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Agenda item 3: Work plan of the MCSD Steering Committee and report on work carried out

Progress Report

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Introduction

1. This progress report covers activities and outputs in relation to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD 2016-2025) and the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), which were carried out in the period between June 2015 and mid-December 2016.

The Process towards COP 19 and its Sustainable Development related Deliverables

2. During the period between June 2015 and February 2016, the focus was on obtaining COP 19 approval for the recommendations emerging out of the 16th Meeting of the MCSD and the 17th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee related to the MSSD Review and MCSD Reform. The MCSD Steering Committee, with substantial support by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Coordinating Unit and its Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre, drafted two decisions.

3. Those draft decisions were submitted to the MAP National Focal Points (MAP NFPs) for consideration during their meeting in October 2015 to prepare for the 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention, COP 19, Athens, Greece, 9-12 February 2016).

4. After adjustments made in November 2016 to reflect comments from the MAP NFPs meeting on the annexes of the draft decisions, the revised draft decisions were then forwarded to the Contracting Parties for adoption during COP 19 in February 2016. The two decisions were approved by the COP 19 as: (i) Decision IG.22/2 Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025; and (ii) Decision IG.22/17 Reform of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents.

5. COP 19 also endorsed the following two decisions which are very relevant to sustainable development and the MSSD 2016-2025: (i) Decision IG.22/5 Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean; and (ii) Decision IG.22/6 Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas.

6. The Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Action Plan complements the MSSD 2016-2025, especially in relation to Objective 5 of the Strategy “Transition towards a green and blue economy”. The Action Plan defines common objectives and identifies actions guiding the implementation of SCP in four priority areas namely Food, fisheries and agriculture; Goods manufacturing; Tourism; and Housing and construction.

7. Following the recommendations of the 16th Meeting of the MCSD (Marrakesh, Morocco, June 2015), the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework (RCCAF) was submitted to and endorsed by COP 19 in February 2016. The RCCAF includes strategic objectives, each of them identifying several strategic directions with priorities for consideration which were developed in full coherence with the MSSD 2016-2025 Objective 4 “Addressing climate change as a priority issue in the Mediterranean”.

8. Following Decisions IG.22/2 and IG.22/17, several activities have been implemented by the Secretariat (Coordinating Unit and Plan Bleu), as follows:

Promoting Visibility of the MSSD 2016-2025

9. In June 2016, the MSSD 2016-2025 was published in a user-friendly layout and format; Plan Bleu prepared the hard copy edition in collaboration with the Coordinating Unit, UNEP/DTIE and UNESCO. Hard copies were distributed during events organized by the UNEP/MAP Secretariat. The publication is also downloadable online in the webpage devoted to the MSSD 2016-2025 on Plan Bleu website and on UNEP/MAP website in [English](#) and [French](#). The [publication](#), which has a UNEP ISBN is also available on UNEP’s website and library.

10. In addition, the third stakeholder news brief of the MSSD Review process was distributed in March 2016 by email sent to about 1,000 contacts; this news brief is available online as well in the Plan Bleu website.

11. The MSSD 2016-2025 was shared with the UNEP in Europe Newsletter and the DTIE monthly update. It was also presented at the 22nd Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the UNFCCC in Marrakech, Morocco, during a side event organized by the Secretariat, Plan Bleu and PAP/RAC with the participation of France and Morocco (14 November 2016, Marrakesh, Morocco). A news item was prepared on the side event and is available on UNEP/MAP and all RACs websites in [English](#) and [French](#).

12. The Secretariat has provided ample visibility to the MSSD 2016-2025 and regularly introduces it in all international fora and official bilateral meetings in which UNEP/MAP is represented.

The Regional Seas Working Group on Indicators

13. In 2014 a Technical Workshop on Selecting Indicators for the State of Regional Seas was held in Geneva, Switzerland, and a Regional Seas Indicator Working Group was established to develop a set of common indicators amongst the Regional Seas in line with the SDGs, with UNEP/MAP as Chair of this working group. Twenty two initial indicators were agreed and are under further development. During the 18th Global Meeting for the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans held in 2016 in the Republic of Korea, it was agreed that the Regional Seas Indicator Working Group will continue to evaluate and describe the 22 Regional Seas Core Indicators, including aligning them with the SDG Indicators and Aichi Targets, using the existing resources of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans and UNEP.

