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Agenda item 3: Report by the Coordinator on Sustainable Development Activities for the period June 2019 – May 2021

Progress Report for the Period June 2019 – April 2021 and Specific Issues

Note by the Secretariat

Since the 18th Meeting of the MCSD (Budva, Montenegro, 11-13 June 2019), important developments have taken place within the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system, including the MCSD. The Members the MCSD and other partners demonstrated a renewed commitment, with a role becoming even more crucial as the regional dimension is increasingly recognized as an essential vehicle to implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (2030 Agenda) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Following the adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025 in 2016, the establishment of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, two editions of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER), substantive progress in MSSD Flagship Initiatives, the preparation of the report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean (SoED), and the launch of the MED 2050 Foresight Study represent key milestones in the work of the MCSD.

Conclusions and recommendations of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD were reflected in the Ministerial Declaration¹ of the 21st Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 21) (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019), as well as in the following decisions, as included in the Report of COP 21²: Decision IG.24/2 “Governance”³, including its Annex IV “Composition of the MCSD for 2020-2021 – Non-Contracting Party Members”, as reproduced in Annex I of the present document; Decision IG.24/3 “Implementation, Monitoring and Mid-Term Evaluation of the MSSD 2016-2025 and of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in the Mediterranean”⁴; Decision IG.24/4 “Assessment Studies”⁵; and, Decision IG.24/14: UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-2021⁶.

Following the adoption of those decisions, the work of the MCSD in 2020-2021 focused on the following activities: Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and integration of SCP Indicators; MSSD Flagship Initiatives; Mid-term evaluations of the MSSD and of the SCP Regional Action Plan; Assessment studies on the environment and development; Structures and processes for the SDGs implementation in the Mediterranean; Strategic response to the COVID-19; and, Preparation of the 19th Meeting of the MCSD.

Since 2020 humanity is facing an unprecedented pandemic, an economic crisis and an ecological breakdown. The MCSD should seize a unique chance to support the Mediterranean region and countries towards sustainable trajectories that prioritize economic opportunity, poverty reduction and planetary health at once. Therefore, the 19th Meeting of the MCSD is expected to deepen important themes of the post-COVID era for building back better towards a green renaissance in the Mediterranean, dissociating development from environmental degradation through a circular economy.

The present document provides information on the work done after the 18th Meeting of the MCSD for the period June 2019 – April 2021 and introduces specific issues for consideration by the 19th Meeting of the MCSD.

UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2021

¹ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/id/5f76bbb1-c200-4260-a772-7257eacc287c/NaplesDeclaration_eng.pdf

² https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/30095/19ig24_22_eng.pdf

³ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31700/19ig24_22_2402_eng.pdf

⁴ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31701/19ig24_22_2403_eng.pdf

⁵ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31702/19ig24_22_2404_eng.pdf

⁶ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31712/19ig24_22_2414_eng.pdf

Progress Report for the Period June 2019 – April 2021 and Specific Issues

1. As indicated in the Note by the Secretariat, four major COP 22 Decisions reflect the outcome of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD (Budva, Montenegro, 11-13 June 2019). Since June 2019, every effort was made to ensure their effective implementation along with activities implemented by MCSD Members and other partners, including on MSSD Flagship Initiatives.
2. Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro), presented the outcome of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD to the UNEP/MAP Focal Points during their meeting in Athens, Greece, on 10-13 September 2019. She also participated in COP 21, as part of the delegation of Montenegro and President of the MCSD.
3. The second half of 2019 was devoted to the COP 21 preparation that culminated with a successful event where fourteen decisions related to pollution and marine litter, biodiversity and marine protected areas, blue economy and integrated coastal zone management, sustainable development and assessment studies were adopted, including a groundbreaking roadmap for the proposal of a possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides (Decision IG.24/8)⁷.
4. Over 200 participants attended COP 21. The Secretariat received important signals of commitment and support from the Contracting Parties and heard the voices of stakeholders. Youth representatives addressed the COP Ministerial Segment for the first time and Members of the MCSD took part in the high-level segment and several side-events that made COP 21 an inclusive and fertile ground for forward-looking proposals and actions. COP 21 also marked the starting point of a new biennium, with the preparation of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for the period 2022-2027.
5. Through the Naples Ministerial Declaration, the Contracting Parties committed to take concrete action to enhance the level of safeguard of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal region, as a place of peace, dialogue and solidarity, as a bridge between civilizations and as a model for environmental protection in the context of sustainable development and multilateral cooperation. They considered that the resources of the Mediterranean should trigger economic prosperity and contribute to the stability of the region with green jobs and innovation opportunities for the sectors of the maritime economy, in full respect of the environmental protection, in a circular approach and good governance pattern, supported by the implementation of the MSSD. They reaffirmed that effective Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), in conjunction with SCP approaches, are crucial to promote sustainable and synergic uses of Mediterranean marine and coastal areas and resources, together with research and innovation. The Contracting Parties urged the implementation of a strategy for environmental communication for the promotion of sustainable development, and of high quality and innovative education and training plans for reaching a diversified audience and the youth.
6. Contribution of the MCSD Members was crucial for the delivery of activities planned by the above-mentioned decisions, in particular Decisions IG.24/3 and IG.24/4, with substantive resources provided by the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-2021 (Decision IG.24/14). The present document presents the progress of those activities and specific issues, while significant actions undertaken by MCSD Members and UNEP/MAP Components are included in Annex II.

I. Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and Integration of SCP Indicators

7. Following opinions expressed by Plan Bleu Focal Points and MCSD Members at their respective meetings in May and June 2019, Plan Bleu finalized the update of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard under the guidance of the MCSD Steering Committee, with a revised list of 28 indicators (Annex III) – most of which corresponding or being linked to SDG indicators.
8. Based on the mandate given by Decision IG.24/3, Plan Bleu prepared an updated version of the indicator analytical factsheets, as included in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.3. A series of maps were designed to illustrate relationship between pressure from human activities and environmental status. SCP/RAC undertook the update of the SCP indicators to reflect this work within the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, strengthening the dashboard on green, blue and circular economies. All the

⁷ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31706/19ig24_22_2408_eng.pdf

information is gathered in the Regional Observatory of the Environment and Sustainable Development website⁸, facilitating the access to information, including factsheets, publications, and thematic maps.

9. Following recommendations from the MCSD Steering Committee, Plan Bleu launched an internal reflection towards the development of indicators to monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis in the Mediterranean, especially on the relationship between the state of the environment and health.

10. Based on a pilot project, Plan Bleu prepared proposals in view of strengthening the Regional Observatory on the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean (see Document UNEP/MED WG.493/4), including the migration of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard to the UNEP World Environment Situation Room⁹ (WESR), connection with external databases, and future update of the dashboard to contribute to the assessment component of UNEP/MAP.

11. The Secretariat, including MED POL, Plan Bleu and Info/RAC, initiated exchanges with the UNEP Science Division, Capacity Development and Innovation Branch (SDGs and Statistics Unit) and Big Data Branch (WESR Unit) to engage collaboration on Monitoring and Evaluation. Opportunities for further collaboration cover the following topics: interconnexion between the global WESR and the UNEP/MAP information system (Info MAP system), e.g. data and knowledge sharing platforms and their interoperability, harmonization of indicator methodologies, data collection and processing, etc.

12. During the 22nd Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee (videoconference, 15-16 December 2020), representatives of the UNEP Science Division introduced the WESR, a global project of geo-referenced, remote-sensing and earth observation information integrated with statistics and data on the environmental dimension of sustainable development; the Indicator Reporting Information System (IRIS) for SDGs¹⁰, which is a reporting tool for SDG indicators where UNEP is the custodian agency; and, Measuring Progress II¹¹, an assessment report based on SDG indicators and Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Response (DPSIR) framework towards policy coherence on and more integration between SDGs.

II. Follow-up and Launch of MSSD Flagship Initiatives

13. The table below presents the status of implementation of the 11 MSSD Flagship Initiatives – in green: launched/on-going; in yellow: under development/to be launched; in orange: not yet launched. Details are provided in the MSSD Reporting Table, as included in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.6.

MSSD Flagship Initiative	Leader, main partners
1.1.10. Support the Trust Fund for Mediterranean marine protected areas The MedFund: https://themedfund.org/	Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, the Oceanographic Institute (Monaco), SPA/RAC, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, MedPAN, WWF Med, IUCN Med, <i>Conservatoire du Littoral</i> (France) and the Mediterranean Small Islands Initiative
2.3.5. Promote the “Green list” (IUCN World Parks Congress) in riparian states to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of parks managing bodies	IUCN (the Green List) through its Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation: https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/our-work/iucn-green-list-protected-and-conserved-areas
3.1.9. Promote the “Environment Friendly City” Award approved by COP18 (Istanbul Declaration, December 2013)	UNEP/MAP through the voluntary contributions from Turkey, as per Decision IG.22/19 adopted at COP 19: https://www.unenvironment.org/unepmap/istanbul-environment-friendly-city-award
3.2.5. Create a sustainable urban toolbox for the Mediterranean, with a view to planning cities that will work for everyone, in order to make them inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Med Cities through MedUrbanTools: http://medurbantools.com/

⁸ <https://www.obs.planbleu.org/en/>

⁹ <https://wesr.unep.org/>

¹⁰ <https://environmentlive.unep.org/myiris>

¹¹ <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/27627/MeaProg2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

3.4.5. Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction	Regional assessment and online repository launched in 2021 by MIO-ECSDE, COMPSUD and UfMS through the EU funded WES Regional Project: www.wes-med.eu
4.1.9. Establish a regional science-policy interface mechanism, including the social and behavioral sciences, endorsed by all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with a view to preparing consolidated regional scientific assessments and guidance on climate change trends, impacts and adaptation and mitigation options MedECC: https://www.medecc.org/	MedECC, UNEP/MAP and Plan Bleu, UfMS, Gov. of the Principality of Monaco, French Ministry for Ecological Transition, <i>Generalitat de Catalunya</i> (Spain), ADEME (France), Aix-Marseille University (France) and its Labex OT-MED, French National Institute of Research for Sustainable Development (IRD), MISTRALS Research Programme, Aix-Marseille Provence Metropole (France)
5.4.5. Create and promote a Mediterranean business award for environmental innovation	SCP/RAC through Decision IG.24/3 adopted at COP 21 with the support of the SwitchMed Programme. WeMed Mediterranean Sustainability Award: https://www.wemedaward.org/ . More details in Documents UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.6 and Inf.7.
5.6.5. Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels	<i>Not yet launched</i>
6.2.3. Encourage the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters;	Activities launched in 2020 by MIO-ECSDE, COMPSUD and MEPIELAN through the EU LIFE Programme and further strengthened in 2021 through the EU-funded Water and Environment Support (WES) in the ENI Neighborhood South Region project: www.wes-med.eu
6.3.5. Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments.	A first set of activities to be launched in 2021 by Panteion University of Athens/MEPIELAN in the context of a specific agreement with the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention Secretariat
6.5.5. Establish a publicly accessible Mediterranean integrated information system through a triumvirate of national governments, international institutions and the private sector to collate and transparently display information on the state of the environment	Plan Bleu through the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and the Regional Observatory on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean http://obs.planbleu.org/en/

III. Mid-Term Evaluations of the MSSD and of the SCP Regional Action Plan

14. The mid-term evaluations of the MSSD and of the SCP Regional Action Plan aim at making the implementation of these strategic and forward-looking policies, at their respective second phase, more efficient and focusing on gaps, shortcomings and opportunities, and at further aligning those policy frameworks with the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in the context of the post-COVID era.

