

SUSTAINABLE MEDITERRANEAN

MEDITERRANEE DURABLE • ΒΙΩΣΙΜΗ ΜΕΣΟΓΕΙΟΣ • MEDITERRANEO SOSTENIBILE



THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION AT THE 12TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

NEW YORK, 19-30 APRIL 2004

LA RÉGION MÉDITERRANÉENNE À LA 12^{ème} SESSION DE LA COMMISSION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE

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EDITORIAL

This issue of *Sustainable Development* is dedicated to the contribution of the Mediterranean Region at the 12th Session of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (UN CSD-12) in New York (April 2004). It was a CSD meeting in which the Mediterranean NGO community was particularly active in promoting joint action and synergies with other stakeholders of the region and the world over.

The twelfth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UN CSD-12) met at the UN Headquarters in New York from 14-30 April 2004. The first three days (14-16 April) were devoted mainly to the preparatory meeting for the ten-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (<http://www.sidsnet.org>). The following two weeks (19-30 April) served as the UN CSD-12 Review Session. As agreed at UN CSD-11, the UN CSD now functions on the basis of two-year "Implementation Cycles". Each cycle focusses on a key thematic cluster of issues (see below). The first year of each cycle — the Review year — evaluates progress made in implementing sustainable development commitments made in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and relevant CSD sessions focus on identifying obstacles and constraints. The second year — the Policy year — decides on measures to speed up implementation and mobilize actions to overcome difficulties and build on lessons learned.

The first Implementation Cycle covers 2004-2005, where UN CSD-12 (April 2004) was a Review Session, while UN CSD-13 (Spring 2005) will be a Policy Session. The CSD-12 Review Session focused on the thematic cluster of **water, sanitation and human settlements**. As with every cycle in the Multi-Year Programme of Work for UN CSD (till 2016/2017) (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd11/CSD_multyyear_prog_work.htm) UN CSD-12 tackled the aforementioned thematic cluster using a number of cross-cutting issues, namely: poverty eradication; changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption; protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development; sustainable development in a globalizing world; health and sustainable development; sustainable development of SIDS; sustainable development for Africa; other regional initiatives; means of implementation; institutional framework for sustainable development; gender equality; and education.

UN CSD-12 incorporated a wide range of activities and meeting formats, including panel discussions, interactive debates, eminent speakers, and regional sessions. Additionally, CSD-12 was the first session to incorporate a *Partnerships Fair and a Learning Centre* into the official programme. UN CSD-12 also continued the tradition of *Side Events*. The main written outputs from the UN CSD-12 Review Session were a report, including a Chairperson's summary, identifying constraints and obstacles and possible approaches and best practices for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well as records of the Regional Discussions and activities held as part of the Partnerships Fair and the Learning Centre. Other outputs include training opportunities and facilitating exchanges of experience and lessons learned as part of UN CSD-12's intention to mobilize further action by all implementation actors to overcome obstacles and constraints in the implementation of sustainable development.

The Mediterranean eco-region, despite its internal difficulties, has tried to capitalize on its long history and tradition in order to consolidate its efforts and demonstrate its common regional will to achieve sustainable development, as manifested by a number of initiatives and institutions which were direct responses to the Rio UNCED and Agenda 21 (www.un.org/esa/sustdev/agenda21) as well as of the Johannesburg WSSD and the MDGs. Among them:

- the elaboration of a *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development* (MSSD) by the year 2005 has be-

en decided. To this end a common vision and orientations have been prepared by the MCSD, based on the identification of major challenges and priority actions that consolidate its framework and guiding principles - shared by all the Countries, the EU and also by the regional partners (IGOs, NGOs, civil society, business sectors).

- › VIth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers (Naples, December 2003, www.euro-pa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/conf/naples/conclusions) stressed the need for environmental protection and sustainable development policies to be implemented through projects and programs undertaken, pursued along the lines of the Declaration of the IInd Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Environment Ministers and the Plan of Implementation of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development.
- › National Commissions and strategies for sustainable development have been launched or are in the design phase throughout the region.
- › Numerous Mediterranean Type II Initiatives have been launched by countries, IGOs, NGOs, etc.
- › in the key issue of water, a new platform was formed (GWP-Med) which includes representatives of governments, NGOs, professionals, cities, etc. and hosts the Secretariat of the EU Water Initiative – Mediterranean Component, which has Greece as the lead country.

The present issue gives a brief overview of the major Mediterranean contributions to UN CSD-12 and provides useful background information for all those who wish to be active in the field of sustainable development in the Mediterranean region.



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THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION AT THE 12th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD)

12th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT UN Headquarters, New York, 14 – 30 April 2004

SUMMARY REPORT

as prepared by Stakeholder Forum for our Common Future
(<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/news/network.php>)

A. BACKGROUND

14-16 April: Preparatory meeting for the International Meeting on the 10-year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (please see: <http://www.sidsnet.org/>).

19-30 April: To undertake a frank and honest review of the obstacles, challenges and constraints as well as the successes, lessons learned and recommendations for improvement in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and in implementing Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements (please see: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/csd12.htm>).

B. OVERVIEW

CSD-12 was the first substantive session of the Commission under its new multi-year work programme since the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It was a non negotiating session with the objective of facilitating interactive discussion between governments, stakeholders, agencies and international organisation in the evaluation of implementation. The session was composed of a number of different elements all of which are reported on in brief below.

C. REVIEW SESSION

Reports were provided from seven *intercessional events* held in preparation for CSD-12. These included:

- International Expert Meeting on the 10-Year Framework of the Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/consumption/Marrakech/conprod10Y.htm>
- The International Water Forum;
- Workshop on Governance for WSSD Implementation in Countries in Transition http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/Istanbul_report.doc
- International Conference 'Water for the Poorest';
- International Forum on Partnerships for Sustainable Development http://www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori_azione/pia/att/forum_svs_eng.asp

Reports were provided from each of the five *Regional Implementation Forums* as detailed below.

- Economic Commission for Africa:
http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/panaf-con_rimreport_wsh.pdf
- Economic Commission for Europe:
<http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2004/ece/ac.25/ece.ac.25.2004.3.e.pdf>
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean:
<http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2004/ece/ac.25/ece.ac.25.2004.3.e.pdf>
- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/BangkokRimReport.pdf>
- Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/WestAsiaRimReport.pdf>

Interactive Review Sessions were held on each issue within the *thematic cluster of issues*. Chair Borge Brende played an instrumental leadership role in maintaining the 'dialogue' aspect of the sessions. This was assisted by the use of 'expert panels'. The sessions focused on the need to provide 1.6 billion people with safe drinking water, ensure 2 billion people have access to basic sanitation by 2015 and to sustainably improve the living condition of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

Whilst it was recognised that we are not on track to meet these goals, their achievement was still deemed possible.

Common issues raised during the Review Sessions included:

- Need for water and sanitation in PRSPs and National Development Plans;
- Lack of political leadership and commitments;
- Inadequate financing and inappropriate allocation of resources;
- Lack of capacity and awareness;
- Inadequate information and data for decision making, monitoring and reporting;
- Partnerships are effective implementation tools – but are not a substitute to government commitment and action;

- Need for decentralisation of services and devolution of decision making authorities;
- Need to involve and engage communities, in particular women in decision making and implementation activities;
- Need for technology development and transfer;

D. HIGH-LEVEL SECTION

The High-Level Section ran from 28-30 April. Kofi Annan (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/scd12/press_release280404.pdf) and Jeffrey Sachs (UN Millennium Project) addressed the opening plenary. Minister and Secretary of States attended from a broad range of Ministries – including environment, development and finance. The segment served to provide high-level commitment to the issues raised during the first week of interactive dialogue.

E. ANALYSIS AND OUTCOMES:

Emerging issues and Challenges include:

- The bridge between review and policy sessions;
- Inclusion of environmental concerns and considerations;
- Integration of environment and development priorities;
- Inter-linkages and coherence in the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the MDG and WSSD targets and commitments;
- Cross-cutting issues such as agriculture, education, biodiversity;
- Role, structure, timing and outcomes of the Regional Implementation Forums;
- Interagency coordination – in the immediate

term with regards to the 5 year review of the MDG;

- Streamlining and coordination of strategies (PRSPs, NSDSs, IWRMS) at national and donor level;
- Policy coherence, cooperation and coordination;
- Aide and financing for water and sanitation;
- Role of Ramsar;
- Strengthening and reform of International Environmental Governance;
- Definition of IWRM;
- Mainstreaming of environment within Dfid;
- Partnerships – contribution to implementation, accountability and financing;
- Introduction and adoption of new concepts – an ecosystem approach, eco-sanitation;
- Inclusion of water, sanitation and environment in PRSPs;
- Ongoing monitoring and review of thematic cluster of issues following their implementation cycle;

F. CONCLUSION

The overall impression of the session was positive. The review session enabled a frank and honest discussion on implementation and enabled the sharing of information and experience. The Chairs Summary (part I and II) is not progressive in its content – but strategically it was an appropriate document. It must be remembered that the value of the meeting was not in its documented outcome but in the meeting itself.

