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Meeting of the MAP Focal Points

Teleconference, 10-17 September 2021

Agenda Items 3 and 4: Progress Report on Activities Carried Out during the 2020-2021 Biennium and Financial Report for 2018-2019 and 2020-2021

Agenda Item 5: Specific Matters for Consideration and Action by the Meeting, including Draft Decisions

Reports of the Meetings of the Bureau (89th, 90th, and 91st)

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2021



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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

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89th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Teleconference, 22-23 April 2020

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2020

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Introduction

1. In consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 89th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held on 22-23 April 2020. The meeting was held through teleconference, due to the measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic (instead of Rome, Italy, as originally planned).

Participation

2. The meeting was attended by the Presidency: Mr. Oliviero Montanaro, accompanied by Mr. Roberto Giangreco, Ms. Silvia Sartori and Ms. Valentina Mauriello (Italy); the Vice-Presidents: Amb. Yann Wehring, accompanied by Mr. Benoit Rodrigues and Mr. Clément Payeur (France); Ms. Ayelet Rosen (Israel); Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro); Ms. Asli Topalak (Turkey); and the Rapporteur, Ms. Nassira Rheyati (Morocco). Ms. Marijana Mance (European Union) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, Programme Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The Bureau meeting was opened at 09:30 on 22 April 2020 by Mr. Oliviero Montanaro, Chairperson of the meeting. He welcomed the Bureau members and other participants to their first meeting of the 2020-2021 biennium.

4. The Coordinator also made a short statement of welcome to the participants.

II. Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.89/1. No additional issues were added to agenda item 7 “*Any Other Matters*”. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

III. Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for January-March 2020

6. The Coordinator introduced the documents “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period January-March 2020*” (UNEP/MED BUR.89/3) and “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Implementation of COP 21 Decisions*” (UNEP/MED BUR.89/4) and made reference to the “*Reports of the 39th and 40th Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*”, presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.89/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively, for the information of the Bureau.

7. In his presentation, the Coordinator highlighted that, despite the situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures to contain it, there is already much progress during the first months of the biennium in putting into action the implementation of COP 21 Decisions, including the Programme of Work and Budget (PoW) for 2020-2021. Special reference was made to the meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel in January 2020, which provided the opportunity for a strategic, in-depth, discussion on the priorities of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system for the biennium, including the preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy. It also provided for an early discussion on other strategic processes, such as the preparation of the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAP BIO), the 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, the Mid-Term Evaluation of the MSSD and of the Sustainable Consumption Production Action Plan (SCP Action Plan), etc.

8. Further highlights focused in the progress on resource mobilization, including the conclusion of the development process of the GEF-funded MedProgramme – an ambitious programme that has mobilized approximately 37 million USD for the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, its partners and the GEF eligible countries in the Mediterranean. The concept notes for two new projects, namely EcAp-MED III and Marine Litter MED II following-up to successfully completed previous projects, have been submitted and approved by the 8th Programme Steering Committee Meeting of the GPGC funding instrument under the EC-UNEP framework agreement in February 2020; the full proposals were under finalization. Furthermore, the meeting was informed that a proposal for a joint project with FAO/GFCM was under submission to GEF, while proposals for new projects have been prepared and submitted by MAP Components to different donors and funding sources, supporting the implementation of the PoW for 2020-2021. Reference was also made to existing projects that are successfully implemented, such as the GEF Adriatic project and the EC-funded IMAP-MPA project, as well as to projects that were successfully finalized, such as the EC-funded MED MPA Network and SEIS Support Mechanism projects, as well as the Cooperation Agreement with the Italian Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea Protection.

9. Highlights included the update of technical features of the online Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS) to launch the submission of national implementation reports for the 2018-2019 biennium. Synergies and complementarities were enhanced with global and regional institutions and organizations, such as the European Union, the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the IMO and the Basel Convention (and especially its Plastic Waste Partnership). The meeting was also informed on progress regarding science-policy interface and assessment reports, including the co-organization by MAP of the Regional Workshop for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (Venice, Italy, 21-23 January 2020), the progress on the publication and communication of the SoED 2019 report, the implementation of the 2023 MED QSR roadmap, and the finalization of the report on the Current State and Risks of Climate and Environmental Changes in the Mediterranean.

10. Finally, the Coordinator informed the meeting on specific progress in relation to the core and cross-cutting themes of the 2016-2022 Medium-Term Strategy. He noted, inter alia, that Nature-Based Solutions are having an increasingly central place in the work of UNEP and this is closely related to the implementation of the Biodiversity and Ecosystems core theme of the MTS, and beyond.

11. The Chairman and other Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat for the excellent work done during this short period and under the COVID-19 special circumstances. They also provided some specific comments on the text of the Progress Report.

12. Regarding paragraph 110, it was clarified that the preparation of the CAMP Agreement between Albania and Italy does not depend on the possible signature of a new bilateral agreement between Italy and UNEP/MAP and that the preparation of the CAMP Agreement will proceed as provided for in the PoW; allocation of external resources will be needed at a later stage, for the implementation of the CAMP Agreement. Furthermore, discussion took place regarding a possible development of a project proposal to the Green Climate Fund. The Coordinator clarified that this is still at a very early stage, and that consultations will take place with the Bureau and Contracting Parties later in the year. The Bureau members expressed appreciation for this matter as well as on the progress on bilateral CAMPs and noted that these issues are also relevant to the preparation of the next MTS.

13. The Bureau members expressed appreciation also for the discussions that took place during and after the 40th Meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel on the preparation of the new MTS. They also asked the Secretariat if there are contingency plans regarding how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the activities of UNEP/MAP, noting that there is always a risk that after the COVID-19 crisis the international agenda focuses on economic/financial issues and sideline the environment. The importance of biodiversity issues as well as of climate change were touched upon.

14. The meeting expressed appreciation for the support of Italy in a number of activities through the bilateral Agreement between IMELS and UNEP/MAP and highlighted the usefulness of some other projects such as the MEDREGION project. A member of the Bureau highlighted the necessity of exploring new instruments and sub-regional implementation mechanisms that would be used to support group of countries that do not benefit from present and future projects financed by the GPGC funding instrument of the European Commission. Regarding paragraph 107 of the Progress Report, the Bureau members asked that the PAP/RAC Focal Points are associated with the preparation of the toolbox for the analytical phase of the MSP process.

15. The Coordinator acknowledged the concerns of the Bureau members regarding the possible implications of the COVID-19 situation and informed the participants that relevant discussions and actions have been initiated at all levels: within UNEP/MAP, UNEP Headquarters and the UN in general. On the possible effects of COVID-19 on the global environmental priorities, Mr. Leone shared with the meeting the relevant priorities highlighted by the UNEP Headquarters, namely “*focus on nature*”, “*waste management*” (and especially medical waste) and “*greening the responses*”.

16. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work done in the period January-March 2020 as presented by the Secretariat, and its satisfaction for the efforts and results achieved so far.

IV. Agenda Item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

17. The Coordinator informed the meeting on the progress made as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.89/5 “*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*”, addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters. He noted that the current situation is unpredictable due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the Working Capital Reserve (WCR) and Net Cash Balance are very important since they provide added security to the system.

18. Noting the healthy status of the Mediterranean Trust Fund, the Bureau expressed appreciation for the information provided. The members of the Bureau asked for further update on the possible impact of the current COVID-19 crisis on the financial situation, once such analysis is completed, and to be alerted if any complications arise.

19. The Secretariat pointed out that the level of financial contributions received for 2019 is very high and contributes to the healthy financial situation of the system. Contributions are being received also for 2020, although at a slower rate due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was added that the Secretariat is in contact with several Contracting Parties, which have confirmed that contributions will be paid in full, although with a short delay.

20. Regarding long standing arrears, it was highlighted that two out of the countries in arrears, namely the State of Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic, face specific critical situation. It was added that this fact differentiates them from the other countries in arrears and should be taken into consideration. It was noted that there may also be a need to address the issue of the arrears of these two Contracting Parties at the COP.

21. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to liaise with UNEP Headquarters to explore if there are relevant considerations at the global level on possible impacts of the COVID-19 situation on the preparation of the new UN scale of assessments.

22. In relation to personnel issues, it was noted by the Secretariat that openings of posts for both staff and consultants are advertised in Inspira, in line with the relevant UN rules, adding that the MAP Focal Points are informed on the new openings through email.

23. The Coordinator informed the Bureau members on the efforts, in coordination with the authorities of the Hellenic Republic, to identify new, adequate and representative premises for MAP headquarters or, if this is not attainable, to refurbish the existing premises. The Bureau members

registered their availability to support the efforts of the Secretariat and noted that if no progress has been made in this direction until the next Bureau meeting, the issue must be discussed again at that meeting with a view to take additional action, possibly involving the Bureau itself.

24. Conclusions:

- (a) The Bureau takes note of the Fund balances and the Working Capital Reserve and requests the Secretariat to continue maintaining the Working Capital Reserve at the recommended level and keeping the Bureau updated on the Fund balances. The Bureau also asks the Secretariat to update the Bureau on the possible impact of the current COVID-19 crisis on the financial situation once such analysis is completed and in line with the projections and scenarios of UNEP;**
- (b) The Bureau welcomes the information provided on the interim financial statements as at 31 December 2019 and notes that the audited financial statements will be shared as soon as they are available;**
- (c) The Bureau notes with appreciation the high level of contributions received for the years 2018 and 2019;**
- (d) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties to pay the 2020 contributions as soon as possible and to adhere to Procedure 4.2.b of the Financial Rules and Procedures for the funds of the Barcelona Convention, which states that contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full. This is particularly important due to the impact and unpredictability of the current COVID-19 global crisis. The Bureau requests the Secretariat, in addition to the current practice of posting the contributions on the UNEP/MAP website, to disseminate the updated status of contributions to the MAP focal Points, every three months;**
- (e) The Bureau strongly urges the seven Contracting Parties whose contributions for prior year(s) are still pending to pay them as soon as possible, in particular those countries in arrears for over 24 months, while noting the specific circumstances of the State of Libya and of the Syrian Arab Republic;**
- (f) The Bureau takes note of the actions taken by the Secretariat regarding the four Contracting Parties in arrears for over 24 months and requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears in line with the respective Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures and to report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties at their next meetings on the progress under any proposed and discussed payment schedule;**
- (g) The Bureau takes note of the application of the new adjusted scale of assessments for the years 2020-2021;**
- (h) The Bureau welcomes the progress made on the administrative procedures taken this biennium by the Secretariat to ensure the rapid and streamlined start of the PoW activities and notes that further updates on the financial implementation of the PoW and Budget 2020-2021 will be provided at its next regular Meeting;**
- (i) The Bureau takes note of the programme support allocation for 2019 and advance programme support allotment for 2020, and urges the Secretariat to take appropriate action for the most efficient use of these resources to further strengthen the operations of UNEP/MAP;**
- (j) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitments at the Coordinating Unit and welcomes the efforts made by the Secretariat in ensuring adequate human resources for the smooth implementation of the Programme of Work and keep the Bureau informed about any potential delays on recruitment processes;**
- (k) The Bureau takes note with appreciation of all efforts made by the Hellenic Republic and the Secretariat and urges the Host Government to rapidly progress, in line with its commitment, towards the provision in 2020 to the Secretariat of adequate premises to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of UN operations.**

V. Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues

25. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.89/6).

26. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

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

27. The Coordinator reported that no new instruments of ratification have been received since April 2019 and informed the Bureau on the initiatives supporting ratification that could be carried out by the Secretariat in cooperation with MAP components, taking into account adequate resources and the constraints posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

28. The Bureau members took note of the current status of ratification and noted that they will liaise with the relevant authorities of their Contracting Parties on possible progress towards ratification of the Protocols for which ratification is pending.

29. **Conclusions:**

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

(b) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts to achieve the full ratification of the revised Barcelona Convention and the ratification of its Protocols, and welcomes the proposals by the Secretariat for possible initiatives to support ratifications.

