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87th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Athens, Greece, 6-7 November 2018

Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues

Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues

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A. Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

1. Based on the latest communication by Spain as Depository Country, the current status of ratifications is described in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Summary of Status of Ratification

21 Contracting Parties have accepted the amendments to the Convention, 1995;
15 Contracting Parties have accepted the amendments to the Dumping Protocol, 1995;
17 Contracting Parties have accepted the amendments to the LBS Protocol, 1996;
8 Contracting Parties have ratified the Offshore Protocol, 1994;
17 Contracting Parties have ratified the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol, 1995;
7 Contracting Parties have ratified the Hazardous Waste Protocol, 1996;
17 Contracting Parties have ratified the new Prevention and Emergency Protocol, 2002;
11 Contracting Parties have ratified the ICZM Protocol, 2008.

Table 2: Ratification of Barcelona Convention and Protocols by individual Contracting Parties

Contracting Parties Legal instruments	Albania	Algeria	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Croatia	Cyprus	European Union	Egypt	France	Greece	Israel	Italy	Lebanon	Libya	Malta	Monaco	Montenegro	Morocco	Slovenia	Spain	Syria	Tunisia	Turkey	
	Barcelona Convention																						
and Amendments																							
Dumping Protocol																							
and Amendments																							
Emergency Protocol																							
Prevention and Emergency Protocol																							
LBS Protocol																							
and Amendments																							
SPA Protocol																							
SPA and Biodiversity Protocol																							
Offshore Protocol																							
Hazardous Wastes Protocol																							
ICZM Protocol																							

Instrument of ratification, adhesion approval or accession deposited and Convention or Protocol entered into force	
No instrument of ratification, adhesion, approval or accession deposited	
Instrument of ratification, adhesion, approval or accession deposited but Protocol has not entered into force yet	

2. Since the last meeting of the Bureau, the Depository has not communicated to the Secretariat new deposit of instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

3. The certified true copies of the Arabic, French, English and Spanish texts of the amendments to Annex II to the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol), as adopted by COP 20 Decision IG. 23/10 were transmitted through a Note Verbale dated 20 March 2018 to the Depository. The Depository communicated to the

Secretariat through a Note Verbale dated 16 April 2018 the launching of the process for the entry into force of the amendments. This process has just been completed, with the entry into force of the amendments to Annex II to the SPA/BD Protocol on 14 September 2018, as officially transmitted by the Depositary through a Note Verbale dated 20 September 2018.

4. Following the information by the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina that the process of ratification of the amended Barcelona Convention is approaching its final stages, the Secretariat is continuing follow-up with this Contracting Party with the aim to achieve the universal ratification of the amended Convention as soon as possible.

5. The amended Dumping Protocol still requires one additional ratification to enter into force. Policy direction and involvement of the Bureau to facilitate the ratification of the amended Dumping Protocol in particular, and of all other Protocols by the remaining Contracting Parties would be highly desirable.

6. Proposed Recommendations:

(a) The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to liaise with the Secretariat to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments;

(b) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts to achieve the full ratification of the revised Barcelona Convention as well as the ratification of its Protocols.

B. Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs

7. Following-up on the request of the 85th Meeting of the Bureau (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2018) to the Secretariat “to prepare a first draft of minimum common provisions to ensure effective operation of the RACs based on their mandates and taking into account the approved Host Country Agreement template, as well as the challenges faced so far as reported by the Secretariat”, a list of minimum common provisions has been prepared and is presented in the Concept Note of Annex I of the present document.

8. As requested, in developing these minimum common provisions, the point of departure has been the HCA Template contained in Annex I to COP 17 Decision IG. 20/3 on “Governance”, Decision IG. 19/5 on “Mandates of the Components of MAP”, Decision IG.17/5 on “Governance Paper”, and the challenges faced by RACs as presented to the 85th Meeting of the Bureau.

9. The proposed set of minimum common provisions rests upon the following baseline elements: (1) UNEP’s property, funds and assets shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as provided for in Article II of the General Convention, (2) UN Officials shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as provided for in Article V and Article VII of the General Convention (the category of UN Officials does not apply to personnel of RACs), and (3) for meetings and conferences convened by UNEP, the regime of privileges and immunities as provided for in Articles IV to VII of the General Convention apply. Against this background, the list of minimum common provisions includes elements ranging from the legal status of RACs to the regime of privileges and immunities as regards property, funds and assets transferred to RACs by UNEP/MAP, personnel of RACs, and conferences and meetings convened by RACs. On privileges and immunities, a window of opportunity is ahead for negotiation with Host Governments.

10. The Secretariat would also like to bring to the attention of the Bureau that different legal instruments are used by other UN organizations to address their relationships with regional centres. For instance, for its Regional and Coordinating Centres, the Basel Convention uses Framework Agreements, which are signed between the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and the Host Country. The FAO, for a recently established General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) sub-regional unit has used an Exchange of Letters between the FAO and the Government of the Host Country.

11. Proposed Recommendations:

(a) The Bureau takes note of the minimum common provisions, as presented in Annex I of the Report on Specific Issues;

(b) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to consult with Host Governments of RACs on the minimum common provisions presented in Annex I of the Report on Specific Issues;

(c) The Bureau requests the Secretariat, following the outcome of this consultation, to review the Host Country Agreement Template contained in Annex I of COP 17 Decision IG. 20/3 on “Governance” with the aim of incorporating the minimum common provisions in a revised template, and in any case to report on this matter to the 88th Bureau meeting.

C. Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity

12. The Contracting Parties, with Decision IG.23/3, requested “the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre to prepare on a trial basis, a meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity for the biennium 2018–2019, under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, to achieve the greatest possible integration with the other themes of the Mid-Term Strategy”.

13. In order to implement the relevant provisions of Decision IG.23/3, the Secretariat prepared a brief concept note and roadmap, presented to the 85th meeting of the Bureau (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2018). The Bureau, *inter alia*, recommended that “In order to cover any additional need for the organization of the Thematic Focal Points meeting, available budget from other budget lines may be used, in accordance with the financial rules”.

14. SPA/RAC, in consultation of the Secretariat, has considered ways to achieve the greatest possible integration with the other themes of the Mid-Term Strategy (MTS), and in this respect, it is proposed to include in the Provisional Agenda of the meeting discussion on the following subjects, besides the regular agenda items:

- a) A progress report by the Secretariat which will refer to all activities carried out by the MAP-Barcelona Convention system to implement the Biodiversity and Ecosystems Core Theme of the MTS, and not only to SPA/RAC activities.
- b) Methodology Guidance of the Common Regional Framework for ICZM in the Mediterranean-Draft model of fact sheet for the Ecological Objective EO1 (Biodiversity).
- c) Results of the first evaluation of most representative marine species impacted by marine litter, within the framework of the Marine Litter Regional Plan.
- d) Guidelines for Regulating the Placement of Artificial Reefs at Sea.
- e) Environment Impact Assessment guidelines for Offshore activities.
- f) Common offshore standards and guidelines for special restrictions or conditions for Specially Protected Areas.
- g) InfoMAP/IMAP platform related to the biodiversity and non-indigenous species cluster.

15. Based on the above considerations, the Secretariat would like to seek the guidance of the Bureau on several organizational and budgetary issues including: (a) the invitation of other MAP Component Focal Points, as well as relevant experts and observer organizations, to attend the Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity meeting, in order to participate in the relevant substantive discussions and to achieve the greatest possible integration with the other themes of the MTS; and (b) the related budgetary implications.

16. Proposed Recommendation:

The Bureau takes note of the proposed additional items of the provisional agenda of the meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity. Based on

these items the Bureau recommends that focal points/experts on.... are also invited to this meeting. Furthermore, to cover the additional costs incurred, available budget from other budget lines can be used following an evaluation by the Secretariat of the availability of resources closer at the time of the meeting, and in accordance with the financial rules.

D. Compliance and Reporting

17. At COP 20, Contracting Parties adopted Decision IG.23/1 on the “Revised reporting format for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols”. The revised reporting format, to which the Compliance Committee contributed, replaces the former adopted by COP 15 in 2005. Since COP 20, INFO/RAC, under the overall guidance of the Secretariat, has been working to make available the revised reporting format on the online Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS). This work has now been concluded, including the testing of the system. Arrangements are in place to launch the new BCRS at the beginning of October, so that Contracting Parties will be able to submit their national implementation reports for the biennium 2016–2017 within the agreed deadline (December 2018).

18. The 14th Meeting of the Compliance Committee was held in Athens, Greece, on 27-29 June 2018. The meeting discussed how to consider the information submitted in the national implementation reports for the biennium 2014-2015 and concluded on detailed guidelines in this regard, with the aim of providing key findings and recommendations for COP 21. For putting in motion these guidelines, an online platform has been set up, under INFO/RAC, for the Compliance Committee members to communicate between them, check on progress on key work items and share files.

19. The 14th Meeting of the Compliance Committee also addressed a communication from Ecologistas en Acción de la Región Murciana (Spain) regarding the implementation by Spain of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, and concluded that the designated Rapporteur would address Ecologistas en Acción de la Región Murciana (Spain) for additional specific information, and, on that basis to present the findings and a draft preliminary decision on admissibility for the 15th Meeting of the Compliance Committee.

20. The Compliance Committee also discussed on how to further increase the submission of national implementation reports and to achieve a 100% submission rate. As a way forward, the meeting concluded on the Chair of the Compliance Committee to send a letter to the National Focal Points of Egypt, Libya, Syria and Tunisia, asking those Contracting Parties to provide an explanation of the nature of the difficulties encountered in submitting their outstanding national implementation reports.

21. The Committee further discussed the timing and election of its officers, a point that was also addressed at the 86th Extraordinary Meeting of the Bureau (Teleconference, 11 July 2018) which concluded on the urgent need to address and solve existing issues that are critical for the functioning of the Compliance Committee. Following-up on the conclusions of the 86th Meeting of the Bureau, work is ongoing to resolve the existing issues as soon as possible and before the next Bureau Meeting. The 86th Meeting of the Bureau also addressed the nomination by Monaco of an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee. Following the conclusions of the Bureau, the Secretariat has sent a letter requesting Monaco to provide a new nomination without delay as per COP 20 Decision IG. 23/2.

22. Proposed Recommendations:

(a) The Bureau strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013 and 2014–2015 without further delay;

(b) The Bureau welcomes the new online BCRS as the collective effort of the UNEP/MAP system to facilitate the national reporting process, thereby increasing the submission rate of national implementation reports and their quality;

(c) The Bureau strongly encourages Contracting Parties to use the new online BCRS when submitting their national implementation reports for the biennium 2016-2017 by December 2018;

(d) The Bureau urges Monaco to nominate an expert as Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee, until COP 21, as requested by Decision IG.23/2 and taking into consideration the conclusions of the 86th Bureau meeting.

E. Cooperation and Partners

23. At COP 20, the Contracting Parties, with Decision IG.23/3 “invite[d] the Secretariat to continue discussions on the Draft Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity with the Contracting Parties and relevant partners for submission of the conclusions of these discussions to COP 21 for its consideration”.

24. In line with the above, the Secretariat asked the guidance of the Bureau at its 85th Meeting (Athens Greece, 17-18 April 2018) in relation to further work on the Joint Cooperation Strategy. The Bureau asked the Secretariat “to launch a formal written consultation of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points on the draft text of the Joint Cooperation Strategy to collect the comments and proposals for amendments and to prepare an advanced draft text accompanied by an explanatory note for submission to the 86th Bureau meeting.”.

