

Sustainable Development Strategy for the Adriatic

Portoroz, Slovenia

5-6 June 2006

Report of the meeting

1. The meeting was opened by Mitja Bricelj, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia. The agenda was adopted.
2. Mr. Janez Podobnik, Minister for the Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, addressed the meeting. He noted that the impacts of human activities on the environment of the Adriatic are being noticed, and if they continue the whole way of life here will be threatened. However, the beginnings of spatial planning on the basis of existing European and MAP commitments provide hope that the coastal countries will move towards sustainability. The Adriatic poses a substantial challenge to countries for action. The Adriatic has been declared a particularly sensitive sea area. The active involvement of the public in protection of the Adriatic is of crucial importance. The Adriatic could be an example for Mediterranean countries and for Europe. The Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin can provide an example for cooperation. This meeting is a response to the EU Green Paper to be introduced in Brussels Wednesday. Includes partnerships for sustainable development of marine resources. Marine ecosystems and people living by the sea are taken into account.
3. Mr. Paul Mifsud, Coordinator of the UNEP/MAP, addressed the meeting. He noted that in Portoroz the MSSD was adopted last November. The major challenge lies in implementation of the strategy. The strategy outlines the main needs and objectives. It works at all, but especially the national, level. It is up to countries to set up their own activities at their own pace. Each country has the primary responsibility for its own SD. MAP's job is to assist countries to develop their strategies. Egypt, Morocco, S&M and Syria are developing their national strategies with financial support from donor countries. Regional and sub-regional initiatives are also important. 1996 meeting set up the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development. Subregional processes such as Adriatic Initiative are welcome, and Slovenia should be commended. Slovenia is expected to play a major role in the application of the ecosystem approach. The Adriatic will be a good test case for this. EEA and UNEP/MAP have done a survey. MSSD can facilitate implementation of Horizon 2020, launched November at EU Summit in Barcelona. Partners agreed to develop a roadmap for de-polluting the Mediterranean by 2020. The EC is preparing it for endorsement in Cairo in November. EC and Euromed should take advantage of reputation and capacities of MAP. They should work together. Slovenia's leadership is recognized and MAP will ensure support of southern Med countries.
4. Mr. Bricelj presented the reasons for a sub-regional approach in the Adriatic. He outlined the threats to the Adriatic and provided scientific evidence. The mouth of the Po River is especially sensitive. Indicators are serious and urge us to change our behavior. Family of Adriatic countries proposed Contingency Plan, CAMP

and Ballast WMP as technical response. Trilateral Commission for the Adriatic (I, HR, SLO) has adopted these 3 projects and other Adriatic countries wish to join. 14th MOP of MAP in Nov 2005 clearly supported these, and an MOU between MAP and EC was also adopted. MCSD meeting in Cyprus May 27 welcomed MSSD and connected activities. We are here to contribute to implementation of strategy. MSSD – what is relevant for Adriatic? Sustainable management of the sea's resources, sustainable urban development, sustainable rural development, sustainable tourism as leading economic sector, sustainable mobility and transport, rational use of energy and mitigation of climate change, water resource management. EU Maritime Strategy – sectoral measures, need for better communication between research community and decisionmakers. Requires adoption of common vision, taking into account reality, but specific measures will differ due to regional diversification. In the hands of the countries. Marine Dir. Recognized Adriatic as an eco-region. Ecosystem approach for SD in Adriatic/PSSA and management plan. Pilot for other regions. “The Sea Deserves Our Voice”

