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15th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to
the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Almeria (Spain), 15-18 January 2008

DRAFT DECISION ON THE MSSD IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties

Decision IG 17/17: MSSD Implementation Plan

The 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties,

Recalling the adoption by the Contracting Parties in their 14th Ordinary Meeting, Portoroz (Slovenia), 8-11 November 2005, of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD),

Reaffirming their commitment to do their utmost to implement its objectives, orientations and proposed actions as appropriate,

Recognizing that MSSD implementation entails the integration of MSSD objectives, orientations and actions into national policy frameworks and instruments; the engagement of stakeholders and the development of partnerships; capacity building; management and dissemination of knowledge and information; and the mobilization and allocation of resources,

Stressing that, while the Contracting Parties are the main actors of MSSD implementation, MAP and its components, including MCSD, can encourage, support and facilitate implementation, in the domains where they have comparative advantages and accumulated experience,

Considering also that MAP and its components, under their respective scope and mandate, within their resources and in their capacities, cannot alone ensure the implementation of MSSD,

Stressing that MSSD implementation domains that are not of the direct competence of MAP can be addressed through dialogue between the Contracting Parties and their potential partners at the national, regional or international levels,

Recognizing the need for coordinated arrangements and interventions of different resources, instruments and mechanisms to secure sustainable, timely and predictable achievement of MSSD objectives,

Considering that effective implementation of the MSSD calls for concrete complementary and coordinated initiatives at different levels, facilitated by the MAP Coordination Unit and in synergy with organizations, networks and programmes pertaining to the SD-related policy processes in the region,

Taking into account the recommendations of the Meeting of the MCSD held in Istanbul in June 2007 as well as the amendments made on the basis of the comments received by the Secretariat;

Decides

To approve the MSSD Implementation Plan contained in the Annex to this decision;

Requests

The Secretariat and the MAP components to coordinate their efforts in support of the MSSD Implementation Plan.

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Background: MSSD in a nutshell

MSSD is a flexible, non legally binding framework. Its purpose is to guide national sustainable development strategies, to initiate a dynamic partnership between countries and to adapt international commitments to regional conditions. By making a public and high profile commitment to sustainable development, countries, as well as donors and the other partners concerned intend to produce and maintain a common sustainable dynamics throughout the region. The MSSD calls for action, taking into account the threats and weaknesses in the region as well as its strengths and opportunities. It also takes into consideration the need to reduce the gap between developed and developing countries in the region.

The MSSD pursues four overall objectives:

- Contribute to economic development by enhancing Mediterranean assets;
- Reduce social disparities by implementing the Millennium Development Goals and strengthen cultural identities;
- Change unsustainable production and consumption patterns and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources; and,
- Improve governance at the local, national and regional levels.

The MSSD has identified seven interdependent priority fields of action and synergy:

- better management of water resources and demand;
- improved rational use of energy, increased renewable energy use and mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.
- sustainable mobility through appropriate transport management;
- sustainable tourism as a leading economic sector;
- sustainable agriculture and rural development;
- sustainable urban development; and
- sustainable management of the sea, coastal areas and marine resources.

ANNEX

MSSD Implementation Plan

1 What does MSSD implementation mean?

Country perspective

For a country, implementing MSSD means improving the political, policy, and planning capacities of the government to engage in sustainable development. This includes leveraging policy dialogues among stakeholders and mainstreaming sustainable development into overall and sector policies, policy instruments, and translating them into national development plans. It also includes mobilising domestic and international resources.

Implementation calls for each country to take steps¹ that translate into concrete impact, and involve national level stakeholders (industry, SMEs, local authorities, civil society etc) in the implementation process. While the priority areas in the MSSD provide a useful framework, each country needs to determine its own implementation path², taking into account national priorities, policy context and processes -including other international commitments- as well as the country resource endowment and constraints. MSSD implementation will take different course and forms according to each country situation.

Regional and sub regional perspective

Translating political commitments into action for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region also means a collective effort involving several countries or subregions as well as the relevant regional sustainable development actors or partners, including the civil society. Beyond individual countries' concern and responsibility, implementing MSSD means joining capacities and pooling resources through permanent collaborative efforts and concrete partnerships - South-South and North-South. At a regional or subregional level, MSSD implementation also entails sharing experience and expertise between countries and relevant actors, and actively contributing to permanent knowledge management efforts. In addition, implementing pilot/demonstration actions at a regional level (for example by bringing together partners/stakeholders from different countries around the region) can have a strong multiplier effect in the implementation phase. Obviously, synergies between the two perspectives are essential and point to a first characteristic of the implementation plan:

Effective implementation of the MSSD calls for concrete complementary and coordinated initiatives at the regional, subregional and national levels. The implementation of the MSSD will always be two-pronged, comprising specific country level activities as well as initiatives and action mobilising actors –states, local authorities, socio-economic actors, associations and population- in more than one country.

¹ e.g. identify and implement specific commitments and pilot/demonstration actions; define and launch partnership initiatives; carry out information and communication campaign, etc.

² Countries may want to develop implementation plan under the MAP guidance on how to implement the MSSD nationally and subsequently report at regional and international levels –MAP support to country level implementation will be addressed in the work programme-. A simple process could be proposed to the countries: identify the rank the priority fields of action according to the country situation and needs; select/identify the relevant objectives; decide the orientations and action; mobilise domestic and foreign, public and private resources; implement; and monitor and report.

2 Challenges of MSSD implementation

While MSSD implementation offers a great opportunity for the different countries and the region to embark on processes towards sustainable development, it also raises issues pertaining to policy changes and reforms, organisation and management, and the mobilisation of human and financial resources.