15. Based on a methodological concept note including sources of information and list of stakeholders to be consulted, and following a literature review (desktop analysis), preliminary outputs of the MSSD mid-term evaluation were included in a State of Play and Gap Analysis Report. Regarding the SCP Regional Action Plan, the methodology of the mid-term evaluation consisted in a quantitative and qualitative evaluation using the following elements: (i) calculation and assessment of the 25 SCP indicators; (ii) analysis of the official reporting from the Contracting Parties on the SCP Regional Action Plan; (iii) review of projects and initiatives supporting the implementation of the SCP Regional Action Plan, including global and regional SCP projects.

16. A stakeholder consultation was carried out by two independent experts (consultants) with various decision-makers and stakeholders (MCSO Members, UNEP/MAP Partners, UNEP/MAP Components and key stakeholders), through bilateral interviews, focus groups (webinars / online workshops) and a wide online survey. The stakeholder consultation focused on achievements, gaps, and opportunities on the

three following components related to the MSSD and SCP Regional Action Plan: (i) Status of implementation; (ii) Reporting and monitoring; (iii) Impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. The results of the stakeholder consultation are included in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.4.

17. The draft final reports of the mid-term evaluations are submitted for review and comments by the 19th Meeting of the MCSD: Document UNEP/MED WG.493/5 and WG.493/6.

IV. Assessment Studies

State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean (SoED)

18. Following their approval by the UNEP Publishing Board, three publications, i.e. SoED full report, Summary for Decision-Makers and Key Messages, were issued as UNEP publications, in English and French, in October 2020: see references in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.1. The SoED resource page on the UNEP website points to the download page on the Plan Bleu website¹², thus making it the main go-to location for the SoED publications, infographics, videos, and other communication material.

19. Following recommendations of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD for preparing communication items adapted to a wide audience and targeted groups, the Secretariat and Plan Bleu prepared a UNEP/MAP system-wide communication plan on SoED. The publications received adequate visibility with support from the UNEP Communication Division, highlighting the fact that the report will equip decision-makers with insights they can use to orient policy towards more sustainable paths and to build back greener in the context of the recovery from the economic contraction caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

20. SoED was presented to representatives of international and regional media organisations on 21 October 2020 during a media briefing co-organised by UNEP and the European Commission (EC) in the context of EU Green Week under the theme “Biodiversity on the international agenda”. The Secretariat worked with UNEP on preparing the press release, which was issued on 19 October 2020 along with the press kit prepared by Plan Bleu. The press release and press kit capture the main findings of SoED and reiterate a call for a green renaissance in the Mediterranean, based on evidence contained in the report. The issuance of the press release, coupled with the media briefing, generated significant media coverage, including from media outlets.

21. SoED has received global attention when the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General mentioned the report in the noon briefing¹³ and through coverage on the UN website and social media accounts. In addition, the Secretariat has received a request to upload SoED on the global UN iLibrary.

22. Plan Bleu organized an event on the launch of the French version of SoED during the Med2020 science-policy videoconference¹⁴ (16-18 November 2020), with substantial discussion between scientists and policymakers towards filling knowledge gaps identified in SoED.

23. On 14 December 2020, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) organized a webinar with its members and lawmakers from across the region, with the participation of Mr. Gaetano Leone (UNEP/MAP Coordinator), Ambassador Sergio Piazzini (PAM Secretary General), Mr. Alain Perea (PAM Vice-President and Rapporteur on the Environment), Mr. Daniele Violetti (Director of Means of Implementation, UNFCCC), Mr. Francois Guerquin (Plan Bleu Director), and Mr. Joel Guiot (Coordinator, MedECC). This webinar provided participating parliamentarians with insights into climate and environmental change and interactions with development in the Mediterranean basin.

24. On 16 February 2021, Plan Bleu co-organized with the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment of Tunisia, with the contribution of SPA/RAC, a national dissemination event on SoED, focusing on decentralisation, development planning, and integrated approach of sustainable development in Tunisia.

¹² <https://planbleu.org/soed/>; <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/state-environment-and-development-mediterranean>.

¹³ <https://bit.ly/31GFECL>

¹⁴ <https://med2020.sciencesconf.org/?forward-action=index&forward-controller=index&lang=en>

25. On 8 April 2021, a media event “Making peace with nature and delivering on the SDGs in the Mediterranean” was organized within the framework of the Geneva Environment Network¹⁵. Considering the Mediterranean as a region at the crossroads in achieving the SDGs, this virtual event was informed by the ‘twin reports’ sponsored by the UNEP/MAP, i.e. SoED and MedECC MAR1.

MedECC First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) and Summary for Policymakers

26. At COP 21, through Decision IG.24/4, the Contracting Parties expressed appreciation to the progress being made by the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change¹⁶ (MedECC) on MAR1 that aims at presenting the state of scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge on climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean and their impacts and future risks. They approved the elements of the *Roadmap for the Consultation of Decision-Makers and Stakeholders on MAR1*, involving the UNEP/MAP Focal Points, UNEP/MAP Components’ Focal Points, and MCS D Members. They also requested the Secretariat to undertake communication on MedECC.

27. UNEP/MAP and the Union for the Mediterranean, together with other partners, support this important regional initiative which contributes to well establish sound processes on environmental assessment in the Mediterranean. The scientific secretariat of MedECC is hosted by Plan Bleu in Marseille, France. MedECC Coordinators contributed, as invited speakers, in the 21st and 22nd Meeting of the MCS D Steering Committee in May and December 2020.

28. MedECC contributes to the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), with a chapter dedicated for the first time to the Mediterranean. This chapter is prepared under the co-leadership of Prof. Wolfgang Cramer, one of the two MedECC coordinators.

29. Review is an essential part of the MedECC work and ensures that the assessment of literature is transparent, objective and complete. As far as scientific review is concerned, experts were invited to comment on the accuracy and completeness of the scientific and technical content and the overall balance of the draft MAR1. Reviewers were self-nominated and accepted by MedECC on the basis of their expertise. The scientific review process ended in December 2019 and its results were taken into consideration in the near-final draft of MAR1, which was reviewed by the MedECC Editorial Committee during a meeting held in Venice, Italy, on 10-12 February 2020.

30. Following the online consultation (April-June 2020) of policymakers and stakeholders¹⁷ on the draft Summary for Policy-Makers (SPM) of MAR1, and as per Annex IV of Decision IG.24/4, Members of the MCS D Steering Committee, Plan Bleu Focal Points, Members of the UfM Climate Change Expert Group (CCEG) and of the UfM Environment Task Force, the MedECC Secretariat, Steering Committee and Coordinating Lead Authors, as well as UNEP/MAP, Plan Bleu and UfM Secretariat representatives participated remotely, on 22 September 2020, in the MedECC Plenary consultation.

31. The aim of this consultation was to ascertain that MAR1 findings, as presented in the revised draft SPM, are fully comprehensible and unambiguous, and that the comments from the previous online consultation were well addressed. The findings of the revised draft SPM were reviewed and discussed in session to ensure that the results are formulated in a clear and understandable way and that the assessment of literature is transparent, objective, complete, and can be easily communicated to decision-makers.

32. This event was an important step in reinforcing the science-policy dialogue. Approximately 100 participants contributed to a meaningful discussion that resulted in a set of conclusions and recommendations, as reproduced in Annex IV of the present document, and a final version of the SPM.

¹⁵ https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/making-peace-with-nature-and-delivering-on-the-sdgs-in-the-mediterranean/#scroll-nav_2

¹⁶ Created in 2015, MedECC is an open and independent international scientific expert network supporting decision-making and information of the general public on the basis of available scientific information and on-going research on climate change in the Mediterranean basin. To date, MedECC counts more than 600 scientific members from 35 countries, including 19 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. See: www.medecc.org

¹⁷ MedECC Secretariat received 453 comments on the draft SPM from 21 governments, decision-makers and partner organizations. In addition, 196 comments were received on the MAR1 draft full report.

33. To continue its mission aiming to consolidate and provide scientific knowledge on climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean, the MedECC secretariat and steering committee works on three complementary actions, as summarized below:

- Communication on MAR1 and its SPM: A communication campaign has been launched, including translation of the SPM in Arabic, Catalan, French, and Spanish, distribution of infographics with MAR1 key messages, regular information updates on the MedECC website and in social media, etc.
- Identification of knowledge gaps, reinforcing the network and capacity-building in the South and the East of the Mediterranean: In order to further reinforce the network across the entire Mediterranean region, contacts have been initiated and MedECC has already gained the interest of several partner institutions and of high-level scientists who could play a key role in the future.
- Preparation of thematic reports related to the challenges identified in MAR1 on: 1. Coastal risks and potential for adaptation measures; 2. Climate-water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus; and, 3. Environmental change and human migration.

34. At its 90th Meeting, the Bureau of the Contracting Parties (videoconference, 12-13 November 2020) urged the Contracting Parties to provide their support to the completion of the important MAR1 report and its SPM, in view of the possible endorsement of the latter at COP 22. At its 22nd Meeting, the MCSD Steering Committee renewed its appreciation of the work done by MedECC, and expressed agreement with the above recommendation from the Bureau of the Contracting Parties.

35. The SPM (see reference in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.1) is submitted for consideration by the 19th Meeting of the MCSD towards recommendation for possible endorsement by COP 22. The MCSD is also invited to consider the recognition of MedECC, with adequate support from the Contracting Parties, to sustain this initiative within the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system.

MED2050 Foresight Study on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean

36. As mandated by Decision IG.24/4 adopted at COP 21 and by Activity 1.4.1.4¹⁸ of the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-2021, the Secretariat (Plan Bleu) launched various activities to implement the revised roadmap for the MED 2050 foresight study.

37. MED 2050 being a participatory exercise, Plan Bleu has structured the involvement of experts and Contracting Party representatives as below:

- An Advisory Committee has been set up and convened on 13 January 2021 through videoconference; this committee will be convened once a year. In addition of the membership of experts from the Scientific Committee, Contracting Parties were invited to take part in this committee, which works on the preliminary results of MED 2050, e.g. review of technical reports prepared by the Foresight Group. The Advisory Committee also includes representatives of funding agencies and international organisations.
- A Foresight Group has been formed, which brings together approximately 35 experts. During several workshops, the Foresight Group members produced the methodology and documents on main trends, disruptions and weak signals for the future of the Mediterranean (see details below).
- MED 2050 Network¹⁹: Contracting Parties were invited to identify interested national stakeholders to contribute to the MED 2050 network, by getting involved via the MED 2050 platform and newsletter, and through participation in MED 2050 surveys or workshops.

