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Agenda item 5: MSSD Follow-up – Good Practices, Exchange of Experiences and Challenges

c) Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard

Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard: Timeline, Updated List of Indicators, Proposals and Recommendations

Note by the Secretariat

At its 17th Meeting (Athens, Greece, July 2017), the MCSD reviewed the list of proposed indicators of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard for submission to COP 20. The MCSD considered the list of proposed indicators as a living document to be periodically assessed and updated, in synergy with the on-going work for the development of SDG indicators and implementation at national level.

At COP 20 (Tirana, Albania, December 2017), the Contracting Parties took note of the list of indicators, as included in Annex I of Decision IG.23/04, as a basis for further work. The MCSD Steering Committee was mandated to coordinate the work on ensuring full consistency and synergy between the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and the work on SDG Indicators, the main objective being to better align the dashboard with SDG Indicators.

Following the 19th and 20th Meetings of the MCSD Steering Committee, the Secretariat (Plan Bleu) (i) finalized the update of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, with the list of indicators as included in Annex I, (ii) prepared a revised version of the analytical factsheets (document UNEP/MED WG.469/Inf.4), and (iii) drafted proposals and recommendations, as included in this document, for improving the process, based on challenges and lessons learned, including a proposal for populating regularly the dashboard. The timeline related to the dashboard, as agreed by the 20th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee, is included in Annex II of the present document.

The updated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and related deliverables will be submitted, after discussions at the 18th Meeting of the MCSD, to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 10-13 September 2019) and COP 21 (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019).

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Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard:

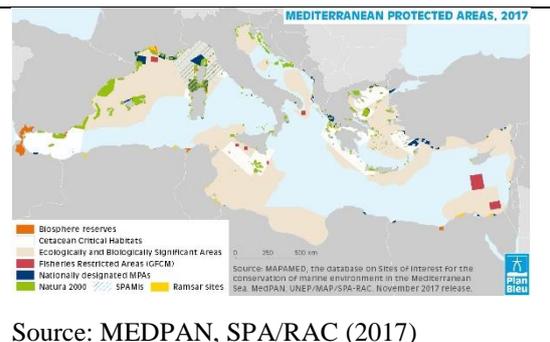
Timeline, Updated List of Indicators, Proposals and Recommendations

I. Methodological Considerations: Geographical Scope

1. Most indicators of the dashboard are conceived for the specific geographical scale of the national or country level. However, some indicators need also or exclusively to be calculated either for smaller geographical units (watersheds, coastal region, coastal strip, spot) or for specific units (marine zones).

<p>The national level corresponds to the whole national territory.</p> <p>The non-Mediterranean extra-metropolitan territories are not considered.</p> <p>This geographical scope is mainly used for general socio-economic and environmental indicators.</p>	 <p>Source: Environmental Systems Research Institute</p>
<p>The watershed level corresponds to the major Mediterranean watersheds.</p> <p>The Mediterranean watershed can be either each watershed or the aggregation of the watersheds for one country.</p> <p>This geographical scope is mainly used for water and land-based pollution indicators.</p>	 <p>Source: Plan Bleu</p>
<p>The coastal region level corresponds to the administrative regions equivalent to the level 3 of the EU Nomenclature of the Statistical Territorial Units (NUTS 3) bordering the Mediterranean Sea.</p> <p>The Mediterranean coastal region can be either each NUT3 or the aggregation of the NUT3 for one country.</p> <p>This geographical scope is mainly used for coastal issues, e.g. Blue Economy indicators.</p>	 <p>Source: Plan Bleu</p>
<p>The FAO-General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Geographic Sub-areas are mainly used for fisheries related indicators.</p>	 <p>Source: FAO/GFCM</p>

The whole Mediterranean basin is a suitable geographical scope for marine biodiversity indicators, such as location of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).



II. Methodological Considerations: SDG Indicators

2. The Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – SDG Indicators¹ was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and agreed upon, including refinements on several indicators, at the 48th session of the UN Statistical Commission (March 2017). The global indicator framework was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 6 July 2017; the list includes 232 Indicators².

3. The purpose of SDG Indicators is twofold. First and foremost, an indicator should be a management tool, to help countries develop evidence-based implementation strategies for achieving the SDGs. Second, an indicator is a monitoring tool, to measure progress towards achieving a target and ensure accountability to the broad range of stakeholders.