14. In terms of how Regional Seas can support countries in implementation of the SDGs, it was also agreed that: the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans will offer to provide their countries with regional contributions to their national reporting of ocean-related SDGs; will coordinate and aim to organize a collective side event at the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 on Oceans in June 2017 in order to showcase their impacts and their potential contribution to the implementation of the SDGs; and will prepare outlook documents, proposing how they can support their countries with the implementation, and monitoring of the ocean-related SDGs and associated targets. The documents will be submitted to UN Environment in order to be utilized in preparation of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

The Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard

15. Following the COP 19 Decision IG.22/20 Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 (key output 1.4.2 “MSSD implementation monitored (...) on periodic basis through the agreed set of indicators in line with SDG and the sustainability dashboard”, under the Overarching Theme “Governance” and the Strategic Outcome 1.4 “Knowledge and understanding of the state of the Mediterranean Sea and coast enhanced through mandated assessments for informed policy-making”), under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, in close collaboration with the MCSD Steering Committee, with the support of other RACs, Plan Bleu has undertaken the development of the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard.

16. Two regional and technical workshops gathered several MAP NFPs, MCSD Members, MAP Partners, and UNEP/MAP Components, as follows:

- a. The Regional Workshop on “How to monitor the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation?”, organized by Plan Bleu (Saint Laurent du Var, France, 30-31 March 2016) allowed to select a first core set of priority indicators. (<http://planbleu.org/en/event/regional-workshop-how-monitor-mssd-2016-2025-implementation>)

b. The Technical Workshop on “How to monitor the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 and the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean?”, co-organized by Plan Bleu and SCP/RAC (Barcelona, Spain, 17 October 2016), allowed to present the assessment of the first set of indicators and a first version of the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard.

(<http://planbleu.org/en/event/technical-workshop-how-monitor-mediterranean-strategy-sustainable-development-2016-2025> ; and,

<http://planbleu.org/en/outils-et-methodes/indicateurs>)

17. In order to strengthen the cooperation of UNEP/MAP Components on indicator related activities, synergies between the Plan Bleu, SCP/RAC and PAP/RAC have been established for the MSSD 2016-2025 Indicators, SCP Action Plan Indicators and Blue Economy Indicators, the latter linked to the Objective 5 of the Strategy, as follows:

- a. The Technical Workshop on “How to monitor the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 and the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean?”, as indicated above; and,
- b. The project “Blue economy for a healthy Mediterranean - Measuring, Monitoring and Promoting an environmentally sustainable economy in the Mediterranean region”, funded by the MAVA foundation and gathering the PB, SCP & PAP / RACs. The project outputs will be available in December 2016.

18. This activity is still in progress towards presentation of the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard to the Meeting of Plan Bleu NFPs (April 2017), the 17th Meeting of the MCSD (June 2017), the Meeting of the MAP NFPs (September 2017) and then to the Contracting Parties at COP 20 (December 2017).

19. In addition to the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard and in view of producing output 1.4.1 “Develop a roadmap for the preparation of Med2050 report” (Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017), in a coordinated manner with regard to the MSSD 2016-2025, Plan Bleu has started the preparation of a roadmap towards a Mediterranean State of the Environment Report to be prepared for 2019 and a roadmap to conduct a prospective study aiming at exploring possible futures of the Mediterranean environment and development in 2050 to be published in 2021.

The Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER)

20. Following the COP 19 Decision IG.22/20 Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 (key output 1.3.3 “MSSD implementation set in motion through actions on visibility and capacity building, (...) and of guidelines to assist countries (to) adapt the Strategy to their national contexts”, under the Overarching Theme “Governance” and the Strategic Outcome 1.3 “Strengthened participation, engagement, synergies and complementarities among global and regional institutions”) and Annex II of the Decision IG.22/17, under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit and in close collaboration with the MCSD Steering Committee, Plan Bleu has launched the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER) of National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs).

21. As a framework for mutual learning and improvement from past experiences and other national approaches, based on a voluntary principle, the SIMPEER aims at engaging a dialogue between two or more Mediterranean countries, on equal participation, for a mutual improvement and learning process on NSSDs. The SIMPEER seeks to establish within an agreed methodology the exchange of experiences, policies and good practices on implementing sustainable development at national level, as opposed to creating a scrutiny framework between reviewers and countries under examination.

22. This SIMPEER also contributes to the ownership, implementation, and monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025. It represents an important tool to enable NSSDs review in line with the MSSD

2016-2025 and as a contribution to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030) and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

23. Following a letter sent in June 2016 by the Secretariat to the MCSD Members representing Contracting Parties, three volunteer countries expressed their interest to participate in the SIMPEER pilot test in 2016-2017, namely France, Montenegro, and Morocco, representing the three groups of countries of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention.

