

**UNITED
NATIONS**



EP

UNEP/MED BUR.92/6



**United Nations
Environment Programme
Mediterranean Action Plan**

Distr.: Limited
23 April 2022
Original: English

92nd 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

Istanbul, Turkey, 24-25 March 2022

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2022

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Introduction

1. At the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Turkey and in consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 92nd 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 in Istanbul, Turkey on 24-25 March 2022.

Participation

2. The meeting was attended by the President of the Bureau, Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar, accompanied by advisors; the Vice-Presidents: Dr. Ibrahim Alarabi Munir (Libya); Mr. Mitja Bricelj (Slovenia), accompanied by advisors; Ms. Itziar Martin Partida (Spain); Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou (Tunisia); and the Rapporteur, Mr. Senad Oprasic (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Ms. Anna Bobo Remijn and Ms. Rosa Antidormi (European Union) attended the meeting virtually, as observers. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator and, Programme Management Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 (UTC+3) on Thursday, 24 March 2022, by Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar, President of the Bureau, who welcomed the Bureau members to the first Bureau meeting of the biennium. He highlighted that this was the first Bureau meeting after the very successful COP 22 and, thus, would pave the way for the implementation of the COP 22 decisions and the Antalya Ministerial Declaration.

4. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, welcomed all participants to the meeting and thanked the President, stressing that this meeting will focus on the implementation of the Programme of Work (PoW) of the current biennium, where the guidance and advice of the Bureau members is of great importance. She also thanked the host country for the special effort made to ensure the online participation of the European Union to attend the meeting as observer, highlighting that, as it is known, the Secretariat cannot hold hybrid meetings if they are organized outside UN premises and UNEP Headquarters.

5. The Bureau member from Slovenia, Mr. Mitja Bricelj, took the floor on the organization of the next COP 23 in Slovenia, noting that this will be hosted by the city of Isola; for this reason, two representatives of the municipality attended the Bureau meeting as his advisors, including the Deputy Mayor.

6. The President of the Bureau welcomed this intervention and highlighted the willingness of his country to assist with the preparation of COP 23, building on the experience of the preparation and holding of COP 22 in Antalya, Turkey. The Bureau member from Slovenia thanked with appreciation the kind offer of Turkey.

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

7. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.92/1. Following a request by a Bureau member, the Bureau agreed to add under agenda item 8 "Any Other Matters" a presentation by Turkey on their intention to submit a proposal on the possible establishment and hosting of a Regional Activity Center (RAC) on Climate Change. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

III. Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for December 2021 – February 2022

8. The Coordinator introduced the documents "*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period December 2021 – February 2022*" (UNEP/MED BUR.92/3) and

made reference to the “*Report of the 46th Meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*”, presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.92/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively.

9. In her presentation, the Coordinator noted that this is the first such progress report aligned to the Programmes and structure of the new UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), adding that the reporting is done at the level of outcome, in an aggregated manner, and that it is process-oriented. She also mentioned that the Secretariat is looking in ways to improve the reporting format, and to this end any guidance or advice by the Bureau members would be very much appreciated. She then went through the main points of the report, outcome by outcome, recommending that the discussions maybe held after each main section. During her presentation, Ms. Hema highlighted that the issue of the MAP Data Policy will be included in the provisional agenda of the next Bureau meeting, since this is a matter needing further discussion by the Bureau, and that an updated Resource Mobilization Strategy will be prepared by the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components during this biennium, based on the existing one.

10. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat on the Progress Report and on the progress made in the short period since COP 22 on the implementation of the PoW, noting that the future seems very promising. They highlighted the key role of the Regional Seas vis-a-vis the new global instrument on plastic pollution, the important work of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components, the importance of the political support expressed through projects for the implementation of the PoW and the implementation of the decision adopted at COP 22 on the MED SOx Emission Control Area (SECA) which is a great success of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and Turkey as the host country and President of the COP 22.

11. One Bureau member, in his role as Chairperson of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), kindly asked the other Bureau members to express their needs and expectations in relation to MCSD, so as to make this body as efficient as possible. He added that MCSD can also assist in covering needs at national and sub-regional level and by using innovative governance approaches.

12. The Bureau member from Turkey, made the following statements:

a) In terms of outcome 1.3 of the Progress Report, the Turkish Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change has submitted comments to the project manager and is currently awaiting the release of the final report of the project;

b) Paragraph 25 (Target 2.1) and Paragraph 80 (Target 5.3) of the Progress Report contain the expression of “pan-European Regional Seas” and Turkey suggested that these expressions should be corrected as “Regional Seas Surrounding Europe”, bringing to the attention of the Bureau a previous occasion where this proposed expression has been used (<https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/figures/regional-ses-surrounding-europe-1>). In addition, he noted that in order to achieve the long-term goal of the project, the expression to improve the management of EBSAs was used. To this end, he reminded to the meeting that EBSAs currently serve the purpose of benefiting from relevant scientific data when deemed necessary, rather than management of those areas. He added that, for this reason, if this project aims to the management of EBSAs, Turkey believes that there should be no maritime jurisdiction disputes, and the condition of cooperation of all relevant coastal states should be ensured in terms of management of the EBSAs and establishment of marine protected areas accordingly. For the reasons explained above, Turkey requested the addition of the phrase of “where there is no ongoing jurisdictional dispute, and in collaboration with all relevant littoral states”. He added that the long-term objective of the project is to protect, preserve and restore the ecological integrity and biological diversity of the regional seas surrounding Europe through the improved management of EBSAs and the establishment of effective MPAs within EBSAs where there is no ongoing jurisdictional dispute, and in collaboration with all relevant littoral states;

c) Regarding paragraph 115, the Bureau member from Turkey noted that when the maps prepared by Plan Bleu/RAC were examined, it was seen that those maps also included the Marmara Sea. He added that, at this point, even though those are part of scientific literature, Marmara Sea is not within

the scope of geographical coverage of the Barcelona Convention. Thereby, he noted that the above-mentioned maps should be rearranged and then published. In this context, Turkey requested the Secretariat to make the necessary arrangements in this regard. Finally, also regarding paragraph 115, Turkey noted with consideration the work that has been done precisely. The Bureau member from Turkey mentioned that, as a matter of fact, the information on the maps should not cause any prejudice on maritime jurisdiction of other parties or States in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. He added that, in this regard, Turkey would like to recall that NATURA2000 sites located beyond national jurisdiction should be determined in collaboration with other relevant coastal States.

13. The President of the Bureau stressed that during UNEA5.2 in Nairobi, in February 2022, many delegations expressed congratulations for the success of COP 22 of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and especially for the adoption of the Decision on the MED SECA. He added that he is proud to Chair the Bureau and be part of the family of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention. He also reiterated the willingness of Turkey to host a RAC on climate change and to assist UNEP/MAP to be a leader on climate change in the region.

14. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work done in the period December 2021 – February 2022 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

15. The Coordinator informed the meeting on the progress made, as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.92/4 “*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*”, addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters. She noted the high rate of paid contributions, adding that Tunisia has also paid recently their assessed contribution. She added that the new invoices will include the new scale of assessment issued by the UN. On financial implementation she noted that it had gone up to 93% for 2021 and that for 2022-3 the plan is to go to 97% or even exceed it. She explained that the administrative system, including UE2, has become more demanding. She also referred to the ongoing recruitments in the Coordinating Unit, which include the key post of Deputy Coordinator, noting also the need to increase the capacity of the RACs. Finally, she referred to the Coordinating Unit’s office renovation, noting that hopefully the offices will be renovated by the end of the current year.

16. In the ensuing discussion, the members of the Bureau welcomed the efforts of the Coordinating Unit. They noted that a joint letter by the President of the Bureau and the Coordinator may be a solution for the arrears and expressed their willingness to support this process. The President of the Bureau suggested that the Coordinator and himself could visit countries in arrears to discuss the payments at a political level. The members of the Bureau also expressed their trust to the Secretariat to use the resources in the most effective way during this post-Covid19 era.

17. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to share the certified and audited financial statements for the year 2021 when they become available;

(b) The Bureau notes with appreciation the contributions received for the years 2020 and 2021 and urges the Contracting Parties which did not pay to do so 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 strongly urges the Contracting Parties in arrears, to pay them as soon as possible, while noting the specific circumstances of each Contracting Party in arrears and to this aim agrees on the proposal to send joint letters or organize joint visit of the President with the

Secretariat emphasizing the importance of timely payment of the arrears and support the efforts of the respective Contracting Parties in this respect;

(e) The Bureau takes note of the indicated budget consumption for the biennium 2020-2021 and requests the Secretariat to take the necessary measures and make all possible efforts to increase the budget consumption in the current biennium 2022-2023 to 100%;

(f) The Bureau takes note of the application of the new adjusted scale of assessments for the years 2022-2023;

(g) The Bureau appreciates the efforts by the Secretariat to operationalize the PoW and Budget 2022-2023 into Project Documents and Legal Instruments in a timely manner, noting that information on the financial implementation of the first semester of the PoW and Budget 2022-2023 will be provided at its 93rd Meeting;

(h) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitments and request the Secretariat and the UNEP Headquarters to speed up the recruitment of the MAP Deputy Coordinator;

(i) The Bureau takes note with appreciation of the joint efforts made by the Greek Government and the Coordinating Unit with regards to the refurbishment of the premises and requests the Secretariat to accelerate the process with the support of the Greek Government and update the Bureau on the progress made at its next meeting.

V. Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues

18. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.92/5).

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

- A. Ratification, Reporting and Compliance

20. 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.

21. Reference was also made to the small number of ratifications of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to prepare an analysis on the possible reasons for non-ratification.

22. The Coordinator provided also an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.25/2 on “Compliance Committee”, including on the submission of national implementation reports. She noted that there is a need to revive the momentum for reporting by Contracting Parties, which has probably been also affected by the Covid-19 situation.

23. The President of the Bureau noted that together with the Coordinator, when visiting Contracting Parties on the issue of arrears, they can also discuss the ratification of Protocols as well as the submission of pending national implementation reports.

24. 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 the ratifications of the Protocols. 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, noting the particular case of the amendments to the Dumping Protocol which are the only ones not yet entered into force;

(c) 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), 2016–2017 (4 Contracting Parties) and/or 2018–2019 (10 Contracting Parties) without further delay, to complete the reporting for these biennia as soon as possible;

(d) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to finalize streamlining work on the BCRS and to initiate the process for the timely submission by the Contracting Parties of their national implementation reports for the biennium 2020–2021.

- **B. COP 22 Key mandates**
 - **Antalya Ministerial Declaration**
 - **2023 MED QSR**
 - **Ecosystem Approach Roadmap Evaluation**
 - **Designation of the Mediterranean Sea as SO_x Emission Control Area**
 - **Regional Plans under Article 15 of the LBS Protocol**
 - **COP 22 Thematic Regional Strategies' way forward**
 - **MAP Knowledge Management Strategy**
 - **Implementation of National Activities under PoW and Externally Funded Projects**
 - **Potential Impacts of Covid-19**

25. The Coordinator presented the progress in relation to these important processes. On the implementation of the Antalya Ministerial Declaration, she noted that there are links with the Programme of Work and with the COP 22 Decisions. On the 2023 MED QSR, she mentioned the need and efforts to move towards a more data-based report and on the need for Contracting Parties to deliver real-time data. On the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) she noted that there is an ongoing process on the independent evaluation of the EcAp process/policy, that this is linked to the revision of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), as appropriate, and that an EcAp Coordination Group meeting is planned for July 2022. On MED SECA she informed the Bureau members on the process under the IMO, while on Regional Plans under the LBS Protocol she noted that a letter has been sent to all Contracting Parties and that more information will be provided in the next Bureau meeting on the measures of the old regional plans. She added that for the three new Regional Plans the same process will be followed as for the Regional Plans that were adopted in the previous biennium. She also referred to the thematic strategies presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5, noting that at the next Bureau meeting the Secretariat may come with a concrete proposal on how to update/revise the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development. On the MAP Knowledge Management Strategy, she highlighted the links with UNEP's World Environment Situation Room (WESR) and the use of UN/UNEP standards on developing, reporting and sharing data, and noted that links will also be ensured with the Knowledge Management platform under the MedProgramme. On national activities she stressed that it is important to send a clear message to Contracting Parties that the system needs to become more rigid and that the relevant commitments have to be respected.

26. One member of the Bureau stressed the importance of assessing how to be more efficient in implementation and referred to the role of the MCSD in this respect. The representative of the observer underlined the importance of the EcAp process and of the data delivered through this process. On MED SECA she highlighted the importance of continuing to work in a coordinated manner, stressing the importance of the ratification of MARPOL Annex VI and thanked the Coordinating Unit and REMPEC for their efforts in this direction. She added that there is a need for outreach also at the political level, and for the possible creation of a roadmap of ratification where countries would commit on the date of ratification, to ensure an even playing field which is important for international shipping.