From a country or regional perspective, implementation is confronted with a number of challenges:

- **mainstreaming sustainable development:** transforming the political commitment achieved in the Portoroz meeting into broader based national commitment, understanding and action that effectively influence national policy processes and action;
- **planning, coordination, monitoring:** integrating Sustainable Development concerns into sector priorities while striving for harmony and convergence; giving due consideration to cross-cutting issues; and responding to other demanding regional and international initiatives and commitments³;
- **Implementation:** building partnership; building capacity; managing knowledge and information; and mobilising financial resources.

3 MSSD Implementation Plan

The MSSD Implementation Plan maps the route to the objectives. It can be defined as “the co-ordinated arrangements and interventions of different resources, instruments and mechanisms to secure sustainable achievement of MSSD objectives”. The implementation plan follows different **orientations**, identifies **domains of intervention**, chooses **strategic elements** that constitute the building blocks, and assigns **responsibility** of specific processes or tasks. It identifies various means of implementation and strives to mobilise the variety of human, institutional and financial resources available in the region. The implementation plan is time bound and outlines how implementation will be managed (i.e monitored and coordinated).

3.1. Strategic directions

The implementation of MSSD pursues complementary strategic orientations:

- Integrate MSSD objectives, and orientations into policy frameworks and instruments;
- Engage stakeholders and forge partnerships to follow up objectives and implement actions;
- Build capacity;
- Manage and disseminate knowledge and information; and,
- Mobilize and allocate resources⁴
- Implement pilot actions

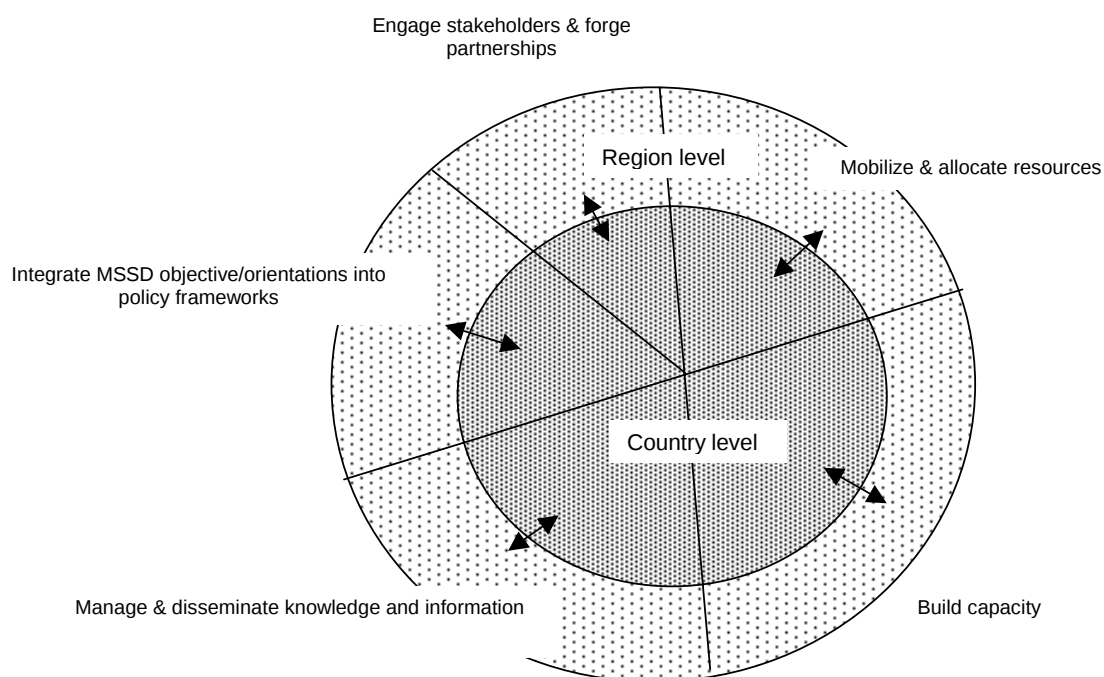
³ e.g. UNCCC, UNCCD, Euro Med partnership, Horizon 2020, etc.

⁴ So far, implementation has privileged some of these orientations in an adhoc manner. For instance, the mobilization and allocation of financial resources seems to have received lower priority. A more systematic approach would be deserved to justify the relative weight and priority granted to the different orientations. This can be done during the next consultations with the CPs, MAP components and partners e.g. on the occasion of MCSD meetings.

Effective implementation calls for concrete, complementary, coordinated interventions in the countries and at the regional level. Synergies and linkages exist between interventions in the different strategic directions

The MSSD is wide encompassing and complex because it addresses social, environmental and economic issues as well as their interactions from the local to the regional level. As a consequence, its implementation is demanding and requires the mobilisation of all the variety of resources available locally, nationally and regionally. Moreover, implementation also calls for strong collaboration and partnerships between institutional actors in the countries, the region and, at times, the international level.

Fig1: Implementation of MSSD: strategic directions and levels of intervention.



3.2.1 MAP specific domains of intervention

Considering their respective scope and mandate, MAP and its components cannot alone, with their resources and in their capacities, ensure the implementation of MSSD. Conversely, in the domains where they have comparative advantages and accumulated experience, MAP and its components can steer and support implementation significantly and proactively, through their interventions.

With regard to MSSD implementation, MAP specific domains of intervention comprise:

- Support to NSSD formulation and implementation
- Synergies with other Sustainable Development networks, organisations and policy process outside MAP
- Support to sector policy making and action programming (Water; Energy and climate change; Transport; Tourism; Agriculture and rural development; and Urban development)
- Support to Sustainable Management of sea, coastal zones and marine resources
- Information and Communication
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

The following analysis focuses on elements belonging to MAP specific domains of intervention. Both for the interventions related to the in-house capacity of the MAP components as well as other domains that are not of the direct competence of MAP, actions should be planned and undertaken on the basis of regular discussions and agreements between the directly concerned stakeholders -i.e. the countries and their potential partners at the national, regional or international levels, including the civil society. The overall aim should be for MAP to act as a catalyst that will generate interaction between a broad spectrum of partners (especially socio-economic stakeholders) and seek to forge partnerships with expert institutions and initiatives in each domain so that efforts are not duplicated. In this process, MAP maintains a central role by ensuring coherence, convergence and synergies between all strategic elements entrusted to the MAP system as well as partners outside MAP. In this way, and depending on its future orientations, the MCSD can become a major instrument and place for these discussions and agreements.

