



**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP)
REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)**

Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional
Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre
for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.41/16
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REPORT
OF THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINTS OF THE
REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE
FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)

Malta, 23–25 May 2017

INTRODUCTION

1 The Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) was held in St. Julian's, Malta from 23 to 25 May 2017, pursuant to the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017 of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), also referred to as UN Environment/MAP, adopted by the Nineteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean ("the Barcelona Convention") and its Protocols (COP 19), which was held in Athens, Greece from 9 to 12 February 2016.

2 The principal objectives of the Meeting were:

- .1 to examine the implementation of the Programme of Work of REMPEC since the Eleventh Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, which was convened in Attard, Malta from 15 to 17 June 2015; and
- .2 to discuss and agree upon the proposed Programme of Work of REMPEC for the biennium 2018-2019, prior to its submission, for approval by the next Meeting of the UN Environment/MAP Focal Points to be held in Athens, Greece, from 12 to 15 September 2017, and for adoption by the Twentieth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP 20) to be convened in Tirana, Albania from 17 to 20 December 2017.

3 All REMPEC Governmental Focal Points were invited to nominate, jointly and in consultation with their respective REMPEC Prevention and OPRC Focal Points, their representatives in the Meeting. The participation of observers representing the oil, chemical, port and shipping industries in national delegations was strongly encouraged. The invitation to attend the Meeting was also extended to the specialised agencies of the United Nations, other governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as to the international professional organisations and associations, the activities of which are relevant to the work of the Centre.

4 The Meeting was attended by delegations from the following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention:

ALBANIA	ISRAEL
ALGERIA	ITALY
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	MALTA
CROATIA	MONTENEGRO
CYPRUS	MOROCCO
EGYPT	SLOVENIA
EUROPEAN UNION	SPAIN
FRANCE	TUNISIA
GREECE	TURKEY

by representatives from the following UN organisations:

- INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO)
- UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME / MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (UN ENVIRONMENT/MAP)
- IMO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW INSTITUTE (IMLI)

by a representative from the following inter-governmental organisation:

- INTERNATIONAL OIL POLLUTION COMPENSATION FUNDS (IOPC FUNDS)

by a representative from the following UN Environment/MAP Component:

- REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION (INFO/RAC)

by representatives from other organisations:

- CENTRE OF DOCUMENTATION, RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTATION ON ACCIDENTAL WATER POLLUTION (CEDRE)
- BIRDLIFE, MALTA
- ENI S.p.A.
- INTERNATIONAL OCEAN INSTITUTE (IOI)
- INTERNATIONAL TANKER OWNERS POLLUTION FEDERATION LIMITED (ITOPF)
- OIL SPILL RESPONSE LIMITED (OSRL)
- SEA ALARM FOUNDATION

5 A complete list of participants appears in **Annex I** to the present report.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

6 The Meeting was opened by the Head of Office of REMPEC on Tuesday, 23 May 2017 at 09:00 hours. Mr Gonzalez welcomed the participants to the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC. Referring to the launch of the Fortieth Anniversary of REMPEC in October 2016, he recalled that this event which was attended by one hundred and thirty (130) participants, aimed primarily at bringing all relevant stakeholders together in one forum with one clear objective to collaborate and strive towards the protection of the Mediterranean Sea. Mr Gonzalez invited Mediterranean coastal States to ensure the implementation of relevant international maritime rules and regulations in a coherent way and reminded them of their responsibility to report the knowledge acquired through various technical activities and events organised by the Centre to their respective countries. The Head of Office recalled that, particularly in view of the limited resources experienced by all, it was of paramount importance to adopt a collaborative approach by sharing responsibilities and means and ensuring an open dialogue at national, sub-regional, regional and international level with a view to mobilising resources and planning activities. He concluded by expressing his appreciation to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the International Maritime Organization (OMI), the UN Environment/MAP and the Government of Malta, as host country, and other partners, for their contributions.

7 The Honourable Mr Joe Mizzi, Minister for Transport and Infrastructure of Malta, welcomed the participants in the Meeting and stressed on the required collective effort and commitment of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, international and regional organisations as well as the industry to protect the Mediterranean environment. The Minister referred particularly to the importance of the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), hereinafter referred to as the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), by Mediterranean coastal States on a national, regional and sub-regional level, as well as to the Draft Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in responding to Marine Pollution Incidents to be reviewed and discussed during the Meeting. Within the framework of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU), the Minister highlighted that strong efforts were made to promote, on the EU political agenda, the objective of ensuring that the EU shipping policy would take into account the needs of the EU Member States and of the industry in general. The Honourable Mr Joe Mizzi concluded by reiterating that Malta would, as in past years, continue to support fully the work of REMPEC and to participate in its activities.

8 Ms Tatjana Hema, Deputy Coordinator of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, welcomed the participants in the Meeting on behalf of the UN Environment/MAP Coordinator. She acknowledged the involvement of REMPEC within the UN Environment/MAP's Integrated Six-Year Programme of Work for the period 2016 to 2021, which integrated the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan in the framework of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil ("the Offshore Protocol"), hereinafter referred to as the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, as adopted by COP 19. She pointed out three key words to be kept in mind: "high impact", "synergy" and "effectiveness". She recalled the Fortieth Anniversary of REMPEC whilst she underlined the paramount importance of optimising knowledge, expertise and financial resources available in the Mediterranean coastal States and within the EU to ensure a cooperative approach at a national, sub-regional or regional level. She expressed the UN Environment/MAP's gratitude to the Government of Malta and the IMO for their continuous support to REMPEC in its activities and also thanked the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for

their commitment in the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) as well as called for their active participation and contribution with regard to resource mobilisation in an integrated manner as it would be discussed further during the Meeting.

9 Ms Colleen O'Hagan, Technical Officer, Marine Environment Division, IMO, expressed her appreciation for her participation in the Meeting. Whilst she acknowledged that the valuable work and success of the Centre could not be reached without the collective effort of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, international organisations as well as industry, she recalled the significant shared responsibility of all towards the protection and preservation of the Mediterranean Sea and its common heritage. Ms O'Hagan reminded the Meeting that the Mediterranean Sea remained one of the most important maritime highways, placing it under immense stress. In particular, she informed the Meeting that IMO was, this year, acknowledging the Fiftieth anniversary since the Torrey Canyon incident in March 1967. She acknowledged that this incident was catalyst for many of IMO's instruments, relating to oil pollution mitigation through prevention, preparedness, effective response and cooperation, intervention on the high seas as well as liability and compensation for victims of pollution incidents. In this regard, she also acknowledged the tremendous efforts made by the countries of the Mediterranean in ratifying and implementing IMO's instruments. However, she reminded the Meeting that there was still more to be done. Ms O'Hagan conveyed the IMO Secretary-General's best wishes to all and extended IMO's profound gratitude to the UN Environment/MAP, all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and the Government of Malta for their kind contribution, support and commitment towards REMPEC and its activities.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

2.1 Rules of Procedure

10 The Meeting decided to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, the rules of procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI) to its deliberations.

