

MedWaves

THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN MAGAZINE

52

World Environment Day and the Mediterranean Sea

The Mediterranean: A (vital) drop in the Oceans The Big Polluters

A Global Initiative for the Regional Seas

ICAM: towards a Regional Protocol

Biodiversity in Mediterranean Media

In this issue

Mediterranean Action Plan New MAP Coordinator: Paul Mifsud	3
World Environment Day Wanted! Seas and Oceans Dead or Alive? Fifty key facts about Seas and Oceans	4
The WED and the Mediterranean sea The mediterranean: a (vital) drop in the oceans	8
The WED and the Mediterranean sea The big polluters: industry, urban centres and agriculture	10
The WED and the Mediterranean sea Trashing the Mediterranean: over 250 kilos of garbage per person per year	12
The WED and the Mediterranean sea Maritime traffic: one third of sea-borne trade and one fourth of oil carried at sea	14
Regional Seas Programme A Global Initiative for the Regional Seas	15
The MAP and the Media Biodiversity, high on the agenda of Mediterranean Journalists	17
Coastal management Towards a regional protocol on integrated coastal management	18
Cinema and the Environment Eco-Cinema Festival: "Summer Lightning" wins the MAP Award	19

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UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN



New MAP Coordinator: Paul Mifsud, from Malta



Mr Mifsud, who took office on 11th May, has been appointed by the UN Secretary-General as Coordinator of the Athens-based Secretariat to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution, signed in 1975 by 16 countries and the European Community.

Currently, the Contracting Parties to this Convention are 21 countries and the European Union.

Before taking office as MAP Coordinator, Mr Mifsud was the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure of Malta.

During his 36 years in the public service, Mr. Mifsud has held several leading headship positions including Director of Information (1982-1988), Airport Manager (1988-1991), Chief Executive Officer of the Mediterranean Conference Centre (1991-1996), Director General Courts of Justice (1996-1998) and Permanent Secretary since 1998, first in the Ministry for Public Works and Construction, subsequently in the Ministry for the Environment and lately in the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure.

In 1997 he was the Head of the Press Office attached to the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Malta.

At the Ministry for the Environment of Malta, Mr. Mifsud was deeply involved in the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan and was responsible for the organization of the 11th Conference of the Contracting Parties in Malta in 1999.

Between 1999 and 2001 he assisted the then Minister for the Environment of Malta, in his capacity as President of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, in the organization of the work of the Bureau.

Since 1999 he has been Malta's representative at the meetings of the MAP Focal Points and sat on the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development.

He also participated at the UNEP Governing Council and Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Kenya in 2001 and 2003. More recently, he organized the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries for the signing of the New Emergency Protocol on Pollution from Ships (Malta, January 2003).

During Malta's EU accession process, Mr. Mifsud was responsible for the screening exercise of the EU Environmental Acquis and subsequently for all the technical preparations during the negotiations stage of the second most difficult chapter after agriculture.

He also participated at a number of Informal EU and Accession Countries Environment Ministers' meetings in Brussels and represented the Ministry for the Environment on the European Policy Review Group (EPRG) of DG Environment.

He negotiated Malta's membership of the European Environment Agency and was subsequently appointed as Malta's first representative on the Agency's Management Board.

Mr. Mifsud participated also in a number of Euro-Mediterranean meetings and seminars on environmental matters. In May 2002, he chaired the technical meeting in Malta in preparation of the Second Euro-Mediterranean Environment Ministers' Meeting (Athens, August 2001).

Between 1990 and 1994 Mr. Mifsud studied Diplomacy and Politics at the University of Malta.

He is married to Victoria Bee Brincat and they have two sons, Stanley and Patrick.

Wanted! Seas and Oceans Dead or Alive?

The World Environment Day (WED), commemorated each year on 5 June, is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness on the environment and enhances political attention and action.

The WED theme selected for 2004 is Wanted! Seas and Oceans Dead or Alive? (www.unep.org/wed/2004). The main international celebrations of the WED 2004 will be held in Barcelona, Spain in close collaboration with the Universal Forum of Cultures.

The agenda is to give a human face to environmental issues; empower people to become active agents of sustainable and equitable development; promote an understanding that communities are pivotal to changing attitudes towards environmental issues; and advocate partnership, which will ensure all nations and peoples enjoy a safer and more prosperous future.

World Environment Day is a people's event with colourful activities such as street rallies, bicycle parades, green concerts, essays and poster competitions in schools, tree plant-

ing, as well as recycling and clean-up campaigns.

The WED event, celebrated around the globe each year on or around 5 June, will take place during the nearly five-month long Universal Forum of Cultures, characterized by a wealth of ambitious and innovative environmental ideas, technologies and infrastructure developments.

