

10th Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group

Istanbul, Türkiye, 11 September 2023

Agenda item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact - Floriana, Malta, 23-24 May 2023

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

Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil
and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental
Impact

REMPEC/WG.55/11
29 June 2023
Original: English

Floriana, Malta, 23-24 May 2023

**Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on
Environmental Impact**

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Note by the Secretariat

This document provides a summary of the discussions held during the Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact, on 23-24 May 2023, as well as the draft conclusions and recommendations put forward.

Introduction

1 The Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact, hereinafter referred to as “the Meeting”, has been convened in Floriana, Malta from 23 to 24 May 2023, pursuant to the Programme of Work and Budget for 2022-2023 of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), also referred to as UNEP/MAP, adopted by the Twenty-second Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (“the Barcelona Convention”) and its Protocols*.

2 The Meeting was organised by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), in close cooperation with UNEP/MAP.

3 The principal objectives of the Meeting were to:

- .1 review and provide further guidance on the key outcomes that have been prepared or updated in the current biennium in relation to the implementation of the Offshore Protocol;
- .2 review and approve for consideration by the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 23):
 - .1 IMAP Common Indicators to be monitored under the Offshore Protocol;
 - .2 Regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects; and
 - .3 Amendments to the Annexes of the Offshore Protocol.
- .3 inform on the progress of the ratification of the Offshore Protocol and of the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, with its comprehensive plan of actions, looking for its long-term sustainable implementation;
- .4 share best practices and lessons learnt among the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, and other relevant international organizations, MAP partners and the private sector regarding offshore activities.

Opening of the Meeting

4 The Meeting was opened on Tuesday, 23 May 2023 at 0900 hours by Capt. Joseph Zerafa, Interim Head of Office (HoO) of REMPEC.

5 The HoO welcomed the delegates and the representative of UNEP/MAP. In his opening remarks, the HoO highlighted that it was the first face-to-face meeting since the last OFOG Meeting which was held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The HoO then referred to the Agenda and the main objectives of the Meeting. Finally, the HoO wished all the delegates a very productive meeting, emphasizing the spirit of cooperation needed to reach decisions that could be accepted by all.

6 In delivering his opening remarks, the representative of UNEP/MAP referred to the importance of the OFOG sub-group on Environmental Impact to enhance the implementation of the Offshore Protocol and the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan as well as to promote the ratification of the Protocol. He also highlighted the bilateral agreement with the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (MASE) supporting activities in the current programme of work for the implementation of the Protocol.

* UNEP/MED IG.25/27, Antalya, Türkiye, 7-10 December 2021.

7 The HoO recalled the Rules of procedures for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties and proposed the Meeting to elect one (1) Chairperson, one (1) Vice-Chairperson and one (1) Rapporteur from among the delegates, as follows:

Chairperson : Dr. Vlatka Vaniček, Croatia;
Vice-Chairperson: Mr. Mourad Ben Moussa, Tunisia; and
Rapporteur: Ms. Maria Louizou, Cyprus.

8 In accepting her nomination, the Chairperson welcomed the delegates and thanked them for her appointment and encouraged the delegates to work together to ensure a fruitful outcome.

9 The Meeting was attended in person by representatives from: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Union, Greece, Israel, Italy, Spain, Tunisia, and Türkiye. The representative of Morocco attended remotely. Representatives of the International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP) attended in person, while the representatives of the CIDCE, EnerGeo Alliance, and the Sea Alarm Foundation attended online. The UNEP/MAP–Barcelona Convention Secretariat was represented by the MAP Coordinating Unit and REMPEC. The list of delegates is set out at Annex I.

Agenda Item 1 **Adoption of the Agenda**
REMPEC/WG.55/1/Rev.1, REMPEC/WG.55/1/1

10 The Chairperson referred to the timetable of the Meeting, as outlined in document REMPEC/WG.55/1/1, and provided a brief overview of the Meeting’s objectives and organisation. This information was supplemented by additional logistical information given by the HoO, in particular, on the working languages and interpretation provided.

11 In introducing the Agenda, the Chairperson requested any delegation who wanted to intervene under Agenda Item 9 – Any Other Business, to inform the Secretariat with a view that the necessary logistics arrangements would be in place for their intervention. No requests were indicated at this stage.

12 The Agenda, and timetable as proposed in document REMPEC/WG.55/1/Rev.1 and annotated in document REMPEC/WG.55/1/1, was adopted and is set out at Annex II.

Agenda Item 2 **Offshore monitoring programme – IMAP Common indicators**
REMPEC/WG.55/2, REMPEC/WG.55/INF.3, REMPEC/WG.55/INF.4

13 The Offshore Consultant of REMPEC introduced document REMPEC/WG.55/2 “Offshore monitoring programme – IMAP Common Indicators”. He provided background information and context leading to the proposed list of eight (8) IMAP Common Indicators (CIs) to be monitored as part of the Offshore Protocol, with five (5) pre-identified as key monitoring indicators for the oil and gas operations.

14 Further information by the REMPEC Secretariat was provided on the IMAP Common Indicator 19 on the occurrence, origin, (where possible) and extent of acute pollution events and their impact on biota affected by this pollution.

15 The UNEP/MAP representative gave further background on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Criteria (IMAP) as it relates to offshore monitoring. He explained that the IMAP monitoring requirements focus on agreed common indicators, parameters, that are indicative of the state of the environment, the prevailing anthropogenic pressure, their impacts and the progress towards good environmental status. In this particular case the CIs selected would reflect the effects of offshore activities on the environment.

16 One delegate requested clarifications on Candidate Indicator 27, namely, on the use of models to monitor low levels of continuous level frequency sounds. The UNEP/MAP representative recalled that Candidate Indicator are non-mandatory indicators and are monitored on a voluntary basis towards their potential development into Common Indicators but with respect to the specific query, he would need to revert to MEDPOL programme as this is the entity which could provide a better understanding of the technical details behind the elements of this CI.

17 Another delegate asked for clarifications on the data to be collected and the use of a specific database. Clarification was provided by the Secretariat referring to the excel spreadsheet related to the Data Standards/Data Dictionaries (DS/DD) using CI 19 as an example.

18 The Meeting endorsed the list of five (5) IMAP Common Indicators (CI 1, 2, 15, 17, and 18) to be monitored for offshore activities, which would reflect the effects of oil and gas activities on the Mediterranean marine environment and requested that the Secretariat informs the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group and the MAP Focal Points Meetings accordingly.

Agenda Item 3

Draft Decommissioning guidelines

REMPEC/WG.55/3, REMPEC/WG.55/INF.5

19 The Offshore Consultant of REMPEC introduced document REMPEC/WG.55/3 “Draft Regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects”, summarizing the work of the Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG) on ‘Decommissioning’ and the process leading to the preparation of the document.

20 The ICG Lead gave a brief introduction to the Guidelines. He explained that the drafted guidelines were an adaptation of the Italian law to be used as a catalyst to promote the development of the final guidelines which would underline key principles underpinning decommissioning projects in the Mediterranean region.

