mission orders of Plan Bleu's employees brought to travel for their work.

Plan Bleu will compensate the accumulated emissions at the end of the year.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

ITALY LAUNCHES NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE



At the national Conference on Climate Change, held in Rome on the 12-13 September and organised by

the Ministry of Environment, scientists and politicians discussed of the threats represented by climate change and tackled some innovative and practical solutions to limit the damage and safeguard the environment.

According to the experts, we must get ready and face dramatic changes in the next ten years provoked by climate. These include coastal erosion and floods, the collapse of ecosystems, the increase of the hydrological imbalance, the loss of flora and fauna, and diverse health impacts on humans.

Researchers from ICRAM (Institute for Research on the Sea) have rang the alarm for the state of the Adriatic Sea, a part of the Mediterranean where a temperature increase of 2 degrees is registered every year, even during the winter and down to a 100 metres depth.

This has already affected and interrupted the current of the Trieste Gulf, a current that contributes to the mixing of the Mediterranean waters. Its absence could involve significant risks for the entire marine

food chain in the region.

Without such North-South current, the Adriatic could turn into a motionless sea, getting warmer by the year, and turning the waters from Trieste down to the Puglia region into a salty dump, with limited circulation of oxygen. The first species to disappear would be fish and aquatic plants from the Trieste Gulf, while mushrooms and algae would be thriving.

Italian Minister of the Environment Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio said: "the Conference should produce a plan for environmental safety of citizens, and to help counteract the effects of climate change. This is an issue that concerns the entire [Italian] Government, and each and everyone must contribute his share."

The next scheduled national conference on climate change will be held in November, and is organised by the Tunisian Government with MAP's support.

More information on the Conference and data presented can be found at: www.conferenzacambiamenticlimatici2007.it

CHEMICAL RESIDUES PUT AT RISK KILLER WHALES

The disposal of chemical substances like the PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls) and the old insecticide DDT, a dramatic issue that has been affecting for years the Polar Seas, creates serious problems also in the Mediterranean.



PCBs are industrial compounds used generally in electric transmission fluids, transformers, lubricants and others. They are part of the

persistent organic pollutants (POPs), a category of substances that are not easily degradable and are accumulated in the organism. They have a toxic effect, in particular on the immune system. Moreover the PCBs influence directly reproductive capacity, making animals sterile or less fecund.

According to recently published data by the Tethys Research Institute (Italy), specialised on the Mediterranean, the concentrations of these toxic

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First nesting of pink flamingos in the saltworks of Thyna, Tunisia

substances are extremely high in the Mediterranean Sea.

The Mediterranean marine flora and fauna are under constant pressure caused by these and other polluting substances produced by more than 200 petrochemical and energy installations, chemical industries and chlorine plants located along the coasts, in addition to the activities of 110 million residents and the arrival of 200 million tourists every year.

PCBs were forbidden in the 70s in order to protect human beings, on which they have harmful effects, as much as on cetaceans. These chemicals begin to poison killer whales even before they start feeding on fish. There is a generational transmission of these toxic substances because they tend to accumulate in fatty tissues. The cetaceans' milk being very rich in fat, the PCBs pass directly into cubs. Contamination then continues through the food chain.

"The present situation may be stated in the form of a simple equation:

great biological richness + strong pressure by human activities = erosion of biodiversity", said MAP Coordinator Paul Mifsud. "In addition to cetaceans, at least 306 animal and plant species are already at risk in the Mediterranean".

The SPA/BD Protocol (Specially Protected Areas and Biodiversity) of the Barcelona Convention is the Mediterranean's main tool for the protection and sustainable management of cetaceans, other coastal and marine fauna and flora and special areas in the Mediterranean region.

MAP, in co-operation with national experts and international organisations, has developed and currently implements an Action Plan for its implementation, which is the main assignment of SPA/RAC, one of MAP's regional activity centres, based in Tunisia.

The SPA/BD Protocol provides the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, international and national organizations, NGOs, donors and all other actors involved in the protection and management of the Mediterranean natural environment, with principles, measures and concrete and coordinated actions at the national, transboundary and regional

levels for the conservation of the Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity.

FIRST NESTING OF PINK FLAMINGOS IN THE SALTWORKS OF THYNA, TUNISIA

The Pink flamingo can be observed practically everywhere in the Tunisian wetlands, according to the level and the salinity of water and the availability of food. Up to 40.000 birds spend the winter in Tunisia, and many young remain in Tunisia during the first



three or four years of their life.

This year, a colony of approximately 140 nests settled in Tunisia and for the first time ever 17 couples succeeded

in reproducing in the saltworks of Thyna, Tunisia.

The Pink flamingo is one of the 15 species of the Action plan for the Conservation of Birds Species of the Barcelona Convention on the Protection of the marine and coastal Environment of the Mediterranean, implemented by the MAP's Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC) in Tunis.

This first-time nesting event is likely to be related to two major factors: the absence of adequate nesting conditions in the pond of Fangassier, in the Camargue (France), one of the principal sites of reproduction in the Mediterranean region for flamingos, affected by climate change, and the conservation efforts of the Tunisian governmental institutions and NGOs.

The Tunisian Directorate-General of Forests (DGF) within the Ministry for Agriculture and the Hydraulic Resources and Association "the Friends of the Birds" (AAO) have ensured for many years the follow-up and the protection of the avifauna of the saltworks of Thyna.

The AAO participates in the research program on the Mediterranean population of the species, concerning the flamingo colonies in France, Spain, Italy, Turkey and since 2005 in Algeria.

UNEP/MAP

Key 2007 and 2008 Dates

16-19
October

MAP Focal Points,
Madrid, Spain

24 October

UN DAY and 1st
Mediterranean Coast Day
Celebrations, Athens,
Greece, and other
Mediterranean venues

25-27
October

First International
Conference on Marine
Protected Area,
Hyeres, France

29-31
October

9th Global Meeting of the
Regional Seas, Jeddah,
Saudi Arabia

12-14
December

Review Meeting on MED
POL monitoring activities
and the role of indicators,
Athens, Greece

15-18
January 2008

15th Meeting of the
Contracting Parties to the
Barcelona Convention,
Almeria, Spain

19-21
January 2008

Conference of the
Plenipotentiaries for the
adoption of the ICZM
Protocol, Almeria, Spain

