

# SUSTAINABLE MEDITERRANEAN

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## THE MEDITERRANEAN AT CSD-16

(New York, May 2008)

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## LA MÉDITERRANÉE À LA CSD-16

(New York, Mai 2008)

Quarterly newsletter produced by the **Mediterranean Information Office** for the **Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development**, in collaboration with the **European Environmental Bureau** and the **Arab NGO Network for Environment and Development**

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## EDITORIAL

The sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-16) which began on the morning of the 5th of May 2008 and concluded its two-week session on the 16th, reviewed the obstacles and barriers that have prevented sustainable development in the areas of agriculture, land use, rural development, drought, desertification and Africa. Climate change, fair trade, the rise in world food prices were also issues at the centre of discussions. Countries will follow-up on these issues with policy recommendations at next year's meeting of the Commission completing thus the 2008/2009 thematic cluster. This year's review session also provided a forum for sharing real world solutions, learning from each other and adapting solutions that contribute to sustainable livelihoods and poverty eradication. The issues under discussion were complex and interlinked, and were therefore addressed in as integrated a manner as possible.

Almost 60 ministers attended CSD-16 along with 680 representatives from 126 nongovernmental organizations. Representatives from civil society, including women, farmers, science, business, children and youth, local authorities, workers and trade unions, indigenous peoples and nongovernmental organizations participated far more extensively than in the past.

This issue of Sustainable Mediterranean presents the two major Mediterranean side events that took place during CSD-16 as well as parts of the Chairman's Summary that are of more relevance to the Mediterranean.

MIO-ECSDE organised jointly with GWP-Med, the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the European Commission, a Side-Event on Addressing Climate Change Adaptation Challenges in the Mediterranean, that took place on 15 May 2008 in the UN Headquarters. France coordinated the review of the contribution by the European Union (EU) to the decisions taken in 2005 at the 13th CSD, concerning water, sanitation and integrated water resource management (IWRM). On behalf of the EU, it was thus tasked with organising a side-event concerning the financing of Integrated Water Resource Management - IWRM. It took place on 12 May 2008.

Other events that were organised by Mediterranean Stakeholders were:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain, May 8th: EXPO Zaragoza 2008: Contributing Towards Sustainable Water Management

- World Water Council /Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 13th: Toward a Global Water Agenda - Preparing the World Water Forum in Istanbul

Ministers identified a broad range of issues to be addressed next year by the seventeenth session of the Commission – the policy session, including:

- Poverty eradication remains a central policy objective in developing countries, and agriculture and rural development will be essential to its attainment.

- Addressing the means of implementation, including meeting commitments to financing for development, trade, technology transfer, scientific knowledge, education, and capacity building, will be critical to ensuring progress.

- The current food crisis has highlighted the consequences for food security of neglecting agriculture and the urgency of redressing this situation. There are multiple factors contributing to this crisis, many of which are interlinked, and an integrated response is needed.

- Climate change was highlighted by many as having important implications for all the issues in this cluster, with particular challenges facing Africa and SIDS.

- Progress in addressing the challenges identified at CSD-16 will require strengthened international cooperation, strong political commitment from governments, and active engagement of all Major Groups.

- Greater policy coherence and coherence of donor support is required with regard to agriculture and the other issues under consideration.

- The importance of good governance at all levels in promoting progress towards sustainable development was highlighted.

- Poverty eradication, changing consumption and production patterns, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and with developed countries taking the lead, and protecting and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development are overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development. Preservation of biodiversity is also crucial.

- South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation all need to be encouraged to promote sharing of technology, knowledge and practical experience and know how.

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## ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION CHALLENGES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

New York, 15 May 2008



### Introduction

On the occasion of the 16th Commission for Sustainable Development of the United Nations, MIO-ECSDE hosted, jointly with GWP-Med, the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the European Commission, a Side-Event on Addressing Climate Change Adaptation Challenges in the Mediterranean, that took place on 15th May 2008 in the UN Headquarters, New York.

The Side-Event was organised in the framework of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, with a special focus on adaptation to climate change and water resources management.

Already a water-scarce region, the Mediterranean is expected to face even more water challenges in the near future due to the looming climate crisis. According to recent studies, the region is among those that are expected to be hit hard by climate change: by 2100, the rise in temperature would be in the range of 2.2 and 5.1°C while total precipitations are likely to fall by 4 to 27%, with an especially marked drop in summer.

The increasing frequency and severity of droughts, floods and other extreme weather events will not only mean an increased water supply-demand gap, but are also foreseen to have (and have already) other important impacts on the region: accelerated desertification, infrastructure damage, loss of inhabitable and arable land due to soil erosion and landslides, serious alterations of natural habitats and damages in important ecosystems, enhancement of the already existing saltwater intrusion due to sea-level rise, health issues, etc., jeopardising the region's overall well-being.

The Side-Event gathered approximately 60 participants representing Croatia, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Tunisia, major international organisations (UNEP, UN DESA, UN ESCWA, FAO, WB, GWP), the European Commission, as well as representatives from civil society (e.g. MIO-ECSDE, RAED).



### Purpose of the Side-Event

The purpose of the Side-Event was to present and discuss challenges, obstacles and possible solutions for effectively adapting to climate change in the Mediterranean, giving a particular emphasis on IWRM. It gathered panellists from a number of Mediterranean countries (France, Greece, Italy, Tu-

nisia, Egypt, Slovenia), the EU Commission, the United Nations (UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan), the World Bank and civil society, who shared their experience in this matter and exchanged views on the different options for the protection of the Mediterranean society and its natural and cultural heritage from the impacts of Climate Change that should be further explored and assessed.

### Reflection of the Discussions

Opening the session, Prof. Michael Scoullas, as the moderator of the Side-Event, introduced the panellists to the audience. The first panellist to take the floor was H.E. Ambassador John Mourikis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, who evoked the key issues with regard to climate change in the Mediterranean. He also stressed the fact that albeit being a significant challenge, climate change offers "a unique opportunity (...) to address all these themes together".

After reviewing the main expected impacts of climate change in the Mediterranean - aggravated water scarcity, floods, droughts, sea water intrusion, loss of lands, desertification, and in particular the increased occurrence of catastrophic forest fires -, the second panellist, Ms. Maria Peppas, Head of International Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Greece, gave a brief overview of the possible coping strategies and options, referring in particular to the Greek experience. The latter included notably the review of land use/spatial planning frameworks (incl. ICZM), the formulation of water-scarcity and drought management plans, the development of early warning mechanisms, the promotion of IWRM and its mainstreaming with adaptation activities, the incorporation of adaptation into the work of MED EUWI, awareness raising, education for sustainable development and improved public participation/stakeholder involvement.

