



Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production



Background - a Mediterranean centre for promoting sustainable consumption and production

The Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC) has been part of the **Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP)**¹ since 1996. This is a programme under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), designed to coordinate the implementation of the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution (Barcelona Convention). Since 2008, the CP/RAC has also been one of the Nominated Centres for the Stockholm Convention, which works to eliminate Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) from the environment.

“Cleaner production is the continuous application of an integrated preventive environmental strategy to processes, products and services to increase overall efficiency, and reduce risks to humans and the environment. Cleaner production can be applied to the processes used in any industry, to products themselves and to various services provided in society” (UNEP)

Nowadays, the approved mission of the centre is *“To promote mechanisms leading to sustainable patterns of production and consumption in the Mediterranean, focusing on cleaner production and pollution prevention”*.

¹ <http://www.unepmap.org/>

The Barcelona Convention

The Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution (Barcelona Convention) was approved in 1976 by the 16 States comprising the Intergovernmental Meeting on the Protection of the Mediterranean, and by the European Community.

One year earlier, 21 Mediterranean countries and the European Community adopted the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), the first ever Regional Seas Programme, under the auspices of the UNEP. The legal framework of the MAP was finally established by the Barcelona Convention.

Seven protocols addressing specific aspects of Mediterranean environmental conservation complete the MAP legal framework:

- Dumping Protocol (from ships and aircraft).
- Prevention and Emergency Protocol (pollution from ships and emergencies).
- Land-based Sources and Activities Protocol.
- Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol.
- Offshore Protocol (pollution from exploration and exploitation).
- Hazardous Wastes Protocol.
- Coastal Management

There are currently 22 Contracting Parties² to the Barcelona Convention and the MAP working to protect the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment while fostering regional and national plans to achieve sustainable development.

The Stockholm Convention

The Stockholm Convention is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically and accumulate in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife. Exposure can lead to serious health effects including certain cancers, birth defects, dysfunctional immune and reproductive systems, greater susceptibility to disease and even diminished intelligence. Given their long range transport, no one government acting alone can protect its citizens or its environment from POPs. In response, the Stockholm Convention, which was adopted in 2001 and came into force in 2004, requires Parties to take measures to eliminate or reduce the release of POPs into the environment. The Convention is administered by the United Nations Environment Programme and is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

² Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Community, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey



CP/RAC: Promoting sustainable production and consumption in the Mediterranean

Since the adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in 2002, changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production has become a major objective of the main global and regional sustainable development initiatives.

This is especially relevant in the Mediterranean region for distinguishing between development and environmental degradation arising from pressure exerted on the local environment by the economic development of the 21 regional countries. The current situation is characterised and affected by water scarcity, population explosion and rapid urban development in coastal areas, increasing levels of waste, climate change, mass tourism, etc.

Why production and consumption?

Whilst production-oriented strategies can certainly reduce the environmental impacts associated with the design and manufacture of products, they do not address the increasingly significant environmental and social impacts arising from the selection, use and disposal of products by consumers. Economies cannot be made sustainable unless efforts to make production processes more environmentally friendly are accompanied by a society-wide shift to sustainable consumption patterns.

Therefore, an integrated approach to patterns of consumption and production is crucial if current trends towards environmental degradation are to be reversed. This approach will also help to bridge the increasing gap between North and South.

Being aware of this fact, in 2005 countries approved the **Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)**, which includes changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production as its overarching third objective.

Accordingly, CP/RAC has established a Work Programme embracing the integrated approach applied by the UNEP to Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) and has been instrumental in:

- Bringing MAP closer to the global initiative on SCP spearheaded by the UNEP and UN DESA³, the so-called **Marrakech Process**; ⁴
- Lending support to the MSSD;
- Updating its mandate within the European Commission-MAP Cooperation Work Programme with the SCP as one of the key priority challenges of the renewed European Union Sustainable Development Strategy;
- Participating in Horizon 2020.

³ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

⁴ The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation calls for the development of “a 10-year framework of programmes in support of regional and national initiatives, to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production.”

This initiative is referred to as the “Marrakech Process” and includes regular global and regional meetings and informal expert task forces on issues relevant to SCP.