2.2 Election of Officers

11 Following informal consultations held with the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the Head of Office of REMPEC proposed Greece as Chair, Morocco as Vice-Chair and Slovenia as Rapporteur. The Meeting unanimously decided to elect the following officers of the Meeting:

Commander H.C.G. Antonios Doumanis (Greece)	Chairperson
Ms Naoual Zoubair (Morocco)	Vice-Chairperson
Mr Arturo Steffe (Slovenia)	Rapporteur

2.3 Working Languages

12 The working languages of the Meeting were English and French. Simultaneous English/French/English interpretation was provided during the Meeting. All working documents were available in both official languages of the Centre. However, information documents were available in their original language only, unless a translation was provided in the second working language.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

13 The Chairperson thanked the Meeting for supporting his election and proposed that the Provisional Agenda, contained in document REMPEC/WG.41/3/1/Rev.1 and annotated in document REMPEC/WG.41/3/2, be adopted.

14 The Meeting adopted the Agenda reproduced in **Annex II** to the present report. The list of documents is presented in **Annex III** thereto.

AGENDA ITEM 4: PROGRESS REPORT ON REMPEC'S ACTIVITIES SINCE THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINTS OF REMPEC

15 At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.41/4 setting out an outline of the activities carried out by the Centre since the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

16 The Head of Office of REMPEC presented the part of the document related to the Report on Institutional Developments and the Report on Administrative and Financial Issues.

17 The Meeting took note that, during the period under review, from June 2015 and April 2017, Algeria and Italy ratified the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea ("the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol") to the Barcelona Convention, on 14 November 2016 and 30 June 2016, respectively.

18 The Meeting was informed that there were sixteen (16) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention which had, up to now, ratified or acceded to the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, whereas six (6) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were only Parties to the Protocol Concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency ("the 1976 Emergency Protocol"), and that seven (7) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention had ratified the Offshore Protocol so far.

19 The Head of Office highlighted some developments related to the UN Environment/MAP pertaining to the field of activities that fell under the mandate of the Centre, as per the decisions adopted by COP 19, further presented under Agenda Item 5. In particular, he underlined the importance of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), presented in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.3, which aimed at preventing pollution from ships and maritime accidents and at enhancing the level of preparedness for response to major pollution incidents in the Mediterranean region. Whilst recalling that the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) listed the priority issues to be addressed when implementing the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol and included, for each of these issues, precise commitments and a timetable for the implementation of its twenty-two (22) Specific Objectives to be achieved by 2021, he emphasised that the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) was considered as the main strategic document upon which all REMPEC activities were based.

20 He further recalled that COP 19 also adopted the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, prepared by the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat with substantive contribution from REMPEC (UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/28, Decision IG.22/3).

21 The Head of Office informed the Meeting that the recruitment of Mr Malek Smaoui, who joined REMPEC as Programme Officer (OPRC) at P.3 level on 19 October 2015, completed the restructuring process of the Centre. He further welcomed the recruitment of Ms Sheila Mifsud, as new Secretary / Administrative assistant, who joined the Centre on 27 March 2017 and acknowledged the services rendered by Ms Amanda Bonavia who occupied this post from January 1997 to February 2016.

22 He expressed his appreciation to the Government of France and to Total S.A. for the continuous and extremely useful support provided since the inception of the Centre through the secondment of a Junior Programme Officer financed by the French Oil Industry through the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs mechanism entitled "*Volontariat International Scientifique*".

23 The Meeting was informed about the measures undertaken by IMO, through the publication of a position of Associated Programme Officer (APO) and Junior Professional Officers (JPO), respectively in 2015 and 2016, and noted that the vacant JPO position remained unfilled.

24 The Head of Office further noted that internship opportunities were explored and took place during the period under review, and thanked the various interns for their contribution during their respective work experience at REMPEC.

25 The Meeting congratulated the Centre's resources mobilisation efforts and their outcome to support the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), in particular through the implementation of the GloBallast Partnerships Programme financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), along with co-financing from countries and other international partners, implemented

by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the IMO, the EU-funded project for Preparedness for Oil-polluted Shoreline clean-up and Oiled Wildlife interventions – POSOW II as well as the “Marine Litter-Med” Project.

26 The Head of Office reiterated the Centre’s appreciation to IMO for its regular financial contribution towards the implementation of the programme of work of the Centre through the allocation of IMO’s Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) budget and the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloBallast Partnerships Programme. He also thanked the Government of Malta, the Government of France, the Accord relatif à la Protection de l’Environnement Marin et Côtier d’une Zone de la Mer Méditerranée (RAMOGE Agreement), IPIECA-the global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues, the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF), the Mediterranean Oil Industry Group (MOIG) and Total S.A for their respective contributions received during the period under review.

27 He then highlighted that the activities implemented by REMPEC in the field of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships in line with the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2014-2015 and for the biennium 2016-2017 were presented in Annex III and Annex IV to document REMPEC/WG.41/4, respectively. He concluded by referring to the activities implemented by the Centre within the context of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan according to the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017, as reported in Annex V to the Progress Report.

28 Referring to the activities relating to the Offshore Protocol, which were assigned to REMPEC for their implementation, pursuant to the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017, a delegation remarked that the Centre was not adequately equipped in terms of human resources to handle such tasks and proposed that within the context of the UN Environment/MAP, measures should be taken in order to strengthen the Centre with professional means.

29 The Deputy Coordinator of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat highlighted that, whilst the Offshore Protocol fell within the responsibility of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, the matter was currently being assessed and would be discussed with IMO.

30 The Meeting acknowledged the need for the creation of a post, either within the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat or at REMPEC to ensure that the required technical expertise and human resources were made available to support Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in the implementation of the Offshore Protocol and the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan.

31 In this regard, the representative of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat urged REMPEC Focal Points to liaise with their respective UN Environment/MAP Focal Points in order to update them on the above discussion for further consideration at COP 20 and stressed the importance of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to follow-up on the ratification of the Offshore Protocol.

