

Since 1995 two regional organisations have been striving for environmental protection and sustainable development in the Mediterranean basin: MAP, founded in 1975 by Mediterranean states and the EU under the aegis of UNEP, and EUROMED, the foreign policy initiative of the EU, launched in 1995, which while aimed at fostering stability in the region through co-operation and economic growth endorses also the concept of a sustainable development. While the environmental agendas are quite ambitious, little progress has been made on the "green front". To meet the ambitious goals of the two protagonists the joining of forces is required; the integration of environmental policies and sustainability strategies needs to be pursued. For the implementation of policies and programmes capacities need to build up and the scarce resources available for green policies need to be co-ordinated. With this Brief conditions and options for a co-operation are set out in order to develop synergies with a view to common goals.

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Options for a Co-operation between MAP and EUROMED

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Options for a Co-operation between MAP and EUROMED

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Foreword

What is the future of the European model of economic and political integration? Is it tied to a uniquely European historical process of overcoming the limitations of the Westphalian system of nation states after World War II? Would it help to involve neighbouring countries with different political, cultural and religious traditions? How can it work in practice?

Europe is looking afresh at the Mediterranean, and not only since the attacks of 11 September 2001. They drew renewed attention to security risks, differences in religion, societies and politics between Christians, Muslims and Jews in the region. The debates since then have also reminded us of our common history, attitudes and traditions.

For over 25 years, nations have co-operated around the Mediterranean Sea on environmental protection, nature conservation and the management of natural resources. A fragile enclosed sea as the common property of all those that live around it served to build institutions for joint action and stronger international relationships. Responding to the need to counter environmental pressures has provided the countries involved with a foundation on which to align foreign policy approaches also on other issues. EU enlargement in 2004 will bring in three new Mediterranean Member States, which will further increase the weight of Mediterranean concerns and priorities in European debates. The Mediterranean Free Trade Zone will accelerate the economic integration of the region.

This Ecologic Brief builds on the study The Mediterranean Action Plan and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan and the French Ministry of Environment. The study had some impact on the 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment (Athens, Greece, 10 July 2002), and we publish this brief ahead of the Euro-Mediterranean Mid-Term Meeting of Foreign Ministers (Crete, 26-27 May 2003).

The brief also provides context to the conference "Applying EU Environmental Legislation in the Field of Marine Protection" on the island of Zakynthos, with an important nesting beach of the highly endangered loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*). This event on 19-20 May 2003, during the Greek Presidency of the European Union, is supported by the Bellagio Forum for Sustainable Development, the Niarchos Foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the European Commission, and Ecologic. All unite around the majestic loggerhead turtle as a symbol of a peaceful and clean Mediterranean.

R. Andreas Kraemer, Director of Ecologic, Berlin & Brussels



Introduction: joining forces in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean is a fantastic asset... its natural conditions remain unique: its biodiversity, oligotrophic conditions, regular water renewal, rich coastal biotopes and landscapes, significant average depth (1.500 m), mild climatic conditions, etc. Properly used, the Mediterranean provides the basis for diversified economies in the basin while keeping a unique Mediterranean entity. [But] we keep transforming all this potential and opportunities into threats for the future ... We are doing much to degrade the landscapes by urbanising the coast beyond carrying capacities; we are also degrading the transition zone, the biotopes, the sealing of soils. In a way we are building a barrier of concrete that extends already over more than 25000 km of the 47000 total km of Mediterranean coast, behind which the Mediterranean identity and its resources are gradually disappearing. We also discharge too much untreated waste water and toxic substances; and biodiversity is threatened by bringing invading fauna and flora species and scraping the sea beds. ... The time has come to implement common policies for action aimed to improve the current situation and stop the degradation ... otherwise, there is little hope of honouring our responsibility to take care of what is still a treasure, the Mediterranean Sea.

(D. Jiménez-Beltrán, Executive Director of the EEA and L. Chabason, Co-ordinator of MAP, foreword to State and pressures of the marine and coastal Mediterranean environment, EEA, 1999)

Environmental protection and sustainable development

Since 1995 two regional organisations have been striving for environmental protection and sustainable development in the Mediterranean basin: MAP, founded in 1975 under the aegis of UNEP by the EU and states bordering on the Mediterranean in the South and East, and EUROMED, the foreign policy initiative of the EU launched in 1995.

While aimed at fostering stability in the region through co-operation and economic growth in the first place, EUROMED endorses the concept of sustainable development. Therefore with a view to environmental protection and sustainable development the role of EUROMED is twofold: with its striving for economic growth, in particular through free trade, it poses huge dangers to the environment, a fact which is continuously stressed by NGOs and acknowledged in EUROMED's own policy documents. On the other hand, this acknowledgement indeed represents a chance for the sustainable development of the region with a high level of environmental protection.

To achieve this goal, firstly, the careful integration of environmental policies and aspects of sustainable development needs to be pursued, and secondly, for the implementation of policies and programmes, capacities need to be build up and the scarce resources available for green policies need to be co-ordinated.

So far, little progress has been made on the "green front". Environmental progress is outweighed by the pressures put on the environment by economic development and growing populations. Therefore co-operation between the two protagonists and joining forces in the struggle for the common goals is the way to go.

Envisioning a co-operation on two levels

Ecologic has analysed the programmes and institutional structures of MAP and EUROMED and has identified the strengths and weaknesses on both sides. On this basis it has developed options for a bi-level co-operation comprising:

- A. the level of policy planning (central levels)
- B. the implementation level (local, national levels).

The one includes agenda setting and the development of policies and work-programmes with a view to the integration of environmental policies and sustainable development, the other the national and local implementation of policies, the collection of data and monitoring of trends, the realisation of (pilot) projects and the co-ordination and building of capacities required for these tasks.

In concrete terms, EUROMED in particular with its political and economic power to transform the region would include MAP into processes of policy planning. Here MAP institutions may be expected to contribute regional expertise and be instrumental to the integration of environmental and sustainable policies into the EUROMED process.

On implementation levels, in the absence of own capacities, EUROMED's ambitious programmes suffer from a lack of partners (particularly in Non-EU-States) that would carry out policies and projects. Capacity building therefore appears to be the key for achieving the environmental and sustainability goals that have been set. In certain fields MAP can offer such capacities. In other sectors MAP institutions have the potential to become eligible partners. With capacities for implementation being scarce in the region, EUROMED should explore opportunities to build up this potential.

Background: goals, institutions and the keys for success

With the following chapter a short outline of the policy goals of MAP and EUROMED, the institutions both processes have been building up, and the issues that may be taken as the keys for success of the environmental activities shall be given.

The Mediterranean Action Plan

In 1975, Mediterranean states and the EU approved the Mediterranean Action Plan set up by UNEP under its Regional Seas activities. In the following year, on 16 February 1976, the Barcelona Convention was adopted transferring, with its ensuing Protocols¹, the Action Plan into legally binding commitments.

Agenda and multilateral approach

In the aftermath of the 1992 UNCED in Rio de Janeiro, MAP's original pollutant-centred policy approach was changed to an integrative strategy aiming at the cross-sectoral integration of environmental protection and sustainable development. Consequently, today MAP targets a comprehensive list of socio-economic sectors including agriculture, industry, energy, tourism and transport, urban development, and the management of natural resources (water, soil, forests, and marine life). Focal areas of MAP are the integrated coastal area management including the preservation of biological diversity, water management and maritime pollution, the observation of trends and the formulation of sustainability strategies, and national and local capacity building in the region.

MAP acknowledges multinational acceptance as a requirement for dealing with environmental issues and emphasises consensual decision making. It allows developing nations to participate on an equal footing with their more advanced neighbours. This "trust-building" ability is one of MAP's main assets.

¹ *Dumping Protocol (1976), Amendment (1995) not in force yet;*
Emergency Protocol (1976), new Prevention and Emergency Protocol (2002) not in force yet;
Land-Based Sources Protocol (1980), Amendment (1996) not in force yet;
Specially Protected Areas and Biodiversity Protocol (1995);
Offshore Protocol (1994) not in force yet;
Hazardous Wastes Protocol (1995) not in force yet.

