

EURO-MED PARTNERSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL HIGH LEVEL MEETING: "HORIZON 2020" MONDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2005

The Euro-Med Partnership Environmental High Level Meeting - Horizon 2020, took place on 19 December 2005, in Barcelona, Spain. The meeting, which was organized by the European Union and the Spanish and Catalan Governments, took place shortly after the Summit of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership of 27-28 November 2005. At the Summit, partner countries adopted a five year work programme that included an initiative to "de-pollute the Mediterranean Sea by 2020," as proposed by the European Commission (EC).

The meeting in Barcelona brought together over 140 participants from international financing institutions, the Barcelona Convention Secretariat and some of its Regional Activity Centers, local, regional and national administrations, networks of Mediterranean towns, as well as representatives from the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The aim of the meeting was to facilitate an exchange of views and reach an agreement on priority actions to be undertaken to achieve the objective of de-polluting the Mediterranean by 2020. In the morning, participants broke into four parallel sessions of stakeholders representing cities, regions, NGOs and the business sector to finalize their statements. Later in the morning, participants engaged in a technical session in plenary, and in the afternoon a ministerial session was held.

The contributions made at this meeting will be considered by the EC in order to produce a draft timetable for action for achieving the goals of the 2020 initiative. The timetable will be the subject of consultations early in 2006 and will then be submitted to the Council of Ministers for adoption. A Euro-Med Ministerial Meeting of Environment Ministers is expected to be called and to formally launch the initiative in the second half of 2006.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PROCESS

The first Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held in Barcelona on 27-28 November 1995. It marked the starting point of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (or Barcelona Process), a wide framework of political, economic and social relations between the EU Member States and partners of the southern Mediterranean.

THE BARCELONA DECLARATION: The Barcelona Declaration was adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference held in November 1995 and establishes the three main objectives of the Partnership, namely: the definition of a common area of peace and stability through the reinforcement

of political and security dialogue; the construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free-trade area; and the rapprochement between peoples through a social, cultural and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil society.

SEVENTH EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE: The most recent Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held in Luxembourg from 30-31 May 2005, and considered the European Commission's communication for the tenth Anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The conclusions stated that: "The quality of life of the average citizen in the Mediterranean should be improved by launching an initiative for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020. The goal should be to tackle all the major sources of pollution including industrial emissions, municipal waste and particularly urban wastewater. This initiative would improve the prospects for the development of tourism; contribute towards stemming the decline in local fishery stocks as well as providing safe drinking water to millions of citizens. Ministers encouraged the mobilization of financial resources to support Euro-Mediterranean countries in that respect."

EU ENLARGEMENT: The latest EU enlargement, which occurred on 1 May 2004, brought three Mediterranean partners (Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia) into the EU, while adding a total of ten to the number of Member States. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership thus comprises 35 members consisting of 25 EU Member States and 10 Mediterranean Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey). Libya has held observer status since 1999.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

OPENING SESSION

Salvador Milà i Solsona, Head of the Environment and Housing Department, Government of Catalonia, welcomed participants and opened the session, observing that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was founded in Barcelona ten years

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ago. He highlighted the results of the Euro-Mediterranean+10 Summit, including its five-year work programme's goals for sustainable development and de-pollution of the Mediterranean. Milà noted that the Mediterranean is a sea between lands, underscoring its role in commerce, cultural exchange, provision of goods and environmental relevance. Milà emphasized that the de-pollution initiative should not only focus on de-pollution but also on pollution prevention. He added that it should coordinate with other initiatives, involve relevant stakeholders and financing, and take into account common but differentiated responsibilities among North, South and East riparian states. He also stressed urban/rural and coastal/marine issues.

José Fernández Pérez, Director General for Coastal Areas, Ministry of Environment, Spain, highlighted the challenge of de-polluting the Mediterranean in a "reachable" time-frame. He reaffirmed Spain's commitment to the Barcelona process and looked forward to completion of a protocol for the development of Mediterranean coastal areas by 2007.