21 In the ensuing discussion, the following comments were made:

- .1 similar regulations exist in member States of the European Union;
- .2 a delegate reported that whilst decommissioning does imply total removal of the fixed installations, in some cases pipelines can be left if cleaned;
- .3 some successful cases do exist for the re-use of fixed installations;
- .4 limitations exist regarding the re-use and repurposing of installations especially when considering ageing installations;
- .5 repurposing a fixed installation for wind turbines is difficult considering that the original structural design was not designed for this type of efforts;
- .6 one delegate reported that every year a list of platforms to be dismantled, or re-utilised, is compiled, however, no application has as yet been received to re-use an offshore platform;
- .7 one MAP Partner emphasized that even when an offshore platform is re-used, at some stage, the installation will have to be dismantled and this needs to be considered. It offered its expertise to countries on the subject matter of decommissioning; and
- .8 a delegate reported that whilst it has no legislation on the subject matter, it has some provisions in place requiring an operator to submit a plan for decommissioning some years before the effective decommissioning, which has to be subsequently approved by the Minister of Energy, and if approved, is financed through a fund specifically established for decommissioning through the licencing system.

22 Following the ensuing discussions, the Meeting concurred that more work was needed on the guidelines and agreed to establish an Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG) to further the work on the development of the guidelines on “Removal of installations and the related financial aspects” with the Terms of References (ToR) as outlined in Annex II of document REMPEC/WG.55/3, and to inform the MAP Focal Points accordingly.

Agenda Item 4 **Technical review of the Annexes to the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol**
REMPEC/WG.55/4, REMPEC/WG.55/INF.6

23 The Offshore Consultant of REMPEC introduced document REMPEC/WG.55/4 “Technical review of the Annexes to the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol”, summarizing the work of the ICG on the technical review of the Annexes.

24 IOGP, a MAP Partner, provided specific examples to illustrate why in its view, it considered that some of the technical content of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol would create significant challenges for the implementation of the Offshore Protocol, both from an operator and a Contracting Party (CP) stand-point. As a result, it would support the establishment of an ICG to further the work on the technical review of the Annexes.

25 One delegate, while agreeing in principle with the IOGP on the need of a technical review of the Annexes, expressed the view that with reference to the lists of Harmful and Noxious Substances and Materials of the Protocol, it might be worth considering the approach taken in the 1996 London Protocol and introduce the “reverse list” approach where all hazardous and noxious material are prohibited except for those possible acceptable.

26 The representative of UNEP/MAP noted this approach with reference to the 1995 amendments to the Dumping Protocol to the Barcelona Convention, which is not yet into force, and, therefore, encouraged its ratification.

27 IOGP underlined that it would support the mentioned approach, noting that the whole process should be risk based on potential harm, noting also that ratification of the Offshore Protocol would be more attractive if there was a much simpler process.

28 One delegate referred to the newly agreed international instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). He questioned if there was any room to consider this new agreement in the technical review of the Annexes as there are interesting requirements, for example, with regards to environmental impact assessments.

29 The representative of UNEP/MAP noted that while the latest developments on the BBNJ are followed, within the context of this exercise, these might go beyond the scope of what is reflected and regulated in the Annexes. He further noted that the proposal would go further than a technical review of the Annexes. The Meeting, however, agreed to bring this proposal to the attention of the next MAP Focal Point Meeting with a view that the proposal could be considered in the future.

30 Following the ensuing discussion, the Meeting agreed to continue the work on the technical review of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol through the establishment of an ICG approving its ToRs as set out in Annex II to document REMPEC /WG.55/4.

Agenda Item 5 **Progress on the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan**
REMPEC/WG.55/5

31 The Offshore Consultant of REMPEC introduced document REMPEC/WG.55/5, on the Progress on the Implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (MOAP). He highlighted the challenges encountered in the implementation of the MOAP and underlined that its implementation period was due to end in December 2024 with still numerous outputs to be achieved. He introduced the actions to be taken as a proposed way forward as set out in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the document REMPEC /WG.55/5. Referring to the possible next steps, the question of requesting an extension of the implementation period of the MOAP and the anticipation for a revised, or new, MOAP was addressed.

32 Following an exchange of view, the Meeting agreed to:

- .1 emphasise the importance of reporting under the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), in particular, by CPs that are Parties to the Offshore Protocol, and by CPs with ongoing or planned oil and gas activities and encouraged all CPs to strengthen their national implementation reporting through the BCRS, with the support of the Secretariat as requested;
- .2 note the challenges encountered in the implementation of the MOAP, including limited dedicated financial and human resources; which resulted in limited progress in its implementation;
- .3 encourage the Secretariat to explore and mobilise external resources for the implementation of the MOAP;
- .4 reiterate the view expressed by the 3rd OFOG Meeting, namely, that to ensure effective implementation of the MOAP, there is a need for a fixed-term staff position on the Offshore Protocol at the Secretariat to organize and support the coordination of the defined outputs in the Plan;
- .5 endorse the importance on capitalizing on strengthened partnerships with industry Partners and international organizations for the delivery of online training courses and other technical support; and
- .6 a text of a draft decision set out at Annex III for consideration by the MAP Focal Points Meeting and COP 23, as appropriate and in line with the rules of UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention.

33 With regards to the draft decision referred to in point 6 above, the representative of UNEP/MAP provided some additional information on the process followed for submission of draft Decisions to COPs, and highlighted that the Secretariat would examine the most appropriate way to accommodate the request of the meeting regarding the extension of the MOAP timeline and its future revision.

Agenda Item 6 **Status of Ratification of the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol**
REMPEC/WG.55/6

34 The Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.55/6 related to the status of Ratification of the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol describing the benefits arising from ratification of the Protocol, the possible reasons for non-ratification by countries and the potential actions that could be taken to overcome the barriers to ratification.

35 The Meeting had an extensive exchange of view on the “twinning approach”, which consists of developing bilateral cooperation between Contracting and non-Contracting Parties which allows the sharing of experiences and lessons learnt, in the route to accession and implementation of the Offshore Protocol by a non-Party State.

36 A delegate expressed the view that while the “twinning approach” is a good one, the process requires a certain amount of time dedicated to the process by the CP to the Offshore Protocol involved in the twinning arrangement.

37 Following, a *tour de table* which allowed delegations to give an update on their country’s status of ratification of the Offshore Protocol, the following comments were made with respect to the possible barriers to ratification of the Protocol:

- .1 while offshore exploration would have been undertaken in the past for some countries, the absence of on-going operations might limit an interest in ratification;
- .2 a lack of understanding of the technical aspects of the Protocol;
- .3 a reason that prevents the ratification of the Offshore Protocol could be the overlap with other existing legislation already in place and, therefore, ways need to be found to overcome this barrier;

- .4 the process of ratification requires a substantial effort to coordinate internal procedures and therefore a stable window of opportunity needs to be found in the political calendar;
- .5 existing legislation already fulfils the requirements of the Offshore Protocol, thus promulgating a law to ratify the Protocol which will merely re-shuffle the current law will give little back in return. It would be useful to explore how ratification can be made easier when the legal requirements are already in place;
- .6 some legal issues are identified in the process leading to ratification which take time to resolve and require a legal opinion; and
- .7 all the technical requirements would be in place for implementation of the Protocol but the official decision to ratify would take time.

38 A delegate raised the issue that his country, which is a non-Contracting Party to the Offshore Protocol, may need assistance with an analysis identifying the gaps and overlaps among the European Directive on Offshore Installations, the Offshore Protocol and any national legislation already in place on offshore activities. Such an analysis would facilitate his country to take the necessary action to allow the necessary laws to be promulgated to support possible ratification of the Protocol.