Visitors to Barcelona can see the huge, 10,500 square-metre solar power plant located at the heart of the Forum. The 1.3 MW of clean, green electricity generated is enough to meet the needs of a town of 1,000 inhabitants.

Other innovative developments include a pneumatic rubbish collection system that will take waste generated by the Forum and WED from intakes around the city through an underground network to a processing and recycling centre.



Fifty key facts about Seas and Oceans

1. Oceans cover 70 per cent of the Earth's surface.
2. More than 90 per cent of the planet's living biomass is found in the oceans.
3. Eighty per cent of all pollution in seas and oceans comes from land-based activities.
4. Forty per cent of the world's population lives within 60 kilometres of a coast.
5. Three-quarters of the world's megacities are by the sea.
6. By 2010, 80 per cent of people will live within 100 kilometres of the coast.
7. Death and disease caused by polluted coastal waters costs the global economy US\$12.8 billion a year. The annual economic impact of hepatitis from tainted seafood alone is US\$7.2 billion.
8. Plastic waste kills up to 1 million sea birds, 100,000 sea mammals and countless fish each year.
9. Sea creatures, killed by plastic, decompose — the plastic does not. Plastic remains in the ecosystem to kill again and again.
10. Harmful algal blooms, caused by an excess of nutrients — mainly nitrogen from agricultural fertilizers — have created nearly 150 coastal deoxygenated 'dead zones' worldwide, ranging from 1 to 70,000 square kilometres.
11. An estimated 21 million barrels of oil run into the oceans each year from street run-off, effluent from factories, and from ships flushing their tanks.
12. Over the past decade, an average of 600,000 barrels of oil a year has been accidentally spilled from ships, the equivalent of 12 disasters the size of the sinking of the oil tanker Prestige in 2002.
13. Oil tankers, transport 60 per cent (approximately 2,000 million tons) of oil consumed in the world.
14. More than 90 per cent of goods traded between countries are transported by sea.
15. Each year 10 billion tons of ballast water is transferred around the globe and released into foreign waters.
16. Ballast water often contains species — such as the zebra mussel and comb jellyfish — that can colonize their new environment to the detriment of native species and local economies.

17. Pollution, exotic species and alteration of coastal habitats are a growing threat to important marine ecosystems such as mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs.
18. Tropical coral reefs border the shores of 109 countries, the majority of which are among the world's least developed. Significant reef degradation has occurred in 93 countries.
19. Although coral reefs comprise less than 0.5 per cent of the ocean floor, it is estimated that more than 90 per cent of marine species are directly or indirectly dependent on them.
20. There are about 4,000 coral reef fish species worldwide, accounting for approximately a quarter of all marine fish species.
21. The Great Barrier Reef, measuring 2,000 kilometres in length, is the largest living structure on Earth. It can be seen from the Moon.
22. Reefs protect human populations along coastlines from wave and storm damage by serving as buffers between oceans and near-shore communities.
23. Nearly 60 per cent of the world's remaining reefs are at significant risk of being lost in the next three decades.
24. The major causes of coral reef decline are coastal development, sedimentation, destructive fishing practices, pollution, tourism and global warming.
25. Climate change threatens to destroy the majority of the world's coral reefs, as well as wreak havoc on the fragile economies of Small Island Developing States.
26. Average sea level has risen between 10 and 25 centimetres in the past 100 years. If all the world's ice melted, the oceans would rise by 66 metres.
27. Sixty per cent of the Pacific shoreline and 35 per cent of the Atlantic shoreline are receding at a rate of one metre a year.
28. The phenomenon of coral bleaching is a major threat to coral health. In 1998, 75 per cent of the world's reefs were affected by coral bleaching. Sixteen per cent died.
29. The Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) calls for a global marine assessment by 2004 and the development of a global network of marine protected areas by 2012.
30. Less than one half a per cent of marine habitats are protected — compared with 11.5 per cent of global land area.
31. The High Seas — areas of the ocean beyond national jurisdiction — cover almost 50 per cent of the Earth's surface. They are the least protected part of the world.
32. Although there are some treaties that protect ocean-going species such as whales, as well as some fisheries agreements, there are no protected areas in the High Seas.
33. Studies show that protecting critical marine habitats — such as warm- and cold-water coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves — can dramatically increase fish size and quantity, benefiting both artisanal and commercial fisheries.