Mr. Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, Mediterranean Action Plan, UNEP, made a brief reference to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in 2005, which stresses the need inter alia for adaptation measures to the effects of climate change in the Mediterranean and their mainstreaming into national development plans as well as the strengthening of regional cooperation and the support to the implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol. He then highlighted the adaptation initiatives being promoted by UNEP within the framework of its Climate Change Strategy, which is intended to assist countries to adapt to impacts of climate change by reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience in sectors of national priority.

Mr. Mifsud explained that the role of UNEP in climate change adaptation was to focus on meeting the twin needs of vulnerable countries for environmental protection and economic development and

to assist them in integrating adaptation into their multi-faceted planning and deliberative processes. He furthermore described the three key mutually supportive pillars that have been identified to support UNEP's climate change adaptation strategy, namely: a) by building the adaptive capacity of vulnerable countries and regions to enable governments and peoples to cope with the adverse effects of climate change; b) by increasing ecosystem resilience and reducing the risk of climate related disasters. This could notably be achieved by integrating adaptation into ecosystem management through IWRM, ICZM and the conservation of biodiversity, coping with the rapid change in sensitive ecosystems (i.e. melting glaciers, mountain disasters) and, not least, reducing the risk of disasters by improving the capacity of national authorities and relevant organizations to manage ecosystems; c) by mobilizing and using knowledge for adaptation planning. To that purpose the initiative intended to deploy a package of information, assessments, methods, tools, good practices and traditional knowledge to enable governments and local communities to integrate adaptation into policy-setting, planning and their good



practices. The outcome would be knowledge-based adaptation policies and plans. Special mention was also made to technology transfer as a key component of any adaptation package.

In order to meet the increasing and diversified needs for adaptation in the developing world a transition towards a programme approach is proposed. Three specific cross-cutting activities are suggested, namely: (i) regional packages enhancing the region-specific and ecosystem-specific adaptation work of the developing world within the global framework, focusing on vulnerable societies and ecosystems; (ii) innovative financing mechanisms to address both short-term and long-term concerns, as well as multi-scale and multi-sectoral needs taking into account that the complexity of the assessment of the cost of adaptation; (iii) extensive yet strengthened partnerships including the private sector and civil society, notably through public-private partnerships.

Mr. Mifsud finally informed the participants that, in line with UNEP's climate change strategy, the next meeting of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development in 2009 would address the integration of climate change considerations into national sectoral policies, planning processes and development programmes.

Ms. Dragica Iskrenovič, representative of the Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning, Slovenia, EU Presidency, made a short intervention on behalf of Mr. Mitja Bricelj, State Secretary for Environment and Spatial planning, unable to attend the event. She stressed the importance of the issue of climate change and adaptation for both her country and the Mediterranean countries of the European Union.

The next speaker, Ms. Soledad Blanco, Director of International Affairs, DG Environment, European Commission, made clear that climate change is already happening and that to address it complementary efforts in both mitigation and adaptation are needed. She evoked the new European framework to improve the resilience of social and economic systems, to reduce climate vulnerability and ensure food security, human health, energy supply and ecosystem protection as well as the existing EU initiatives, such as the Green Paper on Adaptation, the Communication on Droughts and Water Scarcity, the Communications on Disaster Prevention and Control.

Ms. Blanco further underlined that, in a region as highly vulnerable as the Mediterranean, especially

with respect to water resources, inaction could not be an option and that adaptation measures in this matter would be inevitable. She focused on some specific aspects linked to water, as an example of the emerging complexities that Mediterranean societies will have to face.

Referring to the possible way ahead, Ms. Blanco highlighted the importance of increasing the resilience of ecosystems, for them to better carry the additional weight added by climate change. This however proved to be difficult in the Mediterranean which is seriously lagging behind in matters of implementation of environmental policies. Since the countries of the region have signed a number of international agreements, these should make every effort to honour their actual engagements, notably the recently adopted Protocol to the Barcelona Convention on Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Ms. Blanco furthermore pointed out that climate risk factors should also be built into current and future sectoral policies, generally speaking, a matter dealt with by the EU White Paper on Adaptation expected to be adopted in August this year. She added that, at international level, the EU should also promote the elaboration by concerned countries of specific Adaptation Strategies including both general objectives and sectoral actions and that EU cooperation instruments were already available to that end.

Ms. Blanco concluded by saying that "actions need to be cost-effective and proportionate" and that "adaptation to climate change should be used as an opportunity to progress towards more sustainable practices and technologies, (...) key to ensuring that human and economic development remains feasible and sustainable in the future".

The French Ambassador for the environment, H.E. Mr. Laurent Stéfanini, then took the floor thanking the organisers of this very timely side-event on water, climate change and the Mediterranean. The issue is very important for our sea, as recent meetings like the Barcelona COP in Almeria, this January has shown. We are in the important process of preparing draft guidelines that the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on water, in Jordan, next October will adopt. Meanwhile, the preparation process of the future Union for the Mediterranean, which has environment and sustainable development as one of its priorities, will be very helpful. Water is one of the key issues in this process and the future Mediterranean strategy on water will deal with stabilisation in water demand, promotion of



Integrated Water Resources Management, among other. In front of a scarcer resource, we have to be imaginative and practical".

Mr. Paolo Soprano, Head of Division, Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, Italy, made an overview of the impacts of climate change and its negative consequences for the Mediterranean region and Africa, including the risk to food security due to projected reductions in crop yields, as well as the loss of land and precious ecosystems, in particular wetlands, and marine-coastal biodiversity due to sea level rise.

Mr. Soprano then took the opportunity to recall some initiatives undertaken by Italy, wishing to take the lead in addressing these issues and to play a major role in bridging the European Union with the Mediterranean, not only in terms of its geographical position but also as a linking element between the historical and cultural traditions of North Africa, Middle East, the Balkan Region and Europe.

He mentioned the following initiatives: the MEDREP Type II Initiative for the promotion of renewable energies in the Mediterranean basin (with projects in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia); the Italian cooperation projects on water management such as the project on "Innovative means of increasing water resources in Egypt"; the ADRISCOSM Partnership for the implementation of a system for the prediction of marine and coastal current variability in some Adriatic Countries; "the Water Programme for Environmental Sustainability: towards Adaptation Measures to Human and Climate Changes Impacts", in collaboration with UNESCO; as well as a series of Memoranda of Understanding agreed by Italy with some African countries for the promotion of scientific knowledge and transfer of technologies, expertise and experiences on the climate change issue.

