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ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (MSSD) FOR THE PERIOD 2005 – 2010

Assessment on the implementation of the Mediterranean strategy for sustainable development (MSSD) for the period 2005 – 2010

Executive summary
Draft report

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Executive summary

At the 12th meeting of the Parties the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention decided to develop a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) which was adopted at the 14th Conference Parties meeting held from 8 to 11 November 2005 in Portoroz. The MSSD is a framework strategy which aims to adapt international commitments to regional conditions, to guide national sustainable development strategies and to initiate a dynamic partnership amongst countries party to the Convention. The Strategy aims to promote sustainable development which includes progress in economic, social and environmental areas as well as in governance.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the work done so far and to provide the members of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) and the Contracting Parties with an Assessment Document showing the level of implementation of the MSSD since 2005 and ways to improve it and update it with a particular focus on environment/development issues. In particular the project aims to:

- Suggest amendments of the MSSD on the basis of the changes in the context in which the MSSD operates and of the problems related to the MSSD implementation over the period 2005 - 2010 (aim 1);
- Suggest new emerging priorities which should be incorporated in the revised version of the MSSD (aim 2); and
- Suggest actions to improve the implementation of the MSSD (aim 3).

The work which is being undertaken by O.D.I. from October 2010 to May 2011 is organized around three main tasks:

- Task 1. Desk study and review during which we had the opportunity to collect papers on the activities undertaken by UNEP/MAP and complementary activities undertaken by other international organizations in the relevant area.
- Task 2. Interviews based on a questionnaire to MCSD members, RACs and other interested stakeholders concerning UNEP/MAP activities;
- Task 3. Analytical Assessment Report (this report).

Within the period October – May 2011 we have had the opportunity to undertake different activities within the project:

- 1) We have implemented a gaps analysis, which aims to provide information on whether the MSSD objectives have been achieved.
- 2) We have provided a detailed overview of the path of MSSD indicators over the period 2005 – 2010.
- 3) We have discussed a set of new indicators, emerging priorities, and undertaken a critical assessment of actions, orientations and objectives contained in the MSSD document.
- 4) We have provided a brief analysis of the current UNEP/MAP institutional framework,
- 5) We have discussed other actors in the field which could help with the implementation of MSSD objectives
- 6) We have compared the MSSD vis à vis the NSSDs.
- 7) We have run different Computational General Equilibrium (CGE) modeling exercises to understand the impact of concrete policies mentioned by the MSSD as key actions to improve indicators.
- 8) We have analyzed responses of interviews and field visits to understand the factors which affected the MSSD implementation.

The gaps analysis in section 2 compares the actual performance with its potential or expected performance. At its core are two questions: "Where are we?" and "Where do we want to be?". The analysis can be done for indicators, organizations and other units. On the basis of this methodology we compare MSSD targets concerning water, climate change/energy, agriculture, tourism, coastal zones, urban development and transport and current data trends for single countries and or Mediterranean macro areas.

Finding 1 We find that indicators cannot always be monitored with effectiveness. First, in some cases MSSD targets cannot be easily translated into concrete indicators. Second, we find inconsistencies between the Annex I describing the synergies between objectives and priorities and the Annex II of follow up indicators. Third, collected data are not always reliable or sometimes are missing, so we just analyze 20 out of the 28 targets included in the MSSD Annex I. Finally not all the indicators are fully discussed within the document in terms of methodology and rationale.

Finding 2. The gaps analysis highlights that for some MSSD indicators the progress of Mediterranean countries is evident, for other indicators the trend is negative. Moreover we find a large heterogeneity across Mediterranean countries as expected.

Recommendation 1. Within the context of the first project aim (suggest amendments to the MSSD), through our work we notice that the MSSD contains a number of indicators which can be updated according to the current context and which cannot be clearly used to monitor the MSSD progress. We recommend updating the list of indicators on the basis of the suggestions included in the table 1.