34. Ninety per cent of the world's fishermen and women operate at the small-scale local level, accounting for over half the global fish catch.
35. Ninety-five per cent of world fish catch (80 million tons) is from near-shore waters.
36. More than 3.5 billion people depend on the ocean for their primary source of food. In 20 years, this number could double to 7 billion.
37. Artisanal fishing communities, who harvest half the world's fish catch, are seeing their livelihoods increasingly threatened by illegal, unregulated or subsidized commercial fleets.
38. More than 70 per cent of the world's marine fisheries are now fished up to or beyond their sustainable limit.
39. Populations of commercially attractive large fish, such as tuna, cod, swordfish and marlin, have declined by as much as 90 per cent in the past century.
40. Governments at WSSD agreed, on an urgent basis and where possible by 2015, to maintain or restore depleted fish stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield.
41. The WSSD Plan of Implementation calls for the elimination of destructive fishing practices and subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
42. Government subsidies — estimated at US\$15 to US\$20 billion per year — account for nearly 20 per cent of revenues to the fishing industry worldwide, promoting excess fishing capacity and encouraging over-fishing.
43. Destructive fishing practices are killing hundreds of thousands of marine species each year and helping to destroy important undersea habitats.
44. Each year, illegal longline fishing, which involves lines up to 80 miles long, with thousands of baited hooks, kills over 300,000 seabirds, including 100,000 albatrosses.
45. As many as 100 million sharks are killed each year for their meat and fins, which are used for shark fin soup. Hunters typically catch the sharks, de-fin them while alive and throw them back into the ocean where they either drown or bleed to death.
46. Global by-catch — unintended destruction caused by the use of non-selective fishing gear, such as trawl nets, longlines and gillnets — amounts to 20 million tons a year.
47. The annual global by-catch mortality of small whales, dolphins and porpoises alone is estimated to be more than 300,000 individuals.
48. Fishing for wild shrimp represents 2 per cent of global seafood but one-third of total by-catch. The ratio of by-catch from shrimp fishing ranges from 5:1 in temperate zones to 10:1 and more in the tropics.
49. Shrimp farming, too, is highly destructive. It causes chemical and fertilizer pollution of water and has been largely responsible for the destruction of nearly a quarter of the world's mangroves.
50. Mangroves provide nurseries for 85 per cent of commercial fish species in the tropics.

The Mediterranean: a (vital) drop in the oceans

The Mediterranean Sea covers more than 2,5 million km², its coastline is over 46.000 km long, and its volume is 3.700km³. Still, the Mediterranean is just a drop in the oceans: only 0,7 percent of all salt water.

This drop in the oceans that is the Mediterranean sea has always had a decisive impact on the history of humankind and has witnessed the splendour of many ancient civilizations.

But the Mediterranean sea is sick. It is under the intensive pressures of all sorts of pollution both from land and from maritime activities.

Just some hints: Mediterranean coastal countries have a population of nearly 425 million, out of which 150 million live on its coasts. Add to this some 170 million tourists visiting the Mediterranean each year.

This demographic concentration on the Mediterranean shores takes place on only one 40% of its coasts that is considered useful for human activities, due to the absence of large plains, the relatively small good agricultural land available, the high number of ports and harbours, tightly hemmed between sea and rock, and the few broad fluvial basins.

Some 48% urban centres lack of sewage treatment facilities.

Around 80% of wastewater is disposed of in the sea untreated.

In addition, industrial activities are a key source of pollution, coming mainly from the chemical/ petrochemical and metallurgy sectors.

Other main industrial sectors in the coastal region are treatment of wastes and solvent generation, surface treatment of metals, production of paper, paints and plastics, dyeing and printing and tanneries.

There is also a direct impact of effluents from industry that cause pollution problems at the site level (large commercial harbours, heavy industrial complexes) and contribute to the generation of so-called "hot spot" areas.

Some 60 petrol refineries dump into the sea nearly 20.000 tonnes of petrol per year. The use of chemical products in agriculture generates runoffs containing pesticides, nitrates and phosphates.

The Mediterranean sea is also under pressure from intense maritime activities: 30% of international sea-borne trade volume originates or is directed to its ports (its is estimated that 50% of all goods carried at sea are dangerous to some degree), and 28% of the world's sea-borne oil traffic transits the Mediterranean.

Moreover, the Mediterranean sea witnesses some 200 000 crossings per year, 2.000 ships at any one time (of which up to 300 tankers).

Also related to this maritime traffic, the introduction of alien species via ballast waters of ships, apart from accidental escape into estuaries and the sea, can often be an unknown threat to Mediterranean marine species.

All this takes place in a semi-enclosed sea (with two main exists: the Gibraltar Strait, approximately 14 km wide, and the Suez Canal, only a few meters wide). This implies that its waters need a long time to be renewed through inflows from other oceans: between 80 years and 150 years according to scientific estimates.

The WED and the Mediterranean sea

9



The big polluters: industry, urban centres and agriculture

With more than 200 petrochemical and energy installations, chemical industries and chlorine plants, and over 80 major rivers carrying heavy loads of pollution from inland, the Mediterranean basin is now showing an advanced state of deterioration.

