

# CONFERENCE OF THE WATER DIRECTORS OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

## European Strategy for the Protection and the Conservation of the Marine Environment

By  
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Hellenic Government  
Ministry for the Environment  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



EU Commission  
DG Environment  
DG AidCo



Mediterranean Component of  
the EU Water Initiative  
European Commission



EUROMED  
Euro-Mediterranean  
Partnership



Euro-Mediterranean  
Information System  
on Know-How in the  
Water Sector



Regional Monitoring and  
Support Unit  
MEDA-Water Programme

# Layout

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## Origin

### Sixth Community Environment Action Programme 2002-2011

- promotion of “sustainable use of the seas and conservation of marine ecosystems, including sea beds, estuarine and coastal areas, paying special attention to sites holding a high biodiversity value<sup>3</sup>”
- “a thematic strategy for the protection and conservation of the marine environment taking into account inter alia the terms and implementation obligations of marine Conventions, and the need to reduce emissions and impacts of sea transport and other sea and land based activities”



## Milestones

1. 6th Environment Action Programme (2002)
2. Communication 2002 "Towards a Strategy to Protect and Conserve the Marine Environment"
3. EU Council Conclusions 2003 and 2004, EU Parliament, Committee of Regions, Economic and Social Committee
4. Barcelona Convention, OSPAR, HELCOM
5. Stakeholder consultation conferences in 2002 and 2004
6. Working groups 2002-2005
7. Package adopted by the Commission, 2005



## Pressures

- Increasing pressures on the Marine Environment
  - Land-based activities, discharges– 80% of marine pollution
  - Overfishing
  - Oil spills, Shipping
  - Oil and gas exploration
- Marine ecosystems under threat
  - Biodiversity decreasing
  - Habitats being destroyed
- Capacity of our seas to provide goods and services for human populations being undermined.



## Knowledge

- Gaps in knowledge
  - Assessment and monitoring programmes not integrated and not complete.
  - Weak link between research needs and priorities.
  - Challenges of an « ecosystem approach to management of human activities »
- Monitoring and assessment: divergence of approaches around Europe
  - Mostly traditional pollution monitoring (contaminants)
  - Recent developments:
    - More emphasis on ecosystem aspects
    - Spread of indicators
    - Development of Ecological Quality Objectives



## Governance

- Lack of coordination and piecemeal approach
- At international level
  - Many regional and global strategies, recommendations, binding agreements, guidelines etc. but no articulation between them
  - Many institutions, bodies, conventions, and agreements but poor coordination
- At EU level
  - A number of policies affecting the marine environment: CFP, marine transport policy, chemicals policy, CAP, air policy, water policy
  - But not specifically designed to protect the marine environment
  - And no concerted policy for the protection of the marine environment
- At national level
  - Very few countries with legislation or policies on marine protection



## Addressing key Issues

- Different environmental conditions and threats
- Many diverse stakeholders with overlapping obligations in overlapping sea areas
- Lack of coherence and uncertain adequacy in level of control
- Diversity in information base and gaps in knowledge
- Duplication of efforts, waste of resources

- A dual EU - regional approach
- An ecosystem based approach
- A knowledge based approach
- A cooperative approach