Governing and advisory bodies and institutions for policy integration

The MAP process is governed by the 21 Contracting Parties convening for ordinary meetings every two years. The Contracting Parties are assisted by two advisory bodies, the Meeting of the National Focal Points (NFPs), generally belonging to the national environmental agencies, and the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD). The latter is composed of government representatives and representatives of civil society engaged in the fields of environment and sustainability.

As a central secretariat, the MAP Co-ordinating Unit (MEDU) in Athens coordinates all activities of MAP. MAP has eight ancillary institutions generally referred to as Regional Activity Centres (RACs)² with specific mandates within the scope of the Programme. MAP institutions are funded primarily by the Mediterranean Trust Fund to which all Parties contribute according to a UN scale. The 2002-2003 budget totalled approximately US\$ 5 million per year. RACs are additionally funded by the respective host countries.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

Aiming at fostering peace and stability in the region, on 27-28 November 1995 at their Conference in Barcelona, EU and Mediterranean Foreign Ministers launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Agenda

In its three chapters the Declaration envisions a threefold partnership:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I.
A political and security partnership for establishing an area of peace and stability | II.
An economic and financial partnership for creating an area of shared prosperity | III.
A partnership in social, cultural and human affairs for developing human resources and promoting understanding |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

² *Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution, Athens, Greece;*
Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre, Sophia Antipolis, France;
Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre, Split, Croatia;
Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre; Manoel Island, Malta;
Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre, La Chargaia, Tunisia;
Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production, Barcelona, Spain;
Environment Remote Sensing Regional Activity Centre, Palermo, Italy;
Secretariat for the Protection of Coastal Historic Sites, Marseilles, France.

Emphasis is given to the second chapter, at the heart of which is the “acceleration of the pace of sustainable socio-economic development” and the “reduction of the development gap”. Activities under this chapter include, in the first place, the establishment of a Mediterranean free trade zone and co-operation in the field of industry, agriculture, energy, transport, telecommunications and tourism. With regard to environmental goals and sustainability, the Barcelona Declaration has defined the triad of

- reconciling economic development with environmental protection
- integrating environmental concerns into economic policies
- mitigating negative environmental consequences.

Objectives in the realm of environmental protection and sustainable development have been specified in the Short and Medium-Term Priority Environmental Action Programme (SMAP), which defines the following five priority fields of action:

- Integrated water management
- Waste management
- Hot spots (pollution)
- Integrated coastal zone management
- Combating desertification

The latest Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Valencia on 22-23 April 2002, emphasised the EUROMED commitment to “ensuring sustainable development with a high degree of environmental protection”. The Conference anticipated

- the launching of a sustainability impact assessment of the free trade zone
- the adoption of a strategic framework for the environmental integration process in a perspective of sustainable development
- the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities in the region in synergy with programmes such as MAP.

Governing bodies and funds

The Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers is the top steering body of the Barcelona Process convened once a year. In addition, sectoral Ministers meet for Euro-Mediterranean Conferences. The defined agenda and subsequent work-programmes are implemented by the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process, composed of the Troika (representatives of the present, previous and following presidency), senior officials of the EU Commission and the Mediterranean Partners.

For the implementation and monitoring of the Short and Medium-Term Priority Environmental Action Programme (SMAP), each state has appointed a national SMAP Correspondent, usually from the national Ministry of the Environment or a related agency. SMAP Correspondents and representatives of the European Commission form the SMAP Correspondents Network, with which the NGO Steering Committee (Comité de Suivi) is associated.

In order to implement the Barcelona Declaration, its goals have been transferred into bilateral “Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements”, now established between the EU and all Mediterranean Partners with the exception of Syria. At the same time, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Partners are committed to implement free trade among each other (“horizontal” or South-South integration). The implementation of Association Agreements is pursued by two common institutions, the Association Council (ministerial) and the Association Committee (senior official level).