Perhaps first among the environmental problems of the region is the inadequate treatment of municipal wastewaters. Until today, a mere 55 per cent of the coastal cities is served by treatment plants which means that a load of more than three billion m³ of untreated water enters the sea every year.

In addition to the risks of microbiological nature, untreated wastewaters carry large amounts of nutrients of human origin (phosphorus and nitrogen) which cause –in conjunction with the nutrients deriving from uncontrolled agricultural practices –diffuse eutrophication phenomena (enhanced production of micro algae leading to a series of chain effects culminating in depletion of oxygen).

Industrial pollutants impact the Mediterranean basin through air emissions, solid wastes and wastewaters.

Concerning industrial wastewaters, it was calculated that 66 million m³ of untreated waters containing nutrients, phenols, mercury, lead, chromium, zinc and mineral oils, enter directly into the sea every year.

Rivers are also important conveyors of industrial pollutants (13 per cent of the total load of industrial wastewaters is discharged into rivers) which include Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), such as Poly Chlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) –used basically in cooling systems, some neon lamps, etc– and several pesticides, that are toxic organic substances, "time-resistant" and thus very dangerous for humans.

The industrial development prospects of the region, which reflect the expected pressure on the environment,

foresee a certain decline during the 21st century of the heavy industries in the Northern shores (which now account for 87 per cent of the total of the region), that is balanced by an expected strong growth in the South Mediterranean countries.

Also cement production, again expected to decline in the North, will witness a 150 per cent increase in the South.

Without touching the issue of accidental spills of petroleum hydrocarbons due to accidents at sea –a danger permanently present in the Mediterranean that has the largest traffic density of tankers of the globe–, routine discharges can account for very large amounts of petroleum regularly discharged into the sea.

A partial survey covering only six countries revealed that 12,5 metric tones of oil processed per million were discharged every year from only 13 refineries.

Although partially connected to the problems described until now, agriculture merits a separate consideration, as it is believed to be the largest non-point contributor of pollutants to the Mediterranean.

In the catchments basin of the Mediterranean and along the coastal zones, particularly in the South, there is in fact a strong pressure to use increasing amounts of fertilizers along with the use of pesticides which find their way to the sea directly through run-off water and, indirectly, through groundwater, wetlands and rivers in the form of sediment and chemical loads.

A global picture therefore that makes it clear that urgent and pointed interventions are needed.

First of all, there was the need to quantify with precision where and how much pollution enters into the sea.

This process, albeit indispensable, is being completed now by making use of the availability of Governments to provide data and information. As a result, in the framework of the implementation of the MAP Strategic Action Programme (SAP) targeted at reducing pollution from land-based sources, for which Governments are committed to operate concrete reductions of pollution emissions and releases, an amount of essential information is being collated.

First of all, a full list of pollution hot-spots was prepared, integrated by data and information, which is regularly revised to ensure the possession of real-time data. Similarly, a list describing the status of the sewage treatment plants of the region is available and kept continuously up-to-date to identify gaps establish potential progress.

In addition, every country is preparing what is called the "national baseline budget of pollution emissions and relea-

ses", which is a detailed inventory, as at the year 2003, of all pollution sources including types and amounts of releases. This inventory is expected to represent the reference point for the follow-up of the pollution reductions expected to be implemented by the countries, through their commitment by the adoption of the SAP.

The other document being prepared by the countries is a national diagnostic analysis of problems and issues leading to the identification of priority interventions.

The above work should culminate by the end of 2005 with the preparation of National Action Plans describing in each country the ten-year plan, including an investment portfolio, which is expected to show how the countries intend to concretely reduce pollution emissions.

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Trashing the Mediterranean: over 250 kilos of garbage per person per year

Pollution caused by the direct or indirect discharge of solid waste and litter into the sea, especially plastic packaging, is a significant cause of degradation of the land, marine coastal fringe and aquatic life in the Mediterranean.

Municipal solid waste includes, among others, household trash, organic waste from food, paper, plastic, and bottles. The generation of solid waste in the Mediterranean region is estimated to be, in average, 254 kg per person per year, with an annual growth of 2-3%.

In the Mediterranean, plastic alone accounts for 75% of the waste on the sea surface and the seabed. Non-biodegradable plastic and tar balls build up on beaches in the whole of the Mediterranean coast.

Data from the MAP/MED POL Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution in the Mediterranean region, and from other sources in the region show that around 30-40 million tonnes of municipal solid waste of coastal origin are generated annually. It is also estimated that 30-50% could reach the Mediterranean sea from illegal dumping sites.