27. The Coordinator responded to the last proposal noting that letters have been sent to Regional Coordinators proposing also trilateral meetings (UNEP/MAP, MAP Focal point, Resident Coordinator); these meetings will discuss the need to support the implementation of MED SECA as a priority.

28. The President of the Bureau noted that the Antalya Ministerial Declaration is an important step for UNEP/MAP and that efforts for implementation should be made by all. He expressed his wish that the MED QSR will be a significant contribution to all policy makers in the region and he highlighted that the MED SECA is one of the most important steps taken at COP 22.

29. In relation to paragraph 14 on the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap of document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5, the Bureau member from Turkey noted that there is an attribution to the EU Directives, where his country would like to suggest addition of the phrase “where applicable”, since there are some Contracting Parties which are not members of the European Union. Furthermore, he noted that document “Report of the 46th Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel” (UNEP/MED BUR.92/Inf.4), mentions that there is a need for developing and coordinating actions about the climate change. He noted that his country would like to highlight this fact and stress the importance of prioritizing the strategies on this matter in the current biennium and upcoming biennia.

30. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau notes with appreciation the information provided on the key mandates of COP 22 and their implementation, and requests the Secretariat and the respective MAP components to ensure all steps are undertaken for their effective and timely implementation;

(b) Contracting Parties are encouraged to raise awareness on and maximize visibility of the Antalya Ministerial Declaration at national, regional and global fora;

(c) 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 (SECA) Pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, and requests the Secretariat and REMPEC, in collaboration with IMO, to support these processes upon request;

(d) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to actively participate, in line with a pre-agreed common approach, in the deliberations on the proposal and on the draft amendments to regulation 14 of, and Appendix VII to MARPOL Annex VI, related to the designation of the proposed Med SO_x ECA (SECA), at MEPC 78, as well as at the following sessions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)’s Marine Environment Protection Committee, as appropriate, in line with the road map;

(e) The Bureau welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat in following up with countries for national activities implementation and draw the attention of the Contracting Parties benefiting support from these national activities to take all necessary measures to address the challenges mentioned in the Report of Specific Issues above and ensure proper execution of the activities;

(f) The Bureau also invites the Contracting Parties to streamline where appropriate commitments undertaken within the framework of the MAP-Barcelona Convention, and other MAP priorities into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) elevated by the UN General Assembly resolution 72/279 as “the most important instrument for planning and implementation of the UN development activities at country level in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda)”;

(g) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to respond to the data calls issued by the Secretariat in June 2020 and October 2021, considering the primary importance of reporting monitoring data in line with several decisions of COP 19, COP 20 and COP 21 including the timeline of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap. Contracting Parties are encouraged to prioritise their data submission and/or completion of the IMAP Info System validation process as a matter of urgency;

(h) The Bureau agrees with the approach for the evaluation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) Roadmap/Policy implementation and acknowledges the importance of ensuring coherence with relevant regional and global developments, and urges Contracting Parties to actively contribute to this process;

(i) The Bureau agrees with the terms of reference including timelines prepared by the Secretariat for the Working Groups of Experts for development of the Regional Plans on Agriculture Management, Aquaculture Management and Storm Water Management as presented in Annex I to the Report on Specific Issues. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to nominate in a timely manner the members of the relevant Working Groups and to effectively contribute to these processes to ensure their successful and smooth completion;

(j) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to foster and streamline the national implementation of the regional strategies adopted in the framework of UNEP/MAP, in particular those related to major global commitments.

- C. Collaboration and Partners

31. The Coordinator referred to the progress in relation to collaboration and partners, noting that collaboration and visibility can be enhanced during this year, in which a large number of important global meetings and events are scheduled. She referred to the participation in the UN Ocean Conference, possibly also with side events, as an important opportunity to bring visibility to the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system's achievements. She also referred to the signature of the MoUs with PAM and COMPSUD as well as to the updated Annex of the MoU with FAO/GFCM. She highlighted the importance of synergies with other bodies and processes, such as the EU MSFD, and processes and the need to benefit from each other's strong points, as appropriate. She referred to the new bilateral agreement with the Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition (MiTE), and to the implementation of the Action Plan entitled "The Mediterranean: a model sea by 2030 - PAMEx". She also referred to the Stockholm+50 Conference and kindly asked the Bureau members participating at that meeting to make reference to MAP-Barcelona Convention in their national interventions, if possible.

32. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat for the progress achieved in relation to partnerships and collaboration and the plans for the biennium. One Bureau member highlighted that FAO/GFCM is an important partner, and that enhanced cooperation is of essence. He added the importance of the links with the EU's MSFD, as appropriate, and the importance of the collaboration between Barcelona Convention and Black Sea Commission/Bucharest Convention, as well as to the possible collaboration with the Danube River Protection Convention.

33. The President of the Bureau referred to the importance of the One Planet Summit and the UN Ocean Conference, as well as to the global legally binding agreement on plastic pollution expected to be in place by 2024. He also noted the plan of Turkey to organize an international zero waste blue summit.

34. The representative of the observer referred to the review process of the EU MSFD which include an evaluation and impact assessment of the Directive, that may even lead to a legislative proposal on a new Directive. She referred to the need to find ways to further increase cooperation, coherence and data management, noting that the evaluation will be completed in 2023.

35. The Bureau member from Turkey noted that paragraph 39 of document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5 provides information on the efforts of the Secretariat in order to improve collaboration and partnerships in and beyond the region. He added that, at this point, he would like to state that Turkey supports the participation of the Secretariat to these important meetings in order to increase awareness. He noted that Turkey attended the UNEA 5.2 meeting and is more than happy about the important decisions made, especially about the decision of plastic pollution including microplastics and marine litter. He also noted that paragraph 46 of document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5 contains the expression "pan-European Regional Seas" and that his country would like to suggest that these expressions should be corrected as "Regional Seas Surrounding Europe". In responding to this concern expressed also at a previous comment on the Progress Report, the Coordinator explained that the reference to the European Regional Seas is a geographical reference which is related to the fact that their bordering coastal states belong to Europe as a continent and this is also in line with the UN Regional Commissions. This is the case for three out of four regional seas participating in this forum, namely

OSPAR, HELCOM and Bucharest Convention. Only the Mediterranean is a sea bordered by coastal states which belong to three continents. It is also a way to distinguish the four regional seas from the regional seas programmes of other geographical areas. In this context in the Secretariat's views this reference is correct; however, she said that she would consult with their partners on the matter.

36. Conclusions:

37. (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 to strengthen participation and involvement in global processes, and encourages the Secretariat to further work in this direction to increase the impact of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and to effectively promote its mandate;

(c) The Bureau also invites all Contracting Parties, the Bureau President and Members of the Bureau and the Secretariat to use the relevant global fora, such as the UN Ocean Conference, the Our Ocean Conference 2022, the Stockholm+50 Conference, the UN CBD and UN FCCC COPs, the Environment for Europe Conference, as an opportunity, in a proactive manner, to raise the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system's profile, its work and its contribution to the implementation of the SDGs and global commitments with a particular focus to the Antalya Ministerial Declaration and the outcome of COP 22;

(d) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new application submitted by the "Turkish Shipbuilders' Association (GISBIR)" for accreditation as MAP Partner and requests that the Secretariat submits it to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.

- D. Outreach, Communication and Advocacy

38. Following an update by the Secretariat on the information and communication activities, the Bureau welcomed the relevant progress and the proactive work of the Secretariat in relation to outreach, communication and advocacy in view of the many international meetings and events of the biennium.

39. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau welcomes the efforts of the work on information and outreach, implementing also the relevant Programme of the new MTS, and requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction based on the objectives of the MAP Communication Strategy and the relevant decision of COP 22, and invites Contracting Parties to actively participate in the SPAMI Day and Mediterranean Coast Day celebrations;

(b) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to actively participate in the above mentioned important global events organized during 2022 to promote advocacy and visibility of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system in collaboration with Contracting Parties.

VI. Agenda Item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events

40. The Programme Management Officer-Governance, Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis, presented the "Tentative Calendar of UNEP/MAP Meetings and Major International Events (UNEP/MED BUR.92/Inf.3), referring briefly to the main meetings and events until the end of the biennium. The Coordinator noted that still most meetings are held through teleconference, with the exception of smaller meetings such as the one of the Bureau, while after July the possibility to hold larger meetings face-to-face will be re-examined.

VII. Agenda Item 7: Date and Venue of the 93rd Meeting of the Bureau

41. The Bureau discussed the possible dates of the next Bureau meeting and suggested for the next Bureau meeting to take place on 31 November-1 December, in Greece, possibly in Thessaloniki.