39 In acknowledging this challenge and the comments made above on the status of ratification of the different countries, the Meeting emphasized the importance of increasing the number of CP ratifications and noted the main challenges expressed by those who spoke.

40 The Meeting also supported the suggestion to conduct a gap analysis, with support of the Secretariat, between the Offshore Protocol and the countries regulations that have not yet ratified the Protocol, which is to be included in the future revised Offshore Action Plan.

Agenda Item 7 **Technical cooperation and capacity building programme**
REMPEC/WG.55/7

41 The Offshore Consultant of REMPEC introduced document REMPEC/WG.55/7 related to the updated Technical Cooperation and capacity building programme and recalled that the document elaborates further on the elements discussed in Agenda Item 8.

42 The Meeting had an extensive exchange of view on the proposed technical cooperation and capacity building programme for period 2023-2025, as set out in the Annex to the document.

43 In the ensuing exchange of view the following comments were made:

- .1 training on liability and compensation should be considered as a priority;
- .2 training on the use of chemicals within the context of a chemical use plan for fixed installation, as well as training on inspections would be welcomed;
- .3 in principle, training should follow the development of guidelines;
- .4 in the case of the Decommissioning Guidelines where work has already started, it might be worth considering that training on the subject matter takes place concurrently with their further development under Training Block (B) of the training programme;
- .5 there is a need to advance the process on the development of the guidelines on the use and discharge of harmful and noxious substances and materials (HNS guidelines);
- .6 recalling that the majority of funds would come from “external sources” in the form of unsecured funds for most of the training activities, it is imperative to establish priorities based on the available funding from the MTF;
- .7 some of the subject matter proposed for training, such as Safety measures including health and safety requirements for fire-fighting or the Minimum standards of qualifications for professionals and crews, under Block (C) of the Training would be better handled by the OFOG Sub-Group on Health and Safety called for by the MOAP but which as yet has to be established, given that REMPEC and the OFOG Sub- group on Environmental Impact have no competence on these matters;

- .8 with regard to the last point raised, the Meeting agreed with the proposal of the representative of UNEP/MAP who, while recognizing the priorities discussed and the limited availability of funds as well as the concurrence of the Meeting to prioritise Block (A) of the Training Programme, to include in the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Meeting, the establishment of the OFOG Sub-Group on Health and Safety as defined in the MOAP, for consideration by the forthcoming MAP Focal Point Meeting; and
- .9 with regard to the issue of funding, the Secretariat informed the Meeting that according to the proposed Programme of Work for the next biennia 2024-2025, which is being submitted to the next MAP Focal Points Meeting, funding should be secured for the organisation of the next (5th) OFOG Meeting.

44 The Meeting concurred with a suggestion put forward by a delegate that inclusion of radionuclides (naturally-occurring radioactive materials, NORM), as well as technologically enhanced naturally-occurring radioactive material (TENORM), in the guidelines on the use and discharge of harmful and noxious substances and materials (HNS guidelines), should be explored.

45 The Meeting noted the comments of the representative of DG ENER, of the European Commission, who informed that there is an intention to review the Offshore Safety Directive in the near future and that a study on Decommissioning of offshore oil and gas installations, was carried out last year, and its conclusions are presently being discussed.

46 IOGP offered its technical support to training activities, where possible, and noted that it coordinates numerous webinars on several of the training topics discussed. It offered to share some invitations with the Secretariat, for any Contracting Party that may be interested.

47 The Meeting concurred with the proposed design of the training programme as outlined in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.55/7 further agreeing that , under block (A), a training activity on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures and Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings, including the Use and Discharge of Harmful or Noxious Substances and Materials should be the priority while recognising that the two subject matters would be addressed under separate guidelines. This training activity would also incorporate the requirements on the use of chemicals by an operator within the context of a Chemical use plan for fixed installations.

Agenda Item 8

Reviewed Comprehensive Plan of Actions and PoW 2024-2025

REMPEC/WG.55/8

48 The Offshore Consultant of REMPEC introduced document REMPEC/WG.55/8 which evaluated the planning and priorities for the timelines 2023-2025 taking into consideration the available resources and proposed modalities for a more sustainable implementation of the MOAP. In this connection, the Consultant explained that the information would need to be considered within the context of the information provided under Agenda Item 5 (document REMPEC/WG.55/5 refers) regarding the progress on the implementation of the MOAP.

49 A delegate referred to the article 27 of the Offshore Protocol on Liability and Compensation and suggested that this subject matter be considered as a priority.

50 The Meeting, having evaluated the planning and priorities proposed for the time period 2023-2025, and taking into consideration the available resources, agreed to:

- .1 to underline the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (MOAP);
- .2 that future focus should be activities related to the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material, as well as on liability and compensation;
- .3 to concur in principle with the proposed design of the training programme, as specified in

- the reviewed comprehensive plan of actions, which was further elaborated under Agenda item 7; and
- .4 to show commitment to increase the level of leadership and engagement of the CPs in achieving the specific objectives of the MOAP by proposing to take the lead in the development of concrete action/outputs and/or in tasks related to the organization of the OFOG work in general.

Agenda Item 9 **Any Other Business**

51 No request was made by delegations under this agenda item.

Agenda Item 10 **Conclusions and recommendations**

52 The delegates reviewed, commented and approved the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations as amended. These are set out at Annex IV to the present report.

Closure of the Meeting

53 In his closing remarks the representative of UNEP/MAP thanked delegates for their contributions and acknowledged the quality of the conclusions and recommendations which identified a clear path forward on the next steps.

54 In his closing remarks, Capt. Joseph Zerafa, Interim HoO of REMPEC, thanked the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, the Rapporteur and the delegations for their constructive contribution to the Meeting. He also thanked the interpreters and the technician for their excellent job and finally the Secretariat / REMPEC staff.

55 After the expression of her courtesies, the Chairperson of the Meeting declared the Meeting closed at 12.30 hours on 24 May 2023.

Annex I**List of Delegations****ALBANIA / ALBANIE****Mr Bledar KAROLI**Head Of Maritime Policy Sector
Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy**ALGERIA / ALGÉRIE****Ms Linda RIZOU**Sous directrice
Ministère de l'Environnement**BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE & HERZÉGOVINE****Ms Senida DŽAJIĆ-RGHEI**Researcher
HEIS (Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo)**CROATIA / CROATIE****Dr Vlatka VANIČEK**First Researcher, Marine Environment Affairs in Charge
Maritime Transport Sector**CYPRUS / CHYPRE****Ms Maria LOIZOU**Environment Officer
Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment**Dr Theodora IOANNOU (remote)**Environment Officer
Department of Environment**EGYPT / ÉGYPTE****Ms Hala IBRAHIM MOHAMED SAID**Director of Environmental Crisis
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GREECE / GRÈCE**Mr Alexandros KOULIDIS**Directorate of Environmental Licensing / Head of Unit C
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UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS / ORGANISATIONS DES NATIONS-UNIES

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONNEMENT PROGRAMME/MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN
(UNEP/MAP) / PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT / PLAN
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SECRETARIAT / SECRÉTARIAT

**REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE
MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC) / CENTRE REGIONAL MEDITERRANEEN POUR
L'INTERVENTION D'URGENCE CONTRE LA POLLUTION MARINE ACCIDENTELLE
(REMPEC)**