THE MAIN MEDITERRANEAN EVENT AT CSD 12 “THE MEDITERRANEAN RESPONSE TO THE WSSD COMMITMENTS” 29 April 2004

			
MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION OFFICE for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development	HELLENIC MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, PHYSICAL PLANNING AND PUBLIC WORKS	MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN / UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME	ITALIAN MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND TERRITORY

A side event entitled “The Mediterranean Response to the WSSD commitments” co-organised by the Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, the Italian Ministry for the Environment, UNEP/MAP and MIO-ECSDE, took place on April 29th in New York during the 12th Session of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (18:15- 19:45, Conference Room 1). The event was financially supported by the European Commission and UNEP/MAP.

The side event aimed to provide the 12th Session of the UN CSD with a promising joint regional effort of strengthened cooperation, common vision and strategic effort towards achieving sustainable development in an eco-region characterised by major differences and located at the North-South interface, facing serious demographic, economic, technological and socio-cultural problems.

The overall purpose of the side event was to:

- consolidate the progress made,
- speed up the process,
- exchange experiences with other regions of the world

The meeting was opened by HE Ambassador A. Vassillakis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the UN, on behalf of the Hellenic Government, while remarks were also made by Mr. Paolo Soprano, Director of the Division of Sustainable Development, Ministry for the Environment and Territory of Italy and H.E. Mr. Mohammed Elyazghi, Minister of Territory Planning, Water and Environment of Morocco. Dr. Emad Adly, President of the Arab NGO Network for Environment and Development (RAED) presented the achievements and prospects of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD). Mr. Arab Hoballah, Deputy Coordinator of UNEP/MAP addressed the progress made and challenges faced in the preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD). Mr. Claus Sorensen, Director of International Affairs in DG Environment of the European Commission spoke about commitments and obstacles in implementing sustainable development within the EuroMediterranean Partnership.

The rest of the session was dedicated to the brief presentation and discussion of the prospects and difficulties met in various governmental and non-governmental pilot initiatives that have resulted as responses to the WSSD. Interventions were made by Mr. Denys Gauer, Ambassador at large for the Environment, France; Dr. Awni Behnam, President of the International Ocean Institute, Malta; Ms. Maria Peppas, Head of the Department of International Relations and EU Affairs, Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, Greece; and by Mr. Marek Maciejowski, Secretary General of Baltic 21 who referred to the parallel to the Mediterranean regional Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea.

The Chairman of MIO-ECSDE, Prof. M. Scoullas was the facilitator of the side event.

The meeting took place on the second day of the Ministerial Session of CSD 12. The participants of the event were key Mediterranean players. The presentations were informative and stimulating and the resulting interventions and discussion were of significance, confirming commitments and strengthening further partnering and joint implementation of targets.

MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE SIDE EVENT

- The Mediterranean eco-region has developed significant experience for long-lasting successful cooperation in sustainable development and environmental protection, which can be used as a useful model for other eco-regions of the world: the Barcelona Convention and the MCSD within it, as well as the EuroMediterranean Partnership and various other activities of the European Union, such as the EU Water Initiative-Mediterranean Component. This does not imply that environment and development problems are less serious in the Mediterranean than in other parts of the world.
- The Mediterranean countries were the first to jointly respond to the call of Johannesburg in preparing a regional strategy for its sustainable development within the framework of the MCSD.
- The MSSD must be drafted and discussed following progressive participatory processes and should be supported and endorsed at the highest possible political level. This applies collectively for the region and for each Mediterranean country and also for the EU.
- Following the Vision and the Framework Orientations, attention should be focused on the implementation and mechanisms of delivery.
- The MSSD will not succeed without the decisive efforts of implementation of coherent and compatible national strategies for sustainable development. NSSDs must concretise the notion of sustainable development by adopting integrated policies and associating civil society, and the public at large, in the definition of criteria for success, the future of the strategy and the participation and role of civil society in the monitoring and management.
- The regional Mediterranean process must link effectively to the national and even the local level. To this end it has been proposed by the NGO community to facilitate national consultations. Furthermore, small scale pilot activities should take place at national and local level where the MCSD recommendations and outcomes can be applied and tested.
- The Mediterranean scene offers formidable opportunities for implementation of good intentions on sustainable development into concrete actions. If we do not deliver visible, tangible results soon, then we risk losing courage, confidence and momentum.

Minutes of the Side Event:

Opening

HE Amb. A. Vassilakis welcomed everyone to the side event and proceeded to state that the Mediterranean region can claim a long and significant experience of successful cooperation in sustainable development and environmental protection, which can be used as a model for cooperation in other eco-regions of the world. He described in historical sequence the milestones that justify this claim (as described above under the heading "Background"). He went on to emphasise the great importance that Greece attaches to the sustainable development and environmental protection in the region. Greece hosts the UNEP/MAP Coordination Unit, organised the 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment in July 2002, etc. Mediterranean issues were also very high in the political agenda during the Greek Presidency of the EU during the first semester of 2003. The issues of sustainable development and environmental protection of the Mediterranean Region were the subject of five Ministerial meetings and two international conferences during that period. At present, Greece attaches very high importance to water and leads the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative, while it also participates actively in Type II Initiatives linked to the sustainable development of the region.

HE Minister Elyazgi: Since the last World Summit that took place in Johannesburg the international community has been really concerned about the menaces that our world faces. The Johannesburg Summit was organised both for rich and poor countries in order to adopt a strategy of sustainable development ready to deal with the challenges. The eradication of poverty is an important challenge. However, the adoption of a sustainable way of consumption and production and a good governance in order to moderate globalisation and secure our natural resources are equally important.

As for the Mediterranean region the state of the environment continues raising serious concerns. The environmental problems are becoming so intensive in our region, that we risk losing what we have achieved so far in relation to sustainable development. The Mediterranean countries were the first to jointly respond to the call of Johannesburg in preparing Agenda 21, a regional strategy for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean within the framework of the MCSD. With this opportunity I would like to commend all the laudable initiatives that have been taken since the Rabat meeting in 1996. By the adoption and application of the MSSD, a decisive turn will be made as well as a firm commitment of the Mediterranean countries, North and South, in the long and difficult process towards achieving sustainable development in our region. The Mediterranean can only benefit from this process and from the spirit of solidarity and cooperation between the North and South that is called for.

It is obvious that the MSSD will not succeed without decisive efforts for application of appropriate national strategies for sustainable development. NSSDs must concretise the notion of sustainable development by adopting integrated policies and associating the population in the definition of progress and participation in the implementation of the strategies.

Mr. P. Soprano began by noting how the Mediterranean was in fact the first region to experiment with pioneering forms of multilateral cooperation in protecting the environment. Despite the work done in the past 30 years the quality of the Mediterranean is still at risk due to the unsustainable use of natural resources and energy in particular, a situation aggravated by the instability and conflict in parts of our region. The Catania Declaration, signed during the 12th Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention (November 2003), clearly states that the major challenge in achieving sustainable development in the Mediterranean is to guide development through the promotion of a balanced use of resources that allows us to couple economic growth with environmental protection. To face this challenge, multilateral initiatives must be strengthened and economic policies must be integrated with environmental ones.

In view of the twofold role that Italy holds in the region, as President of the Bureau of the Barcelona Convention and as a Mediterranean Country, he emphasised the importance that Italy attaches to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) that will be launched at the 9th session of the MCSD (Genova, 17-19 June 2004). Italy wishes to send a very clear sign of its commitment to the promotion of new approaches and strategies aimed at sustainable development in the region. The MSSD could become the engine of opportunities in strengthening the technological innovation

and international environmental cooperation aimed at sustainable economic growth in Southern Mediterranean countries, especially in regard to water and energy. Proper implementation of the MSSD principle objectives cannot be achieved without involvement of the business community, multilateral financial institutions and civil society organisations.

Within this context, the Italian Government, in the past two years, has supported concrete applications of environmental cooperation initiatives in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Israel and has launched the Initiative for the Promotion of Renewable Energies. These development programmes include projects on ICZM, combating desertification, expanded use of renewable energy sources, energy recycling in waste management, the promotion of sustainable tourism and the strengthening of environmental capacity building of public administrations. In order to overcome the challenges faced in the Mediterranean, we must become promoters of a new era of environmental policies based on constructive actions and voluntary agreements.

