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Third Steering Committee Meeting of the EU-funded IMAP-MPA Project

Videoconference, 7 June 2022

**Agenda item 5: EcAp MED III Progress Report 2021**

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

UNEP/MAP  
Athens, 2022

**Support to Efficient Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach-based Integrated Monitoring and Assessment of the Mediterranean Sea and Coasts and to delivery of data-based 2023 Quality Status Report in synergy with the EU MSFD (EcAp MED III)**

**Annual Project Progress Report**  
Reporting period: 01/01/2021 - 31/12/2021

Prepared by  
UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention Secretariat

SIGNATURES <sup>1</sup>	
Name of Project Manager: Lucas Spieser	Signature  Date: 21/02/2022
Name of Supervisor: Joanne Foden	<b>Clearance</b> Signature  Date: 21/02/2022
Name of Head of Branch / Unit Managing Project: Tatjana Hema	<b>Sign Off</b> Signature  Date: 21/02/2022

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<sup>1</sup> The signatures of the annual project progress reports confirm that quality control was done in the concerned Division and MEA Secretariat.

**ENRTP STRATEGIC COOPERATION AGREEMENTS / GPGC PROGRAMME COOPERATION AGREEMENT**

**ANNEX 4 – ANNUAL PROGRESS PROJECT REPORT**

<b>Reporting Period</b>	<b>01/01/2021 – 31/12/2021</b>
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**DESCRIPTION**

ENRTP/GPGC Strategic Priority <sup>2</sup>	GPGC Priority Area 1 – Component 4: International environment and Climate governance	EC Directorate General	DG ENV
Project Title	Efficient Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach-based Integrated Monitoring and Assessment of the Mediterranean Sea and Coasts in synergy with the EU MSFD (EcAp-MED III)		
UNEP Division Director/MEA Executive Head managing project	Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Coordinator <a href="mailto:Tatjana.hema@un.org">Tatjana.hema@un.org</a>		
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UNEP /MEA PoW	UNEP/MAP PoW 2020-2021 (COP 21, Decision IG.24/14) UNEP/MAP PoW 2022-2023 (COP 22, Decision IG.25/19)		
UNEP /MEA Sub-programme	Governance; Land and Sea-Based Pollution; Biodiversity and Ecosystems; Land and sea interaction and processes; Integrated coastal zone management		
UNEP /MEA PoW Expected Accomplishment(s)/Indicator(s)	<p>Strategic Outcomes:</p> <p>1.4 Knowledge and understanding of the state of the Mediterranean Sea and coast enhanced through mandated assessments for informed policy-making</p> <p>2.4 Marine Pollution Monitoring and assessment</p> <p>2.5 Enhanced capacity at regional, sub-regional and national levels including technical assistance and capacity building</p> <p>3.4 Monitoring, inventory and assessment of biodiversity with focus on endangered and threatened species, non-indigenous species and key habitats</p> <p>3.5 Technical assistance and capacity building at regional, sub-regional and national levels to strengthen policy implementation and compliance with biodiversity -related national legislation</p> <p>4.4 Monitoring and assessment (Land and Sea Interaction and Processes)</p> <p>5.2 Development of new action plans, programmes of measures, common standards and criteria, guidelines (Integrated Coastal Zone Management)</p> <p>5.4 Monitoring and assessment (Integrated Coastal Zone Management)</p>		
UNEP /MEA PoW Output(s)	1.4.1 Periodic assessments based on DPSIR approach and published addressing inter alia status quality of marine and coastal environment, interaction between environment and development as well as scenarios and prospective development analysis in the long run. These assessments include climate change-related		

<sup>2</sup> The ENRTP and GPGC priorities are indicated in the EC-approved project full-fledged documents.

	<p>1.4.3 Implementation of IMAP (the EcAp-based integrated monitoring and assessment programme) coordinated, including GES common indicators fact sheets, and supported by a data information centre to be integrated into Info/MAP platform</p> <p>1.4.4 Interface between science and policy-making strengthened through enhanced cooperation with global and regional scientific institutions, knowledge sharing platforms, dialogues, exchange of good practices and publications</p> <p>1.5.1 Info/MAP platform and platform for the implementation of IMAP fully operative and further developed, connected to MAP components' information systems and other relevant regional knowledge platforms, to facilitate access to knowledge for managers and decision-makers, as well as stakeholders and the general public</p> <p>2.4.1 National pollution and litter monitoring programmes updated to include the relevant pollution and litter IMAP indicators, implemented and supported by data quality assurance and control</p> <p>2.4.3 Marine pollution assessment tools (in depth thematic assessment, maps and indicator factsheets) developed and updated for key pollutants and sectors within EcAp</p> <p>2.5.1 Training programmes and workshops in areas such as pollution monitoring, pollutant inventories, policy implementation, common technical guidelines, authorization and inspections bodies, compliance with national legislation</p> <p>3.4.1 Monitoring programmes for key species and habitats as well as invasive species, as provided for in the IMAP are developed and implemented, including on the effectiveness of marine and coastal protected areas, and on climate change impacts</p> <p>3.4.3 Common indicators on biodiversity and non-indigenous species monitored through IMAP in MPAs and SPAMIs, and relevant data sets established</p> <p>3.5.1 Capacity-building programmes related to the development and management of marine and coastal protected areas, to the conservation and monitoring of endangered and threatened coastal and marine species and key habitats, and to monitoring issues dealing with climate change and biodiversity developed and implemented, including pilots to support efforts aimed at MPA/SPAMI establishment and implementation</p> <p>4.4.2 National coast and hydrography monitoring programmes developed and updated to include the relevant IMAP common indicators, interactions and processes</p> <p>5.2.2 Methodological framework for land and sea interactions, considering in particular MSP and ICZM, developed and applied</p> <p>5.4.1 Fact sheets for ICZM indicators developed to evaluate the effectiveness of coastal and marine resources management measures</p>
<p>Link to relevant SDG target(s) and SDG indicator(s)</p>	<p>SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and the following associated indicators:</p> <p>INDICATOR 14.1.1: Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density (Target 14.1: By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution); INDICATOR 14.2.1: Proportion of national exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches; INDICATOR 14.4.1: Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels; INDICATOR 14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas INDICATOR 14.A.1: Proportion of total research budget allocated to research in the field of marine technology (Target 14.A: Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the intergovernmental oceanographic commission criteria and guidelines on the transfer of marine technology, in order to improve ocean</p>

	health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing states and least developed countries)		
Name of Implementing Partners	Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL) Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (PB/RAC) Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC)		
Type/Location	Regional, National		
Region (delete as appropriate)	Africa, Europe, West Asia		
Names of Countries	Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia		
Project Start Date <sup>3</sup>	01/09/2020	Project End Date <sup>4</sup>	31/08/2023
Date of EC Task Manager approval of project	28/07/2020		
Overall project duration	36 months		
Total EC Allocation incl. programme support costs (USD)	USD 2,200,000 (including 7% PSC)		

## I SUMMARY OF OVERALL PROJECT PERFORMANCE

The EU-funded EcAp MED III Project started in September 2020, with an official launch in December 2020 during the integrated [CORMON meeting](#). Actions during the first months of implementation have been mainly focused on its operationalisation and the undertaking of administrative and regulatory steps required to launch the implementation of most activities on the ground. The pace of progress has accelerated in 2021 despite recurrent challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Project implementation progress was reviewed by the first [Project Steering Committee](#) (PSC) on 28/04/21.

The Secretariat of UNEP/MAP (the Secretariat) has created an IMAP Task Force of project officers and representatives of MAP Components as a communication and coordination channel with the aim to enhance the implementation of the IMAP in the work of the UNEP/MAP system at regional and national levels. The Task Force supported and provided substantive guidance to the implementation of EcAp MED III throughout the year via regular monthly and ad hoc meetings during which specific recommendations were made to ensure full technical relevance and quality of Project products, compliance with the Programme of Work (PoW) 2020-2021 and synergies with other projects. As developed in Section V of this report, complementarity between IMAP-MPA, Marine Litter MED II (ML MED II) and EcAp MED III was ensured during the year.

In terms of Project staffing, mitigation measures were taken such as the recruitment of an Individual Contractor for 10 months, followed by a UN Volunteer and the involvement of other in-house human resources, to avoid any gaps until the onboarding of the P3 EcAp MED III Project Officer foreseen in spring 2022. Although not optimal, it allowed the Project team to run efficiently in 2021.

Regarding the Project implementation, a first important milestone was reached with the conclusion of legal agreements with the MAP Components acting as implementing partners (IPs) in April 2021. Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) were signed with INFO/RAC, SPA/RAC and PAP/RAC, and a Small-Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with Plan Bleu.

Following the formal start of implementation by the MAP components, work focused on the preparation of the SSFAs with all beneficiary countries (BCs). This exercise has been delayed to an extent which was not fully anticipated. The impacts of the Covid-19 in the BCs led to non-optimal working arrangements in spite of intense outreach by the Secretariat and MAP components. By 31/12/21, the Secretariat signed SSFAs with Israel and Morocco; and SPA/RAC with Tunisia, Morocco and Libya.

<sup>3</sup> Start date should be the start date reflected in the EC-approved full-fledged proposal. If the EC approval came posterior to this date - the date of the email marking EC approval or the date indicated as the start date in the EC's email.

<sup>4</sup> End date should be the end date reflected in the EC-approved full-fledged project document. The initial end date can be exceptionally modified upon written EC approval based on a request for no-cost extension of the project implementation period.

Overall, SPA/RAC and PAP/RAC made good progress on the monitoring of selected Common Indicators (CIs), the scales of assessments and monitoring and the baseline values of the CIs as indicated in the Project document. The work on the Non-Indigenous Species (NIS) and to undertake baseline sub-regional assessments for CI 15 and support implementation of monitoring for CI 16 is well-advanced. The activities on the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) could not take place on the ground, but at regional level dialogue between scientists and policy makers were undertaken with full participation and contribution by Plan Bleu. The actions carried out by INFO/RAC to update and upgrade the IMAP Info System continued at pace in 2021, as illustrated by the implementation of Data Standards and Data Dictionaries, the strengthened support to BCs and the approved MAP Data Policy.