Sound chemicals management - a CP/RAC priority in the promotion of SCP in the Mediterranean

Within the framework of MAP, CP/RAC promotes sustainable production under the Land-Based Sources Protocol (LBS Protocol). The Centre has been involved in the main programmes addressing land-based pollution, especially in the Strategic Action Programme Addressing Pollution from Land-Based Sources (SAP).

Chemicals and their main industrial sources are identified in Annex I to the LBS Protocol and the SAP as priorities that must be studied and included in the implementation of action plans, programmes and measures by countries to combat pollution from land-based sources.

Likewise, in the global context of sustainable development, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) are recent international agreements through which countries are combining their efforts to ensure that chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimise significant adverse impacts on the environment and human health.

In order to better contribute to the reduction and sound management of chemicals in Mediterranean countries, CP/RAC is aware that it must avoid duplication of efforts with these international agreements and must also take advantage of synergies between them and the LBS Protocol. For this reason, the Centre has developed a strategy of adapting its activities which focus on the reduction and sound management of chemicals to the priorities and needs which are common to the LBS Protocol, the Stockholm Convention and the SAICM.

Nominated Centre for the Stockholm Convention

Following the presentation made by the Spanish Government in 2007, the CP/RAC was given the status of Nominated Centre for the Stockholm Convention in February 2008 with official endorsement from the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The document certifies that the appointment of the CP/RAC has the formal support of the WEOG Countries (Western European and Other Groups), the EU (European Union) as well as Japan, the USA, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Norway and New Zealand (JUSSCANNZ). The new status drives the centre to broaden its areas of work, following the Stockholm Convention requirements:

- To develop a work plan through a process of regional or subregional consultations;
- To develop project proposals, in consultation with stakeholders, for submission to the financial mechanism and other potential sources of assistance;
- To implement the regional projects thus developed.



Climate change - links to sustainable consumption and production

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Mediterranean region is one of the areas of the planet likely to feel the greatest impact of climate change. Preventing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapting to the possible consequences of climate change therefore constitutes a priority field of action in the region, as was recognised by the Conference of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention in their 15th meeting in Almeria (Spain). Furthermore, the United Nations Environment Programme includes climate change and sustainable consumption and production as priorities in its mid-term strategy for 2010-2013.

Integrating the above priority into the mission of CP/RAC, i.e. the promotion of sustainable consumption and production, the Centre launched a major work programme to tackle climate change from the perspective of final consumption and related trade. This will become a valuable tool for ongoing initiatives in the region, such as the Barcelona Process and the Mediterranean Union, with the prospect of a free trade area increasing consumption and production flows in the Mediterranean.

The consumption perspective provides new elements which can be used to design strategies for reducing the generation of GHG emissions at both national and international levels, as well as policies to promote sustainable production and consumption patterns. Furthermore, consumption-based emissions provide a framework which can be used to measure the responsibility of the consumer.



The Greco Initiative - focusing on the environment while making profits

Green competitiveness is about using an environmental focus to reshape the way we do business. The challenge is to move towards the concept of “opportunity” for reinforcing companies’ capacity to acquire and apply new knowledge.

The Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC), which promotes sustainable patterns of production and consumption, has launched the GRECO Initiative.

This innovative initiative focuses on boosting *green competitiveness* in the Mediterranean region, by enhancing the visibility of financial opportunities generated by investing in the environment. Because of the importance of the initiative, it was announced by the Minister for the Environment, Ms. Cristina Narbona, in January 2008.

One hundred examples of Mediterranean companies which have successfully introduced eco-efficient production techniques show how huge the potential for making money is while protecting the environment.

The Greco Initiative already has a substantial history of research and actions, which has encouraged the CP/RAC to take this line of action further.



Getting to work - lines of action of the CP/RAC Work Programme

Follow-up and assessment of trends and challenges regarding SCP

- Preparation of periodic reports providing review and monitoring of:
 - Development trends and progress made by Mediterranean countries in implementing SCP in the business sector;
 - Main initiatives by local agencies, consumer associations, NGOs and other players in civil society to promote the shift to sustainable consumption and environmentally sound lifestyles.
- Organisation of panel discussions promoting debate and discussion among experts, representatives of government agencies, consumer organisations, business and industry, civil society and other stakeholders regarding the needs, priorities and challenges facing SCP in the Mediterranean region.

