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**Agenda item 4: From Global to Regional: Implementing the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals
Sustainability Considerations in the MAP Programme of Work 2018-2019**

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UN Environment/MAP
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Note by the Secretariat

Following the MCSD Rules of Procedure (i.e. Rule 8, paragraph 1), the provisional agenda of each MCSD meeting shall include, *inter alia*, all items mentioned under the “MANDATE” section of the Terms of Reference of the Commission. The mission of the MCSD as contained in the MCSD Terms of Reference (point B. Mandate) includes, *inter alia*, the following:

- *To produce opinions of the overall MAP Work Programme, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations into the MAP / Barcelona Convention system as a whole;*
- *To produce opinions and recommendations for integration and coordination of the work of the MCSD with the other existing international and regional sustainable development and environmental programmes, policy frameworks and initiatives.*

In line with the above, the Secretariat has prepared this working document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.441/4 *Sustainability Considerations in the MAP Programme of Work 2018-2019*. The aim of this working document is to demonstrate how, beyond the MSSD 2016-2025, sustainability considerations are reflected within the MAP instruments and policies, particularly into the MAP Programme of Work 2018-2019, which is prepared in full alignment with the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021 (MTS).

In the biennial period from COP 18 (December 2013, Istanbul, Turkey) to COP 19 (February 2016, Athens, Greece), the timing of the preparation of both the MTS 2016-2021 and MSSD 2016-2025 has presented opportunities and challenges. The global processes of definition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the development of the 2015 climate agreement within the UNFCCC framework (Paris Agreement), the parallel processes for the development of other MAP strategic documents on issues of increasing impact on the region, were all unrolling simultaneously. This has presented the unique opportunity of making the MAP-lead processes converge under the umbrella of the MTS, while benefiting from the global debate leading to the new global sustainable development agenda.

This working document is structured in the following subsequent sections:

- a) An introduction, summarizing the main challenges of protecting the marine and coastal environment in the Mediterranean;
- b) A section on the MTS, presented in its general approach and through its seven themes;
- c) A concluding section, focusing on how sustainability considerations are reflected in the MAP PoW 2018-2019.

Introduction

1. The Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) was created in 1975, as the first of the Regional Seas Programmes under UN Environment's aegis. It involves all the 21 states bordering the Mediterranean Sea and the European Union, which are the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its seven Protocols.
2. Initially the main objectives of the MAP were to assist the Mediterranean countries to assess and control marine pollution and to formulate their national environmental policies; these duties are still carried out, in particular under the Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL). The focus of the MAP gradually expanded from its original focus on marine pollution control to encompass marine and coastal biodiversity conservation and integrated coastal zone management as part of the sustainable development agenda.
3. During the most recent Conference of the Parties of the Barcelona Convention (COP 19, Athens, Greece, February 2016) the Contracting Parties adopted the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021 (MTS), as the framework for the development and implementation of the Programme of Work of UNEP/MAP, and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD), as a strategic guiding document for all stakeholders and partners to translate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.
4. Following the MANDATE of the MCSD, the present document mainly aims to facilitate MCSD members to *produce opinions of the overall MAP Work Programme, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations into the MAP / Barcelona Convention system as a whole.*

The Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) as a contribution to sustainable development of the Mediterranean Region for the period 2016-2021

5. The MTS was adopted in COP 19 as the framework for the development and implementation of the Programme of Work of UN Environment/MAP. It is a regional response to the major global agendas about sustainable development for the mid-term, while it builds upon existing MAP/Barcelona Convention instruments and provides the framework for the elaboration and delivery of action during the period 2016-2021 by the MAP system.
6. The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. Through the 2030 Agenda, countries have committed to bold and transformative steps to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path. The 2030 Agenda acknowledges the importance of the regional and sub-regional dimensions, regional economic integration and interconnectivity in sustainable development. Regional and sub-regional frameworks are recognized as facilitating the effective translation of sustainable development policies into concrete action at the national level.
7. The vision of the MTS – *“a healthy Mediterranean with marine and coastal ecosystems that are productive and biologically diverse contributing to sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations”* – is inspired by the vision of the MSSD 2016-2025. The following elements of the MSSD 2016-2025 have contributed to the vision of the MTS 2016-2021: (a) Investing in environmental sustainability to achieve social and economic development, and (b) Addressing cross-cutting issues that lie in the interface between environment and development.
8. The MTS development was fed by the MSSD 2016-2025 and most relevant Mediterranean-level processes and complementary strategies. The MTS overarching theme is Governance; the core themes are Land and Sea Based Pollution, Biodiversity and Ecosystems, and Land and Sea Interaction and Processes; the cross-cutting themes are Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) and Climate Change Adaptation.
9. The priority themes reflect legal commitments and major needs at the regional and national levels, they are linked to the MSSD 2016-2025 Objectives and they are part of the global efforts for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Their respective outputs are expected to be achieved through the three successive MAP biennial Programmes of Work of the 6-year period.

