

Decision IG.20/12

Action Plan to implement the Protocol of the Barcelona Convention concerning the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil

The 17th Meeting of the Contracting Parties

Having regard to Resolution I of the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries on the Protocol concerning the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil, hereinafter referred to as Offshore Protocol, that adopted the Offshore Protocol in Madrid, Spain in 1994,

Acknowledging the major importance of the entry into force of the Offshore Protocol on 23 March 2011 following ratification by 6 Contracting Parties (Albania, Cyprus, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia),

Recognizing the importance of having the Offshore Protocol ratified by all Contracting Parties with a view to preventing, abating, combating and controlling pollution in the protocol area resulting from activities, inter alia by ensuring that the best available techniques environmentally effective and economically appropriate, are used for this purpose.

Desirous of ensuring that the Protocol shall begin to produce beneficial effects at the earliest possible moment and facilitating its implementation at regional and national levels through coordinated actions with the support of the Coordinating Unit and REMPEC,

Conscious that significant accidents caused by Offshore activities could have long term adverse consequences for the fragile ecosystems and biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea due to its enclosed nature and special hydrodynamics as well as negative consequences on the economies of the Mediterranean Countries especially for tourism and fisheries,

Urges all the Contracting Parties who have not yet done so to ratify the Offshore Protocol as early as possible (and preferably before the 18th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties) with the view to having the Protocol entering into force for all the Parties;

Requests the Coordinating Unit to

Establish an ad hoc working group coordinated by REMPEC composed of representatives of the Contracting Parties and observers from representatives of the concerned industries, relevant international organizations and MAP partners with a view to:

1. lead the work for preparing an in depth assessment and stock taking analysis of the existing practical measures in place in the Mediterranean countries with regard to Offshore activities as a baseline to measure progress towards Protocol implementation in the future;
2. prepare the Action Plan, the objective of which shall be to:
 - Identify the scope of the work of MAP for a 10 year period, objectives, key activities and major outputs, priorities, timeframe, mid-evaluation and related indicators and resources needed for the effective implementation of the Protocol;

- address governance related issues with regard to the role of MAP components for facilitating the implementation of the Offshore Protocol Action Plan;
- address necessary partnerships with other organizations, industry and other actors to be established including the MAP Partners to support the successful implementation of the Offshore Protocol;

Requests REMPEC, in accordance with the provisions of the Offshore protocol and Prevention and Emergency protocol (2002) as well as REMPEC mandate, to take into consideration, to the extent possible, offshore oil exploration and production activities when assisting in the revision of national or sub-regional oil pollution contingency plans;

Invites all the Contracting Parties to update annually the data provided through the questionnaire prepared by REMPEC in order to obtain a reference basis., and enable the Secretariat to develop an effective capacity building and assistance programme based on the needs of the Contracting Parties.