¹⁸ Deliverables: “a) MED2050 network moderated and producing newsletters; b) MED2050 thematic briefs produced; c) MED2050 website developed and utilized; d) Survey and workshops on contrasted visions in the Mediterranean successfully held; e) Report analysing these visions produced; f) Dissemination of scientific analyses on trends and disruption factors in an integrated framework; g) Workshops and analysis report on transition pathways successfully completed; h) Report of 2020-2021 activities prepared for further consideration and guidance to COP 22”.

¹⁹ To register to the MED 2050 network: <https://planbleu.org/inscription-reseau-med-2050/>

38. In addition to the mainstream MED 2050 programme, complementary “focus projects” are developed on specific issues to nurture MED 2050 according to funding resources made available by partners wishing to provide their support and to benefit from MED 2050 dynamics for their own priority areas of intervention. Two focus projects have been launched, combining preliminary studies and a regional meeting on two cross-cutting topics of major relevance for the future of the Mediterranean that have been identified by the Foresight Group: 1) the nexus Demography-Migrations-Economic Development in partnership with the University of Bari, Italy, and other institutions; and, 2) the Mega Mediterranean Ecosystem in partnership with the University of Naples, Italy, GEF, and other institutions.

39. During the period under reporting, the work of the Foresight Group focused on “Module 1: Building up the foresight baseline – past and future trends, weak signals and disruptions”, as presented below:

- A Methodological Note on MED 2050 has been issued in December 2020 to serve as a framework and guidance for the project implementation. It is structured in a 10-step methodological sequence, ranging from the collection of data and documents to recommendations and the promotion of the exercise to different stakeholders, from UNEP/MAP bodies to the general public. The methodological note has been submitted to the Foresight Group and to the Advisory Committee during their respective meetings held in January 2021.
- An analysis and qualification of trends and disruptions for the future of the Mediterranean (available on the MED 2050 web platform) was carried out and will serve as a sound basis to produce a broader and qualitative reflection on future scenarios for the region.
- The Foresight Group is preparing factsheets on 38 variables covering the whole spectrum of sustainable development in the Mediterranean region; a writing team has been set up for each factsheet. Providing baseline data, the factsheets will be used in the construction of the scenarios.

40. In addition, Plan Bleu has produced a number of MED 2050 outputs and publications: the MED 2050 logo, the MED 2050 online platform, the first and second edition of the MED 2050 newsletter, the MED 2050 conceptual systemic framework, a MED 2050 Technical Report on demographic outlook for the Mediterranean, a MED 2050 Technical Report comparing the forecasts made in Plan Bleu’s 2005 foresight exercise with the current situation, the MED 2050 compendium of long-term trends²⁰.

41. The next steps are the following: Module 2 “Sharing and comparing contrasting visions across the Mediterranean, including a draft report” (September – December 2021); Module 3 “Reconciling trends, disruptors and weak signals, and contrasting visions to identify a preferred yet realistic scenario” (January – June 2022); Module 4 “Co-creating transition pathways and strategies in the short, medium and long terms” (2022 – 2023). See details in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.5.

V. Peer Learning: Structures and Processes for Implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in the Mediterranean Countries

Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER)

42. The Contracting Parties that went through the pilot and second editions of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism²¹ (SIMPEER) of National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) are the following: France, Montenegro and Morocco (2016-2017); Albania, Egypt and Tunisia (2018-2019).

43. At its 18th Meeting, the MCSD recognized the value of SIMPEER and noted that peer learning experiences should be capitalized and communicated as crucial in facilitating the transposition, implementation and monitoring of SDGs at the regional and national levels.

²⁰ <https://planbleu.org/en/projects/med-2050-towards-a-shared-vision-on-a-sustainable-mediterranean-in-2050-and-transition-issues/>.

²¹ Through Decision IG.22/17 adopted at COP 19, the Contracting Parties decided to launch SIMPEER, which is an innovative incentive for promoting dialogue between volunteer Mediterranean countries on national processes and policies for sustainable development.

44. In the ensuing period, Plan Bleu organized missions in Gabes, Kairouan and Tunis, Tunisia (19-25 September 2019); Tirana, Albania (21-23 October 2019); Cairo, Egypt (27-29 October 2019). The Second Peer Review Meeting was held in Marseille, France (19-20 November 2019).

45. The outputs of the SIMPEER first and second editions are included in a Plan Bleu publication: see reference in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.1.

46. SIMPEER being an innovative activity appreciated by the MCSD and Contracting Parties for promoting dialogue between Mediterranean countries, the 21st Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee (videoconference, 13-14 May 2020) encouraged the Contracting Parties to fully participate in SIMPEER future editions, with the support of the Secretariat, noting that this mechanism represents an innovative incentive for promoting dialogue between Mediterranean countries and has the potential to help them in streamlining their work for implementing in synergy the MSSD and the SDGs. The MCSD Steering Committee also recommended to the Secretariat to submit to the next UNEP/MAP Focal Points Meeting and COP 22 an adequate budget proposal for relaunching this activity in 2022-2023.

Paper on Structures and Processes for Implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in the Mediterranean Countries

47. As a follow-up of experience sharing among Contracting Parties on national structures and processes for implementing and monitoring the SDGs, the Secretariat consulted remotely the Members of the MCSD representing Contracting Parties to collect inputs from their Voluntary National Review (VNR) experiences at the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF).

48. Mediterranean countries' representatives provided inputs on the transposition, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs at national level, as well as on encountered challenges and solutions to overcome obstacles. Based on those inputs and on SIMPEER key findings, the Secretariat drafted Document UNEP/MED WG.493/7, which identifies commonalities among Mediterranean countries and national specificities, around the key following ideas:

- Among national governmental bodies, the Ministries in charge of environmental affairs remain the most aware and active national bodies to promote and implement SDGs at national level.
- Contracting Parties experienced common challenges in implementing SDGs at national level, including those related to coordination and effective mobilization of all governmental actors. There is a need to strengthen the institutional set-up towards efficient and systemic governance frameworks to break the "silo effect".
- There is a need to strengthen capacities and resources in national administrations to address the SDGs adequately, in particular for monitoring programmes to report on and follow SDG indicators. To this aim, a better interaction among reporting processes on SDGs related to UNEP/MAP mandate and on the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard should be encouraged for the benefit of both processes.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships, national/local fora on sustainable development, and engagement of civil society organizations, the private sector and academia are critical to overcome those challenges.

VI. The COVID-19 Crisis in the Mediterranean: Consideration on its Impact and the UNEP/MAP Strategic Response

49. Humankind is facing an unprecedented global crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic having huge impacts on societies and economies. The declaration of the pandemic more than one year ago was a call to action; "*It's also a call for responsibility and solidarity, as nations united and as people united*", stated António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, in his message on COVID-19 (11 March 2020).

50. The health crisis and resurgence of infectious diseases are embedded in an irreversible ecological mutation linked to loss of biodiversity and ecosystems degradation. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) sounded the alarm that nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history. "*We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide*", said Sir Robert Watson, IPBES Chair, at the 7th session of the IPBES Plenary meeting (Paris, France, 29 April – 4 May 2019).

51. Human action has modified wildlife population structures and reduced biodiversity, resulting in an increase of zoonotic epidemics. 75% of all emerging infectious diseases in humans are zoonotic and zoonotic diseases are closely interlinked with the health of ecosystems (UNEP, 2016). The expansion of cropland and more intense livestock farming near and around cities increased opportunities for exposure.

52. Containment measures aiming to slow the spread of the Coronavirus lead to significant short-term declines in GDP. The impact is especially harsh for unprotected workers and the most vulnerable groups in the informal economy. The pandemic is taking an enormous toll on the global economy, calling to finance massive budget deficits and to cut the period of economic losses to the maximum possible extent through action aiming to prevent a financial crisis²². Specific support for emerging economies and developing countries that do not have the resources to create robust stimulus packages are particularly needed. According to OECD, vaccination campaigns, concerted health policies and government financial support are expected to lift global GDP by 4.2% in 2021 after a fall of 4.2% in 2020²³.

53. “*Global tourism suffered its worst year on record in 2020, with international arrivals dropping by 74%*” according to the World Tourism Organization²⁴ (28 January 2021). Since 80% of all tourism businesses are SMEs, providing employment for women, youth and rural communities, tourism recession will have heavy impacts on the Mediterranean economies.

54. The time of the crisis is also a time conducive to preparing a new world that leaves no one behind, where basic needs, healthy food, adequate housing, access to education, health, culture, are guaranteed to all, a world where solidarity open the path to further possibilities and perspectives. “*Done right, we can steer the recovery towards a more sustainable and inclusive path*”, stated UN Secretary-General, on 19 March 2020. According to Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director, recovery efforts must be green, resilient, inclusive and sustainable; the recovery cannot be at the expense of climate, nature and pollution or else the world would have an even higher price to pay (BBC News Hour, 21 March 2020).

55. The Mediterranean region and countries must seize this unique chance to put them on sustainable trajectories that prioritize economic opportunity, poverty reduction and environmental health at once. It is essential to consider resilient options for building back better towards a green renaissance in the Mediterranean, dissociating development from environmental degradation through a circular economy and more sustainable consumption and production patterns.

56. It is a long time that the MCSD and its partners alert on unsustainable forms of development. Decision-makers and stakeholders were repeatedly warned of worrying trends and of their resulting risks for the region. Mediterranean countries still face many challenges, as highlighted by SoED, and economic and social convergence has become a necessity given that disparate living standards combined with unequal access to basic services represent vectors for instability and risk of tensions.

57. During the first year of the pandemic, the Secretariat has launched a wide reflection on our ways of life, our patterns of producing and consuming, to reverse the tide towards more sustainable futures in the Mediterranean region. The MCSD is the relevant forum to engage this reflection and the MED 2050 foresight study offers a unique opportunity for the Commission to consider impacts of and responses to the pandemic on sustainable development of the Mediterranean region.