32 The Meeting thanked REMPEC staff for the work accomplished since the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, which addressed most of the twenty-two (22) Specific Objectives of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), and took note of the information contained in document REMPEC/WG.41/4.

33 The Meeting encouraged Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the oil, chemical, port and shipping industries, governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as the international professional organisations and associations, to continue exploring, in close cooperation with the Centre, possible ways of providing support to REMPEC by either appropriate voluntary funding or secondment of staff to work at REMPEC.

AGENDA ITEM 5: DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN UN ENVIRONMENT/MAP RELATED TO THE OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF REMPEC

34 The Chairperson invited the Deputy Coordinator of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat to introduce document REMPEC/WG.41/5 providing information on the

developments within UN Environment/MAP since the Eleventh Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

35 Ms Tatjana Hema referred to the main decisions adopted at COP 19, which were of relevance to the work of the Centre. She also referred to the recent ratifications of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol and encouraged Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention that had not yet done so to ratify the said Protocol. She summarised the recent meetings of bodies of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention system as well as activities under resource mobilisation, monitoring and assessment. Furthermore, reference was made to the involvement of the UN Environment/MAP in the Fortieth Anniversary of REMPEC and the Seventieth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of IMO, to the preparations for COP 20 as well as to future international and regional meetings and processes of UN Environment/MAP relevance.

36 The Meeting took note of the information provided by the representative of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 6: DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN IMO RELATED TO THE OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF REMPEC

37 At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms Colleen O'Hagan, Technical Officer, IMO, introduced document REMPEC/WG.41/6/1, which provided a summary of the latest developments within IMO in the fields of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships.

38 In particular, the IMO representative addressed the recent activities of IMO related to operational pollution, ballast water management, reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships and measures for enhancing energy efficiency of shipping as well as technical cooperation. Special reference was made to the activities of the MEPC and the IMO's Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR).

39 The Chairperson then invited Ms Victoria Turner, Information Officer of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds), to introduce document REMPEC/WG.41/6/2 providing information on the latest developments in the field of compensation for ship-source pollution damage and the work of the IOPC Funds since the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

40 She specifically highlighted to the Mediterranean coastal States, the implications of those recent developments and of the decisions of the IOPC Funds' governing bodies as well as resulting output of the Organisation during that period.

41 Following a request for the organisation of a national capacity building activity on the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1992 (CLC 1992) and the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, 1992 (FUND 1992), the representative of the IOPC Funds indicated that an invitation from the government was required and highlighted that preference was given to regional capacity building events. The Head of Office of REMPEC highlighted that, as in the past, the Centre could support the mobilisation of resources and facilitate the implementation of such an activity.

42 The Meeting took note of the information provided by the representatives of the IMO and the IOPC Funds.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY ON SHIPS' BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT

43 At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.41/7, providing information on the outcome of the assessment of the level of implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy on Ships' Ballast Water Management, pursuant to the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017.

44 When referring to the Synthetic Report on the said assessment, which was presented in the Appendix to the above-mentioned document, the Programme Officer (Prevention) highlighted that the following two significant international developments in the coming months had substantive

implications on the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy on Ships' Ballast Water Management, including its Action Plan and Timetable, hereinafter referred to as the Mediterranean BWM Strategy:

- .1 the imminent coming to an official end of the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloBallast Partnerships Programme on 30 June 2017, the implementation of which in the Mediterranean region had been coordinated by REMPEC, in its capacity of Regional Coordinating Organisation (RCO), in collaboration with the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC); and
- .2 the imminent entry into force of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004 (BWM Convention) on 8 September 2017, which would not only minimise the risk of invasions by alien species via ballast water but also provide a global level playing field for international shipping, providing clear and robust standards for the management of ballast water on ships.

45 The Programme Officer (Prevention) also introduced the following documents, which were disseminated to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention pursuant to the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017:

- .1 the 2011 Guidelines for the control and management of ships' biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species ("the Biofouling Guidelines"), as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.7; and
- .2 the Guidance for minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species as biofouling (hull fouling) for recreational craft, as laid down in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.8.

46 Following concerns raised by some delegations in relation to the implementation of the BWM Convention, the Meeting acknowledged that there was a specific need to further look into the following issues, which were particularly relevant to the Mediterranean region:

- .1 the application of the D-1 Ballast Water exchange standard following the entry into force of the BWM Convention; and
- .2 the granting of exemptions and the possible use of the same risk area concept for short sea shipping trade between neighbouring countries.

47 One delegation asked the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention that were not EU Member States to support, at the seventy-first session of the IMO's MEPC to be held in London, United Kingdom, from 3 to 7 July 2017, the proposal submitted by the EU Member States and the European Commission for amendment to Annex 1 to the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships, 2001 (AFS Convention) aimed at effectively ban and phase-out Cybutryne in anti-fouling paints.

48 Having taken note of the information provided in documents REMPEC/WG.41/7, REMPEC/WG.41/INF.7 and REMPEC/WG.41/INF.8, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **supported** the specific recommendations under each Strategic Priority of the Mediterranean BWM Strategy and each measure identified in the Action Plan as well as the general conclusions presented in the Synthetic Report on the assessment of the level of implementation of the Mediterranean BWM Strategy, as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.41/7;
- .2 **acknowledged** that the Mediterranean BWM Strategy was still relevant and that activities carried out under its Action Plan had so far been overall effective;
- .3 **agreed** that this was a crucial time for technical support to Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to assist with the ratification and effective implementation of the BWM Convention and that it was essential that the most valuable assets and contributions (e.g. capacity building tools and technical cooperation efforts) developed within the framework of the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloBallast Partnerships Programme were sustained beyond the life of the project;

- .4 **concurred** that this was not a time for strategic discussions leading to the establishment of a formal process of revision of the Mediterranean BWM Strategy, which would be time-consuming and resource-demanding for both the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention without the immediate added value required for an effective implementation of the BWM Convention in the Mediterranean region;
- .5 **encouraged** Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to raise the issues referred to in paragraph 46 at the seventy-first session of the IMO's MEPC;
- .6 **further encouraged** Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to enter into bilateral discussions with a view to, possibly, mutually granting exemptions and making use of the same risk area concept for short sea shipping trade between neighbouring countries in specific areas of the Mediterranean Sea; and
- .7 **also agreed** that REMPEC should focus its work in the field of ballast water management and invasive species during the biennium 2018-2019 on national activities, in collaboration with SPA/RAC where relevant, with a view to further promoting, in the Mediterranean region:
 - the ratification and effective implementation of the BWM Convention;
 - the implementation of the Biofouling Guidelines and, by doing so, of the AFS Convention, the focus of which was, admittedly, the prevention of adverse impacts from the use of anti-fouling systems and the biocides they may contain, rather than the prevention of the transfer of invasive aquatic species through hull fouling; and
 - the implementation of the Guidance for minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species as biofouling (hull fouling) for recreational craft, which further supplemented the Biofouling Guidelines.