The inadequate management of solid waste in the region reveals that:

- 30-95% of the waste is collected by services in urban areas,

- between 1-50% of waste is landfilled,
- merely 1-20% of waste is recovered (recycling, composting, etc),
- between 3-50 US dollars per ton are spent by the governments to deal with this problem.

Additional hints:

- The random sitting of waste dumps close to the sea shore facilitates the transfer of solid wastes into the marine environment during sea storms.
- Few disposal sites in the region meet accepted standards, due to poor design, lack of technical capacity, and operational budget.
- Composting of waste is a major component of management of solid waste systems in many countries.
- In general recycling is undertaken largely by the informal sector.
- Biomedical wastes in particular are frequently mixed with other solid wastes.

Municipal Solid Waste Management is one of the most serious environmental concerns in urban areas, especially in view of its adverse effects.

The proximity of the land and the control of litter exercised from the land, together with concerns regarding visual pollution, mean that this waste should receive the greatest attention, as it is harmful for beaches, ports and coastal zones, aquatic life and human health problems.

The costs of solid waste management vary greatly: generally, waste management systems that comprise simply collection and disposal in dumps cost in the range of Euro 5-20/ton. Solid waste management recurrent costs are a major component of municipal budgets, typically comprising in the order of 10 - 30 percent of annual municipal expenditures.

Some examples:

- Euro 100/ton are paid in Beirut, Lebanon, to manage waste through a complex system (street sweeping, collection, sorting, composting, baling, wrapping and landfilling);
- a private contractor in Alexandria, Egypt, is charging the equivalent of approximately Euro 15/ton of waste for an integrated service combining street sweeping, collection and landfilling, together with transportation; and
- a system that combines public and private sector waste collection service and disposal at a semi-controlled dis-

posal site in Tunis costs approximately Euro 50/ton.

What to do? The elements available for managing waste streams are, in order of priority:

- reduction at source;
- recycling and reclamation; and
- sub-surface containment “dumping” and other methods of elimination (incineration and other treatment techniques) should be reconsidered when dealing with coastal urban centres.

The benefits of recycling need no further emphasis:

- it permits a reduction in waste streams to be treated, thereby helping to lower the cost of treatment,
- it prevents overloading of waste dumps and extends their life cycle;
- it preserves natural raw material resources;
- it decreases the volume of imports; and
- it generates jobs.

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Maritime traffic:

1/3 of sea-borne trade and 1/4 of oil carried at sea

With 30% of all international sea-borne trade volume originated from or directed to its ports or passing through its waters, and nearly 25% of the world's sea-transported oil transiting it, maritime traffic is among the key causes of pollution of the Mediterranean sea.

According to estimates, 2,000 merchant vessels of over 100 tons are at sea at any moment, with a total of 200,000 crossing the Mediterranean annually.

The traffic is particularly congested in the narrow passages through which ships enter and exit the Mediterranean sea.

This is the case of the Straits of Gibraltar, with around 14 kilometres width, through which it is estimated that 80,000 vessels transit annually.

The Suez Canal, only a few meters wide, witnesses over 14,000 transits per year according to these estimates.

The Canakkle Straits/Sea of Marmara/Istanbul Straits complex is another example of maritime traffic congestion.

The impacts of this heavy maritime traffic in this sea that

represents only 0,7% of all oceans and seas on Earth, are numerous.

On the one hand, it is estimated that 50% of all good carried at sea are dangerous to some degree.

Some of the hazardous and noxious substances, usually referred to as chemicals, are far more dangerous than oil. However, the quantities of these products transported by sea are only a fraction of the volume of oil carried by tankers.

On the other hand, operational oil pollution from ships encompasses a variety of discharges of oil and oily mixtures that are generated on board.

This includes oil inputs into the sea both from cargo spaces and from machinery spaces, comprising oily ballast waters, tank washing residues, fuel oil sludge and bilge discharges.



A Global Initiative for the Regional Seas

The Regional Seas Programme (RSP) was created in 1974 in the wake of the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. For the last 30 years the RSP has aimed at addressing the accelerating degradation of the world's oceans and coastal areas through the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environment

By engaging neighbouring countries, on a regional scale, to protect their coastal and marine environment, the RSP has grown from strength to strength.

There are now 140 countries participating, in 18 regions. The Black Sea, Caribbean, East Africa, East Asia, the Kuwait Convention region, Mediterranean, North-East Pacific, North-West Pacific, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, South Asia, South-East Pacific, South Pacific and West and Central Africa were established under UNEP auspices.

Added to these are the five partner programmes for the Antarctic, Arctic, Baltic Sea, Caspian Sea and North-East Atlantic. Soon to be joining the Regional Seas (RS) family, the Upper South-West Atlantic's is under development.

