

**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention26 October 2021
Original: English

22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Antalya, Turkey, 7-10 December 2021

Item Agenda Item 3: Thematic Decisions

Systemic analysis and assessment of the required capacity and operational costs for the implementation of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 and its respective Programmes of Work

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Assessment of needs and capacities to implement the Medium-Term Strategy 2022- 2027 of the Barcelona Convention-MAP System

Final Report

Submitted by the Environmental Law Institute

October 21, 2021

This assessment was researched and drafted by the Environmental Law Institute and Serova. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of UNEP/MAP.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Mandate

1. The Environmental Law Institute (ELI) was tasked with supporting the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP Secretariat) to prepare a systemic analysis and assessment of the required capacity and operational costs of the MAP Components to implement the new Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) and its respective Programmes of Work.
2. The assessment seeks to identify the MAP systemic needs to deliver the new MTS in line with the mandate of: (a) Coordinating Unit, (b) MED POL, and (c) the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) considering the following elements:
 - Coordinating Unit core and other functions, staffing, and levels;
 - MAP Component mandates, including identification of the need for possible adjustment;
 - MAP Components functions, staffing, and levels;
 - Operational needs of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components; and
 - Relationship between the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components.
3. The wider governance arrangement of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system was considered as part of the background analysis.

1.2 Methodology

4. The assessment is oriented around three key questions:
 - 1) What are the requirements of the new MTS?
 - 2) What is the current capacity of the MAP?
 - 3) What are the options for the MAP to meet the requirements of the new MTS?
5. The process comprised three main parts: (1) identification of needs and best practices; (2) assessment of current capacities and resources; and (3) gap analysis.
6. To identify the capacity and operational costs needed for the draft MTS, ELI compared the draft MTS with the existing MTS and with other global and regional MEAs. The comparison with other organizations helped identify best practices and typical resource needs, as well as common challenges that informed projection of capacity needs under the draft MTS. Key sources of information include:
 - Documents provided by the Secretariat, including the MTS draft, the existing MTS, 2-year programmes of work, and decisions relating to Mandates of MAP Components and Governance;
 - Publicly available information and records from other global and regional MEAs, such as other Regional Seas Conventions, chemical conventions, and other organizations with structural similarities to MAP such as UNEP-WCMC;

- Interviews with contacts in other relevant organizations.

7. To determine capacity of the MAP system to implement the draft MTS, ELI assessed current capacities and operational expenditures as well as the relationship between administrative structure and mandate. Key sources of information include:

- Documents and reports provided by the Secretariat, including MAP decisions and information related to staffing and budgets;
- Survey of Secretariat staff and management including Coordinating Unit and RACs, and a survey of MAP focal points;
- Interviews with Secretariat staff and management, MAP focal points, and key partners and other stakeholders.

8. Based on the information collected, ELI conducted a gap analysis of discrepancies between projected needs and available capacity.

2 Capacity and cost requirements of MTS 2022-2027

2.1 Overall scope of the MTS 2022-2027

9. The overall vision of the MTS 2022-2027 is:

Progress towards a healthy, clean, sustainable and climate resilient Mediterranean Sea and Coast with productive and biologically diverse marine and coastal ecosystems, where the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its SDGs are achieved through the effective implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development for the benefit of people and nature.

10. Aiming for “progress towards” ultimate goals makes this vision much more attainable and realistic than than the vision of the current MTS, which was criticized as too general and too long-term, creating obstacles for prioritization and for monitoring implementation (UNEP/MED WG.513/2). The vision considers the 2030 SDGs and the MSSD 2016-2025, and is intended to reflect the longer-term UNEP 2050 vision and the CBD 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. However, it recognizes that these longer-term goals are beyond the five-year timeline of the MTS.

11. In support of this vision, the MTS lays out four overall objectives, relating to: 1) enhancing the impact of the MAP system; 2) ensuring achievement of GES, SDGs and the post-2020 global biodiversity goals; 3) strengthening Mediterranean solidarity and prosperity; and 4) building back better. These objectives are also high level and connect to longer-term goals. They demonstrate the broad scope of the MTS, encompassing not only marine and coastal resource management but also regional solidarity and sustainable business development.

12. To deliver the vision, the MTS lays out seven programmes: four thematic, two enabling, and one foundational (Figure 1). These programmes are designed to contribute to global targets including the SDGs, UNEA Resolutions, and targets under the CBD, UNFCCC and Paris Agreement, IMO, and Basil, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions (BRS).

