

# HORIZON 2020 Review, Monitoring and Research Sub-group

*Athens, 9-10 October 2008*

## SUMMARY RECORD

Agenda, list of participants, presentations and all documents will be available at the following link:  
<http://h2020.ew.eea.europa.eu/meetings/1st-meeting-review-monitoring-and-research>

### **1. Welcome and Opening (Item 1)**

EEA (chair) opened the meeting and introduced its purpose: to have an open discussion and share views and ideas on common tasks to carry out under the Review, Monitoring and Research component of H2020.

The UNEP/MAP coordinator confirmed the willingness of UNEP/MAP to work with the Horizon 2020 process and develop synergies with ongoing MAP activities.

During a “tour de table”, the participants were asked about their meeting expectations. [See document “Expectations” at link mentioned above]. Three clusters of expectations were identified: a) cooperation; b) concrete outcomes; c) ways of working.

### **2. Establishment of the Review, Monitoring and Research sub-group (Item 2)**

DG Environment presented 2 documents: a note on RMR organisation matters (Note 1) and an information note on the given mandate of the RMR sub-group (Note 2), as established by the first Steering Committee of H2020. The sub-group will carry out specific actions to from the Cairo timetable, “measuring the success” of the initiative. To this end, a coordination mechanism with the other sub-groups<sup>1</sup> is considered fundamental, to ensure a coherent action. The renewed Euro Mediterranean process, now called “Union for the Mediterranean” launched by the French Presidency in July 2008, includes de-pollution of the Mediterranean as one of its key actions. This has given a new impetus to the H2020 process. The short term objective of the sub-group should be to assist in providing a first assessment of the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea from the three priority sources<sup>2</sup> identified under H2020, in the form of “a number<sup>3</sup>” for the public and policy maker. The meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Environment scheduled for October 2009 will be the first important milestone.

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<sup>1</sup> In June 2007, at the first Steering Committee meeting of Horizon 2020, 3 sub-groups were created: Pollution Reduction (European Investment Bank chair), Capacity Building (EC chair) and Review, Monitoring and Research (EEA chair)

<sup>2</sup> Industrial emissions, municipal waste and urban waste water [EEA/UNEP MAP - Report 4/2006]

<sup>3</sup> Some concrete figures

### **3. Horizon 2020 activities relevant for RMR sub-group (Item 3)**

EEA presented the scope of the work and a possible approach to developing an indicator and scorecard process.

An agreement on a common storyline<sup>4</sup> is a precondition for selecting relevant indicators to measure progress of the H2020 initiative (based on relevant policy questions still to be defined).

The following points were raised during discussion:

- To define and agree on a common storyline/identify a list of relevant policy questions was recognised as an essential step. A key question to answer is “What are the countries’ needs in tackling the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea”.
- The importance of making the Horizon 2020 process sustainable and of avoiding duplication of efforts. To this end, investment in capacity building was mentioned as a main measure towards sustainability. It is equally important to focus on actions that have not been taken yet, e.g. mobilising public opinion, the financial sector (banks), and the private sector.
- In terms of funding, EuropeAid recalled that the ENPI South Project, financed by DG AIDCO<sup>5</sup>, will support the RMR H2020 component. It was also confirmed that funds will be available from ENPI Regional budget (2008) to support the capacity building component of Horizon 2020. Financial assistance should be complemented / sustained by a similar mobilization of national financial and human resources by the recipient countries.
- The structure of the last EEA State and Outlook Report (SOER 2005<sup>6</sup>) was presented: Part A (Integrated assessment), Part B (indicator based assessment) and particularly part C was detailed (country analyses). A similar approach could be used for the H2020 biennial report called for in the Cairo road-map. It was generally accepted to focus on the countries by comparing performance towards the Horizon 2020 targets/objectives. Scorecard and indicators were mentioned as the most innovative part of the work to be done.
- The use of a composite indicator for the scorecard, to compare the overall environmental performances of the countries was discussed. An Environmental Performance Index (EPI)<sup>7</sup> was suggested as an interesting model to follow. It was recalled that in the framework of the European activity “Beyond GDP” a European environmental performance composite indicator

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<sup>4</sup> The main function of the “story” around each indicator subset or cluster of indicators is to communicate what is the framework within which the indicators will be assessed in broad terms. The storyline describes the environmental issue and the main sources/activities being responsible for the problem including cause-effect relationships. This text of the story line, together with the policy questions should serve to ensure the “right” focus of the selected indicators.

<sup>5</sup> DG AIDCO (EuropeAid) is the Directorate-General of the European Commission responsible for implementing external aid programmes and projects across the world

<sup>6</sup> SOER 2005: The European environment — State and outlook 2005

<sup>7</sup> A reference was made to studies conducted by Yale and Columbia University

has been developed, which may be more relevant. It was suggested that in RMR activities composite indicators are more realistic, although some participants felt that agreeing on composite indicators at the Euro-Mediterranean level could present some difficulties which need a medium-long term perspective to be tackled.