25. The Secretariat launched this formal written consultation of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points and received comments and questions from the EU. Based on the outcome of this consultation, the Secretariat has prepared an explanatory note which is presented in Annex II of the present document.

26. The Secretariat feels that this discussion now transcends the nature of an operational agreement such as the Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats, and deserves to be discussed in the appropriate fora of the Contracting Parties, if the Bureau so advises.

27. The Secretariat issued a call for new MAP Partners, which was promoted through a dedicated page on the UNEP/MAP website, as well as a promotional banner included in all email communications sent from the Secretariat. Similar efforts were implemented by the Regional Activity Centres, which promoted the call for new MAP Partners to their respective networks. Promotional efforts are still ongoing.

28. As a result of this campaign, the Secretariat has so far received seven applications from non-governmental organizations for accreditation as MAP Partners, as follows:

- INNODEV - Innovation and Development Association
- BirdLife Malta
- Eco-Union
- CEDRE - Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on accidental water pollution
- MED SOS - MEDITERRANEAN SOS Network
- French Water Academy
- IOGP - The International Association of Oil & Gas Producers

29. The Secretariat has reviewed the documentation submitted in line with Decision IG.19/6 on “MAP/Civil Society cooperation and partnership” and found that the above organizations meet the criteria for such accreditation. The results of the evaluation of the application are presented in Annex III to the present report for the Bureau’s consideration. The table of Annex III includes some specific comments/clarifications by the Secretariat.

30. The Secretariat recommends that the Bureau approves the seven organizations to be admitted as MAP partners.

31. OceanCare informed the Secretariat that they are not planning currently to open a regional office based in a Mediterranean country and therefore they withdraw their application for accreditation as MAP Partner.

32. Furthermore, a letter was sent by the Secretariat to all MAP Partners that were endorsed at COP 18, reminding them that they need to renew their accreditation, since according to Decision IG.19/6, "Every 6 years, NGO observers ask the Secretariat to renew their accreditation", through a procedure described in that decision.

33. Following this reminder, the Secretariat has so far received seven applications from MAP Partners for renewal of their accreditation, as below:

- MEDPAN - Mediterranean Protected Areas Network
- MIO-ECSDE - Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development
- SEPS - Syrian Environment Protection Society
- TUDAV - Turkish Marine Research Foundation
- WWF MedPO - WWF Mediterranean
- GFN - Global Footprint Network
- HELMEPA - Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association

34. The Secretariat has reviewed the applications for renewal of accreditation and recommends that the Bureau approves the seven organizations to be renewed as MAP partners.

35. The Secretariat continues the close collaboration with partners for the implementation of existing Memoranda of Understanding, *inter alia*, between UNEP/MAP and the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), where a bilateral meeting took place in Barcelona, Spain on 18 July 2018, to discuss the way forward; and between UNEP/MAP and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), with a bilateral meeting held in Athens, Greece, on 1 October 2018, to discuss increased collaboration on issues such as Marine Protected Areas, Marine Litter, the 2019 State of the Environment Report, the 2023 Quality Status Report, and joint events in upcoming Biodiversity and Fisheries related meetings.

36. To strengthen cooperation with the Compliance Procedures and Mechanisms established under other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), representatives of the Compliance Committees of (a) the IMO London Convention/Protocol, (b) the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), and (c) the Basel-Rotterdam-Stockholm Conventions, presented the work of their Committees at the 14th Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 27-29 July 2018). Furthermore, the work of the Barcelona Convention Compliance Committee was presented to the GFCM Compliance Committee Meeting (Madrid, Spain, 5-6 July 2018). These exchanges have led to closer collaboration on areas of mutual interests, such as the establishment of criteria for assessing compliance.

37. As requested by the 85th Meeting of the Bureau, legal advice has been prepared by the Secretariat on the process of development and subscription of MOUs (and other legal instruments) relevant for the implementation of PoWs. Advice contained in Annex IV describes the relevant terms in the context of UNEP and of the RACs, and in this framework provides room: (1) for reinforcing the flow of information between RACs-Coordinating Unit-Bureau; (2) for articulating a process whereby the Coordinating Unit would be consulted on any MoU or other legal instruments proposed by RACs; (3) for the Coordinating Unit to ensure that MoUs or other legal instruments between RACs and other entities are within the RACs mandate and linked to the corresponding output of the PoWs as adopted by COPs; (4) for encouraging the sharing of information on MoUs and other legal instruments between RACs and other entities with RACs Focal Points on a regular basis.

38. Proposed Recommendations:

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on mobilizing expression of interest from non-governmental organizations to be accredited MAP Partners and on initiating the process of renewal of accreditation of existing MAP Partners;

(b) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new applications submitted by “INNODEV”, “BirdLife Malta”, “Eco-Union”, “CEDRE”, “MED SOS”, “French Water Academy” and “IOGP” for accreditation as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement;

(c) The Bureau endorses the proposal by the Secretariat to renew the accreditation as MAP Partners of “MEDPAN”, “MIO-ECSDE”, “SEPS”, “TUDAV”, “WWF MedPO”, “GFN” and “HELMEPA” following the applications submitted by these organizations, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement;

(d) In relation to the Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats, the Bureau takes note of the progress and of the explanatory note prepared by the Secretariat, and concludes that...;

(e) The Bureau takes note of the legal advice prepared by the Secretariat on the process of development and subscription of MOUs and other legal instruments.

F. Preparation of Assessment Reports

(a) Preparation of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report

39. The MAP-Barcelona Convention system recently delivered the first ever Quality Status Report for the Mediterranean, a main achievement for the region (2017 MED QSR, <https://www.medqsr.org/>).

40. The Contracting Parties, through Decision IG. 23/6, requested the Secretariat “to make all possible efforts to overcome the knowledge gaps that are recognized in the 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report, contributing to the success of the initial phase of Integrated Monitoring Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria implementation (for the period 2016–2019) and enhancing the capacity of Contracting Parties to deliver the second Mediterranean Quality Status Report in 2023 to demonstrate the progress made towards Good Environmental Status and its related targets”. To this end Contracting Parties also requested the Secretariat “to prepare in cooperation with the Contracting Parties through the Ecosystem Approach governance structure, in the first year of the biennium 2018-2019, a roadmap accompanied with a Needs Assessment on how to improve data collection to address knowledge gaps and strengthen the capacities of the system”.

41. Following this request, the Secretariat organized a Regional Meeting on “IMAP Implementation: Best Practices, Gaps and Common Challenges” (Rome, Italy, July 2018). This successful event recorded progress at both national and regional levels in the implementation of Decision IG. 22/7 on IMAP. It also provided recommendations on how to address some outstanding issues and common challenges of IMAP implementation, including the need for capacity building at all levels and how to progress on some specific recommendations of Decision IG.23/6.

42. Furthermore, the Secretariat has prepared the very first draft of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap and Needs Assessment, based on the key recommendations of the Decision IG.23/6, its key findings and challenges, recommendations laid out in document UNEP/MED WG.450/3 “Progress Report on the Implementation of Decision IG.22/7 on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP)” and the conclusions and recommendations of the IMAP Best Practices Meeting.

43. The first draft of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap and Needs Assessment can be found in Annex IV of the present report, for the review and guidance of the Bureau.

(b) Preparation of the State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED 2019)

44. The Contracting Parties agreed on the preparation of a SoED report for submission to COP 21, as per Decision IG.23/14 on Programme of Work and Budget for 2018–2019 (Activity 1.4.1.1). The

Secretariat, through Plan Bleu/RAC, prepared a concept note with the description of the process and timeline for the preparation of SoED 2019, which was presented to the 85th meeting of the Bureau (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2018).

45. Following the guidance of the Bureau, the Secretariat, through Plan Bleu/RAC:
- (i) reviewed the draft table of content of SoED 2019, as well as the process and timeline for its preparation, to take into account comments and proposals from Thematic Focal Points and MCSD Members;
 - (ii) revised the draft table of content, ensuring full consideration of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021 (MTS) in the SoED 2019 structure, and particularly the provisions of Strategic Outcome 1.4 of the MTS;
 - (iii) prepared a table highlighting coherence across documents and objectives, and shared it with Plan Bleu Focal Points on 22 June 2018;
 - (iv) reiterated the invitation sent to Plan Bleu Focal Points to designate experts for the SoED 2019 chapter working groups;
 - (v) invited Plan Bleu Focal Points to volunteer to participate in the SoED 2019 Steering Committee, through the participation of up to two Contracting Parties per sub-regional group;
 - (vi) invited Plan Bleu Focal Points to designate experts to participate in the scientific committee of the SoED 2019;
 - (vii) committed to disseminate a progress report to Plan Bleu Focal Points on a quarterly basis.
46. Four Contracting Parties have volunteered to participate in the SoED 2019 Steering Committee, while three more have expressed interest pending confirmation. The Steering Committee will provide: (i) institutional support for the preparation of SoED 2019; and (ii) guidance in drafting the conclusion and executive summary of SoED 2019, including key findings and recommendations.
47. A Steering Committee Meeting will be organized in mid-October 2018. This first meeting of the Steering Committee will give its members the opportunity to discuss the process and agree on the dates and agenda items for the forthcoming meetings.
48. A number of Contracting Parties and an MCSD Member have designated technical experts to contribute in working groups established for specific chapters of SoED 2019. However, no suggestions/nominations have been made for the Scientific Committee.
49. Most potential authors that have been contacted, confirmed their availability and interest to participate in the drafting of the report.
50. Proposed Recommendations:

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work for the elaboration of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap and Needs Assessment, and expresses support to the process and timeline for the preparation of the report, as described in Annex IV to the Report on Specific Issues;

(b) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to present the draft 2023 MED QSR Roadmap and Needs Assessment to the members of the EcAp Coordination Group for written consultation, and encourages the EcAp Coordination Group members to contribute to this process, with the view to conclude it by the end of 2018, as requested by COP 20;

(c) The Bureau welcomes the progress made for the elaboration of the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report and re-iterates its request for the timely preparation and review process, with the full involvement of the Thematic Focal Points.

G. Outreach, Information and Communication

51. The Coordinating Unit and INFO/RAC are working to implement Decision IG.23/3 on Governance, in relation to information and communication issues and especially on the preparation of an “operational Communication Strategy” (OCS). The OCS will be implemented under the “Communication Strategy 2018-2023”, and it will be aligned with UNEP’s global vision on communication and with the MAP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS). In particular, the OCS will address the

following MTS objectives: 1.4; 1.5 and 1.6. The OCS will detail specific goals, outputs, activities, audiences and key messages. It will also specify implementation modalities, such as the roles and responsibilities, the timeline, a monitoring plan with quantitative indicators, and a budget. The draft OCS will be presented to the INFO/RAC Focal Points meeting in Spring 2019 and at the 88th Bureau Meeting (Athens, Greece, 21-22 May 2019). The Secretariat recommends a two-years timeframe for the OCS (2020 – 2021), since this is aligned with the timeline of the current MTS (i.e. until 2021) and since this is a reasonable timeframe for an operational strategy. Every two years the OCS can be revised based on progress made and lessons learned, and realigned with MAP strategic documents, in particular with the next MTS.

52. Nine news articles have been published on the UNEP/MAP website (unepmap.org) between April and September 2018 to raise awareness and enhance the visibility of MAP activities.