3.2.2 Synergies with other Sustainable Development networks, organisations, stakeholders and policy processes outside MAP

There exist structural relations between MSSD, the Barcelona Convention and related Protocols, the other major regional initiatives (e.g. EuroMed Partnership, EU Sustainable Development Strategy, EU Marine Strategy) and the MEAs (particularly UNCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD), including the institutional arrangements that support their implementation.

On a more political ground, MSSD features prominently in the Cairo Declaration and the timetable for the implementation of the first phase of Horizon 2020 (2007-2013) adopted by the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Environment Ministers Conference (Cairo, 20 November 2006). While this gives an unambiguous political clout to the MSSD implementation, it also calls for developing strong linkages between organisations, networks and programmes pertaining to the SD-related policy processes in the region, including civil society, the private sector and the local authorities. Additionally, the limited resources available in the countries and the national or regional organisations compounded with a shared concern for harmonisation call for the different actors to strategize and act together. MSSD and the MCSD can definitely prove a tool

for convergence of the different policy processes in the region by fostering interactions and synergies through MSSD implementation.

MAP and its components need to liaise with other actors involved in the MSSD and NSSD domain, in the countries, the region or at the global level by establishing cooperation. This should address the strategic/policy level as well as the early stages of designing pilot interventions. Organisations that are active at the country level, as well as organisations that operate at a higher aggregation level are equally important.

Regional initiatives and programmes in such different domains as marine pollution (Horizon 2020), capacity building, public awareness raising, monitoring, information or education for SD, etc.- offer concrete opportunities to build these strategic partnerships and alliances between the MAP and other entities in the region.

The Secretariat can foster the building of concrete strategic partnerships based on a joint need assessment and the comparative advantages of various actors. Besides initiating contacts with institutions, regional initiatives, civil society and programmes, the Secretariat should also overview the development of thematic partnerships between other MAP components and regional partners outside MAP⁵, and support this effort.

In addition to the regular CSD work on NSSD, different networks have been established under the aegis of EU⁶ and OECD⁷ that contribute to the emergence of a community of practice on NSSD. UNEP/MAP can play a visible and proactive part and bring in a Mediterranean perspective. Different ways could be pursued: link more closely MSSD implementation to EU SSD; work with OECD and EC on a Mediterranean sub network of the already existing EU NSSD network; strengthen working relation with UNDESA; develop a special link on NSSD and on-line updating of NSSD country profiles in the MAP and INFO/RAC websites. Further, it can encourage and promote collaboration at the country level with established partners with hands-on experience in implementing activities, such as UNDP.

3.3 Strategic elements

All interventions engaged with the support of MAP components in selected countries, group of countries or at a sub-regional or regional level are in line with the strategic orientations: mainstreaming, participation and partnership building, capacity building, knowledge management, resource mobilisation and pilot actions (see section 3.1).

Strategic elements consist of various processes and chains of activities. Activities that may be one-off, recurrent or continuing include: pilot actions⁸ at national or regional level, reviews of regional and/or country situation, regional capacity building programmes, regional review and sharing of experience and good practices, policy dialogues, targeted knowledge building and management activities, information dissemination, awareness campaigns, etc.

The interventions in other domains that are not of the direct competence of MAP should be planned and undertaken on the basis of regular discussions and agreements between the

⁵ For example with the opportunity of working groups set-up.

⁶ European Sustainable Development Network. ESDN.<http://www.sd-network.eu/>

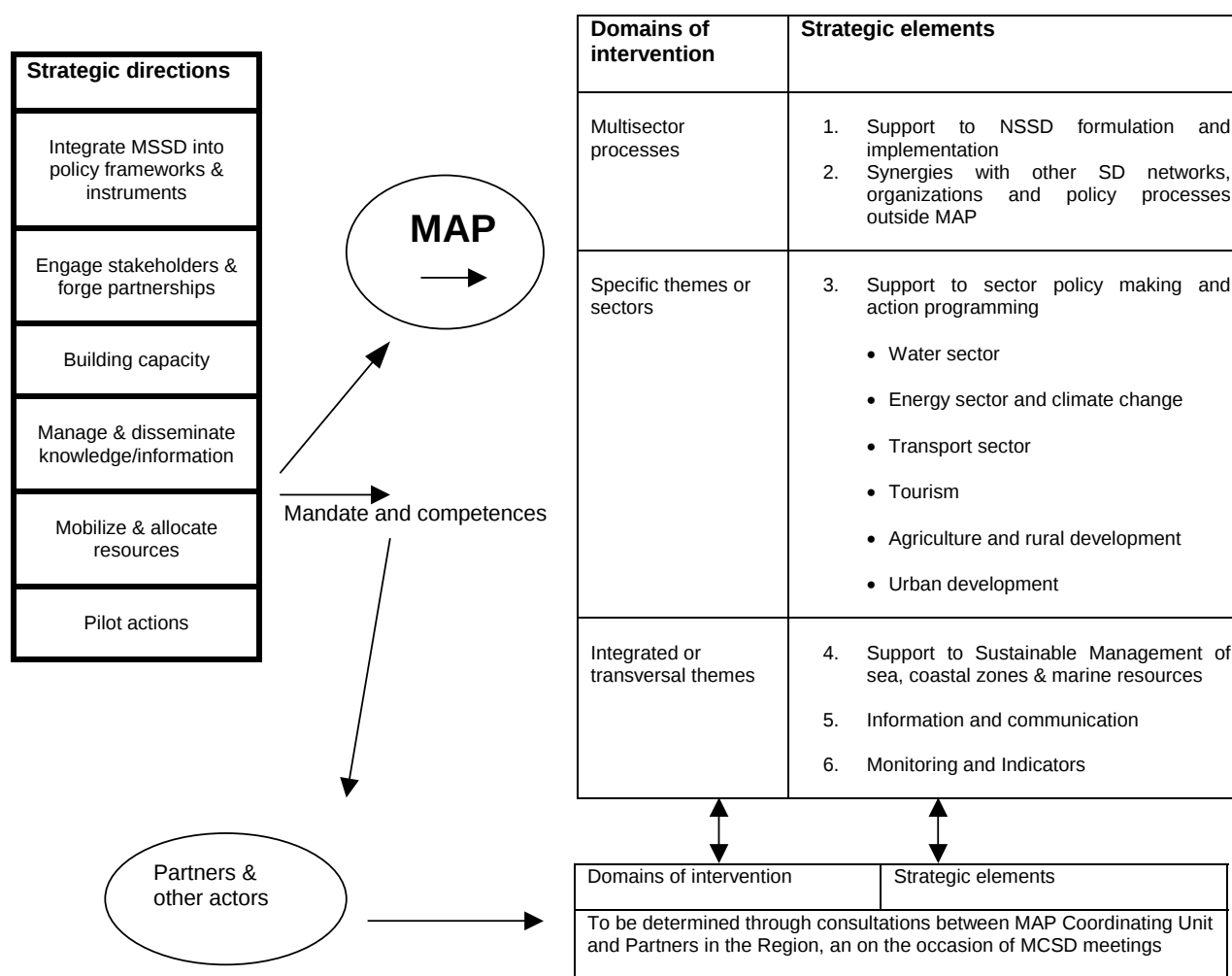
⁷ Regional workshops on Sustainable Development Strategies.
http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,2686,en_2649_37425_1_1_1_1_37425,00.html.