He furthermore evoked the "Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Climate Change (CMCC)" established in

Italy, acting as a network of public and private research institutions focusing on impacts of climate change over the Mediterranean area. He suggested that CMCC serves as a platform promoting technology and know-how sharing and transfer between the Mediterranean countries, and notably for the assessment and quantification of the climate change impact in the region, the definition of climate change intensity and future distribution and the promotion of high quality scientific and technical training programmes on climate change and its impact. In his conclusion, he said "this partnership could represent a permanent tool for the European-African dialogue".

Dr. Nouri Soussi, Director General, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Tunisia, presented the principles on which his country's approach in preventing against the expected impacts of climate change is based. He then listed several of Tunisia's numerous national studies/initiatives on this matter, inter alia the National Inventories (1994-1997-2000), the Vulnerability Evaluation, the Study on Adaptation of Agriculture and Ecosystems to Climate Change, the integrated Strategy and an Action Plan for Adaptation of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the National Marine Erosion Prevention Program, the Study on the elaboration of Strategy and the National Action Plan Health Protection Against Climate Change Impact, and the CDM Projects Portfolio (2006-2016), and proceeded to a brief overview of the findings of these.

Due to its geographic position and its fragile ecosystems, Tunisia is indeed found to be likely to suffer from possible impacts of decreased rainfall averages, average temperature rise, especially sea level rise and fresh-water reserves shrinking as a result of salinization, evaporation and irregular rainfall seasons, besides the effects produced by the economic productivity downturn of considerable areas of low coastline zones threatened by sea-level rise. These may affect the country's water resources, ecosystems and agro systems (olive oil production, fruit trees, cattle raising, dry cultures) and the economy in general. Climate change would increase present pressures on farmers and the land they are exploiting. Some farming activities may not adapt with extreme manifestations of climate change. Health issues are also to be expected as well as issues related to energy, industry and forestry.

With regard to international solidarity for the prevention of and the adaptation to climate change, Dr Soussi also presented the main Tunisian initiatives,



among which the “International Conference on Tourism and Climate Change”, held in Djerba-Tunisia in 2003, and crowned by the Djerba Declaration, and the “International Solidarity Conference to Face Climate Change in Africa and Mediterranean” that Tunisia hosted, on November 18-20, 2007, leading to the Tunis Declaration for International Solidarity to Face Climate Change and a comprehensive Action Plan that were to be presented at the Bali Climate Conference in December 2007 and the objective of which was to help the countries of the African and Mediterranean Region to take the appropriate steps regarding adaptation to climate change in a context of international solidarity.

Dr. Soussi concluded by suggesting a number of recommended actions, notably: assistance for the elaboration and implementation of national adaptation plans; the integration of climate change adaptation in development strategies and plans; the strengthening of participation of stakeholders; the adaptation to climate change in agriculture and the management of natural ecosystems; the adaptation to climate change for better management of water resources; the adaptation to climate change as regards Energy and infrastructure and preparedness for health impacts and natural disasters; and the development and enhancement of financial tools to help developing countries’ adaptation.

Mr. Martin Walshe, Deputy Executive Secretary, Global Water Partnership (GWP), presented the significant interlinkages between adaptation to climate change and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

Dr. Emad Adly, from the Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), presented the

Mediterranean civil society’s perspective on climate change and needs for adaptation, stressing the impacts in the Arab world, which is particularly under stress already as far as water resources and crop yields are concerned.

He underlined the importance of the involvement of civil society and NGOs in the development and implementation of coping measures in the early stages so as to enhance the larger public’s awareness of the climate change issue and thus their resilience. Education for Sustainable Development was also brought up as an important parameter in this regard.

Ms. Dahlia Lotayef, Senior Environmental Specialist and METAP Coordinator, World Bank, gave a presentation on the implications of climate change for development in the Mediterranean region, with focus on water resources and adaptation and on the World Bank’s strategy in this field. She explained how climate change will most probably affect the water sector in the Middle East North Africa region; the main drivers being demographic growth, the decrease in precipitation, the increase of the domestic usage of water, the deterioration of governance, access and efficiency in the water services.

Ms. Lotayef then addressed the key questions with regard to adaptation and proceeded to an overview of the possible areas of action. She moreover mentioned the fronts on which the World Bank was focusing its efforts, namely: a) helping developing countries to move to a lower carbon path; b) promoting new technologies (carbon capture and storage, bio-fuel programs, etc.); c) preventing deforestation (forest carbon partnership facility); and d) adaptation to climate risks (technical analysis of risk management and by pioneering insurance.

Ms. Lotayef concluded evoking briefly the Strategic Framework for Climate Change and Development of the World Bank, the objective of which is to integrate climate change and development challenges, without compromising growth and poverty reduction efforts and which supports the UNFCCC process while being neutral to any negotiating party position, as well as the MENA Regional Business Strategy to Address Climate Change that aims at supporting MENA countries in their adaptation and mitigation efforts, by fully integrating the objectives of reducing climate change vulnerability and GHG emissions into the Bank’s development assistance to the region.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, adaptation was thus unanimously recognized as of paramount importance in the Mediterranean region, calling for concerted action at the regional but also the local level, in particular with regard to the management of water resources,

agriculture, coastal zones and tourism, ecosystems as well as energy and health.

The need to further explore approaches and solutions in some specific issues, namely: enhanced downscaling of climate information at the lowest possible geographical levels; consideration of the interlinkages between water, energy and climate in the planning of adaptation measures; the promotion of the use of renewable energies and energy efficiency when coping with climate change so as to avoid maladaptation; and, finally, the importance of encouraging investments in economic activities less impacted by climate change in the context of North-South cooperation; was further pointed out.

The partners who gathered at the event all stated their readiness to move forward joining their efforts and enhancing cooperation at the regional level to this end.

A full report of the Side-Event, inclusive of the presentations made, is available at [www.mio-ecsde.org](http://www.mio-ecsde.org)

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE OPTIONS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION CHALLENGES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Paper by MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med

Already a water-scarce region, the Mediterranean is expected to face even more water challenges in the near future due to the looming climate crisis. According to recent studies, the region is among those that are expected to be hit hard by climate change: by 2100, the rise in temperature would be in the range of 2.2 and 5.1°C while total precipitation is likely to fall by 4 to 27%, with an especially marked drop in summer.

The increasing frequency and severity of droughts, floods and other extreme weather events will not only mean an increased water supply-demand gap, but are also foreseen to have (and have already) other important impacts on the region: accelerated desertification, infrastructure damage, loss of inhabitable and arable land due to soil erosion and landslides, serious alterations of natural habitats and damages in important ecosystems, enhancement of the already existing saltwater intrusion due to

sea-level rise, health issues, etc., jeopardising the region’s overall well-being.