National and joint monitoring plans are underway, for example on biodiversity for Tunisia and Libya. Preliminary meetings were organised with national institutions to discuss the first drafts and elements developed within EcAp MED III in synergy with the IMAP-MPA Project to ensure successful coordination and implementation of the respective national IMAPs.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are recognised as priorities across all aspects of UNEP/MAP's work and are among the Project's core values. Pertinent actions are therefore taken throughout the Project. A gender-balanced participation was achieved in the relevant meetings which took place in 2021 as well as for the recruitment of regional experts and consultants.

The CORMON meetings in 2020 and 2021 contributed to several Project activities, as did the 8<sup>th</sup> [EcAp Coordination Group](#) (EcAp CG) and [MAP Focal Points](#) meetings in September 2021. This sequenced set of meetings paved the way to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols ([COP 22](#)), held on 7-10 December 2021 in Antalya, Turkey. The "COP for the Mediterranean" successfully concluded this reporting period with a package of [action-oriented decisions](#) including on ecosystem approach implementation and specifically on IMAP addressing related governance aspects which are also very important and related to the success of the Project implementation.

## **II OUTPUT PERFORMANCE**

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The progress made and results achieved in 2021 for each output listed in the Project Document are described in the table below. The supporting documents are listed under Section X and annexed to this report.

Output(s)	Indicator(s)	Target	Description
1.1: National and Joint Monitoring carried out of selected Common Indicator(s) (CIs) in beneficiary countries based on national IMAP	1.1.1 Number of monitored and assessed IMAP CIs per beneficiary country	12 per each project beneficiary country	The work composed of two streams is ongoing. By 31/12/21, the number of CIs selected for implementation per BC based on national monitoring plans is as follows: -Algeria: 3 (CIs 13, 14, 17) -Egypt: 3 (CIs 13, 14, 17) -Israel: 5 (CIs 13, 14, 17, 22, 23) -Lebanon: 1 (CI 17) -Morocco: 4 (CIs 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 23) -Tunisia: 3 (CIs 13, 14, 17) 2 additional CIs (22 and 23 on marine litter) are expected to commence in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia in 2022 pending the finalization of the relevant legal agreements. Quality assurance and quality control are then carried out under the supervision of the RACs.
	1.1.2 Number of national quality assurance and quality control programmes prepared	Minimum one per CI per country	
	1.1.3 Number of sets of data reported to IMAP Info System per country	Minimum 3 for EO5, EO9, EO10; minimum 1 for EO1	Ongoing. BCs have started the submission of available monitoring data generated prior to 2020 (i.e. from 2017 to 2020) as well as new monitoring data (i.e. 2021, 2022). At least one set of data was submitted for all CIs by the majority of Contracting Parties (CPs), apart from CI 2 (Biodiversity) and CI 16 (physical disturbance to coastline). The number of available datasets per Ecological Objective in the beneficiary countries is the following: -EO 5: 4 Algeria, 10 Egypt, 34 Israel, 4 Morocco, 26 Tunisia -EO 8: 1 Morocco -EO 9: 2 Algeria, 3 Egypt, 19 Israel, 1 Lebanon, 18 Morocco, 14 Tunisia -EO 10: 6 Israel Additional datasets pertinent to IMAP EO 10 marine litter (CIs 22 and 23) will be submitted to IMAP Info System in 2022 pending the finalization of the relevant legal agreements. The last set is scheduled for September 2022 as planned in the 2023 QSR Roadmap.
	1.1.4 Number of national institutions involved in the process	Minimum 2 per cluster per country	Achieved. With the SSFAs signed with national IPs in each country, the Project involved up to two key national institutions, as listed below. -Algeria: the Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy (for Biodiversity and NIS) and the National Observatory of the Environment and Sustainable Development (for Pollution and Marine Litter as well as Coast and Hydrography) -Egypt: the Environmental Affairs Agency (for all clusters)

			<p>-Israel: the Nature and Parks Authority (for Biodiversity and NIS) and the Oceanographic and Limnological Institute (for Pollution and Marine Litter as well as Coast and Hydrography)</p> <p>-Lebanon: the Ministry of Environment (Biodiversity and NIS) and the National Council for Scientific Research (for Pollution and Marine Litter as well as Coast and Hydrography)</p> <p>-Libya: the Environment General Authority (for all clusters)</p> <p>-Morocco: the Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment (for Pollution and Marine Litter as well as Coast and Hydrography) and the National Laboratory for Pollution Research and Monitoring (for Pollution and Marine Litter)</p> <p>-Tunisia: the Agency for Coastal Protection and Management Agency (for all clusters) and the National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technology</p>
	1.1.5 Number of assessment factsheets at national and sub-regional and/or regional level	Minimum 6 national and 6 sub-regional/regional assessment factsheets	Not yet started. As planned, national (and regional) assessment factsheets will be prepared in 2022 by the national IMAP teams based on data delivered under Output 1.1 and other sources.
1.2: Joint monitoring pilots designed and implemented	1.2.1 Number of joint (sub-regional) monitoring pilots designed and implemented	1 pilot implemented in East Mediterranean sub-region	1 pilot designed. The work is ongoing to implement the joint monitoring and assessment programme on NIS related to fisheries, as explained under 1.2.2, 1.2.3, and 1.2.4.
	1.2.2 Number of countries participating in joint sub-regional monitoring programmes	3 countries	Ongoing. In addition to EcAp MED III beneficiary countries in the Eastern Mediterranean (i.e. Egypt, Israel, and Lebanon), Output 1.2 also involves non-BCs, namely Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. Discussions with JRC are being held to ensure synergy with MSFD, to follow a common approach and avoid duplication of reporting for Greece and Cyprus.
	1.2.3 Number of species monitored under sub-regional monitoring programmes on NIS	7 agreed species	Ongoing, and species already defined. The list of NIS was prepared as a first step for the elaboration of a baseline assessment, in collaboration with GFCM and in synergy, as appropriate, with the work performed at EU level by JRC. This list, based on the criteria of commercial importance, existing and potential impacts and data sources, consists of <i>Saurida lessepsianus</i> , <i>Lagocephalus sceleratus</i> , <i>Pterois miles</i> , <i>Siganus rivulatus</i> , <i>Siganus luridus</i> , <i>Fistularia commersonii</i> , <i>Plotosus lineatus</i> . The sub-regional and regional analysis are ongoing and will be reviewed by the CORMON meeting (28-29 March 2022).
	1.2.4 Number of baseline sub-regional assessment for NIS	1 Baseline assessment for the 7 agreed NIS for the East Mediterranean sub-region, and 1	Ongoing. Updated national lists were received and discussed with corresponding countries. The draft NIS baseline was at the agenda of the informal Online Working Group (20/04/21). Progress and main findings were presented at the



		regional baseline for the entire list of NIS	CORMON meeting on Biodiversity and Fisheries (10-11/06/21) and the 15 <sup>th</sup> SPA/BD Focal Point meeting (23-25/06/21). The regional baseline is now at the agenda of the next CORMON meeting on Biodiversity and Fisheries for endorsement and its use for the 2023 MED QSR.
	1.2.5 Number of sets of data on NIS reported to IMAP Info System	Minimum 1 set of data on 7 agreed NIS reported to IMAP Info System per participating country	Ongoing. The guidance factsheet on CI 6 was revised and discussed during the integrated CORMON session (12/20), CORMON on Biodiversity, the 14 <sup>th</sup> REMPEC Focal Point meeting (May-June 2021) and the 15 <sup>th</sup> SPA/BD Focal Point meeting. Its use for the 2023 MED QSR was agreed at the 8 <sup>th</sup> EcAp CG meeting (September 2021). The development of national and sub-regional assessment factsheet will start in May 2022.
1.3: Undertake baseline sub-regional assessments for CI 15 and support implementation of monitoring of CI 16 in at least one area per beneficiary country	1.3.1 Number of baseline sub-regional assessments for CI 15	At least 1 per sub-region for CI 15	Ongoing. In coordination with IMAP-MPA, the jointly prepared questionnaire has been adjusted to initiate the preparation of the baseline assessment for CI 15. The preparation of country reports has been completed in Lebanon and Egypt. In Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Israel drafts have been submitted by national consultants and the reports are about to be finalised. In Algeria the procurement procedure to nominate the national consultant is in progress and the contract will soon be signed. The results on CI 15 will be included in the first draft of the 2023 MED QSR (EO 7).
	1.3.2 Number of sets of data reported for CI 16	At least one for each of the 6 beneficiary countries	Ongoing. The assessment criteria and the Guiding document for application of assessment criteria for CI 16 have been developed and discussed at the CORMON Coast and Hydrography meeting (25/11/21). The first set of monitoring data for CI 16 was completed and reported in Lebanon, Libya and Morocco. The results were validated by responsible contacts and the files uploaded to the IMAP Info system. The drafts were submitted by Tunisia and Algeria and comments provided to finalise the reports. Progress in Egypt is pending the nomination of the national consultant. The data collected for CI 16 will be included in the second draft of the 2023 MED QSR (EO 8).
	1.3.3 Number of reports presenting lessons learned	1 report	Lessons learnt will be drawn at a later stage once activities 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 are completed. A report will then be drafted and presented at the related CORMON meeting in 2023 as planned.
1.4: IMAP Info System expanded to include all mandatory CI of IMAP, fully operational enabling the Contracting Parties to	1.4.1 Percentage of mandatory CIs of IMAP included in IMAP Info System	100% (all mandatory CIs included – EO3 not included)	The implementation of Data Standards (DSs) and Data Dictionaries (DDs) is ongoing. In 2021 a light revision and adaptation of the DSs and DDs related to the 11 CIs selected for the pilot phase of the IMAP Info System was performed, and drafts developed for 5 new Common Indicators. Draft DSs and DDs for CIs 18 and 20 were reviewed by the