Table 1. Suggestions for an updated set of MSSD indicators

Existing indicator	Reason for removing	New indicator	Reason for inclusion
WATER			
Halve the population (2015/1990) without access to safe drinking water and sanitation	Mediterranean countries are now well placed to reach the objectives for this indicator	Water consumption per capita	The focus on volume rather than simple access would stimulate policies for water conservation
Protect water resources (quantity and quality)	The indicator is imprecise.	1) Water pollution 2) Water exploitation index	Water pollution better explains the lack of water quality. The water exploitation index provides a suitable quantitative indicator for quantity.
ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE			
Halve the population without access to electricity (2015/1990).	Mediterranean countries are now well placed to reach the objectives for this indicator		
Enhance the potential of Med. renewable energies: (7% of demand by 2015)	Why 7%?	Enhance the potential of Med. Renewable energy penetration consistent to the most recent existing scientific evidence	The % of renewable energy penetration should reflect the agreed global emissions reduction policy target.
Rational use of energy (energy efficiency).	Energy intensity reductions may not generate reductions of CO2 emissions (less energy intensity does not always mean less emissions)	Reduction of energy consumption	This indicator would stimulate policy makers to increase growth with the same level of input use (correct concept of efficiency) through policies such as carbon tax, international environmental agreements etc.
Control, reduce or stabilize GHG emissions	This indicator needs a more precise definition	Reduce emissions by taking into account specific international	Some European countries or other Mediterranean

Existing indicator	Reason for removing	New indicator standards.	Reason for inclusion
			countries could be involved in post Kyoto international agreements. The MSSD should incorporate the international political evolution.
Reduce vulnerability of sensitive areas to climate change.	Useful indicator but the calculation of monetary impacts to climate change could represent important complementary information	Reduce vulnerability of sensitive areas to climate change and monetary climate change damages	Ideally calculation of monetary damages reduction could provide much more precise information about the extent and scale of climate change impacts
TRANSPORT			
Develop more competitive and sustainable Euro-Mediterranean transport systems	Not clear what is meant by competitive.	Increase investment in transport infrastructure	Investments should be made to improve the modernity of infrastructure and consequently the impact on sustainable growth.
Transfer traffic from road to rail and sea.	This is not an indicator. Rather it is a policy that could be useful to affect the other indicator "Stabilize or reduce road traffic share".		
TOURISM			
Promote sustainable tourism	This indicator would fit better the "Sustainability priority"		
Develop tourism to help promoting social cohesion and cultural values	This is not an indicator		
Better temporal and spatial management of tourist flows	Not clear indicator. What does it mean exactly "better temporal and spatial management tourist flow?"	Decrease tourism carbon footprint expressing the quantity of carbon generated by each passenger for each travel.	Easy to calculate and meaningful indicator.
AGRICULTURE			
Enhance Mediterranean diversity and quality	Not a clear quantitative target	Increase the % of organic farming to 10%	Currently just Italy shows a 8% penetration of organic farming which is the highest % across Med countries.
Millennium Development Goals (MDG)	It is not clear why this indicator is just introduced in the		

Existing indicator	Reason for removing	New indicator	Reason for inclusion
	Agriculture priority section.		
Prepare agriculture for climate change	Imprecise and not clear, it does not stimulate clear policy actions.	Implement action to reduce loss of agricultural productivity from climate change	This indicator would be quantifiable and would stimulate policies to improve adaptation. Concrete actions could include terraces, agro – forestry to reduce soil erosion according to the country specific characteristics.
Protect biodiversity and landscape	Imprecise and not clear, it does not stimulate clear policy actions	1) Reduction of deforestation 2) Increase of agro-forestry areas 3) Decrease of threatened vegetal and animal species	These are quantifiable variables that can be easily monitored
URBAN DEVELOPMENT			
Promote sustainable urban economy	Imprecise	Increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy, increased investment in green economy sectors	It would involve clear and quantifiable indicators clearly stimulating urban policies towards green growth.
Create added value from the cultural, historical and landscape heritage	This indicator would fit better in the tourism priority		
SEA AND COASTAL ZONES			
1) Develop activities (tourism, aquaculture,...) integrating natural fragilities. 2) Protect and promote the unique value of coasts, sea resources, landscapes	These indicators should express the synergy between the sea and coastal zone priority and the economic development objective but they are not unambiguously related to economic development. Moreover they are not easy to express by quantitative variables.	Increase the aquaculture and fishing production	Clear and quantifiable indicator, it stimulates policies aimed at improving the performance of the whole sea and coastal zones economic sectors. Well fitting with the economic development objective.
		Migration	There are not currently indicators related to migration (national and international) included in MSSD. In particular the link between climate change, sustainability and migration (number of emigrants dues to climate change issues)