58. “The Mediterranean Action Plan’s strategic response to COVID-19: a blueprint for action”²⁵ (see reference in Document UNEP/MED WG.493/Inf.1) is aligned with the building blocks of the UNEP COVID-19 strategic response²⁶, as summarized below:

²² Jeffrey Sachs and UN SDSN team: Global workshop on COVID-19, 30 March 2020,

<https://www.unsdsn.org/where-are-we-now-where-are-we-headed-key-outcomes-from-sdsns-global-virtual-conference-on-the-epidemiology-and-economics-of-coronavirus>

²³ <https://www.oecd.org/economic-outlook/>

²⁴ <https://www.unwto.org/news/2020-worst-year-in-tourism-history-with-1-billion-fewer-international-arrivals>

²⁵ <https://www.unenvironment.org/unepmap/mediterranean-action-plans-strategic-response-covid-19-blueprint-action>

²⁶ <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/working-environment-protect-people-covid-19-response>

- **The Medical and Humanitarian Emergency Phase:** The COVID-19 crisis is having visible implications for waste management, requiring an adequate waste management response to address the increase in the quantity of discarded single-use plastic items and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This response will be based *inter alia* on relevant provisions of the LBS Protocol.
- **A Transformational Change for Nature and People:** Due consideration will be given to the need to better understanding and responding to zoonotic threats in the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity (SAP BIO). The LBS Protocol also provides for the assessment of linkages between marine pollution and human health related action. The COVID-19 crisis representing risks of weakened environmental regulation and enforcement in cases where emergency responses do not adequately integrate environmental protection as an important dimension, the UNEP/MAP response will address the multi-faceted nature of the challenge through its strategic and programmatic framework, legal and regulatory instruments, policy measures, monitoring and assessment, and capacity building.
- **Investing to Build Back Greener:** Fiscal stimulus packages provide an opportunity for building back better, initiating a green recovery by accelerating integrated, life-cycle approaches, including SCP and circular economy, green jobs, marine renewable energy, sustainable tourism, nature-based and climate-neutral solutions, and transition to sustainable blue economy. Building on the regional consensus of promoting green jobs and innovation in full respect of environmental protection, UNEP/MAP will support that the post COVID-19 recovery is fully based on principles of environmental protection.
- **Modernising Global Environmental Governance:** The COVID-19 crisis provides an opportunity to re-assess our traditional ways of work and the future of environmental governance. The pandemic has shown that technology and modern tools can help us shift our traditional ways of work, while maintaining the same level of efficiency and reducing the environmental footprint of our operations. It is also crucial to identify alternative ways of working with the countries to ensure that activities continue and expected outputs are delivered. Finally, outreach, communication and advocacy campaigns are engaging stakeholders in seizing the historic opportunity for a green renaissance in the Mediterranean.

59. Discussion at the 19th Meeting of the MCSD on adequate responses to the COVID-19 crisis in the Mediterranean, in particular on how to give a new incentive to progress towards sustainable development in the region, is much welcomed.

VII. MCSD Membership

60. As per paragraph 6 of the Composition of the MCSD (Decision IG. 22/17), based on written expressions of interest received by the Secretariat and considered by the MCSD Steering Committee, the following composition of the MCSD for June 2021 – June 2023 is submitted for discussion and agreement by the 19th Meeting of the MCSD, as deemed appropriate, with a view of its approval by COP 22.

Composition of the MCSD for June 2021 – June 2023, non-Contracting Party Members, proposal based on written expressions of interest (in bold below)

- **The Local Authorities Group:** the *Agence des Villes et Territoires méditerranéens durables* (AVITEM – 2nd mandate), the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian cities (FAIC – 2nd mandate), and the **Mediterranean Cities Network (Med Cities)**
- **The Socio-Economic Stakeholders Group:** the Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCAME – 2nd mandate), and the Economic and Social Council of Greece (ESCG – 2nd mandate), and the *Fondation Mohammed VI pour la protection de l'environnement*
- **The Non-Governmental Organizations Group:** ECO UNION (2nd mandate), the Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum (ESDF – 2nd mandate), and the Network of Marine Protected Areas managers in the Mediterranean (MedPAN – 2nd mandate)
- **The Scientific Community Group:** the **Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC)**, the *Centre International de Droit Comparé de l'Environnement (CIDCE)*, and **Dr. Fatima Driouech (Vice-Chair of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group I, University Polytechnic Mohammed VI, Morocco)**

- **The Intergovernmental Organizations Group:** the Arab Forum for the Environment and Development (AFED – 2nd mandate), the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med – 2nd mandate), and the **Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN-Med)**
- **Parliamentarians:** the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians on Sustainable Development (COMPSUD), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), and the **Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (PA OSCE)**.

61. As to the membership of the group of Parliamentarians, despite of the efforts from the Secretariat to ensure written expressions of interest in view of proceeding with the renewal of the membership to this group as per paragraph 9.II of the Composition of the MCSD (Decision IG.22/17), only one expression of interest was received, i.e. from PA OSCE. Two other expressions of interest would be needed to renew the membership to this group. In light of the persistent difficulties in identifying and mobilizing potential candidates under the group of Parliamentarians, due mainly to the limited number of organizations falling under this category, and with a view to enable the functioning of the MCSD, the Secretariat coordinated with the MCSD Steering Committee to propose the following course of action:

- To elect PA OSCE²⁷ as a new MCSD Member under the group of Parliamentarians; and,
- To recommend the extension of the current membership of COMPSUD and PAM for a duration of two biennia, renewable for one additional term, based on Paragraph 9.II of the MCSD Composition (Decision IG.22/17).

62. Given these unprecedented circumstances, in line with relevant conclusions of the 22nd Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee, the Secretariat propose to review, as appropriate, the paragraphs 9.II of the Composition of the MCSD, as below between square brackets:

Three representatives from each of the six categories, shall be selected for a duration of two biennia by the meeting of the Contracting Parties. Their mandate is renewable for one additional term. [For the group of Parliamentarians, if no interest has been expressed to proceed with the renewal of the membership to the group, as per paragraph 6 (), the MCSD and its Steering Committee may consider the possibility to extend the membership of the group for two biennia and recommend it to COP].*

(* Paragraph 6 reads as below: *The Contracting Parties, MCSD members and the Secretariat (in consultation with UNEP/MAP Components, as appropriate) may nominate members of the Commission, other than those representing the Contracting Parties, based on written expressions of interest (...).*

(...) Each biennium, the Steering Committee of the Commission, with the assistance of the Secretariat, shall review the list of the MCSD members, particularly in the light of those members whose mandate may be drawing to a close, and decide on any changes required.

The list of candidates shall be submitted for adoption by the next Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

VIII. Cooperation and Partners; Outreach and Communication

Cooperation and Partners

63. Since May 2020, the Secretariat participated in the monthly meetings of the UNEP Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE) Coordination Group, established by the Marine and Fresh Water Branch, Ecosystems Division. Working with Regional Seas and other partners, this group supports the UNEP's Sustainable Blue Economy Initiative, which aims to facilitate sustainable ocean-based economic, social and environmental benefits. An important focus of the initiative is to support UNEP's strategic response

²⁷ Almost all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are either OSCE participating States (13) or Partners for Co-operation (5). The OSCE PA General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment is actively exploring and bringing increased visibility to the multifaceted effects of environmental degradation and pollution on both the public and planet's health. The PA OSCE includes a Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs.

to COVID-19, building a recovery that uses oceans within safe operating space of planet for humanity and helps deliver the Paris Agreement on climate change.

64. The Secretariat, including UNEP/MAP Components (MED POL and SPA/RAC), contributed to the preparation of the SDG14 Regional Seas Report in view of the next UN Ocean Conference. Mediterranean cases studies related to the Marine Litter Regional Plan and the Roadmap towards an ecologically representative and efficiently managed network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas are included in that report and detailed in its supplementary annex.

65. The Secretariat received accreditation to the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Intergovernmental Conference). Process is ongoing to secure the same status to other events and processes such as the UN Ocean Conference.

66. In Spring 2020, the Secretariat was invited to provide feedback on the draft Strategy for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) and its draft Communication Strategy, coordinated jointly by UNEP and FAO. Inputs were provided by the Secretariat, including all UNEP/MAP Components, and submitted to the UN Decade team. UNEP/MAP is also in contact with the Best Practices Task Force, set up by FAO, and will follow-up towards possible collaboration, in particular on how UNEP/MAP best practices could be disseminated further as part of the Decade, and more generally, how to promote exchange of best practices across regions. The Secretariat will follow-up with UNEP and FAO.

67. Following the invitation of the UNEP Faith for Earth Initiative²⁸, the Secretariat participated in the UN Strategic Capacity-Building Workshop “Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) to Achieve the SDGs”, organized in collaboration with the UN Interagency Task Force on Religion and Development. The objective of that workshop was to develop the capacities of UN staff and partner FBOs to capitalize on the intrinsic relationship between faith (religious beliefs) and environmental sustainability.

68. The Secretariat closely collaborated with SDSN Med – University of Siena, Italy in the context of their “Call For Submissions of Youth Solutions for the SDGs: Mediterranean Youth Solutions Report”²⁹. The SDSN Med Youth Solutions Report 2021 will address students, young innovators and researchers from the Mediterranean region, in order to display transformative, youth-led solutions projects contributing to the achievement of the SDGs in the Mediterranean.

69. Following the Mediterranean Workshop “The Mediterranean Sea We Need for the Future We Want”³⁰ co-organized on 21-23 January 2020 in Venice, Italy, by the Italian Oceanographic Commission (COI), Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO/IOC), European Commission, Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM), and UNEP/MAP, in collaboration with the BlueMed Initiative, as part of the preparatory phase for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), the Secretariat is following-up to proceed with the implementation of recommendations related to the UNEP/MAP Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) and the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report, as a basis for Mediterranean countries towards harmonized assessment of marine and coastal environment, including reporting on SDG 14.

70. In September 2020, the Secretariat contributed with substantial inputs, based on commitments of the Naples Ministerial Declaration and other relevant UNEP/MAP strategic documents, to the UfM consultation on common post-2020 priority thematic areas for the UfM Environment and Climate Action Agenda. The Secretariat, including UNEP/MAP Components, also contributed to the UfM consultation on the Blue Economy towards the preparation of the Second UfM Ministerial Meeting on Blue Economy.

²⁸ <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment-programme/faith-earth-initiative/why-faith-and-environment-matters>

²⁹ <https://sdsnyouth.org/blog-posts/2021/3/16/call-for-submissions-mediterranean-youth-solutions-report>

³⁰ <https://www.cnr.it/it/news/9212/un-decade-of-ocean-science-for-sustainable-development-2021-2030-mediterranean-workshop-the-mediterranean-sea-we-need-for-the-future-we-want>

71. In August 2020, the Secretariat joined the EU4Ocean platform as a founding member. The European Ocean Coalition³¹ (EU4Ocean) has been launched on 8 June 2020, on the occasion of the World Ocean Day. Supported by the European Commission, the initiative connects organizations, projects and people that contribute to ocean literacy and to the sustainable management of the ocean, boosting public awareness and advocacy for a healthy ocean across the European Union.

Outreach and Communication

72. The UNEP/MAP revamped website³², including a new layout, a revised structure and new content, is online since June 2020. The revamped website includes webpages dedicated to the MSSD – with emphasis on MSSD Flagship Initiatives, the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER). A new section titled ‘Sustainability Awards’ offers information on the rationale and the application procedure of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award and the Mediterranean Green Business Award. Visitors can now browse Decisions and Declarations by COP session under ‘Meetings’ and gain access to an array of knowledge products under ‘Resources’, including reports and factsheets on cross-cutting themes. The rollout of the Arabic and French versions of the website will take place prior to COP 22.

73. A letter was sent in October 2020 to inform the Contracting Parties and Partners, including MCSD Members, that the new website is accessible at www.unepmap.org and www.unep.org/unepmap, asking them for their reactions and feedback as primary users of the website. Positive feedback was received.