10. **Overarching Theme: Governance**

This theme corresponds to the 6th MSSD objective and partly to SDG 17 and constitutes a prerequisite for the operation and effectiveness of the entire MTS. It also reflects commitments of the Contracting Parties under Decision IG.20/13 adopted by COP 17 in Paris (2012), the Paris Declaration also adopted by COP 17 and Decision IG.21/13 adopted by COP 18 in Istanbul (2013). Under the Governance Overarching Theme, there are specific outputs directly linked to the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation and monitoring. More specifically:

Indicative output 1.3.3, on MSSD implementation set in motion through actions of visibility and capacity building, has been sought through the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER) pilot test. Following Annex II of COP 19 Decision IG.22/17, the SIMPEER has been designed as a framework for mutual learning and improvement from past experiences and other national approaches.

Indicative output 1.4.2 on MSSD implementation being monitored and evaluated, is sought via the establishment of regional processes for the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025, such as: (i) Development of the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation indicators and, based on them, a Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard; (ii) Completion of this dashboard with data delivered by Contracting Parties and key stakeholders and partners; (iii) Based on this populated dashboard, the development of the State of the Environment and Development Report until 2019, and then the MED2050 report as the new foresight exercise at the regional level.

Indicative output 1.4.4, on interface between science and policy-making strengthened, is being implemented through efforts undertaken towards the establishment of a relevant Science Policy Interface on climate and environmental change, in line with the MSSD 2016-2025 Flagship Initiative 4.1.9.

11. **Core Theme: Land and Sea Based Pollution**

This theme corresponds to the 1st Objective of the MSSD 2016-2025 and partly to SDG 14. Five out of the seven Protocols aim at ensuring the Good Environmental Status (GES) of the Mediterranean Sea and prevent pollution due to different types of land and sea-based sources. The core theme “Land and Sea-Based Pollution” is designed in an integrated manner with all the other themes of the MTS. It is implemented with MED POL and REMPEC leadership in close collaboration with SCP/RAC and in partnership with regional and global partners including NGOs. Efforts are ongoing to ensure the mobilization of the required external resources to complement the MTF funding as appropriate.

Improving the visibility of the MCSD as well as of the MAP system in general is another priority that can contribute to ensuring increased input from the society and multiplying effects of their achievements.

12. **Core Theme: Biodiversity and Ecosystems**

This theme corresponds to the 1st Objective of the MSSD 2016-2025 and to SDG 14. It also contributes to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the promotion of the Aichi targets.

The overall mission under this theme is to provide assistance to the Contracting Parties in meeting their obligations under Articles 4 and 10 of the Barcelona Convention, and under the “Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean” (SPA/BD Protocol), and implementing the “Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region” (SAP BIO), adopted by the Contracting Parties in 2003, as well as the MSSD.

In order to improve synergy and avoid overlapping and duplication of activities, collaboration is being enhanced with relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and other regional, national and local stakeholders, as well as the MAP Components. Many of the regional partners collaborating in marine conservation issues rely very much on technical

tools, strategic documents and other outputs produced within the Barcelona Convention context.

13. Core Theme: Land and Sea Interactions and Processes

This theme corresponds to the 1st Objective of the MSSD 2016-2025, and to SDGs 14 and 15. Coastal zones are complex natural systems exposed to various natural processes with important interactions between their land and sea parts. Furthermore, they represent the major interface between humans and the environment as coastal ecosystems (both terrestrial and marine) are those most heavily impacted by human activity. The “Land and Sea Interactions and Processes” core theme aims at supporting a better understanding and taking into account by the decision makers and planners of these natural processes such as wave action, the risks of flood, erosion, sea level rise or even tsunami and the buffer role of dunes with the view to enhance planning and managing of coastal areas. Furthermore, it aims at supporting a holistic landscape and seascape approach that incorporates all processes affecting the flux of materials, their transport, delivery, the ultimate impact on coastal ecosystems as well as the potential impacts of climate change on the vulnerable coastal fringe.

14. Cross Cutting Theme: Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)

This theme corresponds to the 1st and partly 3rd Objectives of the MSSD 2016-2025 and it is related to SDGs 9, 11, 14 and 15. It is meant to assist Contracting Parties in their efforts to implement the ICZM Protocol.

This theme addresses also a major challenge, related to the governance of ICZM: bringing together decision-makers, planners, scientists of different backgrounds and stakeholders, building trust and fostering partnerships and synergies, ensuring proper participatory and decision-making procedures and thus achieving consensus are key actions and prerequisites for effective implementation.

15. Cross Cutting Theme: Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)

This theme corresponds to the 5th Objective of the MSSD 2016-2025 and to SDG 12. It also aims at assisting the Contracting Parties in their efforts to implement several Protocols of the Barcelona Convention (LBS, SPA/BD and ICZM Protocols).

The main pollution and environmental challenges associated to unsustainable patterns of consumption and production are identified as priorities for action in several Protocols of the Barcelona Convention (e.g. LBS, ICZM and Hazardous Wastes Protocols). More specifically, SCP is highlighted in article 4 of the amended Convention, in article 5.4 and Annex IV of the LBS Protocol, in article 5.2 of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol and in article 9 of the ICZM Protocol.