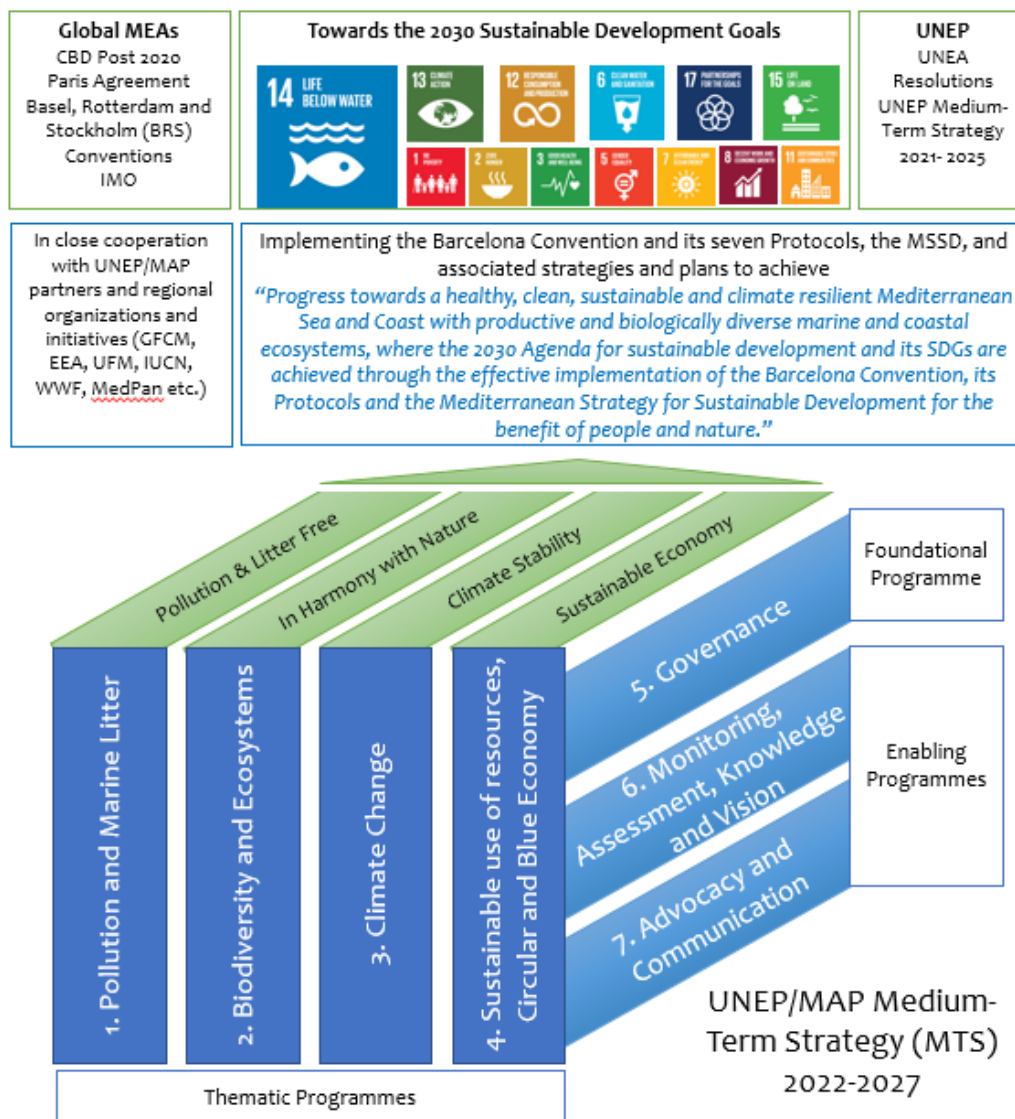


Figure 1: Structure of UNEP MAP Medium Term Strategy 2022-2027

13. Each programme includes 3-5 outcomes, often representing vastly different areas of work. For example, Programme 1 on Pollution and Marine Litter includes outcomes related to marine litter and plastics; chemical contamination and eutrophication; sustainable consumption and production; and a one health approach. Each outcome in turn encompasses a range of approaches, from legislative drafting to development of technical guidelines to data visualization to business engagement to capacity building, etc.

14. Implementing just Programme 1 will require expertise in, *inter alia*, law (national and international), economics, communication, data management, finance, engineering, health and a broad range of environmental sciences, as well as adequate administrative support. Some of this expertise can be sourced externally (e.g. through partnerships and consultancies) but this will still create management and administrative burdens. Relying on

external expertise can create its own challenges, particularly if there is limited in-house capacity to provide supervision and backstopping.

15. The MTS includes 4-7 indicators for each programme, totalling 40 indicators. These indicators are quantifiable and include minimum targets, which gives a sense of required capacity and costs but does not necessarily allow precise calculation. For example, indicator 4 under Programme 1 is: “Number of measures and actions developed and/or implemented to reduce pollution to air, water, soil and the ocean” with a target of 16 measures and actions. From this indicator alone it is not possible to exactly estimate required capacity and costs, because “measures and actions” could encompass both small scale relatively easy to implement measures and large scale transformational actions. However, these indicators are useful in reaffirming the breadth of scope of the MTS in terms of the different types of actions envisioned, including *inter alia*, developing and implementing regulations and policies; designating protected areas; developing standards and guidelines; building capacity of different stakeholders; and establishing data management systems. This gives an idea of the types of capacities and level of resources that will be needed for successful implementation.

16. The thematic scope of the MTS is undeniably broad. Achieving results across such a high number of topics requires a substantial range of capacities and skill sets, with implications for financial and human resources. These implications will be discussed further in the next section.

2.2 Comparison of MTS 2022-2027 and MTS 2016-2021

17. One way to estimate the operational costs and capacity requirements of the MTS 2022-2027 (draft MTS) is to compare it to MTS 2016-2021 (current MTS). This comparison is intended to provide an idea of whether and to what extent the draft MTS represents an expansion over the current MTS in terms of themes and ambition.

18. A pure quantitative comparison between the two MTS is not possible. The current MTS does not include indicators--these are provided in the programmes of work--and for the reasons described above indicators in themselves are not an accurate measure of resources required. The same issue applies to quantifying the number of outcomes and outputs. Both MTS have 7 programmes or themes. The current MTS has 4-7 strategic outcomes per theme and a total of 84 specific outputs, while the draft MTS has 3-5 strategic outcomes per theme and a total of 40 indicators. These are not good measures of the capacity and resources required for implementation.

19. A qualitative comparison does indicate some increase in scope and ambition of the draft MTS. While overall themes are essentially the same, some components are expanded in the new MTS. Marine litter, restoration and the blue economy receive more focus in the new MTS. The one health approach and climate mitigation represent new topics. Other components have been combined. In the draft MTS, the Programme on Sustainable Use of Resources, Circular and Blue Economy incorporates sustainable consumption and production and integrated coastal zone management. These are treated as separate themes under the current MTS. The draft MTS also gives increased focus to two new enabling programmes: monitoring, assessment, knowledge, and vision; and advocacy and communication. While activities under these programmes were undertaken under the current

MTS, drawing them out as separate programme areas raises their profile and ensures that they are subject to specific indicators and targets.

MTS 2016-2021	MTS 2022-2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land and Sea-based Pollution ● Biodiversity and Ecosystems ● Climate Change Adaptation ● Land and Sea Interaction and Processes ● Integrated Coastal Zone Management ● Sustainable Consumption and Production ● Governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pollution and Marine Litter ● Biodiversity and Ecosystems ● Climate Change ● Sustainable Use, Circular and Blue Economy ● Governance ● Monitoring, Assessment, Knowledge and Vision ● Advocacy and Communication

Table 1: Programmes/themes in the current and draft MTS

20. The types of outputs described in the draft MTS are also generally similar to those included in the 2016-2021 MTS. Beyond differences in wording, it is hard to confirm an increase in the amount or type of work envisioned. However, there appears to be an increased focus on advocacy as well as business engagement. The draft MTS includes a regional financing mechanism and support for innovative financing instruments.

MTS 2016-2021	MTS 2022-2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting regional action plans/strategies ● Developing/updating guidelines/standards ● Supporting national action plans ● Managing data/monitoring ● Training and workshops ● Undertaking pilot projects ● Stakeholder and partner engagement ● Regional networks, platforms, hubs ● Support MPA/SPAMI network ● Assisting national legal analysis/identifying policies and tools ● Engagement with international processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting regional plans ● Developing tools/guidelines/standards ● Supporting national action plans ● Monitoring and data visualization ● Capacity building/awareness raising ● Undertaking pilot projects ● Stakeholder and partner engagement ● Networks, knowledge hubs ● Support MPA/OECM networks ● Technical support for national legislation/drafting ● Advocacy and awareness raising ● Regional financing mechanism, innovative financing instruments ● Cooperation agreements with stakeholders

Table 2: Types of activities included in current and draft MTS

21. Discussions with MAP focal points and staff have also revealed a sense that the draft MTS represents an increase in ambition over the current MTS.

