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Introduction

At their Seventeenth Ordinary Meeting held in Paris from 8 to 10 February 2012, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols invited the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) to update the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region (SAP BIO) with the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and ecosystems approach.

As part of the implementation of Component 3 "Conservation of biological diversity: Implementation of SAP BIO and related National Action Plans (NAPs)", Sub-component 3.1 "Conservation of coastal and marine diversity through the development of a Mediterranean marine and coastal protected areas (MPAs) network" of the "Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem" (UNEP/MAP-FEM MedPartnership), RAC/SPA was invited to organize three SAP BIO Advisory Committee meetings and three SAP BIO National Correspondents meetings, during the five-year lifespan of the Project.

The RAC/SPA-implemented project part of the MedPartnership (MedMPAnet Project "Regional Project for the Development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) Network through the boosting of MPAs Creation and Management") is financially supported by the European Commission (EC), the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation to Development (AECID) and the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM).

As part of the Project, RAC/SPA must also organize Inception, Midterm and Final workshops. Having convened the Second Meeting of National Correspondents of SAP BIO/MedMPAnet Project Inception Workshop in Istanbul, Turkey, on 2 June 2010, RAC/SPA convened the Third Meeting of National Correspondents of SAP BIO/MedMPAnet Project Mid-term Workshop.

The meeting was held in Malaga (Spain) at the Hotel Barceló Málaga, Héroe de Sostoa, 2, 29002 Malaga, from 4 to 6 July 2012, with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain and the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med).

Agenda item 1 - Opening of the Meeting

The Meeting was opened on Wednesday, 4 July 2012 at 2.45 p.m. by Mr Francisco DE LA TORRE (Mayor of the City of Malaga), Mr José Luis BUCETA MILLER (Technical Director of the Division for the Protection of the Sea, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain), Mr Antonio TROYA (Director of the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation) and the Director of RAC/SPA. The hosts welcomed all participants to Malaga and wished them a successful meeting.

All the SAP BIO National Correspondents of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were invited to attend the Meeting or to designate their representative(s). The intergovernmental organizations and NGOs concerned were also invited to designate their representatives to the Meeting as observers. The list of participants is attached to this Report as annex I.

Agenda item 2 - Rules of Procedure

The internal rules adopted for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols (UNEP/IG.43/6, Appendix XI) would apply *mutatis mutandis* to the Meeting.

Agenda item 3 - Election of Officers

The Meeting elected a Chairperson, Mr José Luis BUCETA MILLER (Spain), two Vice-Chairpersons, Ms Milena BATAKOVIĆ (Montenegro) and Ms Saba GUELLOUZ (Tunisia), and a Rapporteur, Mr Aybars ALTIPARMAK (Turkey). Following the departure, owing to a prior engagement, of Mr BUCETA MILLER, Mr Javier PANTOJA (Spain) took the chair of the Meeting for the remaining sessions.

Agenda item 4 - Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

The Meeting adopted the provisional agenda proposed by the Secretariat and distributed as document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.371/1, and the annotated provisional agenda, document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.371/2. The Meeting adopted the timetable proposed at the end of annotated provisional agenda.

The Meeting's working languages were English and French and simultaneous interpretation into English, French and Spanish was available for all the plenary sessions.

Agenda Item 5 - SAP BIO National Correspondents membership for the biennium 2012-2013

The Secretariat presented the list of SAP BIO National Correspondents related to the previous biennial period 2010-2011. The Meeting discussed the updating of the list of National Correspondents for 2012 onwards.

Contracting Parties' delegates needing to hold internal consultations within their institutions regarding the update agreed to submit SAP BIO National Correspondents' nominations in writing to RAC/SPA after the Meeting, within the deadline agreed by the Meeting, namely 22 July 2012.

The final list of SAP BIO National Correspondents would be distributed after that deadline.

Agenda Item 6 - Introduction by RAC/SPA on the progress so far made in the implementation of SAP BIO

The Secretariat gave a brief historical description of the creation of SAP BIO, prepared by RAC/SPA and adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in Catania, Italy, in November 2003, to respond to the desire of Mediterranean countries to have a joint integrated strategy to address the complexity and extent of pressures on coastal and marine biodiversity. It recalled that RAC/SPA's mandate was to coordinate regional initiatives and activities for the implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol, strengthen the Parties' capacities in that domain, encourage cooperation with national, regional and international organizations, and mobilize the necessary means.

The methodology included the following elements: the national and regional evaluation of marine and coastal biodiversity based on existing inventories and databases, bearing in mind all pertinent international projects and agreements; the identification of the priority needs and

actions of the riparian countries; the involvement and participation of a large number of national and regional players. Since 2003, 30 regional priority actions (RPAs) had been undertaken together with 58 (+5) NAPs, with investment totalling US\$155 million (2003 estimate)

SAP BIO's main axes had been successfully integrated since 2004-2005 in RAC/SPA activities: inventorying, mapping and monitoring of the Mediterranean Sea as well as coastal biodiversity, habitat conservation, the preservation of species and sensitive sites, evaluation and mitigation of the impact of threats to biodiversity, research to fill knowledge gaps, in particular with regard to biodiversity, capacity-building to provide technical support and improved coordination. Much work remained to be done in the areas of information, mobilization and awareness-raising.

RAC/SPA was helping the countries to implement certain NAPs, evaluate their biodiversity (current state, impact of climate change, surveillance through the ecosystem approach), ensure optimal management of MAP projects under way in coastal areas and the open sea, elaborate regional institutional arrangements to improve synergies, and promote transversal and external initiatives through regional action plans.

At the same time the MedMPAnet Project was intended to meet the objective set by CBD in 2012 to create an ecologically coherent network of MPAs, bearing in mind priority actions identified through SAP BIO and NAPs, donor demands, the experience acquired by partners and, in general, any other problems with the selection, creation, management and assessment of Mediterranean MPAs and the conservation of marine resources. The regional component was strengthened by pilot projects in the field.

New prospects had arisen thanks to support by EC for the Barcelona Convention to implement the ecosystem approach and the creation of MPAs in open sea and deep sea areas (2008-2011), which would be entering a new phase. RAC/SPA had also assisted with the compilation of national surveys of vulnerability and the impacts of climate change on coastal and marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean region (2008-2009) and the state of biodiversity (2010-2011). A project for the rehabilitation of Mediterranean lagoons and wetlands was being created in the framework of a regional activity aimed at alleviating the impact of climate change and promote an ecosystem approach to aquaculture. The elaboration of potential climate change indicators for MPAs in the Mediterranean region (2011-13) should improve endeavours to gauge the impact of climate change on marine and coastal ecosystems.

The follow-up perspectives consisted mainly in preparing and adopting the update of SAP BIO for 2020, in keeping with the CBD's Aichi strategy and the ecosystem approach, which involved creating regional and national action plans and managing the investment portfolio, elaborating strategic NAPs for SAP BIO in line with national policies (promoting the integration of SAP BIO priorities into national ecological priorities). It also entailed elaborating new national and regional institutional mechanisms, formulating, adopting and implementing new programmes in full coordination with partners (sharing responsibilities, joint planning), defining a lasting and reliable funding strategy and contacting donors, by organizing a donor conference with a view to funding the project in an integral manner.

The participants took note of the Secretariat's presentation, making it clear that they would make comments on the evaluation of SAP BIO under the following agenda items.

