



United Nations Environment Programme



UNEP/BUR/37/4
30 August 1990

Original: ENGLISH

MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties
to the Convention for the protection of the
Mediterranean Sea against pollution and
its related protocols

Rome, 6-7 September 1990

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT

(Note by the Secretariat)

Background

1. In resolution 44/228, entitled "United Nations Conference on Environment and Development", the General Assembly decided to convene the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Brazil and, inter alia, to establish the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, open to all States members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies, with the participation of observers, in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly. It further decided that the Preparatory Committee should hold its first substantive session at Nairobi, the timing and duration of which should be determined by the Preparatory Committee at its organizational session.
2. Section II of Resolution GA 44/228 contains two operative paragraphs which may require involvement of the Mediterranean Action plan:

"The General Assembly,

 11. Invites all states to take an active part in the preparations for the Conference, to prepare national reports, as appropriate, to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee in a timely manner and to promote international co-operation and broad-based national preparatory processes involving the scientific community, industry, trade unions and concerned non-governmental organizations;
 13. Stresses the importance of holding regional conferences on environment and development with the full co-operation of the regional commissions, and recommends that the results of such regional conferences be introduced into the preparatory process for the 1992 Conference, bearing in mind that regional conferences should make important substantive contributions to the Conference."
3. At its fifteenth session, in May 1989, the Governing Council noted the increasing number of evolving environmental issues and considered that some of these issues called for further policy elaboration and decision-making by the Council. For this purpose in its decision 15/4 the Council decided to hold a three-day special session in 1990, immediately preceding, and in the same location as, the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Governing Council further decided that the special session should deal "with the elaboration of, and the process of making and implementing decisions on, priority environmental issues, in particular, ways and means of enhancing the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in addressing those issues ...". The Governing Council approved the provisional agenda for the session, the substantive item being entitled "Priority evolving environmental issues".

By paragraph 7 of its resolution 44/229 of 22 December 1989, the General Assembly supported the decision of the Governing Council to hold a special session and reiterated the subjects to be addressed at the session.

The second special session was held in Nairobi on 1-3 August 1990 and adopted the following decisions relevant to the Mediterranean Action Plan.

- (1) Decision SS II.9 - Priority involving environmental issues for consideration by the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and in particular:
 - Section IV - Protection of Oceans and Coastal Areas;
 - Section VI - The Role of Regional and Sub-Regional Environment Programmes;
 - Section VII - Availability of Resources for Developing Countries and Funding Mechanisms.
 - (2) Decision SS II.6 - On the Need for Effective Global Protection of Oceans and Coastal Ecosystems.
 - (3) Decision SS II.4B - On the Comprehensive Approach to Hazardous Wastes.
4. The Preparatory Committee held its organizational session at the United Nations Headquarters, 5-16 March 1990, and its first session in Nairobi, 6-31 August 1990.
5. It had before it, inter alia, the following documentation:
- A report of the Secretary General on protection and preservation of the marine environment made available at the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 44/26 on the Law of the Sea (A/44/461).
 - Suggested guidelines on the preparation of national reports. These are to be submitted to the Conference secretariat not later than the second session of the Preparatory Committee (A/CONF.151/PC.8).
 - The Overview of system-wide activities relevant to GA Res. 44/228 (A/CONF.151/PC.6).
 - The Secretary General's Report on the summary of activities of non-governmental and international organizations relevant to GA Res. 44/228 (A/CONF.151/PC.7).

6. The Preparatory Committee established two Working Groups. WG II, considered the Agenda item on (B) protection of the oceans and all kinds of seas, including enclosed and semi-enclosed seas, and coastal areas and the protection, rational use and development of their living resources. During the debate on this item, the delegations of five Mediterranean States (Egypt, France, Greece, Italy and Tunisia) took the floor and supported the regional approach for the protection of enclosed and semi-enclosed seas and coastal areas, and most of them specifically referred to the Mediterranean Action Plan.

The Preparatory Committee decided on the areas that should receive further consideration at all appropriate level in the course of the preparatory process of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. This decision will be used as the basis for the preparation of the Mediterranean Report.

7. The Sixth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Athens, 3-6 October 1989) took note of a secretariat document entitled: "Contribution of the Mediterranean Coastal States to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - Note by the Secretariat" (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.1/Inf.8). The meeting stressed that the secretariat's work in preparation for the 1992 Conference should be subject to the supervision of the Bureau. The suggestion was made that the secretariat, including its Regional Activity Centres, might prepare a synthetic report based on data and policy reports supplied by governments for the Conference. The meeting approved a budget allocation of \$50,000 for preparation of documentation for the 1992 Conference (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.1/5, Annex VI, v).
8. In April 1990 the Ministers in charge of the Environment of the countries of the Mediterranean basin and the member of the Commission of the European Communities with responsibility for the environment met at Nicosia, Cyprus at the invitation of the EEC. In the Nicosia Charter they proposed inter alia "to evaluate regularly and every two years the results of the Euro-Mediterranean co-operation for the environment, and this before the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development, that will take place in 1992, with a view to present a common subregional proposal at this conference."
9. Finally, the Joint Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Committee and the Socio-Economic Committee (Athens, 28 May - 1 June 1990) noted in its report that "the secretariat would prepare an outline of the synthetic report on the contribution of the Mediterranean coastal states to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development for the next Bureau meeting (Rome, 6-7 September 1990) taking into account the decisions of the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 Conference (Nairobi, 6-31 August 1990). The Bureau might consider whether any specific meeting was needed to assist in the preparation of the document requested by the Contracting Parties (UNEP(OCA)/MED WG.12/6)."

10. The Co-ordinator attended part of the Preparatory Committee's meeting in Nairobi and, taking into account the decisions of the Committee with regard to the Guidelines for report preparation as well as the timetable of regional conferences following that of European States held in Bergen in May 1990, invites the Bureau to consider, and endorse as appropriate, the steps outlined below.

Proposed Steps

- I. In response to the recommendation from the Preparatory Committee a Mediterranean report would be submitted covering all relevant MAP components stressing the specific environment-development issues met in the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution and the rational management of the resources of the basin.
- II. As there is no time available between the submission of national reports and the second session of the Preparatory Committee for a Mediterranean report to be prepared on the basis of those reports, it is suggested that the document be based on the MAP achievements and objectives and circulated to the Contracting Parties for their written comments.
- III. In order to achieve maximum consensus the text should not exceed 10-12 pages in length.
- IV. It is proposed that a three-day meeting of government-designated experts be convened in Athens to improve and finalize the text using as the basis only the written comments received prior to the meeting.
- V. The Bureau is invited to approve the following calendar for the preparation of the Mediterranean report:

- Preparation of Mediterranean report	Oct/Nov. 1990
- Circulation to the Contracting Parties	1 Dec. 1990
- Deadline for submitting written comments on the text to the Co-ordinating Unit	31 Jan. 1991
- Review meeting for adoption of the final version of the Mediterranean report	13-15 Feb. 1991
- Transmission of the Mediterranean Report by the Executive Director of UNEP to the Secretary-General of the Conference	15 March 1991
- Second substantive session of the preparatory Committee	2-19 April 1991