Presentations

Dr. E. Adly expressed the view that there is still a distance to cover to attract attention and commitment to the MCSD analogous of that of its importance, especially on the part of Mediterranean governments. As a civil society representative and coming from the South of the Mediterranean region he said that he is proud of the MCSD initiative and considers it to be a model of regional cooperation and governance. It is a consultative body to the CPs of the Barcelona Convention but it is unique in composition (20 countries, the EU, 15 non governmental organisations) and in that all participate on equal footing. Furthermore, the national, sub regional and regional participation are expressly represented in its Task Groups. It is a scheme wherein there is a shared vision but also a shared responsibility. In the process of preparing the MSSD (presented later by Mr. Hoballah), the MCSD members were in a way forced to face the challenges in promoting the sustainable development of the region. The NGO members of MCSD have coordinated themselves in order to provide qualified input to the process. One main concern is that the regional process must link effectively to the national and even local level. To this end NGOs have proposed to facilitate national consultations. A proposal Dr. Adly made as a representative of civil society on the MCSD is for small scale pilot activities to take place at national and local level where the MCSD recommendations and outcomes can be applied and tested.

Mr. A. Hoballah began by addressing the context within which the MSSD is being developed. He pointed out that UNEP/MAP, since Serbia-Montenegro also joined the Barcelona Convention, has 21 Mediterranean countries and the EU (22 members). It is fully within the UNEP/MAP mandate to formulate an MSSD since the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols have been updated to include the sustainable development concept. At global level, there is an institutional difficulty in that the Mediterranean and UNEP/MAP include parts of three different UN regions and the CSD has difficulties in dealing with the Mediterranean as a region in itself.

From its beginning, UNEP/MAP had a strong network of partners and the civil society and NGOs have played a very important role, more so than at UN level. There has also been satisfactory cooperation of Contracting Parties and partners, and it is clear that there are shared concerns and responsibilities and a strong sense of ownership (of the Programme). The Mediterranean countries historically have had strong political, cultural and economic interrelations. Being a North-South interface it is a microcosm and can thus be considered a bridge between global and national level.

The MSSD is based on a Common Vision which in turn is based on a very objective strategic review with the main outcome being the necessity of policy reform. This reform is to be achieved through addressing five main challenges: development and environmental protection, poverty and inequality, innovation and entrepreneurship, cultural diversity, governance. Peace and stability are needed for progress in the above and vice versa. The Strategy is also based on Framework Orientations to guide its preparatory process. The MSSD key challenges have been defined as: globalisation, poverty and illiteracy, education reform, creating competitive business, better management of natural resources and pollution prevention and control, integrating sustainable development into all policy areas. A certain number of priority areas have also been identified: water, energy and eco-efficiency, tourism, transport, climate change, marine and coastal zones, urban development and agriculture.

The composition of the team which has worked so far and that would co-

tribute to drafting the MSSD comprises an ex minister of land use and environment, an ex minister of finance, an Unesco Chair for sustainable development, an administration and governance specialist, an economist and a natural resources and environment specialist. Specific realistic measurable time-bound targets are being identified based on the MDGs, JHB outcomes, etc. adapted of course to the Mediterranean context. A very strong participatory approach has been followed and the civil society has been particularly active. NGOs held a meeting in Madrid (January 2004) where concrete proposals on their contribution were formulated. The undertaking of national consultations (mentioned by Dr. A. Adly) was one of them. An Interagency Committee of regional organisations including business and civil society will be set up.

As concerns the means for implementing the MSSD, these should be national and external. In the latter included also are innovative taxing systems and remittances which could be a very significant source.

Up coming meetings will take place in May in Rabat (workshop on the targets, means, etc.) and then the 9th MCSD Meeting in Genova in June. Hopefully, a first draft of the MSSD will be presented to the Contracting Parties in November 2005 in Slovenia.

Mr. C. Sorensen expressed appreciation of the holistic approach of the UNEP/MAP, MCSD and MSSD towards the sustainability challenges, especially in the South Mediterranean. The region, he said, is in very good hands.

For the EU it does not make sense to attain sustainable development in Europe without having the same in the South shores of the Mediterranean. Progress must be made in three directions: the EU must do its homework, the southern Mediterranean States must do theirs nationally and sub-regionally, and finally we must work jointly. This has been recognised at the highest political level. The problems that must be dealt with are in the implementation and mechanisms of delivery.

The 2nd Conference of EuroMediterranean Ministers for the Environment held in Athens 2002 called on all partners to exercise the environmental integration process into all policies. In the EU the Cardiff process for integration is moving ahead despite the numerous obstacles. It is at the highest level of the EU construction (President of the Commission) and meanwhile National Sustainable Development Strategies are also underway. In terms of joint efforts between the North and South of the Mediterranean, there is room for improvement but there is gradual progress e.g. Agriculture Ministers have reached some consensus, the Trade Ministers also, with all the dangers it entails - but SIAs are in place and caution is called for. The EU enlargement process also strengthens sustainable development in the Mediterranean with the incoming states. The enlargement is a very important driving force for sustainable development. The financial institutions are also playing their role in the area as well.

The MSSD is progressing well but he noted that he agreed with Dr. E. Adly that it should be further linked to the national and sub national levels. Furthermore, in order to progress well in the EU, it must be supported and accepted at the highest political level i.e. the President of the CEU, Heads of Mediterranean EU States and relevant Ministries. This should also happen in the partner countries.

Prof. M. Scoullas stressed that the Mediterranean is indeed a unique case concerning also the role of civil society. If we do not succeed, he said, in this region, the neighbourhood of the EU, with all of the provisions we have created, then there is little hope that there will be success in any other region. Most of those present share more or less the same concerns but also the same optimism. But if we do not deliver visible, tangible results soon then we might lose the courage, confidence and momentum. This meeting itself is an effort to keep this momentum and it is of significance that it was a joint initiative of the Greek and Italian Governments, UNEP/MAP, MIO-ECSDE supported also by the EU. Then he started the discussion by inviting HE Ambassador Gauer to take the floor.

Interventions

HE Amb. D. Gauer congratulated the organisers of the event and went on to say that the Mediterranean region deserves more attention in terms of sustainable development. Despite the differences in this eco-region there are political, economic and social interdependencies and sustainable development can help in bringing the Mediterranean stakeholders and their strategies closer together. France welcomes and supports the MCSD and MSSD and Pre-

sident Chirac announced in the framework of the JHB Summit that more attention should be paid to the Mediterranean and will therefore organise an informal meeting of experts and personalities and representatives of civil society to for a common reflection on sustainable development in the Mediterranean in Marseille 17-18 May 2004. It is hoped that the meeting will contribute to the MSSD formulation process and other related ongoing processes and partnerships and that it will further strengthen civil society and NGO involvement which has been very significant to date.

Dr. A. Behnam: IOI is headquartered in Malta, has two of its many operation centres in the region and the Mediterranean has been in the focus of its activities. Dr. Behnam described the many ways in which IOI has and can contribute to the implementation of the MSSD (training, capacity building - of decision makers as well, awareness raising, ecotourism projects, marine data collection and monitoring systems, etc.), and clearly stated that IOI is more than ready to cooperate.

Mrs. M. Peppas: noted that the key role of Greece in various on-going efforts towards achieving sustainable development in the Mediterranean was discussed earlier in the day, especially as relates to the EU Water Initiative and its Mediterranean component. She expressed concern about the MSSD, which although necessary as an instrument without provisions for strong links with the national and sub-regional levels (as already mentioned by Mr. Sorensen) and without coordination of the various players, might prove problematic. She asked Mr. Sorensen and Mr. Hoballah to react.

Mr. C. Sorensen: The issue is under scrutiny in Brussels. The solution seems to be the linking with the national sustainable development strategies and deep integration of sustainability agenda in all policy areas. For better management purposes, the EU trend is to lump together smaller initiatives into bigger projects and this may not serve the sustainability criteria well. The EU is in the process of assessing this aspect and trying to assure the intelligent use of funds.

Mr. A. Hoballah: The MSSD is based on a lengthy and on-going participatory approach that takes seriously into account the national concerns. This guarantees that we are on the right track. The intention is to induce implementation of commitments on behalf of the countries based on the objectives and goals of the MSSD.

Prof. M. Scoullas: He stressed the importance of flow of information and more rapid decision making. The experience with the ongoing efforts concerning the Mediterranean component of the EU WI has proven that there are many DGs involved with the Mediterranean and if the EEA and other bodies are included there is a considerable cluster of bodies that need to be informed and coordinated. There is a wealth of experience and talent to be better and fully utilised.

Mr. M. Maciejowski: also congratulated the organisers. The presence of Baltic 21 at this side event is based on their will to further strengthen cooperation between the two regions. There are several similarities between them at various levels. Sweden has offered a significant support for this specific purpose.