AGENDA ITEM 8: DRAFT MEDITERRANEAN GUIDE ON COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN RESPONDING TO MARINE POLLUTION INCIDENTS

49 The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to introduce document REMPEC/WG.41/8, which outlined the process leading, from the review of the Mediterranean "*Principles and Guidelines on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance*", to the preparation of the draft Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in responding to Marine Pollution Incidents, hereinafter referred to as the draft Mediterranean Guide, pursuant to the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017.

50 When referring to the draft Mediterranean Guide, which was presented in the Appendix to the above-mentioned document, the Head of Office of REMPEC presented the amendments proposed on the basis of the Report of the Regional Workshop on Cooperation Arrangements in the Field of Preparedness for and Response to Oil and Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) Spills (MEDEXPOL 2016), which was held in St. Julian's, Malta, from 14 to 15 December 2016, as laid down in document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.6, and introduced the review of the Mediterranean "*Principles and Guidelines on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance*", as reproduced in Annex 1.4 of the draft Mediterranean Guide.

51 Acknowledging that, in addition to the practical aspects set out in the draft Mediterranean Guide, it increased awareness and compiled the background basic information required to understand the regional and international framework, the various situations and the relationship between the relevant stakeholders and, following comments raised by some delegations, **the Meeting agreed** to the following specific recommendations:

- .1 **to review** the format of the draft Mediterranean Guide before its publication in order to make it more user friendly, whilst keeping its content, which would also make the Guide more practical and more easily operated in case of emergency situations;

- .2 **to create** an electronic version of the operational part of the document, which would facilitate the request of assistance;
- .3 **to improve** the format of the two diagrams appearing in Part I, Chapter 3 of the draft Mediterranean Guide insofar as it relates to IOPC Funds, with the assistance of the IOPC Funds;
- .4 **to amend** the form related to the request of equipment and products to extend it to also include personnel; and
- .5 **to make a reference** in the electronic version of the draft Mediterranean Guide and its newly formatted publication, to the related REMPEC's Country Profile section on the Centre's website, which was kept up-to-date by the Centre, in order to ensure that the contact details referred in Annex 1.2 thereof reflected the changes on newly appointed positions.

52 Welcoming the constructive dialogue and proposals to further improve the draft Mediterranean Guide, the Head of Office highlighted that the Centre would endeavour to mobilise the required resources to prepare a publication on the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in responding to Marine Pollution Incidents, with the required reformatting as well as to implement an electronic format to complement the existing decision support tools made available by the Centre but, more importantly, to facilitate the coordination of requests and offer of assistance in case of emergency.

53 Having taken note of the information provided in documents REMPEC/WG.41/8 REMPEC/WG.41/INF.6, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **endorsed** the conclusions and recommendations of the Regional Workshop on Cooperation Arrangements in the Field of Preparedness for and Response to Oil and HNS Spills, as laid down in Appendix IV of the Report of the said Meeting reproduced in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.6;
- .2 **agreed upon** the draft Mediterranean Guide, including the Mediterranean "*Principles and Guidelines on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance*", as amended by the Meeting, and **requested** the Secretariat to make any necessary editorial corrections; and
- .3 **requested** the Secretariat to submit the above-mentioned conclusions and recommendations as well as draft Mediterranean Guide, as amended by the Meeting, to the next Meeting of the UN Environment/MAP Focal Points to be held in Athens, Greece, from 12 to 15 September 2017, for approval.

AGENDA ITEM 9 **DATA SHARING, MONITORING AND REPORTING**

54 At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretariat introduced documents REMPEC/WG.41/9 and REMPEC/WG.41/9/Corr.1, which outlined the progress made on data sharing, monitoring and reporting since the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

55 In particular, the Head of Office of REMPEC provided information on the Mediterranean Integrated Geographical Information System on Marine Pollution Risk Assessment and Response (MEDGIS-MAR) and visualisation rights on national data, on streamlining and rationalising the reporting obligations of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, as well as on assessing possible synergies to interconnect the Regional Information System (RIS) with the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS). Moreover, he referred to the draft revised reporting format for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as presented in document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.11.

56 Acknowledging the valuable effort to reduce the burden related to reporting procedure through a more streamlined reporting process within the Barcelona Convention, **the Meeting agreed** that further synergies and integration between the regional and European databases were still required to avoid duplications, in particular with regard to accidental marine pollution reports and also welcomed the progress made to interconnect existing databases on response equipment.

57 The Head of Office recalled the obligation of all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to report accidents causing or likely to cause pollution of the sea by oil and other harmful substances, in particular those above 50m³ according to the threshold defined within MARPOL and further highlighted that regular reporting would ensure compliance with reporting procedure under the Barcelona Convention.

58 The representative of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat informed the Meeting on the procedure established within the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), which involved the review of the reports submitted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention on the status of implementation of the Barcelona Convention and relevant Protocols as well as on the process established to assess non-compliance with obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols through the Compliance Committee. With regard to reporting, she also mentioned that the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat was working to facilitate this process using, to the extent possible, the “once report” approach. She stressed that, however, irrespective of modalities followed to facilitate this process, reporting remained a major obligation of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, which should be complied with.

59 The Programme Officer (Prevention) then continued to introduce documents REMPEC/WG.41/9 and REMPEC/WG.41/9/Corr.1 providing information on the development of a quality assurance programme for data reporting and collection, in accordance with Article 5 of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, as well as the development of the 2017 Quality Status Report (QSR2017) for the Mediterranean.

60 In particular, he referred to the Consultancy Report, as presented in document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.12, which provided insights on a gap analysis as well as conclusions and recommendations for the development of the said quality assurance programme. He also referred to the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP), as adopted by COP 19, and presented the draft IMAP Indicator Guidance Factsheet for Common Indicator 19: Occurrence, origin (where possible), extent of acute pollution events (e.g. slicks from oil, oil products and hazardous substances), and their impact on biota affected by this pollution, hereinafter referred to as EO9 CI19, as well as the draft QSR2017 Assessment Factsheet for EO9 CI19, as set out respectively in document REMPEC/WG.41/9/Corr.1 and Annex III to document REMPEC/WG.41/9.

61 When referring to the CleanSeaNet platform in the draft QSR2017 Assessment Factsheet for EO9 CI19, one delegation clarified that this was just a satellite feature that was not able to distinguish between illegal discharges and natural occurrences.

62 The Deputy Coordinator of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat made an intervention to draw the attention of the Meeting on the fact that the IMAP laid down the principles for a single monitoring programme to address pollution and marine litter, biodiversity, non-indigenous species, coast and hydrography in an integrated manner. She further highlighted that it was expected that, this year, Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention would prepare and/or adapt their national monitoring programme and implement it in a progressive manner. She further recalled the financial support through the EU-funded EcAp-Med II Project to facilitate the update of the national monitoring programme and encouraged the Focal Points of REMPEC to liaise with their national competent authorities to coordinate this national effort, taking into account the existing monitoring work on EO9 CI19.

63 On the basis of the information provided in documents REMPEC/WG.41/9, REMPEC/WG.41/9/Corr.1, REMPEC/WG.41/INF.11 and REMPEC/WG.41/INF.12, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **requested** the Secretariat, in consultation with the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, to:
 - re-issue the request to each Mediterranean coastal State to confirm its position with regard to the visualisation rights on national data, before the next Meeting of the UN Environment/MAP Focal Points;
 - send a reminder before each Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, to update the information contained in MEDGIS-MAR in particular to report accidents causing or likely to cause pollution of the

sea by oil and other harmful substances and REMPEC Country Profile to ensure their regular update; and

- continue to explore, with the support of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat and other Regional Activity Centres, in particular the Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC), the best way forward to reach a consensus on the access right of national data, including information related to accidents and response means and any other requirements, with a view to improving the quality, speed and effectiveness of decision-making process in case of marine pollution incidents.
- .2 **encouraged** all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to update their REMPEC Country Profile, MEDGIS-MAR, MENELAS Member Profile and the BCRS on a regular basis;
- .3 **agreed** to consider any additional measures to further streamline and rationalise their reporting obligations, as appropriate, and liaise with their respective UN Environment/MAP Focal Points to contribute to the testing of the revised reporting format reproduced in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.11;
- .4 **took note** of the gap analysis as well as the conclusions and recommendations set out in the Consultancy Report, as presented in document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.12;
- .5 **agreed upon** the draft IMAP Indicator Guidance Factsheet for EO9 CI19, as set out in document REMPEC/WG.41/9/Corr.1, and **requested** the Secretariat to submit it to the next Meeting of the UN Environment/MAP Focal Points;
- .6 **endorsed** the draft QSR2017 Assessment Factsheet for EO9 CI19, which was set out in **Annex III** to document REMPEC/WG.41/9 and **requested** the Secretariat to submit it to the next Meeting of the UN Environment/MAP Focal Points; and
- .7 **encouraged** all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to provide to the Secretariat potential case studies at the local, national, sub-regional or regional level with regard to EO9 CI19, which could be included in the QSR2017.

AGENDA ITEM 10: DRAFT GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR THE PREPARATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PLANS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO MARINE POLLUTION FROM SHIPS (2016-2021)

64 The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to introduce document REMPEC/WG.41/10, which outlined the process leading to the development of the draft Guidance Document for the preparation of National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), hereinafter referred to as the draft Guidance Document, pursuant to the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017.

65 In particular, the Programme Officer (Prevention) presented the draft Guidance Document, set out in Appendix I to the above-mentioned document, and referred to minor revisions proposed on the basis of the Report of the Regional Expert Meeting on National Action Plans for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), which was held in Barcelona, Spain, from 8 to 9 November 2016, as laid down in document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.5.

66 Following the question raised by one delegation on how the NAPs would be followed up and how monitoring would be done, the Secretariat stressed that the preparation and implementation of NAPs remained within the responsibility of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and that NAPs intended to serve as a facilitating tool to assist them in the process of implementing the Regional Strategy (2016-2021).

67 Recalling the outcome of the Synthetic Report on the Assessment of the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2005-2015), which showed that, although some of its Specific Objectives had been addressed, many still had to be tackled at national and regional levels and, further recalling that the said report indicated that one of the main obstacles identified by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention was the lack of financial and human resources to fulfil their commitments, the Secretariat indicated that it would be useful if the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were to:

- .1 submit a copy of their approved NAPs to the Secretariat; and
- .2 assess, on a regular basis, the level of implementation of their NAPs, as appropriate, identifying those aspects that still needed to be addressed with a view to the future revision of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), which, in turn, would enable them, with the assistance of the Secretariat, to mobilise the necessary resources and propose relevant activities in the programme of work of the Centre.

68 Acknowledging that NAPs would contribute to plan national and regional measures in a coordinated, integrated and strategic manner, as well as contribute to the mobilisation of the required financial and human resources and, having taken note of the information provided in documents REMPEC/WG.41/10 and REMPEC/WG.41/INF.5, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **agreed** to insert a new section entitled “Work methodology for the preparation of NAPs”, reproduced in Appendix II to document REMPEC/WG.41/10, before Section 7 entitled “Background material and references” of Part I of the draft Guidance Document;
- .2 **agreed upon** the draft Guidance Document, as amended by the Meeting;
- .3 **recognised** that the NAPs were linked with the IMO’s efforts concerning the definition of IMO instruments compliance gaps, *inter alia* the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS), including the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code), IMO’s plans to assist developing countries with the preparation of national maritime policies focusing on IMO related issues, and, ultimately, to define a plan of action to fill the identified gaps;
- .4 **acknowledged** that a substantive number of activities, including projects or initiatives, relevant to the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), were carried out at the national, sub-regional or regional level, and that other activities were foreseen in the near future;
- .5 **recalled** that the preparation of NAPs was a high priority, and that it would enable the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to fully implement the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) in a timely and thorough manner;
- .6 **further recalled** that a NAP should be well-structured and specific to each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention clearly defining the procedures and required actions that were necessary to implement the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) at the national level with a view to ensuring, or at least facilitating, the attaining of the aims and objectives of the said Strategy with the support of the Secretariat;
- .7 **also acknowledged** that the preparation of NAPs was a complex undertaking requiring the involvement of various stakeholders at the national level;
- .8 **appreciated** the limited time within which the ultimate aim of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) consisting in implementing the whole of the said Strategy by all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and the Secretariat should be achieved, well before the end of 2021, and the subsequent need for them to start preparing NAPs, with a matter of urgency;
- .9 **encouraged** Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to use the outcome of the assessment of the level of implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2005-2015) as a basis for the preparation of their first NAPs;

- .10 **invited** the Secretariat to explore the possibility of carrying out pilot projects or activities as soon as possible with a view to assisting Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention that so requested in preparing or implementing their NAPs; and
- .11 **requested** the Secretariat to continue to explore the possibility of obtaining further financial assistance for the above-mentioned purposes under the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and the IMO's ITCP as well as to mobilise other external resources and means, as appropriate.