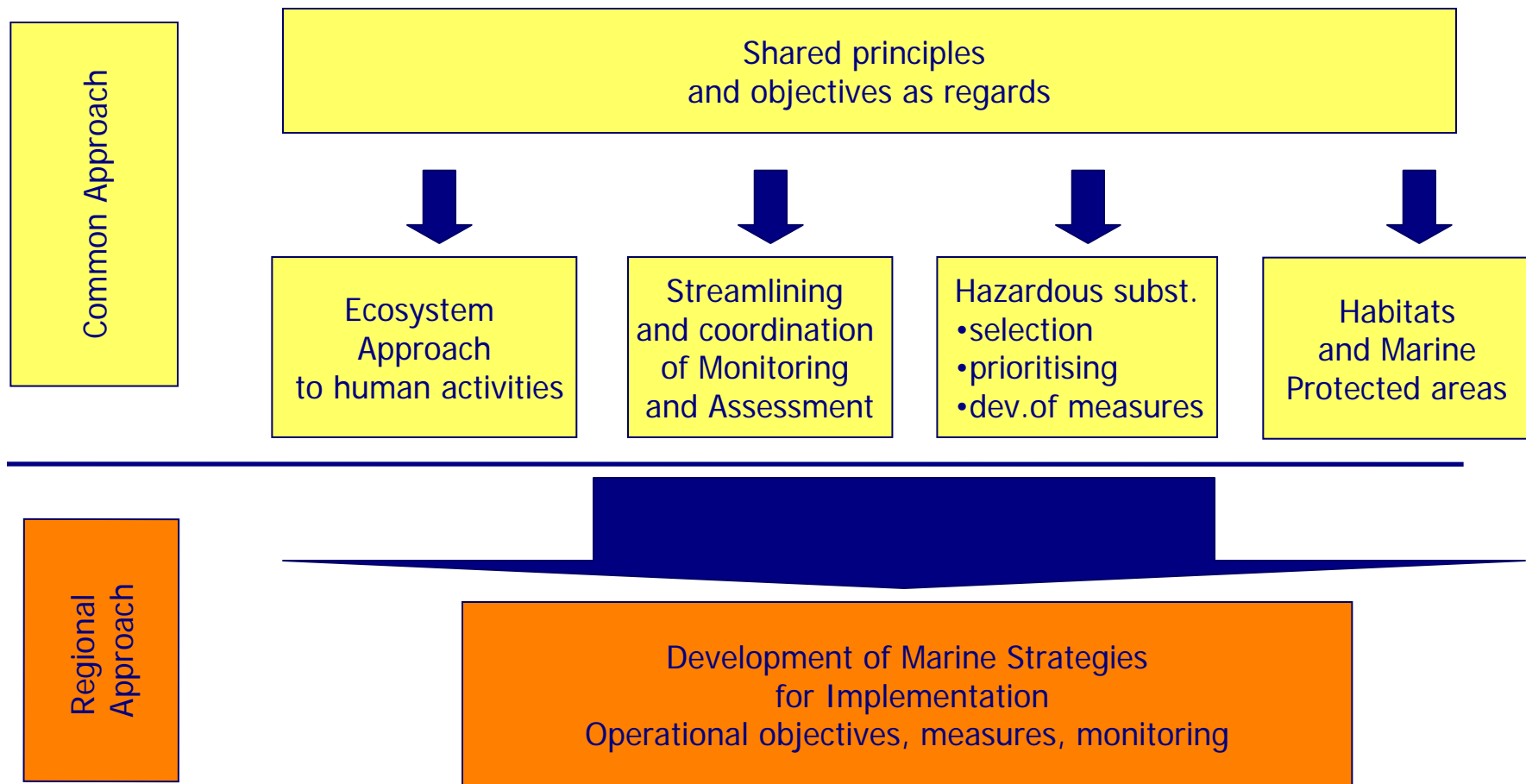


## Dual approach

- Common principles and objectives in different regions
  - EU covering parts of all regional seas around Europe
  - Many problems shared in these seas
  - Transboundary nature of most threats and human activities
- A regionalised approach to capture specific problems
  - Coherence and integration instead of sectoral approach
  - Addressing regional specificities
  - Using as much as possible existing legal and regional institutional instruments