Mr. A. Hoballah: UNEP/MAP also wishes to strengthen the cooperation and they are closely following up on developments. He acknowledged that a strong point of the SSD for the Baltic region is that it has the support at the highest political level, something that has not been achieved in the Mediterranean case. The MCSD has invited Baltic 21 to the 9th MCSD Meeting and has proposed a side event on this issue of cooperation.

Dr. E. Adly: Due to the importance of what has been said and in view of the hard work that has been invested by the organisers, it would be appropriate to prepare a summary with the main elements discussed to be widely distributed.

Prof. M. Scoullas: The suggested follow-up will be delivered to the UNEP/MAP, MCSD and EuroMediterranean fora. The meeting should be judged by the high level of the discussions that took place. He thanked the staff that worked very hard for the side event to take place. In closing, he mentioned that it is very important that representatives of several countries and organisations attended this meeting and he hopes that even more Mediterranean countries will be involved in similar future events that tend to promote the common efforts for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean.

LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE EN MÉDITERRANÉE: UNE QUESTION DE RÉFORME, PARTENARIAT ET GOUVERNANCE

Le Sommet de Rio en 1992 avait mis à jour et fait accepter à l'échelle mondiale la notion de Développement Durable et ce que cela implique en termes de coopération, d'intégration et de changements politiques et sociaux. Cependant, la mise en œuvre de plusieurs des décisions de Rio a dès les premières années rencontré d'importants obstacles dus notamment à des questions politiques et de moyens techniques et financiers. Ce à quoi le Sommet de Johannesburg a tenté de pallier en redonnant une importance primordiale d'abord à l'intégration effective des 3 piliers économiques, sociaux et environnementaux, ensuite à la gouvernance et l'approche participative, et enfin aux moyens institutionnels et financiers de mise en œuvre, mettant l'accent sur la nécessité d'avoir des objectifs clairs, réalistes et, autant que possible, quantitatifs. La CMDD a suivi un chemin similaire.

Grâce à son cadre juridique, son programme d'activités et ses résultats, le PAM a pu très vite adapter les décisions globales à l'échelle régionale méditerranéenne; les Parties contractantes et leurs partenaires régionaux et de la Société Civile ont réussi à s'adapter aux évolutions et aux besoins, voire anticiper et parfois faire œuvre pionnière, en cherchant à adapter à l'échelle régionale l'Agenda 21, les Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement et le Plan de Mise en Oeuvre de Johannesburg.

De même que pour la CDD, la CMDD a connu un démarrage encourageant avec des résultats intéressants en termes de participation et de propositions d'action, créant cependant de plus en plus d'expectatives en termes de coopération régionale et de mise en œuvre, que le système n'était pas tout à fait en mesure de satisfaire. C'est dans ce contexte que les Parties et Partenaires ont décidé de la préparation d'une Stratégie Méditerranéenne de Développement Durable (SMDD) qui devrait notamment mieux définir et de manière plus pratique les principaux défis auxquels doit faire face la Région, ainsi que des moyens appropriés pour la mise en œuvre des objectifs de la stratégie.

En dépit des nombreux progrès accomplis aux échelles régionales Méditerranéennes et Euro-Méditerranéenne, et surtout aux échelles nationales, la concertation et la coopération effectives, dans une approche participative et une gouvernance adéquate, présentent encore des faiblesses ; or c'est là une des conditions nécessaires pour le Développement Durable. A cet égard, si le PAM grâce au contexte juridique de la Convention de Barcelone, a reçu le mandat politique pour la SMDD, la préparation de celle-ci et sa mise en œuvre plus tard devraient aussi concerner les autres acteurs régionaux tels que les institutions des Nations Unies (PNUD, PNUE, FAO, BM, etc.), les institutions et programmes régionaux (Ligue des États Arabes, UE, CEDARE, METAP, CIHAEM, etc.) ainsi que les réseaux d'acteurs de la Société Civile (ONG, secteur privé, chambres de commerce, etc.). Le rôle des Parties Contractantes sera des plus déterminants pour faire en sorte que ces acteurs régionaux coopèrent plus étroitement jusqu'à devenir de vrais partenaires et s'approprier la SMDD.

Dans la mesure où le PAM en cours d'exécution ou, PAM II,

tel que défini en 1995 à Barcelone, expire en 2005, la SMDD, qui devrait être préparée courant 2004 et 2005 et présentée aux Parties Contractantes lors de leur prochaine réunion en novembre 2005 en Slovénie, devrait largement contribuer à la préparation du prochain Plan d'Action, peut être un PAM III, pour la période 2007-2015 (2020?), PAM III qui devrait sans doute être structuré autour d'une série de Plan d'Actions Stratégique, à l'instar des PAS MED et BIO, et qui correspondraient aux domaines prioritaires et leurs objectifs respectifs.

Au-delà des domaines d'action prioritaire définis dans les orientations pour la SMDD, il est attendu de cette stratégie qu'elle:

- 1) insuffle une véritable culture du changement en Méditerranée;
- 2) encourage les actions pour promouvoir le Patrimoine naturel, culturel et social méditerranéen;
- 3) induise au découplage économie/environnement;
- 4) valorise les atouts de la Méditerranée dans la mondialisation;
- 5) identifie et développe les partenariats et actions gagnant-gagnant (win-win);
- 6) encourage l'innovation, la recherche-développement, et les technologies et pratiques alternatives;
- 7) identifie et développe de façon durable les «biens publics régionaux»;
- 8) mobilise les acteurs et décideurs concernés en les impliquant directement dans les processus préparatoire, de mise en œuvre et de suivi/évaluation;
- 9) encourage la décentralisation pour la décision comme pour la mise en œuvre des actions en faveur de DD;
- 10) contribue aux réformes nécessaires, y compris en matière de fiscalité, de rationalisation des dépenses et d'aide en développement;
- 11) encourage l'identification de mécanismes appropriés de conversion de dette en actions recherche-développement, de technologies propres, de programmes sociaux et de protection de l'environnement, de programmes de développement mobilisateurs des acteurs locaux et des PME/PMI;
- 12) mette la coopération euro-méditerranéenne au service du DD de la région, sur la base d'une responsabilité commune et partagée mais différenciée pour la promotion et le développement de biens communs, en particulier l'accès aux biens essentiels, le droit à un environnement sain, la paix et la sécurité pour tous, y compris les générations futures.

A. Hoballah, Coordonnateur Adjoint du
PAM/PNUE

(Les points de vues exprimés dans cet article n'engagent pas son auteur et pas le PAM/PNUE)

PRESENCE OF THE ITALIAN MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND TERRITORY (MATT) AT CSD-12



ITALIAN MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
AND TERRITORY

The “ADRICOM” Initiative (ADRIatic sea integrated COastal areaS and river basin Management system).

The Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory presented the ADRICOSM Partnership during the twelfth UN Commission on Sustainable Development on 28 April 2004. The Partnership was presented by the project coordinator Prof. Nadia Pinardi, two representatives of the beneficiary countries, Mr. Roko Andricevic, from the University of Split (Croatia) and Mr. Vlado Malacic from the National Institute of Biology Marine (Slovenia) and by the representative of the Civil Society, Mr. Augusto Pretener.

The Pilot Project ADRICOSM (ADRIatic sea integrated COastal areaS and river basin Management system) was launched in 2001, within the Adriatic Ionian Initiative, in Croatia and Slovenia, and financed, in its first phase, by the Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory. The Project objectives are the elaboration and the implementation, through a pilot project, of an integrated coastal zone management system in the Adriatic Sea, consisting of a predictive marine circulation module and a river basin and wastewater management module. Furthermore, ADRICOSM has been adopted as a “Type II” Initiative at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 2002.

Within ADRICOSM Partnership three new projects have been developing:

- ADRICOSM-EXT which will start next June and will continue the joint activities with Slovenia and Croatia, and enlarge the experience to other Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII) Member States, such as Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia-Montenegro
- ADRICOSM-PULA BAY - The application of ADRICOSM methodology in the Pula Bay (Croatia);
- NERES Project - The requalification of the delta of Neretva River (Croatia).

The ADRICOSM Partnership, coordinated by the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV), will involve 35 partners coming from the different Adriatic – Ionian Countries. The ADRICOSM-EXT Project is coordinated by INGV with the international directives defined in the UNESCO-IOC Coastal Global Ocean Observing System (CGOOS).

The ADRICOSM Partnership is totally financed by the Italian Government.

The MEDREP Initiative (Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme)

MEDREP was presented during the “Interactive dialogue on partnerships”, organised by Italy and the United States of America during the CSD-12 on 29 April, and during the Mediterranean Side Event at CSD-12 (“The Mediterranean Response to the WSSD commitments”), co-organised by MIO-ECSDE, UNEP/MAP, the Greek and Italian Governments (29 April).