22. The proposed budget allocation for the next biennium indicates a shift in focus, possibly driven by donor priorities. The 2020-21 Budget (current budget) shows the highest level of funding (both MTF and external) directed towards the programme on governance, followed by pollution. The biodiversity programme and sustainable production and consumption received much smaller MTF funds but significant funding from external

sources. In the 2022-23 Budget, the programme on pollution receives the highest overall funding, driven mainly by a few large projects relating particularly to marine litter. This could create resource and capacity needs, as described below.

23. The budgets for programmes related to governance, biodiversity and sustainable use are significantly reduced. In the case of sustainable use, which incorporates SCP and ICZM, the MTF budget is similar to that allocated in 2020-21, but the external budget is smaller. Similarly, the MTF budget for the programme on biodiversity has shrunk only slightly while the external budget is substantially less. This indicates that projects have ended in these areas and have not yet been replaced. The budgets only show secured external funds, so it is possible that additional funds will be secured in these areas. If additional funds are secured, the time between projects will nonetheless entail costs that likely cannot be recovered from future projects, while capacity levels will need to be maintained for future project implementation. If new funds are not secured, the budget reduction will represent a shift in capacity and resource allocation, which will itself have costs.

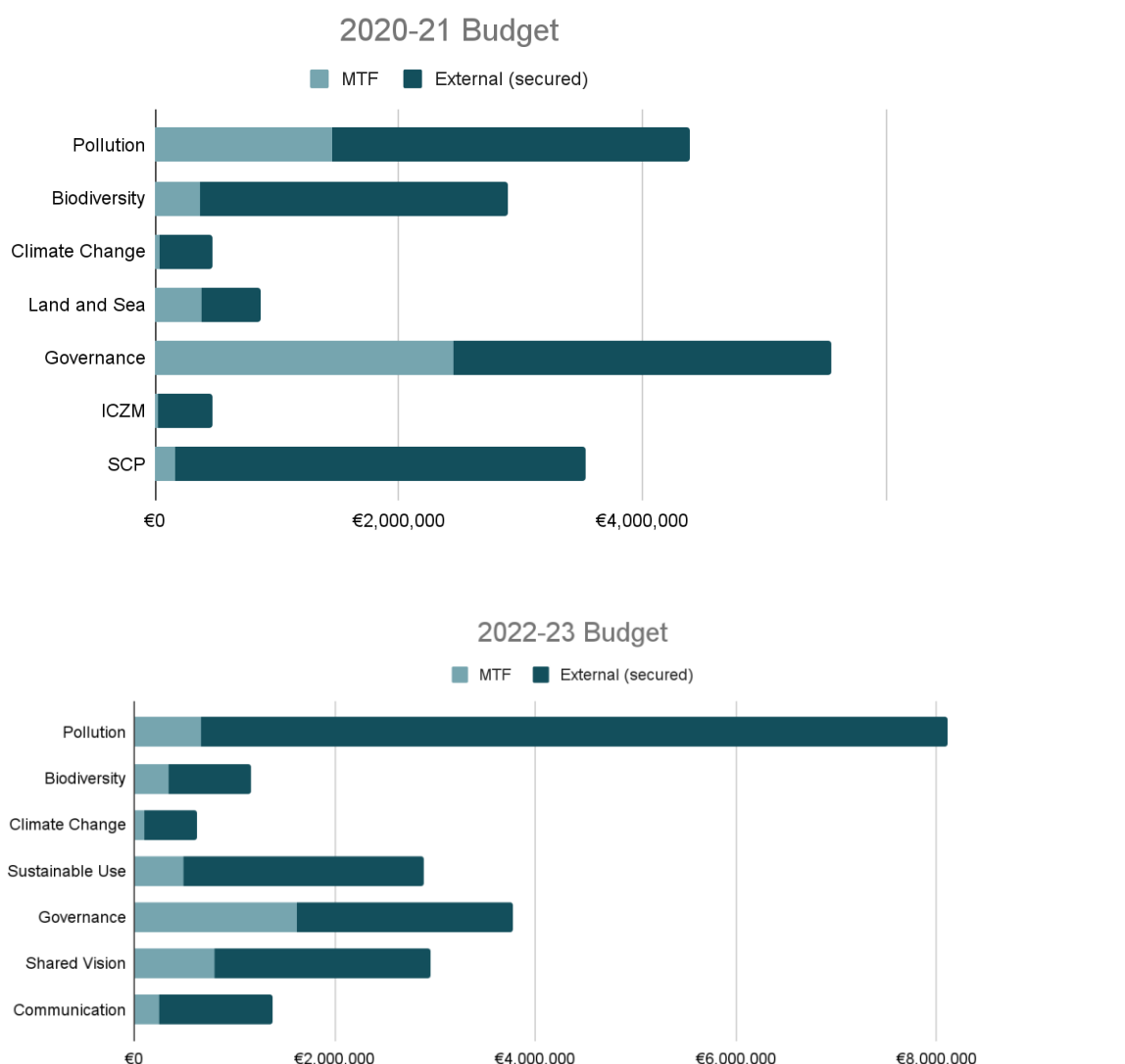


Figure 2: Comparison of 2020-21 and 2022-23 budgets allocations per theme

24. It is expected that a considerable amount of external secured resources will be allocated in support of a number of PoW 2022-23 activities in the framework of the next Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with Italy's Ministry of Ecological Transition which is under preparation, and therefore the amounts shown in the above table for the 2022-23 Budget may be changed by COP 22.

25. Overall, while it is hard to quantify an increase in ambition, the draft MTS does seem to add new topics and types of activities, which will entail an increase in capacity. The proposed 2022-23 budget shows a further shift in focus and resource allocation among areas. This may mean that it is necessary to bring in more staff, but it may also point to a need for staff with different expertise.

2.3 Comparison with other organizations

26. With 22 Parties, the MAP-Barcelona Convention is one of the largest regional seas agreements, second to the Cartagena Convention covering the Wider Caribbean Region, which has 26. The MAP-Barcelona Convention is unique in the diversity of its Parties, across a spectrum of political, economic and geographic situations from Europe to the Middle East and North Africa. It is also unique in bringing together Parties with a history of conflict.

27. Like other regional seas agreements, the MAP-Barcelona Convention addresses a broad range of topics. Most regional seas agreements address issues relating to pollution, biodiversity, and the marine and coastal environment. In addition, the draft MTS has a full programme area on climate change. Other regional seas agreements do consider climate change--e.g., the Nairobi Convention has a climate change strategy and the HELCOM action plan will include climate change. However, it is yet to be seen whether any other regional seas agreement will address climate change as a full programme.