74. Launched in October 2019, the UNEP/MAP twitter account has passed the symbolic milestone of 1,000 followers. By securing a digital presence on Twitter for the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, the account is not only boosting institutional visibility, but also enabling new forms of digital engagement with regional actors and stakeholders, and the uptake of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as regional public good, which continues to be pursued through the consistent use of the hashtags [#BarcelonaConvention](https://twitter.com/BarcelonaConvention) and [#Act4Med](https://twitter.com/Act4Med). The focus on Twitter is justified by the fact that it is a social media platform on where most institutional actors of environmental governance in the Mediterranean region are present. With the support of the MAP Communication Taskforce, a presence is being secured for the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention System through the Regional Activity Centres’ accounts on Twitter and other social media platforms, including Facebook and LinkedIn. Consistent messaging and hashtag use on those platforms allows target audience groups to easily identify links between RAC activities and the MAP system mandate.

75. Three issues of the quarterly newsletter MED News of the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention Secretariat was prepared by Info/RAC based on a programme agreed upon by the publishing board chaired by the Deputy Coordinator. The newsletter features a policy-oriented editorial by the Coordinator and presents the readers with a curated assortment of news sources from the UNEP/MAP Components. The published issues of June 2020, January 2021 and April 2021 are available on the Info/RAC website³³.

76. The Secretariat organized or co-organized several online outreach events involving several stakeholders and regional actors. While key events are reflected under the ‘News’ section of the UNEP/MAP website³⁴, the most relevant items to the work of the MCSD are listed below from the most recent:

- On 8 April 2021, a panel discussion titled “Making peace with nature and delivering on the SDGs in the Mediterranean” was organized within the framework of the Geneva Environment Network³⁵ jointly with UNEP Europe Office. Considering the Mediterranean as a region at the crossroads, this virtual event shed light on the findings of the ‘twin reports’ sponsored by the UNEP/MAP, i.e. SoED and MedECC MAR1, and served as a platform to call for a post-COVID green renaissance centered around the SDGs and driven by a greater compliance with, and enforcement of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

³¹ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/frontpage/1482>

³² <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/>

³³ <http://www.info-rac.org/en/communication/newsletter/newsletter-archive>

³⁴ <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/index.php/newsitems>

³⁵ https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/making-peace-with-nature-and-delivering-on-the-sdgs-in-the-mediterranean/#scroll-nav_2

The narrative prepared for this event, which will remain accessible from the Geneva Environment Network website along with the session recording, is an important asset in the UNEP/MAP pro-sustainability outreach and advocacy endeavors.

- On the occasion of the 2021 edition of International Women’s Day (8 March), the Secretariat published a special feature, prepared in cooperation with SCP/RAC and SPA/RAC. *Sheroes of sustainability in the Mediterranean*³⁶ is a compilation of six stories highlighting the accomplishments of some of the everyday female heroes who embody the principles enshrined in the Barcelona Convention through their work. This was complemented by an article³⁷ introducing gender mainstreaming in the GEF-funded MedProgramme implemented by UNEP/MAP.
- On 14 December 2020, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), in cooperation with the Secretariat, organized an online encounter with its members and with lawmakers from across the region. Titled “Supporting the Science-Policy Interface for a green renaissance in the Mediterranean”, the meeting provided participating parliamentarians with insights into climate and environmental change in the region. This event marked a deliberate advocacy effort targeting lawmakers in the region with messages on the importance of the parliamentarians’ role in the promotion of compliance with the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and in the oversight of their implementation at the national level.
- On 20 November 2020, the Coordinator, reflected on the universal ratification of the 1995 Amendments to the Barcelona Convention in a blogpost “An important milestone has been reached, but more is needed”.
- On 21 October 2020, representatives of international media organizations attended a briefing on SoED, organized by UNEP and the European Commission on the sidelines of EU Green Week. The report was also highlighted in several social media posts raising interest from journalists who came forward with requests for interviews. ERT (Greece) and Casa Mediterraneo (Spain)³⁸ were granted interviews by the Coordinator on themes pertaining to SoED findings.
- On the occasion of the Mediterranean Coast Day (25 September 2020), the Secretariat coordinated a digital campaign³⁹ based on a thematic web page developed by PAP/RAC and Info/RAC. The campaign saw partners and regional actors take part⁴⁰ with the hashtag #Act4Med and the slogan crafted by the Secretariat: “The Mediterranean needs you. If you put a seashell to your ear, you will hear it calling”.
- The Secretariat organized a system-wide participation in the workshop titled “Paving the way for collective Ocean Literacy initiatives in the Mediterranean Sea”, which coincided with Mediterranean Coast Day on 25 September 2021. This served as a platform to convey the messages crafted as part of the MAP campaign, and to pave the way for an adequate participation in the European Ocean Coalition.
- On 23 September 2020, the Coordinating Unit Information Officer briefed a group of journalists from North Africa taking part in a workshop⁴¹ for Maghreb journalists organized by Africa 21, a Geneva-based media organization, on the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and its work for healthy Mediterranean ecosystems in the context of sustainable development.
- On 21 September 2020, the report jointly prepared by the European Environment Agency (EEA) and UNEP/MAP “Towards a cleaner Mediterranean Sea: a decade of progress” was launched. A joint press release⁴² was issued.
- On 7 September 2020, the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat marked the first edition of International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies (IDCABS) by launching a special feature page⁴³ jointly prepared with REMPEC on the INFO/RAC website.

³⁶ <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/news/story/sheroes-sustainability-mediterranean>

³⁷ <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/index.php/news/news/women-leadership-covid-19-IWD-2021>

³⁸ <https://www.casa-mediterraneo.es/events/encuentro-con-gaetano-leone/>

³⁹ <http://www.info-rac.org/coastday>

⁴⁰ <https://twitter.com/i/events/1309798983599034374>

⁴¹ <https://www.africa21.org/projet/programme-de-latelier-en-ligne-de-tunis-2020/>

⁴² <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/news/press-release/stronger-joint-efforts-needed-achieve-cleaner-mediterranean>

⁴³ <http://www.info-rac.org/cleanairday/>

- During a global online event organized on 7 September 2020 by UNEP to observe the first edition of International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies, Ms. Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director, commended the commitment of the Mediterranean Ministers of the Environment and paid tribute to the ongoing endeavor undertaken by the Contracting Parties to improve air quality in the Mediterranean through the *Roadmap for a Proposal for the Possible Designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides Pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, within the Framework of the Barcelona Convention* (Med SOx ECA) approved at COP 21.
- On 26 August 2020, the pan-European information website Euractiv published an open editorial (op-ed) by the Coordinator titled *The breeze that may herald a green renaissance in the Mediterranean*⁴⁴. Another op-ed titled ‘A beacon of hope’ , , appeared in Spanish in *El País*⁴⁵, on 12 August 2020.
- On 15 July 2020, UNEP and UNEP/MAP Components (SPA/RAC and REMPEC) contributed as speakers to the 2020 edition of the *Forum Mondial de la Mer*, Bizerte, Tunisia.
- From July to October 2020, the Secretariat submitted several progress reports related to the SDG14 Voluntary Commitments registered on the occasion of the 2017 UN Ocean Conference⁴⁶.
- On 24 June 2020, the Secretariat issued a press release on the “Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security”.
- On 8 June 2020, marking the World Oceans Day in the Mediterranean, the Coordinator participated in the webinar *What solutions to fight against plastic pollution in the ocean?* organized by IDDRI, with the participation of Ms. Brune Poirson, former Secretary of State, French Ministry of Ecological and Solidarity Transition, France.
- In June 2020, the Secretariat published the UNEP/MAP Strategic Response to the COVID-19 crisis. The Secretariat has also initiated a series of advocacy activities focusing on the theme of “building back greener” towards recovery from COVID-19 crisis. The expression “green renaissance” was coined as part of this effort and appeared in advocacy products. The message on the need to invest into a more sustainable and resilient future in the Mediterranean has consistently been conveyed in UNEP/MAP messaging.
- On 21 February 2020, in Athens, Greece, UNEP/MAP received the “Excellence in the Mediterranean Award”, conferred by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM).
- On 21-23 January 2020, in Venice, Italy, the Secretariat contributed to workshop entitled “The Mediterranean Sea We Need for the Future We Want” organized in the framework of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).
- On 17 December 2019, the Secretariat took part in the 14th Meeting of COMPSUD, which the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco hosted in Rabat.
- On 24-25 October 2019 in Athens, Greece, several MCSD Members and MAP Partners participated in the Regional Stakeholder Workshop organized by the Secretariat as part of the inclusive process of preparation of COP 21. Key messages formulated by participants were considered in the drafting of the Naples Ministerial Declaration.
- On 25 September 2019, in Ayia Napa, Cyprus, the 2019 edition of the Mediterranean Coast Day was celebrated during a regional event organized by PAP/RAC in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment of Cyprus.

⁴⁴ <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/news/opinion/breeze-may-herald-green-renaissance-mediterranean>

⁴⁵ https://elpais.com/elpais/2020/08/10/planeta_futuro/1597055482_728912.html

⁴⁶ <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/>

Annex I

Composition of the MCSD for June 2019 – June 2021, Non-Contracting Party Members

Annex I: Composition of the MCSD for June 2019 – June 2021, Non-Contracting Party Members

New members are indicated in bold below:

- The Local Authorities Group: the *Agence des Villes et Territoires méditerranéens durables* (AVITEM), the **Forum of Adriatic and Ionian cities (FAIC)**, and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
 - The Socio-economic Stakeholders Group: ANIMA Investment Network, the **Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCAME)**, and the **Economic and Social Council of Greece (ESCG)**
 - The Non-Governmental Organizations Group: **ECO UNION**, the **Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum (ESDF)**, and the **Network of Marine Protected Areas managers in the Mediterranean (MedPAN)**
 - The Scientific Community Group: the *Forum Euroméditerranéen des Instituts de Sciences Economiques* (FEMISE), the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN Med), and the Mediterranean Programme for International Environmental Law and Negotiation (MEPIELAN)
 - The Intergovernmental Organizations Group: the **Arab Forum for the Environment and Development (AFED)**, the **Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med)**, and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
 - Parliamentarians: the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians on Sustainable Development (COMPSUD), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM)
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Annex II

**Significant initiatives undertaken by MCSD Members and UNEP/MAP Components in 2020-2021,
as reported through a short online survey (April 2021)**

Annex II: Significant initiatives undertaken by MCSD Members and UNEP/MAP Components in 2020-2021, as reported through a short online survey (April 2021)

