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Agenda Item 5: Preparation of the 2023 MED QSR

2023 Med QSR Ecological Objective – Common Indicator structure and outline template

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Note by the Secretariat

The 2023 MED QSR Roadmap and Needs Assessment was endorsed by COP 21 (Naples, Italy, December 2019) with Decision IG.24/4. It defines the vision for the successful delivery of the 2023 MED QSR, and outlines key IMAP-related processes, milestones and outputs to be undertaken, with their timelines.

The present document uses as its starting point the methodology, structure, and content of the QSR as approved by the 8th EcAp Coordination Group (9 September 2021, WG.514/12 Meeting Report Annex II). It proposes the structure and content of the Chapter 2. Mediterranean Quality Status Assessment of the 2023 Med QSR (included in Information Document UNEP/MED WG.521/Inf.5 for the present Meeting).

The proposed structure was presented to the CORMON Biodiversity and Fisheries Meeting (videoconference, 28-29 March 2022), which welcomed the work undertaken by the Coordinating Unit and the MAP Components. The CORMON Meeting endorsed the proposed structure for the Chapter 2 of the 2023 Med QSR, with the understanding that it is a living document and will be adapted, as appropriate, during the process of assessing the Ecological Objectives and Common Indicators.

1. 2023 Med QSR Ecological Objective – Common Indicator structure and outline content template

1. The proposed structure for Chapter 2. Mediterranean Quality Status Assessment of the 2023 Med QSR (Table 1) builds on the methodology, structure, and content of the QSR approved by the 8th EcAp Coordination Group (included as Information Document UNEP/MED WG.521/Inf.5 for the present Meeting). It was prepared intersessionally by the EcAp Task Force. Specifically, it provides the methodological context for the Ecological Objectives/Common Indicators (EOs/CIs) and includes some practical example contents related to pollution and litter with the aim of being replicated to other EOs, as feasible.

2. Table 1 is a working document and will be adapted as needed during the process of conducting and presenting the Ecological Objective–Common Indicators assessments.

Table 1. 2023 Med QSR Ecological Objective–Common Indicator structure and outline content template. Blue text provides guidance on the anticipated content for each section.

1. Key messages

A short paragraph with the key messages for each Ecological Objective (EO), presented as a chapeau; 3-4 sentences maximum. Provide a brief description of the EO and what the assessment outcome shows. This should be a non-technical, non-scientific description for a general or policy audience.

Current status

Section 1 will be completed at the end of the assessment.

2. Background information and methodology

- Introduction presenting the relationship of the present scope of QSR with 2017 MED QSR, i.e., related to Decisions of the Parties (e.g., IMAP, QSR, assessment studies) and the QSR roadmap
- Structure of 2023 MED QSR, based on priority themes
- Explain the combination of Common Indicator (CI) assessments *within* each theme
- CI assessments will indicate the interrelationship with other CIs, within the same EO or other EOs, as appropriate
- Assessment findings will highlight the feasibility of integration between CIs and EOs

Note:

Within the elaboration of the methodological approach used, summarise the most important elements of the good environmental status (GES) assessment/ alternative assessment methodologies applied for individual CIs / EOs (as specified below in more detail).

Current status

The 2023 MED QSR will be predominantly based on national monitoring data, submitted to INFO/RAC Info System. This may be supplemented by scientific data and information contributed by the scientific partners.

The structure of the QSR is based on the themes (clusters) of Biodiversity and fisheries; Pollution and marine litter; and Coast & Hydrography. Within each theme there are Ecological Objectives that have one or more Common Indicators along with four Candidate Common Indicators.

Based on the outcomes of section 4, it is anticipated that there will be some integration between Common Indicators within some Ecological Objectives, and possibly between Ecological Objectives e.g., as case studies.

3. Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Response (DPSIR)

- Plan Bleu to contribute socio- economic chapter
- Provide the overall common DPSIR analysis for the whole IMAP, which combines all CIs and respective EOs
- Within the GES assessment elaborated per individual CI, (a) identify the DPSIR findings that are most relevant for the CI and (b) interrelate DPSIR findings with GES assessment findings (matrix for Pollution Cluster is presented below; table 6), where feasible and appropriate.
- Note where detailed elaboration of key pressures/impacts–state interrelationship according to this DPSIR is not feasible, provide a detailed explanation of the reasons in the following sections related to GES assessment

Note:

Use the results of work undertaken so far: (i) DPSIR analysis prepared within the cross-cutting document (2017), as well as for preparation of ICZM Framework; (ii) DPSIR analysis provided for the IMAP Biodiversity cluster; (iii) using relevant findings from UNEP/MAP and external processes; (iv) joint UNEP/MAP – EEA joint report, SoED, Mid-term NAPs evaluation related to LBS Protocol and NAPs related to biodiversity, TDA preparation, etc.