report their monitoring data in 2020, 2021 and 2022			Online Working Group (OWG) on Pollution and submitted for information to the 8th EcAp CG meeting (September 2021). Revised versions for CIs 3 and 4 for marine mammals and marine turtles have been further elaborated in 2021 based on a meeting with ACCOBAMS and SPA/RAC in April 2021. These DSs and DDs and a first version for CIs 3, 4 and 5 on sea birds and monk seals were reviewed by the CORMON Biodiversity Meeting (June 2021) and will be submitted for adoption at the next CORMON Meeting on Biodiversity and Fisheries (March 2022). The objective is to have the IMAP infosystem with DS and DD in place and operational for all mandatory CI of IMAP by June 2022.
1.4.2 Number of countries supported to facilitate quality assured reporting of monitoring data	5 additional countries		An IMAP Info System <a href="#">User Guide</a> was updated to provide general assistance to users and a dedicated e-mail account ( <a href="mailto:imap@info-rac.org">imap@info-rac.org</a> ) made available to support CPs to upload data. INFO/RAC delivered bilateral training and continuous assistance during the reporting period. National online workshops – with simultaneous translation in English and French – were organised and dedicated support provided to Tunisia and Morocco. It included a general overview of the IMAP Info System and its functionalities, as well as specific explanations and support on Data Standards and Data Dictionaries. Particular attention was paid to support the processing and loading of monitoring data by the CPs.
1.4.3 IMAP Data policy availability	IMAP Data policy available and reviewed by CORMONs		The IMAP Data Policy was developed in close cooperation with the MAP components and the involvement of the Contracting Parties. It was reviewed by CORMONs, adopted by the EcAp CG meeting in September and endorsed by COP 22 in December 2021. The Policy is annexed to this report.
1.4.4 Number of Data flows implemented	Data flows for all the IMAP CIs (EO3 not included) implemented and IMAP Info System completed and fully operational		The IMAP Info System is fully operational for the initial set of 11 CIs (12 modules) and updated in view of the implementation of the new data flows. The migration of data from the MED POL Info System database by INFO/RAC into the IMAP Info System started in 2020 and continued in 2021. The migration process involved information standards for CIs 13, 14 and 17 and MED POL monitoring data for nutrients and contaminants. The entire dataset is now available on the IMAP Info System in a standardized format and stored on an infrastructure able to guarantee its integrity and preservation over time. A further update is ongoing in order to include previous decade data recently made available by some countries.

			The GIS standards for the CIs related to hydrographic alterations induced by coastal and offshore infrastructures and to the level of coastal artificialization have also been updated.
2.1.1: Analysis for each IMAP cluster on knowledge gaps, with a focus on the scales of assessment/reporting prepared/agreed and scales of monitoring for all IMAP CIs agreed/progressed	2.1.1.1 Number of CI analysed with regards to knowledge gaps with focus on assessment scales	At least 5 CI	Ongoing. All the technical documents covering the scales of assessment were presented at the CORMON meetings. Assessment elements related to marine mammals were endorsed by the 8 <sup>th</sup> EcAp CG meeting for their use under the 2023 MED QSR. Synergy with the results at sub-regional/regional scales is ongoing to fill existing gaps and ensure quality assured data. An inventory of the damage on seafloor integrity (EO 6) is ongoing. It will be reviewed in autumn 2022. The Guiding document for CI 16 was presented at the CORMON meeting (25/11/21) by PAP/RAC and will be tested in some of the eligible countries in 2022. The document is crucial for the preparation of the country-specific GES, operational objectives and targets, as well as for the assessment of trends.
	2.1.1.2 Number of CI covered by monitoring and assessment scales	At least 5 CI	
	2.1.1.3 Availability of proposal on integrated scales of assessment	Proposal on integrated scales of assessment submitted to CORMON	Work ongoing. The proposals for pollution and marine litter clusters were elaborated under MAP PoW. Further work is required and for other clusters too, it will take place in 2022-2023 as planned.
2.1.2: Assessment criteria/thresholds/baseline values proposed/updated for the 10 IMAP CIs included in the current IMAP Pilot Info System as well as one candidate indicator (Noise)	2.1.2.1 Number of CIs with updated/new assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values	10 IMAP CIs and one candidate indicator (Noise)	On marine litter, the updated Baseline Values (BV) and new Threshold Values (TV) for IMAP EO 10 CI22, were approved during COP22 and were annexed to the updated Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean. Relevant work has been also initiated in 2021 for IMAP EO 10 CI 23 (seafloor macro-litter and floating microplastics), which is expected to be concluded in 2022. On pollution, the CORMON meeting (April 2021) discussed the documents prepared by MEDPOL on Adjusted Background (Assessment) Concentrations for CI 17 and Upgraded Approach for Environmental Assessment Criteria for CIs 17, 18 and 20, along with Application of the Assessment Criteria Methodology for IMAP CI 13 (UNEP/MED 492/11, UNEP/MED 492/12). This work supports the aggregated application of the assessment criteria within GES assessment for 2023 MED QSR. On biodiversity, documents on thresholds and baseline values of CIs 3,4 and 5 related to marine turtles and marine mammals were validated by the CORMON meeting (10-11/06/21) and the 15th SPA/BD Focal point meeting (23-25/06/21) and endorsed by the EcAp CG (09/09/21). A draft document on thresholds for CI 6 on NIS was validated by the CORMON and 15th SPA/BD Focal Point meetings. The work on the benthic habitats

			and sea birds is ongoing. The final versions will be presented to the CORMON meeting on biodiversity (28-29/03/22). Please refer to 2.1.1 above for CI 16.
2.1.3: Regular regional/sub-regional expert group meetings, i.e., expert group per sub-region per topic established and operational to address monitoring and assessment scales, monitoring protocols and assessment criteria	2.1.3.1 Number of regional and sub-regional expert group meetings	At least one regional expert group meeting per cluster, and one per sub-region per cluster, per year back-to-back with CORMON	Not done yet. The plan is to hold them in 2022 back-to-back with CORMONs inviting experts from national IMAP country teams and organising subregional discussions. Other regional and sub regional meetings will be held in 2022. They will connect experts at national level in the seven beneficiary countries, to allow for an exchange of lessons learnt, and support the process of development of monitoring and assessment scales, monitoring protocols and assessment criteria, upon which the 2023 MED QSR will be prepared.
2.1.4: Support to CORMON meetings per cluster ensuring strong participation and inputs to its work from expert networks established at sub regional level for the beneficiary countries	2.1.4.1 Number of CORMON meetings organized and supported	At least one per cluster per year and two integrated	All planned CORMON meetings took place in 2021 via videoconference. The BCs actively participated in all the meetings. The CORMON meeting on Marine Litter (30/03/21) approved the baseline and threshold values for beach macro-litter and the updated guidelines for monitoring floating microplastics (report available <a href="#">here</a> ). The CORMON meeting on Pollution (26-28/04/21) pored over the monitoring guidelines, integration and aggregation rules, and assessment criteria for the IMAP Common Indicators related to contaminants (the report UNEP/MED WG.492/14 can be found in annex). The CORMON meeting on Biodiversity and Fisheries (10-11/06/21), addressed monitoring protocols and scales, assessment criteria, and threshold and baseline values of IMAP Common Indicators related to biodiversity (report available <a href="#">here</a> ). The CORMON meeting on Coast and Hydrography (25/11/21) addressed the Assessment criteria and the Guiding document for the application of the assessment criteria for CI 16, and the methodology for baseline sub-regional assessment of CI 15 (report available <a href="#">here</a> ). The second batch of thematic CORMON meetings is scheduled for spring 2022 onwards. After a first integrated CORMON meeting held on 1-3/12/20 (report available <a href="#">here</a> ), a second one could be envisaged in March 2023. CORMON meetings' outcome is strongly related and provide guidance to project activities implementation.

2.2.1: Establish and implement a communication and visibility strategy for the MED 2023 QSR; Outreach to key partners	2.2.1.1 Availability of communication and visibility strategy for 2023 MED QSR	Communication and visibility strategy available	The 2023 MED QSR Communication and Visibility Strategy was drafted and approved by the 8 <sup>th</sup> EcAp CG (meeting on 09/09/21). Its objective is to ensure that the 2023 MED QSR publication has a wide dissemination and receives a high level of visibility; to promote its findings and related recommendations.
	2.2.1.2 Availability of a collaboration mechanism and Partnership Plan for the 2023 MED QSR	Collaboration mechanism and Partnership Plan available	Mechanism established and operational. It was initiated at a first regional meeting on 2 September 2021 with almost 40 participants. Scientific partner organisations and projects were identified, and potential contributions were defined per EO and/or CI. The report of the meeting and the list of partners identified by the EcAp CG for contribution to the 2023 QSR are annexed to the report. This was followed by bilateral talks between MAP Components and partner organisations to discuss whether and how their data and information could be used and these bilateral partnerships will continue in 2022. Meeting will be held on regular basis at regional level between UNEP/MAP and partners.
2.2.2: Strengthen SPI networks of scientists and policy makers for the IMAP and its implementation; Design and implement 1-2 pilots at country level	2.2.2.1 Number of national SPI pilot networks established	2 pilot national SPI networks established	Ongoing. National actions related to SPI were delayed by the consequences of the Covid-19. Plan Bleu also pinned down the scientific partners and institutions relevant to support SPI activity at national level. For a pilot, Plan Bleu, in collaboration with other IPs, has identified Morocco with a focus on the coast and hydrography cluster. The pilot will analyse the baseline and definition of requirements and approach for the monitoring of CI 15. The ToR for the expert supporting Plan Bleu will be finalised and the consultant selected by March 2022. The national workshop in Morocco should subsequently take place before the autumn. Other workshops could be organised in 2023 as planned.
	2.2.2.2 Number of SPI workshops organized	2 national SPI workshops and 1 regional SPI workshop	
2.2.3: Develop and implement a timeline for regional data sharing between partners	2.2.3.1 Availability of agreement and timeline with regional partners for data sharing	Agreement and timeline for data sharing available	A collaboration mapping exercise took place to map where filling the science or data gaps is possible with comparable data of other regional organisations, scientific projects, pilot outcomes, or scientific literature. As indicated above under 2.2.1.2, the partners consultation meeting held on 02/09/21 was followed by bilateral talks to discuss whether and how their individual data and information could be used. Follow up meetings will take place in 2022 between UNEP/MAP and relevant partners.
2.2.4: Develop and Publish 2023 MED QSR in 2 languages; make it available online and present at COP 23	2.2.4 Availability of 2023 MED QSR	2023 MED QSR published	The methodology, outline, structure and contents of the 2023 MED QSR was adopted by the EcAp CG meeting in September 2021 (UNEP/MED WG.514/05, available <a href="#">here</a> ). Two documents will be developed for the CORMON and EcAp CG meetings of 2022: an update of the QSR Roadmap and EO-CI template. It will provide detailed information on the structure and contents of the 2023 MED QSR by explaining the expected

			content of the different sections whenever feasible at this stage, with the methodological context for all EOs/CIs and some practical examples.
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## Project management and coordination

The start of most national activities on the ground depends on the signing of legal agreements between UNEP/MAP and its Components with the relevant national authorities. These agreements (or SSFAs) establish the financial support and modalities of cooperation to carry out actions related to effective implementation of IMAP process at national level.