MCSD Member	Name of the initiative	Short description: key objectives and achievements	MSSD Objectives	Geographic scope	Type of initiative	Launch year	Progress	Funding sources	Partners	Website
ANIMA Investment Network	THE NEXT SOCIETY	In 2020, THE NEXT SOCIETY action plan impact consisted in 1.5 million EUR funds raised by the start-ups supported, 15 start-ups awarded international prizes, 15 new partnership deals achieved by research-based entrepreneurs, 45 Cluster to Cluster promising business partnerships declared, 5 universities in Lebanon equipped with novel research valorisation programmes and, finally, a new accelerator for start-up internationalisation fully designed in Egypt. Most of the startups, clusters and other innovation players supported by THE NEXT SOCIETY do contribute to the SMDD by developing innovative products and services supporting more sustainable patterns in the Mediterranean Region.	5	Regional		2017	On-going	European Union (90%), implementing partners (10%)	See: https://www.thenextsociety.co/about#partners	https://www.thenextsociety.co/
Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED)	State of the Arab Environment	State of the Arab Environment is a series of reports meant to inspire policy changes based on scientific facts and options. The 12 th report in 2020 was on Education for Sustainable Development, and the 13 th in 2021 on Health and the Environment. Recommendations of AFED reports have been adopted in many Arab countries, including the Green Initiatives in Saudi Arabia.	All (1-6)	Regional	Policy & legislation	2007	On-going	Institutional Members a Board of Trustees	International and regional organizations, development funds, academia, civil society, private sector	www.afedonline.org
Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED)	AFED EcoSchool	AFED EcoSchool is a comprehensive educational program managed by AFED, last product was a teaching manual on environment and sustainable development published in 2020. It has been used online by many ministries in various Arab countries to integrate environment and sustainable development in curricula. The online version has been widely used by schools as teaching material.	6	Regional	Educational & Training program		On-going	Institutional Members a Board of Trustees	International and regional organizations, development funds, academia, civil society, private sector	www.afed-ecoschool.org
AVITEM	Changement climatique en Méditerranée : résilience urbaine et solutions innovantes (projet Ksar Tafilet)	Construction d'une réflexion sur la base des savoir-faire traditionnels de cités réputées pour leur résilience. Le travail avec l'éco-cité du Ksar Tafilet (Ghardaïa, Algérie) se construit sur une approche durable et systémique au regard de la rareté croissante des ressources (eau, alimentation, terres, énergie) mais aussi de son empreinte écologique (assainissement, déchets, transports, pollution). Elle met en place une approche innovante, transversale et pluridisciplinaire, s'appuie sur une gouvernance déterminée, à taille humaine et facilement reproductible sur l'ensemble des territoires urbains de la région et se structure sur une base financière axée sur la solidarité, autorisant à la fois la souplesse, la transparence et la pluralité des acteurs et permettant de créer un véritable effet d'appartenance autour du projet urbain collectif. Pour récapituler ces savoirs et ce savoir-faire, publication mi-2020, d'un « Manuel des bonnes pratiques de développement durable dans un environnement contraint » qui récapitule les principaux axes de durabilité identifiés et mis en pratique. Une seconde démarche se conjugue en 2021 avec une approche laissant place à la modernité et l'innovation, sur trois chantiers traitant respectivement de l'eau, de l'énergie et des déchets, avec pour objectif, d'accroître l'autonomie et la résilience urbaines en termes de ressources sur la base de démarches et de protocoles innovants.	3	Regional		2020	On-going	Ministère des Affaires étrangères et de l'Europe, France, et AVITEM	Autorités locales, aménageurs, chercheurs, experts, startups et grand public	www.avitem.org
Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD)	The Rabat Declaration (2019) "Launching a new Decade of Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean"	More than 180 Mediterranean stakeholders, from high-level Moroccan officials, representatives of UNEP/MAP, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the League of Arab States (LAS), Parliamentarians, Members of COMPSUD, COMJESD (Circle of Mediterranean Journalists for Environment and Sustainable Development), to Media, Scientists and other representatives of Civil Society from Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Slovenia, Tunisia and Turkey, met at the premises of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco, on the 17 th of December 2019. The result was the Rabat Declaration which aimed to provide a new stimulus and an inspiring vision to address the challenges of the new decade towards 2030 and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the region.	6	Regional	Other	2019	On-going	EU LIFE Programme, Moroccan Government (Ministry for Energy, Mines and Environment), Moroccan Parliament, in kind contributions	COMPSUD and MIO-ECSDE with contributions from GWP-Med, MedWet, and the International Water Management Institute	https://tinyurl.com/3d5hh55s

MCS D Member	Name of the initiative	Short description: key objectives and achievements	MSSD Objectives	Geographic scope	Type of initiative	Launch year	Progress	Funding sources	Partners	Website
eco-union	Blue Tourism – Towards a Sustainable Coastal and Maritime tourism in the Mediterranean	Blue Tourism is a global project to improve the benefits of coastal and maritime tourism around major Regional Seas such as the Mediterranean, Western Indian Ocean and the Caribbean. It comprises regional sector reviews, as well as scalable national initiatives to improve maritime governance and environmental management in the coastal and maritime sector. Objectives: Assess environmental, economic and social impacts of the coastal and maritime tourism; Support best practices for managing negative externalities and foster sustainable development; Review enabling condition for integrated management of coastal and maritime tourism; Formulate and implement concrete actions to insure a sustainable blue tourism at global and regional level.	1, 5	International	Policy & legislation	2021	Inception	French Environment Fund (FFEM)	IDDRI, ECO-UNION, IUCN-Med, CANARI, CORDIO, GSTC	https://www.ecounion.eu/portfolio/blue-tourism/
Egypt	Saft Torab (village) ... The New Start	The initiative has been launched to incentivize small villages residents to volunteer in the Campaign an effort to ameliorate the environmental conditions of their village.	2	Local	Educational & Training program	2021	On-going	Governmental and NGOs	NGOs and local authorities	Facebook account
Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum (ESDF)	Education for Sustainable Development	<p>Key objective: Exchange of experience between the Ministry of Education in Cyprus (Cyprus Pedagogical Institute) and the ESDF, aiming to strengthen the network of educators, building on the ESDF partnerships with relevant ministries, universities, schools, governorates and concerned local authorities, in addition to implementing/creating education for sustainable development (ESD) models in targeted schools in Greater Cairo governorates.</p> <p>Achievements – Capacity Building and Training Materials: Educational materials on ESD received from the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus have been translated into Arabic, within the capacity building plan for environmental education officials in selected schools. The ESDF Board of Trustees has formed a special working group who prepared training material, building on the Cypriot material, but adapted to the Egyptian context. Those Guidelines were accredited by the Egyptian Ministry of Education as an official training material that teachers / educators can use at schools to achieve ESD. Capacity Building Trainings were held targeting educators and officials of the Ministry of Education on those guidelines. Participants gained sufficient knowledge and skills related to ESD.</p> <p>Coordination among main partners: Regular coordination meetings were held with education officials, in addition to a meeting held with the Minister of Environment to ensure coordination of activities within the presidential initiative implemented by the Ministry of Environment “Live Green”, which focuses on increasing environmental awareness. Accordingly, schools of the first phase have been selected in the same districts where other environmental campaigns are implemented such as tree planting, new solid waste management system, etc., to ensure complementarity of activities. 12 elementary and preparatory schools have been selected in 5 districts in Greater Cairo. Full assessment needs for those schools have been conducted and a participatory plan has been set with specific activities to be implemented in schools, which are in progress, where schools will give a model of “Green Schools” contributing to the achievement of Education for Sustainable Development.</p> <p>Lessons learned: The project in its demonstration phase has succeeded in bringing together, and for the first time, representatives of the main partners to think, discuss, brainstorm and jointly implement activities towards achieving sustainable development in the field of education. This model has created very positive mobilization among concerned partners, which resulted in a bigger demand for the continuation of activities and including more interested schools to this active mechanism. This will result in expanding the experience among more educators and more students and their families, which will impact their role in contributing to the achievement of the sustainable development goals on the national level.</p>	6	National	Educational & Training program	2018	On-going	Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture, Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum (ESDF)	Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture, Egyptian Ministry of Education, Egyptian Ministry of Environment	

MCS D Member	Name of the initiative	Short description: key objectives and achievements	MSSD Objectives	Geographic scope	Type of initiative	Launch year	Progress	Funding sources	Partners	Website
Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP Med)	Water – Energy – Food – Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus Programme in the Mediterranean	Assist Mediterranean countries to enhance natural resources utilization efficiency, environmental security and climate resilience, by balancing competing uses and promoting shared benefits by applying integrated Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus approaches, through fostering shareable policy tools, action planning and investment prioritisation supported by technical assessment and multi-stakeholder processes as well as through demonstrating tangible and scalable local WEFE technical solutions combined with employability/entrepreneurship capacitation, and through promoting gender mainstreaming. Activities are implemented at Mediterranean (knowledge development and capacitation), Western Balkans (national and transboundary WEFE Nexus assessment, action planning and investment prioritization) and MENA countries (national and transboundary WEFE Nexus assessment, action planning and investment prioritization as well as local demo technical solutions and job creation capacitation in a cross-country experience sharing context). Actions contribute to the national priorities of the beneficiary countries, the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), the Water Agenda 2030 of the Union for the Mediterranean, and donors’ regional strategies.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	Regional	Other	2018	On-going	GEF through the UNEP/MAP MedProgramme and IW:LEARN, the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the German Federal Ministry for Environment (BMU) in the Western Balkans, and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and the MAVA Foundation in MENA.	GWP-Med (overall technical coordination and management), beneficiary governments, UNEP/MAP, UfM, UNECE as well as partners like OSS, WWF-North Africa and more per action line.	www.gwpmed.org
Greece	Radical Reduction on Single Use Plastics	The harmonization of the Greek legislation with the EU Directive 2019/904 on Single Use Plastics has been completed with the recent endorsement of law 4736/2020, aiming at urgently addressing the increase in plastic waste generation and the leakage of plastic waste into the environment. This law sets measures and targets at national level in line with the overall objectives of the EU’s waste policy in order to drastically reduce the consumption of certain types of highly environmental damaging single use plastic products, as other more sustainable alternatives exist, namely: cups for beverages including their covers and lids; Food containers, i.e. receptacles such as boxes, with or without a cover used to contain food which: (a) is intended for immediate consumption, either on-the-spot or take-away; (b) is typically consumed from the receptacle; and, (c) is ready to be consumed without any further preparation, such as cooking, boiling or heating. Greece is committed to promote more sustainable materials and to reduce: by 2024 the consumption of the abovementioned plastic products at least by 30% compared to 2022; by 2026 the consumption of the abovementioned plastic products at least by 60% compared to 2022.	1, 2, 5	National	Policy & legislation	2021	On-going	Not prescribed	Public administration, consumers, citizens, business associations	ypen.gov.gr
Greece	New National Circular Economy Action Plan	Under the coordination of the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy, Greece has just completed the elaboration of a new National Circular Economy Action Plan. The new Action Plan supports the needed shift towards a sustainable development model by boosting competition and protecting the environment. It ensures that the regulatory framework is streamlined and made fit for a sustainable future; that new opportunities from the transition are maximized; that existing gaps preventing a faster transition are adequately addressed. The new National Circular Economy Action Plan, which has been set in public consultation on 30 March 2021, is based on the new EU Circular Economy Action Plan, while also incorporating the views of the National Council for Circular Economy made up by the involved professional associations, and of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Circular Economy. The Plan includes a set of concrete actions to be implemented over the period 2021-2025, through increased cross-sectoral arrangements. It focuses on production, consumption, waste management as well as on horizontal issues related to governance and administration. It also includes provisions for the monitoring of its implementation across key performance indicators.	5, 6	National	Policy & legislation	2021	On-going	NSRF of Greece 2021-2027; EU RRF; various national sources e.g. revenues from levies and taxes for waste disposal in landfills, revenues from the tax imposed on the use of single use plastic bags; other international sources; private funds in line with the EU Taxonomy	Public administration i.e. related Line Ministries and government bodies, involved professional associations,	ypen.gov.gr