- B. Compliance and Reporting

30. The Secretariat provided an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.24/1 on “*Compliance Committee*”. Regarding reporting, the Secretariat provided updated information on submission of national implementation reports: as of 14 April 2020, 15 new national implementation reports for the biennium 2016-2017 have been submitted using the new online Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS). This translates into a total of 19 Contracting Parties having submitted their 2016-2017 national implementation reports, 12 out of which have concluded the process of submission. In parallel, the Secretariat is finalizing with INFO/RAC the technical part on the submission of national implementation reports for the biennium 2018-2019, and an official invitation will be sent to MAP Focal Points in May 2019, to submit their 2018-2019 national implementation reports.

31. The Bureau noted the progress made in the submission of national implementation reports and suggested that a working meeting is organized with INFO/RAC, so that the Focal Points of Contracting Parties who have not yet reported can be supported in working on the implementation reports.

32. The Bureau also discussed the way that the information provided in the national implementation reports can most effectively and timely contribute to the preparation of the new MTS. It was proposed that the letter to be sent to Contracting Parties inviting them to submit their 2018-2019 national implementation reports, will stress that doing so will be necessary also for feeding the evaluation of the current MTS and the preparation of the new MTS.

33. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013, 2014–2015 and/or 2016-2017 without further delay;

(b) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to finalize the ongoing streamlining work on the BCRS so as to facilitate the timely submission by the Contracting Parties of their national implementation reports for the biennium 2018-2019;

(c) The Bureau elects Ms. Xenia Loizidou, a national of Cyprus, as an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee for a term of four years, until COP 23¹.

- C. Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy

34. The Secretariat presented the progress regarding the evaluation of the 2016-2021 MTS and preparation of the 2022-2027 MTS, as described in the Report of Specific Issues and its Annex I. Special emphasis was given to the consultations that took place during and after the 40th Meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP, Rome, Italy, 30-31 January 2020), as also presented in the report of the 40th ECP Meeting (document UNEP/MED BUR.89/Inf.4).

35. The Bureau welcomed the discussions held at the ECP and their outcome and provided advice in relation to the process as well as to the structure and priorities of the MTS. On the process, it was noted that the ECP should participate in the meetings of the Steering Committee, as observers, and of the Open-Ended Working Group and that the nature of different bodies (Bureau, Steering Committee, Open-Ended Working Group, MAP Focal Points) needs to be further clarified. To this end, the Bureau asked that a short document is prepared by the Secretariat, based on Annex I of the Report of Specific Issues, explaining the process, timeline and role of the relevant bodies and submitted to its members for comments. The Bureau members supported the involvement of stakeholders/MAP partners in the process, noting that this could be better done at the level of the Open-Ended Working Group and the relevant online consultations. The importance of the discussions to take place during the MAP Focal Points Meeting on the new MTS in Spring 2021 was highlighted and it was noted that relevant documentation should be timely delivered for that meeting.

36. In relation to the structure and priorities of the new MTS, it was highlighted that the priorities of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement should be shared by the new MTS. It was noted that climate change should be central to the new MTS, while the issue of biodiversity was also stressed as important, especially in relation to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. It was also noted that, considering the prevention and reduction of marine litter and plastics, land-based pollution priority should be given to waste management, directly or indirectly linked to the SDGs, with a zero-waste approach, by benefiting from the countries' experiences on this issue. A member of the Bureau referred also to issues related to environmental health as relevant, especially taking into account the current COVID-19 situation. Another member of the Bureau noted that the issue of integration of science-policy interface mechanisms in all MAP policies, in order to ensure their real impact on the ground, should represent one of the priorities in the preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy. On the structure, a member of the Bureau noted that the MTS should be at the level of Strategic Outcomes, to allow enough flexibility in implementation, and, that technical, financial and operational means to achieve the MTS objectives should be also included. Due to the limited time for discussion during the meeting and the importance of the matter, the Bureau members agreed to send written comments to the Secretariat following the meeting.

37. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau takes note of the timeline for the evaluation of the current MTS and the preparation of the new MTS, as presented in Annex I to the Report on Specific Issues, and of the progress achieved and requests the Secretariat to continue implementing Decision IG.24/2 in an inclusive manner;

¹ Turkey did not participate during the election of the Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee at the meeting.

(b) The Bureau welcomes the discussion held at the ECP on the preparation of the new MTS, and agrees with the participation of the members of the ECP in the meetings of the Steering Committee and of the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparation of the new MTS. The Bureau invites its Members to submit to the Secretariat initial indications on the substantive priorities to be reflected in the new MTS within three weeks after the Bureau meeting;

(c) The Bureau takes note of the three additional members² of the Steering Committee nominated by the sub-groups, and requests the Secretariat to prepare the first meeting of the Steering Committee as per the timeline of actions of Annex I to the Report on Specific Issues³. It also requests the Secretariat to prepare an explanation of the expected roles and relations of the different structures involved in the preparation of the MTS (i.e. Bureau, Steering Committee, OEWG, and MAP Focal Points) and a revised timeline of actions (to the one presented in Annex I to the Report on Specific Issues) for the evaluation of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) 2016-2021 and the preparation of the new MTS within three weeks after the Bureau meeting.

- **D. Major Processes and Strategic Documents:**
 - **Data Management Policy**
 - **Mid-Term Evaluation of the MSSD and of the SCP Action Plan**
 - **SAP BIO**
 - **MED SO_x ECA**
 - **2023 MED QSR**
 - **MED 2050 Foresight Study**
 - **MedECC Assessment Report (MAR1)**
 - **Update of Annexes to Pollution Protocols**
 - **Regional Pollution Plans**

38. The Secretariat introduced the progress regarding the major processes and strategic documents that are being prepared in the current biennium. Following this introduction, the Bureau members discussed the progress and provided guidance on the way forward.

39. The Bureau members highlighted the importance of the MED SO_x ECA and asked that a reference is included on this issue in the conclusions of the meeting. They expressed their support in the process and noted that this is a complicated issue for some Contracting Parties as shown during the discussions of the last biennium. The Secretariat informed the meeting that three national workshops on ratification and effective implementation of MARPOL Annex VI were organized for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Libya (November/December 2019), a bilateral meeting was organized in Tunisia (March 2020), while the three national workshops for Algeria, Lebanon and Egypt were postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

40. Regarding the MedECC assessment report, it was noted that the full report and summary for policymakers will be submitted to the UfM Ministerial meeting and then to COP 22. Following a discussion on paragraph 40 of the Report on Specific Issues, the Bureau stressed that it is premature to

² Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou, Tunisia; Ms. Selma Cengic, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Mr. Charalambos Hajipakkos, Cyprus.

³ Turkey did not participate during the discussion on the Members of the Steering Committee for the preparation of the new MTS.

articulate the possible impact of the MedECC assessment report on COP 22 decisions, and in particular on their potentially legally binding measures.

41. On the 2023 MED QSR it was noted that its preparation follows the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap and Needs Assessment and is supported both by the activities in the Programme of Work and Budget, as well as by specific projects, ongoing or expected to start soon. The technical issues are first discussed at the CORMONs (biodiversity, pollution and coast and hydrography) in accordance with the EcAp governance structure. The EU observer welcomed the work that the Secretariat is doing in view of implementing Ecosystem Approach and highlighted the importance of presenting concrete proposals for output delivery as a part of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap at the level of common indicators, including an analysis of related gaps, concrete requirements and deadlines for consideration by the Contracting Parties to be submitted at the 90th meeting of the Bureau for its review and guidance (as per Para 35. of Specific Issues document: *In line with Decision IG.24/4, during the first semester of 2020, the Secretariat, working with the support of the MAP components, is developing further concrete proposals for output delivery as part of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap at the level of common indicators, including an analysis of related gaps, concrete requirements and deadlines for consideration by the Contracting Parties, which will be subsequently submitted to the Bureau at its next, 90th meeting for its review and guidance*). This analysis with deadlines, together with the information on the UNEP/MAP system's technical teams supporting the development of data-based QSR 2023, is very important to address the Contracting Parties' decision at COP 20 in Tirana related to the delivery of data-based Mediterranean Quality Status Report 2023. The Bureau welcomed this proposal and suggested to have a specific recommendation to that effect. More detailed information will be provided by the Secretariat at the next Bureau meeting.

42. On the Regional Pollution Plans, it was clarified by the Secretariat that two working groups of experts will be formed, one on the regional plans on Urban Wastewater Treatment and on Sewage Sludge Management (due to their linked content) and one on the regional plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean. The Bureau members asked the secretariat to prepare a note with more detailed information on the terms of references and timelines of the working groups that will be established for developing the Regional Pollution Plans and for Updating the Annexes to the Pollution Protocols and include the terms of reference as annexes to this report. The note was shared with the Bureau members for comments together with the final version of the Bureau meeting conclusions and recommendations. There were no comments received and the note is presented in Annex III of this report.

43. During the discussion on the pollution related protocols and regional plans, the Coordinator highlighted that MED POL has a very important and extended mandate and that more human resources are needed to effectively deliver this mandate.

44. The Bureau underlined that the specific guidance provided by the Bureau in relation to some processes responds to the need for enhancing their level of implementation, considering related complexities and difficulties faced, based on the information provided by the Secretariat in the Report on Specific Issues, and does not indicate a different level of importance in relation to the implementation of other COP 21 decisions and PoW activities.

45. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses appreciation of the efforts made so far regarding the major processes and strategic documents implementing the relevant COP 21 Decisions, requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction, and calls upon the Contracting Parties to fully commit to and support these important processes;

(b) The Bureau endorses the terms of reference and timeline prepared by the Secretariat as presented in the Annex to these conclusions and recommendations in relation to (i) the process for updating the annexes of the LBS and Dumping Protocols, and (ii) the process for the development of the Regional Plans to reduce/prevent marine pollution from land-based sources, respectively. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to effectively contribute to these processes to ensure their successful completion;

(c) The Bureau welcomes the ongoing work on the possible designation of a MED SOx ECA in the Mediterranean and encourages the Secretariat, REMPEC and the Contracting Parties to continue collaborating to guarantee the success of the process;

(d) The Bureau welcomes the ongoing work of the Secretariat on identifying gaps, concrete requirements and deadlines for the development of the 2023 MED QSR and invites the Secretariat to present a report on the progress of the implementation of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap at the 90th Bureau meeting including information on the technical teams established for this purpose;

(e) The Bureau welcomes the ongoing consultation process on the MedECC report on the Current State and Risks of Climate and Environmental Changes in the Mediterranean.

- E. Cooperation and Partners

46. Following an update by the Coordinator on the progress in relation to cooperation and partners, the Bureau welcomed the progress made on mobilizing financial resources as well as on the cooperation and partnerships, including on synergies with other Secretariats in spatial-based protection and management measures for marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean Area.

47. The meeting also discussed the possible update of existing MoUs with UfMS and FAO/GFCM; it was noted that the Bureau and Contracting Parties will be timely informed on the update of the Annexes/areas of collaboration of the MoUs. On the signature of MoUs between RACs and partners, it was noted that the process developed and formally communicated to RACs, following the conclusions of the 87th Bureau meeting, is being followed.

48. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on mobilizing financial resources under the GEF MedProgramme and encourages the Secretariat to kickstart the innovative and ambitious activities of the MedProgramme as soon as the legal framework for the use of funds is set;

(b) The Bureau welcomes the ongoing work to strengthen the collaboration with partners and requests the Secretariat to ensure the full involvement of the MAP Focal Points in the process of reviewing the MoUs and to keep the Bureau informed on the progress;

(c) In relation to synergies with other Secretariats in spatial-based protection and management measures for marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean Area, the Bureau takes note of the initial work of the Secretariat and encourages the Secretariat to further explore and discuss with the partners informal forms of participation of competent organizations and bodies for multilateral dialogue and collaborative work;

(d) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new applications submitted by “Association Sawa for Development” and “Blue World Institute of Marine Research and Conservation” (BWI) for accreditation as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 22 for consideration and endorsement. Regarding “Fédération des Coopératives des Pays de Mayoko” (FECOPAM), the Bureau agrees that not all conditions and criteria are fulfilled for its accreditation as MAP Partner.