The Meeting took note of the information provided with a view to contributing to it during the remaining sessions.

Agenda Item 7 - MedMPAnet Project implementation and follow-up

The Secretariat presented the state of progress and follow-up of the MedMPAnet Project, presented in document entitled "MedMPAnet Project implementation and follow-up" (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.371/3).

The National Correspondents and other participants were invited to consider the progress made in Project implementation and make recommendations on its future implementation.

The representative of Morocco welcomed the involvement of scientists in the Project development but suggested that jurists and elected representatives, including local officials, should also be involved in the future. He announced that the location of El Jebha in his country had just been awarded the status of pilot site under the MCA-Morocco Compact, an agreement between Morocco and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC); requested hard copies of the SPA guidelines on birds, turtles and cetaceans; and suggested that it might be useful for RAC/SPA to provide Contracting Parties with more assistance in creating SPAs, by means of a standard protocol. He urged more emphasis on governance in order to protect biodiversity in the region. The Secretariat drew attention to the existence of guidelines for creating SPAs, which could be downloaded from the website, albeit in English only, but they would consider elaborating a protocol-type tool. RAC/SPA had always drawn on the full arsenal of tools offered under the Barcelona Convention and would continue to do so in relation to MedMPAnet. The specific guidelines could also be downloaded but hard copies could be sent on request.

The representatives of Albania, Croatia and Montenegro provided information on their national and regional activities related to the Project, both those already implemented and those planned. They welcomed the useful cooperation with RAC/SPA in areas such as fauna and flora protection, and legislative and institutional set-ups. At the request of the representative of Montenegro, the Secretariat promised to correct the erroneous reference to the language of awareness-raising materials produced in Montenegro, as well as that a detailed work plan for future activities of the Project will be submitted by RAC/SPA. The Chair held up the example of projects in Montenegro which had entailed cooperation between the various UNEP/MAP regional activity centres. The representative of Albania explained that there had been delays in the implementation of activities originally planned in the frame of MPANet project in creating the country's first MPA, the Karaburun-Sazan National Marine Park, which was designated in 2010. Thus another proposed site designation to receive the MPANet project support is in the pipeline after bilateral discussion with RAC/SPA staff.

The representative of the European Commission proposed that future progress reports should feature maps plotting the location of existing and potential MPAs. He also emphasized the importance of clear and accurate indicators in respect of progress on MPAs. He wondered whether preparing standardized guidelines on creating MPAs might be a waste of resources, since there was no one-size-fits-all solution and the existing literature contained relevant advice. The representative of Spain stressed the need for properly prepared and realistically budgeted MPAs, since quality was more important than quantity. The observer for the Conservatoire du Littoral pointed to the imbalance between the identification of MPAs and their implementation, often owing to a lack of management experience in the countries concerned. More capacity-building was needed to redress the balance between theory, experience on the ground and the actual implementation of MPAs.

In response to a question from the representative of Morocco concerning the monitoring of SPAMIs by SPA/RAC, the Director of SPA/RAC explained the distinction between SPAs and SPAMIs in that regard. In the case of SPAs, SPA/RAC offered countries assistance but had no responsibility for ensuring that criteria were met.

Each delegation concerned by the MedMPAnet Project was invited to hold a bilateral workshop meeting with the Project officers on the afternoon of Friday, 6 July 2012, after the Meeting's end.

Agenda Item 8 - Open Seas SPAMIs Project implementation and its new follow-up phase III

Referring to the pertinent sections of the document entitled "Joint Management between the Mediterranean Action Plan and the European Commission on the identification of potential sites for creating SPAMIs in the open seas, including the deep seas" (Results of the second phase project – Objectives and outlines of the third phase project) (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.371/4), the Secretariat presented the state of implementation of the Open Seas SPAMIs Project during its two previous phases and the follow-up planned during phase III.

It was specified that the Project was funded by the EC and Mediterranean Trust Fund and that the open seas/deep seas were a relatively new theme for SPA/RAC. In the first phase specific data had been collected, sub-regions within the Mediterranean basin had been assessed and ecologically or biologically significant areas had been identified. Inter alia, studies on marine birds, fisheries conservation management and vulnerable ecosystems had been conducted. It was hoped that more information be made available on the seas off the coast of Libya and the eastern Mediterranean in general. The main aims of the second phase had been to facilitate the process of designating areas within the identified sites as potential SPAMIs and to instigate coordination between neighbouring countries through ad hoc working groups. Focus had been given to the Alboran Sea and Gulf of Lions. A legal analysis had revealed the complexity of the context. A procedure had been elaborated to allow including preliminary declarations of proposed open seas SPAMIs in the focal points meeting reports on Specially Protected Areas.

The third phase of the Project was being designed around two strategic orientations: improving the state of knowledge, in particular in the eastern Mediterranean, and building a framework with countries and organizations to facilitate the joint establishment of open sea/deep sea SPAMIs. Scientific workshops would be organized; oceanographic campaigns would be catalyzed; more work would be done on EBSAs; a joint socio-economic evaluation of fisheries in pelagic ecosystems and deep benthic habitats would be carried out; and support would be given to sub-regional working groups for data collection and the preparation of SPAMI proposals (it was stressed that funding for that support was still in the pipeline). Details were given of plans for synergies and joint strategies with other organizations (IUCN canyons initiative), ACCOBAMS, Oceana MedNet, GFCM FRAs, MedPAN) and for a new focus on the Siculo-Tunisian channel/Tunisian Plateau and the Adriatic Sea.

The Meeting was invited to consider the state of progress of the Project and make recommendations on its future implementation and the activation of Phase III, with emphasis on the commitment by Mediterranean riparian countries to the openseas/deep sea areas multi-party designation and management approach.

The representative of Spain stated that his country had been active in the Project from the outset and was particularly concerned with work on the Alboran Sea and Gulf of Lions. He thanked RAC/SPA for fostering talks between his country and France in respect of the latter

zone; Spain was interested in a successful outcome with a view to coordinating the management of open sea resources and to smooth the issues of jurisdictional waters; he lamented the absence of a delegate from France at the Meeting. Pointing out that many jurisdictional limits in the open seas had not yet been defined, he warned that the process might be lengthy and it would be difficult to meet deadlines. He mentioned, in particular, his country's desire to focus on the Cap de Creus canyon and also the protection of birds in the area, in the context of Natura 2000. Although the identification of SPAMIs was important, other instruments for the administration of deep and open sea areas were equally useful and not all effort should be concentrated on the identification of protected areas.

The representative of Morocco announced that a survey to be carried out in Alboran Sea 2012, organized by SPA/RAC and undertaken by Oceana was awaiting the support of his foreign ministry. Setting up transnational SPAMIs was a challenging objective and would prove highly complex in geopolitical terms, since the zones of the Mediterranean were a veritable patchwork. He recalled an incident where geopolitical sensitivities had previously thwarted a project to protect endangered bird species. Biodiversity must be emphasized in the Project and countries should be brought together over what united rather than divided them. With regard to the continental shelf one solution could be the application of existing provisional agreements, some of which had lasted for decades. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea might offer useful inspiration to solve matters of international delineations.