⁸ The concept of pilot actions that emerged during the last CPs meeting needs to be explored further, in particular: the nature and ambitions of pilot actions, how they insert themselves into a wider process of change at the national or regional level (e.g. as elements of country implementation plan, influencing national or regional policy formulation) and how their achievements can have a multiplier effect and benefit to others.

directly concerned stakeholders -i.e. the countries- and their potential partners at the national, regional or international levels.

The following describes the strategic elements systematically: objective(s); approach (intervention pattern); means and modus operandi⁹; responsibilities and coordination; and, partnerships and synergies. The strategic elements are not independent one from the other. and it is the MAP Coordinating Unit responsibility to ensure that bridges and synergies between them are established and maintained.

Fig.2: MSSD Implementation: MAP specific domains of intervention and strategic elements.



⁹ specifics and detailed procedures will be spelt out when the work programme and work plan are prepared

3.3.1 Support to NSSD formulation and implementation

National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) or any other SD-focused overall policy frameworks are the natural vehicle for MSSD implementation at the country level. Technical and financial support to their formulation and implementation therefore stands as a major strategic element of MSSD implementation to which MAP can contribute substantially.

Objectives

The objectives are to help selected countries to formulate their NSSD, to build up a critical mass of experience and expertise on NSSD in the concerned countries, and to stimulate synergies and cooperation between countries throughout the region.

Strategic approach

Pilot interventions in selected countries lead to the formulation of NSSD. During regular regional working sessions the involved countries share their experience and promising practices with countries initiating their NSSD formulation with the view to build up capacity and improve the approach. The status of the NSSD development and/or implementation in all countries of the region is reviewed regularly to identify achievements and bottlenecks, identify complementary capacity building activities, and inform the countries and partners on the NSSD status in the region. The MCSD operates as a '*Mediterranean Network on NSSD*' and contributes to permanent information exchange on the NSSD formulation and implementation and serves as a vehicle to knowledge management through e.g. e-consultation and the development of partnership initiatives. Permanent communication and information flows on NSSD are also maintained throughout the MCSD and with other partners in the region and outside.

*Means and Modus operandi*¹⁰

Upon the signing of the related MoUs, launching visits are organized in the selected countries. The purpose is to meet the relevant institutions and stakeholders, including the donor community and civil society, in order to inform them on NSSD formulation and obtain their support. On this occasion, a national information workshop is organized and complementary funding secured from the donor community active in the domain. Developing collaboration with the active donors at an early stage is essential to increase the coherence, facilitate coordination and ensure MAP visibility. The formulation of NSSD¹¹ develops over a period of about a year, implementation follows on a continuing basis.

Following the development and adoption of NSSD at the appropriate national level, the countries undertake initiatives for their implementation. Besides initiating the necessary policy and legislation reviews and amendments, to integrate the views of the NSSD, they support efforts for the mobilization of the relevant stakeholders from all appropriate sectors (business, industry, SMEs, local authorities etc) for the implementation of the NSSD through pilot/demonstration activities. MAP plays a catalyst role in this process by providing continued support and technical advice as appropriate, as well as facilitating identification and communication among relevant stakeholders at the regional level.

¹⁰ only pilot interventions are considered here as other activities are self explanatory.

¹¹ NSSD formulation comprises the establishment and regular meetings of the Steering Committee, stocktaking exercise, formulation of national Vision and Framework Orientations for Sustainable Development; preparation of a NSSD document; and organization of broad based stakeholders consultation workshops.

Responsibilities and coordination

MEDU has the main responsibility of this strategic element. MEDU identifies, mobilises and coordinates the financial and human resources for the different tasks and activities. MEDU maintains linkages with key national, regional and international actors and partners within and outside the region. MEDU monitors and reports on achievements. At the country level, responsibility rests with the government through the MAP focal points who are the key actors to ensure enduring and effective national involvement and contribution to this strategic element. The civil society can play a significant role by participating, enriching and monitoring the process.

The involvement of the different RACs in the support to NSSD formulation and implementation is to be pursued¹² systematically and will be integrated into the work programme of RACs, on the basis of comparative advantages and areas of concern. The strategic element "Support to NSSD formulation and implementation" is a great opportunity to mainstream the different RACs' work and outputs into government procedures and processes.