5. Mr. Paolo Guglielmi, from INFO/RAC noted that they are fully behind the Adriatic Initiative. He summarized main conclusions of Cyprus MCSD meeting. Three main ingredients – partnership leading to cooperation (govt, business, NGOs/public); information and communication technology; education and PP. Support that INFO/RAC can give – information and communication logistics and technical support; online magazine Campus Eco-Media targeted at youth and activists; issuing information on success stories. This all improves implementation. Can build something specific for Adriatic and can organize events in framework of main theme of MCSD. Can bring together cultural sector with environment (Med Day, international day of action and awareness).
6. Mr. Ivica Trumbic, Director PAP/RAC-MAP, made a presentation on marine spatial planning. This is a specific field with special considerations. Management activities are almost exclusively sectoral and are therefore inappropriate. Coastline is an arbitrary line that divides sectoral planning, indicators, etc. There is some integration on land side due to legislation, interest of stakeholders, institutions. On the sea side there is no integration. Regulatory split particularly relevant for marine uses. Looking at 3 pillars of SD – economic is obvious. Nature conservation and marine spatial planning draws upon ecosystem approach. Equity is third pillar of SD (??) – social and economic inclusion, transparency etc. He identified the objectives of marine spatial planning in the context of SD (see presentation). Benefits of MSP – integrated, proactive, more certain, consensual. He reviewed the stages of MSP including the framework of activities. Zoning is a useful tool in MSP. Drivers for MSP on the international level include Rio, Jo'burg, Law of the Sea, CBD, IMO (PSSA); on EU level, Marine Strategy and Marine Dir. (2008); on Med level, Barcelona Conv, ICZM Protocol, MSSD; on national level, exclusive economic zones, sectoral strategies, maritime economy. He described the legal and management frameworks for coastal and deep seas, as well as geophysical and political boundaries, and the planning/management levels or institutions. As one moves from the land to the sea the relative de facto control (including property interest) is increasingly in the hands of the government, which then gives way to international control in the high seas. The Irish Sea (UK part)

MSP is an example. PSSA's – 10 are designated. Adriatic is a good candidate. MSP practice is well developed in Croatia.

7. The participants discussed the foregoing presentations. The ecosystem approach seeks to find equilibrium between human activities and ecological capacity. The presentation of Mr. Trumbic did not deal much with the economy. Italian colleagues have evaluated anthropocentric uses. Mr. Trumbic responded that MSP certainly focuses on the economic situation and human activities, and this is behind everything, even if it was not so explicit. The marine economy is a driver for MSP.
8. Ms. Vesna Kolar Planinsic, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, presented strategic environmental assessment as a tool for sustainable development in the Adriatic and for implementation of the MSSD. The Espoo Convention's SEA Protocol, EU SEA Directive, 5th Environmental Programme are the background for SEA in the Adriatic. Alpine Convention is a case where SEA is being applied. For the marine environment, SEA can help balance interests, taking into account the maximum inputs, ensuring an integrated approach. She presented the process for SEA, including public consultation. A wide number of plans relevant to the marine environment need to apply SEA. Administration, science and public need to work together (magic triangle). Drivers from CBD have to be considered on local, national and regional levels. Coastal and marine drivers are different. The Adriatic is not one of the hotspots in the world, but the trend is negative and needs to be reversed. Methods of SEA include screening, scoping, public consultation, and various specific tools. The main aim is balancing of interests and avoiding environmental risks. Identifying the baseline is important. Alternatives must be considered. Guidelines, including monitoring impact, are also issued in order to evaluate plans.

Recommendation that SEA included in preparation of Adriatic Action Plan, using integrated approach and active modeling planning, using good governance and proper assessment of impacts. Strong link between health and planning should be developed, environmental control and transparency. SEA in Adriatic needs strong political will and link among states and institutions, application of ecosystem approach.

9. Ms. Silvia Laria, BP/RAC, presented the scenarios and indicators of Blue Plan's Environment and Development Outlook. "A sustainable future for the Mediterranean" was published last year, supported by the EC, EEA and French government. It allowed for stocktaking in the period since the publication of the first such study in 1989. The BP report covers the whole Mediterranean Basin at different levels of analysis – for example, national for economic and demographic analysis; catchment areas or coastal areas for other parameters. The report spans from up to 30 years in the past up until 20 years into the future. The baseline scenario indicates that if current trends continue there is a bleak future for the Mediterranean. The alternative scenario calls for curbing trends to achieve sustainability. This requires voluntary policies to reduce pressures on the environment. Countries have made progress in the 1990s in policies, legislation and actions aimed at reducing environmental impacts, as well as in international cooperation. There has been less progress in implementation of environmental legislation. The trend of increasing environmental impacts has not been reversed with respect to water, energy, transport, urban areas, rural areas, and coastal areas