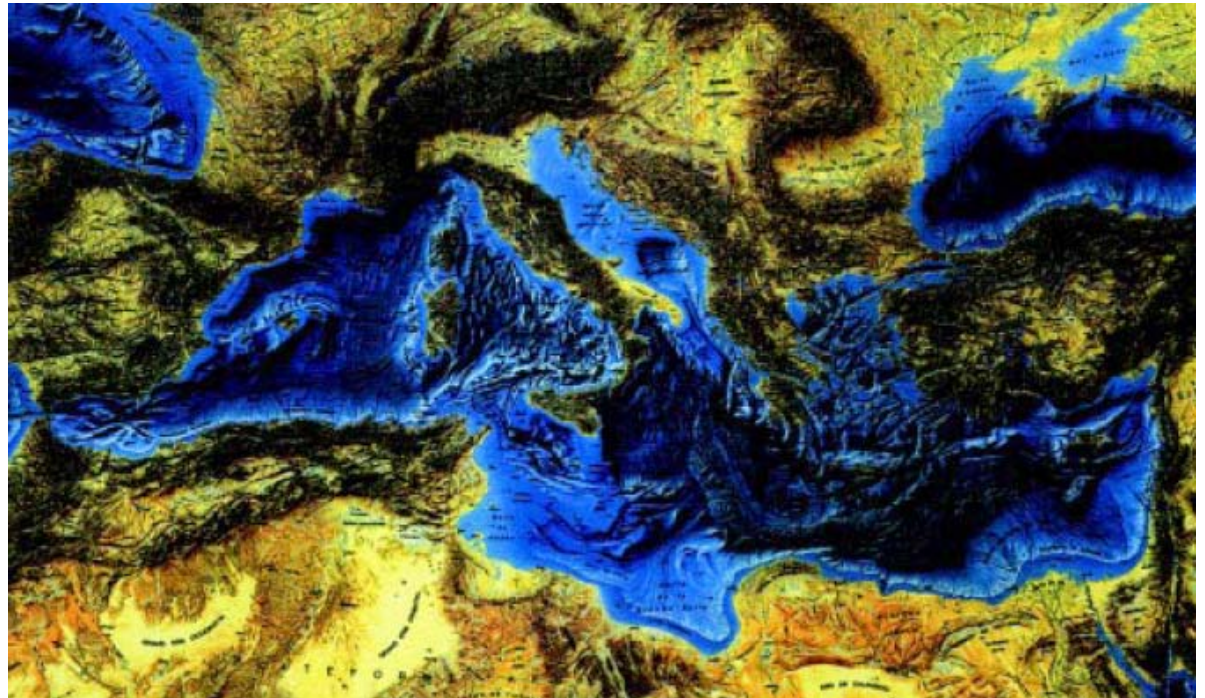


## Two layers

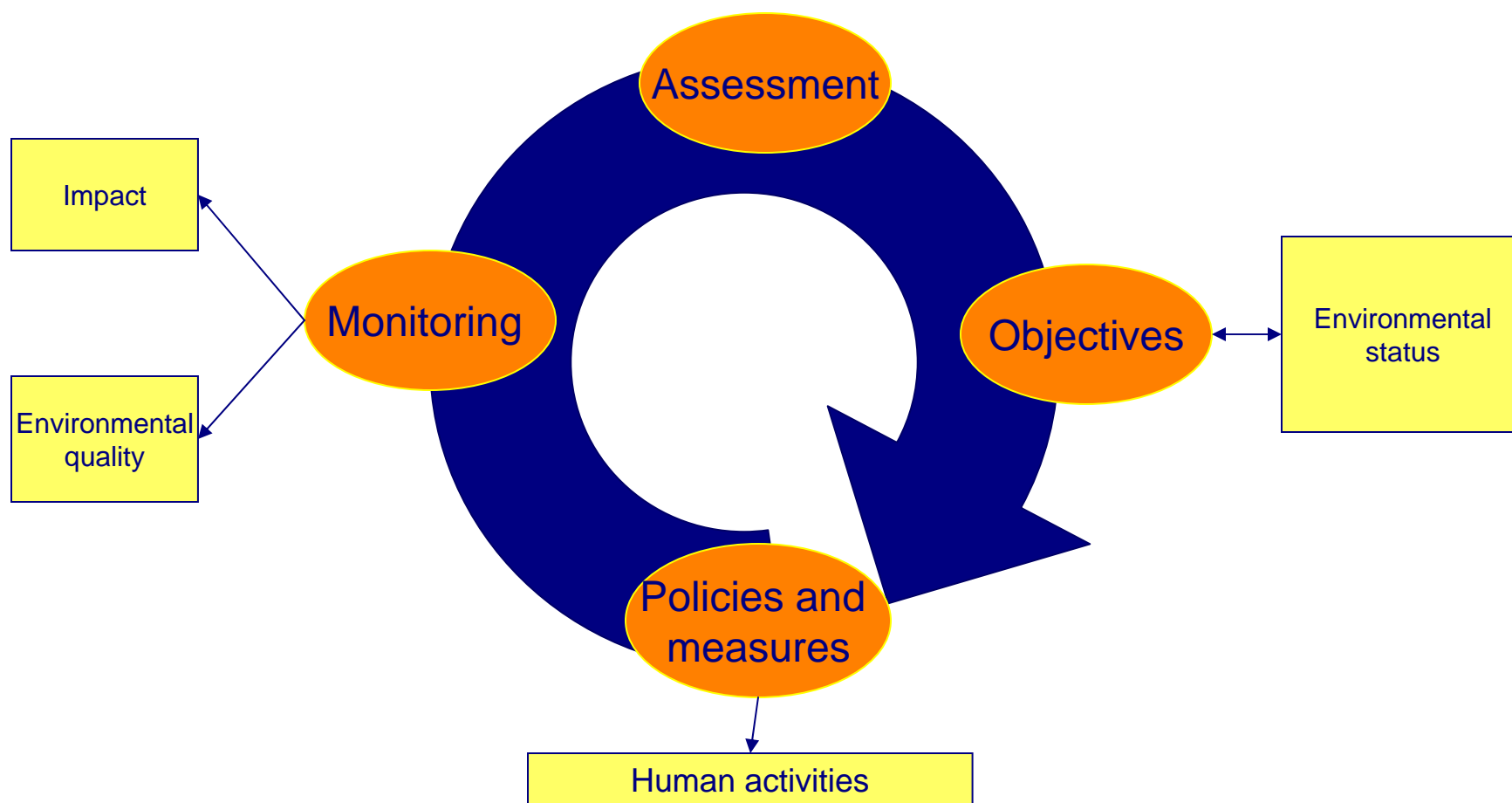


## Regions

- Baltic
- North East Atlantic
- Mediterranean
  - Western
  - Adriatic
  - Ionian
  - Aegean Levantine



# Monitoring & assessment



## The Package

- The Strategy, as adopted by the European Commission, COM(2005)504
- The proposal for a directive, COM(2005)505
- The Impact Assessment, SEC(2005)1290  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/marine.htm>
- Ecosystem Approach Guidance (ICES cooperative research 273)  
<http://www.ices.dk/pubs/crr/crr272/CRR272.pdf>



# Objectives

## Political

- « to protect and restore Europe's oceans and seas and ensure that human activities are carried out in a sustainable manner so that current and future generations enjoy and benefit from biologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas that are safe, clean, healthy and productive »

## Legal

- « to achieve good environmental status in the marine environment by the year 2021 at the latest, and to ensure the continued protection and preservation of that environment and the prevention of deterioration »