The consequences of the pandemic led to some delays in the conclusion of the SSFAs with BCs. Nevertheless, thanks to intense discussions and constant follow up at technical and political level, two SSFA were signed with Israel and Morocco by the Secretariat in the second semester of 2021. The agreements focus on pollution and marine litter. During the same period, SPA/RAC signed SSFAs with Tunisia, Morocco and Libya. Except Libya, all countries received the first instalment of the budget and all the remaining SSFAs were at an advanced stage of negotiation on 31/12/21.

Regarding human resources, the Secretariat had recruited an Individual Contractor from October 2020 to July 2021, until the start of the QSR Programme Officer in July 2021. After a long re-classification process, the recruitment of the EcAp MED III Project Manager is in the final phase. and is expected to start in late spring 2022. In parallel and as agreed at the PSC, a UNV was recruited in June 2021 to support the management of the ECAP MED III Project until mid-March 2022, with the intention for prolongation until end of May 2022 to avoid any gap until the Project manager is on board.

The enrolment of a G5 Administrative Assistant jointly with ML MED II was initiated, with an estimated start quarter 2-2022. A UNV Finance Assistant post is currently allocated to the project and the contract has been extended to avoid disruptions and ensure an effective transition.

There is a good gender balance in the Secretariat team in charge of Project implementation and its supervision. The local staff allocated to the Project at the RACs level (experts on biodiversity, coast, science-policy interface, IT and related administrative support) is on board. Gender considerations were also taken into account locally. For example, SPA/RAC ensured a balanced participation through a recruitment which included the relevant provisions.

Despite the consequences of the Covid-19, all the meetings planned in 2021 took place and substantially contributed to the implementation of the Project from the technical and policy guidance perspective. Besides the CORMON meetings (see output 2.1.4 in the table above) the 8<sup>th</sup> EcAp CG meeting and the MAP Focal Points meeting in September reviewed and/or approved important documents which provide guidance to a number of project activities such as implementation of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap (UNEP/MED WG.514/4); 2023 MED QSR methodology, outline, structure and contents (UNEP/MED WG.514/5); 2023 MED QSR Communication and Visibility Strategy (UNEP/MED WG.514/6); Updated Baseline Values and Proposal for Threshold Values for IMAP Common Indicator 22 (UNEP/MED WG.514/7); Background (Assessment) Concentrations (BC/BAC) for Common Indicator 17 and Upgraded Approach for Environmental Assessment Criteria (EAC) for IMAP Common Indicators 17, 18 and 20 (UNEP/MED WG.514/8); Assessment Criteria Methodology for IMAP Common Indicator 13: Pilot Application in Adriatic Sub-region (UNEP/MED WG.514/9); Revised guidance fact sheet for the IMAP Common Indicator 6 related to Non-Indigenous Species.

### **III CHALLENGES, MANAGEMENT ACTIONS, RISK MITIGATION**

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Risks were well identified in the Project Document, which allowed the Secretariat to react efficiently to the issues faced in 2021. The first Steering Committee meeting reviewed progress made and difficulties encountered since the start of the Project in late 2020. It allowed to slightly adapt the Project through corrective actions and revised schedule.

As projected, the Covid-19 and its consequences (lockdowns, border closures, travel restrictions, etc.) continued to be the main impediment to EcAp MED III and other programmes. It impacted HR aspects (recruitments particularly), the conclusion of legal agreements (and the transfer of funds to implement corresponding activities) and the organisation of meetings. Due to the pandemic, all national administrations of the BCs have been mostly under full/partial telecommuting arrangements. Together with turnover of national staff, it made the negotiation phase of the SSFAs more complicated. The absence of physical meetings at country level also impacted the establishment of National IMAP Committees.

The pandemic comes on top of administrative and other difficulties faced by some beneficiary countries. The Secretariat is closely monitoring the respective situations and reacting accordingly.

The involvement of the BC remains key to the successful implementation of EcAp MED III. As implementing partners, all the RACs faced the same situation. If need be, the importance of face-to-face meetings was demonstrated by the successful outcome of SPA/RAC's mission to Libya where a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Environment in Tripoli (14-15/21) led to the signature of the SSFA by the Minister. For Plan Bleu and the SPI component, it was so far not possible to organise activities on the ground. A first workshop should take place before the autumn. In order to mitigate risks, the preparation of the workshop and terms of reference for the consultant are already well advanced.

PAP/RAC made a lot of efforts to establish and strengthen contacts with national responsible institutions which resulted in positive outcomes in all countries except Egypt. For the latter, the work carried out is likely to pay off and the nomination of a consultant is expected promptly.

Thanks to the mitigation and safeguard measures undertaken, the implementation of the Project was never jeopardised as such. Lessons learnt will be incorporated into the Project management in 2022. However, considering the considerable time needed for implementing monitoring activities on the ground and in particular its seasonal dimension, the need for a project duration extension may be considered for further discussion with the PSC and the EC Task Manager.

### **IV OUTCOME PERFORMANCE**

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The performance at the level of outcomes is summarised in the table below.



Outcome	Indicator(s)	Target	Description of the results achieved
Outcome 1: Effective 'On the ground' national IMAP implementation with beneficiary countries providing quality assured data for the development of a quality-assured, region-wide and data-based (Evidence-based) 2023 MED QSR	1.1 Number of countries with operational national IMAPs	Target: additional 7	<p>SSFAs were signed between the Secretariat and Israel and Morocco; between SPA/RAC and Tunisia, Morocco and Libya; national IMAPs are being established; and monitoring plans designed and implemented for pollution, marine litter and biodiversity clusters.</p> <p>The finalisation of monitoring plans and the implementation of field survey programmes will enable the collection of data sets as required for the QSR. Up to two key national institutions (agencies and ministries) are engaged in the Project, as listed in Section II. Exchanges with national stakeholders take place with both the Secretariat and the RACs.</p> <p>The biodiversity monitoring focuses on CIs 3, 4 and 5 on marine mammals and CI 6 on NIS in East Mediterranean sub-region. The implementation of the joint monitoring and assessment programme on NIS related to fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean is underway. National lists were received and revised. A regional analysis is being undertaken and final output will be presented to the CORMON meeting in quarter 1 2022. A scientific coordinator per country will lead the monitoring process and will support the work of the national teams in the field, to validate the collected data, to prepare the relevant reports and contribute to the preparation of the national assessment of GES.</p> <p>Countries have started the process of data elaboration for the other EOs. The second set of data on IMAP CIs monitored and reported by Contracting Parties is scheduled for the quarter 3 2022 as planned.</p> <p>In coordination with IMAP-MPA, the jointly prepared questionnaire was adjusted to initiate the preparation of the baseline assessment for the CI 15. It is expected that the relevant work will be conducted in all countries early 2022.</p> <p>National CI assessment factsheets will be validated by national workshops and baseline assessment validated by national/sub-regional workshops shared with the Secretariat in spring 2023 as planned.</p> <p>These new sets of data are being used to prepare the very first draft of the 2023 MED QSR.</p> <p>The IMAP Info System contained data flows for the initial set of 11 CIs and the work in 2021 focused on the upgrade and delivery of a fully operational IMAP Info System. 5 new CIs are now covered by the reporting system, bringing the total to 16 CIs. With the finalisation of the Data Standards and Data Dictionaries, it will allow the hosting of the new data submitted in 2021 for the CIs already included in the System and for all other CIs by summer 2022. By quarter 4 2022 all new datasets should be available in the System to support the elaboration of the draft 2023 MED QSR.</p>
	1.2 Number of IMAP Common Indicators (CIs) monitored and quality assured reported per beneficiary country	Target: 12	
	1.3 Number of stakeholders/institutions or coordinating bodies involved in national IMAP implementation per beneficiary country	Target: at least 3	
	1.4 Number of CIs covered by a quality assured reporting system in place through IMAP Info System	Target: at least 17	
	1.5 Number of sets of data on IMAP CIs reported to IMAP Info System by the end of the Project	Target: minimum 3 new datasets for EO5, EO9 and EO10 CI, minimum 1 new dataset for EO1, EO2, EO7, EO8	
	1.6 Number of baseline sub-regional and regional assessment	Target: 1 for NIS and 1 for CI15	
	1.7 Number of CI national assessment factsheets per beneficiary country	Target: at least 8, baseline: existing guidance factsheets and information in 2017 MED QSR	
	1.8 IMAP Info System operational with a functional data policy in place	Target: Info System fully operational for at least 17 CI	