The European Union’s main financial instrument for the implementation of EUROMED is MEDA with a budget amounting to Euro 5.35 billion for 2000-2006. MEDA funds are accompanied by lending from the European Investment Bank, another Euro 6.4 billion for 2000-2007 supplemented by a further Euro 1 billion from the Bank’s own resources. Proposals for projects to be funded through MEDA are short-listed by the European Commission’s Europe Aid Co-operation Office (AIDCO) according to the Regional and National MEDA Strategies. Short-lists are presented to the SMAP Correspondents Meeting and the MED Committee, composed of representatives of the EU member states. Upon endorsement, AIDCO establishes the annual financing plans and manages the projects up to the evaluation phase.

Keys for success

Prerequisites for meeting the ambitious environmental and sustainability goals of both MAP and EUROMED, can be narrowed down to the two “key issues” policy integration and capacity building.

Policy integration

At the heart of the doctrine of environmental policy integration is the claim that there is no independent field for “environmental policy”: environmental policy is energy policy, transport policy, agriculture and fisheries policy, policy on trade and industry, taxes and subsidies. Environmental protection is therefore labelled as a cross-sectoral policy field, that can only be successful if aspects of environmental protection are integrated into sectors which primarily focus on matters other than the environment. In line with the demand to take action early, addressing patterns of behaviour and

taking precautionary action instead of tackling damage that already has occurred, policy integration calls for policy co-ordination between sectoral objectives and environmental aspects in the phases of policy planning.

As a consequence, looking at the implications for policy making, the concept of policy integration requires the review of traditional limits of competencies and the tuning of policies between the different functional departments and the department of the environment.

Albeit EUROMED Foreign Ministers have endorsed the concept of environmental integration at their latest conference in Valencia, policy reality falls short of this commitment. So far, neither sectoral ministers at their conferences of trade or industry talk about environmental issues, nor have environmental and sustainability goals been specified in the Association Agreements. SMAP Correspondents criticised MEDA Regional and Country Strategies for not sufficiently reflecting the concept of sustainable development, although these could provide valuable points of orientation to the Mediterranean partners.

Capacity Building

At the same time, EUROMED needs capacities in the Mediterranean Partner states: players that are able to carry out the ambitious agenda, both at central national levels and at local levels. Three targets can be identified:

- consolidation of national environmental agencies
- supporting civil society (membership based NGOs, academic or scientific institutions, foundations)
- embedding of environmental goals and the idea of sustainable development in Mediterranean societies.

According to the SMAP Correspondents' review of the first five years of the programme, support for the national environmental agencies is imperatively required. Regarding MEDA, only a fraction of funds has been channelled into environmental and sustainability projects. SMAP Correspondents attributed this to a lack of quality proposals found eligible for funding. Players from civil society were restricted by informational and financial constraints, the latter arising from the costly preparation of proposals. With view to the fact that the Commission relies on proposals eligible for funding being submitted, training appears to be crucial for the continuation and success of the SMAP.

Options for a co-operation

As pointed out above: in order to ensure the sustainable development of the region while maintaining a high level of environmental protection, on the basis of the analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the two protagonists and with a view to the identified "key issues", options referring to a bi-level co-operation have been identified.

Policy planning and policy integration

On the level of policy planning MAP can contribute regional expertise and existing networks for the integration of environmental protection requirements into other policies and the sustainable development of the region. This requires, first of all, the establishing of joint MAP-EUROMED work processes for achieving common goals, which could also co-ordinate activities to avoid a duplication of work. Further options refer to the development of a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development by the MCSD, the use of the MCSD as a Mediterranean political forum and involving the Blue Plan RAC for conducting impact assessments in the field of trade and sustainability. Finally, SMAP Correspondents and MAP National Focal Points could be merged.

Establishing a work process for environmental policy integration

Public policy theory differentiates between different levels of policy planning: The policy cycle starts out with the setting of an agenda to define the overall goals. Policy formulation provides for concepts and work-programmes to arrive at these goals. After the implementation results are evaluated and fed back for the revision of policies and programmes.