28. The MAP-Barcelona Convention can also be compared to certain global MEAs, specifically those addressing biodiversity and pollution. While global in geographic scope, and with larger numbers of parties, these agreements have a narrower thematic scope. A more detailed comparison of MEAs is included as Annex 1. The next section discusses how the MAP-Barcelona Convention System compares to the bodies of these other Regional Seas Agreements and MEAs in terms of staffing and funding.

3 Gaps and challenges in resources and capacity

29. The document reviews, surveys, and interviews indicated areas where additional resources or capacities may be needed to implement the draft MTS. Given the finding that the draft MTS represents both a progression and a change from the current MTS in terms of programme areas and activities, a current gap in resources and capacity is likely to indicate a problem for implementation of the draft MTS.

30. A survey of MAP focal points revealed that 30% think that the current capacities of MAP Components are not sufficient to deliver the draft MTS, with another 30% suggesting they are sufficient, but barely. This assessment revealed challenges related to staffing, funding and allocation of resources among RACs.

3.1 Understaffing

31. Current staffing is likely to be inadequate to deliver the draft MTS. Staffing levels are likely to be inadequate in terms of number of staff, type of staff and use of staff time.

32. The staff survey revealed a prevalent perception that MAP is understaffed. Lack of adequate staffing was the single most common answer to the question of what problems people face in delivering their work. Asked about the general staffing situation in their office, 41% of respondents said that their office was “seriously and chronically understaffed”, while 32% indicated “generally understaffed but manageable”.

33. Responses were similar for coordinating unit and RAC staff, as well as across types of positions (general services, professional, and management staff).

34. The current perception of understaffing suggests that, in the absence of a meaningful increase in staffing levels, capacity will not be sufficient to implement the draft MTS. The draft MTS represents a potential increase in workload and a change in type of staff needed. Current challenges in staffing are likely to worsen. In the survey of MAP focal points, several respondents stated that current human resources will be insufficient to deliver the draft MTS 2022-2027.

What is the general staffing situation in your office?

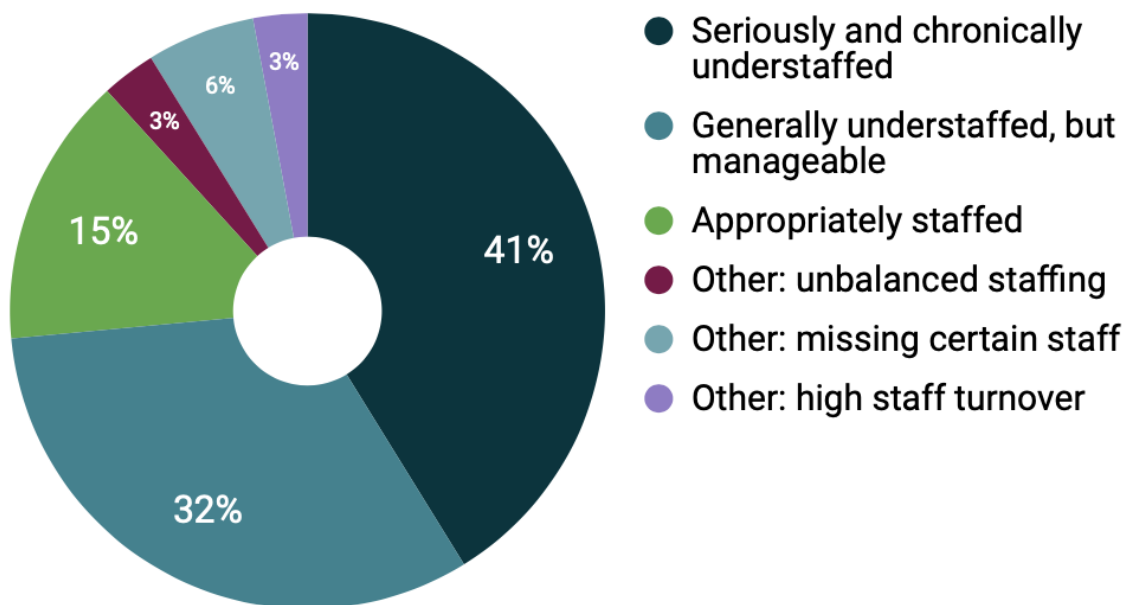


Figure 3: Responses from staff survey

35. While the MAP-Barcelona Convention System has a relatively large number of staff compared with other regional Conventions (Annex 2), these staff must contend with a significant workload. The MAP-Barcelona Convention has 14 Secretariat staff covered by core funding. In comparison, the Cartagena Convention and OSPAR each budget for 12

staff.¹ However, for the OSPAR Convention--an independent Secretariat--Parties themselves contribute significantly to the work of the Convention, allowing them to function with a smaller Secretariat staff.² The Cartagena Convention faces serious challenges with understaffing.³

36. The staffing issue was raised in several interviews with representatives from other MEAs. One interviewee suggested that the problem of lack of staff and lack of time is pervasive in UN organizations, and something that all staff get used to.⁴ To handle staffing shortfalls, some Secretariats explore solutions such as downgrading positions or engaging JPOs, UN Volunteers or Interns to support the work.⁵

37. While staffing problems are apparently pervasive among MEAs, this does not mean that they are sustainable. Based on interviews and survey responses, it appears likely that a shortage of personnel will lead to delays and a reduction in work quality, which will affect implementation of the draft MTS.

3.2 Challenges in funding

38. In general, the total amount of funding available for implementation of the MTS is substantial. However, a significant portion of this funding comes from external projects, which will require capacity and resources to implement. The main challenges related to funding are likely to relate to the reliance on external funding and the availability of capacity to manage the funding and implement objectives (including both technical and administrative capacity).

3.2.1 Reliance on external funding

39. Over 60% of the current total budget of the MAP-Barcelona Convention comes from external funding, and this number will increase according to the secured and projected external funding in the next biennium. This is higher than other, non UNEP administered Conventions, but lower than some other Regional Seas Conventions (Annex 3). The Nairobi Convention, for example, brought in external funding that eclipsed its core funding in 2021, primarily from a set of GEF projects providing around € 18 million.⁶ OSPAR and HELCOM do not typically implement projects, and therefore show minimal external funding and much smaller budgets overall. They are not administered by UNEP, which also separates them from other regional conventions.

40. Reliance on external funding can create numerous challenges. External projects create pressure on the staff and difficulties in the implementation of the projects.⁷ There is a

¹ Interview with OSPAR representative (9 July 2021); Report Of The Executive Director On The Implementation Of The 2019-2020 Workplan And Budget Of The Caribbean Environment Programme. UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.4.

² Interview with OSPAR representative (9 July 2021).