4. SDG Indicators are classified by the IAEG-SDGs into three tiers based on their level of methodological development and the availability of data at the global level, with the following Tier Classification Criteria/Definitions:

- *Tier I: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, and data are regularly produced by countries for at least 50 per cent of countries and of the population in every region where the indicator is relevant.*
- *Tier II: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries.*
- *Tier III: No internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested.*

5. As of 4 April 2019, the updated tier classification³ contains 101 Tier I indicators, 91 Tier II indicators, and 34 Tier III indicators. There are six indicators that have multiple tiers; different components of the indicator are classified into different tiers.

III. Critical Analysis of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard Indicators

6. 26 indicators have been documented with available data: see Analytical Factsheets in document UNEP/MED WG.469/Inf.4. An assessment has been conducted for each indicator, as presented below, analyzing the updating period and current status, as well as data gaps.

¹ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

² Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on Work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/71/313)

³ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>

7. **Ecological footprint:** Developed by Global Footprint Network, this indicator is based on a robust methodology, despite a few biases, and allows to communicate key messages. The 2018 Living Planet Report⁴ used data as of 2014.
8. **Human Development Index (HDI):** This index was launched in 1990 by the Human Development Report Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It is one of the most well-known composite indicators on human development components, i.e. education, health, and economy. Data are available for most Mediterranean countries and regularly updated.
9. **Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita** (SDG Indicator 8.1.1 – Tier I): This indicator is managed by the UN Statistics Division. Annual data from 1970 to 2016 are available.
10. **Youth literacy rate:** Linked with SDG Indicator 4.6.1 *Proportion of youth and adults with functional literacy and numeracy skills* (Tier II), this indicator is managed by UNESCO and data come from national surveys. Available data are not covering all Mediterranean countries.
11. **Girl/Boy primary, secondary and tertiary school registration ratio:** Linked with SDG Indicator 4.5.1 *Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated* (Tier I, II and III, depending on indices), this indicator is managed by UNESCO and data come from national surveys. Available data are not covering all Mediterranean countries.
12. **Number of ratifications and level of compliance as reported by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention:** This indicator shows the progress of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols ratifications by the Contracting Parties. Data is compiled by MAP Coordination Unit.
13. **Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine territorial waters** (SDG Indicator 14.5.1 – Tier I): At the global level, the information is managed by UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA). For the Mediterranean, data are provided by SPA/RAC and MEDPAN. This indicator is complex because there are several types of marine protected areas (MPAs). Data have to be processed for considering only the Mediterranean MPAs in relation to the Mediterranean marine territorial waters.
14. **Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels** (SDG Indicator 14.4.1 – Tier I): Managed by FAO-GFCM in the Mediterranean, this SDG indicator is difficult to desegregate for each fisheries subarea and even more to report at the national level. SDG Indicator 14.4.1 is classified Tier I, but data are available only at the global level in the SDG database.
15. **Number of protected areas participating in the Green List initiative:** This indicator is related to the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas programme, which is also a MSSD Flagship Initiative under its Objective 2. has been launched recently. So far, only a few Mediterranean countries and protected areas are concerned by the IUCN Green List.
16. **Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems** (SDG Indicator 15.a.1 – Tier I and III): This SDG indicator is managed by OECD and data are available with a two years delay. Available data do not allow to focus on funding associated with biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems in the Mediterranean.

⁴ <https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/living-planet-report-2018>

17. **Global Food Security Index:** This indicator is annually published by the Economist Intelligence Unit. As a lot of official data is missing for the most recent year, the Economist Intelligence Unit uses its own estimates.

18. **Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources** (SDG Indicator 6.4.2 – Tier I): This SDG indicator is managed by FAO and data are available in the FAO/Aquastat database with a four years delay. This indicator needs to be refined for the Mediterranean watersheds of Mediterranean countries, with support from national water institutions and companies. Moreover, non-official withdrawals especially for agriculture that could represent a large part of the total withdrawals are not considered.