53. Outreach efforts were made by MAP to highlight a very positive development for the Barcelona Convention, i.e. the creation of a new 46.385 km² Marine Protected Area by Spain (the Cetaceans Migration Corridor). A press release was shared on 2 August 2018, social media contents were posted on UNEP global accounts (totaling 1.5 million followers), and a web article was published on MAP website. The outreach efforts resulted in:

- At least 200,000 people directly reached via UNEP social media accounts;
- Articles published in a dozen of media, including in 4 major newspapers in France and Spain.

54. The celebration of the Mediterranean Coast Day and 40th Anniversary of PAP/RAC took place in Split, Croatia, on 25 September 2018. Preparations had started already in May, with some 200 invitations sent to national, foreign and international partners including, through UNEP in Nairobi, and to the Coordinators of all Regional Seas having their annual meeting back-to-back with the Mediterranean Coast Day, in PAP/RAC premises in Split, on 23-24 September 2018.

55. The Coordinating Unit and the MAP Components provide regular updates regarding their activities on their respective websites, including the publication of newsletters and relevant documents and studies. To this end, recent publications include the following:

- “20 case studies on how to prevent the use of toxic chemicals frequently found in the Mediterranean Region” FR and EN versions, SCP/RAC contribution, June 2018
- “Regional workshop: Human impacts on Mediterranean marine ecosystems and the economy”, (Plan Bleu Note n°36), April 2018
- “Rapport d'activités du Plan Bleu 2017”, June 2018
- “Climagine, co-construisons le littoral de demain “, (Note du Plan Bleu n°37), August 2018

56. Proposed Recommendations:

(a) The Bureau expresses appreciation for the efforts and results of the information and communication work and requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction;

(b) The Bureau agrees with the proposals of the Secretariat for the preparation of the Operational Communication Strategy, including on the 2-year duration of the Strategy.

H. Preparations for COP 21

Dates of COP 21

57. The Secretariat is in continuous dialogue with Italy, as Host Country of COP 21, on the relevant Host Country Agreement, in order to launch the preparation of the logistical aspects of the meeting. To this end, the draft Host Country Agreement is in the process of being finalized.

58. Following the conclusions of the 86th Extraordinary Bureau Meeting (Teleconference, 11 July 2018) the Secretariat continued discussions with Italy to reach an agreement on the exact dates of COP

21. The dates identified to ensure the effectiveness of COP 21 and of its preparatory meetings, including the necessary time for the completion and submission of COP documents, were 2-5 December 2019. Following the final confirmation of the dates by the Host Country, the Secretariat already informed all Contracting Parties accordingly.

Theme of COP 21

59. The Secretariat, after consultations between the Coordinating Unit and the MAP Components, suggests that COP 21 could focus on the “Regional dimension of global biodiversity targets, and especially the Post-2020 Biodiversity Strategy”. The theme could then focus on the links with toxic substances and marine litter, as well as with Marine Spatial Planning. Furthermore, the Ministerial Session of COP 21 could provide strategic guidance on the preparation of the next UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy, and especially on its vision and priorities.

60. The Bureau is invited to reflect on these possible themes. The Bureau member from Italy, Host Country of COP 21, or other Bureau members, may wish to propose and examine other themes for COP 21.

COP 21 Decisions

61. The proposal of the Secretariat is for COP 21 to focus, to the extent possible, on a limited number of forward-looking and substantive Decisions, guided by the UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy 2016-2021, in addition to the issues emanating from previous meetings of the Contracting Parties.

62. Main subjects to be addressed through the COP 21 decisions would include: Governance related issues (including the Operational Communication Strategy, Process for the Preparation of MTS 2022-27, Cooperation and Partners, MCSD Composition), the Compliance Committee, the Implementation and Monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025 and of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean, Assessment Reports (including the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report, the Roadmap and Needs Assessment of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report, and the MED 2050 Phase II), the Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean, the identification and conservation of sites of particular ecological interest in the Mediterranean, Action Plans and Strategies under the Protocol concerning specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean, the six Regional Plans to reduce/prevent marine pollution from land-based sources, as well as adoption of guidelines.

63. The members of the Bureau are expected to discuss on the proposed preliminary list of subjects of draft decisions, and to provide their guidance and advice to the Secretariat.

64. Proposed Recommendations:

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat for the preparation of COP 21;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the possible themes of COP 21 as presented in the Report on Specific issues, and suggests to focus...;

(c) The Bureau agrees with the proposal of the Secretariat to focus on a limited number of forward-looking Decisions, guided by the UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy 2016-2021 and relevant COP decisions. The Bureau asks the Secretariat to further work on this issue and prepare the list of draft COP 21 Decisions for its 88th Meeting.

Annex I

Minimum Common Provisions of Host Country Agreements of Regional Activity Centres

Concept Note

Minimum Common Provisions of Host Country Agreements of Regional Activity Centres

Concept Note

Introduction and Background

1. The present document has been prepared by the Secretariat at the request of the 85th Meeting of the Bureau (Athens, 18-19 April 2018). The request was formulated as follows (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR. 85/7, §34):

“The Bureau takes note of the status of development of the Host Country Agreements for RACs [Regional Activity Centres] and requests the Secretariat to prepare a first draft of minimum common provisions to ensure effective operation of the RACs based on their mandates and taking into account the approved Host Country Agreement template, as well as the challenges faced so far as reported by the Secretariat, for further discussion at the 86th Bureau meeting”.

2. Following-up on the conclusions of the 85th Meeting of the Bureau, a set of minimum common provisions has been identified for consideration by the 87th Bureau meeting. In so doing:
- (a) the Host Country Agreement (HCA) template, as contained in Annex I to COP17 Decision IG. 20/13 on Governance, has been taken as a point of departure;
 - (b) the challenges faced by RACs as raised at the 85th Meeting of the Bureau (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR 85/6, Annex I) have been taken into account. They mainly refer to the uncertainty over the scope of application of the privileges and immunities regime established under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, adopted by the General Assembly on 13 February 1946 (General Convention) to those property, funds and assets transferred to RACs by UNEP/MAP, RACs personnel, and conferences and meetings convened by RACs. In the view of some RACs, this uncertainty lies on the fact that they have the legal status of national centres. As a possible way forward, those RACs have suggested to explore the possibility of them being accorded the status of Intergovernmental Organizations;
 - (c) the Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) recently signed between UNEP and RACs (i.e. INFO/RAC, PAP/RAC, Plan Bleu/RAC, SCP/RAC and SPA/RAC) have been taken into consideration. Through PCAs, UNEP make available to RACs funds from the Trust Fund for the Mediterranean Action Plan (MTF) and, to some RACs, from the discretionary contribution of Italy in the framework of the Cooperation Agreement between UNEP and the Italian Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS). Funds are transferred for the implementation of the Project Document developed in accordance with the MAP Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019 approved by COP20 Decision IG. 23/14. All PCAs contain the following clauses, under which:
 - (i) Clause IV (5) Cooperation: The Partner shall only use the name and emblem of the United Nations or UNEP with prior written consent of UNEP;
 - (ii) Clause V (1) and (2) Personnel: RACs shall be solely and completely responsible and accountable for all services performed by their personnel, agents, employees or contractors (referred to as Personnel). In addition, personnel of the RACs, their contractors or anyone else working for the RACs in the execution of the Project or otherwise, are not employees of UNEP and are not covered by the privileges and immunities applying to UNEP and its staff pursuant to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations;
 - (iii) Clause VII (1) Equipment and Supplies: Equipment, non-expandable materials, or other property furnished or financed by UNEP shall remain the property of UNEP and shall be returned to UNEP upon the completion of the Project or upon termination of the PCA, unless otherwise agreed upon between UNEP and the RACs;

- (iv) Clause VIII (1) Intellectual Property Rights: Any publications prepared or produced pursuant to this Agreement will give appropriate credit to UNEP and shall include UNEP's logo in a manner as stipulated under Clause IV (5) above;
 - (v) Clause XVII Privileges and Immunities: Nothing in or relating to PCAs shall be deemed a waiver, express or implied, of any of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and UNEP;
- (d) the following points have been taken as common ground on which to build-on:
- (i) Property, funds and assets: UNEP's property, funds and assets shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as provided for in Article II of the General Convention;
 - (ii) UN Officials: Officials of the UN shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as provided for in Article V and Article VII of the General Convention. The General Assembly, in Resolution 76(I) of 7 December 1946, defined the categories of officials of the United Nations to which the relevant provisions of the General Convention were to apply. The General Assembly approved: "the granting of the privileges and immunities referred to in articles V and VII of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (...) to all members of the staff of the United Nations, with the exception of those who are recruited locally and are assigned to hourly rates";
 - (iii) UN Experts: Experts, other than officials coming within the scope of Article V of the General Convention, performing missions for the United Nations, shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as provided for in Article VI of the General Convention,
 - (iv) Meetings and Conferences convened by UNEP:
 - the Representatives (i.e. all delegates, deputy delegates, advisers, technical experts and secretaries of delegations) of States to the principal and subsidiary organs of the United Nations and to conferences convened by the United Nations shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as provided for in Article IV;
 - Officials of the UN participating in or performing functions in connection with Meetings and Conferences convened by UNEP shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as provided for in Article V and Article VII of the General Convention;
 - All other Participants shall enjoy the privileges and immunities accorded to Experts on Missions for the United Nations under Article VI of the General Convention.
 - (v) there is room for Governments hosting RACs, which are national institutions, to accord privileges and immunities equivalent to those provided for in the General Convention when it comes to property, funds and assets transferred to RACs by UNEP/MAP; RAC personnel and conferences and meetings convened by RACs. This would allow to address the challenges raised by RACs at the 85th Meeting of the Bureau, without entering into an international treaty, which is the legal instrument required to establish an Intergovernmental Organization.

Proposed Minimum Common Provisions

3. Against this background, the following list of minimum common provisions to ensure standard levels of performance throughout the RACs is provided for consideration by the 87th Meeting of the Bureau. The proposed minimum common provisions are meant to be used as building blocks for the HCAs to be signed between UNEP and the representative of the Host Country Government for INFO/RAC, PAP/RAC, Plan Bleu/RAC, SCP/RAC and SPA/RAC. As such, they offer enough flexibility to allow RACs to make the adjustments needed in the HCAs given their legal status as well as enough room for negotiation with the Host Country Government. Minimum common provisions refer to the points below:

- (a) Identification of the Parties entering into the HCA: HCA to be signed between UNEP and the representative of the Host Country Government.