³ Interview with Cartagena Convention representative (13 July 2021); Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission. Budget for 2021-2022 and draft budget estimate for 2022-2023, 7-2-Rev.2.

⁴ Interview with Representative from CBD.

⁵ Interview with Cartagena Convention representative (13 July 2021).

⁶ Proposed work programme for the period 2018–2022 for the implementation of the Nairobi Convention. UNEP/EAF/CP.9/2/Rev.1.

⁷ Interview with anonymous expert (5 August 2021).

danger that donor priorities will dictate activities rather than the mandate of the MEA.⁸ Several respondents to the staff survey pointed to problems caused by over-reliance on external funding. They cited the significant amount of time needed for fundraising, time that must be covered by the core budget. One respondent pointed out that cost recovery from projects is too low, and often administrative costs are not sufficiently covered.

41. External funding can shift work portfolios, creating need for additional staff and capacity. The comparison of the 2020-21 and 2022-23 Budgets (see above) shows a dramatic increase in project funding for work on pollution, related to a few large projects on ocean plastic. This sharp expansion in funding may necessitate an equivalent increase in capacity to manage and implement projects. Bringing in and training administrative and professional personnel to take on this work can be time-consuming and administration-intensive, leading to delays in implementation and putting pressure on the budget, particularly as it relates to aspects not covered by project budgets (e.g., human resources). Allocation of existing personnel to projects in this area may also require time to allow them to get up to speed on the technical aspects of the programme as well as the specific processes and requirements of the donor. Use of consultants to deliver the work may be faster in the short term, but can create other burdens and challenges. For example, consultants may not have access to internal systems required for project implementation like Umoja, creating additional work for staff.

42. MEA Secretariats may not be best placed to implement external projects. The UN system creates bureaucratic layers on top of donors' own requirements which often use different systems. Large projects require experienced project managers dedicated to their implementation. Where Secretariat staff attempt to manage such projects, it can take them away from their core work implementing the MEA mandate.⁹ Some projects include funds for hiring project managers, but the hiring process itself can take time and resources, particularly scarce administrative staff time.

43. The CU is in charge of the oversight of projects which can be time consuming and can create problems. A new multi-year MedProgramme project funded by GEF is a very large grant of 43 million euros but only one person in the CU is supervising GEF projects. Additional staff may need to be hired to support this work.¹⁰

3.2.2 Allocation of funding between activities and personnel

44. Compared to other organizations, the MAP-Barcelona Convention spends relatively little of its core funding on staff (Figure 5). The 2021 MAP core budget allocated about a third of its budget to activities and less than 30% for staff costs to the Coordinating Unit and MedPol, with about the same to RAC personnel.

45. Other Conventions spend significantly more of their core funding on staff (Figure 6). Even including budget spent on RAC staff, MAP still spends less of its core funding on staff than many other regional conventions and MEAs, including the Cartagena Convention,

⁸ Interview with BRS representative (13 July 2021).

⁹ Interview with CBD representative (15 July 2021).

¹⁰ Interview with anonymous expert (5 August 2021).

Nairobi Convention, and OSPAR Convention. No other Convention analyzed provides funding to RAC staff from its core budget (Annex 2).

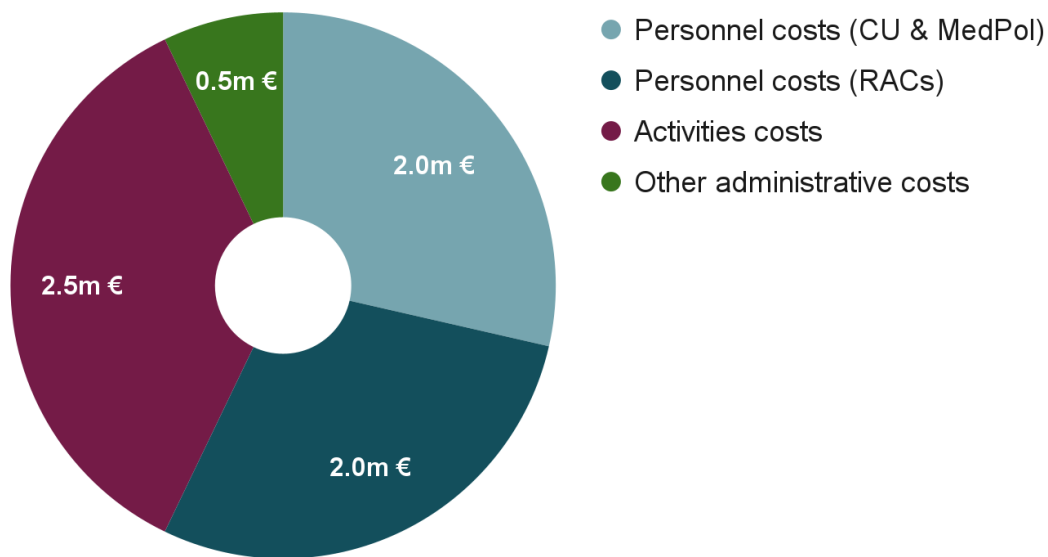


Figure 4: MAP-Barcelona Convention Budget allocation 2021-2022

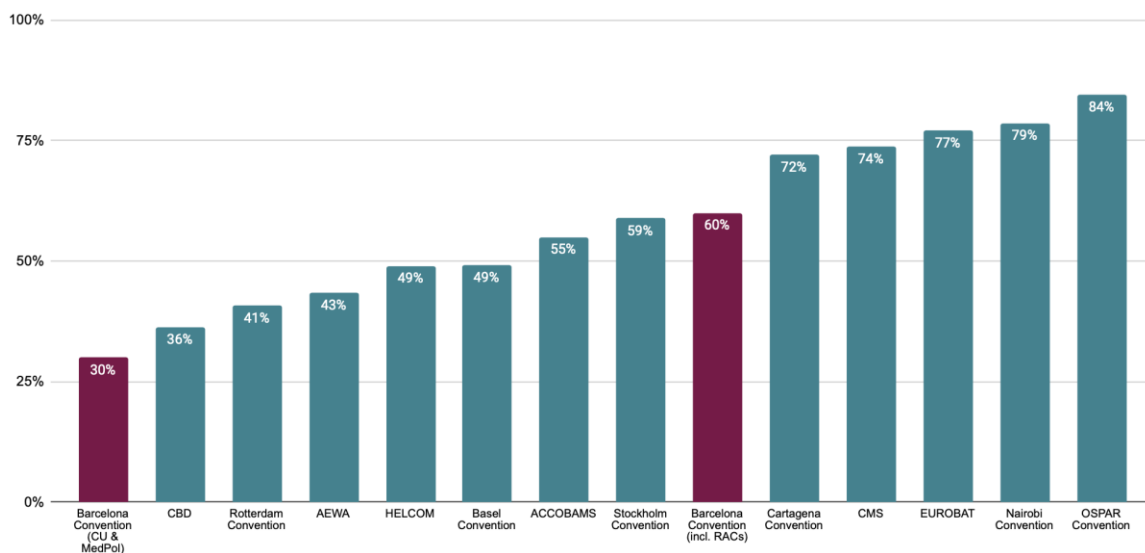


Figure 5: Percentage of core budget allocated to personnel in UNEP MAP and other Conventions

46. The relatively low funding for core personnel likely contributes to the staffing challenges described above. Increasing the allocation of core funding to staff can help create more stability and resilience, as described in the recommendations.