Anthropogenic pressures from urbanisation, agriculture, industry, tourism, etc. have already aggravated the situation of all water bodies, including the Mediterranean Sea itself. As a result, the Mediterranean is facing serious problems with pollution from land-based activities, tightly connected to the release of non-treated municipal sewage and industrial waste waters into rivers and the sea. A number of regional pollution ‘hot spots’ that need urgently to be dealt with include water infrastructures (mostly wastewater treatment plans) and have been identified by the countries of the region through regional schemes coordinated inter alia by UNEP’s Mediterranean Action Plan and the European Union. The recently launched ‘Horizon 2020’ Initiative aims at reducing the pollution loads from land-based sources and calls for support from all involved parties in tackling the issue.

On the occasion of the Side-Event on Addressing Climate Change Adaptation Challenges in the Mediterranean, jointly organized with the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the European Commission, in the framework of the 16th Commission for Sustainable Development (15 May 2008, New York), MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med have grouped the suggestions made by various relevant bodies for the formulation of appropriate approaches and measures to tackle adaptation and to a certain extent also mitigation challenges in the Mediterranean region. It is noteworthy that the measures suggested for the areas mentioned below, need to be completed by the well-known horizontal, cross-cutting issues of wise integrated management such as good governance, appropriate awareness raising, education for sustainable development, meaningful public participation/stakeholder involvement and the wide use of financial instruments.

#### i) Water resources

- Mainstream adaptation measures into national IWRM planning/policies
- Promote water efficiency and demand management (i.e. water pricing policies for households, industry and agriculture; improved irrigation techniques, virtual water, water cuts)
- Develop non-conventional water resources to match increased demand, such as rainwater harvesting, water retention and collection systems, appropriate wastewater treatment and reuse, desalination, groundwater recharge)

#### ii) Civil protection from extreme weather events

- Develop early warning systems for extreme weather events (i.e. heat and cold waves, floods, droughts, forest fires) and regional cooperation in this field
- Increase public awareness on climate change impacts
- Discourage new construction of settlements/housing/infrastructure in areas prone to floods and landslides
- Develop flood protection systems upstream and protection systems against sea-level rise on the coastlines accordingly
- Relocate vulnerable communities and/or activities in less flood-prone areas

#### iii) Ecosystems

- Protect important ecosystems, in

particular wetlands, from over-extraction of water especially during drought periods, ensuring adequate water for their ecological functioning

- Conserve wetland systems (i.e. flood plains, river deltas) useful as buffer zones for flood protection
- Protect forests and maquis-covered areas from wildfire risks (through monitoring and early intervention) and from overgrazing
- Calculate and introduce the valuation of ecosystem services as an integral part of IWRM, adaptation and sustainable development strategies

#### iv) Agriculture/forestry/land use/coastal zones

- Encourage the use of drought resistant crops in arid zones
- Promote efficient irrigation techniques
- Maintain or reintroduce soil retention and water harvesting techniques
- Protect arable land in coastal zones from saltwater intrusion by avoiding groundwater over-extraction, by developing sound groundwater recharge practices and barriers to saltwater intrusion, when appropriate
- Protect forests from wildfires through increased awareness raising, monitoring and on-site infrastructures to retain water in order to prevent soil erosion and subsequent risk of floods, landslides and desertification as well as further warming
- Avoid the development of settlements, infrastructures (i.e. industry) and activities in zones prone to sea-level rise in the next 20-30 years

#### v) Energy/industry/transport

- Promote bio-climatic architecture (incl. passive cooling and heating techniques, retrofitting of buildings) to cope with increased temperature variability and avoid further warming
- Encourage energy-saving measures and techniques - inter alia through pricing policies - for households, industry, transports, etc.
- Foster the development of renewable sources of energy, in particular solar (photovoltaic, thermal), wind, wave and geo-thermal
- Envisage the use of small hydropower

systems in such a manner that they can be combined to water storage and flood protection and minimize undesirable side-effects for ecosystems

#### vi) Tourism

- Promote water efficiency measures and use of non conventional water resources

(i.e. waste water reuse) in the tourism sector

- Avoid the development of large-scale and/or water-intensive tourism activities in arid areas (i.e. golf complexes)
- Promote alternative/sustainable tourism activities during seasons less prone to drought and heat waves

### CSD 16 SIDE-EVENT "INVESTING IN IWRM – IT PAYS BACK!"

New York, 12 May 2008

For the 16th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD16), France coordinated the review of the contribution by the European Union (EU) to the decisions taken in 2005 at the 13th CSD, concerning water, sanitation and integrated water resource management (IWRM). On behalf of the EU, it was thus tasked with organising a high-level side-event concerning the financing of Integrated Water Resource Management - IWRM.

The organisation of this side-event was entrusted to the Executive Secretariat of the French Water Partnership (FWP).

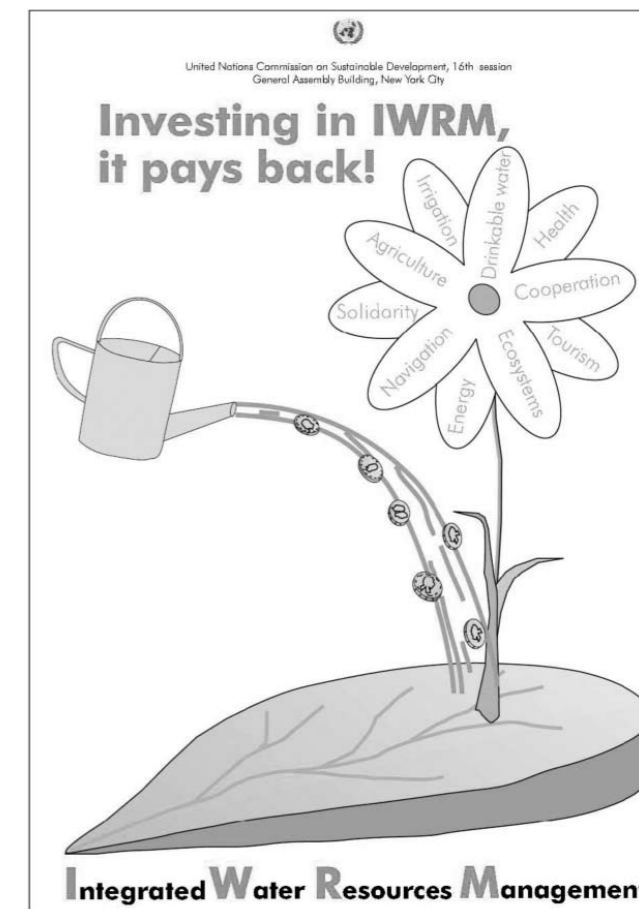
This conference entitled "Investing in IWRM - It pays back!" looked at the issue of national and trans-boundary financing of IWRM. It took place on 12 May 2008, from 13h30 to 14h45, during the specific CSD 13 review segment.