24. Following specific Terms of Reference prepared by Plan Bleu, two consultants have been selected (Peer Review Senior Expert and Sustainable Development Senior Adviser) to support the implementation of this activity.

25. The methodological report and road map were discussed at the SIMPEER first technical meeting (Barcelona, Spain, 18 October 2016), which gathered the volunteer Contracting Parties and most of the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee. The participants expressed their appreciations on the achievements of the meeting and of the process so far. This technical meeting was an important step to move forward on the next steps of the SIMPEER: i.e. desktop analysis of National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs), countries' missions and reports, peer review meeting. The next steps of the pilot test were defined and planned with volunteer Contracting Parties involved.

26. The draft Methodological Report (Version 2) of the SIMPEER is presented in Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.428/Inf.3.

Efforts to Secure External Resources to Facilitate Implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025

27. In July 2016, through UNEP Headquarters, the Secretariat submitted, a concept note to UN-DESA for funding available for projects addressing the Agenda 2030, in order to mobilize external resources for the implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025 and to support MCSD activities.

28. The project proposal "Strengthening regional implementation of the Agenda 2030 in the Mediterranean through support to the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025" aims at strengthening the implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025 with the involvement of all relevant Mediterranean stakeholders, in order to achieve outputs 1.3.3, 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 of the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 (Decision IG.22/20).

29. Highly relevant to the MSSD 2016-2025 is the recently approved GEF "Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security". The Programme will target coastal nutrient pollution hotspots, harmful chemical and wastes, critical coastal habitats and freshwater resources, climate resilience, marine protected areas, and monitoring of progress to impacts. It will be developed through four Components and seven Child Projects which follow the structure of the UNEP/MAP 2016-2021 Mid-Term Strategy. The Child Projects under the Programme will contribute to several core and cross cutting themes of the MSSD 2016-2025 and will foster the achievement of numerous targets of the SDGs, with special focus on Goals 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, and 14.

30. Also relevant is the recently approved GEF Medium Sized Project "Enhancing Regional Climate Change Adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas". The project aims to assist policy-makers and stakeholders in the Mediterranean region to develop Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) strategies and plans regarding climate change adaptation following the agreed strategic objectives codified in the RCCAF.

The Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award

31. In summer/autumn 2016, the Secretariat proceeded with work to finalize the nomination and selection criteria and process regarding the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, which is one of the MSSD 2016-2025 Flagship Initiatives.

32. The following actions were taken in this respect: (i) a Task Force was created (as per Annex of Decision IG.22/19) composed of representatives from the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components, (ii) a document describing the nomination and selection process was drafted, together with an application form, (iii) the two above mentioned documents were revised by the Task Force and were presented to the 83rd Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (25-26 October 2016, Tirana, Albania) as an Annex to document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/6 Report by the Secretariat on specific issues.

33. The Bureau welcomed the work done by the Secretariat and the Task Force on the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, approved the nomination and selection process and the Application Form, as amended during the meeting (see Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.428/Inf.4).

34. The Bureau also requested the Secretariat to proceed with launching the award in accordance to this process, so that the first, pilot, edition of the Award is granted at COP 20 and the following editions to be refined based on the experience of this edition of the award, as appropriate.

35. Furthermore, a Draft Communication Plan for the Award has been prepared during October/November 2016 and was reviewed by the Task Force.

The Science Policy Interface on Climate and Environmental Change

36. Regarding the establishment of “a regional science-policy interface mechanism, (...) with a view to preparing consolidated regional scientific assessments and guidance on climate change trends, impacts and adaptation and mitigation options”, which is another MSSD 2016-2025 Flagship Initiative, Plan Bleu and other partners (including France, the Principality of Monaco, and the Union for the Mediterranean) has provided support to the “Mediterranean Experts Network on Environmental and Climate Change (MedECC)”.

37. MedECC works towards two directions of specific interest for the implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025 and the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean, as follows: (i) producing improved assessments and a comprehensive synthesis of global change knowledge in the Mediterranean region; and, (ii) building a regional Science Policy Interface on climatic and other environmental changes across the Mediterranean.

38. At this stage, MedECC gathers more than 200 experts and scientists coming from most of the Mediterranean countries and covering all scientific disciplines.

39. MedECC launched its website (www.medecc.org) and organized several events in 2016, notably the Steering Committee and Technical meetings (Barcelona, Spain, 7-8 April 2016), Scoping Workshop (10-12 October 2016, Aix-en-Provence, France), side event during the 22nd Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the UNFCCC (14 November 2016, Marrakesh, Morocco).