Existing indicator	Reason for removing	New indicator	Reason for inclusion
			would be an important indicator to monitor.
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Additional comments 1) GDP per capita remains a crucial indicator to demonstrate a sustainable development path of countries. Our advice is to also consider indicators not strictly related to the seven priorities but which can be of strong interest for countries. 2) Alternative measures of GDP could also be considered for non priority specific indicators such as the Green GDP, genuine savings etc. implemented by the World Bank. 3) The recent definition of national strategies such as the one of France and Montenegro emphasizes priorities which can also be of interest for the whole Mediterranean area such as health (no indicators in the current version of the MSSD document) and participatory approaches for the definition of widely agreed policies.			

Recommendation 2 As the table 1 shows, another recommendation arising from our work responding to the project aim to suggest new emerging priorities (aim 2), is that the revised MSSD should put more emphasis on orientations, actions and indicators concerning emerging priorities such as adaptation and green economy. New indicators such as those related to migration caused by climate change would allow the monitoring of adaptation processes with greater detail. Other traditional priorities such health which are now incorporated in some national strategies should be highlighted with more effectiveness in the MSSD.

Recommendation 3 Within the aim 1 another important recommendation arising from our study is that the Annex I of the MSSD explaining synergies between objectives and priorities and the Annex II containing the list of follow up indicators should be integrated to reach a solid and systematic set of indicators to monitor the MSSD performance as in many cases we find inconsistencies and/or overlaps between the two tables.

Recommendation 4 All MSSD targets should refer to indicators for which data are available and fully discussed in terms of methodology, rationale and purposes.

Beyond indicators, the MSSD also contains a set of orientations, actions and objectives that should address the direction of policy in Mediterranean countries. Actions incorporate a clear and precise indication of the behavior the institution should undertake and time horizon. Orientations represent strategic guidelines for policy makers and are usually expressed as quantitative indicators and qualitative indicators. Within the category of orientations there are qualitative indicators that could be easily translated into quantitative indicators and orientations just representing a strategic guide for policy makers, but which cannot be easily monitored.

Finding 3. We found that the signature of the ICZM protocol represents a clear and very important objective fulfillment of the MSSD. Other actions, such as the creation of an Euro-Mediterranean integrated transport system or the creation of an Euro Mediterranean tourism quality label, were not achieved. Other “qualitative” orientations still represent a crucial guide and source of inspiration for policy makers, but they cannot be easily used for a monitoring process.

Within the aim 1 this finding inspires some suggestions to improve the quality of the orientations, actions and objectives in the MSSD. In particular, we suggested that:

Recommendation 5 Actions should incorporate a more precise timing horizon, orientations should fit operational functionality criteria and clearly allow MSSD users to understand the involved actors, policy directions, potential benefits and the indicators that would be affected. Objectives should be incorporated in the discussion concerning indicators as in many cases they overlap.

Recommendation 6. Quantitative orientations expressed in terms of numerical values should be

improved with the explanation of the criteria by which the targets are set. Qualitative orientations should be translated in numerical targets and/or clearly associated to specific MSSD target indicators.

