

## Summary



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## 1. Seminar on the development of an eco-label system in Egypt

Last November the CP/RAC organized a seminar in Cairo, following the interest expressed by Egypt in eco-label systems and in particular in the European eco-label, with a view to the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone.

The seminar took place at the Cairo Marriot Hotel on 26th and 27th November, and was attended by about 90 participants, which confirms the interest expressed by Egypt in the subject of eco-labels. The participants came from public bodies and from companies in the textile, chemical and tourist industries.

The event was held within the framework of the programme of cooperation between the Mediterranean Action Plan and the European Commission in relation to questions of cleaner production. It also received the

cooperation of the E.U. Eco-label information office, of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), and also of the sustainable production and consumption section of the United Nations Environmental Pro-





programme's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP/DTIE), which is currently developing a 4-year project aiming to promote the use of the Eco-label in emerging economies.

The objective was to show the importance of

Eco-label systems in a context of sustainable production and consumption, to explain how the European Eco-label system works and the various criteria which are applied to a number of products selected according to their importance in the Egyptian economy. Thus the categories selected concerned textiles, detergents and tourist accommodation facilities.

The seminar began with an explanation of the activities undertaken by the CP/RAC, which was followed by presentations detailing the work carried out in Egypt

in relation to Eco-labels, an examination of the project currently being developed by the UNEP/DTIE, together with an explanation of the procedures leading to the creation of the new Tunisian Eco-label.

In the afternoon, Ms. Cécile Des Abbayes from the European Eco-label information office talked about the general workings of the European Eco-label, the different categories of products, and the procedures to be followed in order to obtain the European flower symbol of approval.

The following day, sessions were held to analyse the specific criteria for each of the 3 categories of Eco-label of particular interest to Egypt.

The representatives of the companies present showed great interest in the European Eco-label, particularly in the case of the hotel managers attending. However, they require assistance to be able to develop environmental management strategies and thus comply with the technical characteristics required to be able to obtain the European flower symbol of approval. ■

## 2. The GRECO Initiative takes shape in Cairo

Within the framework of the collaboration agreement signed by CP/RAC and BusinessMed in May 2007, a seminar entitled "Moving Towards Sustainable Development" was held in Cairo (Egypt) on 27th and 28th November. Cleaner production and green competitiveness were the key themes at this event organized by CP/RAC, in collaboration with SMAP III TA (the Short and Medium-Term Priority Environmental Action Programme of the European Commission) and UMCE Business-Med. The principal objective of the event, which was open to business people from all parts of the Mediterranean shoreline, was to encourage the private sector to adopt working methods that are respectful of the environment, and to gain access to the financing required to be able to adopt these changes. In keeping with these goals, special emphasis was placed on the presentation of successful examples of green competitiveness, based on information gathered over a ten-year period by CP/RAC.

Each of these cases is explained in a "MedClean" file, and together they show that, with only small changes in the production processes of small and medium-sized

companies, the latter can achieve greater efficiency, thus leading to financial and energy savings, and, into the bargain, a reduction of their environmental impact. Such promising prospects aroused the interest of the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (UCME/Business-Med), a confederation of associations of company heads which has more than 150,000 companies as members, coming from 12 different Mediterranean countries.

### Contributing speakers and participants

CP/RAC participated in the seminar through the involvement of its representatives and experts. Particularly outstanding were the contributions of Juan Antonio de Castro, a specialist in International Economic Prospects and Analysis, José Luis Salazar and Marcela Huertas, CP/RAC advisers, Manolo Clar, a specialist in Environmental Audits, and Bernard Pasquier, a specialist in Economics and International Development. They were all assisted and supervised by Virginia Alzina, the Director of CP/RAC.

SMAP III, the co-organizer of the event, was

represented by Charbel Rizk, the Regional Coordinator, and Véronique Lena, an Environmental specialist.

Lastly, Business-Med was represented by Roger E. Khayat, the President's adviser, and Hicham Abou Jaoude, a specialist in the Environment and Sustainable Development. Particularly noteworthy were the speeches made by the President of Business-Med, Jacques Jean Sarraf, during both the opening and the closing ceremonies of the event.

More than 50 companies and managers belonging to Business-Med and other business associations attended the different sessions of the seminar.

#### **A determination to continue**

Given the interest aroused by the MedClean files among the Business-Med managers, the latter association and the CP/RAC took the first steps towards a joint project, and agreed to present documents prepared by both parties in February 2008, coinciding with Business-

Med's Annual Assembly. The CP/RAC committed itself to preparing a business plan to be implemented over the next five years, and based on the lines of the Medclean files. This exercise has led to the establishment of the GRECO (Green Competitiveness) initiative.

Meanwhile, UNEP/Business-Med will contribute presentations by specialists and business representatives operating in various different countries on the southern shoreline of the Mediterranean, to act as reference and contact points for the CP/RAC. The objective of these contacts is to understand better the real needs and concerns of companies in the private sector so as to propose advantageous solutions at all levels.