Partnership and Synergy

During the process of developing the NSSDs one major part of the success is measured against the effective mobilization of participants from all related forums for the strategy. Decision makers and public administration, especially from sectors that are not 'traditionally' linked with environmental protection, local authorities, the business and private sector, and of course civil society should engage in a target-driven dialogue, with an aim to reach the highest possible common denominator towards sustainable development.

3.3.2 Support to sector policy making and action programming (Water; Energy and climate change; Transport; Tourism; Agriculture and rural development; and Urban development)

The MSSD has identified these sectors as priority areas of action. Country and region wide, the understanding of the situation in the different sectors -in terms of performances, constraints and opportunities- is essential to inform the policy decision makers and develop action programmes. Moreover, the identification of promising approaches and practices combined with knowledge sharing between countries constitute powerful levers to sector policy improvement and action, at the country level and throughout the Mediterranean region.

Objectives

The objective is to generate and manage relevant knowledge in order to inform and substantiate policy dialogues, decisions and action, and ultimately contribute to developing and updating of sector policies and strategies.

Strategic approach

The approach builds around five pillars: inform, measure, identify scenarios and examples of best practice, communicate, and implement. Good practices and policies from the countries are documented and diffused. In close collaboration with qualified networks and the support of

¹² For instance: the BP/RAC work on SD indicators should naturally nurture the NSSD formulation and implementation process in the countries; the outreach and communication capacities of INFO/RAC can be instrumental in the dissemination of NSSD achievements; CP/RAC has a major contribution to play in bringing the private sector and the business on board and changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption.

expert working groups operating, as steering committee, country sector profiles and reports are prepared. The compilation and discussion of results during regional workshops and forums involving a broad spectrum of actors, allow the identification of common constraints and opportunities. Policy and tools to overcome obstacles and meet countries' priorities and international commitments are thus identified then broadly disseminated. National sector studies are complemented by regional reviews and prospective studies that specify trends and articulate possible scenarios in the concerned sectors. The approach is structured by the systematic application of sustainable development indicators to the different sectors. Through the participation of a broad range of stakeholders the necessary partnerships are formed for the implementation of pilot/demonstration actions. The SD indicators developed by BP/RAC are considered essential to benchmarking knowledge management and measuring achievements and progress in the different sectors.

Means and Modus operandi

Central to this approach are the working groups¹³ established in the different sectors. Working groups are the meeting point of high-quality technical and scientific information with the policy-oriented actors with the objective to insert the working group results into the different national and regional processes. Common procedures on how the working groups operate will increase their effectiveness on MSSD implementation. The participation of strong technical participants, as much as representatives of the national authorities with the mandate to turn the findings of the working groups into policy recommendations is necessary, in order to create the needed cohesion and synergy between the Working Groups and the MCSD. In this respect the thematic working groups should aim at creating synergies with established global or regional bodies with recognised expertise on the thematic issues¹⁴.

The working groups could be characterized as follows:

- purpose, objectives, terms of reference and expected outputs,
- time span, work plan with milestones, tasks and deliverables,
- working procedures, monitoring, information and reporting,
- synergy with other MAP components than BP/RAC and with SD initiatives in the concerned sectors.

Based on this formatted information, working group profiles would be made available to the different partners and stakeholders, through the different websites of the MAP components. Moreover the use of a common format would help monitor and evaluate achievements in the different sectors.

The importance given by MSSD to issues that cut across sectors indicate that the working groups should neither exclusively focus on the technical aspects in the different sectors¹⁵ nor operate in isolation one from the other.

¹³ As discussed during the 11th MCSD Steering Committee Meeting, the role of the thematic working groups has evolved since they were first set up in the context of the MCSD. The thematic working groups were originally meant to cover areas in which little had been carried out. They proved essential to the MSSD formulation. With the shift from MSSD formulation to implementation, working groups have to become more action oriented, drawing together the available knowledge and involving the stakeholders.

The structure within which thematic working groups or similar bodies operate should allow for both work by experts and the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, civil society and interested governmental and non-governmental bodies. One possible format for combining these two functions is the holding of preliminary expert groups followed by forums bringing together a broad range of stakeholders.

¹⁴ such as IPCC on climate change, ITO on tourism etc.

¹⁵ If appropriate one could consider establishing working groups on cross cutting issues such as:

Responsibilities and coordination

Because of its mandate, BP/RAC has the main responsibility to implement this strategic element. For the different sectors, the Blue Plan organises, manages and facilitates the chain of activities. It monitors and reports on achievements in the different sectors. The Blue Plan constantly keeps informed and liaises with the MAP Coordinating Unit on developments and achievements. The MAP Coordinating Unit (MEDU) monitors the coherence between interventions in the different sectors and their congruence with MSSD objectives, orientations and proposed actions. In particular MEDU makes sure that sector-related inputs contribute to the MCSD work and discussions, and to NSSD Implementation, and vice versa, MCSD results feed back into the sector work. The Secretariat also supports the activities in the different sectors by attending working group meetings as appropriate, thoroughly contributing to the information flow and bringing financial support, if necessary and according to the approved budget.

At country level, the Secretariat helps secure the effective and full mobilisation of interested countries, stakeholders and civil society. Main responsibility rests with the government through the sector specific Focal Points who ensure effective national participation and contribution. BP/RAC coordinates with the other RACs' country level activities, in particular PAP/RAC and CP/RACs whose domains of intervention -respectively Coastal Zones management and Cleaner Production- touch upon some or all the selected sectors.

There is a profusion of institutions that produce and assemble sector related information in the countries and the region. It is the BP/RAC responsibility to contribute to the coherence of information and knowledge generated in the different sectors, to liaise with other information and knowledge depositories and systems within the MAP system (e.g. relying in particular on the outreach and communication capacities of INFO/RAC through Info MAP, see section 3.3.5) and outside (e.g. Green Spider, EED, EEA).