Recommendation 7. Orientations and actions about the financing of sustainable development should be more accurately explained by incorporating concrete targets about capacity building, information exchanges and education.

We have also examined the institutional aspects which our consultations confirmed affect the accomplishment of the MSSD targets. The analysis of the relevant literature and conversations with relevant actors working with the MSSD (MCSD members, RACs, other involved stakeholders) were very useful to shed light on this process.

Finding 4. A widespread perception is that the MSSD presents a useful document that acts as a background for public authorities in the implementation of national strategies but that it does not affect the policy action in single countries in concrete terms, as the document lacks to provide detailed suggestions on the modalities by which single countries should incorporate MSSD by national strategies.

Recommendation 8 Within the project aim 3 the MSSD should be revised in order to clearly incorporate guidelines explaining in greater detail the procedures, resources and organization for the transformation of the MSSD into actions at national level.

In other words the MSSD would greatly improve if UNEP/MAP could provide operational support to the single national policy processes (technical advice, support to funds raising procedures, commitments of focal points only on MSSD issues) and if the document could clarify:

- 1) The modalities by which each single country may involve local stakeholders
- 2) The modalities by which different ministries should interact during the policy process
- 3) The procedures by which research and consultancy should inform the writing up and implementation of national strategies.
- 4) Suggestions to manage the trade-off between the need to implement country specific national strategies for sustainable development and the consistency of those strategies with a Mediterranean regional Strategy
- 5) The coordination between UNEP/MAP and national institutions (e.g. the UNEP/MAP research activities could be made in close collaboration with that of national research institutes and by taking into account specific national policy needs).
- 6) Guidelines for fundraising and technical activities.
- 7) Competencies, human resources and skills needed to develop and implement national strategies.

Within the aim 3 we also had the opportunity to analyze the institutional governance system of the MSSD and the relationship with the activities implemented by other organizations in the field to achieve the MSSD targets. For illustrative purposes we have analyzed in detail 15 initiatives, programmes and partnerships in the field of water, climate change, education, energy managed by organizations such as, World Bank, FAO and IPCC.

Finding 5. We find that many projects which are currently ongoing could provide enormous positive spillovers to the MSSD implementation and that a strong network across institutions would facilitate the MSSD implementation.

The analysis of synergies inspires recommendations concerning the MSSD revision and modalities of implementation.

Recommendation 9. In terms of revision, the MSSD document should explicitly mention as much as possible opportunities for synergies with programs, organizations and initiatives and, when feasible, indicate timing and modalities by which these synergies may arise.

Recommendation 10 In terms of modalities of implementation and governance, UNEP/MAP

should create or adapt existing work units to provide a service of monitoring the existing programmes and push forward activities of knowledge sharing, information exchange, networking.

Within the institutional aspects a very useful exercise was also to compare MSSD vis à vis the NSSDs to analyze inconsistencies and the strength of the MSSD influence of regional policies. The analysis was driven by taking into account the objectives, indicators and format of the documents.

Finding 6. The MSSD influenced the development of national strategies, especially the most recent ones (France and Croatia NSSDs formally cite the MSSD). However, it does not appear to be equally influential from an operational point of view and all the individual Mediterranean national strategies still do not appear completely consistent to the overall Mediterranean strategy.

Recommendation 11. Within the aim 3 of this project we recommend that a harmonization of the NSSDs at Mediterranean level will be encouraged by the strengthening of the MSSD in terms of operational influence through the elaboration of guidelines for the national incorporation of the strategy and through support, capacity building, information exchange and fundraising support activities implemented by UNEP/MAP.