Soledad Blanco, Director of International Affairs, DG Environment, European Commission, noted the political backing of the Horizon 2020 initiative and the importance of regional cooperation in reducing pollution in the Mediterranean region. She explained that Horizon 2020 will link the protection of the Mediterranean environment within the new European policy framework and raise the political profile of environmental protection.

TECHNICAL SESSION

This session took place in the morning, with participants discussing the following issues: monitoring tools for the de-pollution initiative; funding instruments and the role of international financial institutions; synergies with existing programmes in the region; and elaboration of a roadmap/timetable of the initiative.

MONITORING TOOLS FOR THE DE-POLLUTION INITIATIVE: David Stanners, European Environment Agency (EEA), indicated that there is still inadequate urban treatment of chemicals in southern Mediterranean countries and a lack of political will to enforce environmental regulations. He said current knowledge gaps need to be filled, monitoring and assessment processes should be improved, and data are often unreliable, scattered and inconsistent. He listed lessons learned from the EEA's 2005 State and Outlook of the Environment Report, noting that monitoring progress is possible with existing tools, adequate financing, enhanced cooperation, synergies and a roadmap. Stanners called for identifying synergies with existing actors in the Mediterranean region and setting priorities in order to enhance the visibility and access to existing knowledge. He suggested tracking progress through five-year reports on the state of the environment, bi-annual progress reports focusing on country profiles, and continuous information exchange.

FUNDING INSTRUMENTS FOR THE INITIATIVE – THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: Sherif Kamel Arif, Regional Environmental Coordinator, Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme (METAP), World Bank, outlined METAP's initiatives in quantifying the cost of environmental degradation in coastal zones, which can account for 2-6% GDP losses in studied areas. He also stressed the health effects of pollution. He underscored the need to tap into carbon emission revenues to fund de-pollution activities, emphasizing that the region is not taking advantage of the Kyoto flexible mechanisms. Arif stressed

the need to prepare a pipeline of projects for the entrance into force of the initiative in 2007, and to ensure close programmatic coordination among donors.

Stephan Kerpen, European Investment Bank, outlined the activities of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP). He noted key constraints for funding environmental projects, and underscored the need to identify a pipeline of bankable carbon finance deals and de-pollution projects. Kerpen underlined that FEMIP's lending for project preparation depends on financial perspectives of the future mandate for 2007-2013, and called for allocating responsibilities.

SYNERGIES WITH EXISTING PROGRAMMES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION: Paul Mifsud, Coordinator, Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), indicated that land-based pollution assessment has been a core activity of MAP since its inception and that the Mediterranean is still under stress, noting that 80% of the pollution originated from land sources and the lack of sewage treatment plants. He described the synergy between the Strategic Action Programme and EU measures to combat marine pollution, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Strategic Partnership, the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), and the MAP-EC joint programme. He stressed the importance of building on progress made in existing institutions, policies and conventions, and stated that MAP is the appropriate regional mechanism for joint implementation of de-pollution. He called for adopting sustainable development as a guiding principle, pooling resources between the MAP and the EC to achieve environmental targets at minimal costs, and including all stakeholders. He invited the EC to join the GEF strategic partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem.

ELABORATION OF A ROADMAP/TIMETABLE OF THE INITIATIVE: Claude Rouam, Head of Unit - Enlargement and Neighboring Countries, European Commission, reflected on an informal discussion paper presenting an outline of the initiative, and on the initiative's timeline. On results from the discussion paper, he emphasized that the initiative should, *inter alia*: initially focus on a limited number of sectors; be project based; establish synergies with existing mechanisms, such as the MSSD; and include stakeholders from all parts of the Mediterranean in its development. He noted that the EU should not be considered only as the donor that pays the costs, underscoring the added value of the EU's involvement in the initiative, such as high political profile, experience in other regions, and long-term perspective.

On the initiative's timeline, Rouam outlined three phases: identification of the environmental problems and grouping by sectors; prioritization of projects that might realistically be financed; and project development, implementation and evaluation.

He indicated the EC's intention to prepare a draft timetable by early 2006 based on discussions from the meeting, and to elaborate a communication by the second half of 2006, with the aim of obtaining ministerial endorsement by the end of 2006.

