

MAP-UNEP

MAP at the outset comprised three parts:

- The first, the institutional and legal one, swings in with the implementation of the Barcelona Convention on the protection of the Mediterranean Sea and its Protocols, of which there are now six.
- The second, scientific one, is rolled out through the marine pollution monitoring and research programme (MED POL).
- The third, socio-economic component, follows a systemic approach to focus on prospective analysis and the environmental priorities of all the riparian states, with the setting up in 1977 of the Blue Plan and Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centres.

The 80s saw the creation of other specific Regional Activity Centres and the development of MAP's activities in the coastal regions with the « Coastal Area Management Programmes ». A Coordinating Unit based in Athens is responsible for overall implementation. Several countries now host specialised programmes and Regional Activity Centres (RACs):

- The MED POL Programme, based in Athens and responsible for the scientific study and monitoring of marine pollution;
- REMPEC, based in Malta, for the prevention of and emergency response to accidental marine pollution;
- The BP/RAC (Blue Plan), based in Sophia Antipolis near Nice, whose job is to observe, assess and explore possible changes in the relations between the environment and development in the Mediterranean Basin;
- PAP/RAC (Priority Actions Programme), based in Split, works on integrated coastal planning and management;
- SPA/RAC for the specially protected areas, based in Tunis, contributes to the protection of coastal environments and threatened marine species;
- The 100 Mediterranean historic sites network, led by the City of Marseille's Atelier du patrimoine;
- RAC/INFO, based in Palermo, to build MAP's information and communication capacity.
- And CP/RAC for clean production, the location of which in Barcelona was approved in June 1995.

In 1992 in Rio, the United Nations Conference on the environment and development reinforced the concept of sustainable development and adopted amongst others the Agenda 21. This international thrust and the outcome of earlier Mediterranean work led as of 1994 in Tunis to the drafting of an Agenda MED 21, as well as the revision of MAP in Barcelona in 1995 (MAP II) and to the decision taken in Montpellier in 1996 to set up a Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD).

Through extending its scope of action to the coasts and switching from a sectoral approach to combating marine pollution to the integrated planning and management of the coastal regions, MAP now has on board twenty one riparian states and the European Community and is asserting itself as a privileged driving force for regional proposals and action towards sustainable development in the Mediterranean.

Its work is financed by all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, which meet every two years to adopt the programme and budget.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Set up in 1972, UNEP is the highest environmental authority within the United Nations system. The Programme acts as a catalyst, advocate, instructor and facilitator in working to promote the sensible use and sustainable development of the global environment. To this end, UNEP collaborates with numerous partners including some United Nations bodies, international organisations, national governments, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and civil society.

UNEP's work consists of:

- assessing world, regional and national environmental conditions and trends;
- developing national and international environmental instruments;
- strengthening institutions to ensure sensible environmental management;
- facilitating the transfer of knowledge and technology towards sustainable development;
- encouraging new partnerships and perspectives in civil society and the private sector.

UNEP's global and inter-sectoral vision is well reflected in its operational structure, activities and staff. The fact that its headquarters are located in Africa means that UNEP is better placed to understand the environmental issues faced by developing countries.

In order to ensure its efficiency worldwide, UNEP has six regional offices as well as a growing network of centres of excellence such as the GRID (Global Resource Information Database) and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). There are other major UNEP offices in Geneva and Paris, which hosts the UNEP division responsible for technology, industry and the economy.

UNEP also hosts the secretariats of numerous international environmental conventions, including the Ozone Secretariat and the Montreal Protocol's multilateral fund as well as the secretariats of the Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild flora and fauna, the Convention on biodiversity, the Convention on migratory species as well as a growing number of agreements on chemical substances including the Basel Convention on the control of trans-boundary movements of hazardous waste and the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants.