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CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION.

The Moscow Conference included the Session PK14, *Human Dimensions of Regional Changes: the Case of the Mediterranean*, convened by Professor B. Cori. It was focused on the implications that the research on the global change could acquire when it is carried out on the regional scale. The Mediterranean was selected as a significant case study for three reasons:

- i. As a result of a proposal from its IGU Committee, a programme on the Mediterranean change was launched by the Italian National Research Council (*Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, CNR*). Convenor: Professor Berardo Cori, University of Pisa, Italy.
- ii. In 1975 the Mediterranean was the first sea in the world to be covered by an Action Plan, adopted in the framework of the *Regional Seas Programme* of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and in 1995 it was the first sea to be covered by a Convention pursuing sustainable development on the regional scale.
- iii. In April 1995, an international workshop on *Regional Seas towards Sustainable Development. Challenges for Research and Policy*, was convened in Genoa, Italy, by the International Centre for Coastal and Ocean Policy Studies (ICCOPS), a Non Governmental Organisation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) accredited by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). This event was sponsored by IGU and included papers by distinguished IGU members, including its President, Professor H. Th. Verstappen. The Mediterranean was assumed as a basis from which to move to consider the political changes in the management of regional seas.

The Session PK14 consisted of three parts:

- PK14.1, *Overview and key issues*, focusing on the general aspects of the Mediterranean change and providing global views;
- PK14.2, *National perspectives*, focusing on the implications on the na-

tional scale of the Mediterranean change;

– PK14.3, *Sustainable development of the Mediterranean*, considering the main results of the PK14.1 and PK14.2 in the light of the newly-designed UNEP programme for the sustainable development of this basin.

The PK14.3 took the form of a round table. Speakers were, in alphabetical order, professors:

– *André Dauphiné*, Director, Laboratoire d'Analyse Spatiale, Conseil National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS);

– *Leszek A. Kosinski*, Secretary General, International Social Sciences Council (ISSC), UNESCO;

– *Vladimir M. Kotlyakov*, First Vice-President, International Geographical Union;

– *Herman Th. Verstappen*, President, International Geographical Union;

– *Adalberto Vallega*, Vice-Chairman, IGU Commission on Marine Geography, co-ordinator of the round table.

Their presentations constituted a background for an extensive discussion with the participation of the audience, as well as the members of the panel. At the end of the round table conclusions were unanimously adopted. They provided a basis for a possible efficient involvement of IGU in the framework of the UN policy on ocean management.

CONCLUSIONS AND BASIC PROPOSALS.

1. *Role of the International Geographical Union.* – Investigations and discussions carried out on the Mediterranean region in the framework of IGU provide a background for designing initiatives aimed at involving the IGU in the IGB, HDGEC and IDNDR programmes, as well as other programmes on the sustainable development of the Mediterranean carried out within the UN system.

As far as the former direction, namely the international programmes on global change and the natural disasters, is concerned, the work developed within the Italian *Mediterranean Human Dimensions Programme* (MHDP, Professor B. Cori, convenor), the papers presented in the Session PK14, IGU Conference on *Global Changes and Geography*, as well as the subsequent co-operation, which has been established among geographers from different countries, are encouraging premises.

As far as the latter direction, namely the UN policy on the Mediterranean, is concerned, *The Mediterranean Exercise* is a useful basis for possible developments of IGU initiatives. This is a substantial document focusing on the possible co-operation by the scientific world, which was first adopted by the participants in the international workshop on *Regional Seas towards Sustainable Development. Challenges for Research and Policy* (Genoa, Italy, 19-22 April, 1995), then was presented to the Ninth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Barcelona, 5-10 June, 1995) and was included in its relevant official materials.