DISCUSSION: Participants stressed the need to raise awareness on both sides of the Mediterranean, reflected on the dangers of the sea's degradation for current and future generations, and supported adopting time-bound targets in the short, medium and long term. Rouam called for shifting from identifying problems and hotspots to identifying projects and solutions. Participants also underscored the importance of attaching sectoral costs to the deterioration of the Mediterranean, green production and consumption, public-private partnerships, political will, technical capacity building, and the need to make



more efficient use of existing resources. While recognizing the value of the proposed phases for the initiative, a number of participants recommended speeding up the assessment and prioritization phases in the face of abundant work existing in these areas. Blanco suggested that the EC submit a draft timetable to a first round of public consultation by mid-January 2006.

MINISTERIAL SESSION

This session took place in the afternoon. Following the opening of the session, the four groups of stakeholders presented their statements. The ministers were then invited to react to these statements.

Cristina Narbona Ruiz, Minister of Environment, Spain, underlined that institutional cooperation is essential to ensure synergies between existing programmes in the Mediterranean region. She listed existing environmental protection tools such as the European Marine Strategy, the European Water Directive or the environmental impact assessments, and noted the importance of taking into account social, environmental and economic aspects at an early stage. She said governments bear the main responsibility to respond to the challenge of de-polluting the Mediterranean by 2020 by increasing cooperation, generating and enforcing regulatory frameworks, and involving all stakeholders.

Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for Environment, EC, noted that the Mediterranean region is among the most environmentally rich and vulnerable regions of the world, adding that it faces threats caused by ever-growing tourism, increased and unregulated waste discharges, invasive species, and over-fishing. He underscored that sustainable development principles should be taken into account and said the success of Horizon 2020 will depend on the commitment of all stakeholders. Noting the willingness of the EU to play its part in the initiative, Dimas called for the adoption of a differentiated and tailor-made approach and underlined the responsibility of cities and regional authorities.

STAKEHOLDERS' COMMENTS: Participants then heard statements from representatives of cities, regions, NGOs and the business sector. France Gannerre, Deputy Mayor, Marseilles, France, on behalf of cities, emphasized the need for cities and local authorities to be included in the decision-making process for Mediterranean initiatives and urban sustainable development. She stressed the need to reinforce decentralized cooperation, taking into account the asymmetry of institutional frameworks among Mediterranean countries, and highlighting the role of networks. She recommended focusing the initiative on urban waste, sustainable consumption and production, industrial emissions, tourism and coastal protection. She underscored, *inter alia*: public awareness; transfer of knowledge and experiences, such as the European Urban Knowledge Network; the polluter pays principle; and the urgent creation of an observatory for monitoring experiences on Mediterranean cooperation.

Speaking for the regions, Salvador Milà i Solsona assessed the role of regions in the Horizon 2020 initiative. He stressed the need for action, with concrete and achievable objectives that can be monitored, a specific calendar, and financial instruments. Milà underscored the importance of common but differentiated responsibilities and the precautionary principle. He said preventive measures and information can help avoid disasters, environmental protection should be integrated in sectoral policies at all levels, and sustainable public procurement was necessary. He also noted the role of partnerships, voluntary agreements, and exchange of experiences, and called for a committee for implementation and monitoring of the roadmap, which would develop evaluation indicators and provide periodic assessments on achievements.

Eugene Clancy, coordinator of MedNet, Friends of the Earth, on behalf of NGOs, called for the adoption of a roadmap that is coherent with existing strategies and policies, secure financing, the mobilization of all relevant actors, and a participatory approach. He added that the 2020 initiative must be ambitious and achievable, and highlighted the European Neighborhood and Partnership instrument and the European Investment Bank as key players. He suggested fostering a participatory approach through electronic surveys and questionnaires, an interactive MAP website, consultative meetings, *ad hoc* face-to-face consultations and debriefings, and stakeholders' fora.