- (b) Purpose for entering into the HCA: To set forth the terms and conditions under which RACs will perform their regional role pursuant to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and related decisions of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.
- (c) Legal status of RACs: To be defined as national institutions established under the national laws and regulations of the Host Country Government and operating in accordance with the laws and regulations of the host Government; and to the extent permissible by national laws, with their own legal personality in performing their regional role (in this regard, please also refer to paragraph 2 (b) above on the possibility of RACs being accorded the status of Intergovernmental Organizations).
- (d) Regional Role of RACs: To be defined as per COP16 Decision IG.19/5 on Mandate of the Components of MAPs. Two separate elements are to be included: firstly, reference to the overall mandate to assist Mediterranean countries to fulfil their commitments under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and implement the decisions of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties; secondly, short description of the objective and mission statement for each RAC.
- (e) Financial Resources:
- (i) Description of the source of funding to be provided, by referring to both principal and additional sources of funding. To include: (1) contributions provided by the host country Government (in kind, cash or services), (2) funds transferred to RACs from the MTF through PCAs signed between UNEP and RACs in accordance with the relevant COP decisions, (3) voluntary contributions from Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, (4) funds from donors such as non-Parties, international and national organizations, programs, funds, institutes and other bodies, and (5) other funds received by RACs;
 - (ii) Separate management and accounting of the funds provided to the RACs through the MTF to be operationalized by the requirement to the RACs of having a separate account for those resources in a bank of the host country Government in the currency in which they are to be remitted;
 - (iii) Audit requirements to be specified for all RACs in line with the PCAs signed between UNEP and RACs;
 - (iv) Role of RACs and UNEP/MAP-Coordinating Unit in seeking resources for RACs from sources other than the MTF to be included and put in the framework of COP20 Decision IG. 23/5 on the Updated Resource Mobilization Strategy.
- (f) Contribution of the Host Government: To spell out the responsibility of the host Government in providing free of charge adequate premises for the RAC, adequate and timely maintenance of the premises, and financial and in-kind contributions to the operational costs of the RAC. Operational costs to be defined as personnel costs (i.e. posts of the RAC financed by the host government), premises and services (e.g. furnished office space, office equipment, phone, electricity and water services), and in cash contribution for operation costs.
- (g) Property, Funds and Assets of the RACs: There is room for negotiation with host Governments, for property, funds and assets transferred to RACs by UNEP/MAP in carrying out its regional role, to enjoy the privileges and immunities equivalent to those provided for in Article II of the General Convention¹.

¹ This approach is taken in the Framework Agreements signed between the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and the host country Governments for its Regional and Coordinating Centers holding the legal status of national institutions (<http://www.basel.int/Partners/RegionalCentres/TheCentres/tabid/5275/Default.aspx>). The provision reads as follows: "Article XV Property, Funds and Assets of the Centre 1. The property, funds and assets of the Centre held and administered on behalf of UNEP, and those held and administered on behalf of the Parties to the Basel Convention, wherever located and by whomsoever held, shall enjoy the privileges and immunities, exemptions and facilities equivalent to those provided for in

(h) Personnel of RACs:

- (i) Categories of personnel of RACs to be specified making clear that the category of UN Officials does not apply to personnel of RACs. In defining the personnel falling under the term personnel of RACs to include the Director, national and international staff as well as international experts (i.e. consultants and experts). What is determinative for labelling staff and experts as international is that they are financed from the MTF or other UNEP managed funds;
- (ii) There is room for negotiation with host Governments, for international staff and international experts to enjoy the privileges and immunities equivalent to those provided for in Article V of the General Convention².

(j) Meetings and Conferences:

- (i) Meetings and Conferences convened by UNEP: To indicate that the privileges and immunities provided for in Article IV, Article V and Article VI of the General Convention apply.
- (ii) Meetings and Conferences convened by RACs: There is room for negotiation with host Governments, for representatives of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention participating in those meetings to enjoy the privileges and immunities equivalent to those provided for in Article IV of the General Convention³.

(k) Director: To address the appointment, functions, duties and responsibilities of the Director. The following elements to be included: appointment of the Director falls on the host Government, in consultation with UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit; the Director has the role of administering the RAC with the aim to ensuring that the RAC performs its regional role; the Director has to report on the implementation of the activities of the RAC in carrying on its regional role to the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit and the Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

(l) Steering Committee: To establish a Steering Committee with the specific objective of following-up on the implementation of the HCA. The Steering Committee to be composed by the Director of the RAC, one representative of the host Government and one representative of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit.

(m) Final standard clauses on settlement of disputes and on entry into force, duration and amendment of the HCA.

Article II of the General Convention. 2. Property, funds and assets transferred to the Centre pursuant to the Project Document signed between the Centre and UNEP or between the Centre and the Secretariat, in the performance by the Centre of its regional role shall enjoy the privileges and immunities, exemptions and facilities equivalent to those provided for in Article II of the General Convention”.

² This approach is taken in the Framework Agreements signed between the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and the host country Governments for its Regional and Coordinating Centers holding the legal status of national institutions. The provision reads as follows: “Article XIV Privileges and Immunities (...) 2. International staff and international experts shall enjoy the privileges and immunities, exemptions and facilities equivalent to those provided for in Article V and VII of the General Convention”. The term “international experts of the Centre” means “consultants and experts who are financed from the Trust Funds of the Basel Convention and who are selected and appointed by the Director of the Centre in consultation with the Secretariat” (Article I (f)). The term “international staff of the Centre” means officials of the Centre whose posts are financed from the Trust Funds of the Basel Convention in accordance with decisions of the Parties of the Basel Convention who are appointed by the Director, in consultation with the Secretariat” (Article 1. (k))

³ This approach is taken in the Framework Agreements signed between the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and the host country Governments for its Regional and Coordinating Centers holding the legal status of national institutions. The provision reads as follows: “Article XIV Privileges and Immunities. 1. The representatives of the Parties to the Basel Convention participating in meetings and other activities organized by the Centre in the territory of [host country Government] shall enjoy the privileges and immunities equivalent to those provided for in Article IV of the General Convention.”

Annex II

Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats - Explanatory Note

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity Among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC (the draft Joint Strategy)

Overall background

Considering that there is an urgent need to better harmonize the efforts undertaken by various Regional Organisations addressing the management and conservation of the marine environment and resources in the Mediterranean, to strengthen regional ocean governance and the application of the Ecosystem Approach, five organisations with strong mandates in this area, agreed to investigate ways for using their different expertise and respective mandates in a joint cooperation strategy between Secretariats (Joint Strategy) aimed at promoting spatial based management and conservation measures, building on their respective mandates and achievements and their existing cooperation agreements. These organisations were:

- UNEP/MAP through its Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC),
- The Secretariat of ACCOBAMS (Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area),
- The Secretariat of GFCM (General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean),
- IUCN through the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med),
- The Secretariat of the MedPAN Association

In this context, UNEP/MAP, ACCOBAMS, IUCN and GFCM, in collaboration with MedPAN, started working in 2016, within their respective mandates, to elaborate a Joint Strategy, which aims to strengthen their collaboration, focusing on how to address the issues of common interest, contribute to the achievement of SDG 14 - in particular 14.2, 14.5, 14.7 (and as such Aichi Target 11) - in the Mediterranean; and to ensure that the application of the precautionary principle and of the Ecosystem Approach is strengthened in a coordinated manner.

The development of the Joint Strategy aimed first and foremost to better harmonise the activities of the five organizations, regarding marine spatial management, building on their mandate and existing structures and work.

Developments of this process have been presented in the course of 2016 in various meetings of the respective bodies of the partner organizations. As such, the 40th Meeting of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean welcomed the process leading up to a Joint Strategy on the highest level in June 2016. Furthermore, ACCOBAMS welcomed the draft Joint Strategy through Resolution 6.11 of their Sixth Meeting of the Parties (Monaco, 22-25 November 2016).

The draft Joint Cooperation Strategy was also presented as an Information Document to the 83rd Meeting of the Bureau to the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention and was discussed in its general terms. The Bureau encouraged the Secretariat to engage in further efforts for enhancing collaboration with the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med based on the existing bilateral agreements, and with MedPAN. The Bureau also concluded that the engagement of the Contracting Parties was to be sought.

The Meeting of the MAP Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 12-15 September 2017) considered that the draft Joint Cooperation Strategy merits further attention and asked the Secretariat to share it with the Contracting Parties and to continue consultations with the partners under the guidance of the Bureau.

At COP 20, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, through Decision IG.23/3 “invited the Secretariat to continue discussions on the Draft Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity with the Contracting Parties and relevant partners for submission of the conclusions of these discussions to COP 21 for its consideration”. Decision IG.23/3 as quoted above, reaffirmed the importance to continue discussions on the Joint Strategy and asked the Secretariat to submit the conclusions of these discussions to COP 21 for its consideration.

In line with the above, the Secretariat asked the guidance of the Bureau at its 85th Meeting (Athens Greece, 17-18 April 2018) in relation to the Joint Cooperation Strategy. The Bureau asked the Secretariat “to launch a formal written consultation of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points on the draft text of the Joint Cooperation Strategy to collect the comments and proposals for amendments and to prepare an advanced draft text accompanied by an explanatory note for submission to the 86th Bureau meeting.”.

The following text provides specific explanations on comments received and questions raised by Contracting Parties during this consultation, together with recommendations on the way forward.

1. Rationale on usage of terminology of “open seas” instead of “ABNJ” or “high seas”;

In the Mediterranean the delimitation of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) is highly sensitive politically. In relation to the usage of terminology of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Secretariat recalls that some Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are not Parties to UNCLOS.

A cycle of projects funded by the EU since 2008 promoting non-coastal areas protection, which were broadly absent in the Mediterranean, apart from the SPAMI Pelagos Sanctuary, also underlined this political sensitivity of usage of UNCLOS terminology.

While the first project in this area, which started in 2008, was still entitled “*Support to the Barcelona Convention for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, including the identification of MPAs in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction*”, the second project, facing serious political sensitivities hindering project implementation, already was entitled as of “*Support to the Barcelona Convention for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, including the establishment of MPAs in open seas areas, including deep sea*”.

In fact, all EU funded projects in this area as of 2009 effectively use the terminology “*open seas*” in order to ensure that geopolitical and legal concerns of some Contracting Parties do not hinder implementation of projects in the field of non-coastal areas marine biodiversity protection.

Open seas are defined by having a bottom deeper than the continental platform (200m), without disputing on which is the country which claims its jurisdiction, since it is an oceanographic term¹ for areas far from the coast, that can be either within or beyond national jurisdiction.

Following the change in terminology and the usage of a politically non-sensitive, oceanographic term allowed the Parties to progress together to agree in 2010 on twelve *priority conservation areas embracing the open sea, including deep sea, for the declaration of SPAMIs within them*. In that way, the constraints faced earlier, when UNCLOS terminology was used were efficiently addressed and Parties not signatories to UNCLOS were also progressing and participated in the further identification

¹ Open sea: Term adaptation to the Mediterranean Sea from “Open ocean” defined by the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission as a non-legal term commonly understood by scientists to refer to the water column beyond the continental shelf, in other words, non-coastal. Open ocean may occur in areas within national jurisdiction in States with a narrow continental shelf (GFCM: SAC13/2011/Inf.10).

Deep sea: Sea water column below 200 m. It is a fully aphotic zone (GFCM: SAC13/2011/Inf.10).

of environmental values and related impacts in five (so far) of the 12 defined areas, through EU funded projects support.

On these matter, as well as on the comments received in relation to the references to UNCLOS (see section 3 below), given their implications for Contracting Parties, the Secretariat recommends that they are discussed in the appropriate fora of the Contracting Parties.

2. Rationale for development of the Joint Strategy “in collaboration with MedPAN”

MedPAN is an organisation strongly involved in the support to policy implementation regarding MPAs management in the Mediterranean, which is the main tool for spatial management measures in the region. It links public organizations in charge of MPAs all around the Mediterranean, having SPA/RAC itself, which is at the origin of its foundation long ago, within its Board of Directors (MedPAN management body). It has MoUs with all the other organisations involved in the Strategy.

Noting however that MedPAN is not an international organization under member countries’ supervision, the terminology was used “in collaboration with MedPAN” and as ensuring involvement of MedPAN in the development of the draft Cooperation Strategy, which is closely related to its mandate, without giving it an equal legal status within the agreement.

Further involvement of MedPAN (and other interested international organizations and NGOs, including IUCN MED and possibly IMO) in the development of the Joint Strategy would greatly benefit the Cooperation Strategy and its implementation. It would be also very much in line with the objectives of the Joint Strategy, as well as with the overall international efforts of involving civil society in decision-making.