AGENDA ITEM 11: ENHANCING COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ILLICIT SHIP POLLUTION DISCHARGES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

69 At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.41/11/1 providing information on possible ways and means to enhance cooperation in the field of illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean.

70 With a view to implementing Specific Objectives 7 (Improved follow-up of pollution events as well as monitoring and surveillance of illicit discharges) and 8 (To improve the level of enforcement and the prosecution of discharge offenders) of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and, taking into account the Report of the Meeting of the Mediterranean Network of Law Enforcement Officials relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS) held in Toulon, France, from 29 September to 1 October 2015, as presented in document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.4, the Programme Officer (Prevention) indicated that there seemed to be scope for enhancing the following types of cooperation in the field of illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean:

- .1 administrative and judicial cooperation;
- .2 operational cooperation; and
- .3 cooperation with other regional and international organisations.

71 Following the request made by one delegation, the Secretariat indicated that it would take the necessary measures to improve the visibility of and access to the MENELAS information system in particular through REMPEC's website, which provided, amongst others, information on relevant applicable legislation at national and EU level with regard to illicit ship pollution discharges, as well as to facilitate its use by MENELAS Designated Representatives (DR).

72 Having noted the information provided in documents REMPEC/WG.41/11/1 and REMPEC/WG.41/INF.4, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **encouraged** all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention that had not yet nominated their MENELAS DR to do so as soon as possible;
- .2 **concurred** with the need to further enhance administrative and judicial cooperation in the field of illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean within the framework of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and MENELAS, taking into account the outcome of the Marine Litter-MED Project, as appropriate, with a particular focus on the items identified in the MENELAS Programme of Activities for the period 2016-2017, which may lead to the establishment of possible common procedures in the future;
- .3 **invited** all MENELAS DR that had not yet responded to REMPEC Circular Letter No. 12/2016 to do so as early as possible with a view to facilitating the work of the Secretariat to analyse and report its findings to the next MENELAS meeting to be convened in 2017;
- .4 **agreed** to inform the Secretariat about their interests in organising future coordinated aerial surveillance operations for illicit ship pollution discharges in specific parts of the Mediterranean Sea with a view to enhancing operational cooperation in that field; and

- .5 **requested** the Secretariat to continue to liaise with relevant regional and international organisations with a view to ensuring the necessary cooperation, which may include regular information exchange and reciprocal representation, amongst others, especially within the framework of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and MENELAS.

73 The Chairperson then invited France to introduce document REMPEC/WG.41/11/2 providing information on the proposal made by the Government of France to develop a regional jurisdiction together with a regional report.

74 In particular, France explained that, in order to strengthen cooperation between Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in the area of repression of acts of pollution, France proposed to develop a regional jurisdiction along with a joint report that would enable the courts of the said Parties to prosecute all individuals suspected of having committed pollution, irrespective of the place of pollution, except territorial seas. He also provided details on the suggestion from France to accompany this judicial cooperation with the downstream establishment of a "Blue Fund" to which a part of the pecuniary sanctions would be transferred.

75 The Meeting expressed interest but also some concerns on this proposal, in particular questioning whether it fell within the mandate of REMPEC and the remit of the Barcelona Convention or not, as well as what Model 1 meant in terms of "*a State authorising all other States to intervene in its waters, except for territorial waters, in matters concerning research and identification of maritime pollution*", as laid down in paragraph 18 of the said proposal.

76 France informed the Meeting that their proposal was purposely very simplified since it was seen as a long-term initiative and that more details could be provided at a later stage with the assistance of the Secretariat. He also clarified that the reference to the intervention of States in another State's waters, except for territorial waters, was not the key issue in their proposal, since its primary objective was to enhance cooperation in the field of illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean.

77 Following discussions on the proposal put forward by France, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **took note** of the French proposal for the creation of two (2) judicial cooperation tools within the framework of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and MENELAS;
- .2 **invited** France to submit, with the assistance of the Secretariat, a working document refining its proposal, for further consideration and discussions at the next MENELAS Meeting; and
- .3 **requested** the Secretariat to report on the outcome of the discussions held within the framework of MENELAS to the next Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

AGENDA ITEM 12: COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN TO PREVENT AND COMBAT MARINE POLLUTION FROM SHIPS

78 At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.41/12, which provided information on on-going cooperation in the Mediterranean to prevent and combat marine pollution from ships as well as possible ways to strengthen this cooperation in the future.

79 In particular, the Head of Office of REMPEC referred to the launch of the celebrations of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Centre and the outcome of the High-level Meeting to celebrate Forty Years of Cooperation in the Mediterranean to Prevent and Combat Marine Pollution from Ships, which was held in Malta on 4 October 2016, the coordination on response and assistance in case of major accidental pollution in the Mediterranean, the cooperation in the field of prevention of marine pollution from ships, the cooperation between REMPEC, the European Commission, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the Secretariats of Regional Seas Agreements, as well as the cooperation in the context of projects relevant to the Regional Strategy (2016-2021).

80 Congratulating the Centre for the successful organisation of the launch of the celebrations of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Centre and the importance of the outcome of the High-level Meeting, **the Meeting encouraged** all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and partners to

continue taking part in commemorating REMPEC's Fortieth Anniversary by supporting the Centre in enhancing its visibility and promoting new partnerships as well as in mobilising resources.

81 Acknowledging the fruitful cooperation in the field of response and assistance in case of major accidental pollution in the Mediterranean, **the Meeting requested** the Secretariat to continue exploring other cooperation arrangements required to provide the necessary technical support and assistance to Mediterranean coastal States to respond efficiently to accidental marine pollution.

82 Considering the information provided on the Cooperation between REMPEC, the European Commission, EMSA and the Secretariats of Regional Seas Agreements, a delegation highlighted that the organisation of the Workshop on Risk Assessment and Response Planning, during the INTERSPILL 2018, the European oil spill conference and exhibition, which will take place from 13 to 15 March 2018, in London, United Kingdom was in an early stage of preparation and that it still had to be cleared by the organisers. Addressing the access to the data through the EMSA's Integrated Maritime Services (IMS), the same delegation indicated that internal discussions were currently taking place to open access to non-EU Member States, whereas the beneficiaries of the SAFEMED III Project, namely Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, and Tunisia were given access to CleanSeaNet.

