

Paris, 2 July 2008

Press Communiqué

Ifremer and the Blue Plan sign a framework cooperation agreement

Jean-Yves Perrot, Chief Executive Officer of Ifremer and Henri-Luc Thibault, Director of the Blue Plan, signed a 4 year framework cooperation agreement at Ifremer headquarters on 30th June 2008. Their collaboration will mainly focus on those areas of marine science which are related to sustainable development in the Mediterranean basin.

At the Euro-Mediterranean symposium organised by Ifremer in November 2007, Henri-Luc Thibault presented the Blue Plan's prospective analysis work on the Mediterranean. It is in the common interest of Ifremer and the Blue Plan to work together on subjects concerning sustainable development in the Mediterranean basin, particularly at a time when the Blue Plan is intending to develop a « Sea » pole within its team.

The Blue Plan acts as a Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC) for the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), which itself falls under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). As such, on behalf of the twenty one Mediterranean riparian states and the European Community- the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean- it plays a dual role as an observatory for the environment and sustainable development and as a centre for analysis and systemic and prospective studies. It also monitors the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Located on the shores of the Mediterranean in Toulon, Sète and Palavas, Ifremer conducts work in the marine and sub-marine technology, fisheries and aquaculture fields. Apart from organising the Euro-Mediterranean symposium, which brought together research bodies from some fifteen countries on the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, Ifremer is also responsible for coordinating the European projects it conducts in this region.

The collaboration between Ifremer and the Blue Plan will mainly involve the following areas of the marine sciences related to sustainable development in the Mediterranean basin:

- The marine environment, including chemical pollutants,
- The impact of climate change,
- Living and non-living resources,
- Renewable forms of energy of marine origin,
- Natural geological hazards,
- Marine eco-systems, particularly the economic value of the goods and services they produce.

Ifremer and the Blue Plan have agreed in particular to regularly exchange information on their priorities and programmes concerning the Mediterranean, to jointly organise conferences or seminars and to facilitate the intervention of Ifremer experts providing scientific back-up to the work led by the Blue Plan and vice versa.

Contacts Presse :

Marion Le Foll – Johanna Martin - 01 46 48 22 42 / 40- presse@ifremer.fr