Capt. Joseph ZERFA

Interim Head of Office

Mr. Stefan MICALLEF

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Mr Gérard BONA-FONOLL

Project Assistant

CONSULTANT / CONSEILLER

Mr Benjamin COUZIGOU

Consultant in Oil Spill Preparedness and Response

Annex II

Agenda and timetable of the Meeting

Opening of the Meeting

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Offshore Monitoring Programme – IMAP Common Indicators
3. Draft Decommissioning guidelines
4. Technical review of the Annexes to the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol
5. Progress on the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan
6. Status of ratification of the Offshore Protocol
7. Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building programme
8. Reviewed Comprehensive Plan of Actions and PoW 2024-2025
9. Any other business
10. Conclusions and recommendations

Closure of the Meeting

Day 1 – Tuesday, 23 May 2023		
08:30 – 09:00	<i>Registration of participants</i>	
09:00 – 09:30	Opening of the Meeting	
09:30 – 09:45	Agenda Item 1	Adoption of the Agenda
09:45 – 10:30	Agenda Item 2	Offshore Monitoring Programme – IMAP Common Indicators
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:00 – 12:30	Agenda Item 3	Draft Decommissioning Guidelines
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>	
14:00 – 15:00	Agenda Item 3 (cont.)	Draft Decommissioning Guidelines
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15:30 – 16:15	Agenda Item 4	Technical review of the Annexes to the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol
16:15 – 17:00	Agenda Item 5	Progress on the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan

Day 2 – Wednesday, 24 May 2023		
09:00 -10:30	Agenda Item 8	Reviewed Comprehensive Plan of Action and PoW 2024-2025
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:00 – 11:30	Agenda Item 7	Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building programme
11:30 – 12:15	Agenda Item 6	Status of the Ratification of the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol
12:15 – 12:30	Agenda Item 9	Other business
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>	
14:00 – 15:00	Agenda Item 10	Conclusions and recommendations
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15:30 – 16:45	Agenda Item 10 (cont.)	Conclusions and recommendations
16:45 – 17:00		Closure of the Meeting

Annex III**Drafted Decision for the Extension of the implementation period of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan****Draft Decision IG/XXX****Extension of the implementation period of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan to the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil.**

The Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols at their 23rd Meeting,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

Having regard to the Protocol concerning the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil, hereinafter referred to as the “Offshore Protocol”, adopted in Madrid, Spain in 1994 and entered into force on 24 March 2011,

Recalling Decision IG.22/3, adopted by the Contracting Parties at their 19th Meeting (COP 19) (Athens, Greece, February 2016), on the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan in the Framework of the Offshore Protocol,

Noting that the implementation timeline of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan in the Framework of the Offshore Protocol expires on 31 December 2024;

Further noting that part of the Specific Objectives of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan in the Framework of the Offshore Protocol, have not been fully achieved;

Conscious that significant accidents caused by Offshore activities could have long term adverse consequences for the fragile ecosystems and biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea due to its enclosed nature and special hydrodynamics as well as negative consequences on the economies of the Mediterranean Countries especially for tourism and fisheries,

Having considered the reports of the Third Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact (Online, 3-4 June 2021), and The Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact (Floriana, Malta, 23-24 May 2023),

1. *Agrees* to extend the implementation timeframe of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan to the Offshore Protocol, for one year, i.e. until the 31st of December 2025;
2. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue and strengthen its efforts to mobilize external resources in support of the implementation of priority activities under the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan to the Offshore Protocol, in line with the updated UNEP/MAP Resource Mobilisation Strategy;
3. *Welcomes* the collaborative approach and support offered by industry partners with a view to establishing an effective and sustainable framework to facilitate the implementation of the Offshore Protocol and the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan;

4. *Requests* the Secretariat to establish an ad hoc working group coordinated by REMPEC, composed of representatives of the Contracting Parties, with the participation of relevant partners, as observers, mandated to review the gaps in the implementation of the current Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan and prepare a reviewed Offshore Action Plan, for the period 2026-2035.

Annex IV

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and recommendations

The Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact, which was held in Floriana, Malta, 23-24 May 2023, hereinafter referred to as the “Meeting”:

1 acknowledged the consultative approach followed by the Secretariat on the monitoring programmes under the Offshore Protocol, and approved the list of 5 IMAP Common Indicators (CI) to be monitored as key monitoring indicators for the oil and gas operations, namely the IMAP CIs 1, 2, 15, 17, and 18 ; in this respect, it requested the Secretariat to inform the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group and Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Focal Points Meetings accordingly;

2 emphasised the importance of reporting under the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), in particular by Contracting Parties (CPs) that are Parties to the Offshore Protocol, and by CPs with ongoing or planned oil and gas activities and encouraged all CPs to strengthen their national implementation reporting through the BCRS, with the support of the Secretariat, as requested;

3 noted the information received and feedback provided on the proposed way forward with respect to the regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects, and in particular agreed on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for establishing an Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG), as set out in document REMPEC/WG.55/3, to further the work on the development of the guidelines on “Removal of installations and the related financial aspects” during the biennium 2024-2025, for review and endorsement by the 5th OFOG meeting before submission to MAP Focal Points meeting in 2025;

4 noted the information received and feedback provided on the proposed way forward with respect to the technical review of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol and in particular agreed on the ToR to establish an ICG, as set out in document REMPEC/WG.55/4, to work on the Technical review of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol for consideration by the next OFOG meeting in 2025;

5 took note of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (MOAP), including limited dedicated financial and human resources, which resulted in limited progress, in particular on objectives related to the ratification of the Offshore Protocol, the provision of technical support and capacity building and the regional transfer of technology; in this respect, it encouraged the Secretariat to explore and mobilise external resources for the implementation of priority MOAP activities, in line with the MAP Resource Mobilisation Strategy which is under preparation;

6 reiterated the view expressed by the 3rd OFOG Meeting that to ensure effective implementation of the MOAP, there is a need for a fixed-term staff position on the Offshore Protocol within the Secretariat to organize and support the coordination of the defined activities in the Plan;

7 provided guidance to the Secretariat on the next activities to be undertaken, as a priority, in the implementation of the Offshore Protocol, and the MOAP, including developing guidance on liability and compensation, and on the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material;

8 agreed on the text of a draft decision for consideration by the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Focal Points Meeting and the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties’ (COP 23) as appropriate,

providing for an extension of one year of the current MOAP for it to expire at the end of 2025, and mandating the Secretariat to prepare a reviewed Offshore Action Plan;

9 endorsed the importance on capitalizing on strengthened partnerships with industry Partners and international organizations for the delivery of online training courses and other technical support;

10 welcomed the identified areas for “technical cooperation for the development of standards and guidelines”, stressing the importance of prioritization, considering a realistic allocation of capacities and resources from both the Secretariat and Contracting Parties;

11 noted that the work on “technical cooperation on safety measures, and minimum standards of qualifications for professionals and crews” is pertinent to the OFOG sub-group on Safety and asked the Secretariat to reflect in consultation with the MAP Focal Points about a potential establishment of this OFOG sub-group in the next biennium;

12 concurred with the proposed design of the training programme, as specified in the reviewed comprehensive plan of actions set out in document REMPEC/WG.55/8, and expressed priority for the following topics for training:

- .1 under training block (A), planned for 2023, consider a training activity on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures and Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings, as well as on the Use and Discharge of Harmful or Noxious Substances and Materials, keeping the two topics addressed under separate guidelines. Such an activity should address the requirements on the use of chemicals by an operator as reflected in a Chemical use plan;
- .2 Include in the proposed Programme of Work (PoW) 2024-2025 the organisation of a training on the decommissioning of installations under training block (B), in parallel with the preparation of the respective guidelines, and consider, if possible and depending on availability of resources the organisation of a training on the Offshore Platform Preparedness and Response and Contingency Plan Assessment;
- .3 the remaining trainings under block (C) should be considered pending mobilisation of additional external resources;

13 emphasised the importance of increasing the number of CP ratifications and took note of the main challenges expressed by CPs that have not yet ratified the Protocol;

14 supported the suggestion to conduct a gap analysis, with support of the Secretariat, between the Offshore Protocol and the countries regulations that have not yet ratified the Protocol, which is to be included in the future revised Offshore Action Plan;

15 expressed its commitment to increase the level of leadership and engagement by the CPs in achieving the specific objectives of the MOAP by proposing to take the lead in the development of concrete action/outputs and/or in tasks related to the organization of the OFOG work in general; and

16 thanked the Chair of the Meeting, the Secretariat, and partner organizations for providing essential technical and strategic support in the preparation of the working documents for this Meeting or through their interventions during the Meeting, and for their interest in sustaining their support and cooperation in the further implementation of the MOAP.

Annex V

Reviewed Comprehensive Plan of Action

Overview of milestones, timeline, associated indicative budgets and manpower

Table A.1 Overview of milestones and timeline per Action/Output relating to the Contracting Parties (CPs) (2023-2025)

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	Timeline						Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
			2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025		
1. To ratify the Offshore Protocol	a) Ratification by all CPs of the Offshore Protocol, transposition of the Offshore Protocol into national law, and cooperation through the Secretariat to ensure compliance with its provisions	Increase the number of CPs which ratify the Offshore Protocol (8 in 2021)	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time	Depends on CP
	b) Review of the effectiveness of the Offshore Protocol	Review of effectiveness at the end of the implementation period of the current Offshore Action Plan				X			CPs time	Possibilities to coordinate an ad-hoc Meeting for a new MOAP
2. To designate CPs' Representatives to participate in the regional governing bodies	a) Nomination of the National Offshore Focal Point designated by all MAP Focal Points to coordinate at national level activities carried out in the framework of the Action Plan and actively participate in the OFOG Group	Contribute to the update of the National Offshore Focal Point list on a yearly basis	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time	1-7 days, depending on CP

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023		2024		2025		Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
			#	#	#	#	#	#		
	b) Designation, upon request by the Secretariat, through their National Offshore Focal Point, of the appropriate national entities and/or officials as contact points for each OFOG Sub-Group	Contribute to the update of the OFOG Sub-Group contact points on a yearly basis	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time	
	c) Leadership, on a voluntary basis, of the established Sub-Groups to coordinate with the support of the Secretariat the work assigned to the Sub-Groups	-Dedicated OFOG chair, appointment for a minimum of two years -Assign (voluntary) task leads on the development of standards and guidelines (Specific Objectives 7 & 8) -Set up correspondence groups or ad-hoc task groups on specific issues -See also Part II – updated RMS	#	#	#	#	#	#	Volunteering	Depends on CP and task
3. To establish a technical cooperation and capacity building programme	a) Technical cooperation and capacity building programme endorsed as set in Appendix 2 of the Offshore Action Plan	See Table 1 in REMPEC/WG.55/8 and the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11	#	#	#	#	#	#	Participation in trainings see Table 1 in REMPEC/WG.55/8 the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11	See indicative length of trainings in Table 1 REMPEC/WG.55/8 the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11
4. To mobilize resources for the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Financial and human resources mobilized to support the implementation of the Action Plan, in particular its provisions related to the OFOG Group,	Implement updated RMS	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time, with support from Secretariat under Specific Objective 4 a) (Table A.2)	Depends on CP

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)		
	technical cooperation, capacity building and monitoring activities								
5. To promote access to information and public participation in decision-making	a) Template for public information, in line with national and regional rules on access to information	Template for public information at the regional level available	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time, with support from Secretariat under Specific Objective 5 a) (Table A.2)	1-3 days for filling template, depending on CP
	b) Report to the Secretariat every two years relevant information on the offshore installations within their jurisdiction including, when appropriate, information on their disposal for inclusion in the inventory to be maintained by the Secretariat	Reporting in BCRS Increase the number of CPs that submit their National Report on the implementation of the Offshore Protocol in BCRS (10 CPs for 2020-2021, of which 4 reported on offshore installations)			#	#		CPs time	See Specific Objective 10 a)
	c) Report to the Secretariat every two years on discharges, spills and emissions from offshore oil and gas installations data in accordance with the monitoring programme to be defined by the relevant OFOG Sub-Group	Reporting in BCRS and MEDGIS-MAR platform Increase the number of CPs that submit their National Report on the implementation of the Offshore Protocol in BCRS, and that report on discharges, spills and emissions the MEDGIS-MAR platform			#	#		CPs time	See Specific Objective 10 a)

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023		2024		2025		Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
			#	#	#	#	#	#		
6. To enhance the regional transfer of technology	a) Active participation of the respective scientific and technical institutions, as well as the industry, in R&D activities and programmes related to prevention, response and monitoring of pollution from offshore activities	Enhance knowledge development and exchange through R&D activities and programmes	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time	As appropriate, depending on CP
	b) Presentation of the results of R&D activities and programmes by their respective national institutions and industry in international fora	Enhance knowledge development and exchange through participation in national and international fora	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time	As appropriate, depending on CP
	c) Information on ongoing R&D activities and research needs provided to the Secretariat	Keep the Secretariat abreast of ongoing R&D activities and research needs	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time	1 day per year
7. To develop and adopt regional offshore standards	a) Environmental impact assessment regional standards developed based on existing EIA regional standards taking into consideration requirements referred in Annex IV and other best practices	On-going Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) adopted by COP 22 (IG.25/15)				/			-	-
	b) Common standards, on the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material, in line with relevant international standards and conventions defining inter alia limits and prohibitions at regional level formulated and adopted	Tentatively in biennium 2024-2025 (see Table 1)			#	#			Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	Lead/contribution: 20 - 50 days (see End note ⁱ) To be assessed and refined by the task group

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)			
	c) Identification of the required modifications of Annex I, II and III and definition of which chemicals should be covered and not covered by such standards and under which conditions	<p>Amendments to the Annexes to the Protocol were adopted by COP 22 (IG.25/7).</p> <p>An ICG has been launched in November 2022 for a technical review of the Annexes.</p> <p>Refer to the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11 and the set-up of a new ICG</p>	#	#	#	#	#		Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	Lead/contribution: 20 - 50 days (see End note ⁱ)
	d) Common standards on the disposal of oil and oily mixtures and on the use and disposal of drilling fluids and cutting formulated and adopted, and revision of the limits set in Article 10 and the prescriptions referred in Annex V of the Protocol	Adopted by COP 21 (Decision IG.24/9)	Completed			-	-			
	e) The method to be used to analyze the oil content is commonly agreed and adopted	Tentatively in biennium 2024-2025, as part of Specific Objective 7 b)		#	#	#	#		Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	Lead/contribution: 20 - 50 days (see End note ⁱ) To be assessed and refined by task group