As a basic structure for any sort of co-operation a comprehensive dialogue should be set up between MAP and EUROMED. While EUROMED would continue to set the EUROMED agenda, on the levels of policy formulation and designing work-programmes it could benefit from the scientific expertise of MAP. The advice of MAP would be backed by the regional experience and credibility of MAP as an entrusted North/South organisation. Objectives of the common working group would be

- mutual information
- consultation with regard to agendas, policies, work-programmes
- the building up and co-ordination of capacities ("job sharing") in order to avoid duplication of work.

The group should meet regularly and would be chaired by EUROMED officials. However, with the outspoken regional expertise of MAP a work approach of equal partners will be most conducive to best results.

A Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development as shaped by the World Summit in Rio de Janeiro provides an equilibrium of the interests between developed and non-developed countries. In order to align future EUROMED policies and agenda to this concept, EUROMED should establish a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development. Crucial as it is for the development of the whole region, North and South, it seems preferable to have such a strategy developed outside the framework of EUROMED, which may be taken as driven and dominated by the EU. It might therefore be formulated by the MCSD with the political and financial support of EUROMED. In the region, MAP and MCSD are generally respected as impartial and credible advisers. The MCSD has envisaged the drafting of a regional strategy for sustainable development for 2003-2004. With the preparation of a comprehensive "Report on Environment and Development", the Blue Plan RAC has launched a major undertaking that could provide an important basis for the formulation of the strategy.

Sustainability impact assessment

MSCD and the Blue Plan RAC, over years, have jointly been building up work and activities in the field of trade and sustainability. The latter may, perhaps, be considered as *the* source of expertise about questions of sustainable development in the Mediterranean. The Blue Plan therefore needs to be considered as a partner in matters of assessing the impact of trade on the environment and sustainable development.

A forum to discuss environmental and sustainability integration

With a view to coupling policy processes back to the region and feeding reactions and results into policy processes, EUROMED would benefit from a Mediterranean political forum discussing issues of environmental protection and sustainable development. Such a forum would also raise awareness and enhance transparency. Decisions taken by the European Commission under consideration of the communiqués of such a forum could claim to pursue a fair economic and environmental balance and may expect enhanced ownership. Such a forum could be provided by the MCSD, which while bringing together the countries North and South of the Mediterranean on an "equal footing" already has evolved as an accepted platform of discussion. Informed discussion and communiqués could be

ensured by including the expertise of the RACs. However, it is not expert advice that the MCSD had to deliver in the first place. What is suggested here is a political rather than a scientific forum. As such the MCSD could take on the role of an informed external critic shedding light on sensitive issues, discussing and commenting on policies and measures with a view to environmental policy integration and sustainable development. Involving the MCSD would require the European Commission to share all related information, strategy proposals and envisaged decisions with the MCSD. The function of a forum as lined out above could be provided by the SMAP Correspondents Network, too. However, as a EUROMED institution the network appears not to be able to reach a level of independence and credibility that may be taken as crucial for fulfil this function.

Strengthening SMAP Correspondents

SMAP Correspondents have been established to monitor and feed back results into EUROMED planning processes. Also, SMAP Correspondents shall provide a contact for civil society and potential applicants for funds and thus contribute to capacity building. However, according to their own assessment, at present SMAP Correspondents are lacking the capacities to fulfil this important role.

SMAP Correspondents generally belong to an environmental agency. They would therefore benefit from support provided by EUROMED for the consolidation of national environmental agencies.

Beyond that, expertise of SMAP Correspondents could be enhanced if the functions "SMAP Correspondent" and "MAP National Focal Point" would be merged in the same person or institutional unit. The obvious benefit would be one of information: NFPs are regularly updated on latest findings and recommendations established under MAP. By simply appointing the same person or institutional unit, this knowledge would be fed into the EUROMED/SMAP process (and vice versa) – effectively empowering particularly Non-EU partners with "external" advice.