Priorities

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and its successor the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, Johannesburg, 2002) had a profound influence on the priorities of the various RSPs based on the principles of sustainable development and protection of oceans, seas and coastal areas and its resources (Chapter 17, Agenda 21 and WSSD Plan of Implementation). The RSPs have identified their major concerns and priorities as:

ities of the various RSPs based on the principles of sustainable development and protection of oceans, seas and coastal areas and its resources (Chapter 17, Agenda 21 and WSSD Plan of Implementation). The RSPs have identified their major concerns and priorities as:

- Land-based sources of marine pollution, with particular emphasis on municipal wastewater;
- Ship-generated marine pollution, oil spill preparedness and response, and construction of port reception facilities for ships' wastes;
- The impact of increasing urbanization and coastal development of marine and coastal ecosystems, requiring capacity-building in support of integrated coastal management;
- Conservation and management of marine and coastal ecosystems through Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM), focusing on the over-exploitation or depletion of living marine resources; and
- Scientific and technical monitoring, reporting, and assessment of the marine environment.



Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs)

The process of establishing a RSP usually begins with the development of an Action Plan outlining the strategy and substance of a regionally coordinated programme. From the start, UNEP consults closely with Governments, regional organizations, international organizations and regional experts, to ensure that the Action Plans are based on sound scientific assessments and reflect the region's particular needs and priorities.

In most regions the Action Plan is underpinned with a strong legal framework in the form of a regional convention and associated protocols, expressing in clear terms the commitment and political will of governments to tackle their common environmental problems. The RSP is flexible and responsive to changes in the international environmental agenda.

Other areas of concern on which to base future collaboration with Multinational Environmental Agreements (MEAs), international organizations and civil society, include an ecosystem-based management approach of living marine resources (e.g. fisheries); data and information management including the use of sustainable development indicators; dissemination of best practices; and a multi-sectoral approach to ICAM.

A New Global Strategy

The RS convene regular Global Meetings of the secretariats of all the RSPs and partner programmes to discuss their common interests, set future priorities and forge lasting links with one another, with global environmental conventions and international organizations.

Their 5th Global Meeting in November 2003 established the Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2004-2007. The central elements for this new global strategy are as follows:

- **Commitment:** The strategy calls for Member States to develop an enhanced sense of 'ownership' towards their respective RSPs, leading to stronger political and financial commitment to their implementation;
- **Participation:** The strategy calls for new partnerships, increasing participation of civil society and industry in the development and implementation of the RSPs;
- **Sustainability:** The strategy invites Member States to give their programmes sound and lasting financial support;
- **Partnership:** The strategy foresees the use of the RSCAPs as a platform for the regional implementation of MEAs and global programmes and initiatives; increased horizontal cooperation between RSCAPs; the strengthening of links with International Organizations, and participation in the Barbados Plan of Action on Small Island Developing States;
- **Science based and ecosystem based management:** The strategy calls for intensified monitoring and assessment

activities, including participation in the new process of the UN General Assembly known as the Global Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment (GMA) and of the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA).

Agenda 21, the WSSD Plan of Implementation and the new RS Global Strategy have given the RSP both a mandate and a roadmap for the years ahead. The programme's successes offer a model for future programmes and a yardstick with which to measure our progress.

The RSP provides regional platforms for both the implementation of the principles of sustainable development and for regional implementation of programmes and activities related to global conventions and MEAS. Given its achievements built upon modest resources, the RSP has given excellent value for money for all of its three decades.

Dr. Ellik Adler
Senior Programme Officer
UNEP Regional Seas Programme

Biodiversity, high on the agenda of Mediterranean Journalists

A Workshop for Mediterranean journalists, organized by the MAP in Cyprus, showed the high interest of the media in the region on issues related to biodiversity. Thirty articles, many of them covering full pages, were printed in 13 MAP member countries.

Journalists representing largest newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations in Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey, participated in the MAP Workshop for Mediterranean Media Professional on Biodiversity.

During the event, organized by the Mediterranean Action Plan in Nicosia, from 11 to 13 March, 19 journalists attended six sessions that included detailed presentations on the status of the environment in the region, the main sources of pollution, as well as the activities and actions undertaken by the MAP to protect the environment while promoting sustainable development.

The presentations included full background on the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as well as the works of the MAP and its Regional Activity Centres (RACs). The centre dealing with Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC), based in Tunisia, participated in the organization of the workshop.

Several scientists made presentations on biodiversity: the MAP SPA/RAC Director, a Tunisian marine biologist (former scientific director of SPA/RAC), one independent Cypriot marine biologist, and a Senior Official of the Cypriot Government.

In addition to the discussions that followed each session, the journalists had a number of interviews with both the MAP staff, the SPA/RAC Director and the scientists and experts that participated.

Upon invitation of the Government of Cyprus, the agenda included a field visit to the Akamas peninsula, during which journalists were briefed on the situation of marine biodiversity in the country.