It was important for the FWP to organise this conference on IWRM financing for two main reasons: on the one hand IWRM is a management option supported and implemented by its members and, on the other, many people misunderstand or are completely ignorant of its financing, even though this is vital to the success of concrete, long-term implementation.

Furthermore, because France was in charge of the review of the European Union's contribution to the decisions taken in 2005 concerning water and sanitation at CSD 13, it was important for it to organise a sharing of experiences on the subject within the informal context of a side-event. The choice of the IWRM financing topic would seem to have been a judicious one, given the interest it evoked among the members of the 16th CSD session.

The side-event was a real success: it brought together some 100 to 150 participants and a panel of high level decision-makers from the water sector, from several continents.

The French Water Partnership is very grateful to Mr. Jean-Marie Wauthier, Head of Environmental Department, Foreign Relations of the Walloon Re-



gion, Belgium, who played the role of the moderator of the side event.

Conclusions by M. Jean-François Donzier, Permanent technical secretary of the International Network of Basin Organisations, INBO:

The round-table proved to be very fruitful in that it showed that not only is IWRM becoming a crucial component, but also and indeed above all, that we still have a long way to go. IWRM is progressing, but in some countries implementation is only just beginning, in other words with the construction of conventional infrastructures. We must also look at the quality of sanitation and the importance attached to ecosystems as true natural infrastructures.

Things are however moving forwards and solutions are appearing. It is also worth noting that when the desire to reform is really present, then things start to get done. Each country has to find the means and the tools necessary for its own organisation, but that requires time ... and financing.

We know that total recovery of costs is an illusion and is unachievable, as much in the industrialised nations as anywhere else. User participation is a determining factor in helping to move matters along more quickly. The various partners are all the more willing to contribute to IWRM financing when they are informed of the ways and means of this financing. They can thus see for themselves that the efforts demanded of the various stakeholders involved in IWRM financing are being put to good use.

A final key aspect is the financing of essential services with a view to actually achieving "access by all to essential services". This is an essential step in the fight against poverty and the encouragement of development, which requires long-term resources (via public funds and by mobilising local resources).

The bottom line for IWRM financing is considerable and the financial efforts devoted to water will have to be more than doubled.

To conclude this round table, and as requested by Mr Ambassador Stéfanini, we can confirm that the conclusions of this side-event will be reported at the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul, next March, given that the International Network of Basin Organisations is responsible for the "Basin management and transboundary cooperation" session, together with UNESCO, and will act as the spokesperson for these exchanges.

Similarly, the French Water Partnership, which will be actively participating in the Istanbul Forum, aims to continue the debate on IWRM financing within the largest international water event, with the desire of raising the profile of this issue still higher on the political agenda, of debating solutions to current and future IWRM financing issues, of formulating concrete proposals and bringing them to the attention of the world, and contributing to generating strong political commitment to this issue.

Full report is available at: [http://www.partenariat-francais-eau.fr/rubrique.php3?id\\_rubrique=176](http://www.partenariat-francais-eau.fr/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=176)

**SELECTED PARAGRAPHS FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY, CSD-16  
THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS: AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND,  
DROUGHT, DESERTIFICATION AND AFRICA  
5 - 16 May 2008, New York**

To achieve sustainable development, there will need to be an enabling environment at all levels, good governance, and institutional and capacity building. There is a strong need for strengthening science research and education focused on solutions; there should be mechanisms for facilitating dialogue between scientists, decision-makers and farmers, including through improved extension services so that information and solutions get into the hands of farmers, particularly small-scale farmers.

There is an urgent need to fully implement Agenda 21 and the Rio Principles and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation as well as the international partnership for development called for in the Millennium Declaration. In this regard, it was noted that commitments from the international community in terms of official development assistance (ODA) have not been fully realized. ODA has actually declined in the last two years. Moreover, a significant portion of that ODA takes the form of emergency aid and debt relief.

Many delegations noted external constraints on progress in the thematic areas under review, in particular with respect to the means of implementation.

Water scarcity, poor land and water management practices, the loss of arable land through desertification and the increasing salinity of soils, rapidly rising prices of inputs and inadequate economic policies remain major obstacles to increasing agricultural productivity. A holistic approach to agriculture was urged, with agricultural policies integrated into the national sustainable development agenda.

Climate change and climatic variability are affecting agricultural production and land resources negatively in some regions. Sea-level rise and increasing temperatures particularly threaten SIDS. Agriculture, including aquaculture, and fisheries are vulnerable to an increased frequency of natural disasters and impacts of a changing climate on the hydrological cycle.

It was noted that the decisions reached in 2005 reflect a firm inter-governmental consensus on the critical role that access to water and basic sanitation plays for the overall achievement of the MDGs including the eradication of poverty. Also, it was overwhelmingly recognized that IWRM is the framework for the entire water sector and an essential tool to effectively manage water resources and water related issues. Some countries indicated that the CSD review on progress of water and sanitation should really go beyond mere stocktaking.

Climate change was identified as a major challenge for many countries in terms of its potential impact on water and food security, contributing in particular to an increase in extreme hydrological events such as floods and drought. Speakers noted the importance of mainstreaming adaptation to climate change in the water management process and the development of concrete measures in this regard.

Various aspects of the water and sanitation were addressed, including the importance of global and national monitoring of the sector at all levels; the need for reliable data supported by improved knowledge and research; transfer of technology and capacity building; the importance of water governance and a participatory approach to water and sanitation; the role of partnerships, including public-private partnership; and the importance of strengthening water utilities to extend provision of services. Many countries pointed to limited financial resources as the main constraint for achieving water and sanitation goals.

It is clear that major groups must be fully engaged and included in decision-making processes to ensure sustainable development, and the active participation of major groups in the work of the Commission is widely praised. Indigenous peoples welcomed the recently adopted UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for partnering with Governments, and local authorities

It was underlined that a bottom-up, participatory approach to development can ensure the active en-

gagement of major groups in the broader sustainable development discussion beyond CSD.

Advancing the implementation of sustainable development through multi-stakeholder partnerships involves a number of strategies for success. Nurturing the early stages of a partnership and feeding it into larger organizations for additional support has proven to be helpful. Investing in capacity building of major groups involved in partnerships can be achieved through provision of decent work, respect for human rights, transfer of responsibility to local levels, and blending of science and technology with local knowledge.