Partnership and Synergy

BP/RAC systematically resorts to collaboration with qualified networks in the different sectors¹⁶ depending on their expertise and capacity. Further involvement of well-established expert institutions and civil society should be sought. The same principle should apply to working groups set up by other MAP components, in order to involve as broad as possible a spectrum of experts and stakeholders.

3.3.3 Support to Sustainable Management of sea, coastal zones and marine resources

This strategic element integrates most issues that directly pertain to the mandate of MAP and its components: deterioration of coastal zones (PAP/RAC and BP/RAC); loss of biodiversity (SPA/RAC); land-based pollution and waste generation (MEDPOL and CP/RAC), and pollution from ships (REMPEC)

knowledge management and capacity building; financial strategies and mobilization of financial resources; stakeholders' involvement; public-private partnership, etc.

¹⁶ For example, in the water sector: the Secretariat of GWP-Med, the Mediterranean Water Institute which brings together businesses and local authorities, Medwet (the Mediterranean network of the RAMSAR Convention) and the Centre International des Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes (CIHEAM); in the energy sector: OME (Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Energie), ADEME, ANME, MEDENER (Mediterranean network of energy efficiency agencies), MEDREP regional project, UMET (Mediterranean Summer University), Mediterranean Institute/FEMISE (Euro-Mediterranean Forum of Institutes of Economic Sciences), and Helio International (NGO)

Objectives

At the national level, the objective is to support the countries in the formulation and implementation of integrated policies, plans and programmes to restore degraded coastal and marine resources, and/or to promote economic development based around the protection of environmental, cultural and social capital. At the regional level, the objective is to establish the framework conditions of such development, particularly in terms of legal framework, institutional capacity and information base.

Strategic approach

The approach works on differentiated but converging fronts that are stemming from the respective mandate of the concerned RACs:

- integrated management and development of coastal zones
- prevention and reduction of pollution from ships
- prevention and reduction of land based pollution
- protection of marine and coastal biodiversity and marines resources

Whereas orientations and objectives vary according to the specificity of different RACs, the same categories of activities are pursued on each of these fronts:

- formulate or improve the national policy frameworks, plans and other instruments to integrate sustainable development issues to the thematic roles of the RACs, and foster country level implementation in relation to international and regional agreements and Protocols;
- engage stakeholders, forge partnerships and mobilise financial resources around related programmes and projects, with the objective of establishing pilot actions;
- develop institutional capacity and human resources;
- raise awareness, manage knowledge and disseminate information.

At a higher aggregation level interventions build upon other regional strategies, initiatives and programmes (e.g. EU Marine Strategy, EuroMed Partnership and the related instruments such as Horizon 2020, SMAP III, SAP, SAP-BIO, the new GEF Mediterranean Strategic Partnership, etc.).

Means and Modus operandi

Means and modus operandi vary significantly, depending on the country situation, the status of national implementation through NAPs and the institutional capacity.

The establishment of thematic working groups should be seen as a means to involve a broad range of stakeholders in order to integrate the sustainable development dimension. They do not need to be systematic but left to the decision of the concerned RACs, and should operate in a similar manner as described in section 3.3.3.

In order to facilitate the coordination and information exchange between the MAP components involved on the different fronts in the same countries, the possibility to develop joint MAP country level intervention plans should be considered.

Responsibility and coordination

RACs have the primary responsibility of interventions in the area of their respective mandate:

- PAP/RAC: management and development of coastal zones
- REMPEC: prevention and reduction of pollution from ships
- MEDPOL: prevention and reduction of land based pollution
- SPA/RAC: protection of marine and coastal biodiversity and marines resources

They organise, manage and facilitate the chain of activities undertaken in their respective areas. They also monitor and report on achievements. They constantly keep informed and liaise with the MAP Coordinating Unit on developments and achievements. The MAP Coordinating Unit (MEDU) ensures and monitors the overall coherence of the different operations and their congruence with MSSD objectives. In particular MEDU coordinates the RACs inputs into the MCSD work and discussions, and ensures that MCSD decisions feed back into the work of the relevant RACs .

At the country level, responsibility rests with the government through the relevant focal points who are the key actors to ensure effective national participation and contribution. The designated RACs are responsible to coordinate with other RACs' country level activities. Special attention should be given to liaising with CP/RAC that is in a privileged position to bring in the business sector and influence unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. The responsible RACs should also take the benefit of BP/RAC work on indicators -in particular coastal indicators of sustainable development- and liaise with INFO/RAC to benefit from its communication capacities and outreach.

Partnerships and synergy

It is essential that MAP and its components liaise with other partners involved in their respective areas, in the selected countries, the region or at the global level. This means establishing cooperation early in the design of interventions with organisations that are active at the country or regional level, including the civil society. This also supposes maintaining regular working relations with organisations, initiatives or networks that operate at a higher aggregation level (e.g. EU Marine Strategy, Adriatic Sea Partnership). Key partners and initiatives to develop synergies with on the different fronts include:

- METAP, SMAP III, EC, UNDP, WB and other IGOs and NGOs (management and development of coastal zones);
- IMO, Black Sea environmental programme (prevention and reduction of pollution from ships);
- EuroMed Partnership, Horizon 2020 (prevention and reduction of land based pollution and capacity building);
- protection of marine and coastal biodiversity and marines resources: SAP-BIO, UNCBD, GFCM, MedWet, etc.

3.3.4 Information and Communication

The implementation of MSSD calls for a systematic and efficient information sharing not only across MAP, but also between key actors both inside and outside the region. Raising awareness of the decision makers and the public at large is equally important as the success of implementation also depends on their understanding and support. Consequently, Information and Communication stands as another strategic element in the MAP specific domains of intervention.