The Secretariat thus sees merit in keeping language references to MedPAN, in case need be, specifying further in the text their differentiated role in implementation.

The Secretariat also would like to underline the open nature of the draft Joint Strategy, which could be further joined by other interested international organizations with relevant mandates, such as IMO, upon clearance of the Contracting Parties. Furthermore, the opportunity could be provided to any MAP Partner with relevant mandate to follow the implementation of the Joint Strategy and joint Committee meetings in observatory status (on their own expenses).

3. On comments received in relation to UNCLOS to be reaffirmed/references to UNCLOS to be included in the draft Joint Strategy

The Secretariat recalls that not all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are Contracting Parties to UNCLOS.

On this matter, as well as on the usage of the terms “open seas” or “high seas” (see section 1 above), given their implications for Contracting Parties, the Secretariat recommends that they are discussed in the appropriate fora of the Contracting Parties.

4. Existing MOUs with Partner organisations (including MedPAN) related to spatial based management and conservation measures

Regarding existing MOUs with Partner organisations (including MedPAN) related to spatial based management and conservation measures, these are all described, and their interrelations detailed, in the document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.431/Inf.7. *Enhancing UNEP/MAP Cooperation on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity with regional partners through SPA/RAC*. (http://www.rac-spa.org/nfp13/documents/02_information_documents/wg_431_inf_7_enhancing_cooperation_with_partners.pdf). The Appendix below summarizes the references to area-based management measures within signed MOUs between UNEP (acting as Secretariat to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols) or its SPA/RAC and Joint Strategy partners.

APPENDIX TO EXPLANATORY NOTE

References to area-based management measures within signed MOUs

MOU between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acting as Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), acting on behalf of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (14th May 2012)

Clause 2

Scope

... //...

2. The Parties shall work together, to the extent possible, within the remit of their respective mandates, for the implementation of the activities undertaken pursuant to this MoU. The areas of cooperation for this MOU are :

- 1) Promotion of ecosystem based approaches for the conservation of marine and coastal environment and ecosystems and the sustainable use of marine living and other natural resources;
- 2) ... //...
- 3) Identification, protection and management of marine areas of particular importance in the Mediterranean (hot spots of biodiversity, areas with sensitive habitats, essential fish habitats, areas of importance for fisheries and/or for the conservation of endangered species, coastal wetlands);
- 4) Integrated maritime policy with a special emphasis on marine and coastal spatial planning, and integrated coastal zone management, and other integrated zoning approaches, with a view to mitigate cumulative risks due to reduced access and availability of space affected by multiple and increasing conflictive uses;
- 5) ... //...

Annex 1

ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE AREAS OF COOPERATION OF THIS MoU

1. Promoting ecosystem based approaches for the conservation of the marine and coastal environment and ecosystems and the sustainable use of its living and natural resources
 - Contribute to the formulation/implementation of a regional framework strategy based on the ecosystem approach and on agreed indicators and reference points (ecological, . biological, etc.) to monitor the status of the marine environment and coastal ecosystems and that of marine living natural resources;
 - Cooperate in undertaking assessments of the state of marine environment and ecosystems and that of marine living resources, including socio economic aspects relating to the impact of the exploitation of fisheries on marine environment and ecosystems, the impact of the establishment of marine protected areas on marine living resources, and the impact of coastal and marine aquaculture;
 - ...//...
2. Mitigating the impact of fisheries and aquaculture activities on the marine habitats and species
 - Collaborate in the elaboration, including extra-budgetary fundraising, of a joint regional project on the evaluation and mitigation of by-catch of endangered and non-target species and of the impact of fishing gears on marine habitats;
 - Consider initiatives to develop the concept of marine spatial planning in a manner that takes into account fisheries and aquaculture activities, activities for the preservation of marine habitats and associated species, and possible conflicts between these activities and other uses of the sea (e.g. shipping, marine renewable energies, etc.);
 - Exchange data and information on deep see habitats in order to further the knowledge of these habitats, their biodiversity and their living resources for the purpose of better management;
 - ...//...
3. Identification, protection and management of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), marine areas of particular importance (hot spots of biodiversity, areas with sensitive habitats, essential fish habitats, areas of importance for fisheries and/or for the conservation of endangered species, coastal wetlands)
 - Enhance collaboration with other relevant organizations as appropriate, including those whereby other MoUs have been signed, to create a common regional database of sites of particular importance for biodiversity conservation and for fisheries management, complementary and coherent to the MAP database on pollution and biodiversity monitoring;
 - With regard respectively to the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs) and the Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs) in particular those located partially or wholly on the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ), the Parties will collaborate to harmonize existing respective criteria to identify those areas, for the cases where their location may be coincident and in the selection of mechanisms needed for their establishment;
 - The Parties will cooperate to promote respective Parties adoption of eventual Management Schemes developed within SPAMIs and FRAs to ensure that measures are consistent with the objectives pursued and respectful with the Mandates of both organisations. Measures with potential impact on fisheries in SPAMIs will be discussed by the Parties with the spirit of optimizing common goals.
 - ...//...
 - Cooperate in undertaking assessments of the state of coastal lagoons and other relevant coastal wetlands to be used for the formulation and dissemination of sustainable management measures and sustainable use of its living resources.

4. Integrated Maritime Policy

- Study the impacts of climate change on the marine environment and ecosystems and their marine living resources;
- ...//...
- Strengthening scientific advice on issues of common interest, including the negative effects of pollution of the marine environment and ecosystems on marine living resources and ways to better address cumulative impacts;
- Explore new fields of investigation applied to the conservation of marine environment and marine ecosystems and the sustainable use of marine living resources to promote an integrated approach to environmental and fisheries related issues;
- Collaborate in initiatives related to the implementation and monitoring of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) approach and marine spatial planning as well as other zoning approaches; and,
- ...//...

5. Legal, institutional and policy related cooperation

- ...//...
- Participate (as permanent member in the case of the GFCM) to the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development so to formulate sustainable development frameworks and guidelines for coastal areas management;
- Exchange views regarding the governance of the Mediterranean, with particular regard to those areas located beyond national jurisdiction and take part, where possible, to ongoing initiatives aimed at improving the said governance;
- ...//...

MOU between the Permanent Secretariat of the Agreement on Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the contiguous Atlantic area and the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas of the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan concerning the Sub-regional Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Sea (1st January 2017; renewed every 3 years since 2005)

...//...

3. ROLE OF THE PARTIES

Roles and functions of the RAC/SPA:

- a) to facilitate implementation in the Mediterranean of the activities provided for in Annex 2 to the ACCOBAMS Agreement;

...//...

- d) to facilitate, in consultation with the ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee and Secretariat, the preparation of a series of international reviews or publications, to be updated regularly, including:

-...//...

- a subregional directory of important areas for cetaceans;

...//...

ANNEX - ACCOBAMS – RAC/SPA JOINT WORKING PROGRAM FOR 2017-2019

(English version)

1. ...//...

11. To enhance the effective conservation of **Cetaceans Critical Habitats**, especially by continuing the ongoing threat based management approach.

...//...

ACCOBAMS AGREEMENT

ANNEX 2 CONSERVATION PLAN

...//...

3. Habitat protection

Parties shall endeavour to establish and manage specially protected areas for cetaceans corresponding to the areas which serve as habitats of cetaceans and/or which provide important food resources for them. Such specially protected areas should be established within the framework of the Regional Seas Conventions (OSPAR, Barcelona and Bucharest Conventions), or within the framework of other appropriate instruments.

4. Research and monitoring

Parties shall undertake co-coordinated, concerted research on cetaceans and facilitate the development of new techniques to enhance their conservation. Parties shall, in particular:

a) ...//...

b) co-operate to determine the migration routes and the breeding and feeding areas of the species covered by the Agreement in order to define areas where human activities may need to be regulated as a consequence;

...//...

5. Capacity building, collection and dissemination of information, training and education

...//...

c) prepare a directory of existing protected or managed areas which could benefit the conservation of cetaceans and of marine areas of potential importance for the conservation of cetaceans;

d) ...//...

MOU between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acting as Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) (3rd December 2013)

**Article 4
Areas of Cooperation**

1. .../...
2. The Parties have agreed to the following preliminary and overarching areas of cooperation under this MOU, which form part of UNEP/MAP's mandate and programme of work. The items listed below are also priorities or ongoing activities of IUCN, in accordance with its mandate. The detailed areas of cooperation are listed in Annex 1.
 - a. Promotion of ecosystem based approaches for the conservation of coastal and marine environment and ecosystems and the sustainable management and use of coastal and marine living and other natural resources;
 - b. Identification, protection and management of coastal and marine areas of particular importance in the Mediterranean;
 - c. .../...
 - d. .../...
3. .../...

Appendix 1

UNEP/MAP and IUCN have agreed to cooperate under this agreement on the following areas:

1. ECOSYSTEM APPROACH - Species and ecosystems conservation processes, assessments and monitoring
 - a. Ecosystem Approach for the Mediterranean - setting of indicators and targets, Integrated Assessment and Monitoring Programme, assessments (Biodiversity section of the State of the Mediterranean Environment biodiversity report), framework programme of measures
 - b. ICZM— Integrated Coastal Zone Management and the Marine Spatial Planning and Management;
 - c. Ecosystem Red List - its potential role in the Mediterranean;
 - d. .../...
 - e. .../...
 - f. .../...
 - g. Mediterranean Atlas of seagrasses — supporting national processes
 - h. .../...
 - i. .../...
2. MPAs AND SPAMIs - Marine protected areas and marine area of ecological interest
 - a. Technical, legal and scientific cooperation — utilizing IUCN's technical expertise regarding MPAs beyond national jurisdictions
 - b. SPAMI external evaluation— High Quality assessments to ensure maintenance on the list as per Article 9 of the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol and corresponding Decision by Contracting Parties

- c. SPAMI declaration - Position papers on sites and management measures
- d. SPAMI Elaboration of the management Plans - based on ecosystem approach and on good practice examples and exchange of experience
- e. Identification of new MPAs -national strategies and Action Plans for MPAs and exploration of new concepts such as MPAs for fisheries (MPA-F) in collaboration with GFCM
- f. Provision of the information needed for inclusion of SPAMIs in the World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA) (and in particular in its web interface Protected Planet)
- g. Advancing knowledge on and disseminating it to Promote Open Seas and Deep Seas Protected Areas in the Mediterranean

3. ECOSYSTEMS GOODS AND SERVICES - Evaluations, studies, pilot programmes and promotion activities to better understand and enhance valuation of Mediterranean ecosystems goods and services

- a. Economics of conservation in particular MPAs, Protected Areas, marine area of ecological interests of conservation and species
- b. Joint socio-economic evaluation with GFCM of the fishing activities carried out in pelagic ecosystems and deep benthic habitats (open seas, including deep seas);
- c. ...//...
- d. ...//...