VIII. Agenda Item 8: Any Other Matters

42. Under this agenda item, the Bureau member from COP 23 host (Slovenia) referred to the importance of working with local communities and introduced the Deputy Mayor of the city of Isola. The Deputy Mayor addressed the Bureau and made a brief presentation of the city of Isola that will host COP 23, emphasizing the activities on environmental protection and sustainable development and highlighting how pleased the local authorities of the city are to host COP 23. The President of the Bureau re-iterated the willingness of Turkey to assist with the COP 23 preparations, based on the experience of COP 22. The Bureau members highlighted once again the effectiveness of holding COP 22 face-to-face, considering the very important decision taken. The Coordinator, expressed the Secretariat's appreciation to the Contracting Parties and Turkey, the host and President of COP 22, for their strong commitment, excellent organization, solidarity, active and in person participation - during a pandemic situation - that was instrumental in reaching consensus and adopting decisions of a major and strategic importance for MAP and the region. In this respect, she also paid tribute to Slovenia for their contribution as EU presidency at that time in reaching this objective. Referring to the remarks by the Deputy mayor of Isola, the Coordinator also highlighted the important role of coastal communities in the Mediterranean as well as the importance of local authorities respecting and promoting environmental standards and to this aim she stressed that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system provides an effective framework to base related actions and measures.

43. Under the same agenda item, the Bureau member from Turkey referred to the need for the establishment of a Regional Activity Center for Climate Change. He noted that according to IPCC reports, the Mediterranean is one of the most vulnerable areas for climate change and that SoED, MAR 1 and IPCC Reports clearly indicate the threats that the region is about to face, adding that MAR 1 report highlights the importance of integrated programming in order to meet the requirements of the region and realize long term climate and environment actions, and that the Antalya Declaration also points out the importance of establishing stable natural and socio-economic systems that are resistant to the effects of climate change in the Mediterranean Region and adapting to these systems. He pointed out that given that coastal areas are exposed to the effects of climate change and that urban areas are vulnerable to changes due to rising sea levels; planning and management process and the resilience of coastal areas need to be strengthened by continuous monitoring activities. He also referred to the climate change adaptation process, noting that it strongly requires cooperation with all stakeholders and an overall integrated adaptation plan for the Mediterranean, and that, in this context, the climate-based informed decision-making process should include the adaptation process and planning involving climate scenarios. He then mentioned that, in this context, it is seen that many studies are carried out under the coordination of different regional activity centers. He referred to the example of the AdriAdapt project, mentioned in the progress report, noting that the AdriAdapt platform sets a good example in terms of climate change adaptation studies for the cities around the Adriatic, considering that it is a comprehensive study aiming to support the building of local and regional resilience by developing the necessary knowledge base to identify and plan appropriate climate change adaptation options.

44. The Bureau member from Turkey added that, due to the uncertainties that climate change will bring, the management system must be rapidly adaptable and able to cope with possible changes in the entire Mediterranean Basin. He noted that adaptation does not seem possible without integrated planning studies and that those plans may focus on specific adaptation measures for a city or region, but a single centralized and planned adaptation plan for the Mediterranean Basin is indispensable in order to cope with the complex nature and effects of climate change. He referred to the report of the 46th ECP Meeting, which discusses how to coordinate and maintain the efforts about climate change in the context of Mediterranean Action Plan. He added that there are six different Regional Activity Centers within the MAP system and that, considering their mandates, climate change is a horizontal

issue. He concluded that, for this reason, the most efficient way will be establishing a Regional Activity Center and coordinate time, effort and resources in the most efficient way. He added that, in this context, the Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of Turkey has also stated that Turkey wants to establish a RAC within the MAP system to develop joint efforts to ensure climate stability in the Mediterranean, and to this end, Turkey, will put all their efforts (financial, administrative and technical) with seriousness and determination. Following this, Turkey would like to share their work with the members of the Bureau at the 93rd Bureau meeting scheduled for November 2022. Finally, he noted that Turkey expects the support of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, including the Bureau members and the Secretariat.

45. The President of the Bureau noted that after COP 26 of UNFCCC and UNEA5.2 it is clear that it is important that all countries work together on climate change, adding that this collaboration is even more important since the Mediterranean is a climate change hotspot and that steps should be taken more decisively on climate change. He proposed that Turkey prepares a concept for the next Bureau meeting.

