

**STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE:
TOWARDS AN INITIATIVE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE BLUE ECONOMY IN THE
WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

Barcelona, 2nd of February 2017

Briefing Note – Panel 1C

**Sustainable
consumption and production**



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PANEL 1C: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Introduction and framing the activity of the panel

Objectives of the panel

Maritime and land-based activities in the western Mediterranean region, along with the progressively more urbanised coastline, are at the origin of a wide spectrum of pressures affecting marine and coastal ecosystems. These range from high resource consumption (water, energy, food products, raw materials, coastal space) to air and water pollution releases and waste generation but also climate change effects on biodiversity and marine resources. The aim of this panel is to discuss the opportunities offered by Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in the western Mediterranean region, existing barriers and ways of overcoming them. Taking into consideration the experience gained in the Western Med through the actions carried out under the Barcelona Convention Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean, specific sectors such as aquaculture, tourism, *food and fisheries*; renewable energy generation, goods manufacturing, housing and construction, waste collection and recycling offer a great potential for action

Introducing the speakers

Co-chairs:

- Mr Miguel García-Herraz, Deputy Secretary General for Water & Environment, Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean
- Mr Michel Sponar, Deputy Head of Unit, Marine Environment and Water Industry, Directorate-General for Environment, European Commission

Panelists:

- Mr Enrique de Villamore, Director, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Regional Activity Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Mr Abelmalek Faraj, Director, National Institute for Fisheries Research, Morocco
- Ms Cristina Fossi, Professeur, Siena University, Italy
- Ms Valeria Mangiarotti, Vice President, The Association of Mediterranean Cruise Ports (MEDCRUISE)
- Mr Rafik Moualek, Studies' Director, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture / Agriculture and rural development, Algeria
- Mr Michael Scoullios, Team Leader, EU funded H2020 –SWIM Support mechanism
- Mr Sidi Boubacar Sidi Ali, Director, Fisheries Ressources, Ministry of Fisheries and Maritime Economy, Mauritania
- Mr Christian Susan, Industrial Development Officer, Department of Environment, Division of Industrial Resource Efficiency, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- Ms Pilar Vara, Deputy Director, Fisheries resources protection, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Spain

Setting the topic of the panel

What are the challenges at stake?

Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) is a paramount objective and prerequisite for a blue, sustainable development allowing economic growth to decouple from environmental depletion and growing consumption of natural resources. Current patterns of economic development in western Mediterranean riparian countries are characterised by resource-intensive production processes as well as consumption intensive lifestyles, which exert considerable pressures on local and regional ecosystems, contributing to resource scarcity (water, energy, raw materials), pollution, waste generation, and greenhouse gas emissions. A large part of the pollution in the western Mediterranean (out of which, 80% originates from land-based sources) is caused by inefficient industrial processes and poor management of waste. Environmental and social externalities, addressed, partially or not at all, of the many activities carried out in the region, by market and policies, may offset the incomes and benefits they provide.

Taking into account environmental degradation and climate change, cost-effective opportunities exist for countries to develop eco-efficient economies: the way in which goods and services are produced, sold and consumed needs to be redesigned with the objective to drive the revitalisation of the industrial and socio-economic development towards zero-waste, low-carbon, resource efficient, socially inclusive, green (and blue) circular economies.

What are the persisting problems and gaps identified?

During the last decades, much progress has been made towards SCP in the Mediterranean region as a whole through the work of the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention, culminating in the recent adoption by the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention of a series of decisions on the SCP Action Plan, the Implementation of the Marine Litter Action Plan and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025. At the EU level, an important development is the adoption of the Circular Economy Package¹, yet not specifically applying to the coastal, marine or maritime sectors. The recently adopted General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) mid-term strategy² will help in ensuring more sustainable harvesting practices of marine living resources. Many western Mediterranean countries are making progress in identifying SCP patterns as a priority in their national policy agendas. The implementation of SCP practices already shows positive environmental, social and economic impacts with tangible and achievable co-benefits for climate change and direct improvement on cross-cutting issues as water and energy efficiency, land use, mobility and pollution. Overall, the transition to a green and low-emissions economy is providing real opportunities for preserving natural resources, job creation, improvement of the quality of life for all and a sustainable future.