Involving key players - an exercise in good governance

- Creation of partnerships with representatives from the private sector, academia and civil society for joint collaboration in the promotion of SCP alternatives.
- Cooperation with international agents dealing with SCP in order to take advantage of synergies and avoid duplication of effort.

Promoting tools to facilitate SCP in the business sector

- Preparation of technical studies on CP and other pollution prevention alternatives (eco-efficiency, BATs, BEPs, etc.) in the main industrial sectors of Mediterranean countries.
- Development of plans and methodological guidelines to facilitate the application of SCP alternatives by the public and private sectors alike, e.g. eco-labelling, green procurement, corporate social responsibility.
- Training and technical support at both regional and national levels.
- Publication, dissemination and awareness material about successful projects and SCP experience in Mediterranean countries.

Raising consumers' awareness of their role and responsibility in driving change towards sustainable development

- Dissemination of information on alternatives for sustainable lifestyles among the Mediterranean population.
- Promotion of responsible/sensible consumption among young people (in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP/DTIE) and consumer organisations).





Getting to work - lines of action of the CP/RAC Work Programme

Addressing the links between consumption and climate change

- Awareness and information: raise awareness of the link between consumption and climate change; provide negotiators and policy makers with key and innovative information for decision-making from a consumption perspective;
- Create partnerships and build networks with institutions, agents and experts at the cutting edge of knowledge, for further disseminating and developing the consumption-based approach;
- Assess the general consumption and climate change trends in the Mediterranean region as well as opportunities for the consumption-based approach in the region; facilitate promising new opportunities for cooperation in the Mediterranean and ongoing initiatives in the region;
- Contribute with innovative approaches to effectively reduce global GHG emissions, with a broader perspective than the traditional production-based approach, addressing carbon leakage sources and issues such as transport, trade, global value chains, equity, transparency and participation.

Promoting the sound management of chemicals and pollution prevention under the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution sources and in land-based activities

- Use of the Spanish example to help developing countries with chemicals management.
- Training and technical support to stakeholders.
- Dissemination of experience in the implementation of SAICM (Strategic Approach for International Chemicals Management).

Development of the Stockholm Convention

- Help developing countries to create their own NIPs (National Implementation Plan).
- Identify the priorities in POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants) in developing countries.

Encouraging the environmentally sound management of persistent organic substances (POPs) and heavy metals

- Publication of technical studies concerning strategies for heavy metals.
- Contribute to international projects for the management of chemical waste contaminated with PCBs.

Development of the Greco Initiative

- Boost green competitiveness in the Mediterranean region by enhancing the visibility of financial opportunities generated by the environment.
- Promote green competitiveness of SMEs through private-public partnerships.
- Improve the understanding of green competitiveness technologies with roadshows and other awareness-raising tools.





CP/RAC Publications

CP News

Newsletter on the activities and initiatives carried out in the Mediterranean countries for SCP promotion.

RAC/CP Annual Technical Publication

Publication with diverse contributions from experts related to SCP, with a focus on the Mediterranean aspect.

MedClean

Case studies with examples of businesses in the Mediterranean region which have carried out CP initiatives, demonstrating feasibility through balance sheets which reflect both economic and environmental aspects.

General Studies

These studies introduce and analyse topics related to CP concepts and sustainable development at the global and regional levels.

Industry studies

These documents analyse a particular industry and present the situation and trends in each country in the region.

They describe production processes and resultant environmental impacts, and identify the various options for minimising these impacts and preventing pollution-related health risks.