Mémorandum Cadre de Collaboration entre Le Centre d'Activités Régionales pour les Aires Spécialement Protégées et Le Réseau des Gestionnaires d'Aires Marines Protégées en Méditerranée (10th Sep 2014)

Article I — Domaines de collaboration

Le CAR/ASP et le MedPAN décident d'établir une collaboration dans les domaines suivants :

1. La mise en œuvre des activités du Réseau des Gestionnaires d'Aires Marines Protégées en Méditerranée, à savoir :
 - La mise à jour et les développements supplémentaires de la base de données commune des aires marines protégées de Méditerranée ;
 - L'élaboration d'un rapport sur la situation des aires marines protégées de Méditerranée au regard des objectifs 2016 ;
 - La réflexion sur les suivis à l'échelle du réseau des AMP (espèces invasives, changement climatique. ;
 - L'organisation du Forum des aires marines protégées de Méditerranée en 2016 ;
 - La définition de la Feuille de route pour les AMP de Méditerranée d'ici 2020 ;
 - La mise en œuvre de l'appel à petits projets pour appuyer des projets sur la gestion des aires marines protégées ;
 - L'organisation de réunions d'échanges d'expérience et de formations des gestionnaires d'AMP sur des thèmes prioritaires identifiées conjointement ;
 - ...//...
 - La communication sur les aires marines protégées en Méditerranée et le réseau auprès des gestionnaires, scientifiques, socio-professionnels, grand public et autorités des pays méditerranéens et notamment les liens entre le site web et la newsletter MedPAN et ceux du CARIASP ,
 - Le lancement d'études sur les bénéfices socio-économiques des AMP,
 - Le lancement d'une étude sur l'analyse des besoins de financement des AMP de Méditerranée comme contribution à l'initiative du fonds fiduciaire lancée par Monaco, France et Tunisie ;
 - La représentation du réseau des gestionnaires des aires marines protégées dans les différentes instances et conférences internationales et notamment la Conférence des Parties de la Convention sur la Diversité Biologique et sur la Convention de Barcelone.
2. La mise en œuvre des activités se rapportant à la mise en place de réseaux, à l'assistance technique, à l'échange d'information ou à d'autres activités à définir conjointement, prévues par le PAS BIO ;
3. La coordination dans le cadre du réseau des ASPIM,
4. La coordination dans le cadre des EBSA en Méditerranée et pour œuvrer à la connaissance de la connectivité écologique entre les AMP de Méditerranée ;
...//...
8. Collaborer à l'établissement d'outils techniques et de lignes directrices pour l'utilisation durable des aires marines et côtières protégées dans la région.

Annex III

MAP Partner Applications Evaluation Table

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
	French Water Academy	France	The French Water Academy is a pluridisciplinary, intersectoral, prospective and international think tank that aims to contribute to a better water management in France and abroad. The Water Academy serves as a platform of exchanging knowledge and of scientific monitoring and should reflect all requirements of the society in order to fully integrate water, land-use planning and quality of life within the framework of sustainable development.

EVALUATION**Part I: General conditions for accreditation****Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	French Water Academy
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:

	French Water Academy
be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√

be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures

Accreditation

The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:

	French Water Academy
to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√
to have existed for at least 4 years;	√
to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√
to operate democratically;	√
to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	√

to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:

	French Water Academy
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
BLM	BirdLife Malta	Malta	<p>BirdLife Malta primary objective of conserving birds and habitats is achieved through BirdLife Malta work in a variety of fields including research, environmental policy, education and campaigning.</p> <p>Through community engagement projects and nature reserves BirdLife Malta creates homes for nature and safe places for both migratory and resident birds. BirdLife Malta monitor spring and autumn migration with the aims of deterring, detecting and reporting the illegal persecution of protected birds.</p> <p>BirdLife Malta have been campaigning for better wildlife protection in Malta since 1962. Previous campaign work has resulted in the end of robin trapping and the creation of new nature reserves. BirdLife Malta take a stand to protect Malta's wildlife from damaging developments and fight for stronger legislation to protect Europe's birds.</p> <p>BirdLife Malta have been studying the avian species of Malta since the 1950's. Currently BirdLife Malta main research project focuses on the breeding seabirds of Malta. Through our scientific work monitoring populations and creating protected areas we are ensuring we take the right action to save Mediterranean bird populations.</p> <p>BirdLife Malta have also an education mission that is to connect children with nature.</p>

EVALUATION**Part I: General conditions for accreditation****Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	BirdLife Malta
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:

	BirdLife Malta
be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures**Accreditation**

The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:

	BirdLife Malta
to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√
to have existed for at least 4 years;	√
to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√
to operate democratically;	√
to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	√
to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:

	BirdLife Malta
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
CEDRE	Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on accidental water pollution	France	<p>CEDRE's fundamental purpose is to provide advice and expertise to French and foreign authorities and private businesses in charge of spill response. Since 2004, CEDRE has also been appointed by the French Ministry of Ecology to run the surveillance network for litter and microplastics in shoreline sediment.</p> <p>CEDRE is responsible, on a national level, for documentation, research and experimentation on pollutants, their effects and the response means and tools that can be used to combat them. Its role as an advisory body and its expertise encompass both marine and inland surface waters. Since its creation in 1979, CEDRE has provided consultancy services and assistance in the field in response to over 900 spills, both at sea and in inland waters, both in France and abroad.</p>

EVALUATION**Part I: General conditions for accreditation****Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	CEDRE
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:

	CEDRE
be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√

be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures

Accreditation

The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:

	CEDRE
to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√

to have existed for at least 4 years;	√
to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√
to operate democratically;	√
to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	√
to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:

	CEDRE
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
	eco-union	Spain	Eco-union aims is to accelerate the transition towards sustainability of the Euro-Mediterranean region. It works as an independent citizens-driven Think and Do Action Tank on issues related to Energy Democracy, Green & Blue Economy, Sustainable Finance, Responsible tourism.

EVALUATION**Part I: General conditions for accreditation****Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	eco-union
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:

	eco-union
be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√

be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures

Accreditation

The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:

	eco-union
to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√
to have existed for at least 4 years;	√
to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√
to operate democratically;	√

to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	√
to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:

	eco-union
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
INNODEV	Innovation & Development Association	Lebanon	<p>INNODEV aims for a society with active and responsible citizens capable of making positive differences in their communities. It promotes a positive and active social, environmental and educational attitude and conditions, thus endows the youth with skills, resources and awareness to achieve better livelihoods in a just, secure and healthy society. INNODEV started because of its work on marine issues and finds a deep need to continue working on sea related matters, which is facing threats from different sources (sewage, industry, over- fishing, etc.).</p> <p>INNODEV empowers individuals in their communities, making activism a way of life and a core principle of every human being. It is about leading by example and inspiring fellow individuals to get involved and take action.</p> <p>INNODEV aims to increase environmental and Solid waste management awareness and develop environmental literacy among students, teach the students the environmental knowledge, ethical, values, skills, attitudes and behaviors they need in order to become environmental stewards. INNODEV supports gender equality.</p>

EVALUATION**Part I: General conditions for accreditation****Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	INNODEV
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:

	INNODEV

be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures

Accreditation

The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:

	INNODEV
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to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√
to have existed for at least 4 years;	√ [by COP 21, since INNODEV was founded in 2015]
to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√
to operate democratically;	√
to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	√
to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:

	INNODEV
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
MedSOS	MEDITERRANEAN SOS Network	Greece	<p>MedSOS is dedicated to protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development at national and Euro-Mediterranean level. To achieve its objectives, the organization works on a vast array of environmental issues, with special emphasis on the integrated management of marine, coastal and inland water resources.</p> <p>Through informative campaigns, volunteer and environmental education programs, public events, online publications, social media, collaborations at the local, national and regional levels and a variety of national and EU projects, MedSOS aims to raise public awareness and understanding and improve access to information; Encourage behaviour change amongst citizens and foster the transition to sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods; Advocate, lobby and promote cooperation between social partners, policy-makers and Civil Society at local, national and international level; Promote active public participation in sustainable development strategies and demonstrate alternative solutions and good practices to the local communities; Strengthen intercultural communication, dialogue and exchanges among European and Mediterranean partners.</p>

EVALUATION**Part I: General conditions for accreditation****Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	MedSOS
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:

	MedSOS

be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures

Accreditation

The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:

	MedSOS
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to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√
to have existed for at least 4 years;	√
to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√
to operate democratically;	√
to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	√
to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:

	MedSOS
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
IOGP	The International Association of Oil & Gas Producers	UK	IOGP is the voice of the global upstream industry working on behalf of the world's oil and gas companies and organizations to promote safe, responsible and sustainable exploration and production.

EVALUATION**Part I: General conditions for accreditation****Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	IOGP
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:

	IOGP
be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√

be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures

Accreditation

The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:

	IOGP
to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√
to have existed for at least 4 years;	√
to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√

to operate democratically;	√
to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	√ [IOGP is based in London, UK, but has members who have their headquarters based in a Mediterranean country (including CEPSA, Eni, Galp, Repsol, Total, Assomineraria) and members who have regional or local offices and/or have oil and gas exploration and production activities in the Mediterranean region]
to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:

	IOGP
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

Annex IV

Roadmap and Needs Assessment for the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report

(First draft)

I. From the 2017 MED QSR to the 2023 MED QSR

In the context of implementing the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in 2008 (Decision IG.17/6), the UNEP/MAP system delivered during the last biennium 2016-2017, the first ever Quality Status Report for the Mediterranean (hereinafter referred to as 2017 MED QSR, <https://www.medqsr.org/>). This is an assessment product based on region-wide Ecological Objectives and Common Indicators that is built upon existing data and complemented with inputs from numerous diverse sources.

Underlining the importance of this major and innovative MAP achievement, Decision IG. 23/6 on the 2017 MED QSR (COP 20, Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017) pointed out several gaps (as laid out in Chapter II of this document) and requested the Secretariat “to prepare in cooperation with the Contracting Parties through the Ecosystem Approach governance structure, in the first year of the biennium 2018-2019, a Roadmap accompanied with a Needs Assessment on how to improve data collection to address knowledge gaps and strengthen the capacities of the system (the QSR 2023 Roadmap). To this aim, priority activities needed to successfully deliver the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report shall be identified for inclusion in the Programme of Work”.

Following up on Decision IG.23/6, the Bureau at its 85th meeting (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2018) requested “that the roadmap and Needs Assessment for the 2023 MED QSR, prepared in close collaboration with the EcAp Coordination Group, is presented at its 86th meeting”.

The present paper describes the Secretariat’s approach for the development of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap in line with the above-mentioned COP 20 mandate and represents the first draft of the Roadmap. As such, it is detailing the main processes and milestones and related outputs and timelines, the implementation of which would allow the MAP system to fill the identified knowledge gaps and deliver, to the extent possible, a fully-fledged, quality-assured, region-wide and data-based 2023 MED QSR (First Draft).

The First Draft contains a narrative section describing findings of the initial assessment of key needs and the proposed milestones and steps needed to address such identified needs. Details are then contained in tabular form of the initial 2023 MED QSR Roadmap with Vision, Main Processes and Milestones and related Outputs (with proposed timelines), including the necessary involvement of the Ecosystem Approach governance mechanism.

This draft of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap will be further elaborated and discussed, in line with Decision IG.23/6, in close cooperation with the Contracting Parties through the Ecosystem Approach Governance Structure.

II. Assessment of key needs to address knowledge gaps and strengthen the capacities of the system

Decision IG. 23/6 on the 2017 MED QSR pointed out several gaps and recommended the following general directions in order of successfully deliver the 2023 MED QSR:

- (i) harmonization and standardization of monitoring and assessment methods;
- (ii) improvement of availability and ensuring of long time series of quality assured data to monitor the trends in the status of the marine environment;

- (iii) improvement of availability of the synchronized datasets for marine environment state assessment, including use of data stored in other databases where some of the Mediterranean countries regularly contribute;
- (iv) improvement of data accessibility with the view to improving knowledge on the Mediterranean marine environment and ensuring that Info-MAP System is operational and continuously upgraded, to accommodate data submissions for all the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) Common Indicators.