Objectives

The objectives are: to make the work undertaken by MAP and its components in support of MSSD largely accessible to key actors; and, to increase the visibility of MSSD among stakeholders and partners.

Strategic approach

The approach follows different complementary paths:

- a. formulation of an overall IC Strategy with the goal to build a clear image of the MSSD and its objectives, also though the provision of homogenous information to be presented by the websites of the different MAP components.
- b. Develop target-oriented communication efforts on MSSD and the implementation of its strategic elements, addressed to the needs of each group of stakeholders, for example:
 - Business and sustainability: the win-win scenarios;
 - Decision makers: the role of planning and implementing authorities in sustainability, examples that worked;
 - Broad public: how does sustainability affect everyday life of Mediterranean people, the role of citizens.
- c. building partnerships and cooperation with the key partners concerned by information and communication, and mobilising skills from different horizons, including the public and private sectors, academia and the civil society; and
- d. leveraging Information and Communication Technology by setting up an information gateway for the Mediterranean and the environment.

Means and Modus operandi

The IC Strategy is being formulated through an iterative participatory process. The development of a clear public image/message that lies at the foundation of the presentation of the MSSD and of the need to implement it is the cornerstone upon which the effort should be built.

A good understanding of the priorities and the issues by which the different target groups are concerned, and therefore sensitive, is of key importance for designing the target-driven I&C activities.

The design and development of InfoMAP - an infrastructure of distributed and coordinated components (hardware, software/applications, data, procedures, standards, etc.)- involves ICT specialists, information officers from the different RACs. Stakeholders and the regional user community that will benefit from a common UNEP/MAP information infrastructure are regularly consulted.

Responsibilities and coordination

While all the MAP components have a role to play in the production and dissemination of information, responsibility for MSSD related information appearing on behalf of MAP lay with the MAP Secretariat. While the various MAP components responsible for the different strategic elements clearly maintain their own information activities, the MAP Coordinating Unit (MEDU) guarantees the coherence with MSSD objectives, orientations and actions. Close collaboration

between all MAP components on communication and information issues is indispensable for the MAP Secretariat to ensure the coordination and congruence of messages.

Because of its mandate, INFO/RAC has the main technical responsibility for this strategic element. In close collaboration with the MAP Secretariat, INFO/RAC organises, manages and facilitates the chain of activities. It also monitors and reports on achievements. INFO/RAC constantly keeps informed and liaises with the MAP Coordinating Unit on developments and achievements.

Partnership and Synergy

In the complex cultural, political and social conditions that characterize the Mediterranean region it is essential to build long-term partnerships to promote effective communication and awareness-building among the variety of stakeholders. The IC strategy and InfoMAP currently being developed can provide a broad framework between existing information systems. Notwithstanding this potential to increase coherence, it will remain essential to maintain close collaboration with existing networks or institutions within (e.g. BP/RAC) or outside the MAP system¹⁷ and in particular NGOs and the Civil Society.

3.3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Monitoring and evaluation of the MSSD implementation is a critical tool to answer whether the route to the MSSD objectives is the right one, where on the route does one stand in terms of achievements and how should one proceed further toward the objectives. Monitoring implementation is a management tool. Although both are complementary, monitoring is not to be mistaken with the monitoring of sustainable development that is fostered by the implementation of the SD indicators spearheaded by BP/RAC.

Objectives

To maintain a regular monitoring procedure over MSSD implementation in order to improve implementation, to report on achievements, and to develop and manage future interventions¹⁸.

Strategic approach

Monitoring and evaluation of the MSSD implementation is the task of the MCSD, facilitated by the Secretariat. In order to fulfil its objective, the M&E effort must be based on clear and easy to use criteria/indicators, adapted to the strategic orientations of the MSSD implementation, combined with the assessment of progress on sustainable development, based on the indicators developed by BP/RAC and of the National Strategies, and rely on a knowledge baseline against which to monitor progress.

¹⁷ By way of example, to date INFO/RAC is involved in a series of partnership agreements and different alliances, not only with UNEP/MAP components, but also with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the European Commission (EC), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the United Nations System Staff College (UN), the European Environment Agency (EEA), EUROSTAT, ACCOBAMS and MEDWET.

¹⁸ by way of Five-year rolling work plans and Two-Year Work programmes

Means and Modus operandi

Monitoring implementation will combine different perspectives:

- monitoring achievements in the different strategic elements;
- monitoring synergies and consistencies between strategic elements; and
- monitoring collaboration with partners outside MAP system

Responsibility and coordination

In close collaboration with the Coordinating Unit, performance indicators will need to be developed by the MAP components responsible for the different strategic elements, in consultation with the concerned partners. These indicators would in particular consider the guiding principles (section 4) and the different strategic orientations (section 3.1). M&E will be closely associated with the MCSD work. Comparable information across the different interventions will need to be collected and analysed on a regular basis, according to a frequency to be determined by the Coordinating Unit¹⁹.

Partnership and synergy

The development of a joint M&E Plan may prove necessary to allow for effective coordination and synergies between the different RACs as well as partners outside MAP system. The M&E plan and its results will feed into the preparation of the work plan and work programme. The M&E plan will also guide the countries to report individually on MSSD national implementation. In this respect, it will be crucial to inform MCSD and partners in the region regularly on the steps and initiatives that each country has taken to implement MSSD. This information, compiled by the Secretariat will be discussed during MCSD meetings to identify specific support from the MAP components and other potential partners.

3.4 Central role of the MAP system

In the MSSD implementation, the countries remain the main actors. They are supported by MAP components. The role of MAP components is to make the MSSD work by encouraging, supporting and facilitating the development and/or implementation of national and regional processes, strategies and pilot actions or programmes. In this respect, MAP components interventions should always be seen as supporting national policy processes, contributing to the coherence of policies and programmes related to sustainable development, informing policy making with expert knowledge and bringing together a broad range of stakeholders i.e. state and local authorities, socio-economic actors, NGOs and civil society in general.