with tourism. Ms. Laria described the major areas of human pressure on the environment of the Mediterranean, including artificial land development, population pressures, tourism and transportation, and pollution hotspots. Less than half of wastewater is treated prior to discharge. Pollution from ships is also significant. Decoupling economic development from environmental degradation is required. Specific objectives have been agreed for particular areas of action under the MSSD. Sets of 10 SD indicators have been chosen using the “Imagine” method in Slovenia CAMP (2003-05) for carst areas and coast areas, which can be represented as “amoeba” schemes to see their balance.

10. Mr. Daniel Cebrian Menchere, SPA/RAC, presented the strategic action programme to address pollution from land-based sources in the Mediterranean, including the strategic action programme for protection of biodiversity. It has a legal basis in the 1995 SPA Protocol to the Barcelona Convention. The development of the programme was completed in 2003. A guideline document has been agreed for the next 10-15 years, and a network of national level actors. The action programme is based on a comprehensive assessment, SAP BIO. He presented the main conclusions of the assessment that identified various key issues that need to be addressed in the field of biological diversity, and an outline of the 7 categories of actions and investments required. National actions can be implemented at any time if resources are available. Several concrete actions are projected for the Adriatic.
11. Mr. Enrique de Villamore, CP/RAC, presented IPPC as an important tool for achieving SD of the Adriatic region. It is required by the EC Directive and is an objective of all Adriatic countries. Emission limit values based on BAT are a fundamental element of IPPC. There are still many obstacles to effective implementation of IPPC. He invited participants to join the workshop immediately following on sharing good practices for effective implementation of the IPPC Directive.
12. Mr. Lovrenc Lipej of the Marine Biological Station, National Institute for Biology, made a presentation on biological research for the ecosystem approach in the Adriatic, using the Slovenian Sea as an example. The ecosystem approach is defined under CBD. Information about the Slovenian Sea should be improved; more scientists are needed. New techniques are being applied, new species are being identified, but the numbers are relatively low. Non-destructive methods are being used (SCUBA, narcotics for cryptobenthic species, cameras, etc.). Problems include anoxia, habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and tropicalization (niche replacement). In response to questions, he explained that invasive species generally can find a niche only where a niche has been left vacant due to a usually anthropogenic factor. In addition, entire food webs are migrating.
13. Mr. Branko Cermelj of the Marine Biological Station, National Institute for Biology, made a presentation on the role of oceanography as a contribution to the ecosystem approach. Several institutions are gathering oceanographic information in the Adriatic and some are making it publicly available. Measurement systems are not connected, however, and there is no operational data exchange. As a dilution basin, Adriatic forecasts of circulation require correct meteorological data (winds, rainfall).

Recommendation There should be a new network of data exchange, and an obliged cooperation among meteorological, hydrological, etc. centers.

14. Mr. Robert Turk of the Nature Conservation Institute, Piran, presented a good practice case of implementation of the Protocol on SPA and Biological Diversity: Slovenia's work in implementation of action plans on marine turtles and on marine vegetation. Concerning the loggerhead turtle, in 2003 an agreement between the Ministry of Environment and a private company sponsor enabled activities to be greatly increased, including tagging and release, and public awareness campaigns involving also fishermen. Assessment and monitoring of vegetation – in particular seagrass meadows – was carried out, and information and awareness raising undertaken.

Recommendation There should be a rethinking of the position of national focal points. Mr. Mifsud noted that an evaluation was being undertaken on national focal points and changes are being instituted. A draft TOR for NFPs will be presented at the next meeting for adoption.