Jilani Ben M'Barek, President, Commerce and Industry Chamber Association of the Mediterranean (ASCAME), on behalf of the business sector, stated that a clean environment will encourage competitiveness, noting that environmental degradation costs some countries up to 5% of their GDP. He called for: the participation of the private sector in the drafting of policies and the roadmap for the 2020 Horizon; greater support for small and medium enterprises in combating pollution; the transfer of new technologies; and strengthening the promotion of exchange of information on sustainable development. He emphasized that it is in the interest of all to decrease pollution in the Mediterranean region.

PANEL OF MINISTERS: George Pullicino, Malta's Environment Minister, stressed that any agreed roadmap should not duplicate existing structures but rather make the best of them, and seek to further the goals of the MSSD. He underscored differentiated responsibilities, the need for coordination with the EU green paper on maritime policy, and for capacity building at the local level on both sides of the Mediterranean. He emphasized the need to apply the polluter pays principle, and noted responsibilities of non-basin countries, using the example of oil tankers transiting and polluting the Mediterranean. He reaffirmed the need for sustainable public procurement and greater access to technology.

On access to technology, Cristina Narbona Ruiz reminded participants of the existence of the Cleaner Production Center in Barcelona.

Stavros Kalogiannis, Greece's Deputy Environment Minister, stressed his country's long environmental tradition and underscored the need to concentrate on effective coordination of existing initiatives and creating added value. He emphasized the importance of the MSSD, noting that it should constitute the framework of the 2020 initiative. Kalogiannis also underlined the role of national action plans, and suggested building Horizon 2020 on lessons learned from other regional initiatives.

Jan-Erik Enestam, Finnish Environment Minister, drew parallels between the protection of the Baltic and the Mediterranean seas, noting similarities in the necessary cooperation between EU and non-EU member States. He indicated that the EU Marine Strategy is a good basis for the protection of the Mediterranean region.

Mitja Bricelj, Vice Secretary, Ministry of the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy, Slovenia, stressed the need to implement the MSSD on all shores of the Mediterranean and to turn programmes into action. He noted that there are examples of good practice, such as the cooperation of riparian States of the Danube River in protecting its environment to reduce pressures on the Black sea. He stressed that such sub-regional approaches enable the adoption of tailor-made measures and agreement on common standards.

Hasan Zuhuri Sarikaya, Under Secretary, Turkish Ministry of Environment and Forestry, called for the adoption of a roadmap for the 2020 initiative backed up by commitment, enforcing



legislation, the polluter pays principle, and technical capacity. He also underlined the importance of political will. Noting that many countries spend less than 1% of their GDP on environmental protection, while the costs of environmental degradation in the Mediterranean region can be as high as 6%, he underlined the need to convince governments to finance environmental protection.

CLOSING PLENARY

Stavros Dimas elaborated on how national action plans elaborated under the European Neighbourhood Policy will contribute to the Horizon 2020 initiative. He stressed EU initiatives in the Baltic, Mediterranean and Black Seas, and agreed with George Pullicino that non-Mediterranean States also contribute to the sea's pollution, noting that oil tankers spilled an estimated one million tons of crude oil into the Mediterranean. He underscored other sources of pollution and environmental degradation, such as unprocessed waste, land-based pollution, aquaculture expansion, and biological invasions. Dimas said the EU's monitoring systems provide a good basis for measuring progress in the Horizon 2020 initiative, and outlined the EU's seven thematic environmental strategies. He also expressed support for networks of cooperation for cities and regions to achieve the 2020 goal, and emphasized the key role of the MSSD, which he said will feature prominently in the future.

On financing the Horizon 2020 initiative, he highlighted that cities, regions and countries should be the main contributors, as they will also be the main beneficiaries. He stressed that investment in the environment should not wait for economic growth, as clean up costs would exceed that of environmental protection. He expressed hope that the recently approved European budget would provide enough resources to develop a realistic but ambitious roadmap, and called for the beginning of a new era of environmental cooperation in the Mediterranean.