3.4.1 MAP Coordinating Unit

As indicated in the previous sections on strategic elements, the role of Secretariat is essential to the effective MSSD implementation. The Secretariat ensures the coordination of all MAP components in the different domains of intervention, particularly "Information and communication". For strategic and policy matters, the Secretariat ensures the interface between MAP and partners outside, and provides a point of contact for CPs with respect to MSSD implementation. In this respect, a major challenge for the Secretariat is to help countries that are also pressed to respond to other demanding regional and international processes,

¹⁹ e.g. on the basis of MCSD milestones and deadlines.

maintain coherence and to guide them on how to implement the MSSD nationally. The Secretariat coordination role also entails the overall monitoring of MSSD implementation²⁰ and the provision to stakeholders of information on the MSSD, NSSD, and MCSD work. The political role of the MCSD as it will emerge from the MAP evaluation process and the results of the drafting committee will be crucial to the MSSD implementation. However, the nature and functioning of the MCSD make the role of the Secretariat essential, as it is the unique entity to ensure continuity between the MCSD sessions.

Table 3. MSSD Implementation: Responsibilities

Strategic elements	Privileged strategic directions	Facilitating component
	1. mainstreaming 2. participation & partnerships 3. capacity building 4. knowledge management 5. resources mobilisation 6. pilot actions	
1. Support to NSSD formulation & implementation	1, 3, 2, 4, 5	MAP Secretariat
2. Synergies with other SD networks, organisations and policy process outside MAP	1, 2, 6, (3, 4, 5)	MAP Secretariat
3. Support to sector policy making and action programming • Water sector • Energy sector and climate change • Transport • Tourism • Agriculture and rural development • Urban development	4, 3, (2, 1) 1, 2, 3, 6	BP/RAC CP/RAC
Support to Sustainable Management of sea, coastal zones and marine resources		
• integrated management and development of coastal zones	1, 3, 4, 2, 5	PAP/RAC
• prevention and reduction of pollution from ships	3	REMPEC
• prevention and reduction of land based pollution	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	MEDPOL
• protection of marine and coastal biodiversity and marines resources	3, 4, 5 ,1	SPA/RAC
4. Information and Communication	4, (3,2)	INFO/RAC
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	1	MAP Secretariat BP/RAC

²⁰ Monitoring MSSD implementation is different from monitoring sustainable development in the Region through the indicators developed by BP/RAC.

3.4.2 RACs' common and differentiated roles

Following the adoption of the MSSD, the different RACs have aligned their programmes to support implementation. Beyond steering implementation in the relevant strategic elements and sharing information on their respective contributions, the RACs, under the coordination of the Secretariat, have to show how they converge and jointly contribute to addressing MSSD implementation. This convergence calls for joint planning and programming. It is essential that RACs clarify what they do, coordinate and oversee. The development of specific work programme and work plans for MSSD implementation will contribute to convey a clear message on who is doing what.

While retaining their respective mandates and fulfilling the recommendations of the CPs, the RACs have to work in synergies, particularly when identifying and building the human and information resources that are necessary to the MSSD implementation. In addition to regular RACs Directors meetings, the most appropriate place to foster these synergies appears to be the country level.

In addition to their direct involvement, the RACs have to act also as facilitators. To this end, when steering interventions in a specific domain, they have to develop strategic alliances and mobilize other relevant partners or networks. For instance MSSD related activities steered by different RACs could highly benefit from MCSD members' own networks.

3.4.3 Focal points

The MAP Focal Points, as representatives of the MAP CPs, constitute key actors of the MAP system. In many ways, the success of MSSD implementation at the country level relies on them heavily because they are the closest to the country political reality. As such, they have to be actively involved in the planning of the pertinent interventions and monitoring their implementation.

Besides planning, the national Focal Points can be at the forefront of mobilization of national-level or local-level stakeholders and act as the catalyst for the development of pilot actions that will demonstrate the implementation of the MSSD at a national level, following the priorities set by the NSSD, and with an aim to act as a multiplier.

4 Guiding principles for MSSD implementation

The implementation of MSSD interventions is to be guided by a set of principles. Action and interventions have to:

- be responsive to national needs and challenges and coherent with regional ones;
- avoid duplication with other interventions under different frameworks (coherence, harmonisation);
- take place at the level where they cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level (subsidiarity);
- bring about benefits related to the sustainable development that would not have accrued in the absence of MSSD (additionality);
- foster synergies between different levels (regional and national), and between actors and initiatives.

These criteria can be used to evaluate the quality of implementation.

In addition, and in order to prioritise the types and focus of pilot actions, the following criteria can be considered:

- Urgency of the action / response to emerging issues;
- Priority and importance of the target group addressed by the action;
- Availability of means needed to complete the action;
- Feasibility and expected impact if the action is completed.

5 Financial resources for implementation

The cost of implementation of the MSSD can only be estimated on the basis of the detailed biannual work programme of interventions. It should then be reflected in the MAP Programme Budget of the relevant biennium.

Beyond the budget allocation to the MCSD and MSSD relevant meetings and conferences, it is important to clarify in the aggregate MAP budget what part of the MAP financial resources currently goes to MSSD implementation. Indeed a good part of RACs activities provide direct support to implementation but are not necessarily labelled as such. This clarification would help: showing the overall contribution of the MAP system to MSSD implementation; assessing whether the MAP system (CU and MAP components) receives enough financial resources to bring effective support in its specific domains of intervention; and support the identification of additional resources and matching funds from outside the regular CPs contributions.

6 Phasing implementation

The implementation of MSSD calls for a time perspective that is commensurate to the challenges and harmonized with the major blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions (such as the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), as well as the UNCSO programme of work.

At a regional level, the MCSD programme of work as approved by the Contracting Parties in 2005 should constitute a basis for the development of the multi year implementation plan, and the more detailed plan of work for each biennium, so as to ensure full convergence between the work of the MCSD and the implementation of the MSSD.