- F) Outreach, Information and Communication, including MAP visibility in major global events

49. The Coordinator presented a brief update on the information and communication activities and plans for the biennium in this area. He expressed his satisfaction with the progress, noting that there are now more structured efforts due to the increased stable capacity at the Coordinating Unit and an effective functioning of the Information and Communication Task Force, while there is progress regarding MAP presence in social media, in coordination with Headquarters.

50. The Bureau welcomed the relevant progress and provided feedback, especially in relation to the dissemination and communication of the 2019 SoED report. It was noted that since some final editing was being made to the full SoED report, when this editing is completed the report should be sent to the MAP Focal Points for a final check of possible errors of a purely technical nature, with a short deadline so that the publication progress is not delayed.

51. Conclusion:

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

(b) The Bureau encourages the Secretariat to pursue its communication efforts on the assessment reports according to a system-wide approach, and to this end ensure the dissemination of the 2019 SoED at all levels, as a major product of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system. The Bureau encourages Contracting Parties to identify media and non-media multipliers to disseminate the 2019 SoED findings and conclusions at Contracting Party level;

(c) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to disseminate to MAP Focal Points the final version of the SoED Report, along with this conclusion, for checking any possible errors of a purely technical nature within a strict deadline of 10 days. The final decision and accountability on the technical accuracy of the SoED Report will continue to remain with Plan Bleu/RAC and the Secretariat.

VI. Agenda Item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 90th Meeting of the Bureau

52. The Bureau agreed that its 90th Meeting will be held on 12-13 November 2020, in Athens, Greece (as in document UNEP/MED BUR.89/Inf.3). The meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS is planned to take place on 10-11 November, back to back with the Bureau meeting.

53. One Bureau member noted that, according to document UNEP/MED BUR.89/Inf.3, the 91st Bureau meeting is planned to take place on the same dates with the INFO/RAC Focal Points Meeting in May 2021, and that this will create some difficulties; he therefore proposed to change the date of one of the two meetings.

VII. Agenda Item 7: Any Other Matters

54. No other matters were raised by the Bureau members.

VIII. Agenda Item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

55. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions as set in this report.

IX. Agenda Item 9: Closure of the Meeting

56. The meeting was closed by the chairperson at 16:30 on Thursday, 23 April 2020.

Annex I
List of participants

MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU

ITALY / ITALIE

(PRESIDENT)

Mr. Oliviero Montanaro

Director General
Directorate for Sustainable Development,
Environmental Damage and European Union
Affairs
Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea Protection

Mr. Roberto Giangreco

Directorate General for Nature and Sea Protection
Ministry of Environment Land and Sea Protection

Ms. Silvia Sartori

Expert
Sogesid Technical Assistance Unit - Ministry of
Environment Land and Sea Protection

Ms. Valentina Mauriello

Expert
Sogesid Technical Assistance Unit - Ministry of
Environment Land and Sea Protection

FRANCE / FRANCE

(VICE PRESIDENT)

S.E.M. Yann Wehring

Ambassadeur pour l'Environnement
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et Européennes

M. Benoit Rodrigues

Chargé de mission protection du milieu marin et
conventions de mers régionales (Méditerranée,
Océan indien, Pacifique, Caraïbes)
Bureau Biodiversité et Milieux
Direction des Affaires Européennes et
Internationales
SG/DAEI/CCDD/CCDD2
Ministère de la transition écologique et solidaire

Mr. Clément Payeur

Protection internationale des océans – Global ocean
protection
Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères
Sous-direction de l'environnement et du climat
(CLEN)

ISRAEL / ISRAEL

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Ms. Ayelet Rosen

Head of Division
Division of Multilateral Environmental
Agreements
Ministry of Environmental Protection

MONTENEGRO / MONTÉNÉGRO

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Ms. Ivana Stojanovic

Adviser, Department for Sustainable Development
and Integrated Coastal Zone Management
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism

TURKEY / TURQUIE

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Ms. Asli Topalak

Expert
Ministry of Environment and Urbanization

MOROCCO / MAROC

(RAPPORTEUR)

Ms. Nassira Rheyati

Chef de la Division de la Coopération
Internationale
Direction du Partenariat, de la Communication et
de la Coopération
Département de l'Environnement
Ministère de l'énergie, des mines et de
l'environnement

OBSERVER

**EUROPEAN UNION / UNION
EUROPÉENNE**

Ms. Marijana Mance

Policy Officer, UNEP/MAP Focal Point
European Commission
Directorate-General for Environment
Unit C2: Marine Environment and Water Industry

**SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION
COORDINATING UNIT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

Mr. Gaetano Leone

Coordinator

Ms. Tatjana Hema

Deputy Coordinator

Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis

Programme Management Officer

Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda item 1** **Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2** **Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3** **Progress Report for January – March 2020**
- Agenda item 4** **Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5** **Specific Issues:**
- a) Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols
 - b) Compliance and Reporting
 - c) Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy
 - d) Major Processes and Strategic Documents:
 - Data Management Policy
 - Mid-Term Evaluation of the MSSD and of the SCP Action Plan
 - SAP BIO
 - MED SOx ECA
 - 2023 MED QSR
 - MED 2050 Foresight Study
 - MedECC Assessment Report (MAR1)
 - Update of Annexes to Pollution Protocols
 - Regional Pollution Plans
 - e) Cooperation and Partners
 - f) Outreach, Information and Communication, including MAP visibility in major global events
- Agenda item 6** **Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 90th Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 7** **Any Other Matters**
- Agenda item 8** **Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 9** **Closure of the Meeting**

Annex III

Terms of References including timelines for the Working Groups of Experts for updating the Annexes to the Pollution Protocols and for the development of the Regional Pollution Plans

Terms of Reference for the Working Group of Experts for updating the Annexes to the LBS Protocol of the Barcelona Convention

1. Background

In accordance with PoW and budget 2018-2019, the Secretariat prepared Document UNEP/MED WG.473/5/Rev.1 “Proposals for updating the Annexes of the Land Based Sources, Hazardous Waste and Dumping Protocols,” which was submitted and considered by the Meeting of the MED POL Focal Points (Istanbul, Turkey, 29-31 May 2019).

The Programme of Work 2020/2021 and COP Decision IG.24/10 mandated the establishment of Working Groups composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties to review the annexes and make proposals for consideration of the 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 22) on the basis of “Terms of Reference” and timeline prepared by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Bureau at its first meeting of the biennium 2020-2021.

The work is ongoing for updating Document UNEP/MED WG.473/5/Rev.1 as a working document for review by the Meetings of the Working Group.

2. Objective

The objective of the work of the Working Group of Experts for updating the Annexes to the LBS Protocol is to deliver the updated version of the Annexes for consideration of the MED POL Focal Points Meeting in 2021.

3. Composition

The Working Group will be composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties. Designated experts should have technical knowledge of different aspects of management of pollution from land based sources and activities including those addressed by the current annexes of the LBS Protocol, namely: on programmes and measures for the elimination of pollution from land-based sources and activities; priority sectors and pollutants; authorizations for discharges of wastes; conditions of application to pollution transported through the atmosphere; and criteria for the definition of Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practice (BEP).

4. Tasks

The Working Group will review the updated version of Document UNEP/MED WG.473/5/Rev.1 and adjust it as necessary taking into account the need for full consideration of necessary updates in line with relevant COP decisions; application of ecosystem approach; consideration of up to date techniques and BAT and BEP; the work for the development of the Regional Plans as well as the need for harmonization with relevant global and regional processes and commitments as appropriate.

5. Proposed Timeline

- ✓ Establishment of the Working Group, June 2020.
- ✓ Online consultation of updated working document, July to December 2020.
- ✓ Meeting of the Working Group to review first draft of annexes, February 2021.
- ✓ Submission of the draft of the annexes to the MED POL Focal Points Meeting, May 2021.
- ✓ Review of the respective draft decision by the MAP Focal Points Meeting, September 2021.
- ✓ Submission of the draft decision to COP 22, December 2021.

Every effort will be made to have the meetings of the Working Group combined with other meetings in the Programme of Work so that expertise is used effectively, and costs of meetings are minimized.

Terms of Reference for the Working Group of Experts for updating the Annexes to the Dumping Protocol of the Barcelona Convention

1. Background

In accordance with PoW and budget 2018-2019, the Secretariat prepared Document UNEP/MED WG.473/5/Rev.1 “Proposals for updating the Annexes of the Land Based Sources, Hazardous Waste and Dumping Protocols,” which was submitted and considered by the Meeting of the MED POL Focal Points (Istanbul, Turkey, 29-31 May 2019).

The Programme of Work 2020/2021 and COP Decision IG.24/10 mandated the establishment of Working Groups composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties to review the annexes and make proposals for consideration of the 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 22) on the basis of “Terms of Reference” and timeline prepared by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Bureau at its first meeting of the biennium 2020-2021.

The work is ongoing for updating Document UNEP/MED WG.473/5/Rev.1 as a working document for review by the Meetings of the Working Group.

2. Objective

The objective of the work of the Working Group of Experts for updating the Annex to the Dumping Protocol is to deliver the updated version of the Annex for consideration of the MED POL Focal Points Meeting in 2021.

3. Composition

The Working Group will be composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties. Designated experts should have technical knowledge of different aspects of management of dumping activities including those addressed by the current annex of the Dumping Protocol, namely: the factors to be considered in establishing criteria governing the issue of permits for the dumping of matter at sea and expertise in the scope of application of the Dumping Guidelines adopted by COP decisions.

4. Tasks

The Working Group will review the updated version of Document UNEP/MED WG.473/5/Rev.1 and adjust it as necessary taking into account the need for full consideration of necessary updates in line with relevant COP decisions; application of ecosystem approach; consideration of up to date techniques and BAT and BEP; the work for the development of the Regional Plans as well as the need for harmonization with relevant global and regional processes and commitments as appropriate.

5. Proposed Timeline

- ✓ Establishment of the Working Group, June 2020.
- ✓ Online consultation of updated working document, July to November 2020.
- ✓ Meeting of the Working Group to review first draft of annex, December 2020.
- ✓ Submission of the draft of the annex to the MED POL Focal Points Meeting, May 2021.
- ✓ Review of the respective draft decision by MAP Focal Points Meeting, September 2021.
- ✓ Submission of the draft decision to COP 22, December 2021.

Every effort will be made to have the meetings of the Working Group combined with other meetings in the Programme of Work so that expertise is used effectively, and costs of meetings are minimized.

Terms of Reference for the Working Group of Experts to upgrade/develop the Regional Plans on Urban Wastewater Treatment and Sewage Sludge Management

1. Background

The Programme of Work 2020/2021 and COP Decision IG.24/10 mandated the establishment of Working Groups composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties to upgrade the Regional Plan on the reduction of BOD5 from urban wastewater; develop a new Regional Plan for Sewage Sludge Management; and report to the 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 22) on the basis of “Terms of Reference” and timeline prepared by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Bureau at its first meeting of the biennium 2020-2021.

2. Objective

The objective of the work of the Working Group of Experts is to deliver the Regional Plan on Urban Wastewater Treatment and the Regional Plan for Sewage Sludge Management for consideration of the MED POL Focal Points Meeting in 2021.

3. Composition

The Working Group will be composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties. A single Working Group is recommended for upgrading the Regional Plan on the reduction of BOD5 from Urban Wastewater and developing a new Regional Plan for Sewage Sludge Management. This is justified by the fact that wastewater treatment processes constitute a comprehensive environmental management system which includes also sludge management processes as a byproduct of wastewater treatment; hence, the processes for wastewater and sludge treatment cannot be segregated as they are inherently linked and interact in a manner that they influence each other.