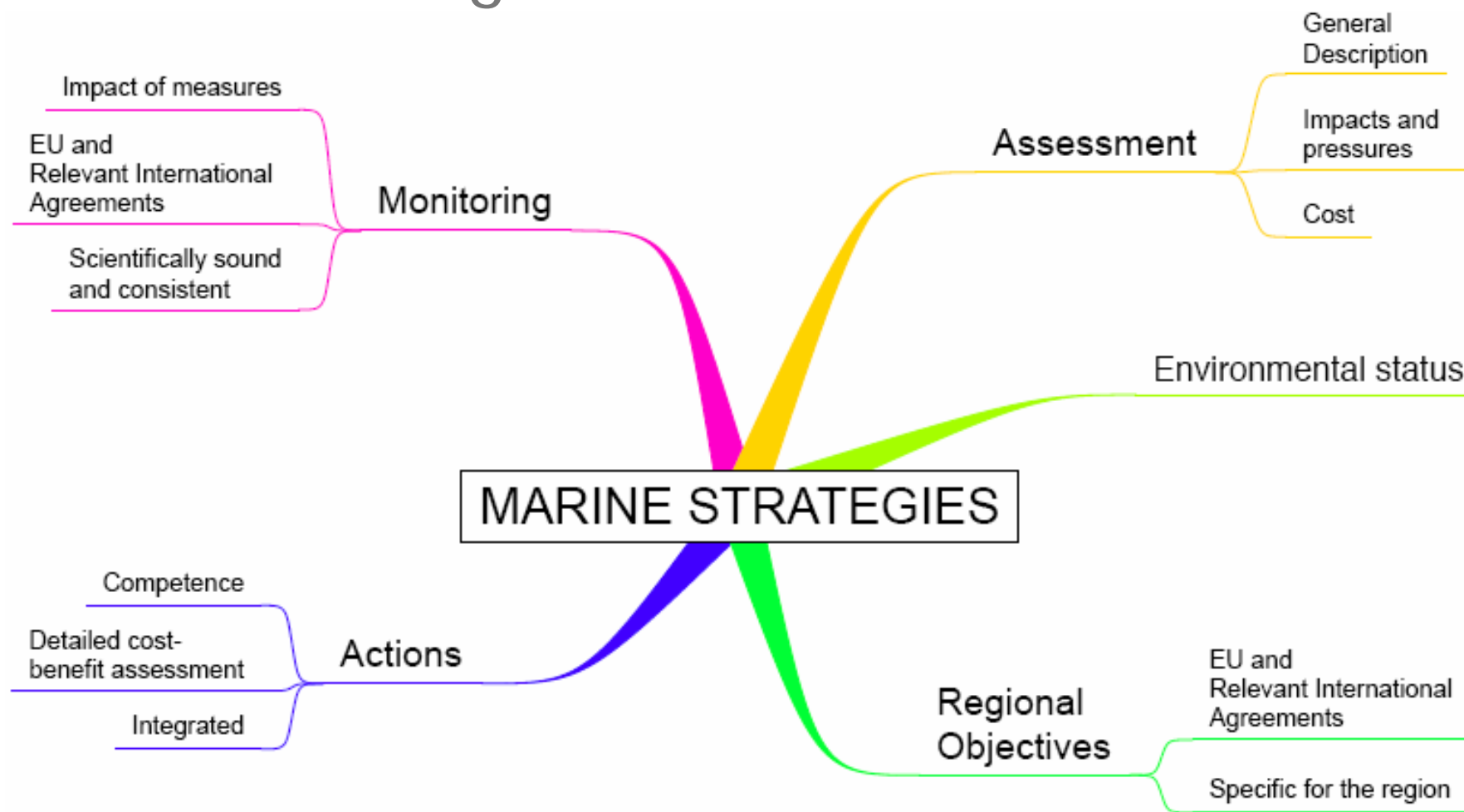


## Implementation

- Marine Strategies to be progressively developed and implemented on the basis of :
  - Description and assessment of current environmental status including the environmental impact of human activities;
  - Determination of good environmental status and of environmental targets
  - Monitoring programme
  - Programme of measures towards good environmental status
- Marine Strategies to be devised building upon existing programmes and activities within international agreements (regional seas conventions)



# Marine Strategies





## Obligations for EU Countries

- initial assessment of the current environmental status of the waters concerned and the environmental impact of human activities thereon
- determination of good environmental status for the waters concerned
- establishment of a series of environmental targets
- establishment and implementation of a monitoring programme for assessment and updating of targets
- development (by 2016) of a programme of measures designed to achieve good environmental status and entry into operation of the programme by 2018.



## Next Steps

- Decision making process within EU Institutions
- Links with the Maritime policy  
[http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/index_en.html)
- Further development of technical topics
  - Monitoring
  - Ecosystem status
- Improving the cooperation with neighbours and international conventions.



## Cooperation with Regional Conventions

- Legal compatibility
  - Consistency
  - No contradiction
- Mutual supportiveness
  - Efficiency
- Multilateral cooperation
  - All Mediterranean countries
- Streamlining obligations
  - Reporting



**CONFERENCE OF THE WATER DIRECTORS OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN  
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