15. Mr. Slavko Mezek, Regional Development Agency Koper, presented integrated coastal zone management in Slovenia undertaken in the framework of the CAMP Slovenia project. Against the background of the MAP CAMP Programme, Slovenia's specific activities were presented. It was clarified in the following discussion that drinking water supply was a very important element of ICZM, as well as wastewater management. Infrastructure development is now less sectoral, which is an improvement.
16. Mr. Valter Suban and Mr. Marko Perkovic delivered a presentation on the Agreement of the Contingency Plan for the Adriatic. Besides the agreement itself, there is also a manual that includes guidance, with annexes on various topics that are to be used in the crisis management plans. The practice of the Baltic Sea in detection and response was discussed. The recently adopted EU Directive on ship-source pollution (7 Sep 2005) requires monitoring, tracing and enforcement. Mr. Perkovic also presented the Slovenian approach to oil spill issues, and introduced the exercise on oil spill crisis management in Koper Bay. Existing information available, including the AdriCOSM database of currents combined with satellite photographs and weather data, assists in the detection of illegal discharges of oil. The participants further discussed how to use legal procedures and prove that specific ships caused pollution. The French have gotten rid of the requirement that samples be taken to prove a connection between a specific ship and a discharge.
17. Mr. Bricelj brought attention to the EU Marine Strategy and the requirements therein that related to the issues under discussion. Joint acquisition of systems, including computers, is necessary as a cost-saving measure. He invited participants to proceed to the university faculty for the exercise on oil spill crisis management in Koper Bay.
18. The second day of the meeting began with a discussion on the road map forward for cooperation on the Adriatic. Ms. Laria discussed the idea of a sustainable development strategy for the Adriatic, which would require the action of the six countries. She wished to hear the position of the countries here at the conference,

and offered support of BP to any initiative. Mr. Bricelj responded that the message from this meeting will be transmitted to the Trilateral Commission with an idea to have a legal agreement that applies to the whole Adriatic.

19. Mr. Bricelj presented the draft recommendations to improve efficiency for sustainable development of the Adriatic Eco-Region. Italy stated that it would develop its position towards the draft recommendations following the meeting.
20. Maja Zalar, the representative of the Slovenian Ecological Movement delivered the results of the parallel international NGO meeting held in Piran. The NGOs drafted a protocol for the common future of the northern Adriatic. They determined the region should apply a bottom-up approach to solve environmental problems, and brought attention to the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, and the Espoo Convention and the Aarhus Convention. The environment of the northern Adriatic is extremely sensitive due to its shallowness, the non-treatment of waste water, etc. The level of pollution is relatively high. The River Po contributes approximately 40% of industrial waste waters, having an extremely negative effect on coastal areas. Eutrophication has contributed to die-offs and invasive species have had an impact on biodiversity. Ports and oil-gas terminals pose a risk. The NGOs also discussed future projects such as Mediterranean Corridor 6 and the two proposed liquid gas terminals in the Trieste Gulf. SEA needs to be applied. The NGOs are addressing 4 appeals to the respective countries. First, to apply MALPOL Convention to declare the northern Adriatic as a PSSA. Second, that the countries apply good development plans in strategic industries. Third, to apply the Espoo Convention. Finally, they demand a moratorium on large high-risk projects. David Stepan of Green Primorske Association further elaborated certain issues related to the Bay of Koper. He contended that authorities are not applying legal requirements. The 46 km of Slovenian coastline are being turned into concrete. He addressed the Italian representative concerning the terminal project and asked why neighboring countries were not notified.
21. Mr. Stephen Stec of the Regional Environmental Center presented the concept proposed by Slovenia for an Adriatic Sea Partnership. Discussion followed. Mr. Guglielmi strongly supported the ASP as the way to go forward. Under the MAP concept the sub-regional approach is very important, and the Adriatic is the most advanced region in the Med. Having the REC as an organization working to have a political umbrella is welcomed and should be supported with all our strength. The expansion of the Trilateral Commission is the most feasible and practical tool. Mr. Bricelj noted that the earlier presentations showed that there is a large amount of data available on the Adriatic but the management is not good. The data is not being used the way it should be. Jelena Knezevic of Montenegro noted that it is willing to participate and share. Now is the time for action. The Adriatic is recognized at Med and EU level, and our action should be concrete. We should propose concrete steps at management. How it should be done should be determined further at national level. AII is not operational at institutional level but important political institution. Monika Peterlin of Slovenia mentioned need to include WFD in the scheme. Italy expressed strong support for ASP initiated by Slovenia and implemented by the REC.