The designated experts to this Working Group should have technical knowledge of different aspects of wastewater and sludge treatment systems, including inter alia knowledge of pollution control technologies pertaining to urban wastewater and sewage sludge, as well as available techniques for wastewater reuse and land-based applications for sewage sludge.

4. Tasks

The Working Group will review the annex to Decision IG.24/10 and adjust the proposed measures with required technical specifications and annexes, as necessary, taking into account the need to elaborate the Regional Plans with feasible measures and appropriate timetables for implementation. The Working Group will also review the report prepared by the Secretariat on the cost of implementation of Regional Plans, including monitoring and reporting measures.

5. Proposed Timeline

- ✓ Establishment of the Working Group, June 2020.
- ✓ Meeting of the Working Group to review sections of the Regional Plans related to the technical measures, timetable for implementation and monitoring and reporting requirements, as well as the technical annexes, October/November 2020
- ✓ Meeting of the Working Group to review final drafts of the two Regional Plans, May 2021, before the MED POL Focal Points Meeting.
- ✓ Review of the last versions of the Regional Plans by the MED POL Focal Points Meeting, May 2021.
- ✓ Review of the draft decisions of the two Regional Plans by the MAP Focal Points Meeting, September 2021.
- ✓ Submission of the draft COP decisions of the two Regional Plans to COP 22, December 2021.

Every effort will be made to have the meetings of the Working Group combined with other meetings in the Programme of Work so that expertise is used effectively, and costs of meetings are minimized.

Terms of Reference for the Working Group of Experts to upgrade the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean

1. Background

The Programme of Work 2020/2021 and COP Decision IG.24/10 mandated the establishment of Working Groups composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties to upgrade the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management, and report to the 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 22) on the basis of “Terms of Reference” and timeline prepared by the Secretariat and endorsed by the Bureau at its first meeting of the biennium 2020-2021.

2. Objective

The objective of the work of the Working Group of Experts is to deliver the upgraded Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management for consideration of the MED POL Focal Points Meeting in 2021.

3. Composition

The Working Group will be composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties. Designated experts should have technical knowledge of different aspects of marine litter management and/or plastic waste management including i.e. microplastic reduction, monitoring of marine litter, circular economy, sustainable consumption and production, etc.

4. Tasks

The Working Group will review the annex to Decision IG.24/10 and adjust the proposed measures as necessary taking into account the need to upgrade the Regional Plan with feasible measures and an appropriate timetable for implementation. The Working Group will also review the report prepared by the Secretariat on the cost of implementation of Regional Plans, including monitoring and reporting measures.

5. Proposed Timeline

- ✓ Establishment of the Working Group, July/August 2020.
- ✓ Meeting of the Working Group to review updated measures of the Regional Plan, timetable for implementation, as well as newly proposed technical annexes, March 2021.
- ✓ Meeting of the Working Group to review final draft of the upgraded Regional Plan, May 2021, before the MED POL Focal Points Meeting.
- ✓ Review of the last version of the Regional Plan by the MED POL Focal Points Meeting, May 2021.
- ✓ Review of the draft decision of the Regional Plan by the MAP Focal Points Meeting, September 2021.
- ✓ Submission of the draft COP decision of the Regional Plan to COP 22, December 2021.

Every effort will be made to have the meetings of the Working Group combined with other meetings in the Programme of Work so that expertise is used effectively, and costs of meetings are minimized. All MAP components will be invited to contribute to the process.



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UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

11 December 2020
Original: English

90th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Teleconference, 12-13 November 2020

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2020

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Introduction

1. In consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 90th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held on 12-13 November 2020. The meeting was held through teleconference, due to the measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participation

2. The meeting was attended by the President of the Bureau, Mr. Giuseppe Italiano, accompanied by Ms. Paolina Pepe, Mr. Roberto Giangreco and Ms. Valentina Mauriello (Italy); the Vice-Presidents: Amb. Yann Wehring, accompanied by Mr. Benoit Rodrigues and Mr. Clément Payeur (France); Ms. Ayelet Rosen (Israel); Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro); Ms. Asli Topalak and Mr. Seda Nal (Turkey); and the Rapporteur, Ms. Khaoula Lagrini (Morocco). Ms. Marijana Mance (European Union) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, Programme Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The Bureau meeting was opened at 9:30 (UTC+2) on 12 November 2020 by Mr. Giuseppe Italiano, President of the Bureau. He welcomed the Bureau members and other participants and noted that work should go on as effective as possible despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He added that recent scientific data from the Mediterranean show that there are alarming threats for the environment as a consequence of human activities. Finally, he stressed that Italy is committed in fulfilling its key role as Presidency of the Bureau, noting the importance of regional coordination through the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system.

4. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator, Mr. Gaetano Leone, made a short statement of welcome to the participants, noting that the recently launched State of the Environment and Development (SoED) Report presents a clear picture of how difficult the situation is for the Mediterranean. He stressed the importance of the second Bureau meeting of the biennium and re-iterated the commitment of the Secretariat in supporting Contracting Parties.

II. Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.90/1. Following a request by France, one additional issue was added to agenda item 7 “*Any Other Matters*”, namely the presentation by France of the action plan “The Mediterranean a model sea by 2030” to be launched on 11 January 2021 at the One Planet Summit. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

III. Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for April – September 2020

6. The Coordinator introduced the documents “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period April-September 2020*” (UNEP/MED BUR.90/3) and “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Implementation of COP 21 Decisions*” (UNEP/MED BUR.90/4) and made reference to the “*Reports of the 41st and 42nd Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*”, presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.89/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively, for the information of the Bureau.

7. In his presentation, the Coordinator highlighted that, despite the situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures to contain it, there have been many challenges but so far no substantial negative consequences on the Programme of Work (PoW) deliverables. The second year of the biennium may be difficult, depending on the evolution of the current crisis. He stressed that a milestone reached during this period was the universal ratification of the Amendments to the Barcelona Convention following the deposit of the instrument of ratification by Bosnia and Herzegovina on 19 October 2020. Special reference was made to the three meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP), which focused on the preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS).

8. Further highlights focused in the progress on resource mobilization, including the endorsement of all Child Projects of the GEF-Funded “MedProgramme” and its kick-off meeting that took place online on 20 to 22 July 2020, as well as the approval by the European Commission of the fully-fledged proposals for EcAp-MED III and Marine Litter MED II projects. Reference was also made to existing projects that are successfully implemented, such as the GEF Adriatic project, as well as to projects that were successfully finalized, such as the EC-funded SEIS Support Mechanism project, and the Cooperation Agreement with the Italian Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea Protection.

9. Reference was also made to the significant progress regarding engagement, synergies and complementarities with global and regional institutions, such as the European Environment Agency (EEA), the Plastic Waste Partnership established under the Basel Convention and the participation to the CBD process on the elaboration of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Regarding knowledge management, the launch of the SoED report during the EU Green Week was highlighted, while reference was also made to the implementation of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap. Another important evolution was the launch in June 2020 of the UNEP/MAP revamped website.

10. The Coordinator also informed the meeting on specific progress in relation to the core and cross-cutting themes of the 2016-2022 Medium-Term Strategy. He referred to the major strategic processes, to be further examined under Agenda Item 5, as well as to specific activities that took place during the reporting period. Finally, he stressed that, as it is clear by the progress report, the strongest point of the work of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components is the integrated implementation of the PoW at the regional level.

11. The Chairman and other Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat for the excellent work done during this period, especially under the COVID-19 pandemic, and for the very clear Progress Report. They also provided some specific comments on the text of the report. Regarding paragraph 10, it was clarified that the EcAp-MED III project was approved by the European Commission in July 2020. Furthermore, it was requested that the French version of working documents are sent out as early as possible to allow enough time for studying them and for internal consultations within Contracting Parties.

12. The Bureau members congratulated Bosnia and Herzegovina for the ratification of the Amendments of the Barcelona Convention, and expressed appreciation for the discussions that took place during the three ECP Meetings on the preparation of the new MTS. They also noted with appreciation the fact that there are no major delays experienced in the implementation of the PoW despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work done in the period April-September 2020 as presented by the Secretariat, and its satisfaction for the efforts and results achieved so far through the integrated work of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components despite the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. Agenda Item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

14. The Coordinator thanked Contracting Parties for the financial contributions received, which are above 80% and at similar levels as in the same month of 2019. He added that the Coordinating Unit is

in regular contact with UNEP Headquarters/Corporate Services Division on financial and administrative issues.

15. The Deputy Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, informed the meeting on the progress made as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.90/5 “*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*”, addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters. She noted that the Mediterranean Trust Fund is in a healthy state despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. She also added that the fund balance of the Host Country contribution will be used for the refurbishment of the current UNEP/MAP premises following previous discussions with the Host Country.

16. In the ensuing discussion, members of the Bureau asked on the use of savings, mainly coming from the reduction in travel due the COVID-19 pandemic. It was agreed that this issue will be addressed under Agenda Item 5.

17. In relation to personnel issues, it was noted by the Secretariat that openings of posts for both staff and consultants are advertised in Inspira, in line with the relevant UN rules, adding that the MAP Focal Points are informed on all new openings through email, so that they can further disseminate them.

18. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the Fund Balances as at 31 December 2019;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the Financial Statements and the status of the Working Capital Reserve and reiterates the conclusions of the 89th Bureau meeting for the audited financial statements to be shared as soon as they are available;

(c) The Bureau notes with appreciation the contributions received for the year 2020. It requests the Contracting Parties whose 2020 contributions are still pending to pay them as soon as possible;

(d) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties to adhere to Procedure 4.2.b of the Financial Rules and Procedures for the funds of the Barcelona Convention, which states that contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full. This is particularly important due to the impact and unpredictability of the current COVID-19 global crisis;

(e) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties in arrears, in particular those in arrears for over two years, to pay them as soon as possible, while noting the specific circumstances of each Contracting Party in arrears;

(f) The Bureau takes note of the actions taken by the Secretariat regarding the Contracting Parties in arrears and requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears in line with the Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures and to report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties at their next meetings on the progress related to possible payment schedules;

(g) The Bureau takes note of the progress made in the financial implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-2021;

(h) The Bureau takes note of the programme support allocation for 2020 and welcomes the increase in the allotment agreed by the UNEP Corporate Services Division;

(i) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitments at the Coordinating Unit and welcomes the efforts made by the Secretariat in ensuring adequate human resources for the smooth implementation of the Programme of Work;

(j) The Bureau stresses the need for the urgent completion of the process of selection for the post of the new UNEP/MAP Coordinator and invites the Executive Director of UNEP to take all the necessary measures to avoid a gap in the post;

(k) The Bureau takes note with appreciation of the joint efforts made by the Greek Government and the Coordinating Unit on the issue of the premises for the Coordinating Unit in Athens, and requests the Secretariat to update the Bureau on the progress made at its next meeting and to involve, if needed, the support of the Bureau for the finalization of this process.

V. Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues

19. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.90/6).

20. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

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

21. The Coordinator highlighted the recent ratification of the Amendments to the Barcelona Convention by Bosnia and Herzegovina leading to their universal ratification by the Contracting Parties, and appealed to the Bureau members, and to all Contracting Parties through the Bureau, to ratify the remaining Protocols of the Convention.

22. The Bureau members took note of the current status of ratification and noted that they will liaise with the relevant authorities of their Contracting Parties on possible progress towards ratification of the Protocols for which ratification is pending. They also asked the Secretariat to analyse if there are any common issues faced by Contracting Parties leading to incomplete ratification rates of some Protocols.

23. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to liaise with the Secretariat to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments. The Bureau asks the Secretariat to examine whether there are common or systemic challenges to the ratification of one or more of the Barcelona Convention Protocols, and report to COP 22;

(b) The Bureau congratulates Bosnia and Herzegovina for the ratification of the 1995 amendments to the Barcelona Convention and expresses appreciation for having achieved the universal ratification of the amendments to the Barcelona Convention by all its Contracting Parties;

(c) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts to achieve the ratification of the Barcelona Convention Protocols.