The representative of Turkey urged RAC/SPA to take internationally sensitive areas into account at every stage of the Project. The representative of Israel said that the protection of deep seas in the eastern Mediterranean had become even more urgent since the discovery of offshore oil and gas; she suggested that the industry be involved as a partner in the Project-related research. Referring to the political transition under way in her country and the broader region, the representative of Tunisia said that it would be useful to convince users of marine resources in those areas of the economic advantages of new protected areas.

The representative of the European Commission warned that the Commission was concerned that the projects which it funded must bear tangible results. The Commission had been funding the Project for many years and, without further significant progress, it would consider re-allocating the funds to areas where institutional support would be more tangible. He suggested that regional fisheries organizations other than GFCM should be included in the process, including the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), which had held an interesting workshop on by-catch. The International Seabed Authority could help with impact assessments in respect of oil and gas exploration. He lamented the recent impasse in talks between France and Spain on creating a SPAMI in the Gulf of Lions and he, too, regretted the absence of a French delegation at the Meeting. In response to an appeal for patience from certain representatives, he said that the Commission's spending was tightly overseen by the European Parliament, which was accountable to every European taxpayer, and in the current economic climate, there was strong pressure to ensure that all expenditure bore measurable fruits.

The observer for FAO said that his organization's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department had a programme on governance in the deep and open seas approved by the Committee on Fisheries in 2009. He recalled the separation of powers between fisheries and environment ministries; since fisheries were one of the main economic activities in the deep seas, FAO focused on the elaboration of international guidelines for the management of fisheries in the open seas. He drew attention to national research projects, such as Spain's work on the protection of sensitive populations and protected species, which might help other administrations make decisions. Many other European Union Member States had been determining the state of deep-sea ecosystems and he wondered if SPA/RAC had contacted them. FAO and other international

organizations were working on open sea protocols along with projects aimed at encouraging sustainable development and environmental protection; international research was necessary as local studies gave an incomplete picture. He stressed the importance of synergy between the many organizations and programmes, in part because that would attract donors. Finally he appealed for more consultations in the early stages of such projects.

The Secretariat recalled that, despite considerable progress in recent years, only 2-3% of the Mediterranean was protected. In order to achieve the CBD objective of 10% by 2020, they would have to precede with deep sea and open sea SPAMIs. The Secretariat understood the Commission's impatience and its rigorous control of funding, but rejected the notion that the Project had not borne fruit: a huge volume of information had been collected, scientific data had been gathered and processed, and awareness of the need for governance in the open seas had been raised. The lengthy process of data-collection and impact studies had been necessary for the eventual creation of open sea and deep sea SPAMIs. He recalled that the Pelagos Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals, declared a SPAMI in 2001, had taken many years to be created. CBD had requested information on EBSAs from all regional bodies and the results of preparations for the SPA/RAC Project had been greatly appreciated by the participants in the latest CBD CoP. The Project Steering Committee was open to any relevant players, including ICCAT. The CBD register of ecologically or biologically significant areas was a broadly defined scientific list of valuable marine sites and implied no political exigencies.

Agenda item 9 - Pilot proposal related to climate change impacts mitigation and Ecosystem Approach to management of human activities: Mediterranean wetlands rehabilitation project

The Secretariat presented a project concept on aquaculture management in coastal wetlands, developed in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.371/Inf.3 ("Proposal related to climate change impacts mitigation and Ecosystem Approach to management of aquaculture: Mediterranean wetlands and lagoons rehabilitation project concept") and its related case study, presented in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.371/Inf.4 ("Ecosystem approach to aquaculture management and biodiversity conservation in a Mediterranean coastal wetland: case study of Doñana marshes (Andalucia, Spain)").

The Secretariat stressed the importance of coastal wetlands, of which there were many in the Mediterranean. They faced the diverse pressures of urban development, tourism and pollution, as well as invasive species and global warming, such that half of those ecosystems had become unproductive owing to human activity and, over the centuries, had been turned into veritable deserts. Efforts were needed to rehabilitate those degraded wetlands by reconstituting the functionality of the original ecosystem.

One solution was to apply extensive aquaculture by recreating water flows in order to restore the food chain, needed for biodiversity. That virtuous circle would improve water quality through filtering and natural purification under the influence of the flora and fauna thus reconstituted. That undertaking was perfectly in keeping with the objectives of SAP BIO, in the framework of cooperation with IUCN and FAO, as it would help to re-establish endangered balances and reconcile conservation with sustainable development. It implied a participatory dialogue on restoring traditions and designing integrated exploitation models. Initially the experiment would be limited to five pilot sites (for cost reasons), to be selected from a list covering the 21 countries. The project architecture might consist of several local, national and regional modules elaborated according to a participatory process. With regard to the timetable, there might be an initial phase of two years, a five-year implementation phase and a seven-year outcome evaluation and expansion phase. Funding might come from institutions such as UNDP, the EC, World Bank, GEF, the African Development Bank and European national cooperation agencies

active in the region.

Meanwhile, the aquaculture farm at Doñana, at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River, albeit on the Atlantic coast of Spain, was a perfect example of what could be achieved. In a matter of two decades, the dried-up Doñana marshland had been transformed into an aquaculture farm, covering 3000 hectares and surrounded by 4500 hectares of livestock pasture and rice fields. A complete network of irrigation and drainage allowed water flows, depth and salinity to be controlled, guaranteeing the system's stability. The proliferation of plankton and other micro-organisms fostered aquaculture, which produced 1500 tonnes of top quality fish every year. Not only was the activity highly profitable, but it also had created around 100 jobs locally and restored the conditions for traditional fisheries. At the same time, the restoration of coastal habitats had turned Doñana into a genuine ecological sanctuary for birds, which settled there in their hundreds of thousands in the dry season. Endangered species thus found a refuge without the need for direct human action for that scope. Naturally RAC/SPA worked closely with other bodies such as MedWet, IUCN, and GFCM for the creation of that project.

The Chair underscored the importance of the Project, which implied close consultation and cooperation between the national authorities and local communities.

The Meeting was invited to consider the project proposal and evaluate its full implementation options in the region. Delegates were invited to offer ideas for feasible pilot sites in their own country for the future implementation of the project.

A representative stressed the utmost importance of the problem, which called into question the national priorities, since a whole set of interferences affected threatened migratory species, in particular. It raised the matter of governance for an integrated management of coastal areas, entailing the mobilization of all MAP bodies, not least PAP RAC in Split, Croatia.

The representative of Turkey deplored the deficit of expertise on brackish waters in the region and suggested two candidate wetlands for his country, a delta and lagoon in the south. The representative of Croatia mentioned her country's efforts to create a network and collect data with the assistance of RAMSAR and Natura 2000. The representative of Libya, praising the project, wondered whether it might not be extended to inland wetlands.

The Secretariat recalled that the Barcelona Convention applied exclusively to coasts and marine areas. The project's aim was to rehabilitate degraded areas under direct marine influence by regularizing salt water flows.

The observer for MedWet expressed agreement with the aims of a project designed to promote socio-economic development at the local level and protect biodiversity. He was willing to cooperate with the rehabilitation of degraded wetlands, which above all should not mean their recovery for the purpose of intensive exploitation.

The Secretariat reasserted the need to take action in wetlands to promote biodiversity and defend endangered species and protected areas. The project was one of RAC/SPA's priorities since, in the South in particular, too many degraded wetlands were threatened by urban development or, worse still, had become huge rubbish dumps. It was too late for prevention but cooperation was still possible with PAP/RAC and other centres to restore the ecosystems to their original functions in view of their considerable contribution to biodiversity. The project was a key element of SAP BIO action for the future.