3.2.3 Assessed contributions

47. ELI examined assessed contributions to determine if they are adequate to support the draft MTS. The level of assessed contributions received by the MAP is comparable to that of other organizations. The average level of contributions per party is higher than other Conventions analyzed, but this is likely related to the number of developed country parties.

48. The adequacy of assessed contributions came up in interviews with several MEAs. There has been no significant increase in contributions in recent years for most MEAs (e.g., for OSPAR, no increase for 10 years) but mandates have continued to expand.¹¹ There is also a problem of equity between the parties. A number of parties, usually the ones with the most capacity, provide voluntary contributions to perform activities aligned with their internal objectives, while others have no such leverage.¹² Moreover, there is little momentum to increase funding and contributions from parties because of the Covid-19 recovery.¹³

49. There is also a question of arrears. Arrears of the MAP-Barcelona Convention amount to €1 355 940 for 2020 and previous years.¹⁴ This amounts to approximately 24% of the 2021 ordinary contributions. Other MEAs for which this type of information is public have significantly higher arrears. For CBD, arrears amount to 41% of ordinary contributions, and for CMS 66%.¹⁵ However, again this may be related to the number of developed country parties. For Conventions where arrears are a significant problem, such as the Cartagena Convention, there has been discussion of sanctions, such as not allowing parties who did not pay their pledged contributions to participate in meetings, or denying them support.¹⁶ However, these measures are unlikely to be popular except in cases where failure to pay results from a clear lack of will rather than lack of resources.

3.3 Allocation of resources among RACs

50. In surveys and interviews the question of allocation of resources among RACs was a recurring theme. Often, this centers on questions of budget.

51. Significant funding for RACs comes from the MAP core budget. Overall, about 50% of the proposed 2022-23 MTF budget will go to RACs. Host countries support their RACs with different amounts of funding and modalities.

52. Other organizations that use regional centers typically rely much more heavily on host country contributions. A representative of BRS claimed that stable funding from host country contributions is a key factor for RACs to be successful.¹⁷ Under that system, regional

¹¹ Interview with OSPAR representative (9 July 2021); Interview with CBD representative (15 July 2021).

¹² Interview with OSPAR representative (9 July 2021).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ [Status of Assessed Ordinary Contributions apportioned to Parties of the Barcelona Convention as at 26 July 2021](#).

¹⁵ CBD. *Status of Contributions*. Available at <https://www.cbd.int/convention/parties/contributions.shtml#tab=1> [consulted on 13 August 2021]; CMS. Implications of arrears on the CMS budget. UNEP/CMS/StC49/Doc.3.2.

¹⁶ Interview with Cartagena Convention representative (13 July 2021).

¹⁷ Interview with BRS representative (13 July 2021); Interview with Cartagena Convention representative (13 July 2021).

centers are independent from UNEP and raise their own resources, but can apply for small grants administered by the Convention or undertake specific projects through contracts.¹⁸ No other MEA analyzed allocates core funding to RACs (see Annex 2).

53. Between 2016 and 2021, the budget allocated to RACs to cover activities and administrative support increased by 1.6%. The draft budget for 2022-23 provides for a 14.3% increase of the budget allocated. This is in line with the ambition of the draft MTS. However, it is interesting to note that this increase almost entirely concerns activities (see, e.g., INFO/RAC proposed budget for 2022-23 in Figure 6). RACs may have to seek additional external funding to cover their personnel costs to implement these activities.

54. The allocation of administrative support budget among RACs has not changed significantly since 2016. The budget for activities changes from one biennial to another. This indicates that there may be a discrepancy between the scope of RACs activities and the capacity to implement them. Further assessments to compare this information with RACs performances may be necessary to assess how the budget allocated to RACs may affect implementation of activities.

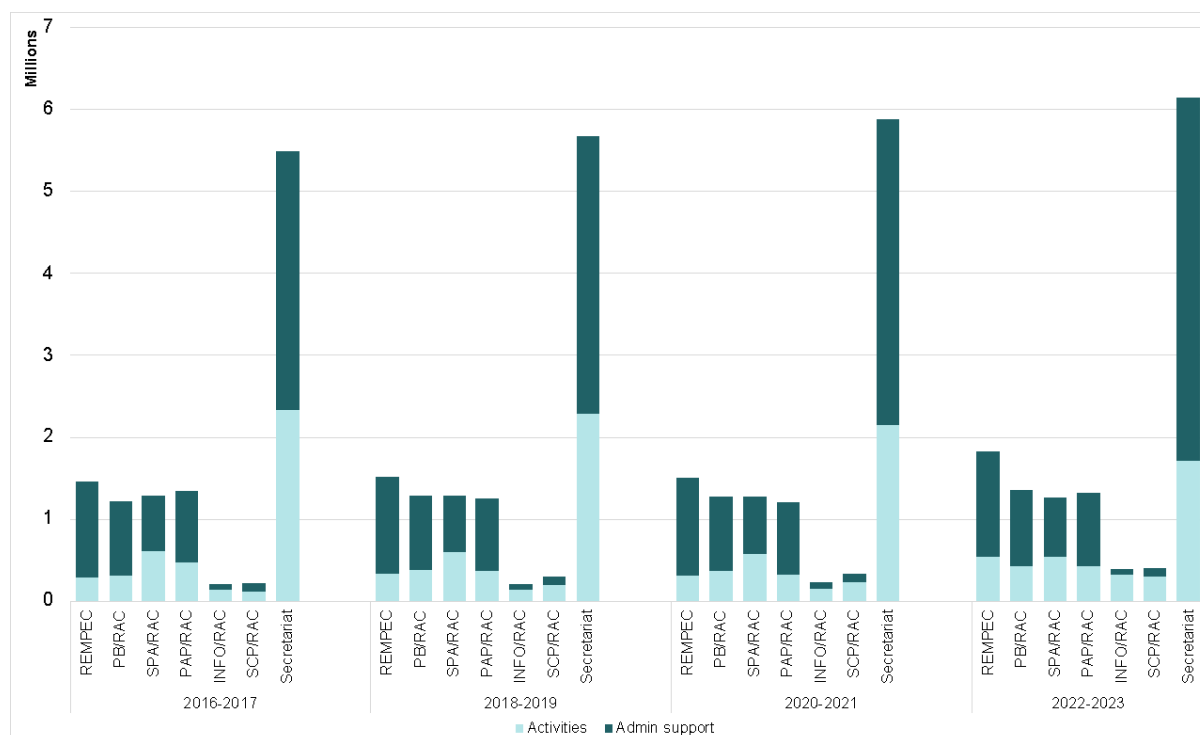


Figure 6: Allocation of activities and administrative support budget per biennium between 2016 and 2023 (including draft budget 2022-23)

¹⁸ Interview with BRS representative (13 July 2021).