There are many examples of successful case studies and partnerships illustrating models of sustainable agriculture and rural development that incorporate indigenous knowledge systems and practices, land use planning, water management, small enterprise development and income generation. Yet these implementation efforts require more support if they are to be scaled-up enough to make significant progress. Knowledge-sharing systems should be strength-

ened, results should be documented and shared, and successful efforts should be replicated. Partnerships that include local ownership, a clear understanding of goals, active collaboration of all stakeholders, good donor coordination, flexibility to respond to changing situations, and ability to keep partners involved in the long-term are the most successful.

An energetic youth force is emerging that intends to hold Governments responsible for their commitments. Youth are increasingly integrated into Government delegations in some regions, and their presence as current and future producers and leaders has inspired progress in the creation of new outreach education programs in sustainable agriculture and rural development. Integrating sustainability themes into all levels of education is an important measure that would ensure that future generations are conscious of sustainable development.

The Full Report is available at [http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/chairs\\_summary.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/chairs_summary.pdf) and [http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/chairs\\_summary2.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/chairs_summary2.pdf)

## MISCELLANEOUS MEDITERRANEAN NEWS

### Position du MIO-ESCDE sur les Nanotechnologies

Le MIO-ESCDE est un des partenaires du NANOCAP (acronyme signifiant 'Le renforcement des capacités des ONG en matière de nanotechnologie'), un projet européen ayant comme objectif d'approfondir la compréhension des impacts et des opportunités que les nanotechnologies représentent pour l'environnement, la santé et la sécurité au travail, ainsi que leurs aspects éthiques, en mettant en place un débat structuré parmi les ONG, les chercheurs académiques et les autres parties prenantes.

En particulier le MIO-ESCDE souhaite apporter dans ce projet et dans les forums dédiés à ce sujet au niveau Européen et International la perspective de la société civile Méditerranéenne concernant les nanotechnologies et sur les questions émergentes relatives à cette nouvelle technologie, qui pourraient avoir un impact sur le développement durable de notre région.

La présente Prise de Position vise donc à communiquer les vues du MIO-ESCDE sur les nano-développements actuels; elle pourra également servir comme base pour planifier des actions concertées des ONG dans la région, faire du lobbying aux niveaux national et régional pour revendiquer des cadres législatifs appropriés réglementant les nanotechnologies et leurs applications, informer et sensibiliser le public et les parties prenantes intéressées (éducateurs, journalistes, parlementaires etc.) sur les questions nano.

Ce document de référence, approuvé par le Bureau Exécutif (BE) du MIO-ESCDE pendant sa dernière réunion au Caire (1 décembre 2007) a été récemment finalisé en y intégrant les commentaires des Membres du BE.

A travers notre participation au projet NanoCap nous gagnons une plus grande compréhension de ce nouveau champ technologique en rapide évolution. Ce document devra probablement être adapté en fonction des développements dont nous serons témoins à l'avenir.

### Document exprimant la position du MIO-ESCDE sur les Nanotechnologies

Questions générales concernant les nanotechnologies qui posent des soucis immédiats (liste prioritaire)

- 1) Des actions urgentes devraient être entreprises par rapport aux nanoparticules libres contre lesquelles il n'y a aucune protection (par exemple les ouvriers et les consommateurs ne peuvent pas choisir de ne pas les respirer). Les nanoparticules libres devraient être traitées et marquées

en tant que nouveaux produits chimiques. Aussi, le rythme de la recherche sur les risques qu'elles peuvent poser devrait aller de pair avec tous nouveaux développements.

L'inquiétude majeure est que les nanoparticules libres pourraient être inhalées, ingérées ou pourraient s'introduire dans le corps facilement à travers la peau et puis causer des dommages aux cellules et aux organes (par exemple aux or-



ganes respiratoires). Les nano-tubes, par exemple, des structures similaires à des fils à une nano-échelle, sont structurellement semblables aux fibres d'amiante, qui peuvent poser des problèmes respiratoires graves une fois inhalées en grande quantité et pour longues périodes.

- 2) Les nano-matériaux et nano-produits dans leur ensemble devraient être définis comme une classe différente de substances. On doit considérer que les nanoparticules ont des propriétés et comportements différents des matériaux correspondants.
- 3) Tous les articles déjà disponibles sur le marché et contenant des nano-particules et/ou des nano-matériaux devraient être adéquatement marqués pour pouvoir être facilement identifiés. Actuellement, il n'est pas obligatoire de mettre en évidence dans leurs étiquettes les nano-propriétés des produits, alors que quelques entreprises ont employé le nano-label en tant qu'un moyen de publicité et de marketing, parfois indépendamment du vrai contenu de leurs articles.
- 4) Il est nécessaire de communiquer les risques des nanotechnologies à la société de façon transparente et efficace. La compréhension devra non seulement être limitée aux potentiels d'application et aux futures opportunités des nouvelles technologies/matériaux mais en particulier à leurs risques réels.
- 5) La recherche et les applications techniques nano devraient répondre à des vrais besoins et des priorités sociales, en se basant sur des considérations écologiques, sociales et durables et non seulement économiques. La majeure partie des nano-produits actuellement sur le marché est de nature accessoire, c'est-à-dire qu'ils ne servent pas à besoins humains ou environnementaux urgents, tels que la santé, la sûreté, la prévention de la pollution etc. mais aux nécessités mineures (produits de beauté, vêtements avec des traits particuliers, articles sportifs, etc.).
- 6) Concernant le point ci-dessus, la société civile et le public en général devraient être activement impliqués dans les discussions destinées à établir des priorités pour la recherche et l'application nano, en particulier quand celles-ci sont financées par l'argent public.
- 7) Encore plus important: il y a urgemment besoin d'un cadre législatif en matière de nanotechno-

logies assurant une gouvernance et transparence efficaces et limitant les applications qui pourraient représenter des dangers pour la santé humaine et l'environnement, avant qu'elles soient consolidées.