José Fernández Pérez identified coastlands as the areas where most impacts occur and originate from. He underscored the effects of climate change, the need for land planning, legal instruments, further scientific knowledge, technology and economic resources. He called for maintaining strong political commitment, with flexibility, generosity, and the participation of all stakeholders at all levels of decision making. Salvador Milà then closed the meeting, at 6:36 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE IN LAKES, LAGOONS AND WETLANDS OF THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION:

This conference will take place from 4-7 January 2006, in Cairo, Egypt. This four-day conference will take up a variety of issues, including: current status and environmental issues; field monitoring and environmental assessment; hydrology and climate; remote sensing and GIS techniques; modeling hydro-ecological dynamics; water management; and managing water resources for people and for biodiversity. For more information, contact: Roger Flower and Caroline Chambers, University College London, tel: +44-207-679-5545 / 4279; fax: +44-207-679-4293; Conference Organizers' e-mail: info.ecollaw2006@geog.ucl.ac.uk; Internet: <http://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/melmarina/ecollaw2006/>

THIRD GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON OCEANS, COASTS AND ISLANDS: This conference will take place from 23-27 January 2006, in Paris, France. The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands serves as a platform for cross-

sectoral information sharing and dialogue on issues affecting oceans, coasts and islands, with the goal of achieving sustainable development in these areas. The Forum also seeks to improve global, regional, and national policies related to oceans, coasts and islands. For more information, contact: Global Forum Secretariat; tel: +1-302-831-8086; fax: +1-302-831-3668; e-mail: johnston@udel.edu; Internet: <http://www.globaloceans.org/>

THIRD INTERNATIONAL MEETING: ACTING TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BLUE

PLANET: This meeting will take place from 29 January - 2 February 2006, in Boulogne, France. Organized by the World Ocean Network, this meeting aims to further develop a global campaign to raise public awareness and an action plan for the sustainable use of the ocean. For more information, contact: World Ocean Network; tel: +33-3-2130-9999; fax: +33-3-2130-9394; e-mail: meeting@nausicaa.fr; Internet: <http://www.worldoceannetwork.org/>

SHARING THE FISH CONFERENCE 2006: This conference will be held from 23 February - 2 March 2006, in Perth, Australia. Organized by the Western Australian Department of Fisheries in cooperation with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), this conference will focus on resource allocation and the sustainability of fisheries and will provide a neutral forum for the multi-disciplinary discussion of the elements of effective allocation of fisheries resources to ensure their sustainability. For more information, contact: Conference Secretariat; tel: +61-8-9387-1488; fax: +61-8-9387-1499; e-mail: info5@eventedge.com.au; Internet: <http://www.fishallocation.com.au/>

ENVIROWATER 2006 CONFERENCE: This conference will take place from 17-19 May 2006, in Delft, the Netherlands. The Ninth Inter-Regional Conference on Environment-Water – "Envirowater 2006" – will focus on concepts for water management and multifunctional land-uses in lowlands, with a particular focus on: opportunities and threats; water and climate change; groundwater and salt water intrusion; and water management systems as a steering instrument for planning. For more information, contact: Conference Secretariat; tel: +31-7-483-849; fax: +31-7-482-166; e-mail: envirowater2006@wur.nl

SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN COASTAL REGIONS INCLUDING OIL AND CHEMICAL SPILL STUDIES:

This conference will be held from 5-7 June 2006, in Rhodes, Greece, and is organized by the Wessex Institute of Technology. Coastal Environment 2006 deals with problems related to monitoring, analysis and modeling of coastal regions, including sea, land and air phenomena. An important part of the meeting will be the discussion of ecological and environmental problems and issues of water quality. For more information, contact: Charlotte Bartlett, Conference Secretariat, tel: +44-238-029-3223; fax: +44-238-029-2853; e-mail: cbartlett@wessex.ac.uk; Internet: <http://www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2006/coast06/index.html>

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WASTE MANAGEMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT:

This conference will be held from 21-23 June 2006, in Malta. The meeting will address the need for the exchange of scientific information among experts in this rapidly growing area of research and applications. For more information, contact: Katie Banham, Conference Secretariat, tel: +44-238-029-3223; fax: +44-238-029-2853; e-mail: kbanham@wessex.ac.uk; Internet: <http://www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2006/waste06/index.html>