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

55. This analysis highlights two key conclusions. First, current staff levels are likely to be insufficient to implement the draft MTS. Staff are already overstretched and struggling to implement the current MTS, and the draft MTS will require additional and different human resources. Second, funding sources and allocation will pose challenges for implementation of the draft MTS. The MAP-Barcelona Convention System is heavily reliant on external funding, which can lead donor priorities and project implementation demands to take precedence over MTS and workplan priorities and core Secretariat functions. This is compounded by the relatively low allocation of core funding to Secretariat staff, which can create instability and reduce capacity to implement the MTS.

56. There are several approaches to addressing these challenges. Based on interviews with experts, MAP-Barcelona Convention staff, and representatives from other organizations as well as our own research and experience, ELI offers the following options, without prejudice, in no particular order:

57. **Ensure sufficient staff.** There is evidence from interviews, surveys and review of documents that staff will not be sufficient to implement the MTS. With the more ambitious MTS (for 2022-2027), it is increasingly important that the MAP-Barcelona Convention System have sufficient professional and general service staff. *Parties should consider authorizing the CU to undertake a human resources assessment to quantify the number and nature of additional staff needed.*

58. **Allocate core funding for staff.** Interviews indicate that MEA Secretariats and other organizations do well when they use assessed contributions or funding from framework agreements to cover staff and administrative costs.¹⁹ This can increase stability by smoothing the boom-and-bust dynamics of the project cycle, thereby allowing staff to spend time between projects planning, strategizing and developing the overall vision.²⁰ It can also contribute to an increase in resources that offsets the decrease in activity funding, as staff have time and space to fundraise strategically. Allocating core funding to a full-time fundraising specialist can improve the quality of project design and implementation, support better alignment of projects with the mandate, and increase the total amount raised.²¹ Core Secretariat operational functions should always be fully covered by core funding. Parties should consider authorizing the CU to undertake a calculation of financial resources needed to support core staff and reviewing funding allocations accordingly.

59. **Fundraise strategically.** External funding can be important for implementation of the MTS if it is approached strategically. In accordance with the previous point, experienced project managers can have positions secured by core funding between projects and covered by project budgets during periods of implementation. Projects and activities undertaken should be aligned with the MTS and the priorities of MAP, not the priorities of donors. *Parties*

¹⁹ Interview with OSPAR representative (9 July 2021); Interview with CBD representative (15 July 2021); Interview with GRID-ARENDAL representative (12 July 2021); Interview with BRS representative (13 July 2021); Interview with CMS representative (5 August 2021); Interview with Cartagena Convention representative (13 July 2021).

²⁰ Interview with GRID-ARENDAL representative (12 July 2021)

²¹ Interview with OSPAR representative (9 July 2021).

should consider directing the CU to develop fundraising processes that ensure projects align with the MTS.

60. **Ensure cost recovery from external projects.** Project budgets should be designed to ensure full cost recovery, particularly including administrative costs and time spent on oversight, contracting, procurement, and other processes. *Parties should consider directing the CU to use processes in fundraising to ensure full cost recovery.*

61. **Consider increasing contributions.** Increasing assessed or voluntary contributions could help address current gaps in capacity. One approach could be setting up different trust funds for contracting parties to contribute to and finance different activities.²² This allows parties to choose funding options that align with their priorities, while ensuring that activities funded are in support of the MAP mandate. *Parties could consider increasing assessed contributions. They could also consider setting up funds for contracting parties to contribute to in order to finance activities.*

62. **Prioritize core secretariat functions of the CU.** If it is challenging to undertake all desired activities given current capacity and resources, it may be necessary to prioritize the core functions of the Secretariat over other activities. As representatives from MEAs noted in interviews, the Secretariat functions can only be performed by the Secretariat (i.e., the CU); while many of the programmatic activities could be performed by a range of other actors.²³ Projects and programmatic activities should not take precedence over Secretariat functions. *Parties should consider authorizing the CU to undertake an assessment of the costs and staffing needs for Secretariat operations separate from programmatic activities.*

²² Interview with anonymous expert (22 July 2021). See also for example AEWA Trust funds: AEWA. Report of the secretariat on finance and administrative issues. AEWA/MOP 8.38. Annexes 5 and 6.

²³ Interview with OSPAR representative (9 July 2021); Interview with CBD representative (15 July 2021); Interview with GRID-ARENDALE representative (12 July 2021); Interview with BRS representative (13 July 2021); Interview with CMS representative (5 August 2021); Interview with Cartagena Convention representative (13 July 2021).

● **Annex 1 - Scope of activities of Regional Seas Conventions and other MEAs**

Convention	Parties	Region	Protocols	Secretariat	RACs	Topics
Barcelona Convention	22	Mediterranean	Dumping Protocol; Emergency Protocol; LBS Protocol; SPA and Biodiversity Protocol; Offshore Protocol; Hazardous Wastes Protocol; ICZM Protocol	MAP CU (UNEP)	MED POL + 6 RACs	Pollution, biodiversity, land and sea, ICZM, MSP, SCP, economy and sustainable development, climate change
Nairobi Convention	10	Western Indian Ocean	LBSA Protocol; Protected Areas Protocol; Emergency Protocol; ICZM Protocol (under negotiation)	Regional CU (UNEP)		Ecosystems, pollution, marine litter, climate change, marine and coastal management
Abidjan Convention	14	West and Central Africa	ICZM Protocol; Mangrove Protocol; Oil and Gas Protocol; LBSA Protocol; Emergency Protocol	Abidjan Secretariat (UNEP)		Ecosystems, pollution, MSP, MPAs, illegal trade, climate change, communication
Helsinki Convention	10	Baltic Sea	Annexes covering harmful substances, pollution from land-based sources, pollution from ships, dumping, pollution from offshore activities, response to pollution, etc.	HELCOM Secretariat		Agriculture, fisheries, industry, marine litter and underwater noise, MPAs, MSP, monitoring and assessment, spills, species, shipping
Bucharest Convention	6	Black Sea	LBS Protocol; Dumping Protocol; Oil Pollution Protocol; CBD Protocol	Black Sea Commission PS	6 RACs + 6 advisory groups	Pollution, biodiversity, shipping, fisheries and marine living resources, ICZM
Cartagena Convention	26	Wider Caribbean	Oil Spills Protocol; SPAW Protocol; Land-based Sources Protocol	CRCU (UNEP)	4 RACs + 4 associated institutions	Pollution, specially protected areas, wildlife
OSPAR Convention	16	North-East Atlantic	Annexes covering pollution from land-based sources, dumping, pollution from offshore sources, assessment of marine environment, ecosystems and biodiversity, etc.	OSPAR Secretariat		Biodiversity, eutrophication, hazardous substances, offshore oil and gas, climate change
CBD	196	Global	Cartagena Protocol Nagoya Protocol Nagoya Kuala-Lumpur Supplementary protocol	CBD Secretariat (UNEP)		Biodiversity; genetic resources; climate change; economics; gender; health; impact assessment; IAS; peace; protected areas; sustainable use; traditional knowledge etc.