19. **Water demand, total and by sector, compared to GDP:** For this indicator, water withdrawals are used as a proxy of water demand. Data available in the FAO/Aquastat database is very sparse. This indicator could be refined with the non-conventional production (desalination, water reuse, etc.) and water balance (imports less exports). This indicator needs to be refined for the Mediterranean watersheds of Mediterranean countries, with support from national water institutions and companies.

20. **Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water service** (SDG Indicator 6.1.1 – Tier II): Managed by WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program, this SDG indicator corresponds to an improvement of the Millennium Development Goal Indicator *Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source*. Data are drawn from a variety of national data sources including: nationally representative household surveys, population and housing censuses, administrative data (such as regulatory agencies) and service provider data within an extensive country consultation. Data collection is to be enhanced through households' surveys. This is also a SEIS II Indicator that should be populated and assessed for the coastal regions of the Southern Mediterranean countries.

21. **Share of population with access to an improved sanitation system (total, urban, rural):** This indicator is similar to the SDG Indicator 6.2.1.a *Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services* (Tier II). Managed by WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program, this SDG indicator corresponds to an improvement of the Millennium Development Goal Indicator *Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility*. Data are drawn from a variety of national data sources including: nationally representative household surveys, population and housing censuses, administrative data (such as regulatory agencies) and service provider data within an extensive country consultation. Data collection is to be enhanced through households' surveys. This is also a SEIS II Indicator that should be populated and assessed for the coastal regions of the Southern Mediterranean countries.

22. **Proportion of agriculture quality products and/or Share of the agricultural land area used by organic farming:** This indicator and the related information and analysis are annually published by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and IFOAM – Organics International. Statistics are available on <https://statistics.fibl.org/>. The time series covering 20 years to 2017 allow to show trends for most Mediterranean countries. IFOAM – Organics International adopted the following definition: *Organic Agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic Agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved.* The EU legal definition is based on the same principles (Council Regulation (EEC) No2092/91 on organic production). As organic agriculture is considered as a key asset to reduce agricultural land-based pollution, it would be useful to geographically refine data for the Mediterranean watersheds or coastal regions, with support from relevant national institutions.

23. **Red List Index (IUCN)** (SDG Indicator 15.5.1 – Tier I): This SDG indicator managed by IUCN aims at showing if biodiversity losses are halted. It is based on the assessment of extinction risk across groups of species (not for the taxonomy groups). As for all indexes, the analysis of this indicator provides a general view of biodiversity extinction risk in the countries and needs to be detailed for some Mediterranean species. The data is annually updated; last available year is 2018.
24. **Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing** (SDG Indicator 11.1.1 – Tier I): This SDG indicator is managed by UN-Habitat. Data are available only for the “population living in slums” in a few Mediterranean countries and the last year available is 2014 (World Cities Report 2016). The follow-up of this indicator could be improved with the support from relevant national institutions (data from households’ surveys). Focus could be made at the level of specific Mediterranean cities.
25. **Status of UNESCO world heritage sites**: This indicator is based on the list of the UNESCO world heritage sites available online; a list of world heritage in danger is also available⁵. Data is processed by Plan Bleu to provide a picture of the situation in the Mediterranean countries. This indicator could be refined by focusing on sites located in the coastal zones. The indicator does not provide any information on the status of specific sites. UNESCO is also documenting SDG Indicator 11.4.1 *Total expenditure (public and private) per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by type of heritage (cultural, natural, mixed and World Heritage Centre designation), level of government (national, regional and local/municipal), type of expenditure (operating expenditure/investment) and type of private funding (donations in kind, private non-profit sector and sponsorship)* (Tier III).
26. **Waste generated and treated by type of waste and treatment type**: This indicator is linked with SDG Indicator 12.5.1 *National recycling rate, tons of material recycled* (Tier III), with 2016-data available in *What a Waste Global database* (World Bank, 2018) and some projections for 2030 and 2050. This indicator is one of the SEIS II indicators and should be populated and assessed for the coastal regions of the Southern Mediterranean countries. It could also be refined for the major Mediterranean coastal cities.
27. **Green House Gas (GHG) emissions (related to GDP)**: This indicator is a proxy of the SDG Indicator 9.4.1.1 *CO₂ emission per unit of value added* (Tier I), managed by the International Energy Agency (IEA) and UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The IEA estimates CO₂ emissions based on country data and on the IPCC Guidelines for GHG inventories, producing internationally comparable CO₂ emissions data for over 150 countries and regions. UNFCCC is also dealing with GHG emissions, mainly for Annex I Parties. The dataset used for this indicator comes from the Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center (CDIAC) via the World Bank (World Development Indicators), with 2014 as the last year documented. This indicator could be improved by using UNFCCC data until 2015-2016 and EIA database.
28. **Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP** (SDG Indicator 7.3.1 – Tier I) and/or **Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption** (SDG Indicator 7.2.1 – Tier I): Between the various existing data sources, primarily the IEA Energy Balances and the UN Energy Statistics Database, annual total and renewable energy consumption for every country and area can be collected. The data is collected in the UNSD SDG database and is available until 2015. More recent data should be available in the IEA databases (Not freely accessible). SDG Indicators 7.3.1 and 7.2.1 are classified Tier I.