This has been the third major gathering of Mediterranean media professionals organized by the MAP in only ten months.

In May 2003, a workshop on coastal management and cleaner industrial production took place in Barcelona, Spain, and was attended by 19 Journalists from 11 countries.

In November 2003, over 100 Mediterranean media professional covered the meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with nearly 250 articles printed.

Another workshop, focussing on pollution from land-based activities and the MAP special programme for reducing it is scheduled after the summer period.

For a regional protocol on integrated coastal management

Cagliari, Italy, hosted on 28-29 May a "Regional Stakeholders Forum on Integrated Coastal Management in the Mediterranean: Towards a Regional Protocol", held by the MAP Priority Actions Programme / Regional Activity Centre.

Attended by 200 participants, representing national and local authorities, NGOs, experts, scientists, MAP components and UN organisations (UNESCO, UNDP, UNIDO, WHO) and the World Bank, the Forum counted on the strong support of the Italian Ministry of the Environment, the Region of Sardinia, and the Province of Cagliari.

The MAP and its PAP/RAC, as well as most of the nations in the region, have increased their efforts in introducing Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM) as principal tool for achieving sustainable development in their coastal areas.

Trying to fill that gap, the Contracting Parties (CPs) have, at their 13th Meeting in Catania (2003), recommended to "...prepare a draft text of the regional protocol on integrated coastal management, on the basis of a broad process of consultation among experts and all other interested parties in view of its consideration by the CPs." To that end, the Regional Forum on ICAM has been envisaged as a first step.

After the CPs meeting in Monaco (2001), the required Feasibility Study for the ICAM protocol was prepared. The study demonstrated the need for a regional legal instrument from technical, environmental and legal standpoints, and puts forward the protocol as the best-suited instrument.

Three options were presented: a) A framework protocol; b) a more complete and detailed protocol; and c) an intermediate protocol.

The 13th meeting recommended to PAP/RAC to draft the text of the protocol and to present it at the 2005 meeting. The first major action was to organize a broad-based forum, or a

"stock-taking" meeting on ICAM, where all the relevant stakeholders would have the opportunity to express their views.

During the Forum, key coastal issues (urbanisation, tourism, protected areas), and national experiences in implementing coastal legislation were presented in a critical manner.

MAP components (MED POL and RACs) have presented their experiences in drafting and implementing existing regional protocols. Participants formed 4 working groups, each one representing a specific stakeholder sector: national and local authorities; NGOs; scientific community; and private sector.

The Forum concluded, among others, that:

- a "bottom-up" approach to the preparation of the protocol should be followed;
- duplication and overlaps with existing regional legal instruments should be avoided;
- a minimum of legally binding provisions should be set-up from the beginning, and more should be phased in progressively;
- national experiences and contexts should be taken into consideration;
- implementation mechanisms should be provided;
- relationship with EU relevant legislation should be set-up;
- better involvement of the business sector should be secured.

The Forum supported a programme of follow-up activities:

- setting up of the drafting group (October 2004)
- meeting of the small technical and legal expert group (November 2004)
- consultations in countries (February 2005)
- government designated experts' meeting (April 2005)
- finalisation of the text (May 2005)
- submission to the MAP Focal Points (September 2005)
- submission to the Contracting Parties (November 2005)

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Eco-Cinema Festival: “Summer Lightning” wins the MAP Award

The story of a Greek family that owns a small hotel on the island of Crete, with their daily activities, worries, and even doubts about the usefulness of a life often interrupted by visits from passing tourists and travelling salesmen.

The film, directed by the Greek Nikos Ligouris, also shows the crisis of the 55-year-old head of the family. A one-time olive-farmer, he is now having serious doubts about going into tourism. His thoughts about the sun and the light, form the centre of the film. The family spends most of their days sitting in the shade, waiting, hoping, for tourists and gazing at the sea.

When they find a camera someone has left behind, they begin to photograph the sea several times a day. Their idea is to document the rich variety of light and colours on the water in a "catalogue". At the same time, they hope to snap a summer lightning flash, a rare phenomenon, which happens on the horizon in fine weather and is not followed by thunder. They have now collected some 5,000 pictures, but so far without any summer lightning...

The MAP-sponsored award for the best Mediterranean production, was delivered at this 4th edition of the Festival, in which over 100 films participated, took place on the Greek Island of Rhodes on 1-6 June, coinciding with the celebrations of the World Environment Day, devoted this year to Oceans and Seas.

Nikos Ligouris was born in Athens in 1952, studied Law at the University of Athens and cinema at the Senior Film and Television School in Munich, Germany. He now lives in Berlin.