- 8) Une approche fondée sur le principe de précaution devrait être adoptée avant de produire et d'introduire des nano-matériaux sur le marché. Ceci nous évitera de répéter les erreurs faites avec les OGM, qui sont entrés dans nos vies sans que leurs effets à court et à long terme sur la santé humaine et l'environnement aient été précédemment recherchés. Le principe de précaution devrait couvrir l'entier cycle de vie des particules et des matériaux issus des nanotechnologies. L'analyse du cycle de vie est l'un des moyens les plus efficaces pour approcher la question complexe de la façon dont ces matériaux pourraient affecter l'environnement. Elle consiste à tracer leur destin et transport à chaque étape, de la production à la mise au rebut ou à la dispersion finale.
- 9) La recherche et les essais sont nécessaires pour fournir une base scientifique aux politiques traitant des incertitudes et des risques des nanotechnologies. En particulier, des recherches, essais et protocoles toxicologiques et écotoxicologiques (encore très limités) nouveaux sont nécessaires pour élucider les possibles impacts sur la santé et l'environnement car il a été montré que ceux qui sont actuellement disponibles ne seraient pas suffisants à évaluer efficacement les risques.
- 10) Il y a urgemment besoin de standards supportant une législation sur les nanotechnologies et un cadre d'évaluation des risques des particules et des matériaux, ainsi que la communication (standards sur les définitions) et les méthodes pour la prise d'échantillons et la mesuration.
- 11) Le déséquilibre existant entre la quantité des fonds alloués à la découverte et l'expérimentation de nouveaux produits/matériaux devrait être corrigé, en mettant l'accent sur l'évaluation et la minimisation des impacts.
- 12) Les programmes de recherche publique devraient jouer un rôle important en fournissant les plus grandes incitations et encouragements aux Nanotechnologies qui s'inscrivent dans une perspective de développement durable et ne posent pas des risques pour l'humanité dans le long terme.

## Questions spécifiques des pays en voie de développement

Il est nécessaire de relier le développement des nanotechnologies au développement des nations pauvres afin de rejoindre les buts de réduction de la pauvreté convenus au niveau international, tels que les Objectifs de Développement du Millénaire (MDGs). Des millions de personnes n'ont pas accès à l'eau propre, à des sources efficaces d'énergie, à la santé et à l'éducation. Les nanotechnologies pourraient promettre des solutions efficaces dans ces secteurs. Pourtant il semble y avoir des efforts tout à fait insuffisants parmi les divers acteurs de la société - gouvernements, organisations non gouvernementales, donateurs, entreprises et académiciens - à agir efficacement dans cette direction. La plupart des gouvernements des pays industriels et peu de gouvernements dans le monde en voie de développement investissent fortement dans les nanotechnologies et partout peu de ces investissements profite actuellement aux pauvres.

Les gouvernements devraient assurer la participation des citoyens et la transparence dans la façon dont l'argent public est dépensé en technologies naissantes et en voie de développement. En particulier, on devrait accorder davantage d'attention aux besoins des pauvres et pas simplement à améliorer la compétitivité des corporations nationales concernant les nanotechnologies. Les universités et les instituts de recherche reçoivent beaucoup de fonds pour la recherche sur les nanotechnologies par des programmes gouvernementaux et, dans une moindre mesure, par le secteur privé. Beaucoup de ces fonds vont soutenir une recherche qui sert les intérêts des corporations et l'amélioration de la qualité de vie dans les pays développés, où, par exemple, les universités se financent de plus en plus en brevetant leurs découvertes au secteur privé. Au contraire, celles-ci pourraient jouer un rôle important dans la gestion de l'innovation pour assurer que les pays en voie de développement puissent se servir des avantages produits par la recherche publique.

Afin de promouvoir le développement humain il est important de prévoir les impacts des politiques gouvernementales et des corporations à travers la participation active de la société civile et du public dans n'importe quelle discussion liée aux développements des nanotechnologies.

Bien que certains avantages potentiels certains avantages potentiels n'aboutiront que dans un futur lointain, la technologie est normalement dans les mains des pays développés et des sociétés multinationales - par exemple par le biais de brevets - et bénéficie principalement aux consommateurs du nord ce qui aboutirait à accentuer les écarts entre les pays développés et ceux en voie de développement.

Il faudrait prêter une attention particulière aux risques qui pourraient affecter les pays en voie de développement dus à leurs conditions environnementales et sociales spécifiques.

MIO-ECSDE has recently been involved in a European project entitled NanoCap (acronym for "Nanotechnology Capacity Building NGOs") with the aim to deepen its understanding of environmental, occupational health and safety issues and ethical aspects of nanotechnologies and be able to inform its Members and the general public.

In particular, MIO-ECSDE wishes to bring in the project and in the relevant European and International fora the Mediterranean civil society's perspective on nanotechnologies emerging issues, many of which might have an influence on the sustainable development of our region.

The present Position Paper is therefore intended to present MIO-ECSDE views on current nano-developments and could also serve as a basis for planning concerted NGOs actions in the region, lobbying at the national and regional levels for suitable legislative frameworks regulating nanotechnologies and their applications, informing and raising awareness of the wider public and of concerned stakeholders (educators, journalists, Parliamentarians etc.) on nano-issues.

The Position Paper, endorsed by MIO-ECSDE Executive Bureau (EB) during its last meeting in Cairo (1 December 2007), has been recently finalised through the integration of EB Members' input and feedback.

Through the participation in the NanoCap project we are gaining a deeper understanding of this new and rapid evolving technological field and the position paper will probably need to be adapted to the developments we will witness in the future.

## MIO-ECSDE POSITION ON NANOTECHNOLOGIES

### General issues of concern (priority-based)

1) Urgent action should begin in relation to free nanoparticles against which there is no protection (e.g. workers and consumers cannot choose not to breathe them). Free nanoparticles should be treated and labeled as a new class of substances and research into their potential hazards should keep pace with new developments.

The concern is that free nanoparticles could be inhaled, ingested or can enter the body via the skin, and then cause damage to cells and organs (e.g. organs of the respiratory tract and other). Nanotubes, for example, nanometer scale wire-like structures that are most often composed of carbon, are structurally similar to asbestos fibres, which can cause respiratory problems when inhaled in large amounts over long periods.

2) Nano-materials and products as a whole should be defined as a different class of substances considering that nanoparticles have different properties and behaviors than their correspondent bulk materials.

3) All consumer items already available on the market and containing nano-particles and/or nano-materials should be adequately labeled to allow their easy identification. Currently, it is not required to state the nano-properties of products on their labels, while some enterprises have used the nano-label as a means of publicity and marketing, sometimes independently from the real content of nano-engineered particles in their items.

13) A transparent and effective communication of the risks of nanotechnologies to society is needed. The public's understanding should not only be limited to application potentials and future opportunities of the new technologies/materials but particularly on their actual risks.

14) Nano-research and technical application should be driven by real societal needs and priorities and based on ecological, social and sustainable development considerations and not on the 'marketability' of products only. Most of the nano-products present in the market are of 'accessory' nature, e.g. they do not serve impelling human or environmental

needs, such as health, safety, pollution prevention and remediation, etc. but rather minor necessities (cosmetics, textiles, sport items, etc.).