To specifically address the above-mentioned main directions in the development of the 2023 MED QSR, the Secretariat and MAP Components have reviewed the state of play of national implementation of IMAP, focusing on best practices and challenges faced with regards to different aspects of its implementation at national level, and initiated a discussion on a number of cross-cutting issues and region-wide challenges, that are crucial for ensuring the effective integrated GES assessment. An initial needs assessment on how to improve data collection to address knowledge gaps and strengthen the capacities of the system was developed in the “Progress Report on the implementation of Decision IG.22/7 on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria” (UNEP/MED WG.450/3). This document was presented at the Regional Meeting on IMAP Implementation: Best Practices, Gaps and Common Challenges (10-12 July, Rome, the Rome Meeting) which resulted in valuable lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations. They are guiding the work of the Secretariat towards the more detailed needs assessment to be provided cluster by cluster and discussed in the upcoming CORMON meetings and within respective Ecosystem Approach Governance Structure.

The following issues will be presented for review and in-depth discussion in the upcoming CORMON meetings:

- a) Better interlinkages between Activities/Pressure/Impacts and clarification of definition of impacts noting that such a definition should primarily focus on biodiversity;
- b) Clarifications of definitions of integration and aggregation rules. In this respect the Rome Meeting requested the Secretariat to make the necessary changes in document UNEP/MED WG. 450/3 opting for giving the priority at this stage of IMAP implementation to the work on geographical aggregation and assessment scaling rather than integration.

Consistent with the outcome of the Rome meeting, and acknowledging the achievements, lessons learned, and challenges faced during the current initial phase of IMAP implementation at national level, the following elements will be submitted for discussion at the upcoming CORMON meetings:

- a) Efforts for coordinated national IMAP implementation should be enhanced, notably through technical proposals;
- b) Tailored capacity-building activities should be established to fill the gaps clearly identified during IMAP national trainings, including on technical capacities, software, monitoring protocols, human resources needed, etc.;
- c) Further efforts are necessary by the Contracting Parties to generate more synchronized datasets for assessments (collection of quality assured data in a coherent manner and format and availability of long-time data series to monitor trends);
- d) IMAP compatible Pilot Info-system needs to be finalized to accommodate reporting of IMAP compatible data by the Contracting Parties, with clear distinction between mandatory and optional data;
- e) Monitoring protocols and assessment methods have to be harmonized and standardized, including region-wide harmonized criteria for reference conditions and threshold/ boundary values per assessment area, as appropriate and feasible;
- f) Further development of the risk-based approaches, analytical testing and assessment methodologies, assessment criteria for integrated chemical and biological assessment methods

- and testing of new research-proved tools for monitoring the toxic effects, as well as improvement of knowledge on emerging chemicals, are needed;
- g) Testing of the Background Assessment Criteria (BACs) and Environmental Assessment Criteria (EACs) and thresholds application should be undertaken on a trial basis and at regional and sub-regional levels;
 - h) Identification and evaluation of marine litter accumulation (stranding fluxes, loads and linkage with specific sources) and hotspots using GIS and mapping systems and modelling tools should be enhanced, including better understanding of transport dynamics and accumulation zones;
 - i) Science-Policy Interface should be strengthened, structured and sustained, by supporting the national monitoring programmes, to ensure that ongoing scientific projects can address IMAP national implementation needs;
 - j) Cooperation at sub-regional level for Common Indicators, as appropriate, to share best practices and addressing specific gaps within national monitoring programmes should be strengthened;
 - k) A continual exchange of best practices should be encouraged and established among thematic experts possibly through on-line communication tools for all three IMAP clusters.

Based on the findings of the 2017 MED QSR and related Decision IG.23/6, as well the recommendations of the Rome Meeting, the Secretariat has concluded a coordinated analysis with the involvement of all relevant components on major achievements and gaps of the 2017 MED QSR, priority needs and specific issues to address for each IMAP cluster. Specific recommendations were also coordinated on procedural (including meetings and coordination) needs, based on lessons learnt from the 2017 QSR process, in order to find realistic ways and means for addressing and filling the 2017 MED QSR identified gaps.

The outcome of this specific mapping resulted in:

- (a) A vision of a better integrated and DPSIR-based Good Environmental Status (GES) assessment of the 2023 MED QSR and
- (b) A short list of key priority needs which need to be addressed in order to achieve this vision, accompanied with the necessary main processes and milestones and related outputs.

Based on the outcomes of above steps undertaken by the Secretariat, key priority needs to be addressed towards a DPSIR-based GES assessment of the 2023 MED QSR are as follows:

1. Scale(s) of monitoring, assessment and reporting to be agreed on, to enable comparable data sets assessment;
2. Necessary methodological tools and assessment criteria to be agreed on to allow and promote integrated assessment of GES;
3. Full implementation of IMAP to be achieved, with data generation throughout the Mediterranean;
4. Fully operational SEIS-based IMAP Info System to be put in place to enable timely reporting of the Contracting Parties;
5. Monitoring Protocols and Data Quality Assurance and Quality Control for IMAP Common Indicators are to be made available to guide Contracting Parties;
6. National capacity and knowledge gaps are to be addressed to ensure region-wide coherence and data availability;
7. Regional partners, projects to be able to input process in a coordinate manner;
8. Regular, effective (and more frequent) regional coordination with the Contracting Parties to be put in place.

III. Vision and Milestones to be achieved for a successful delivery of the 2023 MED QSR

Vision: An integrated DPSIR-based GES assessment, developed on consolidated and quality-assured monitoring data sets, reported and processed through an effective IMAP Info System that is interoperable with national and other regional monitoring and reporting networks.

The 2023 MED QSR Roadmap is built around the following phases and processes:

1. Timely negotiation and agreement of Contracting Parties through the Ecosystem Approach Governance Structure at regional (and as appropriate at sub-regional) level on the scale(s) of monitoring, assessment and reporting;
2. Development and agreement of Contracting Parties through the Ecosystem Approach Governance Structure on necessary methodological tools and assessment criteria to allow and promote integrated assessment of GES at the level of Ecological Objectives and to the extent possible, across relevant Ecological Objectives;
3. Full implementation of IMAP-based national monitoring programmes throughout the Mediterranean to enable the region to generate quality assured and real time data during 2020-2022 (at least delivery of two sets of data for each IMAP cluster⁵);
4. Delivery and operationalisation of a user-friendly and SEIS-based IMAP Info System to collect and process data produced by IMAP-based national monitoring programmes;
5. Development and implementation of Monitoring Protocols and Data Quality Assurance and Quality Control for IMAP Common Indicators (depending on the nature of Common Indicators, to be developed on regional/sub-regional or national level and discussed, agreed on by the Contracting Parties through the relevant level of the Ecosystem Approach Governance Structure);
6. Continuous support and technical assistance to the Contracting Parties in relation to all the above areas;
7. Outreach to regional partners to provide inputs to the 2023 MED QSR, establishment of solid partnerships and development of a communication and visibility strategy for the 2023 MED QSR;
8. Regular and effective regional cooperation and coordination with the Contracting Parties, through CORMONs, under the guidance of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group.

Table 1 below details each of the above main processes and milestones of the roadmap, with main outputs and delivery timelines.

Once reviewed by the Bureau at its 87th Meeting in November 2018, this First Draft will be further elaborated in close coordination with the Contracting Parties through the Ecosystem Approach Governance Structure. In particular, the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group Members will be requested to comment on the First Draft, including the reflections of the Bureau. The CORMON Meetings will follow the recommendations of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group in order to further address specific needs and necessary priority actions to deliver the outputs presented in Table 1, specific to their clusters, as provided for by Decision IG.23/6 on the 2017 MED QSR.

⁵ Noting that in line with consultations throughout the UNEP/MAP system, it is most likely feasible to have at least two data sets in areas of pollution and marine litter and coast and hydrography, while only one data set can be assured for biodiversity and NIS throughout the Mediterranean

2023 MED QSR Vision:

An integrated DSPIR-based GES assessment, developed on consolidated and quality-assured monitoring data sets, reported and processed through a fully operational IMAP Info System that is interoperable with national and other regional monitoring and reporting networks

2017 MED QSR features (starting point)

This first regional assessment product, based on 23 IMAP common indicators, includes clear findings, conclusions and key messages related to each indicator. Data sources of the assessment include Contracting Parties' data sets as part of the MED POL data base, other relevant data provided by MAP components and MAP implemented project, and GFCM and other regional sources of data, including projects.

Data sets are provided to the extent possible for all common indicators but are incomplete and data availability is limited for the whole region. The assessment is limited in relation to integrated GES assessment (provided, if any, only across Common Indicators of specific Ecological Objectives). The assessment recognizes the need to address interlinkages between pressures/impacts and state of marine environment, but it cannot provide it in detail.

Decision IG. 23/6 of COP 20 on 2023 MED QSR preparation provides for:

- (i)** harmonization and standardization of monitoring and assessment methods;
- (ii)** improvement of availability and ensuring of long time series of quality assured data to monitor the trends in the status of the marine environment;
- (iii)** improvement of availability of the synchronized datasets for marine environment state assessment, including use of data stored in other databases where some of the Mediterranean countries regularly contribute;
- (iv)** improvement of data accessibility with the view to improving knowledge on the Mediterranean marine environment and ensuring that IMAP Info System is operational and continuously upgraded, to accommodate data submissions for all the IMAP Common Indicators.

MAIN PROCESSES AND MILESTONES				
1. Scales of Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting	2. Integrated assessment of GES	3. Implementation of national IMAPs throughout the Mediterranean 6. Technical assistance and support	4. IMAP Info System 5. Monitoring Protocols and Data Quality Assurance and Quality Control	7. Outreach and visibility
OUTPUTS				
<p>Analysis for each IMAP cluster on knowledge gaps, with focus on scales of monitoring prepared (mid 2019 - end 2020);</p> <p>Approaches on scales of monitoring for IMAP Common Indicators included in the IMAP Pilot Info System defined (2019);</p>	<p>Analysis of interrelations between sectors, activities, pressures, impacts and state of marine environment for each Common Indicators included in the IMAP Pilot Info System prepared (2018-2019);</p> <p>Approaches for mapping the pressures/impacts/status of marine environment for the above IMAP Common Indicators defined (Rome Meeting); (2019-2020);</p>	<p>State of the national implementation of IMAP reported by the Contracting Parties (2018/2019, 2020/2021, 2021/2022);</p> <p>Minimum 3 sets of data on IMAP Common Indicators (EO5, EO9, EO10) reported by the Contracting Parties (2019, 2020, 2021/2022);</p>	<p>IMAP information and data sharing policy developed (2019);</p> <p>IMAP Pilot Info system ready to upload monitoring data (end of 2019);</p> <p>Data dictionaries and data standards finalized for all</p>	<p>Timeline for data-sharing with regional partners defined (2019-2021);</p> <p>Agreements reached with Regional Partners (2020);</p> <p>Communication and visibility strategy for the</p>