83 Following, the clarifications provided, the **Meeting:**

- .1 **welcomed** the proposal by EMSA to organise a Workshop on Risk Assessment and Response Planning, during the Interspill 2018 Conference and Exhibition and **requested** the Secretariat to explore with the organisers the modalities for the Barcelona Convention to participate in the workshop;
- .2 **requested** the Secretariat to liaise with EMSA to clarify the access by the Secretariats of the Regional Agreements and by non-EU countries to EMSA's IMS and other services, including SafeSeaNet, and report the outcome at the next Meeting of Focal Points of REMPEC; and
- .3 **also asked** the Secretariat to explore possible synergies on future joint activities or projects in order to benefit from a stronger cooperation on topics of common interest, and to propose possible synergies to the various technical groups of the regional agreements and the Consultative Technical Group for Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response (CTG MPPR), within the framework of the Inter-Secretariat Meetings.

84 Having considered the importance of ensuring the capitalisation of past and on-going efforts and to increase the effectiveness of the resources made available for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), on the one hand, by the UN Environment/MAP and its Components, IMO, as well as other partners through the mobilisation of resources in a coordinated and integrated manner and, on the other hand, by all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention through bilateral, multilateral or regional activities or projects, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **agreed** on the submission by each Contracting Party, when applicable, of a fiche for each bilateral, multilateral or regional project or activity relevant to the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), based on the template reproduced in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.41/12, to the Secretariat, preferably at the beginning of the said project or activity; and
- .2 **encouraged** all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention concerned to submit an information document presenting the main developments or outcome of the said project or activity, at the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

AGENDA ITEM 13: MEDITERRANEAN TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

85 Under this agenda item, the Chairperson invited the Secretariat to introduce document REMPEC/WG.41/13 providing an update on the progress made by the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) since the Eleventh Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC and proposed future activities to be integrated to the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2018-2019.

86 Following a request of clarification on the composition of the OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group, the Head of Office of REMPEC referred to the 2015 Guidelines for the MTWG which laid down the method of work of the MTWG, and which stated that the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, through their respective REMPEC OPRC Focal Points, should designate the appropriate national entities and/or officials as contact points for each task to be dealt by the MTWG.

87 Further to concerns raised by some delegations on the financial implication of their participation in the MTWG, the Meeting noted that the designated national entities and/or officials were expected to contribute to tasks assigned to the MTWG by providing comments through the proposed OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group using national expertise and therefore individual Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were not expected to incur any additional costs.

88 Highlighting the valuable source of information contained in the Maritime Integrated Decision Support Information System on Transport of Chemical Substances (MIDSIS-TROCS), and noting that the REMPEC OPRC Focal Points were encouraged by the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, which was held in Malta, from 3 to 5 May 2011, to assist the Secretariat in maintaining updated information on HNS incidents by providing reports on HNS response following incidents, the Meeting questioned the need to review the tool and requested the Secretariat to address this issue through the MTWG and report the outcome of its evaluation to the next Meeting of Focal Points of REMPEC.

89 Having noted the information provided on the update of the Guidelines on Risk of gaseous releases resulting from marine incidents, **the Meeting agreed to:**

- .1 **roll over** into the biennium 2018-2019, this task scheduled within the framework of the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2016-2017;
- .2 **establish** an OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group under the MTWG to support the process of the update of the Guidelines on Risk of gaseous releases resulting from marine incidents; and
- .3 **designate**, through the REMPEC OPRC Focal Points, the appropriate national entities and/or officials as contact points for the OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group.

90 In light of the overview provided on the cooperation between the MTWG and the other technical fora, **the Meeting agreed** to include, in the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2018-2019, the following tasks to be implemented through the established OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group:

- .1 to contribute to the "Guide on practical methods for the implementation of the OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol" and **requested** the Secretariat to submit to the Fifth Session of the PPR Sub-Committee, the "Draft Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents", as amended by the Meeting, for its consideration.
- .2 to contribute to a joint inter-regional effort aiming at updating response manuals for HNS spills taking into account the latest developments in the field of response to chemical spills, through the possible production of a joint manual based on existing guides and tools on HNS response.

AGENDA ITEM 14: PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK OF REMPEC FOR THE BIENNIUM 2018-2019

91 At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.41/14, which presented, in its Annex, the proposed programme of work to be implemented by the Centre during the biennium 2018-2019, and explained the rationale used to prepare it.

92 The Head of Office of REMPEC recalled the consultation process leading to the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 and highlighted that, although the Centre duly noted the national requests for assistance on various activities proposed in the first technical consultation, with a view to ensuring a progressive programming process in the context of the UN

Environment/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021, the Thirty-second Executive Coordination Panel Meeting agreed that the Programme of Work for the biennium 2018-2019 of each UN Environment/MAP Component to be submitted to their respective Meeting of Focal Points, should focus on deliverables, in accordance with the existing regional strategies or action plans, without making any specific reference to any Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, since the availability of funds for such national activities would only be secured once the whole process was completed.

93 The Secretariat further underlined that, whilst the proposed programme of work of the Centre for the biennium 2018-2019 encompassed all twenty-two (22) Specific Objectives of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) with a view to ensuring a flexible approach and to enabling possible implementation of relevant activities that may result from future opportunities, the Centre would only be in a position to implement those activities for which sufficient funds would be ultimately secured and made available following the approval of:

- .1 the programme of activities of the IMO's ITCP for the biennium 2018-2019, which would be reviewed and approved by the Sixty-seventh Session of the IMO's Technical Cooperation Committee (TCC) to be held in London, United Kingdom from 17 to 19 July 2017; and
- .2 the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2018-2019, including the proposed programme of work of the Centre for the said biennium as detailed in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.41/14, which would be reviewed and approved by the next Meeting of the UN Environment/MAP Focal Points scheduled in Athens, Greece from 12 to 15 September 2017 prior to its submission for adoption by COP 20 to be convened in Tirana, Albania from 17 to 20 December 2017.