- B. Compliance and Reporting

24. The Programme Officer, Governance, Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis, provided an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.24/1 on “*Compliance Committee*”, including on the submission of national implementation reports. He noted that the Coordinating Unit and INFO/RAC are in close contact with Contracting Parties in supporting them for the submission of their national implementation reports, and he added that a number of Contracting Parties have started the process for drafting their 2018-2019 reports, although no reports have been officially submitted yet.

25. The Bureau took note of the progress made in the submission of national implementation reports and asked the Secretariat to look for ways and means to further support Contracting Parties in their reporting obligations. This could be done through enhancing bilateral contacts with Contracting Parties, or, if needed, through a virtual meeting with all interested Contracting Parties. It was agreed that the Secretariat will look more into this issue and the different options, as well as into using the relevant budget lines to support ratification of Protocols, in consultation with the Compliance Committee.

26. Conclusions:

- (a) The Bureau strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013, 2014–2015 and/or 2016-2017 without further delay;**
- (b) The Bureau asks the Secretariat to continue working with Contracting Parties in supporting them for national reporting and in analyzing what are the difficulties faced in meeting their reporting requirements;**
- (c) The Bureau notes with appreciation the continued assistance provided by the Coordinating Unit and other MAP Components to the Contracting Parties and requests the Secretariat to provide, as appropriate, also financial assistance in 2021, in consultation with the Compliance Committee and depending on the availability of funds;**
- (d) The Bureau encourages Contracting Parties to submit their national implementation reports for the biennium 2018-2019 within the agreed deadline of December 2020, following the general guidance given in order to enhance timeliness and completeness in reporting;**
- (e) The Bureau expresses appreciation for the work of the Compliance Committee;**

- C. Possible Impacts of COVID-19 and Proposed Responses by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention System

27. The Deputy Coordinator referred to the two papers prepared by the Secretariat with the involvement of all MAP Components on the impacts of COVID-19 and the possible responses of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system (document UNEP/MED BUR.90/Inf.6). These were based on the concept of the relevant paper prepared by UNEP Headquarters. It was noted that no activity seems to be in a major implementation risk due to COVID-19 and that savings are anticipated from the cancelling of travel and from holding meetings virtually. She noted that exact amount of savings will be clear after the closure of 2020 accounts in early spring 2021, and for this reason the Secretariat wishes to be in close communication with the Bureau for a possible redirection as appropriate of savings for PoW implementation.

28. The Bureau members expressed their satisfaction for the proactive work by the Secretariat on this issue and, noting that this is still an evolving situation, asked that the Secretariat presents to the Bureau more detailed information on savings as well as a list of activities to which savings could be redirected. It was agreed that this could be done in the intersessional period before the next Bureau meeting and that Bureau members will discuss these proposals with the other Contracting Parties in their respective groups. The Secretariat will then reach out to all MAP Focal Points for no objection on possible proposals.

29. The possible implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on global processes, such as the preparation and adoption of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under the CBD, were also discussed, since these may affect UNEP/MAP major processes, such as the Post-2020 SAP BIO. This issue was further discussed under Agenda Item 5.E.

30. Conclusions:

- (a) The Bureau welcomes the work and proactive response by the Secretariat regarding the possible impacts of COVID-19 and asks the Secretariat to continue working in this direction and to inform the Bureau at its 91st Meeting;**
- (b) The Bureau invites the Secretariat to present to its next meeting a more elaborate estimate of the savings deriving from the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of its work and a table showing the affected activities with proposals on how the funds will be re-allocated.**

- D. Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy

31. The Coordinator presented an overview of the independent evaluation of the 2016-2021 MTS and the preparation of the 2022-2027 MTS - as described in the Report of Specific Issues (document

UNEP/MED BUR.90/6) and its Annexes I and II, respectively - together with the relevant outcome of the 1st Meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS (document UNEP/MED BUR.90/7). Reference was also made to the indicative main products of the new MTS, presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.89/Inf.4. He noted that the two consultants involved in the process are participating in this part of the Bureau meeting and made special reference to the consultations that took place in the three last meetings of the ECP, as also presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.89/Inf.4.

32. The consultant responsible for the independent evaluation of the UNEP/MAP MTS 2016-2021, Mr. Ivica Trumbic, presented the progress in the evaluation, as in Annex I of the Report on Specific Issues, and referred to the main findings from the responses to the evaluation questionnaire. Findings included that most respondents noted that the MTS has been up to now partially implemented, which is reasonable since more than one year of implementation is remaining, and that they were pleased with their interactions with the Secretariat. Other findings which are relevant for the preparation of the new MTS included the need for clear targets and indicators, the inclusion of as limited as possible outcomes/priorities, the need for some budgetary considerations, and the enhanced linkages with the global level. He also noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible to do country missions and that interviews with a number of Contracting Parties and main Partners will take place in the next few weeks.

33. The Bureau members welcomed the work so far and the consultative process undertaken, and asked for a close linkage of the two processes, namely the evaluation of the current MTS and the preparation of the new MTS. They also highlighted the importance of an assessment of the needs to strengthen the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system to deliver the new MTS and PoWs, as also noted in Decision IG.24/14. The Secretariat stressed that all efforts are being made to ensure the close linkages between the two processes and that the Secretariat has started the process for a systemic analysis to accompany the new MTS in order to assess the needs for its effective delivery.

34. The Secretariat offered a more detailed presentation of the progress in the preparation of the new MTS, referring to Annex II of the Report on Specific Issues and to the outcome of the 1st Meeting of the MTS Steering Committee. It was noted that the structure of the MTS is inspired by the new UNEP MTS, while adapted to the specificities of UNEP/MAP and the Mediterranean. Next steps will include the further elaboration of the narrative parts, objectives and outcomes as well as the preparation of programmatic targets and indicators as well as the MTS contribution to achieving regional and global agreed targets on the status of the environment and sustainable development, in particular the SDGs.

35. The Bureau welcomed the progress in the elaboration of the new MTS and the work and outcome of the 1st Meeting of the MTS Steering Committee, noting that the structure of the new MTS is easier to understand. They also asked the Secretariat to update the Bureau in the coming months on possible difficulties on the process of elaboration of the new MTS 2022-2027 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

36. It was also mentioned that some outcomes, which are under the enabling products, should better go under the thematic programmes or the foundational programme, such as those related to integrated monitoring and assessment and the 2023 MED QSR. The Secretariat noted that the enabling programmes are of equal importance as the thematic ones and that they have a cross-cutting nature, basic for all future decisions. The Secretariat noted that the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach roadmap and of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme are under the foundational programme on Governance, adding that emphasis will be on the integrated implementation of all programmes. It was also clarified that the draft MTS is still under evolution and that it is important to move away from a silo approach and put more emphasis on interlinkages among different programmes and MAP Components' contribution to their delivery.

37. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau notes with appreciation the progress in the preparation of the new MTS and welcomes Annex II of the Report on Specific Issues and the draft outcome document prepared by the 1st meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS;

- (b) **The Bureau, having looked at the outcome of the 1st meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS, requests the Secretariat and the Steering Committee, to continue the preparation of the new MTS as per the approved timeline, and taking into account the comments and suggestions received during the 1st MTS Steering Committee and 90th Bureau meetings;**
- (c) **The Bureau requests the Secretariat to be updated on possible difficulties linked to the persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on the process of elaboration of the new MTS 2022-2027, with the aim to facilitate its finalization in due time;**
- (d) **The Bureau takes note of the progress in the evaluation of the current MTS and asks the Contracting Parties to provide all the necessary information to the consultant undertaking the independent evaluation of the MTS. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to ensure the timely finalization of the draft evaluation report for submission to the first MAP Focal Points Meeting of the 2020-2021 biennium;**
- (e) **The Bureau requests the Secretariat to ensure interlinkages and cross-fertilization between the processes of the evaluation of the current MTS and the preparation of the new MTS.**

- E. Major Processes

- 2023 MED QSR**
- MED SO_x ECA**
- Mid-Term Evaluation of the MSSD and of the SCP Action Plan**
- MedECC Assessment Report (MAR1)**
- MED 2050 Foresight Study**
- SAP BIO, including Links with the Post-2020 CBD Process**
- Update of Annexes to Pollution Protocols**
- Regional Pollution Plans**
- Other Processes**

38. The Secretariat introduced the progress regarding the major processes and strategic documents that are being prepared in the current biennium. Following this introduction, the Bureau members discussed the progress and provided guidance on the way forward.

39. The Bureau members highlighted the importance of the implementation of the 2023 MED QSR roadmap and of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme and referred to EC-funded projects that support this process, such as the MEDREGION and EcAp MED III projects. Regarding the implementation of the road map for a proposal for the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an emission control area for sulphur oxides (MED SECA), some Bureau members stressed the importance of the ratification of MARPOL Annex VI and of the relevant workshops to take place in relevant Contracting Parties. It was also noted that a number of Contracting Parties are providing financial support to implement the road map, including Italy, France and Spain. Reference was also made to an EC-funded LIFE project that will also be supporting this process.

40. The Bureau members welcomed the MedECC assessment report (MAR1) and noted the importance of the collaboration between UNEP/MAP and UfMS in this respect and of hosting the MedECC Secretariat at the Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre. They also welcomed the possible endorsement of the report by the UfMS Ministerial meeting and by COP 22 and expressed their support in continuing this successful initiative beyond the publication of the MAR1 report.

41. Regarding the MED 2050 foresight study, it was noted that it is a timely report considering the environmental challenges that the region faces, while it was added that Youth could be actively involved in this forward-looking process.

42. On the preparation of the Post-2020 SAP BIO, reference was made to the possible effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the preparation and endorsement of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under the UN CBD. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that it is committed to continue the process for delivering the relevant COP mandate in spite of delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including those under the UN CBD. Any possible postponement of the SAP BIO revision process and its alignment with the context of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under the UN CBD would require a very careful consideration of possible implications regarding both substantive and regulatory aspects, and will be considered as need be under the strict guidance of the Bureau.

43. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses appreciation for the progress regarding the major processes implementing the relevant COP 21 Decisions, requests the Secretariat to progress in this direction, and calls upon the Contracting Parties to provide their full guidance and inputs to these important processes and effectively contribute to their successful delivery;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the progress in the designation of national IMAP users and data submission in the IMAP Info System and asks the Contracting Parties that have not yet done so to formally nominate IMAP users and submit their available data. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to re-upload data from the pilot phase of IMAP Info System, marked as testing data, and inform the concerned Contracting Parties, asking them to validate the data for formal re-uploading;

(c) The Bureau notes with appreciation the successful collaboration between UNEP/MAP and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) regarding the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC) and its First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) to be issued in November 2020, and urges the Contracting Parties to provide their support to the completion of the important MAR1 report and its Summary for Policy Makers, in view of its possible endorsement at COP 22.

- **F) Host Country Agreements of RACs**

44. The Secretariat presented the progress in the preparation of the minimum common provisions for Host Country Agreements of RACs and the relevant consultations with the RACs' Host Countries.

45. The Bureau welcomed the work done and requested the Secretariat to finalize the relevant provisions for submission to COP 22.

46. **Conclusion:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the progress regarding the preparation of the set of minimum common provisions, and requests the Secretariat, in cooperation with the Host Countries of RACs, to finalize them for submission to COP 22.

G. Cooperation and Partners

47. Following an update by the Secretariat on the progress in relation to cooperation and partners, the Bureau welcomed the progress made on mobilizing financial resources as well as on enhancing cooperation and partnerships with regional and global organizations. The importance of the enhanced relationship with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO/GFCM) was highlighted, as well as the importance of building partnerships with Youth representatives, especially in relation to climate change and biodiversity related issues. The Secretariat noted that collaboration with FAO/GFCM will be enhanced through the recently approved joint GEF Project and that the MoU between UNEP/MAP and FAO/GFCM is being updated to reflect recent evolutions and the enhanced collaboration between the two organizations. On Youth, the Secretariat stressed that this is a very important and positive matter, and that thanks to the

political guidance of Minister Costa the involvement of Youth was very active in COP 21 (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019), especially through the pre-COP Youth meeting organized by Italy (Naples, Italy, 23 October 2019). It was added that the Secretariat will try to ensure a regular occurrence of Youth involvement, and to this end will discuss the issue with Turkey as Host Country of COP 22.