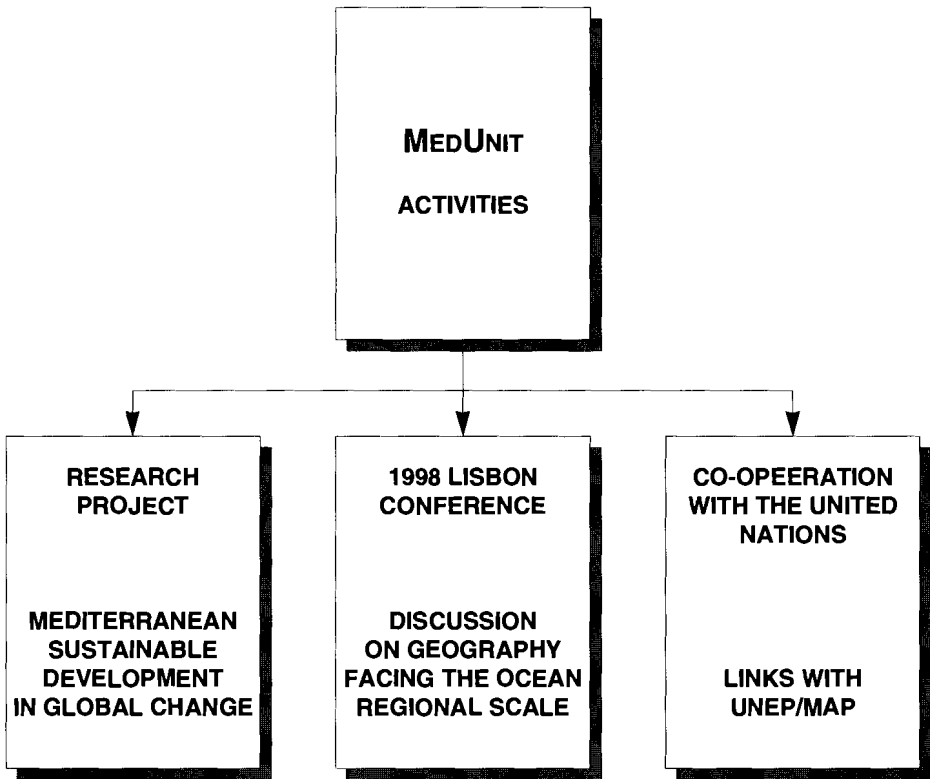


FIG. 1 – THE ROLE OF THE MEDUNIT.

2. *International IGU Unit on the Mediterranean Sustainable Development and Global Change - IGU MedUnit.* – In order to advance, in both directions, an international unit, called International IGU Unit on the Mediterranean Sustainable Development and Global Change (IGU MedUnit), could be established by the IGU Executive Committee.

The IGU MedUnit could serve as a tool for IGU Executive Committee to develop special purpose-aimed actions. In this perspective this Unit should not be placed in the categories of the IGU Study Groups and Commissions, as they are regulated by the IGU Statutes. It should be regarded only as a tool through which the IGU Executive Committee will pursue special goals and which will be dissolved when the goals have been achieved.

For the reasons which will be presented below it is reasonable to assume that the IGU MedUnit will serve till 1998.

3. *The role of the MedUnit.* – To pursue the goals outlined in Section 2, the MedUnit could have three basic roles:

A) *Mediterranean Sustainable Development in Global Change* research

project (tentative title). A research project could be set up focusing on the main aspects and implications of the Mediterranean global changes relating to its sustainable development, as well as the main geographical issues of sustainable development-aimed policies on the Mediterranean scale. As a consequence, this project is expected to be concerned:

as far as the Mediterranean global change is considered, with:

- i. the International Global Change Programme;
- ii. the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Programme;
- iii. the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction Programme;

as far as the policy on the Mediterranean scale is considered, with:

- i. the Convention on the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, adopted by the Mediterranean States, June 1995;
- ii. the Agenda 21 for the Mediterranean (Med Agenda 21), adopted by the Mediterranean States, November 1994;
- iii. the Mediterranean Action Plan, Phase II, by the UNEP, adopted in June 1995;
- iv. complementary and subsequent materials by UNEP and inter-governmental organisations.

B) *Scientific event.* If the 1998 IGU Lisbon Conference includes a meeting, or a section, on *Geography for the International Year of the Ocean*, a module of it could be concerned with *Geography facing the Ocean Regional Scale: the Mediterranean*. The relevant scientific discussion could aim at focusing on the main geographical issues of the sustainable development-aimed management of the regional seas, assuming the Mediterranean as the most important case study.

C) *Collaboration with the IGU Executive Committee on the Mediterranean Action Plan.* Documents could be prepared for, and technical assistance could be given to, the IGU Executive Committee to enable it to establish and implement co-operative links with the UNEP Ocean and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre (OCA/PAC), Nairobi, and the MAP Co-ordinating Unit, Athens, and, as a subsequent step, to interact with the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

5. *The organisation of the MedUnit.* – As a consequence of its role, it is suggested that the IGU MedUnit be conducted by a co-ordinator, who should be in close touch with a IGU Vice-President. The co-ordinator could be supported by a Committee consisting of: i) persons involved in the three above mentioned initiatives; ii) persons acting in institutions/organisations with which links should be established.

To establish links with the ISSC in order to set up a research project, the MedUnit could keep in touch with Professor Leszek A. Kosinski, Secretary General of ISSC.

To co-operate in the framework of the Lisbon Conference, the MedUnit should keep in close touch with Professor Jorge Gaspar, the Chairman of the IGU Portuguese Committee.

To set up links with the UN system, IGU could continue to ask for co-operation from ICCOPS, with the aim of benefiting from the ICCOPS accreditation to both UNEP/MAP and UN CSD.

6. *Follow-up.* – The present document was addressed to the President and Secretary General of IGU, who expressed their appreciation and encouraged to proceed in this initiative. As a consequence, A. Vallega initiated to cooperate with both the Secretary General of IGU and the Organising Committee of IGU Lisbon Conference (1998). Further steps are expected to be accomplished in the framework of The Hague IGU Congress (August, 1996).

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