			<p>The number of available datasets per Ecological Objective in the beneficiary countries is the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-EO 5: 4 Algeria, 10 Egypt, 34 Israel, 4 Morocco, 26 Tunisia</li> <li>-EO 8: 1 Morocco</li> <li>-EO 9: 2 Algeria, 3 Egypt, 19 Israel, 1 Lebanon, 18 Morocco, 14 Tunisia</li> <li>-EO 10: 6 Israel</li> </ul> <p>The IMAP Info System was established in line with FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable) principles and best practices. The MAP Data Policy was approved at COP 22. Together with the “Element for IMAP Data Policy” elaborated by INFO/RAC, this will pave the way for implementation of the IMAP Data Policy.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Regional scale progress and consensus for the monitoring and assessment as well as the reporting processes at national, sub-regional and regional levels</p>	2.1 Availability of analysis and proposal of updated scales of monitoring and assessment	Target: analysis available, baseline: information provided in CI guidance factsheets	<p>The project supported the 2021 CORMON meetings in 2021: on Marine Litter (30/03/21), on Pollution (26-28/04/21), on Biodiversity and Fisheries (10-11/06/21), and on Coast and Hydrography (25/11/21). An analysis of knowledge gaps and the definition of the scales of monitoring and assessment for all IMAP CIs were presented. The conclusions and actions agreed by the CORMONS will be addressed to prepare the first draft of the 2023 MED QSR.</p> <p>The establishment of assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values for IMAP CIs laid solid foundations for their development in 2022. This will be instrumental to prepare the first draft of the QSR using a threshold- approach to the extent possible for a number of CIs. To this aim, the 2021 CORMONS played an important role in reaching consensus on the Secretariat’s respective proposals.</p> <p>The second set of thematic CORMON meetings will start in the first quarter of 2022. The number of stakeholders involved is high at both country and regional level. It is expected that the target of 130 experts will be exceeded by 2023, including a significant number of women.</p> <p>The adoption in September 2021 of the 2023 MED QSR Communication and Visibility Strategy is a fundamental means to ensure visibility and outreach of the whole process of preparation and delivery of the QSR.</p> <p>The work on SPI during the reporting period prepared the ground for a strong interface at regional and national level. In the long-term the intention is to promote sustainable collaborating networks of stakeholders from scientific community and policy makers for IMAP implementation, which is indispensable for its effective implementation beyond the Project.</p> <p>Overall, the activities implemented in 2021 to identify data gaps, sources, and partners, are key to engaging partner organisations and projects and to ensure the timely provision of additional data to support the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR in the next reporting period.</p>
	2.2 Number of CIs with updated/new assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values	Target: at least 10, baseline: existing Pollution/Marine litter assessment criteria	
	2.3 Number of regional expert meetings and CORMONS	Target: at least one sub-regional meeting, one CORMON per cluster per year and 2 integrated CORMONS	
	2.4 Number of local, national and regional experts/actors mobilized/involved	Target: at least 130	
	2.5 Availability of communication and visibility strategy for 2023 MED QSR	Target: 1 strategy	
	2.6 Number of national SPI pilot networks established	Target: 2	
	2.7 Number of SPI workshops organized	Target: 1 regional back-to-back with CORMON and 2 national	
	2.8 Availability of 2023 MED QSR	Target: 2023 MED QSR published	



## **V INTER-LINKAGES AND SYNERGIES WITH OTHER PROJECTS FROM SAME UNEP SUB-PROGRAMME/MEA SECRETARIAT FUNDED UNDER DG ENV AND DG INTPA ENRTP SCAs/DG ENV GPGC PCA**

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The Project falls under the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategies (MTS) 2016-2021 and 2022-2027, as well as the PoW 2020-2021 and 2022-2023. In line with the Project Document, synergies and coherence are being ensured with several projects and initiatives in order to strengthen their impacts and avoid duplication and fragmentation.

EcAp MED III was launched in parallel with the EU-funded project [ML MED II](#). Together, they are contributing to enhance national capacities on monitoring and assessing Candidate Indicator (CCI) 24 (litter ingested by or entangling marine organisms) in a way to supplement the support for Ecological Objective (EO) 10; to address pressures/sources and impacts; and to assess knowledge and data gaps for the riverine inputs of marine litter in the Mediterranean and the main uses and sources of microplastics in the region. The current work of ML MED II contributes to the development of the assessment of marine litter-related Common Indicators, which will be part of the 2023 MED QSR.

At the thematic CORMON meeting held on 30/03/21, the Regional Operational Strategy for Monitoring IMAP CCI 24 was presented for review and endorsement. Its aim is to provide practical guidelines in designing and developing monitoring programmes to collect standardised data on marine litter ingested by sea turtles.

The aim of the EU-funded project [IMAP-MPA](#) is to strengthen the ecosystem approach for Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the Mediterranean. IMAP-MPA is focusing on testing the implementation of integrated monitoring in monitoring sites/stations/areas already identified under the EcAp MED II and III projects. The two ongoing projects are both supporting countries in developing and enhancing capacities pertinent to monitoring of IMAP EOs on biodiversity and NIS (EO 1, EO 2), pollution and marine litter (EO 5, EO 9, EO 10), and coast and hydrography (EO 7, EO 8).

As an example of cooperation, the questionnaire for the analysis of hydrographic status in pilot areas of IMAP-MPA project was prepared jointly. For the purpose of EcAp MED III, this document has been adjusted to respond to the country-scale needs. This questionnaire has been used to report on CI 15 to provide national baseline status.

The monitoring sites in BCs are selected together in a cost-effective way, with IMAP-MPA focusing on specific pilot areas. The results will be taken into account by EcAp MED III in the planned development of monitoring of other representative areas.

Regular exchanges are taking place with the RACs. For instance on the SPI, where Plan Bleu is consulting IMAP-MAP on a regular basis.

Despite not being officially a partner of ML MED II and IMAP-MPA, INFO/RAC has established relationships with both on the monitoring data collection and future data upload in the IMAP Info System. INFO/RAC is ensuring the compatibility of data with the agreed templates and could participate in upcoming training sessions for the BCs.

EcAp MED III is strongly linked with ABIOMMED, another EU-funded project in which SPA/RAC is leading the integration of the GES biodiversity assessment in a pan-Mediterranean scale. This activity will provide guidance towards a regional harmonized assessment of EO 1 focusing on benthic habitats. It will be based on a regional analysis of available data, lessons learnt and efforts elaborated within previous and current project implemented in the Mediterranean.

Finally, exchanges took place with the EU-funded project [MED REGION](#), which aimed at addressing critical aspects of IMAP implementation. The following activities are directly related to EcAp MED III: the completion of gaps in monitoring data in the Mediterranean; the support to the development and operational implementation of (sub)regional indicators, lists of elements, threshold values; and towards the support to the development of effective regional measures, with a special focus on biodiversity. To this end, a continuous dialogue is taking place, projects' deliverables and relevant information are shared on a regular basis between the two projects.

## VI RESOURCES AND BUDGET<sup>5</sup>

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The official release of the Project budget occurred in December 2020. Its allocation for 2021 was USD 857,375, with more than 60 percent assigned to Outcome 1 (Outputs 1.1 and 1.4 mainly). The expenditure incurred as of 31/12/2021 amounts to USD 258,345. The difference can be explained by the implementation delays related to the IPs since the budget is largely allocated to operational activities.

The Project is co-funded by the [Mediterranean Trust Fund](#) (MTF). Its in-kind contribution amounts to USD 294,790, including USD 94,930 in 2021.

The complementarity with the two EU-funded projects (IMAP-MAP and ML MED II) allows - when relevant and duly justified - financial resources to be pulled together in order to increase their leverage. This is the case at national level through the SSFAs with BCs or by the joint communication at COP 22 and the production of common visibility material (see Section VII).

USD 910,750 were budgeted for 2022, together with a contribution from MTF worth USD 94,930. According to the General Conditions of the ENRTP-GPGC Framework, unspent funds from 2021 would be rolled over to 2022. The reallocation of potential savings (e.g. absence of travel and in person meetings) will be reviewed at a later stage.

Besides reallocations, the possibility to secure additional resources from the MTF 2022-2023 biennium will be explored. It could *inter alia* finance activities such as a second SPI pilot, the preparation of national sets of monitoring data on CI 16 or on the baseline status for CI 15.

More information and detailed financial figures can be found in the 2021 Annual EcAp MED III Financial Report.

## VII VISIBILITY<sup>6</sup>

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The planned communication actions and deliverables are stemming from the initial Project Communication and Visibility Plan, the revised Workplan for 2021-2022 presented at the Steering Committee in April 2021 (UNEP/MED WG.506/4) and the 2023 MED QSR Communication and Visibility Strategy (adopted by the meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group on 09/09/21, UNEP/MED WG.514/6, annexed to this report). The objective of the latter is to ensure that the 2023 MED QSR publication has a wide dissemination and receives a high level of visibility; and to promote its findings and related recommendations. Most of the activities are therefore geared towards 2023.

The activities already undertaken are described underneath, following the structure of the abovementioned Workplan. In all of them, particular attention was paid to EU visibility and the acknowledgement of its financial contribution.

A brochure (*A push for the achievement of Good Environmental Status in the Mediterranean*) was prepared in 2021 and is under procurement. It describes the three EU-funded projects (EcAp MED III, IMAP MPA and ML MED II) contributing to the Ecosystem Approach and the 2023 QSR. Drafted in English, it will be available in Arabic, French and Spanish in the first quarter of 2022 and distributed through all UNEP/MAP and IPs' usual channels (websites, social networks and relevant events). Its content is annexed to this report.

In addition, a 2-minute video will be produced and disseminated in 2022 alike the brochure.

A [webpage](#) dedicated to the Project was created at the end of 2020 within the UNEP/MAP website. The page – in both English and French – is regularly updated (last time on 20/12/21 following COP 22) to take new developments into account. In a year time, the page has been viewed 244 times by a core group of stakeholders.

Achievements under EcAp MED III were illustrated by regular publication of news features on the Project webpage and press briefs in newsletters and social media. The progress acknowledged by the Steering Committee meeting of [IMAP-MAP](#) (20/04/21), of [EcAp MED III](#) (19/05/21 and viewed 347 times until 19/12/21) and by the [EcAp Coordination Group](#) (11/11/21) were showcased by UNEP/MAP on its website and twitter via @UNEPMAPNews.

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<sup>5</sup> This section will provide a narrative description of the project financial implementation only, but should be developed in close liaison with the Fund Management Officer. Financial reporting will provide detailed figures.

<sup>6</sup> With communication activities, increasingly important for the EU, please raise where and how EU support has been mentioned and acknowledged in your communication activities.

As IPs, the RACs contributed to the visibility of the Project by presenting its activities at their respective Focal Points and CORMON meetings. They channelled the communication of Secretariat through their networks, social media and websites, including on their dedicated EcAp MED III webpages (example from [SPA/RAC](#)). Due to late or delayed legal agreements with BCs, communication at national level was kept to a minimum. The implementing partners will communicate on tangible results through local media to a greater extend in 2022 and 2023 in particular.

COP meetings occur every two years and are the most important event of the Barcelona Convention and the principal gathering on environment and sustainable development in the region. COP 22 (7-10/12/2021 in Antalya, Turkey) offered an inclusive platform for renewed commitment in the Mediterranean and sent a clear signal that the UNEP/MAP system was ready to act effectively and in a timely manner to support the region in building back greener with strong environmental objectives.

It was a great opportunity to communicate widely on the Ecosystem Approach and EcAp MED III. A [slideshow](#) was used for that purpose. It was displayed in four languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish) in the main hall and in the background of multiple events. A [virtual exhibition](#) was developed by INFO/RAC to showcase the videos, panels and documents displayed physically at the venue. A few pictures illustrating the exhibition are annexed to the report.

