



## Press release

# Workshop on "Energy and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean", 29 & 30 March 2007, Monaco

A working group meeting was held in Monaco, on March 29 and 30, 2007, on the topic of « Energy and Sustainable Development », attended by approximately 40 experts from 12 Mediterranean countries, representatives of national authorities and institutions, of European and international institutions, of NGOs from the private sector and members of associations.

This international meeting was organized by Plan Bleu and its regional partners working in the energy sector (in particular the Mediterranean Observatory on Energy, ADEME and MEDREP), under the aegis of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development. Discussions focused on rational use of energy (RUE) and renewable energies (ER).

If current trends are not abated, the demand in energy of Mediterranean countries is expected to increase from 945 MToe in 2005 to 1360 in 2020, and high-CO<sub>2</sub> emission fossil energies are expected to cover 80% of requirements. And yet, the exceptional potential of the region in renewable energies (particularly wind and solar) is still largely untapped and energy wastes are assessed at between 20 and 50% in the different countries.

The combined use of both options on a large-scale is an answer to the stakes and challenges of regional development, by reducing constraints applicable to energy supply, by providing access to energy and related services, and by limiting environmental impacts at the global (regarding climate change and biodiversity) and local (air pollution) levels.

This stresses the importance of improved energy demand management (rational use of energy) and of diversified energy sources through renewable energies as recommended by the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

In the course of the two-day meeting, the participants presented national case studies on best practices in renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as regional experiences. Discussions highlighted the need for further exchange of success stories, for the assessment of progress achieved by Mediterranean countries in energy efficiency, for the analysis of the political instruments implemented, for the identification of the main difficulties encountered and for proposals on the large-scale development of renewable energies and rational use of energy.

In their conclusions, meeting participants underscored the need to implement a specific institutional and regulatory framework, to raise public awareness regarding the relationship between energy and climate change as well as to the need for limited (in the South) or reduced (in the North) energy consumption. The group of experts also recommended more in-depth reflection on economic mechanisms (pricing, subsidies, taxation, feed-in tariffs ...) for renewable energies and energy efficiency initiatives.

The main conclusions of this meeting will be presented to Mediterranean governmental representatives

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during the forthcoming meeting of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development, scheduled for May 30 and 31, 2007 in Istanbul.

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***About the Plan Bleu:***

Think-tank and Mediterranean Observatory of the environment and sustainable development, the Plan Bleu is a Regional Activity Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), set up, funded and steered by the countries bordering the Mediterranean and the European Commission. Its mission, as defined by the intergovernmental conference held in Split in 1977, is to develop regional cooperation to build and make available a fund of knowledge for facilitating the implementation of sustained development respectful of the environment. The Plan Bleu carries out prospective analyses of the environment and development, and acts as a Mediterranean observatory of sustainable development and main support centre for the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD).

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