Based on the importance of SCP as a necessary strategic approach for the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols, the Contracting Parties have requested MAP to prepare a specific SCP Regional Action Plan, which was adopted at COP 19. This Regional Action Plan defines common objectives and actions to implement SCP in the Mediterranean countries. It also guides the definition of specific activities to provide technical support and capacity building to the countries on SCP and establishes the needed policy and regulatory mechanisms enabling a broad shift to SCP in the region, in order to reduce pressure on the marine and coastal environment. The MSSD 2016-2025 makes clear reference to the SCP Regional Action Plan, especially in its 5th Objective “Transition towards a green and blue economy”.

16. Cross Cutting Theme: Climate Change Adaptation

This theme corresponds to the 4th Objective of the MSSD 2016-2025 and partly to SDG 13. It also aims at assisting the Contracting Parties in their efforts to implement the ICZM Protocol of the Barcelona Convention (Articles 22 and 23).

UN Environment/MAP has been working on the issue of climate change impacts on the marine and coastal zone as far back as in the 1990's. Aimed to further work on this direction, the SAP BIO was updated on climate change issues, and a related Synthesis Document giving an overview of priority national needs and urgent actions related to vulnerability and impacts of climate change on biodiversity in marine and coastal areas was issued in 2009. At COP 16 (Marrakech, 2009), the "Marrakesh Declaration" agreed to "Implement effective coordination to ensure the integration of climate change issues into development policies with the aim of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the objectives of the MSSD, and ensure the strengthening of cooperation for the sharing of experience in the field of surveillance (early-warning systems) and the development and implementation of adaptation and risk-management strategies". Furthermore, the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework was adopted in COP 19.

Integrating sustainability considerations in the MAP Programme of Work 2018-2019

17. The MAP activities are focused around the themes of its MTS 2016-2021. Decision IG 22/20 on PoW and Budget 2016-2017 mandated the Secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, to prepare for consideration and approval by COP 20 a results-based PoW and budget for 2018-2019, explaining the key principles and assumptions on which it is based and taking into account the progress achieved during the implementation of 2016-2017 PoW, and in full alignment with the MTS.

18. In order to implement the above decision, and to fully involve all MAP Components which are jointly responsible for delivering in an integrated manner a considerable number of outputs, the Secretariat started the work for preparing the new PoW and budget in late autumn 2016, in a coordinated manner with the MAP Components.

19. In line with the above COP Decision, the 2018-2019 PoW and budget has been designed to ensure coherence and continuity with the results achieved during the current biennium to effectively and timely deliver the MTS by 2021. Thanks to recent successful resource mobilization efforts, large external funding from GEF and EU as well as bilateral cooperation have been or are in the process to be secured. This has played an instrumental role in creating momentum and sound premises for preparing a realistic results-based budget and for securing its implementation.

20. In this respect, the 2018-2019 MAP PoW aims at further strengthening the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention system as a unique legally-binding regional agreement and effective collaboration framework gathering together all Mediterranean coastal states and the EU in partnership with other actors including civil society. In this respect, the implementation of the 2018-2019 PoW will be a step forward towards achieving GES in relation to the 11 Ecological Objectives through the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as well as its strategies and action plans.

21. A number of activities have been designed related to policy frameworks, guidelines development, training and capacity building, as well as monitoring and assessment, in order to integrate sustainability considerations within the MAP 2018-2019 Programme of Work. Expected outputs for the next biennium include:

- a) the preparation of the State of the Environment and Development Report 2019;
- b) the participatory process for the scenarios building and the preparation of the MED2050 Report (new foresight analysis study on the environment and sustainable development at the regional level);
- c) the further population and updating of the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard;
- d) the extension of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER) to other Contracting Parties, strengthening linkages with the Voluntary National Reviews process under the High Level Policy Forum (HLPF) to foster best practice sharing;

- e) the preparation of the Regional Framework on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, including the Marine Spatial Planning;
- f) the preparation of Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, with focus on nautical tourism including cruise;
- g) the implementation of the mechanism to assist the Barcelona Convention with scientific institutions;
- h) the further development of the main elements for regional plans addressing pollution prevention and reduction for priority sectors and contaminants;
- i) several activities aiming at the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production, enhancing networking and support to initiatives of business, entrepreneurs and civil society related to SCP solutions;
- j) the development and consolidation of tools to facilitate climate change integration into decision-making processes (e.g. adaptation of existing tools to engage decision-makers and stakeholders on climate change adaptation strategies);
- k) the population of indicators on biodiversity vulnerability to climate change and on climate change impacts on natural resources;
- l) the strengthening of collaboration with key partners in the region, as an important dimension under the Governance theme, based on comparative analysis and mandates as approved by their respective governing bodies
- m) the strengthening of the work with civil society, supporting capacity building and their active participation.