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**Agenda Item 5: Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019**

**Agenda Item 6: Membership of the MCSD: Implementation of Decisions IG.22/17 and IG.23/4**

**Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019**

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UNEP/MAP  
Athens, 2018

## **Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019**

### ***Envisioning the 2018-2019 biennium from a sustainable development perspective***

#### **Introduction**

1. As contained in this document, the Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019 introduces a series of activities of primary interest for the work of the MCSD and its Steering Committee. Following a narrative description of on-going and forthcoming activities in line with the MCSD's mandate, a work plan proposal is submitted in a tabular format, as recommended by the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee.
2. This work plan aims at supporting the MCSD Steering Committee in overseeing the work of the MCSD for preparing the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD and its contribution to the 21<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 21).

#### **I. Background**

3. Following the adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025 and Reform of the MCSD and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents (Decisions IG.22/2 and IG.22/17), a number of key achievements were reached in 2016-2017, including: the establishment of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard<sup>1</sup>; the successful pilot edition of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism<sup>2</sup> (SIMPEER); the Roadmap for the MED 2050 Foresight Study on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean<sup>3</sup>; and, the first edition of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, as recommended by Decision IG.22/19 adopted at COP 19.
4. Furthermore, MCSD Members, MAP Partners and other stakeholders, supported by the Secretariat, have undertaken the launch and follow-up of MSSD Flagship initiatives<sup>4</sup>.
5. In addition, the President of the MCSD presented the outcome of the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD to MAP Focal Points during their meeting held in Athens, Greece, in September 2017. She also participated in the COP 20 Ministerial Session in Tirana, Albania, in December 2017.
6. The adoption at COP 20 of Decision IG.23/4 "Implementation and Monitoring of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 and of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean" and the related activities agreed in the MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-2019 (Decision IG.23/14 – Reference Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23) pave the way for the work of the MCSD during the biennium 2018-2019.
7. Following Decision IG.23/4 and Decision IG.23/14, on-going activities that are at the core of the MCSD's mandate include: Updating and populating the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard; Preparing assessment studies, namely the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED 2019) and the Foresight Study on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean (MED2050), including case studies on the Blue Economy; Strengthening and sustaining SIMPEER through the implementation of its second edition; and, Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface. The progress and perspectives of these activities are described in the Report on Specific Issues in Relation to the Implementation of Decision IG.23/4 (UNEP/MED WG.447/3).

#### **II. Narrative description of the work plan**

##### ***(a) Main Activities, as per MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-2019***

<sup>1</sup> Annex I of Decision IG.23/4 adopted at COP 20 in Tirana, Albania, in December 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Information Documents UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.441/Inf.4 and UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.441/Inf.5 submitted to the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD held in Athens, Greece, in July 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Information Document UNEP/MED WG.447/Inf.4.

<sup>4</sup> Information Document UNEP/MED WG.447/Inf.6.

8. In addition of Working Document UNEP/MED WG.447/3, a description is provided below for each of the activities enumerated above, including indicative key milestones.

9. Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard: Following Decision IG.23/4 and given the mission of the MCSD to ensure the follow-up of the MSSD implementation through appropriate tools, the MCSD Steering Committee is expected to coordinate the work on ensuring full consistency and synergy between the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and the ongoing work on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators at the global level.

10. The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) will consult the MCSD and its Steering Committee on further work to better align the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard with SDG indicators, as well as about the population of the agreed indicators and production of related factsheets showing trends. Key milestones of such consultations are indicated below.

11. In parallel of the work on the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, the Secretariat has undertaken a comprehensive mapping of the MAP-Barcelona Convention policies and instruments against the relevant SDGs targets and indicators, notably for the SDG 14. The outputs of this mapping will feed the SDGs Synergies Portal<sup>5</sup>, which is an interactive tool that demonstrates the potential for creating synergies between the global and regional Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and the relevant SDGs. The online tool will showcase the relevance of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system for implementing the 2030 Agenda at the regional level, offering a visualized demonstration of synergies between MAP policies and SDGs.

12. Indicative key milestones:

- October 2018 (online): Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to provide guidance on the extension of the dashboard on relevant indicators; MCSD Members to provide comments and advice on the updated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard;
- January 2019: Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to discuss at their 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting the mapping of MAP policies and instruments against relevant SDGs' targets and indicators; Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to discuss the progress regarding the dashboard; and,
- April 2019: Updated dashboard transmitted to the MCSD Members for review and comments.