48. Other good examples of partnerships highlighted by participants included the engagement of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system with the International Ocean Governance process under the EU, the preparation of the Strategy on African Ocean Governance, and the involvement of the Secretariat in the process under the UN CBD on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

49. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat for the progress achieved and provided their full support. In response to a question raised by a member of the Bureau, the Secretariat clarified that applications for accreditation of new MAP Partners as well as for renewal of accreditation of existing MAP Partners have to be sent to the Secretariat six months before a Meeting of Contracting Parties, as per Decision IG.19/6 on "MAP/Civil society cooperation and partnership".

50. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on enhancing ocean governance and on strengthening cooperation and partnerships with global and regional organizations for joint impact on the ground;

(b) The Bureau welcomes the progress in relation to synergies with other Secretariats in spatial-based protection and management measures for marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean Area, and encourages the Secretariat to further work with the partners on an informal multilateral dialogue and collaborative work;

(c) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new applications submitted by "Association de Recherche Environnement et Bio Innovation" (AREBI) and "Mediterranean Conservation Society" for accreditation as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 22 for consideration and endorsement;

(d) The Bureau endorses the proposal by the Secretariat to renew the accreditation as MAP Partners of "Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles" (MEDASSET), "The Association of Continuity of Generations" (ACG), and "Morigenos – Slovenian Marine Mammal Society" (Morigenos) following the applications submitted by these organizations, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 22 for consideration and endorsement.

H. Outreach, Information and Communication, including MAP visibility in major global events

51. Following an update by the Secretariat on the information and communication activities and further plans for the biennium, the Bureau welcomed the relevant progress and the proactive work of the Secretariat in this area. The members of the Bureau also expressed their appreciation for the revamped website of UNEP/MAP, which they found user-friendly and informative.

52. **Conclusion:**

(a) The Bureau acknowledges the marked improvement in communication, expresses appreciation for the efforts and results of the work on information and outreach, and requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction based on the objectives of the Communication Strategy.

I. Promotion of and participation to the "30by30 Initiative" of the Global Ocean Alliance

53. The representative of Italy presented the "30by30" initiative of the Global Ocean Alliance, noting that this is an initiative championing an international commitment for a minimum 30% of the global ocean to be protected through Marine Protected Areas by 2030, with 10% undergoing stricter protection measures. He added that this ambitious initiative, which Italy joined in May 2020, is

currently included in the negotiations under the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Therefore, more linkages between this initiative and the relevant work under the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system will strengthen the Mediterranean voice in the global context.

54. The members of the Bureau and the Secretariat welcomed this initiative, with the representative of France noting that his country will most probably soon join the initiative. With this opportunity, France also referred to another similar initiative, namely the high ambition coalition for nature and people in order to protect and effectively conserve 30% of the planet, land and sea by 2030.

55. Conclusions:

a) The Bureau welcomes the “30by30 Initiative” promoted in the context of the Global Ocean Alliance and aiming at the protection of 30% of global ocean by 2030, and invites the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention to consider joining such initiative thus giving a strong message of cooperation as Mediterranean community;

b) The Bureau notes initiatives similar to the “30by30 Initiative” such as for example, the high ambition coalition for nature and people in order to protect and effectively conserve 30% of the planet, land and sea by 2030.

VI. Agenda Item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 90th Meeting of the Bureau

56. The Secretariat presented the calendar until the end of the biennium, noting that in 2021 the calendar is very heavy since a large number of governance and technical meetings need to take place in preparation of COP 22. Therefore, it will be difficult to make changes in the calendar, since this would affect a sequence of meetings. It was also noted that the 91st Meeting of the Bureau is planned for 28-29 June 2020, in Athens, Greece (as in document UNEP/MED BUR.90/Inf.3). The 2nd Meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS is planned to take place on 30 June-1 July, back-to-back with the 91st Bureau meeting.

57. The representative of Israel noted that due to religious reasons, there are difficulties for them in attending meetings on specific dates in September 2021, including 16 September. The Secretariat took note of the comment by Israel, adding that it is difficult to change meeting dates at this stage, given the intense cascading sequence of deadlines to be met in order to comply with rules of procedure of the series of meetings during the second half of 2021. In any case, all efforts will be made to ensure participation by all Contracting Parties.

VII. Agenda Item 7: Any Other Matters

58. The representative of France presented the action plan “The Mediterranean a model sea by 2030”, to be launched on 11 January 2021 at the One Planet Summit.

59. Conclusion:

a) The Bureau takes note of the presentation by France of the action plan “The Mediterranean a model sea by 2030” to be launched on 11 January 2021 at the One Planet Summit, aiming to engage Mediterranean countries in the field of biodiversity conservation, sustainable fisheries, marine litter and sustainable shipping, emphasizing the importance of its interlinkages with the work under the MAP-Barcelona Convention system.

VIII. Agenda Item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

60. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions as set in this report.

IX. Agenda Item 9: Closure of the Meeting

61. The Chairman of the meeting and all participants expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the UNEP/MAP Coordinator, Mr. Gaetano Leone, since he is retiring in May 2021 and no other Bureau meetings are foreseen in the period until then.

62. The meeting was closed by the President at 18:00 (UTC+2) on Friday, 13 November 2020.

Annex I
List of participants

MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU

ITALY / ITALIE

(PRESIDENT)

Mr. Giuseppe Italiano

Director General for the Protection of Nature and the Sea
Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea

Ms. Paolina Pepe

Head of Unit V - European and International Affairs
General Directorate for the Sea and Coasts
Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea

Mr. Roberto Giangreco

Directorate General for Nature and Sea Protection
Ministry of Environment Land and Sea Protection

Ms. Valentina Mauriello

Expert
Sogesid Technical Assistance Unit - Ministry of Environment Land and Sea Protection

FRANCE / FRANCE

(VICE PRESIDENT)

S.E.M. Yann Wehring

Ambassadeur pour l'Environnement
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et Européennes

M. Benoit Rodrigues

Chargé de mission protection du milieu marin et conventions de mers régionales (Méditerranée, Océan indien, Pacifique, Caraïbes)
Bureau Biodiversité et Milieux
Direction des Affaires Européennes et Internationales
SG/DAEI/CCDD/CCDD2
Ministère de la transition écologique et solidaire
Grande Arche (sud), 92055 La Défense Cedex
France

Mr. Clément Payeur

Protection internationale des océans – Global ocean protection
Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères
Sous-direction de l'environnement et du climat (CLEN)

ISRAEL / ISRAEL

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Ms. Ayelet Rosen

Head of Division
Division of Multilateral Environmental Agreements
Ministry of Environmental Protection

MONTENEGRO / MONTÉNÉGRO

Ms. Ivana Stojanovic

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Adviser, Department for Sustainable Development
and Integrated Coastal Zone Management
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism

TURKEY / TURQUIE

Ms. Asli Topalak

Expert

Ministry of Environment and Urbanization

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Mr. Seda Nal

City planner

General Directorate of European Union and
Foreign Relations

MOROCCO / MAROC

Ms. Khaoula Lagrini

Chef de Service de la Coopération Multilatérale
Direction du Partenariat, de la Communication et
de la Coopération

Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines et de

l'Environnement - Département de l'Environnement

(RAPPORTEUR)

OBSERVER

**EUROPEAN UNION / UNION
EUROPÉENNE**

Ms. Marijana Mance

Policy Officer, UNEP/MAP Focal Point

European Commission

Directorate-General for Environment

Unit C2: Marine Environment and Water Industry

SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION COORDINATING UNIT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

Mr. Gaetano Leone

Coordinator

Ms. Tatjana Hema

Deputy Coordinator

Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis

Programme Management Officer

Ms. Virginie Hart

Consultant

Mr. Ivica Trumbic

Consultant

Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

Agenda Item 1 Opening of the Meeting

Agenda Item 2 Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

Agenda Item 3 Progress Report for April – September 2020

Agenda Item 4 Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

Agenda Item 5 Specific Issues:

- a) Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols
- b) Compliance and Reporting
- c) Possible Impacts of COVID-19 and Proposed Responses by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention System
- d) Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy, including Follow-up to the 1st Meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS
- e) Major Processes:
 - 2023 MED QSR
 - MED SO_x ECA
 - Mid-Term Evaluation of the MSSD and of the SCP Action Plan
 - MedECC Assessment Report (MAR1)
 - MED 2050 Foresight Study
 - SAP BIO, including Links with the Post-2020 CBD Process
 - Update of Annexes to Pollution Protocols
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- f) Host Country Agreements of RACs
- g) Cooperation and Partners
- h) Outreach, Information and Communication, including MAP visibility in major global events
- i) Promotion of and participation to the “30by30 Initiative” of the Global Ocean Alliance

Agenda Item 6 Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 91st Meeting of the Bureau

Agenda Item 7 Any Other Matters

- a) Action plan “The Mediterranean a model sea by 2030”

Agenda Item 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

Agenda Item 9 Closure of the Meeting



UNITED
NATIONS

EP

UNEP/MED BUR.91/8



**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention

5 August 2021
Original: English

91st Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Teleconference, 7-8 July 2021

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2021

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Introduction

1. In consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 91st Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held on 7-8 July 2021. The meeting was held through teleconference, due to the measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participation

2. The meeting was attended by the President of the Bureau, Mr. Carlo Zaghi, accompanied by Mr. Roberto Giangreco and Ms. Valentina Mauriello (Italy); the Vice-Presidents: M. Stéphane Pailler, accompanied by Mr. Clément Payeur (France); Ms. Ayelet Rosen (Israel); Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro); Ms. Eda Bayar (Turkey); and the Rapporteur, Ms. Nassira Rheyati accompanied by Ms. Khaoula Lagrini (Morocco). Ms. Silvia Bartolini and Mr. Fabio Pirotta (European Union) attended the meeting as observers. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Programme Management Officer, Associate Administrative Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The Bureau meeting was opened at 10:00 (UTC+3) on 7 July 2021 by Mr. Carlo Zaghi, President of the Bureau. He welcomed the Bureau members and congratulated Ms. Tatjana Hema for her appointment as MAP Coordinator since the 1st of July. He also noted that Italy is ready to discuss a new Agreement with UNEP/MAP, following-up to the previous such Agreement.

4. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, welcomed all participants to the meeting and thanked the President, stressing how honored she feels regarding her appointment and expressing her commitment to stand up to the high expectations of the Contracting Parties and the Executive Director of UNEP. She also expressed her appreciation for the willingness of Italy to proceed with the discussion and signature of a new bilateral cooperation Agreement.

II. Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.91/1. No additional issues were added to agenda item 8 “Any Other Matters”. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

III. Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for October 2020 – May 2021

6. The Coordinator introduced the documents “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period October 2020 – May 2021*” (UNEP/MED BUR.91/3) and “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Implementation of COP 21 Decisions*” (UNEP/MED BUR.91/4) and made reference to the “*Reports of the 43rd, 44th and 45th Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*”, presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.91/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively, for the information of the Bureau.

7. In her presentation, the Coordinator referred to the progress achieved during the reporting period, in relation to governance issues – including main meetings of the governance bodies, resource mobilization, implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap, partnerships, knowledge management, and awareness and outreach - as well as in relation to the core and cross-cutting themes of the Programme of Work (PoW). She noted that, despite the situation related to the COVID-19

pandemic and the related challenges, the Secretariat made every effort to implement the Programme of Work (PoW) and there were no substantial negative consequences on the PoW deliverables. She also paid tribute to the former Coordinator, Mr. Gaetano Leone, stressing that he was fully committed in supporting the efficient PoW delivery until his last day in office.