In this way links have been forged between the Centre and the Association, the fruits of which, it is hoped, may be the adoption on a massive scale of measures for green competitiveness by companies from all around the Mediterranean. ■

## 3. Aquaculture and environment, subject of a seminar in Malta

The CP/RAC has on the 16th of November of 2007 organised a one-day discussion seminar on "Aquaculture and the Environment", in collaboration with the Malta Cleaner Technology Centre. The seminar was held at the Aula Magna, Old University Building in Valletta.

The objective of the seminar was to bring together all interested stakeholders to review, discuss and possibly put forward recommendations on how to lessen any adverse impacts on the environment. The Cleaner Technology Centre has thus invited a range of stakeholders amongst which enterprises operating in the aquaculture industry in Malta; importers and exporters of fish; fishing cooperatives; Fisheries Conservation and Control Division of the Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment; non-governmental organisations; local councils; Members of European Parliament and the Maltese Consumer Association.

#### **Towards a sustainable aquaculture**

Commissioner Joe Borg responsible for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs of the EU has conveyed a message to the participants whereby he highlighted the fact that the demand for fish and seafood is growing, yet the capture of wild fish is suffering from a number of

constraints. This increased demand is being catered for through aquaculture. According to estimates of the FAO, global aquaculture production will have to double by 2030 to keep pace with the demand. This represents, in absolute terms, an increase of almost 60 million tons. It is therefore important to recognise the challenges being posed by aquaculture particularly those with regard to the environment. The European aquaculture sector has considerable strengths in research and technology to address these challenges and the know-how to find the necessary solution.

Another message by Mr. Paul Mifsud, Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan pointed out that aquaculture is an emerging environmental problem in the Mediterranean. Nutrients and carbon enrichment, introduction of new species into the marine environment affecting the balance in the ecosystem, public health concerns due to the inadequate location of fish farms close to sewerage or industrial outfalls and the introduction of chemicals such as antibiotics, and hormones into the ecosystem are the major environmental concerns related to aquaculture. According to Mr. Mifsud, these environmental problems may be overcome by improvement in technology related to aquaculture practices and interventions



through integrated coastal management plans. In this respect, Mediterranean aquaculture should be sustainable with practices that are environmentally not degrading, technically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable.

A series of presentations were delivered by a number of invited speakers. Topics ranged from Aquaculture in Malta; The importance of Fish in the Mediterranean Diet; Regulating Aquaculture Activities; Environmental Monitoring of Aquaculture Activities in the Maltese Islands; Aquaculture and Marine Life Conservation; and Environmental Protection Efforts in Fish Farming – The Case of Fish & Fish Ltd.

Mr Enrique de Villamore, who represented the CP/RAC also addressed the participants.

### Conclusions and future actions

Following the presentations and discussion the different stakeholders/participants came up with the following conclusions and recommendations:

- To promote artisanal and sustainable fishing techniques.
- To support aquaculture that is run in a sustainable manner and not at the expense of artisanal fishing.
- Health Department to initiate a campaign promoting the consumption of fish as part of a healthy balanced diet. Manufacturing industry should make an informed choice and start raising awareness about the importance of fish consumption.
- To provide a food label on fish marketed for human consumption in order to provide proper nutritional and product origin information.
- To support the Veterinary Affairs and Fisheries Division in their effort to label fish caught from the wild.

- To set up a certification system for fish farm site managers in order to ensure adequate knowledge of management of aquaculture activities.
- To strengthen research capacity for the study of feeding behaviour of captive tuna in order to improve feed management.
- Finding alternative food sources to replace the consumption of feed fish in tuna penning.
- To reassess the monitoring programme.
- To initiate an educational programme for the public on aquaculture.
- To reinforce research on the environmental, social and economic impacts of aquaculture and its application, in order to ensure its sustainable management.



- To establish periodical roundtable discussions between all the interested stakeholders and the fish farming community.

The meeting proposed that the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) holds, in synergy with on-going initiatives on fisheries and environment, a regional workshop on sustainable development and aquaculture where using these conclusions as food for discussion.

The seminar was chaired by Mr. Godwin C. Micallef (Environment Committee – Federation of Industry) and Mr. Lawrence Micallef (Eco-Pro Ltd.)

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## 4. Environment Award for Industry 2007 in Malta



### ENVIRONMENT AWARD FOR INDUSTRY 2007

The Malta Cleaner Technology Centre has on the 18th of January 2008 organised the Presentation Ceremony for the 4th Edition of the Environment Award for Industry. The Award Presentation Ceremony was held at the Aula Magna, Old University Building in Valletta.

The Award is designed to recognise and promote organisations that have made a significant contribution to sustainable development during the year 2007. It aims to highlight businesses and other organisations' policies, practices and processes which are helping to achieve economic and social development while minimising the environmental impact of their operations. It also aims to encourage the replication of such environmental good practice by other organisations.

The award was given in the following three Categories:

#### Category 'A' – The Management Award for Sustainable Development

This award aims to recognise and promote organisations that have based their management systems on the requirements of sustainable development. It highlights the growing need for businesses and organisations to acknowledge their obligations to various stakeholders within society and to manage their broader social responsibilities accordingly.