13. Assessment Studies (SoED 2019 and MED2050): The MCSD members will be regularly informed and consulted during the preparation process of the assessment studies undertaken by the Secretariat (Plan Bleu).

14. The progress and outcome of the Phase I for the preparation of the MED2050 foresight study, with business-as-usual scenarios and regional trends, will be presented to the MCSD so that the Commission is able to provide advice and guidance towards Phase II.

15. In parallel of the preparation of the SoED 2019 and MED2050 Phase I, the MCSD and its Steering Committee will be consulted about, and associated to, the production process of the "Blue Economy in the Mediterranean: Lessons and Perspectives" report. The overall objective of the report is to assess and highlight the current weight and various opportunities provided by the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean in support of sustainable development and to showcase a range of concrete examples and good practices in the region. This report is also expected to be an input from the MAP-Barcelona Convention system to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Blue Economy, organized by UNEP in Nairobi, Kenya from 27-30 November 2018. MAP Partners and MCSD Members will be approached by the Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to contribute to the report by sharing case studies and lessons learned. The Members of the MCSD Steering Committee will also be invited to provide advice and comments on this activity described in Working Document UNEP/MED WG.447/3.

16. The President of the MCSD, supported by the Members of the Steering Committee and the Secretariat, will be invited to contribute to the preparation of the Draft Decision related to the MSSD

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<sup>5</sup> <https://environmentlive.unep.org/portal>

and the work of the MCSD, including the preparation of the MED2050 Phase II, for submission to the next Meeting of the MAP Focal Points and COP 21.

17. Indicative key milestones:

- April 2019 (online): MCSD Members to provide comments on the first draft of the SoED 2019 and roadmap for MED2050 Phase II;
- June 2019: The 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD to discuss the first draft of SoED 2019 and roadmap for MED2050 Phase II; and,
- July 2019: The President of the MCSD, supported by the MCSD Steering Committee and Secretariat, to contribute to the draft decision related to the work of the MCSD and MSSD implementation, including the preparation of the MED2050 Phase II, for submission to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points and COP 21.

18. SIMPEER Second Edition: Based on lessons learned from the SIMPEER pilot edition (2016-2017), the Secretariat through Plan Bleu is updating the SIMPEER methodology to reflect the recommendations from the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD. The Members of the MCSD Steering Committee will be invited to provide advice and comments on this updated methodology.

19. Based on the outcome of the SIMPEER pilot edition and following exchanges with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the President of the MCSD, the Secretariat submitted a side event proposal to the 2018 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). The Hellenic Ministry of the Environment and Energy and the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania agreed to co-organize this side event. As mentioned in the concept note contained in Annex I of this document, and depending on the approval of the proposal at the UN in New York, the overall objective is to highlight the importance of the regional dimension for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and, in so doing, the role of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in facilitating the implementation of SDGs in our region. Global/regional interactions on sustainable development in the Mediterranean are captured in Table 1 below.

*Table 1: Global/Regional Interactions on Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean*

<b>Global</b>	<b>Regional (Mediterranean)</b>
2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)
High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)	Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)
Volunteer National Review (VNR)	Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER)
SDG Index and Dashboards	Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard

Indicative key milestones:

- June-July 2018: The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to capitalize on the experience and outcome of SIMPEER pilot edition (publication);
- July 2018: The President of the MCSD to participate in the MAP side event at the 2018-HLPF (pending approval), with support from MCSD Members representing Contracting Parties; and,
- June 2019: MCSD Members to comment and discuss at their 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting the draft Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition.

20. Science-Policy Interface: The SoED 2019 and MED2050 Phase I will benefit from cooperation with the Mediterranean Expert Network on Climate and Environmental Changes (MedECC). Supported by the MAP-Barcelona Convention system and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), MedECC has the potential to achieve the flagship initiative recommended by the MSSD under its Objective 4 on climate change and to build a relevant regional science-policy

interface on climate and environmental change in the region<sup>6</sup>. The ultimate perspective is that the MCSD – together with the UfM Climate Change Expert Group (CCEG) – endorses the “policy” role/component within the science-policy interface recommended by the MSSD. Then, the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee will be consulted regarding the modalities of MCSD involvement within, and collaboration with MedECC.

21. Indicative key milestones:

- January 2019: The Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to review and comment the summary for policymakers of the draft MedECC scientific assessment report on environmental and climate changes in the Mediterranean; and,
- June 2019: MedECC to present its first assessment report (draft) to the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD (to be confirmed).

**(b) Reporting Tool to Ensure the Follow-up of the MSSD Implementation**

22. At their 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting, “the MCSD members agreed to provide inputs in line with their responsibilities and areas of expertise for the completion of the MSSD 2016-2025 Implementation and Monitoring Plan, in particular regarding the state of play, in order to deliver a state of progress by all MCSD members and the Secretariat as complete as possible. To this end, the Secretariat will circulate a document/table to the MCSD members, asking them to fill it with relevant activities they undertake”.

23. Such a table is submitted in Annex II of this document, as a proposal for consideration and review by the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee.

**(c) MSSD Flagship Initiatives**

24. At their 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting, the MCSD urged the Contracting Parties, MCSD Members, MAP Partners, the Secretariat and other actors to undertake actions to launch the flagship initiatives that are not yet implemented. The MCSD called upon its members to provide strong support and leadership in advancing the implementation of the flagship initiatives as a contribution to the MSSD and SDGs implementation, and making this work known at global and regional fora.

25. Taking into account the above, the MCSD Steering Committee is invited to consider the following flagship initiatives and to provide guidance to the Secretariat for putting them in motion in close cooperation with MCSD Members, MAP Partners and other stakeholders:

- Under MSSD Objective 3: Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction;
- Under MSSD Objective 5: Create and promote a Mediterranean business award for environmental innovation;
- Under MSSD Objective 5: Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels;
- Under MSSD Objective 6: Encourage the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters;
- Under MSSD Objective 6: Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments;
- Under MSSD Objective 6: Establish a publicly-accessible Mediterranean integrated information system through a triumvirate of national governments, international institutions

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<sup>6</sup> More information is provided in Information Document UNEP/MED WG.447/Inf.6 *Factsheets on the implementation of the MSSD and the work of the MCSD*.

and the private sector to collate and transparently display information on the state of the environment.

26. It is expected that the MCSD Steering Committee take the lead on facilitating the launch, implementation and follow-up of these MSSD flagship initiatives.

**(d) Mid-term evaluation of the MSSD and Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean**

27. The MSSD Regional Action 7.2.4 recommends to “Undertake a participatory mid-term evaluation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 based on the first 5 years of data regarding its implementation, using indicators associated with the actions, as well as the proposed dashboard of Sustainability Indicators”. Such mid-term evaluation is expected to be undertaken during the next biennium (2020-2021) and informed by the SoED 2019 and MED2050, in view of submitting results to COP 22.

28. In addition, following Decision IG.22/5 *Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean* (SCP AP), the indicator-based mid-term evaluation of the SCP AP is expected to be undertaken in 2020 for submission to COP 22.

29. The timing of the MSSD and SCP AP mid-term evaluations is in-line with the cycle of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) 2016-2021 and will enable these processes to mutually inform each other, as indicated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Indicative timeline of MTS, MSSD and SCP AP processes

COP	MTS process	MSSD process	SCP AP process
COP 21 (end of biennium 2018-2019)	To launch the MTS 2016-2021 Evaluation and Review	To launch the MSSD mid-term evaluation (5 years of data - period 2016–2020)	To launch the indicator-based mid-term evaluation
COP 22 (end of biennium 2020-2021)	To adopt MTS 2022-2027	To approve the MSSD mid-term evaluation	To approve the indicator-based mid-term evaluation

30. At its 85<sup>th</sup> Meeting, the Bureau of the Contracting Parties requested “the Secretariat to prepare, in due time, a draft thematic decision, including a dedicated roadmap, related to the processes of the MSSD mid-term evaluation and the indicator-based mid-term evaluation of the SCP Regional Action Plan, and to submit it to the next meeting of the MAP Focal Points for consideration and further submission to COP 21”.

31. The Secretariat will ensure consistency between the roadmap for the MSSD mid-term evaluation and the roadmap for the SCP AP indicator-based mid-term evaluation. These mid-term evaluations will be undertaken by Plan Bleu and SCP/RAC, in close cooperation with the thematic Focal Points of these Regional Activity Centres.

32. The President of the MCSD and the members of the MCSD Steering Committee, with support from the Secretariat, are expected to contribute to the preparation of the roadmap related to the MSSD and SCP AP mid-term evaluations for discussion at the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD towards submission to the next meeting of the MAP Focal Points and COP 21.

**(e) MCSD Membership**

33. Through Decision IG.23/3 “Governance” adopted at COP 20, the Contracting Parties confirmed the current composition of the MCSD for the biennium 2018-2019, as set out in Decision IG.22/17 “Reform of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents adopted at COP 19”. However, the Contracting Parties called upon the MCSD Members, MAP Partners and the Secretariat to mobilize expressions of interest in membership of the MCSD for the next biennium.

34. Following an analysis of the MCSD membership during the last three biennia, it is proposed to undertake the following actions:

- Mobilize expression of interest – through MCSD Members, MAP Partners, and MAP Components’ networks – for membership of the MCSD for the biennium 2020-202. As per paragraph 9. II. of the *Composition of the MCSD* (Annex I, Decision IG.22/17), the MCSD Members that should be replaced after three consecutive mandates are the following:

Stakeholder	Group
Association of Italian Local Agenda 21	Local Authorities Group
MEDCITIES	Local Authorities Group
Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)	Socio-economic Stakeholders Group
Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (UMCE)	Socio-economic Stakeholders Group
World Wide Fund for Nature – Mediterranean Programme Office (WWF MedPO)	Non-Governmental Organizations Group
Environnement et Développement au Maghreb (ENDA-Maghreb)	Non-Governmental Organizations Group
Mediterranean Information Office for Environment Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO ECSDE)	Non-Governmental Organizations Group
International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	Intergovernmental Organizations Group
Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)	Intergovernmental Organizations Group

- As per paragraph 9. III. of the *Composition of the MCSD* (Annex I, Decision IG.22/17), forward enquiries to identify and address the reasons for the non-attendance of the following MCSD Members that did not attend the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD:
  - Forum Euroméditerranéen des Instituts de Sciences Economiques (FEMISE);
  - Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM); and,
  - Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM).

**(f) Preparation Process of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD**

35. In line with the MCSD Mandate (MSCD Terms of Reference, Annex I, Decision IG.22/17), the Secretariat is proposing the following points to the consideration of the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee for preliminary exchange of views in relation to the preparation process of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD and to the selection of possible agenda items:

- Maintaining a few “business as usual” agenda items:
  - Discussing the Analytical Report of the Coordinator (as per Rule 8 of the MCSD Rules of Procedure);
  - Producing opinions of the overall MAP Programme of Work 2020-2021, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations into the MAP-Barcelona Convention system as a whole;
- Rendering more interactive some agenda items:
  - Implementing the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals worldwide (key note speaker(s) to be identified with the involvement of the Steering Committee), and producing 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;

- Ensuring the follow-up of MSSD implementation through appropriate tools, mechanisms and criteria (with inputs/presentations from MCSD Members, MAP Components and other stakeholders);
- Presenting and discussing Flagship initiatives, national and regional actions to promote the exchange of experiences and good practices regarding the integration of environmental and socio-economic policies;
- Discussing appropriate ways to launch the MSSD Flagship initiatives that are not yet implemented in order to identify the obstacles encountered and support regional and subregional cooperation for the effective implementation of the sustainable development principle;
- Focusing a specific agenda item on peer learning exercises on national structures and processes for sustainable development (VNRs presented at the HLPF and SIMPEER), keeping in mind the mission of the MCSD that consist of assisting Mediterranean countries and other stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable development policies;

### **III. Work plan proposal submitted in a tabular format**

*(Please see Table 1 in pages 8 and 9)*



**Table 1: Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019 (proposal)**

Month	Task	Lead	Key contributors or reviewers
July 2018	MAP Side event at the 2018-HLPF	President of the MCSD, with support from the Secretariat	CPs presenting their respective VNR at the 2018-HLPF and CPs having participated in the SIMPEER pilot edition
June-July 2018	Capitalization of SIMPEER 2016-2017 pilot edition (publication)	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD Steering Committee and volunteer Contracting Parties
October 2018	Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to provide guidance on the extension of the dashboard on relevant indicators  MCSD Members to provide comments and advice on the updated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard	Secretariat (Plan Bleu) in cooperation with the MCSD Steering Committee  Secretariat (Plan Bleu) in cooperation with the President of the MCSD	MCSD  MCSD Steering Committee
November - December 2018	Preparation of the 20 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee	Secretariat	MCSD Steering Committee
January 2019	20 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee  Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to discuss the mapping of MAP policies and instruments against relevant SDGs' targets and indicators  Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to discuss the progress regarding the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard  Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to review and comment the summary for policy makers of the draft scientific assessment report on environmental and climate changes in the Mediterranean	President of the MCSD, with support from the Steering Committee and the Secretariat  MCSD Steering Committee  MCSD Steering Committee	MCSD Steering Committee  Secretariat (Plan Bleu)  Secretariat (Plan Bleu) in cooperation with the President of the MCSD
February 2019	Follow-up of the 20 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee	Secretariat, Plan Bleu	MCSD Steering Committee
March - April 2019	Draft Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition submitted to MCSD Members for discussion at the 18 <sup>th</sup> MCSD Meeting	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD
May 2019	MCSD Members to provide comments on the updated dashboard, SoED 2019 first draft, and roadmap for MED2050 Phase II	Secretariat (Plan Bleu) in cooperation with the MCSD Steering Committee	MCSD