MCS Member	Name of the initiative	Short description: key objectives and achievements	MSSD Objectives	Geographic scope	Type of initiative	Launch year	Progress	Funding sources	Partners	Website
Israel	Food Waste and Rescue in Israel, The Economic Social and Environmental Impact, 2019.	For the first time, the report (published 2020) includes a detailed model for estimating the environmental impact of food waste.	2, 3, 4, 5	National	Policy & legislation	2020	On-going			https://foodwastereport2019.leket.org/en/
Israel	The National Climate Change Preparedness and Energy Efficiency Plan for Local Authorities.	As a result of a competitive process, 12 local authorities were selected for a pilot program to prepare their individualised climate change plans based on a Guidance Manual and tailor-made assistance and expertise provided by a number of government ministries and other bodies. These initial pilots are due to be completed by the end of 2021. The initiative built upon the EU Clima Med project.	2, 3, 4, 5	National	Policy & legislation	2020	On-going			
MedPAN	Network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas managers	To provide technical and strategic support to MPA managers directly at local level and through coordinated actions at Med level, with solutions and experience sharing, capacity-building and harmonised knowledge on MPAs. The strength of MedPAN lies in its ability to make the link between experiences on the ground and decision-making processes. Main achievements: MAPAMED database (with SPA/RAC) on Mediterranean MPAs and OECMs ; MedPAN database on Mediterranean MPAs management, Mediterranean MPA Forum and Roadmap process (with SPA/RAC), thematic working groups (fisheries, mobile species, financing), regular and operational MPA training programme, support to national and sub-regional existing and emerging networks of MPA managers, joint strategy with other networks of MPA managers at transatlantic scale, support to The MedFund, Production of key communication and technical tools to support MPA management and promotion	1, 5, 6	Regional	Other	2008	On-going	MAVA Foundation, European Commission (Interreg-Med), FFEM, GEF, Foundation Prince Albert II of Monaco, OFB, City of Marseille	SPA/RAC, IUCN Med, WWF Med, The MedFund, PIM, Conservatoire du Littoral, OFB, GFCM, ACCOBAMS, AdriaPAN, French Forum for MPAs, networks of MPA managers at transatlantic scale, MPA managers in the Mediterranean, NGOs and public institutions acting at all levels to support MPAs, scientific community working on MPAs	http://medpan.org
MEPIELAN CENTRE-Panteion University	Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention	Implementation of the MSSD Flagship Initiative 6.2.3 “Encourage the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention”, in cooperation with MIO-ECSDE	6	Regional	International and National Law and Governance	2018	On-going	EU Life Programme, EU funded WES Regional Project	MIO/ECSDE	
MEPIELAN CENTRE-Panteion University	Mainstreaming the Public Trust Approach in the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system	Implementation of the MSSD Flagship Initiative 6.3.5 “Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to the implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements”, in cooperation with UNE/MAP.	6	Regional	International and National Law and Governance	2021	On-going			
MIO-ECSDE	Sustaining Intercultural Dialogue through deeper Understanding of Mediterranean Food (SIDUMEF)	The project aims to raise citizens’ awareness and, particularly of youth, on the links of Mediterranean diet and food, food sustainable production and consumption and the related to Mediterranean diet “intangible” cultural heritage. To this end, the project will co-create online educational resources (a handbook resource and a MOOC) on Mediterranean Food as a vehicle for the promotion of sustainability and intercultural dialogue. Ultimately, SIDUMEF aspires to improve the “perceptions of the other” by exploring the variations among food “cultures” and our common responsibilities when it comes to address the current challenges of sustainable consumption and production of food.	2, 4, 5	Regional	Educational & Training program	2020	On-going	Anna Lindh Foundation Grant & Partners Resources	MIO-ECSDE, Festambiente (Legambiente), Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AOYE), Palestine Wildlife Society (PWLS), Club Marocain pour l’environnement et le Développement (CMED)	https://medies.net/project/sustaining-intercultural-dialogue-through-deeper-understanding-of-mediterranean-food-sidumed
Morocco / Maroc	Elaboration du Plan National du Littoral	Conformément aux dispositions de la Loi 81-12 relative au littoral, le projet du Plan National du Littoral (PNL) a été élaboré dans le cadre d’une longue série de consultations avec toutes les parties prenantes. Le projet de PNL, vise	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	National	Policy & legislation	2020	On-going	Budget de l’Etat	Les membres de la Commission Nationale du Littoral	

MCS Member	Name of the initiative	Short description: key objectives and achievements	MSSD Objectives	Geographic scope	Type of initiative	Launch year	Progress	Funding sources	Partners	Website
		à déterminer les orientations et les objectifs généraux à atteindre en matière de protection, de mise en valeur et de conservation du littoral, en tenant compte de la politique nationale d'aménagement du territoire, des objectifs de développement économique et social; à intégrer la dimension de protection du littoral dans les politiques sectorielles notamment dans les domaines de l'industrie, du tourisme, de l'habitat et des travaux d'infrastructure ; à fixer les indicateurs à prendre en compte pour assurer la cohérence entre les programmes d'investissement et définit les moyens permettant l'harmonisation entre les projets de développement à réaliser sur le littoral ; et à prévoir les mesures à prendre pour prévenir, lutter et réduire la pollution du littoral et assurer la cohérence et la complémentarité entre les schémas régionaux du littoral. Actuellement, le PNL est en cours d'adoption par décret conformément à l'article 11 de la loi précitée.								
Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)	1. Supporting the science-policy interface for a green renaissance in the Mediterranean	This virtual event aimed to strengthening synergies and collaborations between parliamentarians and scientists in addressing the immediate and long-term challenges related to climate change and environmental degradation in the Mediterranean Basin. The event included a review of the two recently published scientific reports: SoED and MedECC MAR1.	4, 6	Regional	Policy & legislation	2020	Achieved	UNEP/MAP, Plan Bleu, MedECC		
Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)	2. On the way to COP 26, series of initiatives for parliamentarians	Parliamentarian contribution to a number of initiatives organised by strategic partners, including OECD, WB, IMF, Global Commission on Adaptation, in preparation to COP26. Organisation of a high-level virtual event in collaboration with UNFCCC, the Italian Presidency of the G20 and other key partners for preparation of PAM delegates to COP26 and COP22.	6	International	Policy & legislation	2020	On-going			
Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)	3. Strengthening partnerships towards a sustainable future in the Mediterranean	Development of platforms for the strengthening of science-policy interface mechanisms for a sustainable future across the Euro-Mediterranean and Gulf regions. Reinforcement of PAM partnerships with UN Agencies, international and multilateral organisations, IFIs, academia and private sector working in the field of climate change, green and blue economy, energy, climate finance and natural resource governance. Close collaboration with members of the PAM academic platform for the publication of policy papers with recommendations for parliamentarians in the field of energy security and energy transition, climate-related security risks, climate change, food security, and transition towards climate neutrality.	All (1-6)	International	Policy & legislation	2020	On-going			
SDSN Mediterranean	Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Report 2020	The Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean – Transformations to achieve the SDGs. It focuses on 24 Mediterranean countries hosting a population of over 520 million people to show the current level of achievement of the SDGs in the Mediterranean region. The 2020 Report, Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean, presents the SDG Index and Dashboards for the 24 countries of the Mediterranean area, a complex environment, shared by three continents, seriously affected by global warming, being the most vulnerable to climate change in the world, after the Arctic (section 1). The scores, meant as general measures of the distance to SDG targets, have been reported per country and assessed in the four aggregated regions (values weighted by population) and in the all Mediterranean area (section 2). As a result, given a general score of 73.5 of the Mediterranean area (meaning that SDG targets are achieved by 73.5%), the SDG index shows better performance in Europe West (78.5) and lower values in Europe East (74.8), North Africa (70.2) and Middle East (70.2). Nevertheless, the spillover index looks inversely proportional to the SDG index, since better performing countries tend to negatively impact on other countries (e.g. financial, trade, environmental issues), often compromising their efforts for improvements.	All (1-6)	Regional	R&D	2020	Achieved	Internal resources	Santa Chiara Lab – University of Siena, Italy; UN-Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). For Dissemination: Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention Secretariat	https://sdsn-mediterranean2.wp.unisi.it/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2020/11/MED_SDG2020-def_compressed.pdf

MCS Member	Name of the initiative	Short description: key objectives and achievements	MSSD Objectives	Geographic scope	Type of initiative	Launch year	Progress	Funding sources	Partners	Website
United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)	Local4Action Hubs	The Local4Action Hubs are spaces held within UCLG meetings aimed at showcasing and promoting the #LocalizingSDGs agenda.	2, 3, 4, 6	International	Policy & legislation	2020	On-going			

UNEP/MAP Component	Name of the initiative	Short description: key objectives and achievements	MSSD Objectives	Geographic scope	Type of initiative	Launch year	Progress	Funding sources	Partners	Website
PAP/RAC	Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through MSP (GEF Adriatic)	The overall objective of the initiative is to restore the ecological balance of the Adriatic Sea through implementation of the ecosystem approach and improve sub-regional management capacity through MSP as a viable marine management tool. In doing so, the aim is to integrate horizontally management tools through ecosystem approach (MSP, ICZM, MPAs, etc.) and to provide technical assistance to Albania and Montenegro to strengthen their respective management capacity. Achievements till the end of the project: Integrated monitoring programmes for Albania and Montenegro; Towards integrated GES assessment for Albania and Montenegro (with thematic GES assessments), with recommended measures; Two marine surveys in Albania and Montenegro; National data bases for Albania and Montenegro, harmonised with IMAF INFO system; Cumulative impact assessment for Montenegro, based on IMAF; Draft MSP for Montenegro; national and sub-regional capacity building programmes on monitoring, GES, data bases and data standards and MSP.	1, 5, 6	Sub-regional, national	Research and development	2017	On-going	GEF – 1,520,490 EUR	UNEP/MAP with SPA/RAC and PAP/RAC; Ministry of Tourism and Environment and National Agency for Protected Areas (Albania); and Ministry for Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism (Montenegro) as national partners and beneficiaries	https://www.unep.org/unesp-map/what-we-do/projects/GEF-Adriatic-project
PAP/RAC	AdriAdapt	The project aims at improving local capacities to adapt to climate change in the Adriatic region by creating an information platform that provides access to guidance, data and tools that will help local authorities to take adequate policy measures and develop plans to increase resilience in urban and coastal context.	All (1-6)	Sub-regional	Policy and Legislation	2019	On-going	InterReg Ital – Croatia (EU) – 2,223,870 EUR	Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change (CMCC), PAP/RAC, IUAV of University of Venice, Croatian Meteorological and Hydrological Service (DHMZ), Regional Agency for Prevention, Environment and Energy of Emilia Romagna (ARPAE), Unione dei comuni Vale del Savio, DOOR, cities of Vodice, Cervia, Udine, County of Šibenik-Knin	https://adriada.pt.eu/ ; https://www.italy-croatia.eu/adriadapt
REMPEC	Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031) and its Action Plan	The Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) aims to contribute to the implementation of overarching and thematic Mediterranean strategies, particularly the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) (2016-2025), the United Nations (UN) Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)'s Mid-Term Strategy (2022-2027), the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) and its roadmap for implementation, the Mediterranean Strategy on Ships' Ballast Water Management (BWM) and the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean adopted in the Framework of Article 15 of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) to the Barcelona Convention. It also strives to contribute to global and other regional goals and strategies, notably, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2018 to 2023, the IMO Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, the IMO strategy on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from ships (IMO's GHG Strategy), disaster resilience, prevention, preparedness and response in line with the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the European Green Deal, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) 5-Year Strategy (2020-	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	Regional	Policy and Legislation	2022	Inception	Resources requirements to be assessed in 2021 – UNEP/MAP, IMO ITCP, EU Funding, industry, other donors and contributions	The implementation of the Strategy (2022-2031) shall be governed through the comprehensive and integrated institutional, legal, and implementing framework of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, particularly the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, in collaboration with relevant national, regional and international organisations, institutions, agencies and stakeholders. NGOs are invited to apply for accreditation as UNEP/MAP partners to	www.rempec.org