The actions there had a large policy impact since it reached all the key players identified in the Project Document and its stakeholders analysis. This greater awareness and engagement should lead to an improved implementation of the Project and increased sustainability beyond its lifespan.

## VIII WAY FORWARD<sup>7</sup>

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EcAp MED III and its significant contribution to the QSR is specifically mentioned in the newly adopted MTS 2022-2027 (available [here](#)) and PoW 2022-2023 (available [here](#)).

Thanks to an efficient monitoring of the Project, the lessons learnt from the actions undertaken in 2021, the problems encountered, and the measures taken to overcome the difficulties will serve the Secretariat for the implementation of the Project in 2022. Enhanced cooperation at each level will be essential. Major activities, key milestones and main outputs to be achieved during the next reporting period are highlighted below.

With all EcAp MED III core staff and RACs on board, the conclusions of the remaining SSFAs with BCs – five with the Secretariat and four with SPA/RAC – will be the priority of the first months of 2022. Once signed, the Project as a whole will be operational and the remaining awaited national activities will properly start. In parallel, it will further strengthen the cooperation with the environmental authorities in the BCs.

For INFO/RAC, the priority of the next reporting period is the monitoring data collection ahead of the 2023 MED QSR. It will continue to focus on the upgrade and update of the Info System (hardware and software) to include all CIs. INFO/RAC will finalise and submit the Data Standards and Data Dictionaries established in 2021 to the CORMON meetings, while the remaining DSs and DDs will be developed (except EO 3). Support to reporting activities will continue throughout the year, with trainings to be organised for the remaining beneficiary countries. INFO/RAC will also create the metric annex of the IMAP Data Policy to complement the general MAP Data Policy.

In the coming year, Plan Bleu will identify relevant existing frameworks, processes and institutions at national level on the SPI. It will set up one national SPI pilot in one BC at the end of the first semester, in coordination with PAP/RAC. It will also provide inputs to CORMON and EcAp CG meetings.

There are no changes in PAP/RAC workplan for the upcoming reporting period. Activities related to the baseline sub-regional assessments for CI 15 and to the sets of data reported for CI 16 will be completed and the lessons learnt report will be prepared. Moreover, the guiding document for the application of the assessment criteria for CI 16 will be tested in a number of countries.

On biodiversity and fisheries, monitoring protocols at national level will be implemented in line with approved selected CI listed in each legal agreement. Discussions on the sub-regional and regional NIS baseline within the members of the OWG, as well as on the assessment elements with the thematic OWG should take place early 2022 before a first CORMON meeting organised by SPA/RAC on 28-29 March. In addition, meetings

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<sup>7</sup> A milestone is not equal to a summation of tasks or activities. Rather it represents the achievement of a feasible project management stage and be strictly answerable as yes or no answer.

with key partners (e.g. GFCM and ACCOBAMS) will be organised to undertake further analysis of available data and methodologies to support the assessment component of IMAP. It will allow to progress in reaching a common understanding and agreement on monitoring and assessment scales, assessment criteria, thresholds and baselines values, and in developing aggregation rules towards integrated assessment for GES for a number of IMAP Common Indicators.

Detailed annotated contents of the 2023 Quality Status Report will be prepared during the first quarter of 2022 and presented in spring and summer for review and approval (see the agenda below). It will include data per CI, geographic coverage, GES thresholds (if established and agreed), statistics, and gaps.

In 2021, the Secretariat has developed a UNEP/MAP Gender Action Plan for 2022-2023. It will be applied to EcAp MED III in order to enhance knowledge of staff and partners on gender-related issues and to further integrate gender considerations into the Project implementation, and meeting organisation in particular. As an example, a presentation on UNEP gender policies and best practices to UNEP/MAP Components involved in EcAp is envisaged in 2022.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Project Steering Committee is planned in June 2022. The agenda and supporting documents will be prepared and shared in advance by the Secretariat. The SC will review the implementation of the Project, provide strategic guidance and oversight and approve the upcoming workplan. The EcAp Coordination Group could then meet in summer 2022 to ensure an efficient and coordinated implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap ahead of the 2023 QSR. Finally, CORMON meetings will take place in spring and autumn 2022. All these meetings are expected to give a boost to Project activities implementation.

Awareness and advocacy efforts will continue in 2022. The dissemination of newly produced communication material (such as the brochure and the video) will resume in the post-COP agenda and will stick to the EcAp MED III schedule. The CORMON meetings will be the occasion to shed lights on the progress of the Project, followed by the EcAp GC and MAP Focal Points meeting. Communication guidance will be prepared for the implementing partners. Emphasis will be made on the EU visibility requirements, using the comprehensive EU communication and visibility manual for EU external action, and the approach of Communication as One. Opportunities are being explored to present the results of the Project and MAP work on ecosystem approach in global events of relevance, particularly to CBD COP and World Ocean Summit.

The first consolidated data monitoring results coming from the BCs will be disseminated by INFO/RAC through the IMAP Info System.

## **IX FINAL REMARKS ON REPORTING PERIOD 2021**

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This Annual Progress Report provided a comprehensive account of all aspects of the implementation of the Project for the period covered. Overall, EcAp MED III made good progress in 2021. The initial delays and challenges do not affect the relevance of the Project which will continue at full speed in 2022. As planned, it will support the Beneficiary Countries in the implementation of IMAP and the 2023 QSR.

The issues faced were mitigated by the long-standing experience within the Secretariat and the Components. It allowed the Secretariat to draw several lessons from this first implementation phase (developed under Section III). Coordination among EU-funded projects allowed for constant exchanges of experience, knowledge and best practices.

The successful implementation of EcAp MED III requires strong and solid engagement by the beneficiary countries, and, in this context, there is room for improvement to shorten the time needed for bilateral consultations and related actions.” The donor will be kept informed of the Project performance and fully updated ahead of the next Steering Committee meeting in spring 2022 through a dedicated Project report and workplan for the upcoming period.

## **X ANNEXES**

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The documents annexed to this report are listed below.

Annex I: IMAP Data Policy – UNEP/MED WG.514/11 and IG 25/10

Annex II: 2021 CORMON Meeting on Pollution – Report UNEP/MED WG.492/14

Annex III: List of partners identified for contribution to the 2023 QSR

Annex IV: Potential contribution of Scientific Projects, Partners, and Institutions to the 2023 MED QSR

Annex V: 2023 MED QSR Communication and Visibility Strategy – UNEP/MED WG.514/6

Annex VI: Brochure – A push for the achievement of Good Environmental Status in the Mediterranean

Annex VII: Pictures taken during COP 22 illustrating the exhibition



## Annex I: IMAP Data Policy – UNEP/MED WG.514/11 (extracts)

### 1. Elements for IMAP Data Policy

In view of the development of the specific IMAP Data Policy Annex, the present document is proposed as state of play of its development including a preliminary collection of the elements discussed during the following meetings:

- Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON), Biodiversity and Fisheries (Marseille, France, 12-13 February 2019);
- Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON), Pollution (Podgorica, Montenegro, 2-3 April 2019);
- Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON), Marine Litter (Podgorica, Montenegro, 4-5 April 2019);
- Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON), Biodiversity and Fisheries (Rome, Italy, 21 May 2019);
- Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON), Coast and Hydrography (Rome, Italy, 21-22 May 2019);
- Fourteenth Meeting of MED POL Focal Points (Istanbul, Turkey, 27-29 May 2019);
- Thirteenth Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points (Valletta, Malta 11- 3 June 2019);
- Fourteenth Meeting of SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points (Portorož, Slovenia, 18-21 June 2019).
- Integrated Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON), videoconference 1-3 December 2020.

#### 1.2 IMAP Data availability

An important starting point is to agree about data to be considered suitable for the IMAP reporting as follows:

##### 1.2.1 Testing phase data

The contribute of Contracting Parties into the **testing phase** of the IMAP Pilot Info System has been of utmost importance and has enabled detecting and sorting out arising issues. It has been also an asset for the first elaboration by INFO/RAC of a **Technical Guide**, an additional useful tool complementing the **User Guide**, already developed for the testing phase, to support the Contracting Parties in the IMAP process. Both guidelines can be downloaded at <http://imappilot.info-rac.org>.

The first **IMAP call is open** and includes both new monitoring data generated in **2020**, as well as available monitoring data collected **prior to 2020**, if their content is compatible with format required by the respective Data Standards and Data Dictionaries adopted for IMAP Common Indicators.

The IMAP Pilot Info System is ready to receive past and new data. **The uploaded testing files need control and validation by Countries**. To avoid new efforts and repetitions INFO/RAC needs confirmation by CPs about the nature of the data uploaded in the testing phase. CPs need to clarify which of the following options is valid for their data sets:

1. They are only **test data that are NOT for inclusion** into the IMAP Pilot Info System;
2. They are **official data** sent before the opening of the IMAP call, already **validated and to be considered eligible for inclusion** as part of mandatory reporting.

To facilitate CPs work, INFO/RAC has renamed the files. It is required to CPs to access the IMAP Pilot Info System at <http://imappilot.info-rac.org>, go to the section **Upload** and search and check the file belonging to their country whose name start with **“TEST”**.

- ✓ If the right **option is 1**, CP can **delete** the file;
- ✓ if data are in the **option 2**, press the validation bottom if the file is in **“Compliant”** status
- ✓ if data are in the **option 2**, liaise with INFO/RAC if the file is in **“Not compliant”** status.

In any case, CPs need to send an official e-mail to INFO/RAC ([imap@info-rac.org](mailto:imap@info-rac.org)) explaining which test files have to be accepted and maintained and which ones have to be deleted. The **saved files will be renamed and integrated** in the system as new IMAP call data.

### **1.2.2 MED POL data migration**

MEDPOL Info System database migration into the IMAP Info System has been successfully carried out by INFO/RAC, in consultation with MEDPOL during 2020/2021, as initially proposed and confirmed by the Meeting of the MED POL Focal Points, Rome, Italy, 29-31 May 2017.

Monitoring data for nutrients and contaminants (sediment and biota) reported using the MED POL Metadata Templates have been migrated to the new IMAP Info System using Data Standards adopted for IMAP Common Indicators 13 (Concentration of key nutrients in water column), 14 (Chlorophyll-a concentration in water column) and 17 (Concentration of key harmful contaminants measured in the relevant matrix (biota, sediment, seawater)).