<b>Month</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Key contributors or reviewers</b>
June 2019	18 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD MCSD Members to discuss the updated dashboard, SoED 2019 first draft, roadmap for MED2050 Phase II, draft Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition, and first scientific assessment report on environmental and climate changes in the Mediterranean	Secretariat, host country, MCSD SC Secretariat (Plan Bleu) in cooperation with the MCSD Steering Committee and MedECC	MCSD MCSD
July 2019	The President of the MCSD to contribute to the draft decision related to the work of the MCSD and MSSD implementation for submission to MAP Focal Points Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition submitted to MAP Focal Points as Information Document	President of the MCSD Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat MCSD Steering Committee and volunteer Contracting Parties
August 2019	Preparation of the MCSD's contribution to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points	President of the MCSD	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat
September 2019	The President of the MCSD to present the outcome of the 18 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD to MAP Focal Points	President of the MCSD	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat
October- November 2019	Publication of the Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD Steering Committee and volunteer Contracting Parties
December 2019	The President of the MCSD to present MCSD recommendations to the Contracting Parties at COP 21	President of the MCSD	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat

**Annex I:**

**Concept Note - Mediterranean Side Event at the 2018 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)**

**(as submitted on 27 April 2018)**

**Annex I: Concept Note - Mediterranean Side Event at the 2018 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) (as submitted on 27 April 2018)**

**Topic:** The regional dimension as a bridge between global processes and national policies for sustainable development / Regional Forum for Experiences Sharing / Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER)

**Event title:** Voluntary Peer Review Mechanism of Sustainable Development Strategies in the Mediterranean

**Short title (60 characters):** Peer Review on Sustainable Development Policies in the Mediterranean

**Organizer and co-organizers:**

- Secretariat of the UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan - Barcelona Convention
- Hellenic Ministry of the Environment and Energy, President of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)
- Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania

**Brief description of the event:** Based on innovative peer review experiences for implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in the Mediterranean, the side event will showcase the relevance of the regional dimension as a bridge between global processes and national strategies on sustainable development.

**Introduction**

The Barcelona Convention system (UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan) has a leading role in facilitating the coordinated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs and in ensuring the transition towards a green and blue economy in the Mediterranean. In this region gathering countries from three continents that border a shared, regional semi-closed sea, there are long-standing processes and structures that have a direct compatibility with the 2030 Agenda and SDGs:

- (i) The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025 is a strategic guiding document for all stakeholders and partners to translate the 2030 Agenda at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. In line with the SDG 12 on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), the MSSD is underpinned by the conviction that investment in the environment is the best way to secure long-term sustainable job creation and socio-economic development.
- (ii) The Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) is the multi-stakeholder advisory body designed to ensure the interaction between environmental protection and sustainable development policies in the region. Exchanging best available practices and acting as a forum for discussions, the Commission gathers – on an equal footing – government representatives and experts from various stakeholders' categories: local authorities, civil society/NGOs, socio-economic actors, the scientific community, IGOs, and Parliamentarians.
- (iii) The global SDG indicator framework also has its pair in the Mediterranean region, with the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard. The latter is a living list of selected indicators to monitor the implementation of the MSSD, aligned with global indicators for reducing reporting burden.
- (iv) In parallel of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) annually presented at the HLPF, the Mediterranean countries experiment the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER), which is an innovative incentive for promoting dialogue on national strategies on sustainable development. Based on a voluntary basis, participation on equal footing, and mutual trust and respect for sharing experiences and best practices, the SIMPEER pilot edition 2016-2017 involved France, Montenegro and Morocco. SIMPEER represents an adaptive tool to support the preparation and the follow-up of the VNR, while the VNR process is a source of inspiration to align SIMPEER with the 2030 Agenda and to meet countries' needs for transposing the SDGs at the national level.

The points below summarize those Global/Regional interactions on sustainable development:

- The MSSD is an adaptation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs;
- The MCSD corresponds to the HLPF at the regional level;
- The Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard builds on the SDG Index and Indicators;
- The SIMPEER is aligned with the VNR approach.