Policy implementation

At implementation levels MAP can contribute capacities regarding data and information. The Blue Plan RAC's expertise in the field of water should be used, and activities on pollution from marine activities could be joined. The Priority Action Programme RAC should be supported for tasks in integrated coastal zone management. Also the Specially Protected Area RAC and the Programme for the Assessment and Control of Pollution should be considered for support. Finally, MAP know-how could be made accessible for policy-makers and scientists in the region in a "Mediterranean Central Resources Centre" backing up also the activities of EUROMED.

Given the overall lack of capacity in the region, the Commission, as pointed out above, needs to consider strengthening potential players. Where

- commitment of staff
- expertise
- efficient management
- effectiveness of activities pursued

can be proven or at least can be expected, i.e. where activities are truncated by finances rather than by the institution itself, the European Commission should consider the implementation of SMAP through building up such existing capacities, instead of relying on proposals being submitted. The Commission should enter into a dialogue with the potential partner, identify existing capacities and, if applicable, provide funds contractually tied to measures to build up institutional capacities.

Extension of co-operation in the field of data, indicators and reports

The competence of MAP in the field of data, indicators and information related to the state of the environment and trends of development has been highlighted, for instance, by the co-operation between the EEA and MAP for the report "State and pressures of the marine and coastal Mediterranean environment" (EEA, 1999). The environmental chapter of the MEDSTAT programme, aimed at promoting the exchange and comparability of statistical data, training and capacity building in the Mediterranean basin, was carried out by the Blue Plan RAC. On behalf of MEDSTAT this co-operation has been emphasised as "very fruitful". With respect to co-operation in the field of data, indicators and information should be therefore considered for extension.

Drawing on MAP capacities in the field of water management

Water management is one of the five SMAP priority fields of action. The Blue Plan RAC has aggregated an extraordinary amount of expertise in the field of sustainable management of water. However, apparently due to financial and staff constraints, the Blue Plan has already refrained from submitting a proposal for MEDA Water once, an indication that the European Commission might have to re-consider its funding policy, within the pre-conditions that have been suggested above.

Supporting MAP activities concerning maritime traffic pollution

The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre (REMPEC) assists the Mediterranean states in case of marine pollution accidents, with building up national contingency plans, and – within a MEDA project – regarding port reception facilities. The amendment of the Emergency Protocol requires REMPEC to extend its activities to the prevention of pollution incidents resulting from the day-to-day operation of ships. In these fields, largely uncovered by EUROMED activities, REMPEC might play a role in a MAP-EUROMED co-operation. With the work REMPEC has carried out over the past years, it represents a valuable potential to be considered for co-operation and possibly support.

Supporting MAP activities for sustainable coastal zone management

Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) is one of the five SMAP priority fields of action. The SMAP agenda for the ICZM seems to be almost entirely matched by the Priority Action Programme RAC's activities of the last years. The Centre's performance has been emphasised by an external evaluation carried out in 2001. Among the Contracting Parties, the Coastal Area Management Plans (CAMPs), pilot projects for ICZM ten of which have already been conducted, are generally regarded as a valid approach for operationalising ICZM. The Centre's activities in this field are supplemented by the activities of all other regional centres.

With a similar hub of know-how elsewhere in the Mediterranean missing, the Centre, embedded in the network of the other regional centres' expertise, should be considered for being built up as a central capacitor for putting in place the ICZM chapter of the SMAP. As such it could not only conduct CAMPs but also advise national governments and build up new players among governments and civil society.

Considering MAP capacities for protecting Mediterranean biodiversity

Currently the Specially Protected Areas RAC implements and prepares action plans for the conservation of endangered species. It develops technical tools for national inventories of sites of conservation and a classification of marine habitats. A MEDA project for the development of protected areas to strengthen protected area management capacities, promote examples of best practices, and exchange experience is currently being carried out. Within a MAP-EUROMED co-operation, the Centre could become a central player in the field of the protection of Mediterranean biodiversity, which is included in the SMAP as a horizontal issue in the five priority fields of action. The Commission should investigate the possibility of building up the Centre along the lines that have been laid out above.