In total **69 files** have been revised and migrated, including a data review phase, in terms of formatting, of alignment with Data Dictionaries, and further checks necessary to make the files compliant in the System.

The monitoring data have been received from Mediterranean countries over the last 15 years from 2005 to 2015-2017 and include some MEDPOL Info System datasets dating back to the early 1990s, in compliance with the LBS Protocol. The entire dataset is now available on the IMAP Info System in a standardized format and stored on an infrastructure able to guarantee its integrity and preservation over time.

It is important to remark that the **periodic collection of MED POL monitoring data will become part of the IMAP Call** through the reporting for IMAP Common Indicators for EO5 and EO9 **that will substitute the data reporting into the MED POL Info System (no more active)** or other ways of data submission.

### **1.2.3 Projects datasets**

The lack of monitoring data leads to explore **other possible sources** to fill the gaps. It is up to the CPs to **assess which other sources are available and endorse them** as official IMAP data sets.

Criteria for validation of other available datasets should be defined by Countries in a common and agreed way in order to avoid incoherent datasets in IMAP.

In this context, **projects** occupy a relevant position and although their use is allowed, the following rules should be applied:

- the **project source** should be always reported in remarks;
- monitoring data related to projects should be collected in **distinct files** and not mixed with other monitoring data produced by IMAP national monitoring programmes.

### **1.2.4 IMAP Call**

As requested by the IMAP call opened in June 2020, all IMAP users are expected to make the maximum effort to report data into the IMAP Info System, also for the production of the Mediterranean Quality Status Report (**2023 MED QSR**). The Report on the state of the quality of the Mediterranean (hereinafter QSR), which aims to evaluate the main results concerning the "state" of the marine environment, **will mainly built on IMAP indicators and the relative monitoring data**.

Till now, regardless the status (Draft, Compliant, Not Compliant, Valid, Not Valid, Published), CPs have reported by uploading a total of **84 files** into the IMAP Info System.

To facilitate a high response to the IMAP Call, INFO/RAC, in close cooperation with CU and the other MAP Components, is ensuring a constant and cross-cutting support for the reporting of all the IMAP Common Indicators at two different levels:

- supporting each IMAP user for Common Indicators reporting through an **IMAP helpdesk**
- supporting each Contracting Party through **Bilateral Assistance/Trainings meetings**

The INFO/RAC **IMAP help desk**, has provided and has ensured a continuous technical support to Contracting Parties (CPs) to facilitate understanding, access, and use of the IMAP Info System. Full technical assistance has been provided in the process of filling-in DSs and data submission.

In addition in the biennium 2020-2021, **Bilateral Assistance/Training meetings** have been organized by INFO/RAC according to the availability of Contracting Parties to provide via videoconference an organic and structured presentation for monitoring data reporting including:

- a clear picture of the IMAP Info System and its functionalities;
- specific explanations and support for the correct understanding of Data Standards and how to fill in them;
- an overall guide about the consultation of Data Dictionaries;
- information about the available supporting tools (utility check and user guide);
- support to provide a clear state of art of the monitoring data availability in countries;
- support to ensure compliance of the filled Data Standards;
- information in order to complete the list of IMAP users still pending in some countries.

In order to maximize the benefit of a Training/Assistance meetings, each country should:

- ensure the participation of all the national IMAP Users;
- have already tried to access and work on the system;
- has already made an internal check about all available data for IMAP reporting.

Furthermore, INFO/RAC and the respective MAP Components help desk accounts established during the testing phase, remain active to provide full support to the Contracting Parties:

- [imap@info-rac.org](mailto:imap@info-rac.org) for any problem relating to access, data standards download and upload, any difficulty that users can encounter during the process, including clarifications and advice of the type of content requested by the system;
- [pollmlitter\\_imap@info-rac.org](mailto:pollmlitter_imap@info-rac.org) to provide clarifications and advice related to scientific aspects of the information requested by the system for Pollution and Marine Litter;
- [bio\\_imap@info-rac.org](mailto:bio_imap@info-rac.org) to provide clarifications and advice related to scientific aspects of the information requested by the system for Biodiversity and Non-Indigenous Species;
- [coasthydro\\_imap@info-rac.org](mailto:coasthydro_imap@info-rac.org) to provide clarifications and advice related to scientific aspects of the information requested by the system for Coast and Hydrography.

### 1.3 IMAP Users network

**CP User profiles** have been further updated and refined according to Contracting Parties advise.

The role of Contracting Parties users has been detailed as per the table below:

Official **IMAP Users** are responsible to upload, validate and officially release monitoring data related to IMAP Common Indicators, in line with the following three data management levels:

**Level I - Upload:** users uploading the monitoring data file and performing the **compliance quality check** - the system will generate an error file if the monitoring data file is NOT compliant with Data Standards and Data Dictionaries.

**Level II - Validation:** users performing the process of quality control of monitoring data –the system doesn't generate any automatic output. **Validation** confirms that all controls related to the content have been successfully passed.

**Level III - Official release:** users officially releasing monitoring data at country level as a final step. Users have the duty to confirm the **official release**.

The 3-level users subdivision allows the CPs to differentiate the responsibility level according to the internal national organization on data management.

An example of a possible structure could be:

**Level I:** *scientific institutions responsible for data production and elaboration (i.e. monitoring and research institutes)*

**Level II:** *national institutions responsible for data collection and validation (i.e. Environmental National Agency)*

**Level III:** *national entities responsible for the official release of the data (i.e. National Focal Point)*

Nevertheless, Contracting Parties can decide to appoint the **same user even for all the 3 levels**.

In order to maximize the reporting data on the IMAP Info System, an integration between the IMAP Users Network and INFO/RAC Focal Points will be promoted and facilitated.

INFO/RAC Focal Points:

- act as facilitators among IMAP users and INFO/RAC,
- ensure full collaboration of all national institutions for IMAP reporting;
- allow the sharing and exchange of knowledge and information for data reporting purposes on IMAP Info System;
- provide the state of art of IMAP reporting at Country level;
- provide suggestions and observations to improve Information Standards.
- coordinate the participation of all the national IMAP Users in the IMAP Assistance/Training meeting.

### 1.3 Next steps

In the general framework of the agreed roadmap on MAP data policy and taking into account countries needs, capacities and challenges caused by the recent COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential that the Secretariat is informed by each Country about the following aspects:

- ✓ the state of art of the **availability** of monitoring data for IMAP;
- ✓ any **delay** affecting the planned timeline in IMAP user appointment or data uploading;
- ✓ the **sources** of data used in monitoring data reporting;
- ✓ any **restriction** in use of reported data;
- ✓ completion of IMAP **data collection** for the **11 selected IMAP Common Indicators** and clear understanding of quality controls outputs as follows from compliance check run on IMAP Info System;
- ✓ preparation for the reporting of the new data flows that will be implemented with the completion of IMAP Info System for the **remaining IMAP Common Indicators**;
- ✓ publishing **a set of validated data accessible at the regional level** (each CP provides assessment products of data referred to its own country);
- ✓ agreement with the other CPs under the INFO/RAC and CU coordination on **a common level of aggregation of data**, to assure wide visualization in the Mediterranean Region.

**IMAP Data Policy – Decision IG.25/10** is available [here](#).

## Annex II: 2021 CORMON Meeting on Pollution – Report UNEP/MED WG.492/14



21wg492\_14\_Report\_CORMON Pollution

### Annex III: List of partners identified by the EcAp CG for contribution to the 2023 QSR

Scientific Institution/Authority holding the data	Initiative / Project	Type of contribution	Geographical coverage	Possible contribution to IMAP Ecological Objectives / Common Indicators
ACCOBAMS	<a href="#">ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative</a>	Distribution and abundance of cetaceans, sea turtles, elasmobranchs, fish, birds	Mediterranean	CI 3 Species distribution CI 4 Population abundance
		Distribution and abundance of floating marine litter	Mediterranean	CI 23 Litter in the water column
	QuietMED II	Underwater noise	?	CCI 26, CCI 27 Underwater Noise
Birdlife Europe and Central Asia		Data on seabirds	Mediterranean	CI 3 (Species Distribution) and CI 4 (Population abundance) related to seabirds
Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on accidental water pollution (CEDRE)				
CEFE-EPHE PSL	<a href="#">INDICIT-I and INDICIT-II Projects</a>	marine litter ingestion data	Mediterranean	CCI 24 Litter Ingestion
CENER21 Center for Energy, Environment and Resources				
<a href="#">CMCC</a>		Climate change data and modelling tools	Mediterranean	Section 1.1.2 Climate change Multiple Common Indicators
CIESM	<a href="#">Historical Records of Marine Fauna</a>	Biodiversity data	Mediterranean	CI 1-5
	<a href="#">Atlas of Exotic Species</a>	non-indigenous species	Mediterranean	CI 6 Non-indigenous species
EC Joint Research Centre (JRC)		Assessment criteria; assessment methodologies (MSFD and IMAP)	Mediterranean	Multiple Common Indicators
EEA	<a href="#">Copernicus Marine Service (CMEMS)</a>	Chlorophyll a Temperature, Salinity, Sea level, Heat content, Significant Wave Height Variability	Mediterranean	Section 1.1 Environmental characteristics EO 5 Eutrophication (CI 13-14)
	<a href="#">Copernicus Land Monitoring Service (CLMS)</a>	Land use, land cover, land use change, land cover change	Northern shores of Mediterranean - possible expansion to	Section 1.2 Human activities EO 7 Hydrography (CI 15) EO 8 Coastal

			southern shores	ecosystems (CI 16, CCI 25)
<a href="#">EMODnet</a>	Bathymetry	bathymetry	Mediterranean	EO 6 Seafloor integrity
	Biology	Species occurrences: location, date, depth Biological measurements: e.g., abundance, biomass Sampling information and methodology Specimen characteristics: e.g., length, lifestage, sex Abiotic parameters: e.g., sediment type, temperature, salinity	Mediterranean	EO 1 Biodiversity (CI 1-5)
	Chemistry	Acidity Antifoulants Chlorophyll Dissolved gasses Fertilisers Heavy metals Hydrocarbons Marine litter Organic matter Pesticides and biocides Polychlorinated biphenyls Radionuclides Silicates	Mediterranean	EO 5 Eutrophication (CI 13-14) EO 9 Pollution (CI 17-21)
	Geology	Sedimentation rate	Mediterranean	EO 6 Seafloor integrity
	Human Activities	Data on maritime activities	Mediterranean	Section 1.2 Socioeconomic characteristics of the Med
	Physics	Water temperature Water salinity Water conductivity Currents and winds Optical properties Sea level Underwater noise (dB)	Mediterranean	Section 1.1 Environmental characteristics CCI 26, CCI 27 Underwater Noise
	Seabed Habitats – EUSeaMap	EUNIS Seabed Habitats	Mediterranean	CI 1 Habitat distributional range
ESA	EOP-SD (Earth Observation Programme Data Applications) Division and the EOP-SI (Earth Observation Programme Sustainable	Use of products of ESA MED REGIONAL Initiative/projects, including the following: -Multi-mission high-resolution, gap-free maps directly derived from water quality products (e.g., Chl-a		Multiple Common Indicators

