capacity building was most needed, and that any proposal for an integrated monitoring network should concentrate on reinforcing capabilities in those two areas. In addition to that aspect, other on-going programmes should concentrate more on examining certain emerging contaminants (e.g. pharmaceuticals and caffein, *inter alia*) for which little information, particularly on their biological effects, is presently available. One further suggestion on contaminant priorities, to ensure that sewage wastes were included in any future contaminant monitoring network, was strongly supported by the group and panelists. It was recognized that sewage is considered by international expert groups and public health specialists as one of the top priority marine pollutants needing global attention.

The panel concluded that the first phase of the CIESM Mussel Watch project has been successful, and a reasonably good synopsis of the geographical distribution of ^{137}Cs was now available. The merits of continuing the project on radionuclides and extending it to other trace contaminants using caged mussels were debated. The levels of ^{137}Cs found in mussels were very low and it was agreed that, given the low limits of detection for measurements, a 10-50% variation around reported levels would be acceptable. Participating laboratories were therefore urged to continue measuring ^{137}Cs in mussels, and they were strongly encouraged to analyze ^{210}Po as well since this natural alpha-emitting radionuclide is responsible for most of the radioactive dose received by humans consuming seafood. The main areas of future focus should be the southern and eastern shores, as well as the entire coast of Italy since routine radionuclide monitoring there had ceased a few years ago. Some questions arose about the use of synthetic indicator materials rather than live "bio-indicator"mussels to measure contaminant levels; however, the group concurred that mussels were the preferred choice as long as obtaining information on the bio-available fraction of the contaminant in seawater was the desired endpoint. Finally it was noted that while information on the levels and distribution of trace contaminants is desirable, some effort should be put into transforming these data into fluxes of contaminants through the ecosystem as this type of data is very sparse for the Mediterranean Sea. Such data are extremely important for modelling contaminant transfer and eventually predicting impacts on the marine environment and on public health.

In order to move to a new level of measurement capability and scientific understanding of chemical contamination in the Mediterranean Sea, it was recognized that capacity building was an urgent need for certain areas of the Mediterranean region. Participants enquired how countries could obtain information on technical assistance from international organizations such as the IAEA. It was pointed out that international organizations work strictly through national focal points, and for that reason end users often do not receive potentially useful information because they are not dealing with the proper national counterpart. Countries were therefore encouraged to get in touch directly with the focal points for relevant international organizations (e.g. IAEA) which offer technical assistance and training in trace contaminant analyses. If basin-wide programmes such as the CIESM Mussel Watch do become fully-integrated with other similar initiatives in the Mediterranean sponsored by the European Union and various national bodies, capacity building efforts could be offered to all participants at the same time and thus be made far more cost-effective.