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	f) Procedures for contingency planning, notification of accidental spills and transboundary pollution established in accordance with the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea	Address through REMPEC work in the framework of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol, as needed	#			CPs time, with support from the Secretariat under the framework of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol	As appropriate
	g) Special restrictions or conditions for SPAs defined and adopted	Adopted by COP 21 (Decision IG.24/9)	Completed			-	-
	h) Common criteria, rules and procedures for the removal of installations and the related financial aspects adopted	<p>Planned in PoW 2022-2023 (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.5)</p> <p>An ICG has been launched in November 2022, led by Italy.</p> <p>A first draft has been submitted to the CPs for the Fourth OFOG Meeting, May 2023</p> <p>Refer to the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11 and the set-up of a new ICG</p>	#	#	#	Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	<p>Lead/contribution: 20 - 50 days (see End noteⁱ)</p> <p>To be assessed and refined by task group</p>
	i) Common criteria, rules and procedures for safety measures including health and safety requirements adopted	It could be proposed to launch an ICG on the topic early 2024 and might be suggested that the		#	#	-	-

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	j) Common minimum standards of qualification for professionals and crews adopted	<p>ICG also incorporate work on Minimum standards and qualifications for professionals and crew. Nevertheless it should be under the OFOG Safety sub-group ; which is not a decision of the OFOG sub-group on Environmental Impact.</p> <p>Refer to the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11</p>		#	#		-
8. To develop and adopt regional offshore guidelines	a) Regional Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment	Finalized in 2020-2021 biennium for COP 22 consideration	Completed			Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) adopted by COP 22 (IG.25/15)	-

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones				Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
			2023	2024	2025		
	b) Regional Guidelines on the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material	Tentatively in biennium 2024-2025 See Table 1		#	#	Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	See Specific Objective 7 b)
	c) Regional Guidelines on the disposal of oil and oily mixtures and the use and disposal of drilling fluids and cutting and analytical measurement	Adopted by COP 21 (Decision IG.24/9)	Completed			-	-
	d) Regional Guidelines on removal of installations and the related financial aspects	Planned in PoW 2022-2023 (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.5) An ICG has been launched in November 2022, led by Italy. A first draft has been submitted to the CPs for the Fourth OFOG Meeting, May 2023 Refer to the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11 and the set-up of a new ICG	#	#	#	Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	See Specific Objective 7 h)

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	e) Regional Guidelines on installation safety measures including health and safety requirements	It could be proposed to launch an ICG on the topic early 2024 and might be suggested that the ICG also incorporate work on Minimum standards and qualifications for professionals and crew. Nevertheless it should be under the OFOG Safety sub-group ; which is not a decision of the OFOG sub-group on Environmental Impact. Refer to the text of the drafted Conclusions and Recommendations in REMPEC/WG.55/11				Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	See Specific Objective 7 i), j)
	f) Regional Guidelines on minimum standards of qualifications for professionals and crews			#	#		
	g) Regional Guidelines on authorization requirements based on the above-mentioned Standards	Tentatively in biennium 2024-2025 No firm decision. It should be decided at a later stage.		#	#	Tasked to CP/s on a voluntary basis, with support from the Secretariat under Specific Objectives 3, 7 and 8 (Table A.2)	Lead/contribution: 20 - 50 days (see End note ¹) To be assessed and refined by task group
	h) A report assessing national, regional and international, rules, procedures and practices regarding liability and compensation for loss and damage	No progress since submission of Study on International Best Practices (REMPEC/WG.35/INF.3) at the				-	-

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023						Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	resulting from the activities dealt with in the Offshore Protocol.	3 rd Offshore Protocol Working Group Meeting in 2014								
	i) Contribution through their OPRC Focal Points to the revision of the Section II of the Manual on Oil Pollution – Contingency Planning by the IMO Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) which will include new information related to contingency planning for offshore units, sea ports and oil handling facilities	Manual on Oil Pollution: Section II published in 2018	Completed						-	-
9. To establish regional offshore monitoring procedures and programme	a) A regional monitoring programme for offshore activities building, inter alia, on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme	Set of indicators to complement IMAP addressing offshore activities developed and adopted	#	#	#	#	#	#	CPs time, with technical support included under Specific Objectives 3 and 9 (Table A.2)	10-30 days every two years, depending on CP
	b) Results of the national offshore monitoring programme and the related agreed data are reported to the Secretariat every two years	Reporting of the national offshore monitoring programme as part of IMAP implementation			#	#			CPs time	
10. To report on the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Report on the implementation of this Action Plan, in particular on the effectiveness of the measures defined in this Action Plan and difficulties encountered every two years	Biennial progress updates presented at the OFOG, MAP and COP Meetings	#				#		CPs time, including participation in biennial OFOG Meetings	For travel budget, see Specific Objective 10 b) in Table A.2 2-7 days for reporting every two years, depending on CP

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
							2 days per OFOG Meeting, not including preparation time
	b) Biennial review of the status of implementation of the Action Plan on the basis of the regional report prepared by the Secretariat	Biennial progress updates presented at the OFOG, MAP and COP Meetings	#		#	CPs time	1-3 days for reviewing every two years, depending on CP

/ Green, anticipated implementation period – X / Blue, anticipated structuring physical meeting.

i. Indicative man-days estimated based on the consultancy funds of Euro 20,000 per standard/guideline assumed in Appendix I of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (Decision IG.22/3), accounting for a daily rate of 500 USD (420 Euro). This amounts to 48 days.

Table A.2 Overview of milestones and timeline per Action/Output relating to the Secretariat and its Components (2023-2025)

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023		2024		2025		Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
			#	#	#	#	#	#		
1. To ratify the Offshore Protocol	a) Provision of advice and technical assistance to CPs to the Barcelona Convention, which so request	Secure fixed-term position dedicated to the Offshore Protocol at the Secretariat	#	#	#	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	b) Assistance in reviewing the effectiveness of the Offshore Protocol	Secure fixed-term position dedicated to the Offshore Protocol at the Secretariat	#	#	#	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
2. To designate CPs' Representatives to participate in the regional governing bodies	a) Participation of the industry and their representatives as observers to the OFOG Sub-Groups	Sustain participation and engagement of IOGP as accredited MAP partner Encourage participation of representatives from other relevant parties	#	#	#	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time and travels	End note ⁱ Secretariat Travels on Official Business
	b) Enhancement of public awareness through the contribution of IGOs and NGOs with a relevant mandate to the topics discussed in the various OFOG Sub-Groups, through their participation as observers, ensuring an open and transparent process through public consultations	Sustain current level of participation and engagement of NGOs, e.g. WWF Greece Encourage participation of representatives from other relevant organizations	#	#	#	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	c) Establishment of institutional cooperation with various relevant regional and global institutions, initiatives and agreements and, at an operational level, identification and use of possible synergies	Sustain cooperation with IOGP, London Protocol Secretariat, UNEP Oil for Development Partnership, EUOAG and OSPAR OIC	#	#	#	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time and any travel required	End note ⁱ Secretariat Travel on Official Business