- Important interlinkages and a need for mutual support between the Horizon 2020 process and the MSSD implementation were highlighted. Particularly the 34 priority indicators adopted by the MCSD were mentioned as a useful tool. Some countries expressed concerns about creating/developing new indicators that could generate an extra burden on new data collection. It was emphasized that the intention is not to create new data and indicators but draw on those already existing.
- In response to a demand as to how SEIS<sup>8</sup> is going to support the work it was clarified that the Shared Environment Information System based on common agreed principles will help locate, organize, structure, share data and information, facilitating the tasks of the sub-group.
- National statistical offices should be involved in the RMR process and be able to integrate their work into SEIS as soon as possible. Concerns were expressed about the lack of data harmonization in the region.
- Some countries underlined that the Cairo Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment agreed “to take steps to develop national integrated environmental information systems to produce reliable, comparable and timely statistical data and information to support Horizon 2020 aims”. These steps are needed to ensure that SEIS, currently a European level initiative, is backed up by appropriate activities at the national level. The work carried out within the SMAP Clearing House was mentioned as an important step in improving the understanding of actions necessary for a more institutionalized and sustainable framework at the national and regional level for reinforcing environmental knowledge and information management. To these end weaknesses, strengths and needs have been identified through a set of country visits organized with national CH Focal Points in interested MEDA countries, to improve coordination among the many actors and initiatives responsible for information gathering, exchange and reporting.

- **4. The research component (Item 4)**

A presentation by JRC was given on “FATE<sup>9</sup> spatial mapping and indicators of environmental pollution risks”. The project was described as support to the

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<sup>8</sup> COM(2008) 46 final - “Towards a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS)”

<sup>9</sup> FATE – [Fate and impacts of pollutants in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems] is a JRC project providing scientific and technical support to reduce the impact of agriculture on water resources [see leaflet also available in the H2020 website at the following link:

implementation of the new Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and as a possible example for Mediterranean environmental cooperation. A collaborative pilot case study was proposed concerning scenario analyses in a spatial context including costs of impacts and cost of inaction.

A presentation by CSIC<sup>10</sup> was given on “MELIA, MIRA<sup>11</sup> and HORIZON 2020 - Elements for a collaboration scenario”.

Some participants felt there was a gap in knowledge sharing between projects carried out between partner countries and European institutions. Better networking and information sharing of research projects could facilitate the dissemination of good practice serving the H2020 purposes.

In the discussion that followed:

- UNEP/MAP (MEDPOL) presented its experience in assessing and controlling the Land-Based Sources (LBS<sup>12</sup>) pollution by using data and information for the National Baseline Budget (NBB). In order to implement the Strategic Action Plan, a “baseline budget” exercise is running in the countries, quantifying the release of pollutants and helping to define reductions and consequently monitoring changes in following years. From 2003 onwards several actions were identified to be implemented at national or local levels, in order to reduce the pollutants load from land based sources. MEDPOL currently maintains two main different databases: pollution levels and pollution sources, to be included in the near future in an information system to be made available on the web.
- MIO-ECSDE pointed out that the capacity building sub-group and the monitoring sub-group should work closely together. The private sector also should be linked in implementing H2020 as should the pollution reduction sub-group. A two-way dialogue /linkages need to be put in place amongst major actors such as UNEP/MAP, MSSD and the recent GEF project on large marine ecosystems.  
NGOs are involved in several research projects, and it would be useful to have an overview.
- The role of MCSD<sup>13</sup> in reporting every two years on different environmental topics, including water, as a specific chapter of the MSSD report (alongside

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[http://h2020.ew.eea.europa.eu/meetings/1st-meeting-review-monitoring-and-research/2007\\_FATE\\_brochure\\_IES\\_booklet.pdf](http://h2020.ew.eea.europa.eu/meetings/1st-meeting-review-monitoring-and-research/2007_FATE_brochure_IES_booklet.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Spanish Council for Scientific Research

<sup>11</sup> MELIA [Mediterranean Dialogue on Integrated Water Management, <http://www.meliaproject.eu/> ], MIRA [Mediterranean Innovation and Research Innovation Action, <http://www.miraproject.eu/> ] are research project funded by EC to build a water culture and raise public awareness through the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and the principles of the Water Framework Directive (WFD)

<sup>12</sup> The Mediterranean Protocol on Land-Based Sources under the Barcelona Convention

<sup>13</sup> Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development

water) was mentioned as one of the results from the research sector which should be integrated.