8. The Bureau members congratulated Ms. Hema on her appointment and expressed their gratitude to Mr. Leone. No comments were made on the Progress Report. The Coordinator highlighted that receiving no comments from the Bureau members showed that the Bureau members appreciate and acknowledge the work undertaken by the Secretariat.

9. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work done in the period October 2020-May 2021 as presented by the Secretariat, and its satisfaction for the efforts and results achieved so far through the integrated work of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components despite the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. Agenda Item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

10. The Coordinator informed the meeting on the progress made as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.91/5 "*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*", addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters. She noted that the assessed part of the Mediterranean Trust Fund balance is USD 8.8 million, as at 31 December 2019, including the accumulated surplus of USD 7.7 million and the amount put aside for the Working Capital Reserve of USD 1.1 million. She added that sustainability and continuation are key priorities for the system.

11. In the ensuing discussion, the members of the Bureau welcomed the efforts of the Coordinating Unit. The representative of the Observer noted that further information needs to be provided on the positive balance of the Mediterranean Trust Fund, including on where the surplus comes from and why it has accumulated; providing a clear understanding of absorption of funds, and; information on how the assessed contributions were used. Therefore, she asked for such an analysis to be made.

12. The Coordinator noted that the Secretariat expects to receive soon from Headquarters the 2020 certified amount. She added that an analysis on how the savings were accumulated up to 2019 was submitted to the MAP Focal Points Meeting of 2019 and to COP 21 (Naples, Italy, December 2019) and that was why the COP decided to allocate a higher amount to Regional Activity Centres, using savings. She agreed that a detailed analysis is needed including the more recent information, as requested by the Bureau.

13. A member of the Bureau asked that an invoice for contributions is received every year in January/February to enable timely payment of contributions. The Coordinator confirmed that invoices are issued and distributed in the beginning of each year (after the COP, as appropriate) and she added that the Secretariat will ensure that this practice will continue, in coordination with Headquarters (since invoices are issued directly by UNEP Headquarters).

14. In relation to personnel issues, a member of the Bureau stressed the importance of ensuring that all posts are open for competition, published in Inspira and broadly communicated, since this was not very clear from document UNEP/MED BUR.91/5.

15. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the Fund Balances as at 31 December 2019 which shows a sound financial status of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system.

(b) The Bureau notes with appreciation the contributions received for the years 2020 and 2021. It requests 14 and 7 Contracting Parties whose payment of 2021 and 2020 contributions are still pending to pay their dues as soon as possible.

(c) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties to adhere to Procedure 4.2.b of the Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures of the Barcelona Convention, which states that contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full.

(d) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to provide an overall analysis of the unforeseen positive fund balance (surplus in the accounts and the COVID-19 savings), as well as their composition, in order to enable a good understanding of where the surplus originates from and how it was created.

(e) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties in arrears, in particular those in arrears for over two years, to pay them as soon as possible, while noting the specific circumstances of each Contracting Party in arrears.

(f) The Bureau takes note of the actions taken by the Secretariat regarding the Contracting Parties in arrears and requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears in line with the respective Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures and invites the Contracting Parties in arrears to report on the progress of payment of arrears at the MAP Focal Points Meeting in September 2021.

(g) The Bureau appreciates the progress made in the financial implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-2021 and requests to continue taking measures aiming at full implementation of the 2020-2021 Programme of Work.

(h) The Bureau appreciates the information on the potential additional savings which may be achieved during the 2020-2021 biennium well in a timely manner and requests the Secretariat to update the Bureau and the Contracting Parties on the potential savings at their next meetings.

(i) The Bureau takes note of the information provided with regards to the new scale of assessment and requests the Secretariat to update the Bureau, MAP Focal Points and the COP of the outcome of the relevant discussion of the 76th UN General Assembly Session and suggests modalities for the application of the new scale of assessment.

(j) The Bureau takes note of the measures proposed by the Secretariat which aim at enhancing effective financial implementation of Programme of Works in line with Paragraph 6. of Procedure 2 of the Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures and recommends the Secretariat to further address this matter with UNEP and consider it for submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting in September 2021.

(k) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitments at the Coordinating Unit and welcomes the efforts made by the Secretariat in ensuring adequate human resources for the smooth implementation of the Programme of Work and externally funded projects.

V. Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues

16. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.91/6).

17. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

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

18. The Coordinator presented the status of ratifications and appealed to the Bureau members, and to all Contracting Parties through the Bureau, to ratify the remaining Protocols of the Convention and especially the Dumping Protocol which misses one ratification to enter into force.

19. One member of the Bureau highlighted the need to prepare an analysis on why certain Protocols are not being ratified, and especially the Hazardous Wastes Protocol. She noted that, for

example, this may be due to a very active/important global legal instrument, or some other reason that needs to be explored. Then, following this analysis, further action can be taken.

20. The representative of Italy informed the meeting that the country is in the process of finalizing the ratification of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol.

21. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to make efforts for their ratifications. To this aim the Bureau also invites these Contracting Parties to liaise with the Secretariat as appropriate to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments, with particular focus on the Dumping Protocol to ensure its entry into force as soon as possible;

(b) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts with the respective Contracting Parties to achieve the full ratification of the Protocols to the Barcelona Convention.

- **B. Compliance and Reporting**

22. The Coordinator provided an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.24/1 on "*Compliance Committee*", including on the submission of national implementation reports. She noted that the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components are working together in preparing the overall assessment of national implementation reports, stressing the importance of receiving high quality reports to enable an effective assessment of the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Furthermore, she noted that the Compliance Committee had a successful 17th Meeting in June, where Spain also presented in a very constructive and efficient way their response to the questions of the Committee in relation to the communication from the NGO Ecologistas en Acción de la Región Murciana as to the implementation by Spain of the SPA/BD Protocol in the SPAMI Mar Menor. Ms. Hema said that the Secretariat was very impressed by the constructive response of the Spanish delegation during the proceedings of the Compliance Committee, especially considering that this was the first case of this kind and would serve as a reference for future cases, as appropriate. The Coordinator thanked the members of the Committee and especially the rapporteur, Ms. Karassin, for their work, and added that the meeting also discussed the effective functioning of the Committee. She added that the Legal Officer will be leaving the Secretariat for another post.

23. The Bureau took note of the progress made in the submission of national implementation reports and the preparation of the overall assessment by the Secretariat. They also welcomed the work of the Compliance Committee. A member of the Bureau noted that the Compliance Committee has a very broad area of activity and authority and that, while the Committee can make recommendations on its effective functioning, the final decision lies with the Contracting Parties.

24. The meeting noted that the decision of the Committee in relation to the communication from the NGO Ecologistas en Acción de la Región Murciana is taking longer than expected.

25. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013, 2014–2015 (2 Contracting Parties) and/or 2016–2017 (4 Contracting Parties) without further delay to complete the reporting for these biennia as soon as possible;

(b) The Bureau encourages Contracting Parties to expedite the submission of their national implementation reports for the biennium 2018-2019 in preparation for COP22, with the support of INFO/RAC as needed, so that COP is in a position to keep under review in a timely manner the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as per article 18 of the Barcelona Convention;

(c) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work of the Compliance Committee in preparation to COP 22 in particular of its facilitating role to promote compliance with the obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. In this respect the Bureau encourages the Committee to focus their work on supporting cases related to the difficulties in implementing the Convention and its Protocols or potential non-compliance cases.

- C. Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy, including the follow-up to the 2nd Meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS

26. The Coordinator referred to the progress related to the preparation of the new MTS and the evaluation of the current MTS, making specific reference to the outcome of the MTS Steering Committee meeting (Teleconference, 5-6 July 2021) as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.91/7. She noted that the meeting should especially look at the vision of the MTS and the title of Programme 6, which are still open, while she also referred to the progress in relation to the systemic analysis to accompany the new MTS which had to start after the first draft of the MTS was prepared.

27. In the ensuing discussion, the members of the Bureau expressed their satisfaction with the progress achieved. One Bureau member noted that the systemic analysis should be prepared leaving adequate time for examination before the COP. The representative of the Observer noted the importance of the milestones to be achieved by 2023 in relation to the preparation of the MED QSR.

28. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau notes with appreciation the inclusive processes followed for the current MTS evaluation and the preparation of the new MTS as well as the active contribution by the Contracting Parties and MAP partners, and requests the Secretariat to ensure that the evaluation report and the new MTS take into account the comments and suggestions received during the second MTS Steering Committee and 91st Bureau meetings and submit its final version to the MAP Focal Points Meeting of September 2021;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the progress in the assessment of the current structure and the needs for enabling the Secretariat and MAP Components to deliver the new MTS and requests the Secretariat to ensure the timely elaboration of the assessment for submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting in September 2021.

- D. Follow-up to the work of the SO_x ECA Technical Committee of Experts and the processes of Updating the Regional Plans on Pollution

29. The Coordinator presented the progress in relation to these important processes. She reiterated the importance of the implementation of the road map for a proposal for the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an emission control area for sulphur oxides (MED SECA) and expressed her satisfaction for the progress achieved during the REMPEC Focal Points meeting.

30. The Coordinator also referred to the Regional Plans on Pollution, and noted the parallel developments in relation to the amendments of the relevant EU directive; therefore, it is advisable to consider steps to avoid any possible delays of the approval process of the Regional Plans by the MAP Focal Points and the COP. Some concerns were also expressed with regards to the delayed transmission of the documents related to the relevant meeting established for the Plans' negotiation. The Coordinator, acknowledging the delay due to the difficult working conditions of this year and the very loaded mandate of MED POL during this biennium, paid tribute to the constructive contribution of all Contracting Parties during the respective meeting to make up for these delays and recommended the submission of the Regional Plans to the MAP Focal Points meeting for consideration at COP 22.

31. The representative of the Observer noted the commitment of the European Union on the implementation of the road map for a proposal for the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an emission control area for sulphur oxides.

32. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau notes with appreciation the good progress made for delivering these important mandates of COP 21 and requests the Secretariat and the respective MAP components to ensure all steps are undertaken in a timely manner for their submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting of September 2021;

(b) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties that have not yet done so, to take necessary actions for ratifying MARPOL Annex VI to facilitate the 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, and requested the Secretariat and REMPEC, in collaboration with IMO, to support these processes upon request. The Bureau congratulates Albania for ratifying Annex VI of the MARPOL Convention as an encouraging example for other Contracting Parties to do so.

- E. Main Directions of the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023

33. The Coordinator presented the progress in relation to the preparation of the Programme of Work and Budget (PoW) 2022-2023, noting that the process has been inclusive, transparent, through a collective effort of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components, with full involvement of the Contracting Parties. Ms. Hema added that, in line with the financial rules, the PoW needs to be sent first to the UNEP Executive Director. She explained the four scenarios proposed in the PoW with emphasis on scenarios C and D, adding that the time has come for a very frank discussion, initially with the Bureau and then with the MAP Focal Points, on an annual increase in the assessed contributions, in line with the practice of most international conventions.

34. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the explanations and for the inclusive process of the PoW preparation involving all MAP Components. One member of the Bureau noted that his country has difficulties in increasing the assessed contribution and that scenario C of the PoW is preferable, noting the possibility to use the surplus together with voluntary contributions to support the implementation of the PoW. Another representative noted that her country is not against an increase in assessed contribution, if this increase is directed to activities. The representative of the Observer noted the importance of the implementation of projects and of the structures needed to support them, adding that she understands the call of the Secretariat to increase the assessed contributions to have long term sustainability of the budget; however, she expressed the difficulties to do so if there is a surplus. Bureau members also pointed out that an alternative to the increase of assessed contributions can be the voluntary contributions by different Contracting Parties.

35. The Coordinator thanked the Bureau members for their feedback and noted that the Secretariat wanted to present the full picture and that the PoW cannot be complemented for a long time from the positive balance of the surplus. Therefore, there is a need for additional resources to maintain the same level of funding for activities. She added that, as indicated, the Secretariat will present the PoW to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points, fully in line with the respective COP decision.

36. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau took note of the proposed programmatic and budgetary elements of the proposed PoW and budget for 2022-2023, including possible budget scenarios. While expressing concerns on a possible increase of the assessed contributions during the next biennium considering especially the Covid-19 pandemic, requested the Secretariat to prepare the Budget in line with the COP 21 Decision and the new MTS 2022-2027.

- F. Preparations for COP 22: Format, Ministerial Session and Declaration, Host Country Preparations

37. The Secretariat introduced the progress regarding the preparation of COP 22, noting that preparations are progressing in close cooperation with the Host Country of the COP, Turkey. Ms. Hema added that the plan is for the COP to be held in person and informed the meeting that the Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Inger Andersen, is planning to attend the COP. Regarding the Host Country Agreement for the COP it was noted that it is under finalization and was sent to the UNEP

Headquarters for clearance. She also referred to the two options submitted in relation to the theme of the COP, noting that these are preliminary. The representative of Turkey, Host Country of COP 22, thanked the Coordinator for the proposals and the collaboration in the preparation of the COP, adding that the proposed themes are under consideration by the Host Country and that feedback will be sent at a later stage. She also referred to the possibility to hold a Youth Event, as was also the case for COP 21. The Coordinator then asked the advice of the Bureau members on the theme of the COP, so that this is taken into consideration for the preparation of a short concept note.

38. The Bureau members thanked Turkey, as Host Country of the COP, and the Secretariat for the information provided in the preparations of COP 22. In relation to the theme of the COP, they expressed preference for a combination of the two proposed themes, noting the importance of the biodiversity and climate change nexus and of the post-covid recovery, and stressing the links with the new Medium-Term Strategy. They also referred to the importance of the preparation of the Antalya Ministerial Declaration, toward which they offered their availability to collaborate. The representative of the EU noted that the plan of the EU is to attend the COP at the highest level, adding that the fact that the EU Presidency is held by a Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention, Slovenia, is advantageous.

39. During the discussion on the list of proposed COP Decisions, the representative of the Observer referred to the need that the draft Decision on Governance includes reference, as well as a related annex, to the governance mechanism of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp), as an important input for the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR.

40. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work by Turkey and the Secretariat for the preparation of COP 22 as an in-person meeting, and urges all Contracting Parties to ensure high level participation to the extent possible to maximise the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention's system visibility considering also that UNEP Executive Director has confirmed her participation;

(b) The Bureau welcomed the proposals provided by the Secretariat on the possible theme of the Ministerial Session of COP 22 and suggested to combine the proposed themes 1 and 2, noting the importance of the biodiversity and climate change nexus in the Mediterranean in the context of the Post-Covid recovery for the consideration of the Host Country. The Bureau encouraged both the Host Country and the Secretariat to work together for finalizing the proposal for the theme of the COP;

(c) The Bureau encourages both the Secretariat and the Host Country to draft the concept note and the first main elements of the Ministerial Declaration for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points, where the theme will be agreed and the main elements of the Ministerial Declaration subsequently discussed;

(d) The Bureau takes note of the proposed list of draft Decisions for consideration by the MAP Focal Points and requests the Secretariat to finalize their preparation, in a timely manner for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points.

- G. Partnerships

41. The Coordinator referred to the progress in relation to cooperation and partners, noting the fact that the Secretariat including MAP Components had been very active in this period and adding that there is an increased interest for collaboration with the solid regulatory and policy framework of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system. The Programme Officer, Governance, Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis, presented in more detail the progress in relation to cooperation and partners, including new and renewed MAP Partners. He referred to the new (with PAM and COMPSUD) and updated (with FAO/GFCM) MoUs under preparation, adding that despite the efforts of the Secretariat there has been no progress in relation to the proposal for an MoU with UNESCO/MAB.

42. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat for the progress achieved in relation to partnerships and collaboration for the achievement of the objectives of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona

Convention system. One member of the Bureau referred in particular to the collaboration with FAO/GFCM as a very important process, while welcoming the key role of UNEP/MAP in relation to the Action Plan “The Mediterranean: a model sea by 2030”. In relation to the expert to be seconded to the Coordinating Unit for supporting the implementation of this action plan, she added that the expert should work on all actions of the Action Plan. Another member of the Bureau noted the importance of the Action Plan being coordinated by UNEP/MAP, noting that she did not have the opportunity to examine it in detail. She added that it is important to clarify how this Action Plan is going to work in coordination with the work under the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, ensuring that the UNEP/MAP priorities are met, and what its added value is. Another Bureau member highlighted that the Action Plan is inline with the work under UNEP/MAP, adding that it is not legally binding and it aims to reinforce synergies in the Mediterranean, for example looking at biodiversity in an integrated manner from an environmental and a fisheries perspective. The Coordinator added that the Secretariat sees added value in this process, also in relation to monitoring and implementation, and added that it is in the right direction and it will use the existing framework under UNEP/MAP, without creating duplications. She added that the Secretariat will revert to the Bureau during the process, in case it is needed.

43. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on enhancing ocean governance and on strengthening cooperation and partnerships with global and regional organizations for joint impact on the ground;

(b) The Bureau welcomes the work by the secretariat in developing new MoUs with PAM and COMSUD and in updating the Appendix of the MoU with FAO/GFCM, and requests the Secretariat to submit the draft text of these MoUs to the MAP Focal Points Meeting of September 2021;

(c) The Bureau takes note of the engagement of the Secretariat in the preparation of the Action Plan “The Mediterranean: a model sea by 2030” as well as the proposal for the secondment of a Technical Expert by France in the Coordinating Unit and requests the Secretariat to keep the Contracting Parties informed on the next steps;

(d) The Bureau endorses the applications submitted by “European Topic Centre – University of Malaga” (ETC-UMA), “Cittadini per l’aria onlus”, “Cercle Mallorquí de Negocis” (CMN), “SUBMON”, “Marevivo”, “All For Blue”, and the “World Ocean Council” (WOC), for accreditation as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 22 for consideration and endorsement; the Bureau encourages “Ona Futura Foundation” to resubmit its application when the criterion of number of years of operation will be fulfilled;

(e) The Bureau endorses the renewal of the accreditation as MAP Partners of the organizations “Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)”, “Arab Office for Youth & Environment (AOYE)”, “Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum (ESDF)”, and “Turkish Marine Environment Protection Association (TURMEPA)” following the applications submitted by these organizations, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 22 for consideration and endorsement.

- H. Visibility and Communication

44. Following an update by the Secretariat on the information and communication activities during this period, the Bureau welcomed the relevant progress and the proactive work of the Secretariat in this area.

45. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the efforts and results of the work on information and outreach, and requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction based on the objectives of the MAP Communication Strategy.

- I. Other Issues

46. Under this agenda item, the Programme Officer, Governance, referred to the progress achieved in relation to the Host Country Agreements of Regional Activity Centers, in collaboration with their Host Countries, and the finalization of the set of common operational principles for MAP Components.

47. The Coordinator referred to the savings due to the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic and their proposed reallocation as communicated through a letter to the Bureau, noting that it is a pity not to use savings from some activities to other activities where they are most needed. The Bureau members noted that they agree in general with the proposed allocations, with some minor proposals for the use of certain savings for a different activity by the same MAP Component.

48. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the finalization of the set of common operational principles for MAP Components and requests their submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting before further submission to COP 22;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the information provided by the Secretariat on savings due to the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic and as agreed previously the Secretariat will send the letter to the MAP Focal Points for no objection.

VI. Agenda Item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 92nd Meeting of the Bureau

49. The Secretariat presented the calendar until the end of the biennium, noting that as per practice the 92nd Bureau meeting will be planned for April/May 2022.

VII. Agenda Item 7: Outreach activity: update on the ratification of Annex VI of MARPOL Convention and participation to relevant Global Initiatives (Global Ocean Alliance and High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People)

50. The issue of the ratification of Annex VI of MARPOL Convention was discussed under Agenda Item 5(D).

51. The representative of Italy referred to relevant Global Initiatives (Global Ocean Alliance and High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People) noting the importance of the objectives of the Global Ocean Alliance and adding that Italy made a commitment during the country's Presidency of the G20. Another member of the Bureau supported these initiatives and their objectives in relation to the protection of biodiversity, noting the links with the Post-2020 SAP BIO under UNEP/MAP and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under the UN CBD.

52. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau noted the information provided by Italy on the scope and objectives of the Global Ocean Alliance and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, and encourages its Members to follow-up within their countries as well as with other Contracting Parties so as to increase participation in these global initiatives.

VIII. Agenda Item 8: Any Other Matters

53. No other matters were raised by the Bureau members.

IX. Agenda Item 9: Conclusions and Recommendations

54. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions as set in this report.

X. Agenda Item 10: Closure of the Meeting

55. The meeting was closed by the President at 18:00 (UTC+3) on Thursday, 8 July 2021.

Annex I
List of participants

MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU / MEMBRES DU BUREAU

ITALY / ITALIE

(PRESIDENT)

Mr. Carlo Zaghi

Director General of Sea and Coasts and President
of the Bureau
Ministry for Ecological Transition

Mr. Roberto Giangreco

Senior Officer
Directorate General of Sea and Coasts
Ministry for Ecological Transition

Ms. Valentina Mauriello

Technical Expert
Directorate General of Sea and Coasts
Ministry for Ecological Transition

FRANCE / FRANCE

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Mr. Stéphane Pailler

Chef de la délégation française
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et Européennes

Mr. Clément Payeur

Protection internationale des océans – Global ocean
protection
Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères
Sous-direction de l'environnement et du climat
(CLEN)

ISRAEL / ISRAEL

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Ms. Ayelet Rosen

Head of Division
Division of Multilateral Environmental
Agreements
Ministry of Environmental Protection

MONTENEGRO / MONTÉNÉGRO

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Ms. Ivana Stojanovic

Adviser, Department for Sustainable Development
and Integrated Coastal Zone Management
Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism

TURKEY / TURQUIE

(VICE PRESIDENT)

Ms. Eda Bayar

Expert
Ministry of Environment and Urbanization of
Turkey
General Directorate of Environmental Management
Marine and Coastal Management Department

MOROCCO / MAROC

(RAPPORTEUR)

Ms. Nassira Rheyati

Chef de la Division de la Coopération
Internationale
Direction du Partenariat, de la Communication et
de la Coopération
Département de l'Environnement

Ms. Khaoula Lagrini

Chef de Service de la Coopération Multilatérale
Direction du Partenariat, de la Communication et
de la Coopération
Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines et de
l'Environnement - Département de
l'Environnement

OBSERVER

**EUROPEAN UNION / UNION
EUROPÉENNE**

Ms. Silvia Bartolini
Head of Unit C.2 Marine Environment and Water
Industry
Directorate-General for Environment
European Commission

Mr. Fabio Pirotta
Unit C.2 Marine Environment and Water Industry
Directorate-General for Environment
European Commission

**SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION AND COMPONENTS OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN / SecrÉTARIAT DE LA CONVENTION DE
BARCELONE ET COMPOSANTES DU PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE**

Ms. Tatjana Hema
Coordinator

Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis
Programme Management Officer

Mr. Stavros Antoniadis
Associate Administrative Officer

Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda Item 1 Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda Item 2 Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda Item 3 Progress Report for October 2020 – May 2021**
- Agenda Item 4 Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda Item 5 Specific Issues:**
- a) Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols; Compliance and Reporting; Partnerships; Visibility and Communication
 - b) Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy, including the follow-up to the 2nd Meeting of the Steering Committee on the MTS
 - c) Follow-up to the work of the SO_x ECA Technical Committee of Experts and the processes of Updating the Regional Plans on Pollution
 - d) Main Directions of the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023
 - e) Preparations for COP 22: Format, Ministerial Session and Declaration, Host Country Preparations
- Agenda Item 6 Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 92nd Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda Item 7 Outreach activity: update on the ratification of Annex VI of MARPOL Convention and participation to relevant Global Initiatives (Global Ocean Alliance and High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People)**
- Agenda Item 8 Any Other Matters**
- Agenda Item 9 Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda Item 10 Closure of the Meeting**