However, many challenges still hinder the decisive shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns. These are linked to a number of features such as SCP legislation/regulatory frameworks, including sustainable procurement and in particular public procurement, which disposes of a major potential to shift to more sustainable production patterns through sustainable government consumption

¹ The Circular Economy Package, consisting of an EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy and revised legislative proposals on waste.

² Resolution GFCM/40/2016/2 for a mid-term strategy (2017/2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries

itself, but also through governments' role-setting for the private sector and through the creation of new markets for sustainable products; or improvement of business competitiveness through the transfer of environmentally sound technologies; or adjustment of adequate economic and financial instruments so as to meet the needs of eco-entrepreneurs and investors.

Eco-innovation is helping in developing new sustainable products and services, since environmental impacts occur at all stages in the life cycles of products and materials, being often connected to land use, combustion of fuels, industrial processes, dispersive use of materials (e.g., fertilizers), or resource extraction (including biomass and minerals).

Looking at the consumption side, education and awareness throughout the region, as well as actions (including incentives) aimed at changing life styles, consumers' behavioural responses, together with overall civil society empowerment, are instrumental in shifting towards sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Discussion on potential interventions to be supported by the initiative

Promote more effective SCP tools and projects

- How can SCP tools and practices be incorporated into the blue economy sectors of the west Med, in a uniform manner? e.g. through the promotion of an inclusive governance system including top-down policy development (innovative policy and regulatory changes) and bottom-up public participation?
- How can tools and practices already in place (regulatory and economic instruments, new and existing technologies, empowerment of stakeholders, etc.) be deployed, across the western Mediterranean region, amongst traditionally segmented institutional management and production systems, to achieve more sustainable consumption and production patterns?
- How can inter-linkages between sustainable development challenges be identified so that they offer immediate and effective solutions at the different levels of governance (local, national and regional)?
- How can the recent experience gained through the ongoing regional SCP programmes be of help in further upscaling/advancing towards SCP/green, circular economy?

Foster stakeholder cooperation and market development

- In which manner may the sub-regional approach support the development of partnerships between universities and/or research centres and green businesses? (e.g. development of networks of economic clusters and/or eco-incubators).
- In which manner can a sub-regional cooperation initiative provide support to address the drivers of unsustainable consumption and production patterns (e.g. lack of knowledge and know-how, provision of investment and/or technologies for sustainable production, etc. regarding aspects such as limited product life spans, prices not reflecting real consumption of natural resources/externalities, environmental and social costs, limited incentives for recycling and reuse, or reliable consumer information)?
- How can stakeholders be actively engaged, notably the private sector (from large industrial conglomerates to small-scale producers), workers' organisations, women, along with the scientific/research community, educators, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society/consumers?

- What can be the new forms of cooperation (partnerships, collaborative actions, etc.) across sectors (with ICZM or MSP) and across actors to achieve SCP, while keeping balanced governance?
- How should consumer education and awareness-raising shift towards more sustainable lifestyles and products?

Mainstreaming SCP into Blue Economy sectors

- What are the main reasons for mainstreaming SCP into relevant sectors for Blue Economy of the West Med?
- What are the environmental impacts, including waste, water, biodiversity -related issues, created along the life-cycle?
- What is being or will be done in order to promote SCP in the management of fishing ports and fishing vessels? E.g. in managing the waste from fishing vessels (and other vessels).
- What is the state of advancement in solar-powered desalination and cooling/refrigeration plants? By when are these forecast to overtake fossil fuel powered plants around the (west) Med?
- What is being done to ensure uniform standards for aquaculture operations, regarding discharges, escape prevention, plastic pollution etc.?
- What are the experiences with application of the Regional Marine Litter Action Plan?
- What are the experiences with application of the Regional SCP Action Plan and the Roadmap?
- How could prevention of marine pollution (e.g. marine litter, waste water) be best pursued?