22. Mr. Bricelj opened a discussion on what concrete projects should be carried forward following the upcoming Trilateral Commission meeting. He reminded the participants of Croatia's proposal that the countries work to have the Adriatic formally declared a PSSA. Mr. Guglielmi brought attention to the issue of data management and informed the meeting of INFO/RAC's progress in establishing a comprehensive system for meta-data in order to ensure the equal availability of information. INFO/RAC will develop a prototype in the next year.
23. **Recommendation** that the REC present the ASP at the upcoming meeting of the Trilateral Commission, July 3-4 in Opatija, and the upcoming meeting of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and that these meetings consider ways to promote the implementation of existing and future commitments on an Adriatic Sea-wide level, involving all six countries.
24. **Alenka Colarič, ARSO:** presentation of legal framework and institutional set up for protection of waters (continental waters and coastal sea) the responsibilities of institutions, the work of inspections. Pollution sources (direct and indirect – accidents) were presented, and the need for international cooperation was stressed.
25. **Andrej Sovinc: presentation of Sečovlje Salina** – the model of protected area management. The area is rich with species, but no human inhabitants. Ramsar site and specially protected area under Barcelona Convention, established in 2001; in 2002 it got the management authority, financed by Mobitel – the telecommunication company. The management is based on the detailed management plan, the concession company is reporting regularly about the implementation of this plan. Steering Committee is supervising the implementation. The income from salt production and tourism is growing, there are other benefits too: like the better image and credibility of the donor company (Mobitel) who provides 60% of the total budget (10% provided by government, 30% by management of the Park – through salt, cosmetics and tourism).
26. Within the next session the draft *Recommendations to improve efficiency for Sustainable Development of the Adriatic Eco-region* were discussed in plenary, in order to get the feedback from all participants. Some amendments were suggested and accepted, except one made by the REC representative M. Marega, related to the recommendation from Transboundary Water Management in South Eastern Europe, Belgrade, 2-3 March 2006 (“*There is a need for appropriate institutional arrangements to promote coordinated action among all Adriatic countries.*”) After integration of amendments in the draft text, the final version of recommendations was accepted (see the Appendix).
27. Ms. Laria opened again the issue on the potential assistance of the REC in order to reconsider this option. Mr. Bricelj confirmed the good experience with Sava Initiative and the beneficial role of the REC there, but he also stressed the need for consensus from all countries. Ms. Marega, REC CO Slovenia, added that there are several areas where the REC could facilitate the implementation of Adriatic Action Plan effectively. These ways of assistance could be presented by the REC in more details, so countries could consider the potential benefits, preferably on coming Trilateral Commission Meeting in July.

Based on this discussion it was agreed that at the next Trilateral Commission Meeting, the REC should present its initiative in order to reach the consensus among countries and take the final decision.

Ms. Knezevic, Montenegro representative, added the following suggestion: Representatives of the countries of the Adriatic Region that do not participate in Trilateral Commission should be communicated on the conclusion that will be adopted on the next meeting of this Commission in order to provide coordinated acting of all Adriatic Countries in preparation of next meeting of AII.

28. CP/RAC: Report on the IPPC Workshop conclusions (see the list of recommendations). Besides that it was agreed that countries will use the workshop results and share appropriately the information with their authorities.
29. Ms. Laria suggested that these conclusions should be added to the general conclusions from the meeting. Mr. Bricelj informed the participants that all contributions will be published by INFO/RAC.

Ms. Laria: she will write additional suggestion.

30. Mitja Bricelj: Eco-system approach, and three reference projects are agreed already. Are there other suggestions?
31. Ms. Knezevic: We should strive to more concrete cooperation. Political will, expressed by all countries will lead to good implementation level. There is interest from international organizations for support the process. Next Adriatic Ionian Initiative Meeting will be a new opportunity.