Responding to the countries' representatives, the UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator, said that it was vital for all MAP components to agree to work together for the project's success.

Agenda item 10 - Evaluation of SAP BIO implementation by the Contracting Parties and regional bodies

In accordance with document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.359/Inf.5 (“Forms for the evaluation of SAP BIO implementation by the Contracting Parties and regional bodies”), the Contracting Parties (and those regional bodies yet to do so) were requested to provide the Secretariat (in electronic and hard copies, if possible) with their contributions for completing the forms relating to the SAP BIO’s state of progress, with regard to regional priorities, to serve as the basic information needed for the evaluation of SAP BIO implementation.

The Contracting Parties gave a brief oral presentation of the progress made by their country/organization in implementing their priorities and National Action Plans (NAPs) and explaining any contributions they had made to the achievement of the regional priorities of SAP BIO since its adoption date in 2003, following the pertinent sections of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.359/Inf.5.

The representative of Albania informed the meeting of efforts in her country aimed at the improvement of knowledge of coastal and marine biodiversity. Analysis and evaluation at the national level had led to the publication of Albania’s first red list of flora and fauna in 2007; the first five-year review was being conducted. She mentioned significant cooperation with MedWet and a Greek NGO resulting in a publication on wetlands. The third Ramsar site in Albania had been designated in 2005. She also mentioned an EC-funded project to strengthen the national monitoring system. Turning to MPAs, she noted that national coverage had increased from 5.8% in 2005 to over 15% in 2012. Albania hoped to help to meet the CBD’s 10% target for 2020. Much progress had been made in the field of management plans and capacity-building, with emphasis on migratory birds. Despite limited financial and human resources, action had been taken to protect the Dalmatian pelican. The country’s main weak point was implementation but legislation was being elaborated and revised in line with the EU-Albania Stabilization and Association Agreement and CITES guidelines.

The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina regretted that nothing had been done in his country to protect the coastal area, which was only 25 km long and not a government priority. Nor were there any red lists of fauna and flora; scientific and NGO research had to be relied on. A major leap forward was the adoption of new national legislation on nature protection, which was being implemented. The country’s biggest wetland, the Ramsar site of Hutovo Blato had been destroyed by fire in 2011. Nothing had been done to restore what had been a major nesting site for marine birds. Under Natura 2000, all potential protection sites in the country had been inventoried by an NGO, which had unfortunately lacked the necessary funding to include underwater coastal caves.

The representative of Croatia referred to the National biodiversity strategy and action plan adopted by parliament in 2008; marine protection was a horizontal theme in different chapters. NBSAP revision will start this year aiming to meet CBD and EU targets on biodiversity. The MedPAN South Project is contributing to marine and coastal conservation helping 3 national parks and 2 nature parks in preparation of Management plans. Management plans are at the final draft stage. A national ecological network with broad coverage provided corridors for sea turtles and migratory birds, with another project programme of work for finalization of marine Natura 2000 is prepared, proposal of monitoring programme is prepared (monitoring protocols have to be developed) guidelines for assessment of conservation status for habitats and species, monitoring and reporting capacity building as well as capacity building of divers for inventory was conducted. Results of this project will serve as the basis for the preparation for larger scale mapping of marine species and habitat types for designation of Natura 2000

network in the in marine waters.

The country's Natura 2000 proposal is accessible interactively on the Internet, as well as a Web based application for import data on marine habitats is prepared. Regarding implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive Croatia recently prepared initial assessment of the current environmental status of the waters concerned and the environmental impact of human activities.

Knowledge on biodiversity is improved with inventory of marine biodiversity. This would be contribution to the elaboration of the national ecological network and preparation of guidelines for the sustainable use of natural resources in agriculture, fishery and tourism.

Much emphasis had been laid on the preservation of endangered species, on the basis of red lists and by producing comprehensive publications on flora and fauna.

The representative of Cyprus mentioned that her country had designated six MPAs, meeting the EC Habitat Directive and the SPA Protocol. The areas covered important biotopes and protected marine turtles, Posidonia beds and monk seals. A detailed inventory of fauna and flora and habitats had been carried out. A preliminary management plan had been drafted and negotiations were taking place with other stakeholders to finalize it by the end of 2012. Cyprus had overseen systematic monitoring of marine turtles since 1978 to protect turtles and their nesting sites and had monitored monk seal habitats on the island; she thanked RAC/SPA for its recent workshop on the latter. Posidonia bed mapping in Cypriot coastal waters had been taking place; the project was due for completion in 2013. There were also national programmes on the impacts of human activities on the marine environment, including aquaculture. Fish farmers were legally required to carry out environmental controls, especially on macrobenthos. Cyprus had carried out an inventory of invasive coastal species and monitored stocks of fish species. Research was needed to fill gaps in knowledge of the marine environment; a priority had been set for research into deep sea ecosystems.

The representative of EC outlined the main European Union environmental legislation in effect since SAP BIO's adoption in 2003, which would help to guide the process for the Programme's revision. They were the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, to be applied in connection with the Aichi targets agreed in Nagoya; the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC), a broad legal framework based upon 11 descriptors; the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora), under which a network of marine protected areas would be set up; and the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000, establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy) committing member States to achieving a good qualitative and quantitative status of all water bodies, including marine waters up to one nautical mile from the shore.

The representative of Israel said that in 2011 her country had begun to implement a comprehensive policy to protect the coastal environment, after five years' preparation. Details of the policy were available on the Internet in Hebrew only but should be translated into English within a few months. Based on a division of Israel's territorial waters into zones, it focused on enforcement, awareness-raising and capacity-building. The Israel Marine Data Center was open to the public and allowed planners to gain access to information for improving marine planning. Under a master plan for MPAs drafted in accordance with the Barcelona Convention criteria 20% of territorial waters would be protected. The MPA planning process was under way but it was estimated that the MPAs would not be operational for another decade. Extensive surveys had been conducted and the information would be share with interested parties. They had revealed the existence of sponge gardens and deep coral reefs in Israeli waters. She hoped the SPA/BD Protocol would soon be ratified by the Israeli Government.

The representative of Italy said that four further MPAs had been established in his country since

2009, bringing the total to 27, plus the two archaeological marine parks belonging to the same network of MPAs. Approximately 700km of Italy's coasts are protected following national legislation establishing MPAs. Three new SPAMIs have also been identified. During the International Year of Biodiversity Italy has adopted its national biodiversity strategy based on 3 main key issues: "Biodiversity and ecosystem services", "Biodiversity and global changes" and "Biodiversity and economical politics". These key issues are achieved through 15 main "working areas"; some of these are strictly related to SAP-BIO as: "Species, habitats and landscape", "Protected areas", "Marine environment" and "Tourism". Italy has begun implementing the Strategy in 2011 and the first biennial report is being prepared. Some initiatives were started to adopt action plans to protect marine species, i.e. the interministerial working group for the adoption of a national action plan for elasmobranchs, due for completion in 2013. Italy has also begun implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC), a broad legal framework based upon 11 descriptors and on a series of marine biodiversity indicators related in particular to the descriptors 1, 2, 3, 4 that should be valuable for a following possible application at the regional level.

The representative of Libya said that his country had been isolated from the rest of the world but had returned to the international arena. Earlier cooperation between his country and SPA/RAC had been on an individual basis and unfortunately much of the relevant data was irretrievable. He had no valid data on the protected sites in Libya but could report that work was continuing on the protection of threatened species, such as the monk seal, turtles and migratory birds. He hoped that at future meetings, a brighter and clearer picture of the situation in his country would be presented.

The representative of Monaco recalled that the small principality had only 3km of coast, which presented the advantage of ease of quick intervention. The State looked seaward in economic and urbanistic terms, putting pressure on the marine environment. Ecological inventorying and monitoring were conducted with the help of civil associations. Posidonia bed markers placed three decades earlier had been checked, revealing no overall regression. Through regular studies monitoring offshore corals, urban pressures had been detected and plans were afoot for a cleansing operation. There was no government strategy on marine biodiversity for institutional reasons. He thanked RAC/SPA for its help with reporting on ecosystems and pressures on biodiversity. Coastal habitats would be mapped, with emphasis on red and black coral reefs. In 2011, Monaco had updated its laws on fisheries and protected species after many years of work. An environmental code was due for completion in 2013; it contained a major chapter on the environment, and protected wildlife and habitats in particular, and would be binding. The Monegasque Government was interested in regional cooperation and had assisted projects and workshops in other countries, including Slovenia and Tunisia.

In response to a request from the representative of Monaco, the Secretariat provided information on mapping guidelines and nomenclatures for marine habitats. SPA/RAC had the most exhaustive list of any organization and comprehensive information was accessible in a page on the website.

The representative of Montenegro stressed the importance of implementing the Programme in her country, whose national sustainable development strategy had been adopted in 2007, followed three years later by a national biodiversity strategy. Montenegro had focused on inventorying and mapping sensitive areas since 2008, Cooperation had begun with the Italian authorities to set up first marine protected area in Montenegro. The Government had instigated a project aimed at setting up the country's first MPA. Capacity-building and improved management of the different Projects had been the subject of much work, aimed at providing information for decision-makers and ensuring coordination between projects. A database had been created on flora and fauna species for protection on about 15 locations. There was a

specific action plan to protect Dalmatian pelicans, including regular monitoring. The assessment of coastal protected areas had begun in 2011 and had been extended to other protected areas in 2012. Since Montenegro intended to keep improving implementation of the Programme, its planned activities included seeking donors, making budget projections and holding capacity-building and training workshops.

The representatives of Morocco recalled the repeated appeals by the King for legislation on environmental protection and sustainable development. Morocco had consistently complied with the requirement for biennial national studies under the Barcelona Convention. An inventory produced for the national strategy for wetlands was being finalized. Morocco was in the second phase of identifying MPAs. Fisheries were a key sector and Morocco had national plans targeting pelagic, octopus and seaweed fisheries and had banned certain fishing methods. The approval of SPAMIs was mentioned along with the creation of an intercontinental biosphere reserve by the governments of Morocco and Andalusia, with UNESCO support. New legislation on protected areas, especially MPAs, and pollution mitigation had been passed or reinforced. Special efforts were being directed to aquaculture, with a new institution created in 2011, the National Agency for the Development of Aquaculture. There was also a national strategy on deep sea species. Morocco would host a workshop in connection with the Aichi strategy. Information was provided on the identification of protected wetland sites. Legislation had been passed to fight illegal trade in wildlife, under CITES. Morocco and the United States of America had been cooperating on the drafting of a red list of species, with a project to train customs officers, and a tourism development plan for the protection of national parks. Local authorities and civil society had been involved in the legislative process in the field of environmental protection from the outset.

The representative of Spain said that considerable progress had been notched up in terms of norms on biodiversity protection. The legislation on the natural heritage and biodiversity and a marine environmental protection law formed the framework of State action to regulate the planning of the marine environment and biodiversity; there was a national plan for biodiversity, too. Spain had been applying the EU strategy guidelines for planning and measures in various economic sectors. An extensive biodiversity inventory had been built up along with an inventory on all wetlands. A nationwide inventory on habitats and species was being developed together a new inventory on the categories of all marine species. A national reference list of different types of marine habitats had been approved. Periodic analyses of the situation regarding some endangered species had resulted in specific protection plans. MPAs had been identified on the Atlantic coast but none on the Mediterranean seaboard. The regional authorities had begun work on a plan to protect a network of protected areas. He gave information of protection activities conducted in connection with Natura 2000 and the European Union. Spain intended to meet all the targets for 2020. He singled out activities to monitor and protect *Posidonia* beds and, in the framework of ACCOBAMS, to conserve cetaceans.

The representative of Tunisia said that her country had updated its biodiversity strategy and established its red list of species. Inventorying and mapping had covered most of the territory, including submarine sites. MPAs had been identified and the first mapping of *Posidonia* beds had been conducted along with coral reefs in the north, by the National Institute of the Sea. The desired level of classification of protected sites had not been reached but laws had been passed on the creation and management of MPAs and coastal sites; for the latter a special coastal agency had been set up, which often delegated powers to municipalities and NGOs. MPAs had their own management plan and funding from international sources, in particular France and Monaco, had been forthcoming for the protection of wetlands. With RAC/SPA help, Tunisia had been focusing on endangered species such as sea turtles and monk seals, along with seabirds. Erosion and the impact of climate change had been studied, and projects had been conducted to protect coastal dunes within a strategic plan. Tunisia was, however, hard pressed to contain

tourism development; there had been illegal tourist visits to the protected site of the island of Zembra. In 2013, a new project on fisheries would be started. Other activities concerned educational activities for the management of coastal areas and MPAs.

The representative of Turkey said that his country's national strategy included a biodiversity chapter on the marine environment. New legislation in that regard was before parliament. A GEF-supported project aimed at strengthening the national MPA system was on-going and scientific data had been collected and a database would be created to contain all the data available. A total of 46 sensitive areas had been identified along the Mediterranean coast and, once more scientific data became available, further MPAs would be added. Approximately 300 species had been identified for a Mediterranean inventory and special research activities focused on islands and islets. A centre for sea turtle conservation had been opened in Mersin. A research centre for the monk seal was planned and a suitable venue was being sought; the national action plan on that species had been revised and translated into English. Coastal wetlands inventories had been completed; management plans for most had been prepared and others were on the way.

The regional organizations which are members of the SAP BIO Advisory Committee presented the progress made in implementing the SAP BIO regional priorities at regional and/or national levels, following the pertinent sections of the submitted forms

The observer from GFCM said that the relevant activities had been undertaken by the Commission. Some resulted in the adoption of decisions that were binding on Contracting Parties, including measures to restrict fishing and protect cetaceans, seaweeds, turtles, corals and seabirds. He also added that a MoU had been signed between GFCM and UNEP/MAP at the Commission's 36th Session, held in Marrakesh, Morocco, in May 2012. A document due to be finalized shortly in Athens would define the modalities of cooperation under this MoU.

The observer for ACCOBAMS described the relevant activities initiated by the secretariat and the member countries. SAP BIO was a very broad programme and they should do more to federate efforts. The new open seas dimension was of special importance for the protection of cetaceans. ACCOBAMS had organized several regional workshops to discuss countries' priorities for the next five years. She requested closer synergies between SAP BIO and the programmes of the partner organizations aided by bilateral meetings, while new partners should be involved in the process in the future. Areas of special importance in the Mediterranean had been identified; a whale-watching label had been created; the key survey initiative had determined numbers of common and bottlenose dolphins and fin whales; thematic workshops had been staged; a toolkit for raising public awareness had been produced and countries had been offered assistance with training, studies and their national action plans. She also provided information on inventorying, mapping and monitoring, plus research conducted to fill knowledge gaps on biodiversity. Finally, she mentioned her organization's capacity-building projects aimed at marine veterinarians.