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	with ongoing activities of bodies such as the EMSA	Establish cooperation with other organizations and associations, including EMSA and EOSCA					
	d) Publication and update of the composition of the OFOG Group and Sub-Groups on a dedicated website	Publish and update OFOG Group and Sub-Group contact points on a yearly basis	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	e) Updated list of the National Offshore Focal Points and OFOG Sub-Group Focal Points	Update National Offshore Focal Point and OFOG Sub-Group Focal Points list on a yearly basis	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	f) Definition, in consultation with MAP Focal Points, of the roles and responsibilities of UNEP/MAP Components to facilitate the implementation of the Action Plan	Define roles and responsibilities every two years in the preparation of PoW	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	g) Identification of the required means including human resources to ensure the implementation of the Action Plan and the support of the relevant UNEP/MAP Components.	see Specific Objective 4		#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
3. To establish a technical cooperation and capacity building programme	a) Integration of the technical cooperation and capacity building programme in the six-year programme of activities of UNEP/MAP and its relevant Components and in their biennium programme of work	Integrate within the current draft MTS 2022-2027	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	b) Preparation of the corresponding budget for consideration by the Ordinary Meeting	Integrate in PoW 2024-2025	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023		2024		2025		Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	Mobilize support from national technical experts, partners and international organizations								
	c) Identification of donors to secure funds required for the implementation of the technical cooperation and capacity building programme	Implement updated RMS Secure financial and in-kind contribution through collaboration with partners and international organizations	#	#	#	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
4. To mobilize resources for the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Identification of additional donors to secure funds for the implementation of the Action Plan	Implement updated RMS Evaluate the implementation of RMS and potential update in 2024, to be presented at COP 24			#	#			Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
5. To promote access to information and public participation in decision-making	a) Support the preparation of the template for public information in line with existing Decisions of the CPs addressing public access to information and with UNEP's Access to Information Policy	Compile links to national websites that provide public access to information Template for public information at the regional level in biennium 2022-2023	#	#	#	#			Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	b) Development of an online regional system and for it to be maintained for the purpose of public information sharing	Develop online regional system for public information sharing	#	#	#	#			Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	c) Publication every two years on a dedicated website of the inventory of installations as well as the discharges,	Harmonize reporting on the inventory of installations in	#				#		Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023		2024		2025		Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	spills and emissions from offshore oil and gas installations data submitted by the CPs	BCRS with MEDGIS-MAR platform Further update of the inventory subject to reporting by CPs under Specific Objective 5 b) (Table A.1)								
	d) Produce a consolidated report every two years on the discharges, spills and emissions from offshore oil and gas installations data submitted by the CPs.	Develop a regional system for reporting on discharges and emissions		#				#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
6. To enhance the regional transfer of technology	a) Support in the identification of fields of research in which there is a need for enhancement of the state-of-the-art of offshore pollution prevention, response and monitoring technologies and techniques	Compile an inventory of R&D activities and research needs e.g. through a dedicated questionnaire	#	#	#	#			Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	b) Dissemination and exchange of results of national R&D activities and programmes within and outside the Mediterranean region	Disseminate and enhance the exchange of information related to R&D results e.g. publication on website	#	#	#	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	c) Participation of national and regional research institutions and industry in the relevant international fora facilitated with a view to making better known the results of R&D activities undertaken in the Mediterranean region	Disseminate and enhance the exchange of information related to R&D results	#	#	#	#	#	#	Participation in relevant fora	-

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
7. To develop and adopt regional offshore standards	a) Support the specific OFOG Sub-Groups for the development of the above common standards	Secure fixed-term position dedicated to the Offshore Protocol at the Secretariat Mobilize support from national technical experts, industry partners and international organizations	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
8. To develop and adopt regional offshore guidelines on	a) Support the specific OFOG Sub-Groups for the development of the above common guidelines	Secure fixed-term position dedicated to the Offshore Protocol at the Secretariat Mobilize support from national technical experts, partners and international organizations	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
9. To establish regional offshore monitoring procedures and programme	a) The development/adoption of Mediterranean Monitoring Procedures and Programmes for the above, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, building on the relevant work undertaken in the Monitoring Correspondence Groups in the EcAp process in line with Decision 21/3	Develop and adopt a set of indicators to complement IMAP addressing offshore activities Establish the Mediterranean Regional Offshore Monitoring Programme as part of IMAP	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	b) Development of the Mediterranean Offshore Reporting and Monitoring System (e.g. Regional Data Bank on Offshore activities through the Barcelona	Streamline offshore data-sharing and monitoring platform with Info-MAP data management system	#	#	#	Secretariat staff time, with support from Info-RAC	40,000 allocated to Info-RAC in 2022-2023

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)	
	Convention Reporting System or other systems defined by the CPs)	Establish the Mediterranean Regional Offshore Monitoring Programme as part of IMAP						
	c) Production, dissemination and publication, every two years of a report on Discharges, Spills and Emissions from Offshore Oil and Gas Installations, based on data submitted by countries which should be used as a base for the State of Environment Report regarding the impacts of the offshore oil and gas industry	Develop regional system for reporting of discharges and emissions Update and publication subject to regular reporting by CPs as part of Specific Objective 5c) (Table A.1)	#	#			Secretariat staff time, publication and dissemination	End note ⁱ
10. To report on the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Guidelines on the structure and content of the national report on the implementation of this Action Plan considering existing reporting procedures (e.g. Reporting under the Compliance Committee) to avoid duplication of reporting procedures, as well as a set of indicators	Provide guidelines to CPs to compile and report information presented in Table A.1 to the Secretariat	#	#			Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ
	b) Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Organize a biennial OFOG Meeting	#	#			Travel/DSA	60,000 ⁱⁱ
	c) Consolidated report on the implementation of the Action Plan every two years for its submission to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol and the Meetings of the	Present biennial progress updates at the OFOG, MAP and COP Meetings	#	#			Secretariat staff time	End note ⁱ

Specific Objective	Actions/Outputs	Key milestones	2023	2024	2025	Means required	Indicative budget (Euro)/ manpower (man-days) (2023-2025)
	Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention		#		#		

/ Green, anticipated implementation period – X / Blue, anticipated structuring physical meeting.

- i. Taking into account the number of tasks to be implemented by the Secretariat, the creation of a fixed position at the Secretariat should be envisaged.
- ii. Two meetings in the period 2023-2025, with a budget of 30,000 Euro per meeting

Annex VI

Proposed Terms of Reference for an Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG) on the development of regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects

Scope of work

1 The scope of work of this Intersessional Correspondence Group hereafter referred to “ICG Decommissioning” is to further the work on the development of the guidelines on ‘Removal of installations and the related financial aspects’ in accordance to Specific Objectives 7 h) and 8 d): To develop and adopt regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal of installations and the related financial aspects of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (Decision IG.22/3).

2 This work will be guided by Article 20 Removal of Installations of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil (the Offshore Protocol).

Objectives

3 Using documents REMPEC/WG.55/3 and REMPEC/55/INF.5 as a basis, the objective of the ICG Decommissioning is to carry out the following tasks with the support of REMPEC:

- .1 Further elaborate the submitted draft document based on input received for the Fourth OFOG Meeting, taking into consideration relevant international, regional and national best practice guidance documents and practices;
- .2 Submit a second draft to Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact Contracting Parties, partners and experts (ICG members) for consultation; and
- .3 Consolidate a third draft version for submission to the fifth OFOG meeting to be held in Q2 2025.