46. The Coordinator noted that, based on this discussion, the issue will be addressed in line with the Terms of Reference of the Bureau at the next Bureau meeting. She also noted the importance of climate change following the SoED and MAR1 reports as well as the Antalya Ministerial Declaration and above all the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 which identifies climate change as one of its important thematic priorities. She added that there is a need for further reflection and she kindly suggested that the proposal should clearly explain the links, with the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy, and above all the added value of a possible RAC on climate change to the MAP-Barcelona Convention system and the region, as well as the resources required. She also noted that, in line with UNEP/MAP decision making process, any follow up discussion on the matter as need be is for the MAP Focal Points to consider.

IX. Agenda Item 9: Conclusions and Recommendations

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

X. Agenda Item 10: Closure of the Meeting

48. The meeting was closed by the President at 18:00 (UTC+3) on Friday, 25 March 2022. In his closing statement, the President highlighted that he looks forward to go to Slovenia to participate in COP 23. He re-iterated that he and his colleagues from Turkey are very willing and happy to share their experiences from the organization of COP 22 with Slovenia. Finally, he thanked all Bureau members as well as the Secretariat team and his colleagues from the host country for the very successful Bureau meeting.

Annex I
List of participants

**MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU AND ADVISORS/MEMBRES DU BUREAU ET
CONSEILLERS**

**TURKEY / TURQUIE
(PRESIDENT)**

Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpinar

Deputy Minister
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
Change

Mr. Eyyüp Karahan

General Director
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
Change

Mr. Ertuğrul Çalışkan

Deputy General Director
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
Change

Ms. Nazan Özyürek

Head of Department
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
Change

Mr. Adnan Altay Altinörs

Head of Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Özlem Örne

Branch Manager
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
Change

Mr. Mehmet Tamer Çobanoğlu

Expert
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
Change

Ms. Vildan Bölükbaşı Atay

Engineer, MSc.
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
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Ms. Ozlem Aksoy

Biologist
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
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Ms. Eda Bayar

Expert
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate
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Ms. Berilsah Kocabiyik

Researcher
Ankara University
National Centre for the Sea and Maritime Law

Mr. Ugur Sukru Biyiklioglu

Ms. Hilal Karaaslan

Mr. Turgut Eminoglu

Dr. Ibrahim Alarabi Munir
Minister of Environment

LIBYA / LIBYE
(VICE-PRESIDENT)

SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE
(VICE-PRESIDENT)

Mr. Mitja Bricelj
Secretary
Slovenian Presidency of the Council EU - Chair
Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

Mr. Aleksej Skok
Vice-Mayor
Municipality of Isola

Iztok Skerlic
Director JZP
Municipality of Isola

SPAIN / ESPAGNE
(VICE-PRESIDENT)

Ms. Itziar Martin Partida
Deputy General Director
Ministry of Ecological Transition

TUNISIA / TUNISIE
(VICE-PRESIDENT)

Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou
Director General
The National Sanitation Utility
Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA /
BOSNIE ET HERZEGOVINE
(RAPPORTEUR)

Mr. Senad Oprasic
Head Environmental Protection Department
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations

OBSERVER

EUROPEAN UNION / UNION
EUROPÉENNE

Ms. Anna Bobo Remijn
Policy Officer
Directorate-General for the Environment
European Commission

Ms. Rosa Antidormi
Senior Policy Officer
Directorate-General for the Environment
European Commission

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

Ms. Tatjana Hema
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 December 2021 – February 2022**
- Agenda item 4 Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5 Specific Issues:**
- a) Ratification, Reporting and Compliance
 - b) COP 22 Key mandates:
 - Antalya Ministerial Declaration
 - 2023 MED QSR
 - Ecosystem Approach Roadmap Evaluation
 - Designation of the Mediterranean Sea as SO_x Emission Control Area
 - Regional Plans under Article 15 of the LBS Protocol
 - COP 22 Thematic Regional Strategies' way forward
 - MAP Knowledge Management Strategy
 - Implementation of National Activities under PoW and Externally Funded Projects
 - Potential Impacts of Covid-19
 - c) Collaboration and Partners
 - d) Outreach, Communication and Advocacy
- Agenda item 6 Calendar of Meetings and Events**
- Agenda item 7 Date and Venue of the 93rd Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 8 Any Other Matters**
- a) Possible establishment of a RAC on Climate Change
- Agenda item 9 Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 10 Closure of the Meeting**