		2024), the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) ministerial declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy, and the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity through the Aichi Targets (specifically target 9 on invasive alien species), and the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework which is currently in development.							become involved in the implementation of the present strategy.	
REMPEC	Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan	The Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan aims to define measures, which, if applied at regional level and by each Contracting Party within their jurisdiction will ensure the safety of offshore activities and reduce their potential impact on the marine environment and its ecosystem: - Setting-up a governance framework to support the implementation of the Action Plan and the adoption, enforcement and monitoring of regional standards, procedures and rules; - Defining commonly agreed regional offshore standards and guidelines to be integrated and used at national level; and - Develop in conformity with EcAp and its relevant indicators a regional commonly agreed reporting and monitoring system for the Action Plan.	1, 2, 5, 6	Regional	Policy and Legislation	2016	On-going	1,500,000 EUR	IOGP	https://www.rempec.org/en/about-us/strategies-and-actions-plans/mediterranean-offshore-action-plan
SPA/RAC	Post-2020 SAPBIO	Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAP BIO), aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, harmonized with the CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework through the optic of the Mediterranean context. The Elaboration of Post-2020 SAPBIO is ongoing. It should be adopted in December 2021 at COP 22.	1, 6	Regional, National, Local	Policy and Legislation	2021	Inception	TBC	Post-2020 SAPBIO Advisory Committee members	www.spa-rac.org
SPA/RAC	Post-2020 Regional Strategy for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean	During their COP 21, the Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat (through SPA/RAC) to elaborate an ambitious and transformational post-2020 strategy for MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean, in line with the post-2020 global biodiversity framework of the CBD and other regional and global processes, and in consultation with relevant global and regional organizations, for consideration by the Contracting Parties at their COP 22. The draft regional strategy is being elaborated by SPA/RAC. It aims at guiding the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with the support of relevant international and regional organisations, to harmonize their efforts to achieve the globally agreed marine and coastal conservation objectives. The current draft of the strategy is articulated around 5 strategic pillars (between brackets below) with 5 key outcomes, these are: Outcome 1: Governance for the establishment and management of MPAs and OECMs strengthened (Governance) Outcome 2: MPA coverage increased in particular across countries with low representation (MPA expansion) Outcome 3: OECMs Recognized and Reported (OECMs) Outcome 4: MPA management effectiveness Improved (Management effectiveness) Outcome 5: Action and support across governments, the private sector, stakeholders, youth and the general public mobilized (Action and support).	1, 6	Regional, National, Local	Policy and Legislation	2022	Inception	National budgets, The MedFund, bilateral and international donors; MTF, external funds, other regional and international organizations. As an indication, the financing gap to reach Aichi Target 11 at Mediterranean level was estimated at €7bn. The financial gap to reach the even more ambitious 2030 CBD target will more important.	National authorities in charge of MPAs and marine conservation, relevant international and regional organizations, NGOs, private sector	www.spa-rac.org
SCP/RAC	Switchers Support Programme	The Switchers Support Programme, created by SCP/RAC, works to create an enabling ecosystem for entrepreneurs and small and medium sized enterprises in the Mediterranean pursuing SCP and Circular Economy business models. The Programme provides entrepreneurs, business support organisations and local communities with business development services, networking opportunities and access to finance services. During 2020, the Switchers Support Programme achieved: • The establishment of 5 local networks of Business Support Organisations in Palestine, Lebanon, Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco, engaging 70 organizations, • The development of sustainable business expert networks, training 166 professionals in 6 countries. 50% of targeted professionals are women,	5	Regional, Sub-regional, National		2018	On-going		DG NEAR, ENI CBC MED, Catalan Cooperation, Catalan Waste Agency, MTF	https://www.the-switchers.org/

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The launch of the GIMED business support training and incubation programme in Palestine, Lebanon, Tunisia, Egypt and Italy, • The development of TheSwitchers.org platform, a online and free-to-use tool to enable interactions among entrepreneurs, business providers, trainers, mentors and financial institutions willing to develop novel business models in the field of Green and Circular Economy. <p>Likewise, the Switchers Community, a community of inspiring green entrepreneurs and changemakers, reached 400+ members in 2020 providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great exposure for eco innovative business ideas via online, easy-to-use web platform which increases visibility and exposure for green entrepreneur products and services. • Outstanding networking opportunities. It builds strong and far reaching networks that allow foster visibility and attractiveness of green and circular business models, as well as engagement and commitment among local stakeholders • Benefit from peer to peer support and knowledge exchange by joining SCP/RAC interactive Switchers group • 100 funding opportunities, shared among the community • 5 international events hosting Switchers <p>The Switchers Support Programme also includes the SwitchersFund, which serves as convening platform for private funders including foundations, private donors, ready to invest impact investors, to identify projects in the Mediterranean.</p> <p>After having engaged more than 100 investors and harvested more than 3 M€ in funding for Green Entrepreneurs since its establishment in 2017 the Switchers Fund underwent an important reorganization in 2020. The Switchers Fund has been equipped with a new brand strategy which will be deployed for the next 2021 2023 implementing period, relying on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The development of the Sustainable Finance Med Observatory 2. The establishment of Sustainable Finance National Working Groups 3. The engagement of national and regional investors, thanks to an extensive action of awareness raising, training and match making in 10 Mediterranean countries. <p>Finally regarding policy support, following the request of the Barcelona Convention Contracting parties (COP21 Decision IG. 24/13), in 2020 SCP/RAC worked on the development of a set of regional measures to support green and circular businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compiling country factsheets, 4 sub Regional Baseline Assessment on the enabling environment for green and circular businesses in the Region, 43 policy recommendations, - Identifying and analysing international Best Practices to nurture the process and boost policy learning, - Implementing a Regional On line Consultation, coupled with key informative documents to enable bottom up policy making processes (https://switchmed.eu/policy/regional-stakeholder-consultation/) 								
Plan Bleu	Update of the MSSD Dashboard	The compendium of the 28 "indicator factsheets" of the Mediterranean sustainability dashboard is updated every 2 years as a monitoring tool to follow up the MSSD implementation at regional level. It has been updated during the biennium 2020-2021 and covers the 6 topics of the MSSD 2016-2025. It supports the Contracting Parties to report on SDGs implementation at national level. The Regional Observatory's website has been redesigned.	All (1-6)	Regional	Policy and Legislation	2020	Achieved (cont'd)	MTF: 10.000 USD	2 GIS experts and 1 website designer	https://www.observatoirebleu.org/en/

Annex III

**Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard – Updated List of Indicators,
as taken note of by COP 21 (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019)**

Annex III: Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard – Updated List of Indicators, as taken note of by COP 21 (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 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 IV

Conclusions and Recommendations adopted at the Plenary consultation on the draft Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) elaborated by the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC)

22 September 2020 (Marseille, France, and online)

Annex IV: Conclusions and Recommendations adopted at the Plenary consultation on the draft Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) elaborated by the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC). 22 September 2020 (Marseille, France, and online)

The Focal Points of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Climate Change Expert Group (CEEG) and the UfM Environment Task Force, the Focal Points of Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan – UNEP/MAP), the Members of the Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSDD), as participants to the Plenary consultation on the draft Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) elaborated by the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC),

Recalling the United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” and the Paris Agreement of 12 December 2015 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Recalling also the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution of 15 March 2019, UNEP/EA.4/Res.23 entitled “Keeping the world environment under review: enhancing the United Nations Environment Programme science-policy interface and endorsement of the Global Environment Outlook”,

Recalling further the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016- 2025 and its Objective 4 “Climate change as a priority in the Mediterranean”, the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for Marine and Coastal Areas, and the 1st UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change (Athens, Greece, 13 April 2014),

Having regard to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols, and in particular Article 4 thereof on general obligations,

Recalling Decision IG.24/4 on Assessment Studies adopted at the 21st Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 21) (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019), approving the elements of the “Roadmap for the Consultation of Decision-Makers and Stakeholders on the First Assessment Report on the Current State and Risks of Climate and Environmental Changes in the Mediterranean (MAR1)” as set out in Annex IV of that Decision,

- *Welcome and express appreciation* for the work undertaken by members of the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC), in particular its coordinators, authors and secretariat, for the preparation of the MedECC First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) and its Summary for Policymakers (SPM);
- *Acknowledge* the importance of the Science – Policy – Society Interface developed by MedECC in cooperation with the UfM and UNEP/MAP Secretariats and Plan Bleu, and *welcome* the inclusive process undertaken to consult the scientific community, governments representatives, policymakers and stakeholders on the findings of MAR1;
- *Agree*, on a consensual basis, that the Plenary consultation did not identify any factual inaccuracy or error in the SPM;
- *Invite* the Secretariat of the UfM to submit the SPM to for the consideration and endorsement by the next UfM Ministerial Meeting on Environment and Climate Action expected to be held in Egypt;

- *Invite also* the Secretariat of the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention to submit the SPM for the consideration and endorsement by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention at their 22nd Meeting to be held in Antalya, Turkey, in December 2021;
 - *Encourage* the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system to consider the results of MedECC work in the preparation of the draft decisions for the COP 22 and of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027;
 - *Encourage also* the MedECC secretariat, supporting institutions and partners to proceed with a timely publication of the SPM and use its key messages toward a broad dissemination and communication campaign, targeting decision-makers, other stakeholders and citizens, supporting policy-making processes and awareness of the public at regional, national and local levels in the Mediterranean region.
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