

# III

## REPORT ON ACTIVITIES 2008 - 1. Sustainable production and consumption

year, in 60% of the cases in just 6 months. In 40% of the cases it is observed that no kind of investment is required. With these and other data, the aim is to pass on the message to firms that cleaner production can lead to significant financial and also environmental benefits.



### Report for SMEs

Taking into account the ultimate target for the GRECO Initiative, namely SMEs, a smaller, simplified version was drawn up of the report “Green Competitiveness in the Mediterranean – Finding business opportunities through Cleaner Production”, that covers 5 pages. This report, less technical and more informative in nature, reinforces the message of the GRECO Initiative by constantly relating the financial and en-

vironmental benefits obtained from applying cleaner production. Its slogan: the environment is not a cost but improved competitiveness.

This smaller version of the report was published in English and French and distributed to SMEs through contacts of UMCE-Businessmed, the Cleaner Production Centres and congresses organised by the CP/RAC.

### 1.13 GRECO Strategy

In 2008, a work plan was drawn up for the GRECO Initiative that includes new elements such as the creation of a Mediterranean digital platform, the publication of an annual report, public relations activities, setting up the biannual GRECO award and hiring “antennas” (local experts to help spread the project) in each of the countries. This work plan was presented to Mediterranean business people through the UMCE-BusinessMed (Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises), at its annual meeting held in Egypt last February.

To ensure green competitiveness throughout the Mediterranean, the CP/RAC became involved in this confederation, signing a collaboration agreement in 2007. They also jointly organised the seminar entitled “Towards Sustainable Development”, held in Egypt towards the end of 2007. This close cooperation helped to establish the lines of work and specific actions to be carried out with the Mediterranean business sector in 2008.

With a view to creating a favourable atmosphere for spreading cleaner production in the Mediterranean, financial institutions became involved in the initiative, such as the International Financial Corporation (IFC), belonging to the World Bank. This step meant that work could begin on designing a financial instrument



for the Mediterranean to help apply cleaner production techniques in SMEs.

#### 1.14 GRECO UMCE-BusinessMed project

After signing the collaboration agreement with UMCE-BusinessMed, the CP/RAC trained members of the confederation, involving them to help promote the GRECO Initiative in the country and to encourage SMEs to attend the congresses. A Business Plan was agreed with them and they undertook to spread the GRECO Initiative among those firms where they had an influence. The plan for 2009 is to get even closer to those countries where congresses are held.



#### GRECO Workshop

The GRECO workshop was held on 5 November 2008, prior to the inauguration of the First Mediterranean Round Table on Sustainable Consumption and Production, entitled "GRECO Initiative, finding business opportunities through Cleaner Production".

Located at the Escuela Superior de Comercio Internacional (ESCI) in Barcelona, the seminar brought together around 20 participants from France, Slovenia, Malta, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Cyprus, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Spain. Most of the participants formed part of the UMCE-BusinessMed, as well as Cleaner Production Centres from each of the countries.

Virginia Alzina, Director of the CP/RAC, inaugurated the seminar by encouraging the participants to adopt the GRECO Initiative as a way to achieve cleaner production throughout the Mediterranean and to therefore obtain a more sustainable market of goods and services. Luisa Valdecasas, head of the GRECO Initiative, presented the project in detail, emphasising its advantages, the activities carried out and those planned for the future. All participants had the chance to express their opinions regarding the project, which were very positive and focused on the innovative fact that the GRECO Initiative is aimed at companies,



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talking to them in terms of financial profitability and not only in terms of respect for the environment.

The BusinessMed Focal Point explained the challenges and opportunities that the GRECO Initiative might encounter in each of the countries. For their part, the National Cleaner Production Centres provided the methods to be used to support SMEs in adopting Best Environmental Practices (BEPs) and Best Available Techniques (BATs).

### 1.15 GRECO Disseminating the report as stipulated in the MAP

One of the main objectives of the GRECO Initiative is to spread and raise awareness as far as possible of the financial benefits for Mediterranean firms in applying environmental techniques, reducing the erroneous but still deeply rooted perception that introducing the environment into a company is a cost and a burden. So that firms can see the environment as an opportunity, as well as governments (with the aim of these designing public policies and measures to encourage the application of cleaner production), it is essential to disseminate the findings from the study on green competitiveness.

This dissemination was carried out within the context of the most relevant forums for the Initiative. In 2008, the GRECO Initiative was presented at various meetings with different actors, both from the public and the private sector and from different countries in the Mediterranean region:

- **January:** presentation by the Environment Minister in Spain, Cristina Narbona, at the 15th Ordinary Meeting of the Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, held in Almeria (Spain).



- **February:** The Clean Equity Forum, Monaco.
- **February:** Annual meeting of UMCE-BusinessMed, Egypt.
- **March:** Seminar on Cleaner Production, Turkey.
- **April:** Expo CO<sub>2</sub>, Barcelona (Spain). The CP/RAC took part in organising this event and prepared and published a brochure on energy efficiency in the Mediterranean with data from the Med Clean files.



- **April:** OECD – UNEP conference on Resource Efficiency, Paris (France).
- **November:** Seminar on the GRECO Initiative, Barcelona (Spain).
- **November:** Barcelona Process, Union for the Mediterranean, Paris (France).
- **December:** Visit to the Moroccan authorities to secure their support to present the GRECO Initiative in their country, with a view to organising a congress in Morocco in February 2009, bringing together around 100 participants from the public and private sector.