40. An overview of the MedECC first report is ready. Forthcoming thematic workshops are planned in 2017, gathering coordinators and main contributors to the three main chapters of the MedECC first report. Finalization and publication of the first MedECC report is planned by end of 2018.

41. Regarding Science Policy Interface (SPI), in the framework of the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 and the EcApMEDII project, Plan Bleu is coordinating an activity related to the strengthening of the SPI for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) to the management of human activities in the Mediterranean, with the ultimate objective to achieve a Good Environmental Status (GES) of the Mediterranean Sea. In this respect, three workshops were organized, as follows:

- a. A launching workshop related to SPI for EcAp, in Sophia-Antipolis, France, on 15-16 December 2015;
- b. A workshop dedicated to pollution issues, back-to-back with a meeting of the Correspondence Group for Monitoring organized by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention MEDPOL Programme, in Marseille, France, on 20-21 October 2016; and,

- c. A workshop focusing on biodiversity, back-to-back with the 2nd Forum of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas organized by RAC/SPA and the MedPAN network in Tangier, Morocco, on 28 November 2016.

42. The SPI for EcAp is an initiative complementary to the MedECC. Exchanges need to be encouraged between scientists and policy-makers already involved in those two Mediterranean SPI initiatives.

The Regional Framework for ICZM

43. In the first version of the MSSD, the coastal issues were given particular attention. The preparation and adoption of the Mediterranean ICZM Protocol is probably the only MSSD objective achieved 100%. The MSSD 2016-2025 continues to be considered as an appropriate regional strategic context for ICZM, which is a management approach offering tools and methods that can lead to sustainable coastal development. ICZM corresponds to the first and partly third objectives of the MSSD 2016-2025, and it is related to SDGs 9, 11, 14 and 15.

44. Reference to ICZM remaining in the MSSD 2016-2025 at a general objectives level, the CPs decided at the COP 19 to include the preparation of a Regional Framework (RF) for ICZM in the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) for the 2016-2017 biennium, in view of its adoption at the next COP. Since in the Mediterranean there is already a long history of ICZM policies and activities, and several relevant strategic documents have already been adopted within the UNEP/MAP system, a two-step approach has been selected for the preparation of the RF: (a) drafting of the Background Document “The Way to a Regional Framework for ICZM in the Mediterranean”, and (b) drafting of the RF itself that will be presented to COP 20 for adoption.

45. In the period April-August 2016 the Background Document was drafted in an effort to assess the current situation and identify appropriate recommendations to orient the future work. It was focused on issues such as: coherence and coordination within UNEP/MAP and with the other actors in the Mediterranean; coherence among different policies; links between ICZM and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP); obstacles to implementation, needs and opportunities.

46. The Document was discussed at a Regional Consultation Meeting held in Barcelona on 28-29 September 2016, back-to-back with the “Mediterranean Coast Day” celebration. The meeting gathered some 60 participants including MAP and PAP NFPs, a number of invited experts and representatives of international institutions and organisations.

47. The participants in the meeting supported the work accomplished and expressed the unanimous position that the RF should not apply only to the land part of the Mediterranean coasts but extend to the sea incorporating the MSP within the geographical scope of the ICZM Protocol and articulating in a complementary way the two policies in a single document i.e. the Regional Framework for ICZM and MSP. Another important recommendation was to clarify how the RF relates to two other major strategic documents of UNEP/MAP: the MSSD 2016-2025 and the RCCAF.

48. The final version of the Background Document and the Annotated Contents of the RF are being worked on and should be available by the end of 2016.

The Blue Economy Initiative for the Western Mediterranean

49. In December 2015, the European Commission (DG Mare) has launched the process for the preparation of a maritime initiative in the Western Mediterranean sub-sea basin: i.e. the West Med Blue Economy Initiative.

50. The UNEP/MAP Secretariat is participating in consultation meetings as a major institutional body in the Mediterranean region, while Plan Bleu is participating in the consortium selected for building this initiative.

51. The intention of the West Med Blue Economy Initiative is to avoid overlapping, building on complementarity, enhancing ocean governance and strengthening collaboration with the UNEP/MAP-

Barcelona Convention and GFCM, and focusing on emerging priorities. Flagship actions to focus on, such as safety and security, ocean governance, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, marine research and blue technology, as well as marine protected areas, were highlighted as important for the sub-region.