94 The Meeting welcomed the fact that the funding of the activities to be implemented by the Centre during the biennium 2018-2019 within the framework of the "Marine Litter-MED" Project was already secured and acknowledged the importance of continued efforts in resource mobilisation, in close cooperation with the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat as set out in document REMPEC/WG.41/5, with the IMO Secretariat as detailed in document REMPEC/WG.41/6, and with other partners through the submission of project proposals to external funding mechanisms or through voluntary contributions, as illustrated and explained in documents REMPEC/WG.41/4 and REMPEC/WG.41/12.

95 Acknowledging that inputs received from the first technical round of consultation was integrated in the proposed programme of work of REMPEC for the biennium 2018-2019, some delegations welcomed in particular the inclusion of the activity addressed in Specific Objective 15 of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) on the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea or parts thereof as a SOx emission control area, under MARPOL Annex VI and effectively implement the existing energy efficiency measures.

96 Following the review of all proposed activities set out in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.41/14, and considering a specific request from one delegation on the need to have more information in order to enable the Focal Points of REMPEC to prioritise the proposed activities in view of the discussions on the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2018-2019 to take place at the upcoming Meeting of the UN Environment/MAP Focal Points, **the Meeting endorsed** the proposed activities, as amended, and:

- .1 **authorised** the Secretariat to add an additional column to the table to include an indicator of priorities and to circulate the revised programme of work of the Centre for the biennium 2018-2019 as soon as possible to the Focal Points of REMPEC for their information; and
- .2 **requested** the Secretariat to integrate the revised programme of work of the Centre into the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work for the biennium 2018-2019 to be submitted for approval by the next Meeting of the MAP Focal Points prior to its submission for adoption by COP 20.

AGENDA ITEM 15: OTHER BUSINESS

97 The Meeting considered other matters that were raised under this agenda item.

98 The representative of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) provided an overview on IMLI achievements and its cooperation with REMPEC. On this occasion, he presented to the Head of Office of REMPEC, the IMLI Manual on International Maritime Law, Volume III: Marine Environmental Law and Maritime Security Law, as recognition of the Centre's contribution to this publication.

99 At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Programme Officer (Prevention) introduced document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.9 providing information on the Guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life, which were disseminated to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention pursuant to the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-2017.

100 The representative of Sea Alarm Foundation (a member of the MAU) presented document REMPEC/WG.41/INF.10, which provided information on recent developments in international oiled wildlife preparedness and response, namely the European Module for oiled wildlife response (EUROWA) project, the First phase of Global Oiled Wildlife Response System (GOWRS), the IPIECA/International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (OGP) Good Practice Guide on Oiled Wildlife Response Preparedness and the Self-assessment Tool for oiled wildlife preparedness.

101 Following the need expressed by one delegation to be provided with assistance regarding reporting obligations related to the implementation of MARPOL, especially in respect to MEPC/Circ.318, **the Meeting requested** the Secretariat to liaise with IMO Secretariat with a view to addressing this request.

AGENDA ITEM 16: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

102 The Meeting adopted the present report together with its annexes.

AGENDA ITEM 17: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

103 The Chairperson closed the Meeting at 15:50 hours on Thursday, 25 May 2017.

ANNEX(E) I

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Organisation of the Meeting
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Progress Report on REMPEC's activities since the Eleventh Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC
5. Developments within UN Environment/MAP related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC
6. Developments within IMO related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC
7. Assessment of the level of implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy on Ships' Ballast Water Management
8. Draft Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in responding to Marine Pollution Incidents
9. Data sharing, monitoring and reporting
10. Draft Guidance Document for the preparation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021)
11. Enhancing cooperation in the field of illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean
12. Cooperation in the Mediterranean to prevent and combat marine pollution from ships
13. Mediterranean Technical Working Group
14. Proposed Programme of Work of REMPEC for the biennium 2018-2019
15. Other business
16. Adoption of the report of the Meeting
17. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

WORKING DOCUMENTS

REMPEC/WG.41/3/1/Rev.1	Provisional agenda
REMPEC/WG.41/3/2	Annotated provisional agenda and draft timetable
REMPEC/WG.41/4	Progress Report on REMPEC's activities since the Eleventh Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC
REMPEC/WG.41/5	Developments within UN Environment/MAP related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC (Submitted by UN Environment/MAP)
REMPEC/WG.41/6/1	Developments within IMO related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC (Submitted by IMO)
REMPEC/WG.41/6/2	Latest developments in the field of compensation for ship-source pollution damage (Submitted by IOPC Funds)
REMPEC/WG.41/7	Assessment of the level of implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy on Ships' Ballast Water Management
REMPEC/WG.41/8*	Draft Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in responding to Marine Pollution Incidents
REMPEC/WG.41/9	Data sharing, monitoring and reporting
REMPEC/WG.41/9/Corr.1	Corrigendum
REMPEC/WG.41/10*	Draft Guidance Document for the preparation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021)
REMPEC/WG.41/11/1	Enhancing cooperation in the field of illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean
REMPEC/WG.41/11/2	Proposal for the development of a regional jurisdiction together with a regional report (Submitted by France)
REMPEC/WG.41/12	Cooperation in the Mediterranean to prevent and combat marine pollution from ships
REMPEC/WG.41/13	Mediterranean Technical Working Group
REMPEC/WG.41/14	Proposed Programme of Work of REMPEC for the biennium 2018-2019
REMPEC/WG.41/WP.1	Draft report of the Meeting
REMPEC/WG.41/16	Report of the Meeting

* Reissued for technical reasons.

INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

REMPEC/WG.41/INF.1/Rev.2	List of documents
REMPEC/WG.41/J/1	Provisional list of participants
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.2	List of participants
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.3	Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021)
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.4	Report of the Meeting of the Mediterranean Network of Law Enforcement Officials relating to MARPOL within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS) (Toulon, France, 29 September – 1 October 2015)
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.5	Report of the Regional Expert Meeting on National Action Plans for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021) (Barcelona, Spain, 8-9 November 2016)
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.6	Report of the Regional Workshop on Cooperation Arrangements in the Field of Preparedness for and Response to Oil and Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) Spills (MEDEXPOL 2016) (St. Julian's, Malta, 14-15 December 2016)
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.7	2011 Guidelines for the control and management of ships' biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.8	Guidance for minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species as biofouling (hull fouling) for recreational craft
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.9	Guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life (English only)
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.10	International developments in oiled wildlife preparedness and response (Submitted by Sea Alarm) (English only)
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.11	Draft revised reporting format for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (English only)
REMPEC/WG.41/INF.12	Consultancy Report for the development of a quality assurance programme for data reporting and collection, in accordance with Article 5 of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, as well as for the development of the 2017 Quality Status Report (QSR2017) for the Mediterranean (English only)