Within this project we also led a quantitative modeling exercise to understand the impact of relevant policies identified by the document to reach the targets on relevant MSSD indicators. In particular, we considered the case studies of countries that our data analysis proved to be challenging for specific indicators (Turkey, Israel and Egypt for emissions; Algeria and Morocco for children mortality; Morocco and Lebanon for education; Syria for energy efficiency). For each indicator we simulated the application of relevant policies identified by the MSSD as strategic to reach targets:

1. The application of a carbon tax to reduce emissions in Turkey, Israel and Egypt;
2. The increase of DAC ODA to reduce children mortality;
3. The increase of investments in education to raise the rate of participation to the primary school in Lebanon and Morocco
4. The increase of investments in R&D to raise GDP growth rate and reduce energy intensity in Syria.

Finding 7. Except in the case of investment in education, we generally find a low impact of those single policies on the relevant target indicators.

Recommendation 12. The consequent insight is that in order to achieve MSSD targets, policy makers should implement complex packages of policies because the magnitude of the impact of single policies is not always high according to our simulations. This finding confirms the importance of the existence of a Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development providing orientations for a series of policies covering different development and environment aspects.

Beyond numerical analysis, consultations were very important to understand the functioning of the MSSD institutional framework and possible improvements of the MSSD within the aim 3 of the project. In spite of the low return rate of the distributed questionnaires (slightly more than 20%), we were able to extract useful information from this exercise.

Finding 8. An interesting finding arising from our consultations is that the implementation of the MSSD has strongly been affected by the MSSD governance framework. Consultations clearly show the need of relevant institutional framework changes.

Recommendation 13. Evidence from our consultations shows that a wide consultation participatory process is needed to achieve an agreed institutional structure of the MSSD which may encourage an effective accomplishment of the MSSD targets. A different organization of MAP components roles and coordination is needed to define changes necessary to transform MSSD in a "lively" document.

In spite the provision of specific suggestions for a different MSSD governance structure is beyond

the aims of the present work, a basis for a collective reflection and discussion could be represented by a series of opinions arising from our consultations:

1. UNEP is seen as “environmental” rather than economic. Many stakeholders suggested that an environment-oriented institution is not effective in managing a strategy dealing with a wider set of policy targets, including economic and social issues.
2. The MSSD has had little observable influence on sectoral strategies, policies and action programmes. This finding comes from consultations and from the report of NSSD Assessment(2009) showing that environmental policies, especially in the European countries, are mainly influenced by European policies, and that in North African and Middle Eastern Mediterranean countries they are not affected by the MSSD.
3. In terms of regional activities, many regional initiatives have been launched towards the objectives and priority areas of the MSSD, but except for the ICZM protocol, there is little evidence that they have been driven by the MSSD.
4. The MSSD was conceived as a framework strategy for Regional partnership, and yet the Union for the Mediterranean, Horizon 2020 and other important strategic initiatives have not formally acknowledged the MSSD.
5. The Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development, UNEP/MAP could improve the coordination of their activities to support the implementation of national strategies, to enhance capacity building, to increase fund raising capabilities of private and public organizations engaged in environment and development issues.
6. The support and operational activities of the MCSD towards national governments should be improved
7. The participation of the business community, academics, and NGOs should be strengthened at national and MCSD level.
8. A different organization of the roles and organization framework concerning UNEP/MAP and in particular national focal points would be needed to create figures working exclusively on the MSSD.

The next diagram quickly summarizes the findings, recommendations and relative involved actors of our project results.