Conscious of the need for all Mediterranean countries to turn towards renewable energies and of the main challenges to be overcome in this regard, Italy has launched in Johannesburg at WSSD, as a Type II Initiative, the Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme (MEDREP).

The two principal objectives of the Program are:

- to provide modern energy services particularly to rural populations;
- to contribute to the climate change mitigation by increasing the share of renewable energy technologies in the energy mix in the region.

In this perspective, the Program aims at developing a sustainable renewable energy market system in the greater Mediterranean Region, through three main subprojects:

- tailoring of financial instruments and mechanisms to support projects;
- strengthening of policy frameworks and removing barriers to projects development;
- building a stronger private sector infrastructure, considering the positive role of “Tradable Renewable Certificates” and “Certified Emission Reductions”.

Current partners involved are: Ministry for Industry and Energy of Tunisia (TMIE), the Tunisian National Agency for Renewable Energies (ANER), the New & Renewable Energy Authority of Egypt (NREA), the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure of Malta, the Ministry of Water and Environment of Yemen, the Centre for Renewable Energy Development (CDER) of Morocco, the French Agence de l’Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l’Energie (ADEME), the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Solar Energy Society Italy (ISES ITALY), the Mediterranean Association of the National Agencies for Energy Conservation (MEDENER), the Observatoire Méditerranéen de l’Energie (OME), the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank; others will also probably be involved in the partnership, being MEDREP a co-operative programme with Countries bordering on both the North and the South of the Mediterranean.

International Forum on Partnerships for Sustainable Development (Rome, March 2004)

Italy reported on the outcome of the International Forum on

Partnerships for Sustainable Development during the 12th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development – plenary session.

Given the growing interest in the contribution that voluntary, multi-stakeholder partnerships can make to implementing sustainable development, the Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory, in cooperation with the United Nations Department for Social and Economic Affairs (UNDESA), has organized the International Forum on Partnership for sustainable development. The Forum was held in Rome, March, 4 - 6, 2004. The Forum focused on results achieved and on lessons for the future on major issues of sustainable development, ranging from protection and conservation of water resources to oceans and small island developing states. The Forum recognized that traditional approaches to funding sustainable development were now mixed with new approaches, and partners were encouraged to mobilize resources from all sources, including private ones. The Forum also recognized that the public sector should facilitate and strengthen local capacities and encourage private sector participation.

It has been widely recognized during the Forum that, compared to most stand-alone political processes, partnership initiatives can add value to sustainable development efforts by increasing the involvement of stakeholders at all levels, by increasing participation of sectoral experts and by their capacity to address goals such as poverty reduction, environmental protection and social development using a synergistic approach

Side events that were attended by the Italian Delegation:

- “The Mediterranean response to WSSD” (29 April), co-organised by the Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, the Italian Ministry for the Environment, UNEP/MAP and MIO-ECSDE,
- “Promoting Strategic Partnerships on Water in the Mediterranean” (29 April). The purpose of the Partnership Fair Event, organised by Greece and GWP, was to pre-

sent and discuss progress in developing and implementing three Mediterranean initiatives for water:

1. Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative,
2. Mediterranean Education Initiative for Environment & Sustainability, with an emphasis on water and waste (MEDIES)
3. Euro-Mediterranean Water and Poverty Facility (WPF).

Italy chairs the Bureau of UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan and hosts in Genoa (16-19 June 2004) the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development. It was emphasised the importance that Italy attaches to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and to the partnerships and other cooperation initiatives in the Mediterranean region.

- Side event on “Education for sustainable development” (28 April), organised by Greece. The Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory, looking forward the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development. will host in Turin the third World Congress on Environmental Education, and active participates both to Medies (Mediterranean Education Initiative for Environment & Sustainability), and the preparation of the UNECE Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development.
- Side event *the “new Eden project” for the restoration of the Mesopotamian marshes: a step forward the sustainable reconstruction of Iraq* (April 21). organised by Italy, in cooperation with the Iraq Foundation. In the spring of 2003, the “Free Iraq Foundation” and the Italian Ministry for Environment and Territory agreed to cooperate in the identification of urgent actions for the environmental restoration of “New Eden” and for the conservation of water resources in the marshes of Southern Mesopotamia. The “New Eden” Project involves the Iraqi Ministries of Environment (MoE), of Municipalities and Public Works (MoMPW) and of Water Resources (MoWR), the Universities of Baghdad, Mustansyriah and Basrah and the local municipalities.

LA PRESENCE FRANÇAISE LORS DE LA CDD12 ENJEUX ET CONCLUSIONS



MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

La délégation française était conduite par deux ministres, M. Serge Lepeltier, ministre de l'Écologie et du développement durable, M. Xavier Darcos, ministre délégué à la Coopération. Cette présence a permis de valoriser l'expérience et les propositions européennes (1) et françaises (2), lors des

interventions des ministres, à l'occasion de deux événements parallèles co-organisés par la France (financement de l'accès à l'eau, accès aux services essentiels), d'un petit déjeuner ministériel sur la gouvernance internationale environnementale et d'une rencontre des ministres de la Francophonie.

1/ Les messages européens relayés par la délégation française

La France a pleinement participé à l'élaboration des priorités de l'Union européenne présentées par la Présidence irlandaise. La délégation française s'est notamment employée à :

- a) mettre en valeur notre savoir-faire dans le domaine de l'eau et de l'assainissement, en veillant à maintenir le li-

en entre les deux sujets. Un CD Rom exposant la politique publique française de l'eau, est accessible sur le site www.politique-eau.gouv.fr ;

- b) promouvoir le modèle de gestion intégrée des ressources en eau. Il s'agit de l'une de nos priorités de coopération, en particulier pour la définition de stratégies de gestion intégrée et d'organisation par bassin (Bassin du Niger). La France joue un rôle pilote dans ce domaine dans le cadre du volet Afrique de l'Initiative européenne sur l'eau ;
- c) insister sur l'importance d'un renforcement de la bonne gouvernance au niveau local, en renforçant le mouvement de décentralisation et les capacités institutionnelles des collectivités locales. Une plaquette retraçant l'expérience française a été distribuée pendant la CDD.

2/ Les initiatives françaises lors de la CDD12

Plusieurs initiatives initiées par la France ont été développées à l'occasion de la CDD12.

- a) *Assurer une bonne prise en compte du pilier environnement du développement durable*

La France est favorable au renforcement du PNUE et prépare l'étape suivante : sa transformation en une institution spécialisée des Nations Unies. En marge de la CDD12, M. Lepeltier, ministre de l'Ecologie et du développement durable a réuni les ministres des 26 pays du Sud et du Nord qui composent le groupe de travail constitué par la France sur ce thème. Ils ont convenu de poursuivre cette réflexion plus avant.

- b) *Donner au PNUD les moyens d'une action inscrite dans la durée*

M. Darcos, ministre de la Coopération et de Francophonie a signé le 28 avril, avec l'administrateur du PNUD, M. Brown, un accord de partenariat entre la France et le PNUD.

- c) *Mesurer les progrès réalisés dans l'accès à l'eau*

La France souhaite que s'engage une réflexion sur un mécanisme d'observation et de recueil de données sur l'eau. La création, le 22 mars, d'un « Conseil consultatif pour l'eau et l'assainissement » placé auprès du Secrétaire général des Nations Unies constitue un premier pas. Au-delà, la question se pose d'un suivi inter-gouvernemental de ces enjeux. Le résumé de la Présidence reprend cette analyse en identifiant le besoin d'un mécanisme de suivi-évaluation (cf. le paragraphe 35 i) du résumé de la Présidence du segment ministériel).

- d) *Promouvoir l'accès aux services essentiels pour tous*

La France souhaite favoriser l'accès aux services essentiels (eau, assainissement, propreté, énergie, transports, ...). Pour cela, elle entend promouvoir la rédaction / diffusion de codes de bonne gouvernance susceptibles d'être mises en oeuvre par des autorités publiques (nationales et locales), des opérateurs privés, des ONGs. Un événement parallèle s'est tenu sur ce thème avec ONU-Habitat et Unitar.

- e) *Renforcer et diversifier les financements et garantir les investissements pour les autorités locales compétentes*

Un événement parallèle organisé avec l'Institut des relations internationales et du développement durable (IDDRI Paris) a permis d'explorer les conditions du financement de l'accès à l'eau, notamment en zones semi-urbaines et rurales. Ont été évoqués le besoin d'aider au développement de l'épargne et des marchés financiers locaux, d'allonger la durée des prêts en monnaie locale et de faciliter l'accès des opérateurs publics et privés à des financements en monnaie locale qui les protègent du risque de change.