15) With reference to the above point, civil society and the public in general should always be actively involved in discussions directed to set priorities for nano-research and application, particularly when this is supported by public money.

16) Most importantly, a relevant regulatory framework is urgently needed to secure proper governance and transparency and to set the limits for nanotechnologies applications that might be harmful for human health and the environment, before these are consolidated.

17) The precautionary principle approach should be adopted before producing and introducing nano-materials in the market for consumer use. This would help avoiding the mistakes made in the case of GMOs, which have entered our daily lives without being properly tested for short and especially long-term effects on human health and the environment. The precautionary principle should cover the entire life-cycle of nano-particles and materials. Full life cycle analysis is one of the effective means of approaching the complex question of how nano-structured materials might affect the environment and human health. It involves mapping fate and transport at every step, from production inputs to final disposal or dispersal.

18) Research and testing is needed to provide a scientific basis for policy frameworks to deal with uncertainties and risks of nanotechnologies. In particular, there is an urgent need for additional toxicological and ecotoxicological studies, tests and protocols (all still very limited) in order to elucidate health and environmental impacts as it has been shown that the available ones (targeted to bulk chemicals and substances) might not be suitable for the assessment of nano-risks.

19) There is an urgent need for standards to support legislation and a regulatory framework for risk assessment of nanomaterials and nano-particles as well as for communication (standards on definitions) and methods for sampling and measurement.

20) The existing imbalance in funds allocated to nanotech research needs to be corrected so that impact assessment and minimization and not only application come high in the agenda.

21) Public research programs need to play an important role in providing greater incentives and encouragement for nanotechnologies that support Sustainable Development and do not endanger humanity's well-being in the long-term.

### Nanotechnologies issues specific to developing countries

There is a need to connect the development of nanotechnologies with the development of poor nations and neighborhoods in order to meet internationally agreed poverty reduction goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Millions of people lack access to safe water, efficient sources of energy, health care and education. Nanotechnologies may promise effective solutions in these areas. Yet there appears to be very little effort among the various sectors of society – government, nongovernmental, business, donors, and academia – to act effectively in this direction. Most industrial countries' governments and few governments in the developing world are investing heavily in nanotechnologies but even in the countries where a large proportion of citizens are poor, little of this investment is presently going to benefits for the poor.

Governments should assure the participation of citizens and transparency in the way public

money is spent in developing emerging technologies. In particular, focus should be given to the needs of the poor and not just at improving national corporate competitiveness in nanotechnologies. Universities and Research Institutes receive much of their funding for nano-research through government programs and, to a lesser extent, through partnerships with the private sector. Much of this funding goes to research that supports corporate interests and improved quality of life in developed countries. This is also the case for Universities in the developed world that are more and more expected to 'pay their way' by patenting and licensing advances to the private sector. On the contrary, these could play an important role in managing innovation to ensure that developing countries can reap the benefits from publicly funded research.

In order to meet human development it is important to anticipate the impacts of governmental and corporate policies through the active involvement of civil society and the public in any discussion related to nano-developments. Although some of the potential benefits of nanotechnologies may be years away, the technology is usually controlled by developed countries and multinational corporations, for example through patents and conditions in technology licenses that primarily benefit consumers in the North and lead to a deeper divide between developed and developing countries.

Attention should be paid to specific risks that might affect developing countries due to their particular environmental and social conditions.

## "REACHing SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION"

Within the framework of the project that MIO-ECSDE has launched entitled "REACHing Sustainable Management of Chemicals in the Euro-Mediterranean Region", directed to inform and sensitize the public and other concerned stakeholders in Europe and the Mediterranean on the developments of the new EC Chemical Policy's reform under the proposed new system REACH an information leaflet has been developed. MIO-ECSDE, in collaboration with the EEB, which is already very active in issues related to chemicals (particularly in connection with human health and safety and protection of the environ-

ment), intends to provide through disseminating this leaflet basic information about the principles of the new legislation and advise NGOs and the public about their role and possible interventions in order to push their governments and the business/industry sector for a more viable management of chemicals in their countries.

The leaflet has been produced in Arabic, English, French, Greek, Italian, Maltese, Portuguese, Slovenian, Spanish and Turkish. There is availability of copies upon request from the Secretariat, [info@mio-ecsde.org](mailto:info@mio-ecsde.org) or for downloading from [www.mio-ecsde.org](http://www.mio-ecsde.org)



## MIO-ECSDE Profile

The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development, is a Federation of Mediterranean Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for the Environment and Development. MIO-ECSDE acts as a technical and political platform for the intervention of NGOs in the Mediterranean scene. In cooperation with Governments, International Organizations and other socio-economic partners, MIO-ECSDE plays an active role for the protection of the environment and the sustainable development of the Mediterranean Region.

### Background

MIO-ECSDE became a federation of Mediterranean NGOs in March 1996. Its roots go back to the early 80s, when the expanding Mediterranean membership of the European Community encouraged the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) to form its Mediterranean Committee supported by Elliniki Etairia (The Hellenic Society for the Protection of the Environment and the Cultural Heritage). The Mediterranean Information Office (MIO) was established in 1990 as a network of NGOs, under a joint project of EEB and Elliniki Etairia and in close collaboration with the Arab Network of Environment and Development (RAED). The continuous expansion of MIO-ECSDE's Mediterranean NGO network and the increasing request for their representation in Mediterranean and International Fora, led to the transformation of MIO-ECSDE to its current NGO Federation status. Today it has a membership of 104 NGOs from 25 Mediterranean countries.

### Our Mission

Our mission is to protect the Natural Environment (flora and fauna, biotopes, forests, coasts, natural resources, climate) and the Cultural Heritage (archaeological monuments, and traditional settlements, cities, etc.) of the Mediterranean Region. The ultimate goal of MIO-ECSDE is to promote Sustainable Development in a peaceful Mediterranean.

### Major tools and methods

Major tools and methods used by MIO-ECSDE in order to achieve its objectives are the following:

- Promotion of the understanding and collaboration among the people of the Mediterranean, especially through their NGOs, between NGOs and Governments, Parliaments, Local Authorities, International Organizations and socio-economic actors of the Mediterranean Region.
- Assistance for the establishment, strengthening, co-operation and co-ordination of Mediterranean NGOs and facilitation of their efforts by ensuring the flow of information among relevant bodies.
- Promotion of education, research and study on Mediterranean issues, by facilitating collaboration between NGOs and Scientific and Academic Institutions.
- Raising of public awareness on crucial Mediterranean environmental issues, through campaigns, publications, exhibitions, public presentations, etc.

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