Methodological guides

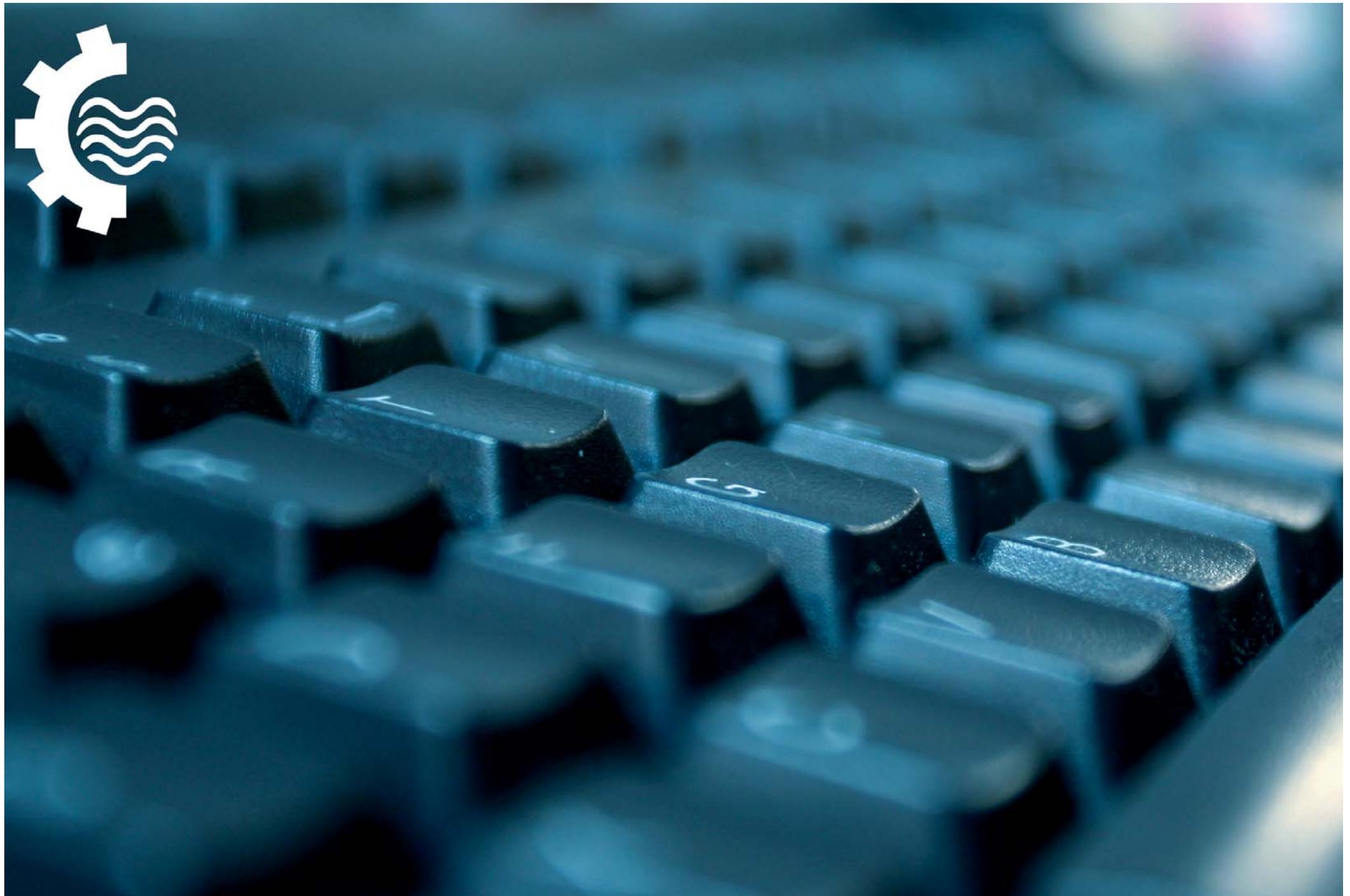
The guides introduce tools to facilitate eco-efficient management in companies by analysing their production processes and implementing BATs and BEPs, with a view to identifying solutions to the environmental impact created by these activities.

Leaflets

The leaflets introduce the topic in a concise manner. Methodological and sectorial leaflets are accompanied by a CD which includes the study of the methodology and the sector which they target.

Annual Report

The annual reports are a very useful tool for analysing the milestones reached during the period and for setting new goals.



For further information, please visit [http:// www.cprac.org](http://www.cprac.org) or contact:

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