CMS	132	Global	7 Agreements and 19 MOUs	CMS Secretariat (UNEP)		Conservation, climate change, illegal killing, plastic pollution, health, connectivity
Basel, Rotterdam & Stockholm Conventions (BRS)	188/164/184	Global		BRS Secretariat (UNEP)	23 regional centers	Health, hazardous waste, pollution

● **Annex 2 - Funding of Regional Seas Conventions and other MEAs**

	Number of contracting parties	Total funding per year	Core funding per year	Number of staff covered by core funding	Personnel costs		Total funding to RACs per year	Arrears % of assessed contributions	Year	
		In million €			Total per year	% of core funding	In million €			
					In million €					
Barcelona Convention	22	17,2	6,6	14**	2,0	30%	2,3	24%	2021	
Regional Seas Conventions										
Nairobi Convention*	10	18,3	0,3	0,0	0,2	79%			2021	
Abijan Convention*	19	5,8	0,5					541%	2020	
Cartagena Convention*	26	3,0	1,1	12	0,8	72%	0,0	401%	2020	
OSPAR Convention*	16	1,2	1,2	2	1,1	84%			2021	
HELCOM	10	2,3	2,1	15	1,0	49%			2020-2021	
CMS Agreements										
AEWA	82	1,8	1,8	12	0,8	43%		38%	2021	
ACCOBAMS	24	0,5	0,5	4,5	0,3	55%		53%	2021	
EUROBAT	37	0,5	0,5	5	0,4	77%		17%	2021	
Global MEAs										
CMS	132	2,7	2,7	17,62	2,0	74%		66%	2021	
Basel Convention*	188	5,2	5,2	46	2,5	49%	0,0	26%	2017	

Rotterdam Convention*	164	3,0	3,0		1,2	41%		27%	2017
Stockholm Convention*	184	4,9	4,9		2,9	59%	0,0	26%	2017
CBD*	196	27,0	27,0	78	9,8	36%		41%	2020

* Figures have been converted to € to allow comparison.

** CU & MedPol

When no specific annual information was available, figures were divided to obtain an average number corresponding to a year.

- Annex 3 - External funding of Regional Seas Conventions

	Number of contracting parties	Total funding per year <i>In million €</i>	Core funding per year	External funding	
				<i>Total per year</i>	<i>% of total funding</i>
				Barcelona Convention	22
Regional Seas Conventions					
Nairobi Convention*	10	18,3	0,3	18,0	98%
Abijan Convention*	19	5,8	0,5	5,3	91%
Cartagena Convention*	26	3,0	1,1	1,9	64%
OSPAR Convention*	16	1,2	1,2	0,0	0%
HELCOM	10	2,3	2,1	0,3	11%

● Annex 4 - Sources

Nairobi Convention

Ninth Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Amended Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region, Mombasa, 30 and 31 August 2018. *Proposed work programme for the period 2018–2022 for the implementation of the Nairobi Convention.* UNEP/EAF/CP.9/2/Rev.1.

Abijan Convention

Second Meeting of the CoP12 Bureau of the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region (Abidjan Convention), Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 23 June 2020. *2020-2021 Work Programme.* UN Environment ABC-WACAF / Bureau meeting 2 CoP12 /5.

Cartagena Convention

Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, virtual, 26 to 30 July 2021. *Report of the Executive Director on the Implementation of the 2019-2020 Workplan and Budget of the Caribbean Environment Programme.* UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.4.

Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting of the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Fourteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Roatán, Honduras, 3 to 7 June 2019. *Workplan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the Biennium 2019-2020.* UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.42/3.

OSPAR Convention

Meeting of the OSPAR Commission, videoconference, 8 to 10 December 2020. *Draft OSPAR Budget 2021.* OSPAR 20/04/02.

HELCOM

Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, Helsinki Commission Online meeting, 17 to 18 March 2021. *Budget for 2021-2022 and draft budget estimate for 2022-2023.*

Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, Helsinki Commission Online meeting, 17 to 18 March 2021. *Outcome of the 42nd Meeting of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM 42-2021).*

AEWA

8th session of the Meeting of the Parties, 5 to 9 October 2021, Budapest, Hungary. Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative Issues. Doc. AEWA/MOP 8.38.

ACCOBAMS

7th Meeting of the Parties to ACCOBAMS, Istanbul, Turkey, 5 to 8 November 2019. Resolution 7.6 Programme de Travail et Budget pour le Triennat 2020-2022. ACCOBAMS-MOP7/2019/Doc38/Annexe15/Res.7.6.

EUROBAT

8th Session of the Meeting of the Parties, Monte Carlo, Monaco, 8 to 10 October 2018. Financial and Administrative Matters (Budget 2019 – 2022). EUROBATs.MoP8.Resolution8.1

CMS

Conference of the Parties 13th Meeting, Gandhinagar, February 2020. Financial and Administrative Matters. UNEP/CMS/Resolution 13.2

Basel Convention

Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal Fourteenth meeting, Geneva, 29 April to 10 May 2019. *Information on financial matters*. UNEP/CHW.14/INF/45/Rev.1.

Rotterdam Convention

Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade Ninth meeting, Geneva, 29 April to 10 May 2019. *Information on financial matters*. UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.9/INF/38/Rev.1.

Stockholm Convention

Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants Ninth meeting, Geneva, 29 April to 10 May 2019. *Information on financial matters*. UNEP/POPS/COP.9/INF/47/Rev.1.

CBD

Fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 17 to 29 November 2018. *Integrated programme of work and budget for the Convention and its Protocols*. CBD/COP/DEC/14/37.