- c) *Favoriser le développement durable en Méditerranée*

Enfin, au cours d'une manifestation du MIO-ECSDE, la France a annoncé la tenue d'une réunion d'experts des pays du pourtour méditerranéen à Marseille les 17 et 18 mai 2004 (cf www.environnement.gouv.fr). Elle est destinée à contribuer à l'élaboration d'une stratégie méditerranéenne de développement durable, actuellement en cours de préparation sous l'égide de Plan d'Action pour la Méditerranée (PAM)

Conclusion

Cette 12^e CDD a confirmé la nécessité d'un lieu où débattre des conditions d'intégration des trois dimensions du développement durable. Elle constitue le lieu où pays en développement et pays développés peuvent s'entendre pour veiller à l'intégration des objectifs environnementaux et sociaux dans les politiques de développement. De ce point de vue, la CDD13 devra participer pleinement, dans le cadre de son mandat, à la préparation de la revue à mi-parcours en septembre 2005, de la Déclaration du Millénaire. La participation très active de la société civile aux CDD (cf. les foires aux partenariats et les événements parallèles) pourrait nous y aider.

Marc Trouyet / Philippe Lacoste (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, France)

PROMOTING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ON WATER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN UN CSD 12 Partnership Fair Event | 29 April 2004 • 10.00 – 11.25 am



The purpose of the Partnership Fair Event was to present and discuss progress in developing and implementing three Mediterranean Initiatives for water, based on partnerships that were inaugurated at the WSSD in Johannesburg. These water partnerships are:

1. Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative

The Mediterranean Component (MED EUWI) is an integral part of the EU WI and shares its overall objectives, aiming to:

- assist the design of better, demand driven and output oriented water related programmes,
- facilitate the better coordination of water programmes and projects, targeting more effective use of existing

- funds and mobilization of new financial resources and,
- enhance cooperation for proper implementation of projects, based on peer review and strategic assessment.

The MED EUWI partnership refers to the partnership between the EU and the Mediterranean and South-eastern European countries as well as the partnership between government, civil society and the private sector. Non-EU donors and international organisations (including the OECD, UN Organisations and Agencies, IFIs, etc.) are also invited and encouraged to join the Initiative. The MED EUWI is led by the government of Greece (Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Foreign Affairs) while the MED EUWI Secretariat has been undertaken by the GWP-Mediterranean Secretariat.

More information can be found in www.gwpmmed.org

2. Mediterranean Education Initiative for Environment & Sustainability, with an emphasis on water and waste (MEDIES)

MEDIES aims to facilitate the educational community in order to contribute to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Goals, through the successful application of innovative Educational Programmes in Mediterranean countries. To this end, MEDIES introduces Educational Programmes that are based on cross-cutting themes such as water and wastes.

MEDIES is a Multilateral Initiative with Leading Partners the Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, UNEP/MAP, UNESCO and the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), while the Italian Ministry for Environment and Territory joined the MEDIES Core Group recently.

More information can be found in www.medies.net

3. Euro-Mediterranean Water and Poverty Facility (WPF)

The Euro-Mediterranean Water and Poverty Facility (WPF) aims to:

- Assist in improving the livelihoods of poor people in urban areas of the Mediterranean, particularly in relation to water and sanitation
- Contribute in designing guidelines on social performance and water pricing
- Develop guidelines and expertise in order to facilitate the integration of poverty reduction components in major water projects of the region

- Develop functional tripartite initiatives to facilitate regional and national investment on Water and Poverty initiatives

The WPF is a Type II Initiative, led by the governments of Greece (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Egypt (Ministry for Water Resources and Irrigation) and Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean. The governments of Egypt, Greece, Morocco and Tunisia, several intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and local authorities in the region have confirmed their partnership in WPF which was officially launched in Johannesburg (2002). The WPF is a building block of the EU Water Initiative.

The key dimensions to be addressed by the WPF are: improving livelihoods, improving health, mitigating vulnerability of the poor under extraordinary conditions and events such as disasters related to water.

More information can be found in www.gwpmmed.org

The Event included short statements by key partners in these processes, short interventions by participants as well as questions & answers.

The panel of the event consisted of

- Ms. Maria Peppas, Head, Department of International Relations and EU Affairs, Ministry for Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, Greece
- Mr. Corrado Clini, Director General, Ministry for Environment and Territory, Italy
- Mr. El Shafhie El Dakrouy, Chairman, National Organisation for Potable Water & Sanitary Drainage, Egypt
- Mr. Claus Sorensen, Director, International Affairs, DG Environment, European Commission
- Ambassador Eleni Tzanetoulea, Head, Department for Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece
- Ms. Margaret Catley-Carlson, Chair, Global Water Partnership (GWP)
- Mr. Emad Adly, President, Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)

The focus of the Partnership Fair Event was on the partnerships' role in contributing to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In this context, particular emphasis was placed on achievements and obstacles to date and how to address the latter in putting into practice the methodology and activity plans of these Mediterranean partnerships on water.

“EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT” Side Event

12th UN CSD, New York • 28 April 2004, Conference Room 6, UN Headquarters

The Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works together with UNESCO, UNECE and MIO-ECSDE co-organised on the 28th of April, in association with the UN Education Caucus a Side Event entitled “Education for Sustainable Development” within the 12th Session of the UN CSD in New York. The Side Event took place in Conference Room 6 in the UN He-

adquarters and was attended by 55 participants.

The Side Event had as basic objective to provide the opportunity to present the recent developments in the field of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at international, regional and local level. The UNECE Strategy for ESD was acknowledged as a very important input to the UN De-

cade on ESD. The role of the civil society, especially of youth and the involvement and cooperation of all relevant Institutions and Organisations, governmental and non-governmental in the preparation and implementation of ESD strategies was stressed. Additionally, it was emphasised that ESD is not so much about *teaching* but *learning* for sustainable development and thus, the whole educational system should be re-oriented towards such a direction.

The meeting was opened by HE Ambassador Adamantios Vassillakis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the UN. The Ambassador underlined the role of ESD in empowering people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future and for acting, individually and collectively towards positive environmental and social changes. The Ambassador also acknowledged MEDIES as an important Initiative for ESD in the Mediterranean region and he highlighted the role and responsibilities of the Governments in promoting the necessary regulatory and operational frameworks for supporting ESD.

The participants were introduced by Prof. Michael Scoullou, Chairman of MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med to the basic concepts related to ESD and their evolution, in order to understand the scope of ESD not as an entirely new concept but as a result of the dialectic evolution of Environmental Education (EE) and Education for All. The setting of the foundations of EE in Belgrade and Tbilisi and the meeting points of EE and Sustainable Development (SD) in 1987 (the Brundtland Report) and in 1992 (Rio Conference – Agenda 21) were presented in order to explain the formulation of the famous SD module based on the three pillars of environment-economy-society. However, the need to address the interdependence and interrelationships between these three pillars of SD and to recognise Education as the cross-cutting basis of the SD module urges to identify another model for SD. To this end, the figure of a *tetrahedron* was introduced as the appropriate SD module having as facets: “environment”, “society”, “economy” and “education for sustainable development”. However it is essential to attribute to ESD its realistic role and responsibilities in approaching SD and thus, a further elaboration on the latter model was presented by Prof. Scoullou. According to that, education is placed among the components of the overall “governance” needed for approaching SD together with “institutions” and “technology”. Ultimately, and given the current conditions regarding ESD Prof. Scoullou explained that the basic components of ESD are namely: environment, society, economy, culture, technology and governance which could all be appropriately represented by the facets of a *double pyramid*. In this model of double pyramid the naming and position of the facets are random so that all interlinkages between the components of ESD are possible, real and important.

The progress of the drafting of the UNECE Strategy for ESD was presented by Mr. Per Almquist, Director, Prime Minister’s Office for Sustainable Development. The UNECE Strategy for ESD was decided by 55 countries all across the northern hemisphere at the UNECE 5th Ministerial Meeting “Environment for Europe” in Kiev, May 2003. The Strategy will be finalised by the beginning of next year (2005) and it would offer the region’s major input to the UN Decade on ESD. The Strategy covers all types of education: formal, non-formal and informal and all levels: primary, secondary,

higher, vocational and adult education. Among the critical points of the Strategy are the proposals for setting up of National Implementation Plans for ESD. Mr Almquist stressed that ESD is about a critical and constructive way of changing society and thus, it requires the involvement not only of Ministries for Education or Ministries for Environment, but of the entire government, as well as its cooperation and coordinated activities with education institutions, NGOs, private sector, local authorities and other concerned stakeholders. The draft document of the Strategy provides not only the necessary theoretic basis but also financing tools, implementation, follow up and evaluation schemes. Mr Almquist also underlined that the basic objective of the Strategy’s content is to provide inspiration for the national implementation plans on ESD that would be developed. The draft Strategy document is available on the UNECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/wgso/SustainableDevelopment/ESD>).