Current status

This section will rely on the trans-boundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) socio-economic analysis outcomes and other existing information and reports. It will be based on the findings of the indicator and ecological objective assessments in section 4, examining the priority sectors impacting the clusters.

4. Good environmental status (GES) / alternative assessment

- Summary of GES/alternative assessment using a traffic-light system, per CI

4.1 Theme selected for GES assessment

- Introduction/ explanation of the theme, including the combination of different CIs and respective EOs
- GES assessment per CI or combination of CIs

4.2 GES Assessment for CI/ alternative assessment for CI

This section will be repeated per [Candidate] Common Indicator. The following four points need to be provided per CI:

- Based on the overall analysis as provided in section 3, elaborate those aspects that are most relevant for the individual CI
- Provide and apply the GES assessment methodology per CI that considers spatial and temporal aggregation and integration
- Provide and apply an alternative assessment methodology for those CIs where GES spatial and temporal aggregation and integration is not possible
- Based on the overall analysis as provided in section 3, elaborate the interrelationship of the DPSIR findings that are most relevant for the individual CI and related GES findings, as appropriate and feasible

Note:

For the presentation of CIs for GES assessment / alternative assessment, the methodology should elaborate the use of the criteria of assessment, optimally nested scales of assessment, visualisation of the assessment findings by applying the tools as feasible within the selected specific GES assessment methodology i.e., maps/graphs/infographics, etc.

Where possible, assessment findings will also be provided for Candidate CIs as part of the relevant sections based on available data (CCI24, 25, 26 and 27).

GES assessment per CI will include the following elements:

- The relationship with Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) Core Theme
- Ecological Objective
- IMAP Common Indicator
- GES Definition
- GES Targets

4.3 GES Assessment for the EO / alternative assessment for EO

- Further to the findings on *possible* integration of an individual CI with other CIs, elaborate the integrated GES assessment findings at the level of: (i) EO, to which the CI(s) belongs; (ii) between EOs of different IMAP pollution clusters
- Summary of GES using traffic-light system, per CI
- SIDA project on GES in the Adriatic as a case study

Example to interrelate DPSIR and GES assessments

Table 6. The GRID/Table combined with the GES assessment results.

Scaled GRID pressures/impact approach	SUB-REGIONS	SUB-DIVISIONS	Country/ National Part	Assessment Result	Coastal urbanization	Industry	Offshore structures
Common Indicator x	Western Mediterranean Sea	North Western (NWMS)	Onshore	non-GES	Orange	Red	Green
			Offshore	GES			
		Alboran Sea (ALBS)	Onshore	...	Orange	Orange	Yellow
			Offshore	..			
		Tyrrhenian Sea (TYRS)	Onshore		Orange	Red	Yellow
			Offshore				
	Adriatic Sea	North Adriatic (NADR)	Onshore		Orange	Red	Yellow
			Offshore				
		Middle Adriatic (MADR)	Onshore		Green	Orange	Green
			Offshore				
		South Adriatic (SADR)	Onshore		Green	Orange	Green
			Offshore				
	Central and Ionian Sea	Central (CEN)	Onshore		Green	Green	Green
			Offshore				
		Ionian Sea (IONS)	Onshore		Green	Green	Green
			Offshore				
	Aegean and Levantine Seas	Aegean Sea (AEGS)	Onshore		Orange	Red	Yellow
			Offshore				
		Levantine (LEVS)	Onshore		Orange	Red	Yellow
			Offshore				

*Note: For the purpose of this table, onshore and offshore areas are **not** used as legal terms but as the geographical terms to distinguish them for the purpose of monitoring and assessing different areas with different ecological features*

Current status

See Information Document UNEP/MED WG.521/Inf.5 for the present Meeting.

5. Key findings per CI

- Further to the GES assessment findings as provided above, provide key findings on compliance and non-compliance with GES targets. In so doing, provide highlights for individual CIs – diagrams or figures, and maps if feasible (these could be in boxes).
- Endeavour to provide a comparison of the present findings with 2017 Med QSR GES assessment findings
- Identify gaps per CI that need to be further addressed towards achieving GES, considering the key knowledge gaps from the 2017 Med QSR
- Highlight data gaps

Current status

Section 5 will be drafted based on the findings of section 4.

6. Measures and actions required to achieve GES

Further to knowledge gaps identified in section 5:

- Propose measures and actions to be put in place towards GES achievement (what is the outlook and what are the risks, challenges to look out for)
- Pay particular attention to the steps needed to improve data availability

Note:

Depending on progress in specific GES assessment, this section can be further developed

Current status

Section 6 will be drafted depending on progress in specific GES assessments and the gaps and challenges that this process will highlight.

Proposals on measures and actions in light of the outcomes of the GES assessments.