- The WISE RTD<sup>14</sup> initiative was also mentioned as a collecting place of all EU research project results on water and is available already on the WISE website.

## **5. Reporting and indicator activities (Item 5)**

A presentation was given by UNEP/Grid Arendal on the activity under the EEA/CARDS contract on environmental indicators, particularly with West Balkans countries (Croatia, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia).

The project involves statistical offices in West Balkans, strengthening the reporting network and focusing on production of a core set of indicators in line with EEA/CSI. A possible contribution to the RMR tasks will also be explored with the UNEP product "Vital graphics" combined with scorecards, before end of 2009.

Medstat II presented data exchange activities with the Euro-Mediterranean partner countries. A yearly data collection based on an agreed list of variables<sup>15</sup> was announced, and data are expected to be available at the beginning of 2009. According to the specific needs of H2020, some variable could be added, depending on the findings of the sub-group.

UNEP/MAP - Blue Plan and MEDPOL presented an initial joint proposal for H2020 initiative, based on the inventory of the existing indicators at the regional level. Available indicators under MSSD were scanned based on H2020 priority areas. Concerning the data coverage, some gaps were identified and consequently new data collection and validation was suggested.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- EMWIS/SEMIDE offered to contribute available data from national water authorities. These data were used for the indicator exercise developed with Blue Plan in the framework of MSSD. The work with EEA on a metadata catalogue in the framework of WISE cooperation was also mentioned.
- GWP-Med stressed the importance of considering governance, institutional setting and legislation enforcement and integration of the environment in other sectors as part of the discussion (e.g. environment versus finance).
- Eurostat highlighted the potential weakness of using the traditional indicators because of the various indicator definitions available/used. (e.g. distinction between controlled and uncontrolled landfill, cities with more than 100.000

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<sup>14</sup> Water Information System for Europe - Research and Technology Development

<sup>15</sup> Statistical unit being observed that may assume more than one of a set of values (e.g. composition of municipal waste: paper, textiles, plastics, glass ...)

habitants, etc.). Therefore the issue of harmonisation of data categories and definition was considered as fundamental by some partner countries.

- UNEP/MAP were asked to clarify which data from the proposal already existed.
- Egypt and Italy mentioned the cooperation among their respective Environmental Protection Agencies for an Egyptian Guide for Annual Environmental Data and Indicators, within the bilateral cooperation between the Egyptian and Italian Ministry of the Environment.

A presentation was given by EEA on Med-Reportnet and the H2020 web platform as possible tools for the delivery of environmental data and information.

Concerning the potential overlap with ongoing reporting activities under the Barcelona Convention initiatives and tools, the UNEP/MAP coordinator clarified that the contracting parties under the Convention have an obligation to report to the secretariat. However harmonisation and interoperability of reporting is a necessary step in order to manage, use and interpret the data and to produce environmental assessments and information, which are freely accessible for the public and countries. For the Barcelona Convention, Info RAC is working on a MAP reporting system. These systems need to be compatible.

It was also underlined that improved mainstreaming and cost effectiveness of existing reporting mechanisms at the Mediterranean level is needed, taking full account of the experience gained by MAP and the EEA with their respective constituencies and stakeholders in order to avoid duplication of efforts and of funding resources at the entire Euro-Mediterranean level.

## **6. The way ahead for the RMR sub-group activities (Item 6)**

In order to proceed, it was proposed to set up 3 working parties:

WP 1: Pilot development of biennial report and scorecard

WP 2: Pilot investigation to develop a composite environmental indicator for the Mediterranean;

WP 3: Making links to research activities – demonstrating the role of FATE and MELIA/MIRA (Euro-Mediterranean Research and Innovation platform), as well as of other ongoing research projects, at the bilateral and regional level, relevant to H2020

To this end, a first draft “Setting up of three working parties and description of short-term activities” was supported and will be distributed for comments.

Other tasks

- The MERM-MED<sup>16</sup> report, giving an overview of the available data, information and main institutions involved in the Mediterranean region, will be updated, taking into account, where appropriate, the results of the SMAP Clearing House country visits in terms of identified actions, at the national level, for triggering a set of enabling activities for implementing Medreportnet.
- A meeting of chairs of the three sub-groups will be organized to clarify interlinkages and synergies and possibilities of mutual support and cooperation.
- The Horizon 2020 internet platform should be used for regular exchange of information between the members of the sub-group.

Next meeting of the RMR sub-group is planned tentatively to be held in April 2009.

Athens  
February 2009

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<sup>16</sup> MERM-MED: Mediterranean Environment Reporting Mechanism (June 2007), prepared by the European Environment Agency in collaboration with the European Commission (DG EuropAid, DG Env, Eurostat and JRC), UNEP-MAP (MEDPOL, INFO/RAC and Blue Plan) and CEDARE