The observer for Conservatoire du Littoral said that his organization was dedicated to providing institutional, technical and legal support, mostly in the western Mediterranean and, above all, in the Maghreb. For many years those countries had faced difficulties in implementing protection and conservation measures. In recent years it had extended its work from coastal areas and wetland to include small islands. The Conservatoire suggested processes and provisions for the management of protected areas, building cooperation between scientists, managers and associations, who relied on each other in order to operate effectively. Young teams in the Maghreb countries often found it hard to start their activities and the Conservatoire offered them training, often in the field. He mentioned a number of specific projects carried out in Italy, Malta, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.

The observer from FAO said that Fisheries and Aquaculture Department is currently developing the capacity of small-scale fishing communities to participate in the management and monitoring of fisheries activities in selected countries. The selected area is the National Park of Al Hoceima, Morocco, and the main aims are improving the involvement and participation of local artisanal fishermen in the monitoring of fisheries activity; the development of a monitoring plan for artisanal fisheries inside the park; capacity-building and training of fishermen's organizations in the development of project proposals and project management development; the production of scientific data to support the monitoring plan and MPA management; the mapping of fishing grounds and ichthyoplankton distribution; and the production of a bathymetric map. The project is a pilot for testing the conceptual means of supporting countries with improving their national monitoring systems and data collection on fisheries and related activities within a national MPA, while implementing the Ecosystem approach to Fisheries Management and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The observer for IUCN-Med said that her organization has recently being focused on the assessment of conservation status of several marine species groups (Red List of cartilaginous fishes, cetaceans, seagrasses and cnidarians), among other elements of biodiversity. They worked mainly in priority biodiversity hotspot areas (ie. Sea mountains and marine canyons) around the Mediterranean particularly North African countries, Lebanon, Spain and elsewhere. IUCN-Med worked closely with other regional organisations such as MedPAN on MPA management evaluation, capacity building programmes, climate change impacts as well as monitoring of invasive species. Furthermore, they covered other aspects related to the conservation and sustainable development such as marine and coastal governance, fisheries, maritime traffic as well as action programme towards endangered species and habitats are t. From these works, IUCN-Med prepares a wide range of publications which attempted to publish in as many languages as possible.

The observer for MedWet said that for two decades his organization had concentrated on producing tools for use in inventorying and monitoring. It had produced two manuals on different aspects of inventories, in 1996 and 2008. The later version included guidelines for data collection on habitats and descriptions of wetlands mapping. An online database allowed users to store and retrieve data. MedWet had also produced a series of reports and set up an observatory of Mediterranean wetlands based on its inventories. One of its activities of particular relevance to SAP BIO was the "living planet index", a methodology for assessing the state of biodiversity worldwide. It had also worked on improving data, as they varied from country to country or species to species. He also mentioned the Globwetland project, an initiative led by the European Space Agency in collaboration with the Ramsar Convention secretariat, which used remote sensing to map wetlands in a way that facilitated management and monitoring. A number of sites around the region had been mapped and the project was due to be extended to the rest of the Mediterranean.

The observer for MedPAN provided some information on the relatively new programmes of her organization. She stressed cooperation with other organizations, many of which were represented at the Meeting. She stressed that most of its activities were derived from the Barcelona Convention, other international agreements and European Union policy. MedPan was involved in an analysis of marine protected areas in the Mediterranean and would present a new database on protected areas by the end of 2012. Support for small projects, capacity-building and communication were its main priorities. Her organization helped provide a nexus between project managers and international and regional structures, which the former often found difficult to achieve alone. Over the next five years, MedPAN was due to work on its own strategy, including a scientific strategy that would be directly linked to SAP BIO. She presented detailed information on the Mediterranean MPA Forum to be held in Antalya, Turkey, from 25 to

28 November 2012, to which all participants were cordially invited.

The Secretariat opened a discussion on the methodology and procedure to be used in evaluating the SAP BIO status of implementation and achievements to date by the Contracting Parties and the regional bodies concerned. Information on those actions would be collected in order to quantify the achievements by countries, sub-regions and the region as a whole.

In response to a request from the Chair for a calendar for the transmission of information on implementation and achievements to date, the Secretariat said that the summer vacations and Ramadan needed to be taken into account, since they would result in temporary suspension of activity in official institutions. The forms would be dispatched over the summer and all documentation should be received by the end of September 2012 at the latest. The Secretariat would process the information and produce a synthetic document in time for the next meeting of focal points.

When the representative of Italy suggested that the deadline was too soon, in view of the task of collecting national information and the summer breaks, the Director of RAC/SPA recalled that the revised SAP BIO must be ready for the Focal Points meeting (schedule for June 2013), so that a final draft could be presented for adoption at the CoP at the end of 2013. The latter part of 2012 would therefore be needed for the analysis and evaluation of the information, to enable SAP BIO to be revised in time for the Focal Points meeting, which effectively implied having a draft SAP BIO ready by May 2013. The existing SAP BIO had two elements: one for RAC/SPA and the other for the countries to implement and it should be decided whether the new SAP BIO would have the same structure. The Deputy Coordinator stressed the desire of the Contracting Parties to have a revised SAP BIO at their next CoP and pleaded for the process to be speeded up.

The representative of Spain recalled that the Contracting Parties also had the requirement to submit a biannual document on the application of biodiversity requirements and efforts risked being duplicated. The Director suggested that the submission of information had been simplified by the forms produced for that purpose and should not take an inordinate length of time. The revision stage would entail determining the national and regional priorities and working out national and regional action plans, either in group meetings or bilaterally, but the whole process should be completed within the deadlines already outlined. The representative of EC said that a priority should be to determine which countries or organizations required special attention in order to resolve specific points by means of bilateral contacts.

It was agreed that the national forms would be filled in and conveyed to the Secretariat by the end of September 2012 and the initial evaluation would be completed by the Secretariat by the end of November 2012. The Chair suggested that direct contacts be made by electronic means, to avoid the holding of meetings. The full analysis at regional level should ideally be ready by the beginning of 2013. The Director stressed the importance of cooperation with the National Correspondents throughout the evaluation process.

The Director added that a consultant would be needed to assist the Secretariat with the heavy task of SAP BIO evaluation; a small budget had been earmarked to that end. In response to the needs of French-speaking countries, the Secretariat promised that the French version of the relevant documents would be sent to those requesting them within a week. The representatives of EC and of other countries welcomed the announcement of the appointment of a person or institution on a consultancy basis and asked for the terms of reference under which it would be engaged, suggesting that the consultant person or institution should be retained until the final draft of the updated SAP BIO. The Director said that the terms of reference would be communicated and the process of engagement would be conducted in close cooperation with

the partners; he suggested that two consultants might be necessary but that it would be preferable for the same consultant to accompany the process until its finality.