Ms Malika Ladjali Acting Chief, Division for the Promotion of Quality Education, UNESCO gave a comprehensive presentation of the UNESCO preparations for the UN Decade of ESD: 2005-2014. UNESCO as the lead agency of the Decade (DESD) has developed a draft International Implementation Scheme in consultation with UN Agencies, International Organisations, Governments, NGOs, universities and the private sector, which will be accomplished by mid-May 2004. The draft would provide recommendations for Governments on how to promote and improve the integration of ESD in their educational strategies and action plans, including linkages between the MDGs, UN Literacy Decade (UNLD) and Education for All (EFA).

UNESCO as the lead agency encourages the integration of ESD in educational policies, strategies and plans at the appropriate levels and accelerates education reforms, coordinating multi-stakeholder activities to implement ESD at international, regional and country levels. To this end, regional draft ESD Strategies are being prepared under UNESCO coordination; a series of international meetings are organised; information material (printed, CD-Rom, etc.) as well as the DESD webpage (<http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php>) have been prepared. Apart from the Section of ESD and the Consultative Committee on ESD, all Programme Sectors of UNESCO (Natural, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, Sustainable Tourism, Communication and Information) are involved in the Decade process including relevant activities in their work plans for 2004 and 2005.

Ms Ladjali emphasised the emerging issues that need to pay particular attention for in order to contribute to the effective implementation of the Decade, such as “culture” as the forth pillar of sustainable development, the “gender issue”, the exploration of “partnerships” with the private sector as well as the “definition” of ESD. She also stressed the essential contribution and role of the civil society in promoting and implementing ESD activities and she raised the question of reorienting the educational methods from teaching to learning approaches.

HE Mr Mohammed Elyazghi, Minister for Territory Planning, Water and Environment, Kingdom of Morocco highlighted the fact that the heavy problems – social, economical, political and environmental - which the countries of

the South face due to the globalisation lead to the adoption of strategies in which the environment is relegated. HE Mr Elyazghi urged the need for adoption of common North - South policies to elaborate projects of sustainable development, including ESD. In Morocco the strategy adopted by the Government for ESD consists of involving and sensitising the young citizens on problems concerning the environment. Among the projects initiated is the creation of environment clubs in schools throughout Morocco and the "Education 5" Programme which introduces environment as a course in schools and is included in the National Programme to fight illiteracy.

Mr Brian McKeon, Environment International Section, Ministry for Environment, Ireland (EU Presidency for the period of January -June 2004) stated that the EU has placed ESD in the higher of its priorities. Mr McKeon presented the Green School Initiative and Environmental Information Service (ENFO) as Ireland's practice in implementing ESD. ENFO's purpose is to promote environmental awareness by providing easy public access to updated information on environment and sustainable development. ENFO has produced a wide range of information material: leaflets, pamphlets, books, etc. for children to adults, targeting all sectors of the Irish community. However, ENFO has a specific focus on producing children material (newsletters, posters, books, stickers). NGOs are involved in the process and an extended network of environmental education officers in the local authorities throughout the country has been set up. Additionally, the National Council for Sustainable Development develops ESD programmes for second and fourth level students and also, along with UNESCO environmental awards were established for the year of 2004.

The Eco Schools in Ireland are included in the Green School International Programme. Eco Schools target three specific thematic areas: waste, litter and energy (6000 schools involved). According to a recent research on Eco Schools for their 7 years of existence in Ireland it was found that the waste was reduced by 45%; the students delivered their ideas to

their families; and also after some years leaving school, young people who participated in the programme still performed environmentally friendly behaviour.

In addition to the presentations by the panellists the floor was also open to participants offering the opportunity for exchange of information and experience on Type II Initiatives, Partnerships and Networks on ESD. To this end, the *Mediterranean Education Initiative for Environment & Sustainability* -MEdIES was presented by Ms Vicky Malotidi, MIO-ECSDE representative, which is a Type II Initiative led by the Hellenic Ministry for Environment, the Italian Ministry for Environment, UNESCO, UNEP/MAP and MIO-ECSDE.

Prof. Charles Hopkins spoke about the *International Network of Teacher Education Institutions for the Reorientation of Teacher Education towards Sustainable Development* (UNITWIN/UNESCO). The network includes 40 Faculties of Education from developed and developing countries as well. Prof. Hopkins emphasized the importance of the national socio-economic and political context to implement ESD and thus the need to work in sub-regional level.

Mr Paolo Soprano from the Italian Ministry for Environment & Territory brought to the audience's attention the 3rd *World Congress on Environmental Education* to be held in Italy in 2005, as a contribution to the launching of the UN DESD.

Ms Anna Havioula, representative of the UN Youth Caucus delivered the Caucus' recommendations for integrating sustainable development issues in the educational systems and programmes worldwide.

Mr Emad, Chairman of Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) stressed the need for further involvement of youth and women in the ESD Initiatives and activities.

Mr. Claus Toepfer, UNEP Executive Director, made also a short intervention underlining the role of ESD in ensuring peace and stability among regions and people.

MISCELLANEOUS MEDITERRANEAN NEWS

THE FORMULATION PROCESS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (MSSD)

NGO Recommendations

Some of the largest and most active MAP environmental NGO partners met in Madrid on January 17-18, 2004 to explore and discuss the formulation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable development (MSSD) which will take place during 2004-2005. Many facets of the MSSD were energetically debated and there was clear consensus that not only was the resulting strategy important but the process by which it is derived equally so. This short paper reflects the proposals and conclusions made by the Madrid workshop participants regarding the manner by which the participants to this workshop expect to see the MSSD formulated and implemented in coming years.

NGOs are of the opinion that implementation of a sustainable development strategy requires the active participation of all stakeholders and actors. It is a process that requires new ideas and ways of thinking, and greater participation in the political, social and economic debate, beyond a solely environmental dimension. In the Mediterranean context, the regional cooperation process should lead to integrating sustainable development and good governance principles in all decision-making structures nationally and regionally. This includes a shift from a centralized decision-making process to cooperation, concerted action, consultation, partnership and decentralization. As this is currently not the case in most Mediterranean countries the MSSD would better focus its resources on mobilising and building the capacity of all pertinent actors: Governments, local authorities, the private sector and civil society to ensure their efficient and full participation. The adequate engagement of all key actors in the MSSD process will generate the necessary shared political will and sense of ownership for the strategy to be successfully implemented in the Mediterranean. As a necessary first step the MSSD experts meeting that will initiate the MSSD framework elaboration in May 2004, and the subsequent process, should associate representatives from the major groups that are competent in the respective environmental, social and economic issues of the Mediterranean region.

All the actors in the Mediterranean should recognise their common but differentiated responsibility *vis _ vis* sustainable development in the region and the MSSD in particular. The environmental NGO community, active in a wide range of sustainable development, environmental policies and action oriented initiatives, is eager and willing to play its role in the formulation and implementation of the MSSD. At the same time we call on all the other actors and in particular the contracting parties to the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea to demonstrate in word and deed their commitment towards a MSSD and to all the other actions needed in order to secure the sustainable development of the region. We expect that such an approach could include:

- The ratification and enforcement of the Barcelona convention and its protocols adopted within the MAP.
- Voluntary financial support to MAP centres for undertaking MSSD related tasks;
- _Secondment of professionals to MAP centres;
- Taking direct responsibility for leading and carrying out the tasks related to a priority area of actions or crosscutting issues;
- _The organisation of thematic working sessions and major workshops.

As collaborating environment and development NGO networks, we are in an excellent position through our national partners, to mobilise national and local grassroots organisations in benefit of the MSSD process. National and local environmental NGOs are in turn able to engage other categories of actors at the national and local level to develop a greater understanding of the complexities of implementing sustainable development locally and nationally in the Mediterranean basin.

As part of this mobilisation process the Madrid NGO workshop participants propose as a contribution to the MSSD formulation the staging of a series of national NGO consultations on the MSSD, culminating in a regional NGO conference on the MSSD during the course of the next 18 months. The national consulta-

tions in all the Mediterranean countries would contribute to, and in some cases initiate, national debate on implementing sustainable development locally. They would serve to raise awareness and develop a sense of ownership for the MSSD. In turn, the national viewpoints could feed into the MSSD formulation process through the proposals and conclusions of the envisaged regional NGO conference.

In the formulation of the MSSD there is a need to engender clearer links and better interaction with national, regional, bilateral and multilateral entities and processes. Point 2 of the Catania declaration of the Barcelona Contracting parties (November 2003) calls on the MSSD and the MCSD to give due consideration to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and UNCSD work. NGOs consider that these links are extremely important and that the conclusions of the MCSD should be in step with what is going on in other fora. Of particular relevance in the Mediterranean context are the EuroMediterranean Partnership, the 6th environmental action programme of the EU and the national strategies for sustainable development (NSSDs) in Mediterranean countries. Finally, NGOs believe that efforts should be made to link the MSSD to the National strategies for sustainable development in the region and therefore it would be both logical and pertinent that Mediterranean representatives in the MSSD formulation process are those who are responsible for the development of NSSDs at national level.