Considering MAP capacities in relation to “hot spots”

MEDPOL has gained a reputation for qualifying and quantifying the Mediterranean marine environmental problems. The main task of MEDPOL has now become the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) targeting regional and national “hot spots”. The implementation of National Action Plans to combat pollution from land-based activities is the operational long-term output of the SAP.

The quality of MEDPOL's work seems to be indicated by the fact that the programme has been found eligible for substantial funding by, *inter alia*, the UNDP Global Environment Facility. Given that “hot spots” are a SMAP priority field of action, the European Commission should also enter into a dialogue with MEDPOL with a view to supporting MEDPOL's capacities and integrating the implementation of the SAP into SMAP policies.

Drawing on MAP capacities in the field of tourism

Both, the MCSD with one of its working groups, the Blue Plan RAC and the Priority Action Programme RAC, have been working on sustainable tourism. The MSCD has issued recommendations on “tourism and sustainable development”. Activities of the Priority Action Programme relating, *inter alia*, to carrying capacity assessments, have been evaluated as an effective demonstration of capacity building. Also the 100 Historic Sites Programme (100 HS), currently being in the process of re-structuring, has carried out related work. MAP should therefore concentrate the scattered activities in the field of tourism, either under the roof of the Priority Action Programme, the new 100 HS, or the envisaged new Eco-Tourism RAC and enter into a dialogue with the European Commission about what capacities should be jointly build up.

A “Mediterranean Central Resources Centre”

MAP could enhance the dissemination of information on environmental issues and sustainable development. It could stimulate exchanges of experience, provide examples of best practice, and animate policy learning and environmental integration. Such a role could particularly be played as a partner of the twelve national institutions envisaged to receive MEDA funds in order to support the implementation of the SMAP. Commission and MEDU should jointly develop a concept as to how expertise available under MAP can be channelled into these institutions. MEDU could play a role as a “Mediterranean Central Resources Centre”, being gateway to MAP institutions and inquiry desk offering support to scientists, NGOs and policy-makers in the national agencies.

Conclusion

The way forward seems to be clear: both Mediterranean initiatives, albeit coming from different backgrounds, external relations and security on the one hand, environmental protection on the other, endorse the same corner post for the future of the Mediterranean region: sustainable development. Parallel structures in goals and activities seem to be abundant. Nevertheless, co-operation has been limited until today, with both sides looking at trends of *unsustainable* development being established throughout the region. Joining forces both on central levels and implementation levels, the former with regard to policy planning and accomplishing policy integration, the latter with regard to the national and local implementation of policies and the co-ordination and building of the capacities required, could mobilise synergies and help to break unsustainable trends.

EUROMED would continue to steer the Euro-Mediterranean process. However, with its political and economic power to transform the region it should include the capacities of MAP in order to accomplish its ambitious goals relating to environmental protection and sustainable development. Opportunities for co-operation are manifold on both levels and should be carefully investigated and, if appropriate, taken advantage of.

MAP Contracting Parties took the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of the Environment in Athens on 8-10 July 2002 as an occasion to have proposals for improving operational synergies between MAP and EUROMED developed. Accordingly, the 5th Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers in Valencia on 22-23 April 2002 has asked the European Commission to promote co-operation with MAP in order to strengthen technical and institutional capacity in the region. Therefore, the political will for co-operation is there. Decision-makers should not allow this chance to pass them by.



Links

European Commission –
The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed

European Environment Agency
www.org.eea.eu.int

Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre
www.planbleu.org

Priority Action Programme Regional Activity Centre
www.pap-thecoastcentre.org

Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre
www.rac-spa.org.tn

UNEP – Mediterranean Action Plan
www.unepmap.org

List of abbreviations

CAMPs Coastal Area Management Plans

EEA European Environmental Agency

EUROMED Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

MAP Mediterranean Action Plan

MEDU Mediterranean Action Plan Co-ordinating Unit

MCSD Mediterranean Commission
on Sustainable Development

NFP National Focal Point

RAC Regional Activity Centre

SMAP Short and Medium-Term Priority
Environmental Action Programme

UNCED United Nations Conference on Environment
and Development

UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

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