<p>Scales of monitoring for all IMAP Common Indicators agreed (2021);</p> <p>Scales of assessment products for all IMAP Common Indicators clustered per Ecological Objectives proposed (2021-2022);</p> <p>Assessment criteria/thresholds/ baseline values proposed/updated for IMAP Common Indicators included in the IMAP Pilot Info System (2020-2021);</p> <p>Assessment criteria/thresholds/ baseline values initiated for all IMAP Common Indicators (2021-2022);</p>	<p>Methodological concept developed and proposed to assess the interrelation of pressures/impacts/status of marine environment (2020);</p> <p>Methodological concept to support better integration of thematic assessment products related to IMAP Common i.e. integration between Ecological Objectives (at national, sub-regional and regional scale) is agreed and tested (2020-2021);</p> <p>Thematic assessment products are prepared (2021-2022);</p> <p>2023 MED QSR delivered (2023);</p>	<p>Minimum 1 set of data (EO1 and EO2) reported by Contracting Parties (2021/2022);</p> <p>Minimum 2 sets of data (EO7, EO8) reported by the Contracting Parties (2020, 2021/22);</p> <p>Country capacity building trainings organized in line with their needs (2019-2021);</p> <p>Sub-regional/regional workshops and trainings, in areas of common capacity needs and knowledge gaps, organized (minimum 2 per sub-region), (2019-2021);</p>	<p>IMAP Common Indicators (mid 2021);</p> <p>IMAP Pilot Info System updated to cover all IMAP Common Indicators (mid-2022);</p> <p>IMAP Info System fully operational enabling the Contracting Parties to report their monitoring data in 2020, 2021 and 2022.</p> <p>Monitoring Protocols drafted for IMAP Common Indicators included in the IMAP pilot Info System; (2018/2019);</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Quality Control schemes in place for IMAP Common Indicators included in the IMAP Pilot Info System (2019-2020);</p>	<p>2023 MED QSR developed and agreed (2021);</p> <p>Outreach to key partners is undertaken and relevant meetings held (2019-2020);</p> <p>Communication and visibility strategy for the 2023 MED QSR is implemented (2021-2023);</p> <p>2023 MED QSR published in 2 languages and on line available and presented at COP 23.</p>
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<p>Reporting formats adjusted to agreed scales of monitoring and scales of assessment products (2021-2022).</p>		<p>Joint monitoring pilots designed and implemented (minimum 2 in participating countries), (2019-2021).</p>	<p>Quality Assurance and Quality Control schemes expanded to cover all IMAP Common Indicators (2021-2022);</p>	
<p>8. Effective Regional Collaboration</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CORMON meetings are held (minimum 1/year/cluster between 2019-2022); • Integrated CORMON meetings are held (minimum 1/biennium 2020, 2022); • Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group meetings are held (minimum 1/year between 2019-2023); • Sub-regional expert groups to address monitoring and assessment sub-regional specifics, including scales of assessment products and their integration, are held (minimum 1/biennium for all 4 sub-regions in integrated manner, for all clusters); • Online expert groups are held for each cluster, to ensure continuous work between CORMON meetings (to be re-established in CORMONs in 2019); • Bilateral meetings on MoU implementation are held, new MoUs are considered and partnerships with key partners are further strengthened; • Progress reports are submitted to the meetings of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, the meetings of the MAP Focal Points and the COPs (2019-2023) for guidance and approval as appropriate. 				

Annex V

Process of development and subscription of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and other legal instruments by MAP Components

Process of development and subscription of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and other legal instruments by MAP Components

Introduction

1. At its 85th Meeting (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2018), the Bureau discussed the issue of Focal Points being kept informed and involved in the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) by the MAP Components, to allow proper contribution and with the view to strengthening cooperation and coordination. In this context, the Bureau concluded by requesting the Coordinating Unit (CU):

“(a) To provide legal advice on the process of development and subscription of MoUs relevant for the implementation of PoWs, for discussion at the 86th Meeting of the Bureau;

(b) To instruct the MAP components to involve the relevant Thematic Focal Points in the process of development of MoUs to allow proper contribution and with the view to strengthen cooperation and coordination”. (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR. 85/7, §17 (a) and (b))

2. The request from the Bureau was tabled at the 35th Meeting (Paris, France, 6 June 2018) of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP). The meeting discussed the need of the CU to provide advice on the binding nature of MoUs for the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, if such MoUs are signed between MAP Components and other entities. The meeting also discussed the need to consult the content of such MoUs with Thematic Focal Points.

3. This document addresses the request from the 85th Bureau Meeting by analysing, first, the meaning of the term MoU in the context of UNEP and the UNEP procedure for concluding MoUs, and second, the conclusion of MoUs by MAP Components for the implementation of the UNEP/MAP PoW. In closing, key points are highlighted to feed into the discussion of the 87th Bureau Meeting.

Analysis

UNEP: an MoU is one of a portfolio of legal instruments to implement UNEP/MAP PoW

4. In the context of UNEP, MoUs, as other UNEP legal instruments, such as Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs), Small-Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) or Letters of Agreement (LoAs), are practical means to implement the UNEP/MAP PoW, as approved by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP).

5. As per the UNEP Guidelines for the Use of UNEP’s Standard Legal Instruments, Rev. 09 January 2014, an MoU is to be seen as a framework of commitments through which UNEP and its partners confirm that they share a common understanding and endeavor, define strategic alliances, and agree and/or define areas of common interest, spheres of cooperation and mutual operation engagements. MoUs do not cover financial arrangements. Where an MoU has been signed, relevant implementation agreements are required to detail financial and programmatic/administrative arrangements, if resources are to be transferred between the parties. As to the partners, UNEP can conclude MoUs with Non-UN implementing partners, including Governments and their subsidiary bodies, Local Authorities, Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community-Based Organizations and the Private Sector.

6. In negotiating MoUs with the relevant partner, which has to be approved following the due diligence procedure outlined in the 2011 UNEP Partnership Policy and Procedures, the UNEP standard template is applied. Substantial deviations from the template require the clearance of the Legal Unit of the UNEP Corporate Services Division. The clearance of the Legal Unit is also required for those MoUs to be signed by the UNEP Executive Director, i.e. MoUs with strategic partners, which have corporate implications and/or include some non-standard clauses. For MoUs other than those, the delegation of authority within the UNEP Ecosystem Division rests on the Coordinator and the Deputy Director of the Ecosystem Division’s Barcelona Convention Secretariat-Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan. Once an MoU is concluded and signed by the appropriate UNEP

signing authority, it is uploaded to the UNEP Environmental Central Information Repository for institutional knowledge and record-keeping.

7. The procedure described above is followed by UNEP/MAP in concluding MoUs with its partners for the implementation of its PoW. MoUs have been recently concluded with the Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) (COP 18 Decision IG. 21/4), the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), the Permanent Secretariat of the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (BSC PS) (COP 19 Decision IG. 22/18) and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM). By concluding MoUs with its partners, UNEP/MAP, in line with the strategic objectives set out for Governance in the UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy 2016-2021, strengthens synergies, complementarities, and collaboration among relevant international and regional partners and organisations active in the Mediterranean region, with the aim to promote the objectives of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

RACs: MOUs as legal instruments to make operational its regional role

8. The mandate of MAP Components, i.e. Regional Activity Centres (RACs), is established in COP 16 Decision IG. 19/5. All MAP Components have the overall mandate to assist Mediterranean countries to fulfill their commitments under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and implement COP decisions, and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) recommendations. This general mission statement is specified for each RAC. The main fields of action of RACs vary from RAC to RAC depending on their scope of action under the Barcelona Convention, relevant Protocols and COP Decisions.

9. The activities of MAP Components are governed by a series of operational principles. These are listed in COP 16 Decision IG. 19/5 and include the following: (1) the Five-Year and biennial Programmes of Work are developed in accordance with the Governance Paper (COP 15 Decision IG. 17/5), approved by the meeting the Contracting Parties and implemented under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, and (2) transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness shall guide planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all activities.

10. In fulfilling their individual mandates, as translated into the UNEP/MAP PoW, RACs, as national institutions separate from UNEP with either their own legal personality or represented by their hosting institution, can conclude MoUs or other legal instruments with other entities. Legal instruments so concluded, will only concern the parties involved. This should be put however into a broader context and linked to the regional role of the RACs.

11. RACs have been assigned a regional role, which is to support Contracting Parties in meeting the objectives of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Practical means to do so, as for instance the conclusion of MoUs or other legal instruments to implement the UNEP/MAP PoW, fall under the overall guidance and monitoring of the Coordinating Unit, as the body ensuring the overall coherence and complementary of the work undertaken by the RACs (COP 15 Decision IG. 17/5). In particular, as set in Decision IG. 17/5, the Coordinating Unit is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the MAP Work Programme (including the components assigned to the RACs and MED POL) and reporting regularly to the Contracting Parties thereon; and for providing formal and informal guidance to the RACs and MED POL on issues requiring the involvement of the Coordinating Unit in their work.

12. Against this background, a window of opportunity is ahead: (1) to further strengthening the current flow of information between RACs-Coordinating Unit-Bureau; (2) to formalize a process, whereby the Coordinating Unit would be consulted on any MoUs or other legal instruments proposed by RACs; (3) to reinforce the channels for the Coordinating Unit to ensure that MoUs or other legal instruments between RACs and other entities are within RACs mandate and linked to the

corresponding output of the PoW as adopted by COPs; (4) to encourage the sharing of MoUs or any other legal instruments between RACs and other entities with RACs Focal Points on a regular basis.

Closing remarks

In guiding discussion on the conclusion of MoUs by MAP Components at the 87th Bureau Meeting, the following points should be highlighted:

- (1) in the context of UNEP, MoUs, as other UNEP legal instruments, such as Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs), Small-Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) or Letters of Agreement (LoAs), are practical means to implement the UNEP/MAP PoW, as approved by the COP;
- (2) MoUs are seen as framework of commitments, through which UNEP and its partners confirm that they share a common understanding and agree on areas of common interest and cooperation. MoUs are used in situations where UNEP does not intend to transfer funds to, or receive funds from, its partner. If resources are to be transferred, other relevant implementation agreements are required;
- (3) there is a UNEP established step-by-step procedure for the conclusion MoUs, which is followed by UNEP/MAP when entering into MoUs with its partners for the implementation of the PoW. This entails adherence to a template and clearance by the Legal Unit of the UNEP Corporate Services Division, where required;
- (4) By entering into MoUs, UNEP/MAP, in line with the strategic objectives set out in the UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy 2016-2021, strengthens synergies, among relevant organisations active in the Mediterranean region, thus promoting the objectives of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;
- (5) MAP Components, i.e. RACs, have a regional role to perform as assigned by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. This role is to assist Mediterranean countries in fulfilling their commitments under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. This general mission statement is translated into RACs individual mandates by COP 16 Decision IG. 19/5;
- (6) in fulfilling their individual mandates, as translated into the UNEP/MAP PoW in the form of outputs to deliver, RACs can conclude MoUs or other legal instruments with other entities. Legal instruments so concluded will guide the relationships only among the partners involved;
- (7) MoUs or other legal instruments signed by RACs have been concluded to deliver the UNEP/MAP PoW. The implementation of the PoW, including the components assigned to the RACS, is under the overall guidance and supervision of the Coordinating Unit. Against this background, there is room for action in order to:
 - (a) reinforce the flow of information between RACs-Coordinating Unit-Bureau;
 - (b) set up a process, whereby the Coordinating Unit would be consulted on any MOUs or other legal instruments proposed by RACs;
 - (c) strengthen the channels for the Coordinating Unit to ensure that MoUs or other legal instruments between RACs and other entities are within RACs mandate as set forth in COP 16 Decision IG. 19/5 and linked to the corresponding output of the PoW as adopted by COP;
 - (d) encourage the sharing of information on MoUs and other legal instruments, including their content, with RACs Focal Points on a regular basis.