52. The Maritime Initiative for the Western Mediterranean should become a sub-regional declination of the MSSD 2016-2025. Such an initiative may offer opportunities to reflect the MSSD 2016-2025 Vision and Objectives at sub regional level and support compliance with the Barcelona Convention in achieving Good Environmental Status (GES). Indeed, it is fundamentally important that the role of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as the only legally-binding set of instruments for addressing common issues and challenges of environmental degradation and protecting marine and coastal ecosystems of the Mediterranean Sea, is emphasized and fully recognized within the West Med Maritime Initiative. In this context, the MSSD 2016-2025 is an instrument that has a very important scope and needs to be guiding and informing the discussion on such a sub-regional initiative. Of importance is also the need to rely and build on existing regional or sub-regional governance mechanisms to avoid unnecessary proliferation. In particular, the MCSD is a regional forum where sub-regional initiatives related to the blue economy and actions promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean can share lessons learnt and be inspired for better performance.

53. The results and deliverables issued so far are downloadable in the project website (www.westmed-initiative.eu).

The Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism

54. In partnership with the French Agency for Development (AFD), Plan Bleu organized a Regional Workshop on Sustainable Tourism in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries (Marseille, France, 23-24 May 2016), gathering more than 60 participants (documents and results are available on line in Plan Bleu website).

55. As an outcome of the workshop, Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, in line with MSSD 2016-2025 Vision and Objectives, have been drafted and are being circulated for feedback and comments from the Coordinating Unit and Components. Those guidelines could also be discussed within the MCSD towards the elaboration of a possible regional strategic framework on sustainable tourism, for consideration of and approval by the Contracting Parties.

56. Indeed, this crucial issue has not been discussed for some time within the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and it is now addressed, following its cross-cutting approach, in the MSSD 2016-2025, while it is also one of the four priority areas of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean (Decision IG.22/5). Tourism is a sector closely linked with the approach of the MSSD 2016-2025, which aims at investing in the environmental sustainability to achieve social and economic development. Tourism is vital for many Mediterranean countries, as a major pillar of Mediterranean economies, offering consistent employment and economic growth. Over time, Mediterranean destinations have developed a unique blend of tourism products covering leisure, health, sports, nature, business, as well as cruise and culture. However, the economic growth related with the tourism sector has often been to the detriment of environmental integrity and social equity. Furthermore, maritime transports are closely linked to tourism development in the Mediterranean.

The Contribution of National Action Plans on Pollution and on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the MSSD 2016-2025 Implementation

57. Following the commitment undertaken by the Contracting Parties in COP18, all Contracting Parties have worked to prepare their updated National Action Plans (NAPs) and/or Programmes of Measures to combat pollution from land-based sources, in view of achieving GES related to marine pollution and marine litter.

58. Moreover, under the SWITCH-MED project, several Mediterranean countries have developed Sustainable Consumption and Production National Action Plans, which also address the marine and coastal environment.

59. These national policy documents constitute important steps forward in streamlining the SDGs and the objectives and strategic directions of the MSSD 2016-2025 at the national level, addressing pollution as well as resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production. The timeline for the implementation of these national policy documents is in line with the timeline of the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation.

The Approval of the Action Plan for the Mediterranean Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD)

60. The “Ministerial Conference on the Action Plan for Education for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean”, took place in Nicosia, Cyprus on 8-9 December 2016, organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator participated in this meeting, which provided the opportunity to interact with approximately 60 High-Level representatives from 19 countries as well as representatives of international organizations and to share experiences and best practices in the application of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at the national level, identifying common challenges, key drivers and barriers. The Conference resulted to the unanimous adoption of the Action Plan of the Mediterranean Strategy on ESD (MSESD that has been endorsed by the UfM Ministers of Environment and Climate Change in Athens, 2014) and the “Nicosia Declaration”.

61. This process is directly relevant to Strategic Direction 6.4 of the MSSD 2016-2025 and an important step forward in its implementation. Indeed, the MSSD 2016-2025 promotes education and research for sustainable development, in particular through the implementation of the MSESD, which encourages countries to develop and incorporate education for sustainable development into their formal education systems, in all relevant subjects, and in non-formal and informal education.

62. At the final session of the Conference, the representatives from UNECE, League of Arab States, Union for the Mediterranean, UNEP/MAP, and UNESCO agreed to promote this initiative and to make an effort to mainstream as appropriate the MSESD and its Action Plan in the Agendas of their organizations. Furthermore, a Mediterranean Committee for ESD is to be established for following up and promoting the implementation of the MSESD through the Action Plan. The Committee will collaborate closely with GAP/UNESCO, the EU, the League of the Arab States, the Secretariat of the UfM and the MCSD - UNEP/MAP. The Committee could set up focus groups to work on specific issues such as one on indicators. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator will be a member of this Committee.