The winner for this category was Hilton Malta Ltd.

#### Category 'B' – The Conservation Award for Sustainable Development

This award is designed to recognise and promote the achievement of outstanding results in the areas of energy, water and materials conservation.

The joint winners for this category were The Edible Oil Refining Co. Ltd. and Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum. Yellow Pages Malta Ltd. was also awarded an Honourable Mention.

#### Category 'C' – Environment Protection Initiative Award for SME's



This award recognises initiatives taken by small and medium sized enterprises in favour of environmental protection. Applicant firms have no more than 8 employees.

The winner for this category was IMA Engineering Services Ltd.

The Awardees were presented with an appositely designed Trophy and Certificate and were given the chance to take part in the European Business Awards for the Environment Scheme, organised by the EU Commission, whose presentation ceremony takes place every two years during Green Week in Brussels.

Dr. Simone Borg, Chairperson of the Adjudicating Committee and Mr. Mark C. Mifsud (representative of Hon. George Pullicino, Minister for Rural Affairs and the Environment) presented the trophies to the Winners.

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## 5. The Implementation in Spain of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management



The concern for the possible repercussions on human health and the environment of the innumerable chemical substances which form an inseparable part of our current way of life has since the 1990s given rise to intense activity at an international, supranational (i.e., European Union) and national level.

In this context, the Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC) has prepared a report entitled "Actions to promote the sustainable management of chemical products in the Mediterranean Region", with the collaboration of the Department of Environmental Consultancy of the company SIR, s.a., and in response to a proposal made by the Spanish Ministry of the Environment's General Directorate for Environmental Quality and Evaluation.

The objective of the report is to acquire a closer knowledge of the current situation in relation to chemical substances in Spain, so that this may be used as a basis for implementing all necessary actions specified by any E.U. or international orientations, legislation, objectives or strategies that have been adopted in recent months with regard to chemical substances, and so as to be able to take advantage of synergies, coordinate efforts and confront the challenges pending in this wide and

varied sector.

The focus of the work undertaken is necessarily multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary, and involves various different entities, ranging from a variety of public bodies and central government organisms to non-governmental organizations, representatives of industry and of employees, groups acting in the public interest, and scientific associations, among others.

The National Profile thus prepared, which follows the format recommended in the United Nations Guideline-Document, takes into account all the relevant information available: socio-economic and industrial data; legal instruments for the control and supervision of chemical products; research, development and innovation factors; current institutional capacities; voluntary agreements; health conditions in the workplace; and access to information. This profile has been completed using a detailed analysis of each of the 272 activities included in the 36 Areas of Employment included in the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), examining in each case the degree of compliance and the availability of the means required to ensure such compliance; as well as, as appropriate, the lack of such means and any shortcomings detected. ■

## 6. Diagnosis of the situation of mercury and other heavy metals in Spain

As part of the report "Actions to promote sustainable management of chemical products in the Mediterranean Region", mentioned in the news item entitled The Implementation in Spain of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, the question is

raised of the current situation concerning heavy metals in Spain (principally cadmium, lead and mercury, with special attention to the latter), and of the objectives and measures outlined both in the E.U.Strategy for this latter metal presented in 2005, and in the World

## Evaluation of Mercury (2002).

The objective of this diagnosis, is to provide a basis for the development of a Spanish Strategy for Mercury and for its sustainable management. For this purpose, an analysis has been made of the data relating to current stocks of this mineral, its extraction and sale, the principal sources of production in Spain, and the experimental campaigns to evaluate levels and give estimates of pollution caused by mercury, cadmium and lead both in sample environmental conditions and in relation to human health.

In addition, the report contains a study of the most important industries and sectors of economic activity causing emissions and/or waste deposits of heavy metals (the chlor-alkali industry, oil-fired power stations, cement-works, the non-ferrous metal and waste incineration sectors), including a description of the best technology available today to reduce or eliminate the pollution from heavy metals caused by these activities.

This analysis also reveals the geographical areas most affected by the presence of heavy metals (in terms of

emissions and waste deposits) and the production centres or industrial sites which cause this pollution, on the basis of the data available in the EPER&/EMEP Register (Co-operative programme for monitoring and evaluation of the long range transmission of air pollutants in Europe) and the Spanish Baseline Budget produced in 2005 concerning the discharge of pollutants into water and the air by industrial installations with a significant potential for pollution located in the hydrographic basins of the Mediterranean region.

A series of recommendations and proposals are included in order to foster the sustainable management of heavy metals, including backing for the creation of a Mercury Technology Centre in the mining district of Almadén (in the province of Ciudad Real) and of a Mercury Environmental Surveillance Network. With regard to the future Technology Centre, an analysis is made of the steps already taken over the last two years, together with a review of its objectives and needs, of the management model required for its establishment and subsequent operation, and of the various initiatives that could be undertaken or directed from the new centre. ■