***Description***

First, the Coordinator of the Mediterranean Action Plan - Barcelona Convention, Mr. Gaetano Leone, will introduce the side event and present how the 2030 Agenda and SDGs are implemented at the regional level. A specific focus will highlight the lessons learned from the first, SIMPEER pilot edition.

Testimonies from high level representatives of France, Montenegro and Morocco will be at the core of the side event. Involved with determination within the SIMPEER pilot edition, these three Mediterranean countries reported that SIMPEER truly helped them in fine-tuning national processes and mechanisms for sustainable development, making them more effective in pursuing the active engagement of stakeholders and in maintaining the momentum after they presented their respective VNR at the 2016-HLPF.

Participation from Mediterranean countries which are presenting their respective VNR at the 2018-HLPF is also expected (Albania, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Malta, State of Palestine, and Spain).

Questions/Answers and discussions will follow the presentations from speakers.

Beyond its general scope on peer review of national strategies/policies on sustainable development in the Mediterranean, the side event will be linked to the work of the HLPF and particularly to the SDGs under discussion in 2018. First, implementation of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol) is highly relevant to Goals 11, 15 and 7 – noting that the Mediterranean region is pioneer in this area, as the only Regional Sea Convention having a specific legally-binding instrument dedicated to ICZM. In addition, inter-regional cooperation with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (regional fisheries management body) is not only relevant to the implementation of SDG 14, but also SDG 15. Furthermore, the MSSD has obvious links with the SDGs addressed by the 2018-HLPF, notably MSSD Objective 2: Promoting resource management, food production and food security through sustainable forms of rural development; Objective 3: Planning and managing sustainable Mediterranean cities; Objective 4: Addressing climate change as a priority issue for the Mediterranean; Objective 5: Transition towards a green and blue economy; Objective 6: Improving governance in support of sustainable development.

**Annex II:**  
**MSSD Implementation Reporting Tool**

**Annex II: MSSD Implementation Reporting Tool**

The table below is a living document aiming to facilitate the follow-up of the work of the MCSD and the monitoring the MSSD implementation, in particular the progress towards achievement of MSSD Targets and Flagship initiatives.

Once the format agreed by the MCSD Steering Committee, the Secretariat will invite the MCSD Members to fill-in the cells with relevant inputs from their activities, initiatives, and projects that contribute to the achievement of MSSD Targets and Flagship initiatives.

Objective	Target or Flagship initiative	Inputs
1. Ensuring sustainable development in marine and coastal areas	Target: By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on best available scientific information	
	Target: By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics	
	Flagship initiative: Support the Trust Fund for Mediterranean marine protected areas	

Objective	Target or Flagship initiative	Inputs
2. Promoting resource management, food production and food security through sustainable forms of rural development	<p>Target: Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation and fragmentation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species, and take further action as needed by 2030</p>	
	<p>Flagship initiative: Promote the “Green list” (IUCN World Parks Congress) in riparian states to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of parks managing bodies created</p>	
3. Planning and managing sustainable Mediterranean cities	<p>Target: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries</p>	
	<p>Target: By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse</p>	
	<p>Flagship initiative: Promote the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award approved by COP19</p>	



Objective	Target or Flagship initiative	Inputs
	<p>Flagship initiative: Create a sustainable urban toolbox for the Mediterranean, with a view to planning cities that will work for everyone, in order to make them inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>	
	<p>Flagship initiative: Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction</p>	
<p>4. Addressing climate change as a priority issue for the Mediterranean</p>	<p>Flagship initiative: Establish a regional science-policy interface mechanism, including the social and behavioural sciences, endorsed by all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with a view to preparing consolidated regional scientific assessments and guidance on climate change trends, impacts and adaptation and mitigation options</p>	
<p>5. Transition towards a green and blue economy</p>	<p>Target: By 2025, the majority of Mediterranean countries are committed to green or sustainable public procurement programmes</p>	
	<p>Flagship initiative: Create and promote a Mediterranean business award for environmental innovation</p>	

Objective	Target or Flagship initiative	Inputs
	Flagship initiative: Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels	
6. Improving governance in support of sustainable development	Target: By 2025, two-thirds of Mediterranean countries have acceded to the Aarhus Convention	
	Flagship initiative: Encourage the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters	
	Flagship initiative: Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments	
	Flagship initiative: Establish a publicly-accessible Mediterranean integrated information system through a triumvirate of national governments, international institutions and the private sector to collate and transparently display information on the state of the environment	