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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

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UNEP/MAP
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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
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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
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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
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Ms. Marijana Mance

Policy Officer, UNEP/MAP Focal Point

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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
 - Regional Pollution Plans
 - Other Processes
- 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