⁵ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>; <https://whc.unesco.org/en/danger/>

29. **Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP** (SDG Indicator 12.2.2 – Tier I): This SDG Indicator is managed by UN Environment. The Global Material Flows Databas” covers each country individually, over a time period of 47 years (1970-2017).

30. **Number of National Strategies for Sustainable Development adopted or updated [and number of updates since first edition]**: This indicator has been populated using the report *Towards a Green Economy in the Mediterranean* (Eco-union, MIO-ESCDE and GEC, 2016). The status of the National Strategies for Sustainable Development adopted or updated has to be updated with the information directly provided by the countries.

31. **Proportion of bank credit allocated to the private sector – Existence of alternative financing systems using bank credit**: This indicator is linked to SDG Indicator 9.3.2 *Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit* (Tier II). Data are available in World Development Indicators (World Bank) from various sources: International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics and data files, and World Bank and OECD GDP estimates. The last year available is 2017.

32. **Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP** (SDG Indicator 9.5.1 Tier I): This SDG Indicator is managed by UNESCO. Data are available until 2016 in the SDG database or in the UNESCO Institute for Statistics database. This indicator is documented only in a few Mediterranean countries at present time; documentation is expected to be further developed.

33. **Number of countries that have clear mechanisms in place for ensuring public participation and guarantying public access to environmental information**: This indicator is linked to SDG Indicator 16.10.2 *Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information* (Tier II). Some data are available in the SDG database from UNESCO World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development and Global Right to Information Rating. The use of this indicator has to be clarified.

34. **Number of countries that have National Strategies/Action Plans on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in place**: This indicator is linked to SDG Indicator 4.7.1 *Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (ESD), including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment* (Tier III). Data will be provided by MIO-ESCDE, taking advantage of the 2nd Meeting of Mediterranean ESD Committee – Regional Workshop on ESD (Heraklion, Greece, 24-26 June 2019).

IV. Recommendations

35. The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) is raising the following points as minimal conditions of success to update and populate regularly the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard:

- The implementation of the data sharing principle, as included the MAP Data Management Policy under development, as well as a better coordination among the various indicator’s initiatives at the global and regional level should allow to avoid duplication of works and to meet simultaneously several requests, avoiding new reporting burden.
- The MAP involvement in the ENI SEIS II South Support Mechanism project, which aims to contribute to the reduction of marine pollution in the Mediterranean by developing a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) supporting the regular production and sharing of quality assessed environmental data, indicators and information, should support the monitoring of the MSSD implementation.

- The operation of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard should be enhanced by the ownership of the indicators core set and data sharing principles by the relevant stakeholders, including the Contacting Parties, the international and regional organizations, and the scientific institutions.
- A list of indicators is neither final, nor exhaustive; it should evolve as knowledge and data availability improve.

36. As the list of indicators of the dashboard is a living document, the MSSD indicators can get even closer to the SDG ones in the future, as methodological aspects and data availability progress internationally, keeping in mind Mediterranean specificities and the MSSD objectives.

37. The list of indicators needs also to be reviewed regularly to better cover all MSSD issues in a balanced way and considering in priority marine and coastal issues.