A participatory approach in the formulation and implementation of the MSSD based on good governance principles requires a series of the mechanisms and processes to guarantee timely, transparent and full consultation with all parties. NGOs consider that the following proposals will facilitate all actors' participation:

- Electronic surveys and questionnaires

- An interactive MAP website, allowing for online consultation, information access and transparent discussion contributing to the MSSD formulation
- Various regional consultative meetings
- Using the international meetings circuit to have *ad hoc* face to face consultations and debriefings
- Establishing stakeholder forum groups (NGOs, focal points, Parliamentarians, etc.)
- Discussion papers

Furthermore, the inexistence of appropriate consultation mechanisms between the Major Groups and their respective focal points at country level, both prior to and between MAP meetings is a handicap to improving the implementation of MAP and MCSD recommendations nationally. NGOs believe that this issue should be addressed at the next meeting of the MCSD (9th) with a view to identifying the most appropriate mechanisms to solve this problem.

Finally, the NGO MAP partners believe that the MCSD major groups' quotas should be applied in a flexible way to reflect the interest and willingness of the different major categories to participate in the MSSD formulation. In this regard NGOs propose that the current 5:5:5 quota be changed for the purpose of the MSSD drafting to 7:4:4 in favour of the NGO grouping. In addition the MAP Secretariat is asked to provide observer status and, to the extent possible, the financial means for all NGOs which specifically request to participate in MAP meetings on the MSSD.

Signatories: Arab Network for Environment and Development, Association for Forest Development and Conservation, Environnement et Développement au Maghreb, European Environmental Bureau, Friends of the Earth Middle East, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), Friends of the Earth MedNet, Comité 21, Greenpeace International, ENDA Europe, WWF – Mediterranean Office, Greenpeace Mediterranean, Amigos de La Tierra España, Friends of the Earth Europe

**THE MEDA REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME SMAP
NGO position on the directions envisaged by the European Commission**

This paper is an initial critique of SMAP III by the Mediterranean environmental NGO steering Committee, the Comité de Suivi (CdS)¹.

First and foremost

The CdS looks with interest at the Commission initia-

tive to re-orient the SMAP programme towards more strategic and policy objectives as proposed in the Commission's document "Directions envisaged for the third phase of the MEDA Regional Environment Programme (SMAP III)". The CDS reaffirms its will to actively contribute to the further development and implementation

of the suggestions expressed in this document. However, the CdS is concerned that the "Directions" paper and the SMAP III Programme Summary have been produced with no consultation of NGOs and that it remains very unclear whether NGOs will be allowed to play a significant role in its implementation.

Sustainable development requires the active participation of all stakeholders and actors. It is a process that requires new ideas and ways of thinking, and greater participation in the political, social and economic debate. In the Mediterranean context, the regional cooperation process through programmes such as SMAP should lead to integrating sustainable development and good governance principles in all decision-making, including that of the European Commission.

Brief review of today's environmental situation in the Mediterranean

The CdS broadly agrees with the Blue Plan's view of the environmental situation in the Mediterranean today. Environmental integration and sustainable development continue to be ignored in the national development plans of EuroMed partner countries. The low political ranking, restricted funds, etc. result in a general ineffectiveness of environmental ministries, which constitutes just one more major obstacle in moving the Mediterranean countries along the path to sustainable development.

In such a context, the CdS feels that there is a need to confirm and strengthen the SMAP role of "environmental pillar" of the EMP by giving to the Programme appropriate financial and human resources as well as political recognition and capacity to build environmental sustainability into the wider EMP implementation, including the bilateral MEDA plans and the creation of the MFTA. The allocation of 15 million euros to the SMAP III Programme is clearly insufficient to live up to this ambition and there should be guarantees that SMAP Programme objectives are complemented with actions and funding at the national level (MEDA bilateral programmes and national funding). SMAP should be a policy tool to integrate environment in all sectors and horizontal (regional) EuroMed programmes.

The CdS agrees that the first two calls, SMAP I and II failed to live up to expectations and fears that SMAP III may continue to lack the political mandate, leadership and financial backing to be more than a financial instrument to implement environmental protection me-

asures through pilot projects in the region. Even as regards these pilot projects, SMAP has struggled so far to operate efficiently and continues to suffer long delays.

NGO participation in SMAP

Since the inception of SMAP in 1997, the NGO community has been a willing and constructive partner trying to improve the SMAP instrument and contribute to its success. Time and again CdS have made critical but constructive comments and proposals and even successfully run a number of SMAP projects under very difficult logistical and local conditions. The CdS is therefore disappointed that in the Commission's attempt to "structure its approach of regional funding for the environment" the NGO community chances of presenting proposals have diminished significantly.

The CdS is especially concerned about the fewer opportunities that exist for NGO project funding in the Mediterranean, which will weaken civil society and reduce scope for innovation in approaches to sustainable development generated by new projects.

Environmental Integration

The EuroMed strategy for environmental integration as adopted in Athens in July 2002 has been a failure to date. The first test case for the strategy – the EuroMed energy action plan 2003-2006 adopted in May 2003 made no attempt to address environmental integration in its planning. The EuroMed Energy forum is not open to public participation. There is no regional strategy for the promotion of environmentally sustainable energy. No regional strategy for the promotion of demand side management and renewable energies. Instead, there is a body (REMEP) with a clear mandate to promote the fossil fuel economy in the region. The CdS is of the opinion that representatives from the priority sectors of the EMP and the EIB should report annually to the EMP Foreign Ministers and SMAP Correspondents meeting on progress made in implementing the environmental integration strategy in their sector, and should held accountable for failure to do so.

Possible objectives and focus for SMAP III

The CdS agrees that many of the obstacles to sustainable development in Mediterranean partner countries have a lot to do with governance and the poor organisation of government administrations (lack of transparency, integration and capacity, etc). This is a widespread national problem that needs to be tackled urgently making it a priority for MEDA bilateral funding. SMAP

cannot substitute for this wider commitment to environment integration by the MEDA programme, but should focus on issues of regional importance such as IWRM, desertification, climate change, integrated sustainable rural development, coastal zone management and others, facilitating their integration in national development policies, building actors capacity, demonstrating solutions.

It goes without saying that the 15 million euros earmarked to SMAP III is not adequate to even tackle one of these regional problems comprehensively. Only when MEDA bilateral sources, i.e. 90% of the budget available under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership are used to promote environmentally sustainable national development policies and investments will real transformation away from the current unsustainable development models take place. Mediterranean countries can best be aided in this respect by introducing environmental conditionality to MEDA financial disbursement and to the European Investment Banks Mediterranean lending facility. The CdS believes this will help development planners and policy-makers effectively integrate environmental considerations into national sectoral strategies.

CdS Recommendations for SMAP

The current mandate given to SMAP is little more than for a “grant provider for few pilot environmental projects”. This is insufficient to make a real environmental impact. SMAP must be given the mandate and means to make the EMP a process that promotes sustainable development.

This includes:

- Ministerial leadership: The Naples Foreign Ministe-

rial Conclusions stressed the need for environmental protection and sustainable development policies to be implemented. This should be pursued along the lines of the Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean meeting of Environment Ministers in Athens in July 2002 and the Plan of Implementation of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. A properly strengthened SMAP with sustained political support from EMP foreign and Environment ministers should monitor the implementation of the sustainable development process in the way outlined above.

- SMAP should promote the adoption by the EMP of key sustainability indicators to measure progress in the region. Such indicators should be of similar stringency as those applied by EU environmental laws and regulations.
- EMP Environment Ministers responsible for the SMAP should monitor and ensure implementation of the recommendations of the Sustainability Impact Assessment launched in 2004 by the European Commission.
- SMAP should enjoy greater funding to administer fully its present and future tasks.
- SMAP activities and procedures should be transparent and inclusive of civil society organizations and work closely with other Mediterranean based institutions such as the Mediterranean Action Plan.
- The SMAP secretariat reports and recommendations should be translated to national languages of the region and be made available to the public

1. ¹ Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED),
2. Environment and Development Action in the Third World (ENDAs),
3. European Environmental Bureau (EEB),
4. Friends of the Earth (FoE/MedNet Programme),
5. Mediterranean NGO Network for Ecology and Sustainable Development (MEDForum),
6. Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE),
7. World Wild Fund / Mediterranean Programme (WWF/MEDPO)



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 98 NGOs from 22 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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