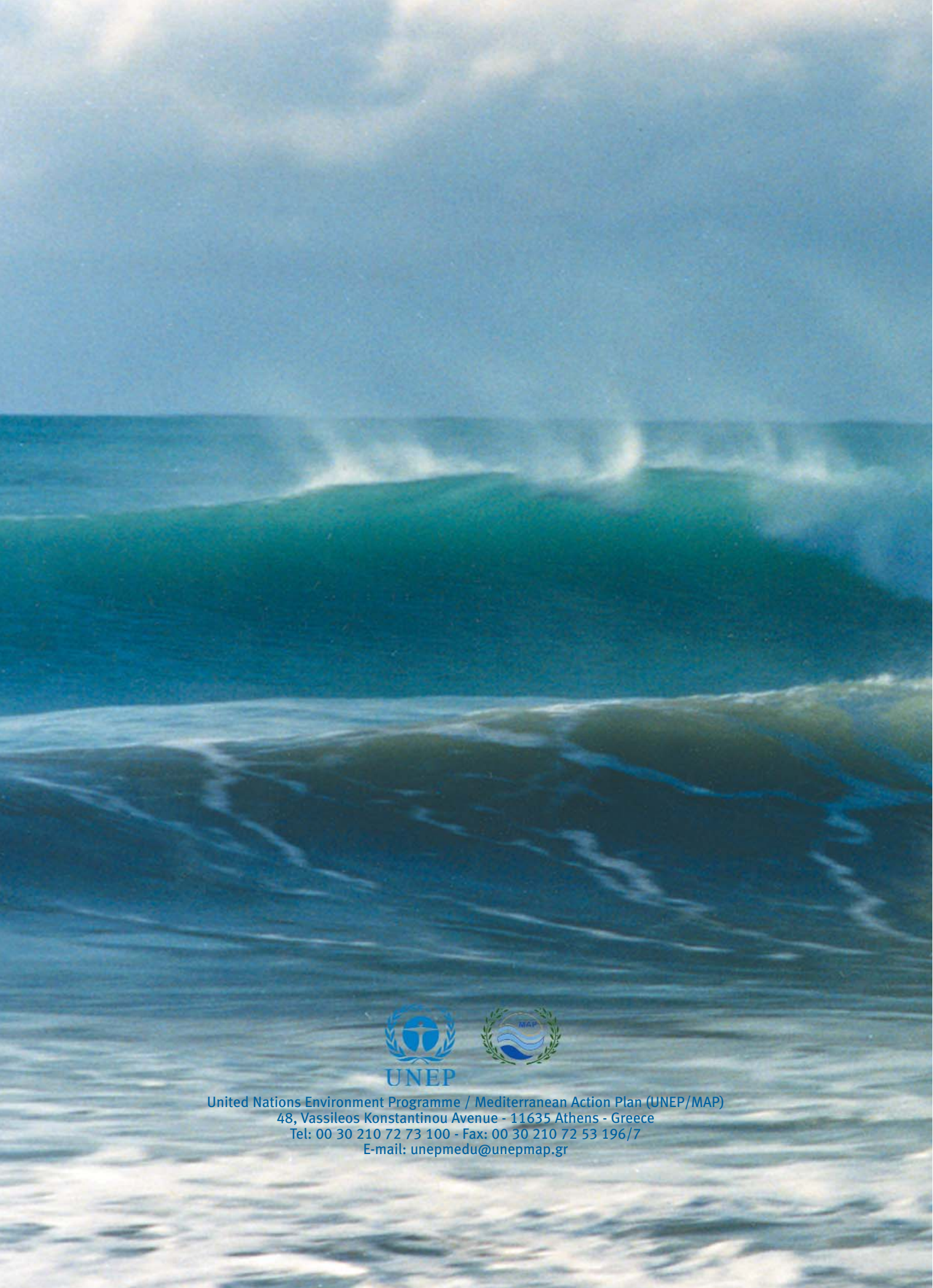
The Jury, that selected this film for the MAP prize, stated that they highly appreciated "the combination of spiritual approach to the environment and human nature", as well as

"the proper restitution of the Mediterranean atmosphere and the capacity of the director to keep the intensity as well as the involvement of the public".

The Mediterranean Jury also gave a Special Mention to another Greek production: Haravyi (Sunrise) by Giannis Katsamboulas. According to them, what they appreciated in his film was "the intensity and density of the direction which successfully managed to include many dimensions, social, environmental and psychological, and also the beauty of the picture".

It is the story of the inhabitants of Haravyi, in Western Macedonia, that abandoned their village in 1987 due to the spreading of the lignite mines in the greater area. Now the place is desolated, ruined and surrounded by huge machines. An 80 year-old refugee from Pontos (Asia Minor), who refused to leave the village, is the protagonist of this film.





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