Table A2. Proposed adjusted planning for the “ICG Decommissioning”

Activities/Tasks to implement	Indicative timeline						Deadline	Coordination and considerations for implementation	Entity responsible for the implementation
	2023		2024		2025				
Definition of the ToR for an ICG to work on the development of the guidance document on ‘Removal of installations and the related financial aspects’	#							Secretariat to draft the ToR, circulation of the document and reaching an agreement	Secretariat
Approval of the ToR	#								Contracting Parties (CPs) Secretariat
Compilation of further comments on the submitted initial draft	#							Secretariat to compile the comments	CPs, OFOG Partners and experts
Submission of a second draft of a revised version of the Guidance document on Decommissioning by Secretariat to OFOG members, partners and experts for consultation		#							Secretariat
Comments from OFOG members, partners and experts			#					Secretariat to compile the comments	CPs, OFOG Partners and experts
Submission of a third draft of a revised version of the Guidance document on Decommissioning by Secretariat to OFOG members, partners and experts for pre-approval during an online meeting				#				Secretariat to coordinate the meeting and compile the comments	Secretariat
Present a revised version of the Guidance document on Decommissioning at the Fifth OFOG meeting					#			Secretariat coordinating the meeting	Secretariat

/ Green, anticipated implementation period.

Participation

4 Participation is open to all CPs to the Barcelona Convention, Partner organizations and appropriate entities which can provide the necessary expertise on a timely basis or which have a particular interest in the issue under consideration. Any CP, Partner organization or appropriate entity can join in the work of the ICG Decommissioning and any contribution should be accepted at any stage of the work of the Group.

Organisation of work

5 The group will be convened by the Secretariat, with the participation of other CPs, partners and experts (ICG members), and support from the Secretariat (REMPEC).

6 The Secretariat is expected to plan, organize and coordinate the work, making sure the task is progressing as planned.

7 The Secretariat will correspond remotely, through scheduling of regular remote meetings with the members, as considered necessary.

8 The working language is preferably English. Correspondence and documents would also be accepted in French, however, no translation will be made by the Secretariat.

Responsibilities

9 Responsibilities of the Secretariat include:

- .1 organization of the work, planning, coordination and keeping track of the progress;
- .2 establishment of deadlines for the preparation of the drafts and receipt of comments,;
- .3 scheduling regular remote meetings with the members, as considered necessary;
- .4 preparation of the annotated outline and subsequent draft guideline documents; and
- .5 presentation of the revised guidelines at the 5th OFOG meeting.

10 Responsibilities of the member Contracting Parties include:

- .1 designation of a person/entity with the corresponding expertise for the issues dealt within the ICG Decommissioning;
- .2 active participation and contribution to the work of the ICG; and
- .3 compliance with the timeline and deadlines established by the Secretariat.

11 Responsibilities of third parties include:

- .1 active contribution to the technical content of the work of the ICG; and
- .2 compliance with the timeline and deadlines established by the Secretariat.

Annex VII

Proposed Terms of Reference for an Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG) to work on a revised version of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol consistent with the Common Standards approved at COP 21

Scope of work

1 The scope of work of the ICG on the revision of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol (in short - ICG Revision of Annexes) is to keep under review the technical content of the Annexes to the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil (the Offshore Protocol) and make relevant recommendations for their periodic update as necessary. This is in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) and Specific Objective 7.c Identification of the required modifications of Annex I, II and III and definition of which chemicals should be covered and not covered by such standards and under which conditions of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (Decision IG.22/3).

2 This work will build on the working document UNEP/MED WG.498/4 presented at the third OFOG meeting held remotely on 3-4 June 2021, and references therein, including links to the Common Standards and Guidance on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures and the Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings (Decision IG.24/9 - Annex I). It will also build on the working document REMPEC/WG.55/4 presented at the fourth OFOG meeting on 23-24 May 2023. Furthermore it will take into account the planned activities of the OFOG related to guidelines on the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances, as well as recent and ongoing relevant activities and processes at the international, regional and national level.

Objectives

3 The objective of the ICG Revision of Annexes is to carry out the following tasks with the support of REMPEC:

- .1 Technical review of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol, identifying further required alignments with international, regional and national standards;
- .2 Propose recommendations for modifications and corresponding justification;
- .3 Submit proposed amendments to OFOG members, partners and experts for consultation;
- .4 Present outcomes at the fifth OFOG meeting to be held in Q2 2025.

Table 1 Proposed planning for the implementation of an Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG) to work on Annexes to the Offshore Protocol

Activities/Tasks to implement	Indicative timeline					Deadline	Coordination and considerations for implementation	Entity responsible for the implementation
	2023	2024	2025					
Development of the ToR for an ICG on Annexes to the Offshore Protocol	#						Secretariat to draft the ToR, circulation of the document and reaching an agreement	Secretariat
Approval of the ToR	#							Contracting Parties (CPs) Secretariat
Circular letter launching the ICG	#							Secretariat
Submission of a first draft of a revised version of the Annexes with corresponding justification by Secretariat to OFOG members, partners and experts for consultation		#						Secretariat
Comments from OFOG members, partners and experts			#				Secretariat to compile the comments	CPs, OFOG Partners and experts
Submission of a second draft with corresponding justification by Secretariat to OFOG members, partners and experts for consultation			#					Secretariat
Comments from OFOG members, partners and experts			#				Secretariat to compile the comments	CPs, OFOG Partners and experts
Submission of a third draft with corresponding justification by Secretariat to OFOG members, partners and experts for pre-approval during an online meeting				#			Secretariat to coordinate the meeting and compile the comments	Secretariat
Present a revised version of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol at the Fifth OFOG meeting					#		Secretariat coordinating the meeting	Secretariat

/ Green/Shaded, anticipated implementation period.

Participation

4 Participation is open to all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, partner organizations and appropriate entities which can provide the necessary expertise on a timely basis or which have a particular interest in the issue under consideration. Any Contracting Party, partner organization or appropriate entity can join in the work of the ICG Revision of the Annexes and any contribution should be accepted at any stage of the work of the Group.

Organisation of work

5 The group will be convened by the Secretariat, with the participation of other CPs, partners and experts (ICG members), and support from the Secretariat (REMPEC).

6 The Secretariat is expected to plan, organize and coordinate the work, making sure the task is progressing as planned.

7 The Secretariat will correspond remotely, through scheduling of regular remote meetings with the members, as considered necessary.

8 The working language is preferably English. Correspondence and documents would also be accepted in French, however no translation will be made by the Secretariat.

Responsibilities

9 Responsibilities of the Secretariat include:

- .1 organization of the work, planning, coordination and keeping track of the progress;
- .2 establishment of deadlines for the preparation of the recommendations;
- .3 scheduling regular remote meetings with the members, as considered necessary;
- .4 facilitation of the administrative and operational functioning of the ICG, including establishment of contacts with other entities etc., as required; and
- .5 presentation of the recommendations for amendments at the 5th OFOG meeting.

11 Responsibilities of the member Contracting Parties include:

- .1 designation of a person/entity with the corresponding expertise for the issues dealt within the ICG Revision of the Annexes;
- .2 active participation and contribution to the work of the ICG notably by:
 - a) conducting the technical analysis required for the revision of the Annexes; and
 - b) submitting recommendations and justification for the proposed amendment to the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol.
- .3 compliance with the timeline and deadlines established by the Secretariat; and
- .4 submit input using the template shared by the Secretariat.

12 Responsibilities of third parties participating in the ICG Revision of the Annexes include:

- .1 active contribution to the technical content of the work of the ICG notably by:
 - a) conducting the technical analysis required for the review of the Annexes; and
 - b) submitting recommendations and justification for the proposed amendment to the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol.
 - .2 compliance with the timeline and deadlines established by the Secretariat; and
 - .3 submit input using the template shared by the Secretariat.
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