One representative expressed the fear that the suggested engagement process, albeit admirably transparent, might take too long; the important aim was to select someone capable of analysing all the information efficiently. Other representatives said that the terms of reference could be quickly verified by the partners in the interest of transparency; the representative of EC insisted that one consultant should follow the process to the end in order to avoid a duplication of the selection process. The Director said that the Secretariat would take into account the comments made and gave his reassurance that the engagement process would be efficient, transparent and in accordance with the established rules. The representative of Morocco said that the partners might communicate suggestions to the Secretariat with regard to the engagement of a consultant. The Chair requested that the terms of reference should be finalized by the end of July 2012.

Agenda item 11 - SAP BIO roadmap for updating the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, with regard to the Ecosystem Approach process within MAP

The Secretariat presented the “Draft Roadmap for the Updating of the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity (SAP BIO)” in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.371/5. The potential economic savings of a region-wide programme were stressed, as was the need to strengthen ties with partner organizations. Funding was a vital aspect that needed to be addressed.

The Meeting considered and discussed the draft roadmap in relation to schedules for other region-wide initiatives as shown to the participants and reflected in Annex II.

The representative of EC said that the key was improved networking of contacts with other parties, which would also increase the funding potential; private funding should also be sought. He added that it was important to increase public knowledge of RAC/SPA’s work by means of better outreach. The next CBD CoP would provide an opportunity to discuss the issue of access to benefit-sharing. Good references for the rules on biodiversity protection might be derived from the work of Rio+20 and the work carried out in the context of UNCLOS. There should also be an assessment of the impact of human activities, in particular gas and oil extraction, on biodiversity in the open seas.

The representative of Tunisia called for innovation in the design of activities, with the inclusion of other sectors in the process, in view of the complexities of biodiversity and the ecosystem approach. More donors might be attracted if more work were done on the ground instead of the classic approach of theoretical actions such as workshops and formal meetings. The representative of Montenegro agreed with the need for a new general approach, in line with the ecosystem approach, and asked how that might apply to the review of NAPs. She asked whether RAC/SPA could assist countries with that process. The Secretariat lamented the lack of funding that might assist national authorities in that regard. The Director emphasized the need to update rather than overhaul countries’ action plans; that process should not prove lengthy or over-demanding in terms of resources.

The Director recalled the request of the Contracting Parties to complete revision of SAP BIO in time for the 2013 CoP. The existing SAP BIO was an excellent basis for that revision, in view of the new context facing the Mediterranean. Realistically speaking, the new SAP BIO would begin to be implemented in 2015, once all requirements were in place, and 2025 would therefore be a logical timeframe for a further revision. The representative of Morocco agreed that SAP BIO needed adjustment rather than a complete reworking and supported the 2025 deadline; 2020

would be too soon. The ecosystem approach was being established and would also need time for implementation by means of the necessary strategies; likewise, the MPAs would occupy much time and effort at the national and international levels. He recalled the new deadline set by CBD for the Mediterranean, alluding to the reasons for its being put back.

It was recalled that European Union Member States would have to complete their survey of the impacts on the marine environment under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive by 2020. The representative of EC confirmed that the aim was that the EU marine strategy should be taking effect by 2020, with an intermediate review scheduled for 2018; he felt that 2025 was too late a deadline. The Director reminded the Meeting that revision processes took two years, as had been ascertained in the current revision process. Moreover, priorities changed incessantly and regular and flexible adjustments had already proved feasible without always adhering to fixed deadlines. The deadline of 2025 was the most realistic and intermediate adjustments after 6 years would be possible. The representative of EC said that the 2025 deadline was then logical, in view of the dynamic flexibility outlined by the Director.

The Meeting adopted the roadmap, taking into account the suggestions outlined in the previous paragraphs.

Agenda item 12 - Approach to donors regarding SAP BIO implementation

Following a brief introduction on the subject by the Secretariat, in which it was stressed that the new SAP BIO would need to be completed before donors could be approached, the Meeting was invited to offer ideas and proposals about the coordinated approach to be followed while seeking resources from various possible donors for further SAP BIO implementation, at both the national and regional levels. The representative of EC urged caution in the matter; he would need to consult his hierarchy before making any new commitments. The representative of Spain remarked that his country had strongly supported SAP BIO from the outset but the current economic climate made any financial commitments difficult. Other RACs should also be consulted. The observer for IUCN-Med suggested more national involvement in the quest for funding.

The Director responded to the latter intervention, lamenting the fact that the national element of the existing SAP BIO had largely failed to obtain funding; he urged the Meeting to bear that in mind when seeking donors in the future. The Director further recalled that at the latest CoP meeting the Contracting Parties had adopted a regional fund mobilization strategy, which should help to make the funding of all activities clearer and easier. A well-defined vision and strategy should be established with a view to approaching donors for the implementation of SAP BIO. The lack of funding had been a major obstacle to the start of implementation of the existing Programme. He added that the process of approaching donors had already been embarked upon by SPA/RAC.

Recalling the current economic climate, the Deputy Coordinator stressed the importance of the fund mobilization strategy adopted at the latest CoP meeting. The Coordinating Unit was working with all system components to approach potential donors, presenting practicable projects. With a sound new SAP BIO, achieved through strict adherence to the roadmap, he was confident that donors could be found.

Agenda item 13 - Any other matters

No other matters were discussed.

Agenda item 14 - Conclusions of the Meeting

The draft conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting were submitted to the participants. They were adopted without amendment. The adopted conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting are attached to this Report as annex III.

Agenda item 15 - Closure of the Meeting

Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed on Friday, 6 July 2012 at 1 p.m.

Annex I

List of participants

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Annex II

SAP BIO update roadmap

2008-2009 Ecosystem Approach Initial Assessment (IA)

- Preparing biodiversity reports for each Mediterranean riparian country
 - Preparing biodiversity reports embracing four sub regions and on synthesis of Mediterranean wide commonalities
- COP Decision

SAP BIO update and implementation having regard of CBD Strategic Action Plan and ecosystem approach

UNEP/MAP RAC/SPA
Roadmap projected actions for SAP BIO update

UNEP/MAP Programatic work needed to be considered within new SAP BIO (More relevant actions for SAP BIO in bold)

- Integrate the activities related to the Ecosystem Approach through UNEP/MAP policy and action including the 2012-13 and the five year programme of work
- Develop strategic and integrated institutional framework for the application of the EA

- Evaluating the progress made so far in the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the conservation of Biodiversity in the Mediterranean (SAPBIO);
- Defining the orientations of SAPBIO at national and regional levels for the coming years, in accordance with the Mediterranean Ecological Objectives and the Aichi targets
- Investigating options for ensuring appropriate financial support for the implementation of SAPBIO at national and regional levels
- Preparation of selected sub-Regional projects and NAPs and preparatory activities for actions to be funded by donors

Development of MAP assessment policy

- Develop MAP assessment policy to address multiple needs for thematic and integrated assessment in the EA framework
- **Update/revise a set of effectiveness indicators of the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols including the EA**

UNEP/MAP policies under development to incorporate EA application progress

- Integrate the EA objectives/indicators in the ICZM Protocol Action Plan
- **Updating SAP BIO as appropriate.**
- Preparing Action plan to implement the Offshore Protocol
- Preparing Action Plan on marine litter
- **Review of the management plans of 1-2 SPAMIs**

COP Decision

2010												2011												2012												2013											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Legal transposition of
Designation of competent authorities
Communication of subdivision (Art.4)

List of competent authorities

For public consultation: draft initial assessment, draft set of characteristics for GES and draft comprehensive set of environmental targets and associated indicators

Finalised initial assessment, set of characteristics for GES and comprehensive set of environmental targets and associated indicators

For public consultation: draft monitoring programme

EU MSFD
National implementation

Development of IA, GES, ET+ I

Public consultation

Development of monit. programme Consultation

Dev. of measures

EU

Common Implementation Strategy

Establishment of criteria and methodological standards for GES

Establishment of guidance on social and economic analysis

Establishment of reporting formats for data and information in initial assessment

Assessment report on the contribution of the MSFD to other international obligations, etc.