38. Finally, there is a need to define and to develop a regional process for an effective monitoring of the MSSD implementation with the involvement of relevant regional and national stakeholders and partners, in cooperation with information producers from global to local levels. This process, to be based on data and information sharing principles, should be developed in synergy with existing processes and programmes, such as the proposed development of a MAP Data Management Policy and SEIS. The internal cooperation between the MAP components and the involvement of the national bodies are essential for the success of this process. This process could be completed by new data production and sharing tools for a real-time monitoring such as the use of big data for SDG monitoring.

Annex I

Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard – Updated List of Indicators

(as agreed by the MCSD Steering Committee in April 2019)

Annex I: Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard – Updated List of Indicators (as agreed by the MCS D Steering Committee in April 2019)

No.	MSSD Objective	Indicator
1	Global	Ecological footprint (*)
2	Global	Human Development Index
3	Global	Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita (*) (SDG Indicator 8.1.1), Gross Domestic Product (*), Gross Domestic Product per capita (*)
4	Global	Youth literacy rate (*)
5	Global	Girl/Boy primary, secondary and tertiary school registration ratio (*)
6	1	Number of ratifications and level of compliance as reported by the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention
7	1	Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine territorial waters (*)
8	1	Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels (*) (SDG Indicator 14.4.1)
9	2	Number of protected areas participating in the Green List initiative (*)
10	2	Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems (*) (SDG Indicator 15.a.1)
11	2	Global Food Security Index
12	2	Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources (*) (SDG Indicator 6.4.2)
13	2	Water demand, total and by sector, compared to GDP (*)
14	2	Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water service (*) (SDG Indicator 6.1.1) (**)
15	2	Share of population with access to an improved sanitation system (total, urban, rural) (*) (**)
16	2	Proportion of agriculture quality products (*) and/or Share of the agricultural land area used by organic farming (*)
17	2	Red List Index (IUCN) (*) (SDG Indicator 15.5.1)
18	3	Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing (*) (SDG Indicator 11.1.1)
19	3	Status of UNESCO world heritage sites (*)
20	3	Waste generated and treated by type of waste and treatment type (*) (**)
21	4	Green House Gas emissions (related to GDP)
22	4	Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP (*) (SDG Indicator 7.3.1) and/or Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption (*) (SDG Indicator 7.2.1)
23	5	Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP (*) (SDG Indicator 12.2.2)
24	6	Number of National Strategies for Sustainable Development adopted or updated [and number of updates since first edition] (*)
25	6	Proportion of bank credit allocated to the private sector – Existence of alternative financing systems using bank credit
26	6	Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP (*) (SDG Indicator 9.5.1)
27	6	Number of countries that have clear mechanisms in place for ensuring public participation and guarantying public access to environmental information (*)
28	6	Number of countries that have National Strategies/Action Plans on Education for Sustainable Development in place

(*) Corresponding/linked to SDG Indicators, (**) linked to SEIS II / Horizon 2020 Indicators

Annex II
Timeline of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard
(January 2019 – April 2020)

Annex IV: Timeline of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard (January 2019 – April 2020)

What	Who	When
Discussion on the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and its update	MCSO Steering Committee, Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	January 2019 (20 th Meeting of the MCSO Steering Committee)
Information by the Secretariat (Plan Bleu) regarding the three pending indicators (methodological aspects and data availability), and feedback from the Members of the MCSO Steering Committee	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	February 2019
Data collection and analysis, and work on the updated dashboard for populating it, following comments from the MCSO Steering Committee and taking into account updates of international databases	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	February-March 2019
Updated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard populated (draft) and related Analytical Factsheets issued	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	March 2019
Proposals and recommendations for improving the process related to the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, based on challenges and lessons learned	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	April 2019
Discussion and recommendations on the updated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and related Analytical Factsheets	MCSO Plan Bleu Focal Points Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	May-June 2019 (18 th Meeting of the MCSO and Meeting of the Plan Bleu Focal Points)
Fine-tuning of the updated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard in view of submission to the MAP Focal Point Meeting to be held on 10-13 September 2019 in Athens, Greece	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	June 2019
Finalization of the updated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and related Analytical Factsheets, in view of submission to COP 21 to be held on 2-5 December 2019 in Naples, Italy	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	September-October 2019
Data collection and analysis following COP 21 requests and taking into account updates of international databases	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	January-March 2020
Publication	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	April 2020