Finding 1	Finding 2	Finding 3	Finding 4	Finding 5	Finding 6	Finding 7	Finding 8
1) MSSD targets cannot be easily translated into concrete indicators. 2) Inconsistencies between MSSD Annex I and Annex II 3) Not always reliable data	The gaps analysis highlights that for some MSSD indicators the progress of Mediterranean countries is evident, for other indicators the trend is negative. Moreover heterogeneity across Mediterranean countries	The signature of the ICZM protocol represents a clear and very important objective fulfillment of the MSSD. Other actions were not achieved. Other “qualitative” orientations still represent a crucial guide and source of inspiration for policy makers, but they cannot be easily used for a monitoring process.	A widespread perception is that the MSSD presents a useful document that acts as a background for public authorities in the implementation of national strategies but that it does not affect the policy action in single countries in concrete terms, as the document lacks to provide detailed suggestions on the modalities by which single countries should incorporate MSSD by national strategies.	Many projects which are currently ongoing could provide enormous positive spillovers to the MSSD indicators and a strong network across institutions would facilitate the MSSD implementation.	The MSSD influenced the development of national strategies, especially the most recent ones (France and Croatia NSSDs formally cite the MSSD). However, it does not appear to be equally influential from an operational point of view and all the individual Mediterranean national strategies still do not appear completely consistent to an overall Mediterranean strategy.	By our CGE simulations except in the case of investment in education, we generally find a low impact of those single policies on the relevant target indicators.	From our consultations we find that the implementation of the MSSD has strongly been affected by the MSSD governance framework. Consultations clearly show the need of relevant institutional framework changes.
Recommendation 1. We recommend updating the list of indicators on the basis of the suggestions included in the table 1. Recommendation 2. The revised MSSD should put more emphasis on orientations, actions and indicators concerning emerging priorities such as adaptation and green economy. Traditional topics such as health would deserve more attention. New indicators such as the number of migrants due to climate change would be useful to monitor with greater detail adaptation and all the other emerging issues. Recommendation 3. The MSSD Annex I and the Annex II should be integrated to reach a solid and systematic set of		Recommendation 5. Actions should incorporate a more precise timing horizon, orientations should fit operational functionality criteria, objectives should be incorporated in the discussion concerning indicators. Recommendation 6. Quantitative orientations expressed in terms	Recommendation 8 The MSSD should be revised in order to clearly incorporate guidelines explaining in greater detail the procedures, resources and organization for the transformation of the MSSD into actions at national level.	Recommendation 9. In terms of revision, the MSSD document should explicitly mention as much as possible opportunities for synergies with programs, organizations and initiatives and, when feasible, indicate timing and modalities by which these synergies may arise. Recommendation	Recommendation 11. We recommend that a harmonization of the NSSDs at Mediterranean level will be encouraged by the strengthening of the MSSD in terms of operational influence through the elaboration of guidelines for the national incorporation of the strategy and through support,	Recommendation 12. In order to achieve MSSD targets, policy makers should implement complex packages of policies because the magnitude of the impact of single policies is not always high according to our simulations	Recommendation 13. Evidence from our consultations shows that a wide consultation participatory process is needed to achieve an agreed institutional structure of the MSSD which may encourage an effective accomplishment of the MSSD targets. A different organization of MAP components

indicators. Recommendations 4. All MSSD targets should refer to indicators for which data are available and fully discussed in terms of methodology, rationale and purposes.	of numerical values should be improved with the explanation of the criteria by which the targets are set. Qualitative orientations should be translated in numerical targets and/or clearly associated to specific MSSD target indicators. Recommendation 7. Orientations and actions about the financing of sustainable development should be more accurately explained by incorporating concrete targets about capacity building, information exchanges and education.		10 In terms of modalities of implementation and governance UNEP/MAP should create or adapt existing work units to provide a service of monitoring the existing programmes and push forward activities of knowledge sharing, information exchange, networking.	capacity building, information exchange and fundraising support activities implemented by UNEP/MAP		roles and coordination is needed to define changes necessary to transform MSSD in a "lively" document.
Project aim 1. Suggest amendments of the MSSD. Project aim 2. Suggest new emerging priorities which should be incorporated in the revised version of the MSSD	Project aim 1. Suggest amendments of the MSSD	Project aim 1. Suggest amendments of the MSSD.	Project aim 1. Suggest amendments of the MSSD. Project aim 3. Suggest actions to improve the implementation of the MSSD	Project aim 1. Suggest amendments of the MSSD Project aim 3. Suggest actions to improve the implementation of the MSSD	Project aim 3. Suggest actions to improve the implementation of the MSSD	Project aim 3. Suggest actions to improve the implementation of the MSSD