Assessment reports on GES, environmental targets and indicators

SAP BIO implementation having regard of CBD Strategic Action Plan and ecosystem approach

- **Implementation of priority actions defined in updated SAP BIO document**
- **Preparation/implementation of selected sub-Regional projects and NAPs and preparatory activities for actions to be funded by donors**

MAP Integrated Monitoring

- Updating national monitoring programme in line with the regional one
- Assessment of needs for implementing the updated national monitoring programmes

Review and development of MAP Action Plans and Programmes of measures to take into account the EA application progress

- **Regional plans on endangered species, updated or new ones developed as appropriate**
- **Update as appropriate NAPs (LBS) and SAPs (BIO) to reflect the targets and commitments under the regional plans**
- **Management plans of selected SPA and SPAMIs, adjusted to reflect the EA application progress and other requirements under the Barcelona convention and its protocols as well as commitment under the regional plans**
- **Establishment of new protected areas, as appropriate and development and implementation of their management plans in order to address priority issues identified by the Initial Assessment as well as EA progress**

Public awareness raising on the SAP BIO

SAP BIO implementation having regard of CBD Strategic Action Plan and ecosystem approach

- **Implementation of priority actions defined in updated SAP BIO document**
- **2016-2020 implementation of activities in line with CBD Strategic Plan, and through an ecosystem approach adapted to the Mediterranean needs and priorities**

MAP Integrated of Monitoring Programme

- Implementing national monitoring programme in line with the integrated regional one with coordinated support from the Secretariat, where appropriate
- Reporting monitoring data and information on the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols
- SoE report finalised in the form of quality status report and submitted to the CPs meeting

Review and development of MAP Action Plans and Programmes of measures to take into account the EA application progress

- **Regional plans on endangered species, updated or new ones developed as appropriate**
- **Update as appropriate NAPs (LBS) and SAPs (BIO) to reflect the targets and commitments under the regional plans**
- **Management plans of selected SPA and SPAMIs, adjusted to reflect the EA application progress and other requirements under the Barcelona convention and its protocols as well as commitment under the regional plans**
- **Establishment of new protected areas, as appropriate and development and implementation of their management plans in order to address priority issues identified by the Initial Assessment as well as EA progress**

Public awareness raising on the SAP BIO

COP Decision

COP Decision

2014												2015												2016												2017											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

EU MSFD
National implementation

Monitoring programme finalised for implementation
For public consultation: draft programme of measures

Programme of measures established

Entry into operation of programme of measures

For public consultation: draft review of initial assessment, set of characteristics for GES and comprehensive set of environmental targets and associated

Dev. progr. of measures → Public consultation →

Development of first review IA, GES, ET+I → Public consultation →

EU
Common Implementation Strategy

SAP BIO implementation on programmes of measures having regard of CBD Strategic Action Plan and ecosystem approach monitoring programmes

First evaluation report of the implementation of the MSFD (by 2019 at the latest)

- **Implementation of priority actions defined in updated SAP BIO document**
- **2016-2020 implementation of activities in line with CBD Strategic Plan adapted to the Mediterranean needs and priorities**

Integrated Monitoring Programmes

- Implementing national monitoring programmes in line with the integrated regional one with coordinated support from the Secretariat, where appropriate
- Reporting monitoring data and information on the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols

Development and implementation of MAP Action Plans and Programmes of measures to take into account the EA application progress

- **Regional plans on endangered species, updated or new ones developed as appropriate**
- **Updating as appropriate and implement their NAPs (LBS) and SAPs (BIO) to reflect the targets and commitments under the regional plans**
- **Management plans of selected SPA and SPAMs, adjusted to reflect the EA application progress and other requirements under the Barcelona convention and its protocols as well as commitment under the regional plans**
- **Establishment of new protected areas, as appropriate and development and implementation of their management plans in order to address priority issues identified by the EA**

Review EA process and implementation of its outcome

- Suggest the necessary policy adjustment as appropriate to the meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2019 with regard to, EO, OO, Indicators, Targets and monitoring programme
- Implementation of 2017 COP decisions related to the adjustment as appropriate of the regional policies, legally binding measures and monitoring programme.
- **COP 2019 decision to approve the necessary updates and revisions of regional policies and targets, legally binding measures and regional plans.**

Public awareness raising on the SAP BIO

COP Decision

2018												2019												2020											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

EU MSFD
National implementation

Review established of initial assessment, set of characteristics for GES and comprehensive set of environmental targets and associated indicators

For public consultation: draft review of monitoring programme

EU
Common Implementation Strategy

Development of first review of monitoring programme



Annex III

Conclusions and recommendations

General recommendation

It was generally agreed that there should be greater synergies, closer cooperation and enhanced consultations between all partners, with a view to improving the SAP BIO process, from the technical and funding points of view.

SAP BIO National Correspondents membership for the biennium 2012-2013

A deadline of 22 July 2012 was set for the submission of the names of the SAP BIO National Correspondents and the representatives of the regional organizations in order to update and ratify the List.

Open Seas SPAMIs Project implementation and its new follow-up phase III

It was agreed that the Steering Committee should invite ICCAT, the International Seabed Authority and other partners to future meetings.

It was agreed that political sensitivities should be taken into account at every stage of the Project.

The Meeting stressed the need to promote open seas SPAMIs in areas where the future impacts of all human activities were foreseeable.

Pilot proposal related to climate change impacts mitigation and Ecosystem Approach to management of human activities: Mediterranean wetlands rehabilitation project

The participants expressed a strong interest in developing further and implementing the proposed project and offered their cooperation in the selection of pilot wetland areas in several countries for the future implementation.

Evaluation of SAP BIO implementation by the Contracting Parties and regional bodies

A deadline of 30 September 2012 was set for the completion and submission of the relevant forms to RAC/SPA Secretariat. A French version of the form would be promptly made available by the Secretariat. It was agreed that a consultant would be appointed to assist the Secretariat with the task of completing the evaluation process and the updating of SAP BIO. The terms of reference of the consultant would promptly be made available to the Parties for their information, for the sake of transparency.

SAP BIO roadmap for updating the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, with regard to the Ecosystem Approach process within MAP

It was agreed that the revised SAP BIO would begin its effective implementation in 2015 and that its timeframe should be extended until 2025. It was, however, emphasized that the Programme was dynamic in its implementation and that periodic adjustments could be made in response to changing contexts and priorities during the period of implementation.

The SAP BIO roadmap presented by the Secretariat was adopted, taking into account the discussions held and recommendations made during the Meeting.

Approach to donors regarding SAP BIO implementation

It was agreed that an approach to donors should be started even before the revised SAP BIO was completed (scheduled for end 2013).

The Coordinating Unit would support the approach to donors for SAP BIO implementation in the framework of the fund mobilization strategy adopted at the last CoP meeting.