	Initiatives) Office	<p>concentration, Total Suspended Matter, Turbidity, ...)</p> <p>- Multi-mission, high-resolution, gap-free maps of experimental EO “indirectly” derived water quality products (e.g., nutrient concentration, bacteriological concentration, dissolved oxygen, or any parameter relevant to the engaged end-users...)</p> <p>-Multi-mission added-value product of river plume extension and characteristics, as well as other available maps of relevance for IMAP EOs</p> <p>-The products related to application of forecasting techniques-</p>		
FAO/GFCM	<a href="#">Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF)</a>	<p>Global figures of national fisheries (number of vessels, total landing, total capacity, total engine power)</p> <p>Catch</p> <p>Incidental catch of vulnerable species</p> <p>Fleet</p> <p>Effort</p> <p>Socio-economics</p> <p>Biological information</p>	Mediterranean	<p>Section 1.2 Socioeconomic characteristics of the Med</p> <p>EO 3 Fisheries (CI 7-12)</p> <p>EO 4 Food webs (partially)</p> <p>EO 6 Seafloor integrity</p> <p>EO 10 Marine litter</p> <p>EO 11 Underwater noise</p>
INOGS	Harmonia	Contaminants in the Adriatic-Ionian sub-region	Adriatic-Ionian sub-region	CI 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
HCMR (host)	<a href="#">MedOBIS</a>	Non-indigenous species	Mediterranean	CI 6 Non-indigenous species
HCMR	MED REGION	methodologies for marine monitoring and assessment for the Mediterranean	Mediterranean	All CIs, especially CI 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, and CCI 24
IAEA			Mediterranean	Multiple Common Indicators
IUCN Mediterranean			Mediterranean	Multiple Common Indicators
ICES	<a href="#">ICES has published</a>	Distribution of fishing pressure,	Mediterranean	EO6



	<a href="#">work (June 2021)</a>	including a preliminary compilation of data for the Mediterranean.		
MAVA Foundation		<a href="#">Biodiversity data</a>	Mediterranean	Biodiversity-related Common Indicators
Medasset		Sea turtles-related data and methodologies	Mediterranean	CI 3 (Species distribution) and CI 4 (Population abundance) for sea turtles
MEDPAN			Mediterranean	
MIO-ECSDE		Marine litter data and methodologies	Mediterranean	CI 22, 23, CCI 24
University of Siena	<a href="#">Plastic Busters MPAs</a>	marine litter data	Mediterranean	CI 22, 23, CCI 24
UN Decade of Ocean Science		Science-Policy Interface, Mediterranean priorities related to monitoring, assessment, climate change	Mediterranean	Multiple Common Indicators
UNEP-WCMC	<a href="#">Data portal</a>	Biodiversity data	Not specified	Biodiversity-related indicators
University of Malaga	<a href="#">MedBioLitter</a>	Interaction between marine litter and biota	Mediterranean	CCI 24 Litter ingestion/entanglement
WWF Mediterranean			Mediterranean	

## **Annex IV: Potential contribution of Scientific Projects, Partners, and Institutions to the 2023 MED QSR**

### Online meeting 02/09/21 - Minutes

#### Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1.1 Joanne Foden, UNEP/MAP Secretariat, opened the meeting at 1500 EET and welcomed participants. The agenda was adopted.

1.2 The following points were highlighted:

- a. The vision of the COP21 Decision (Tirana) is for the 2023 MED QSR to be: (i) more quantitative and less narrative; (ii) having interrelated links of status, pressures, and impacts; and (iii) where feasible to conduct integrated assessment across Ecological Objectives.
- b. The 2023 MED QSR will be predominantly based on **national monitoring data**, submitted to INFO/RAC Info System. This could be supplemented by scientific data and information contributed by the Partners.
- c. Therefore, the intention of the meeting is to have an open discussion about what the Partners can offer and to create an ongoing partnership. However, the ultimate decision about what to include in the 2023 MED QSR lies with the Contracting Parties.
- d. This initial meeting will be a first step towards building a partnership. It is hoped that there will be further meetings e.g., thematic sub-group discussions with the MAP components to discuss specific data and information contributions, and meetings perhaps every 6 months with the whole partnership.

#### Introduction of the participants

2.1 Participants briefly introduced themselves in a round table. The list of participants is in Annex I.

#### 2023 MED QSR approach and structure, and data and knowledge gaps

3.1 The Secretariat gave an overview of the structure and table of contents of the whole 2023 MED QSR.

3.2 The structure per cluster and per Ecological Objective (EO) was explained, as in Table 1 that had been previously shared with the Partners as the background document.

#### Identification of Partners' contribution to 2023 MED QSR in terms of complementary data, tools, and methodologies

4.1 The Secretariat explained the process for the meeting which was to focus on one cluster at a time.

4.2 The relevant MAP Component representatives introduced and helped to steer the discussions on each cluster; Jelena Knezevic (MEDPOL), Mehdi Aissi (SPA/RAC), and Marko Prem (PAP/RAC) to:

- a) Identify the available data, tools & methodologies, and their potential contribution to specific sections/parts of the 2023 MED QSR (e.g., specific Ecological Objectives, Common Indicators, or chapters/sections of the 2023 MED QSR);
- b) Reach an agreement on the timeline for contribution to assessment and data sharing for the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR.

4.3 Antoine Lafitte (Plan Bleu) also explained that socioeconomic aspects had been of 2017 MED QSR and proposed the same kind of information should be included in the 2023 MED QSR. Previously there was an economic and social analysis group. Antoine Lafitte offered to create a thematic sub-group focused on socioeconomics.

#### Conclusions and next steps

5.1 The next steps were summarised:

- a. Participants were invited to send a simple list of what they could potentially contribute (e.g., as a bullet list), by the end of Friday 3 September. The initial inputs will serve as a basis for consultations in the sub-groups aimed at identifying the gaps that could be filled with the inputs/contributions of the Partners.
- b. MAP Components to organise bilateral or thematic sub-group meetings intersessionally.
- c. The Coordinating Unit to send a doodle poll in the spring for a meeting in March 2023 of the partnership to share progress in work by sub-groups or through bilateral engagement.

5.2 The meeting closed at 1730 EET.

Table 1: Mediterranean Quality Status Assessment per Cluster

CI, Common indicator. CCI, candidate Common Indicator. EO, ecological objective. IMAP, integrated monitoring and assessment programme of the Mediterranean Sea and coast and related assessment criteria.

Section	Potential Contribution from Partners								
<b>2. Mediterranean Quality Status Assessment</b>  <b>2.1 Pollution and Litter Cluster</b> <b>2.1.1 Eutrophication (EO5)</b> <b>2.1.2 Pollution (EO9)</b> <b>2.1.3 Marine Litter (EO10)</b>	<p><b>European Environment Agency (EEA)</b> (Cécile Roddier-Quefelec): Existing resources from WFD (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> RBMP, next reporting 3<sup>rd</sup> RBMP March 2022). Dashboards chemical status, ecological status published.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest to collaborate to prepare specific map on transitional and coastal aspects</li> <li>• WISE-SoE data call 2021</li> <li>• WISE Marine developments</li> <li>• Environmental trends (including MAES final report)</li> <li>• Marine litter assessment (2022)</li> <li>• Riparian Zones &amp; Coastal Zones datasets do map LCLU on Rivers/lakes and on the coast (EIONET area) LCLU is a proxy of water quality (Eutrophication/pollution).</li> <li>• River discharge and several water quality information (e.g., algae blooming) will become part of CLMS. With CMEMS (MOI) basically contributing with the marine perspective</li> </ul> <p><b>ISMAR CNR</b> (Rosalia Santoleri). Siena is leading the ocean colour thematic centre of Copernicus producing Med Sea products. A long history of working to develop a eutrophication product that is used annually for CMEMS. Ready to contribute to this effort to provide a methodology to merge CMEMS efforts. Rosalia has been asked by CMEMS to deliver eutrophication indicator of EUROSTAT, for a unique methodology (a US request). CNR would also like to contribute marine litter data.</p> <p><b>EMODnet chemistry</b> (Marina Lipizer). EMODnet has a strong mandate to assist MSFD implementation and MED QSR is related. EMODnet has data on nutrients, chlorophyll, and pollution by contaminants in all three matrices (C117). Also, beach litter, water column and sea floor litter data. EMODnet has mandate to make products to support the MSFD and the Regional Seas Conventions. EMODnet is making sea basin maps for eutrophication and litter in particular. Strong work with JRC on identifying substances and methods on which samples and substances to use. Also look at the latest <a href="#">EMODnet portfolio</a> (updated last August 2021)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>EO</th> <th>Common Indicator</th> <th>EMODnet Data</th> <th>EMODnet Data products</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>EO5 Eutrophication</td> <td>13: Concentration of key nutrients in water column (nitrite, nitrate, ammonium, DIN (dissolved inorganic nitrogen), phosphate, silicate (in addition to nutrients, also oxygen)</td> <td>yes</td> <td>Sea basin maps, as 6-years products</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	EO	Common Indicator	EMODnet Data	EMODnet Data products	EO5 Eutrophication	13: Concentration of key nutrients in water column (nitrite, nitrate, ammonium, DIN (dissolved inorganic nitrogen), phosphate, silicate (in addition to nutrients, also oxygen)	yes	Sea basin maps, as 6-years products
EO	Common Indicator	EMODnet Data	EMODnet Data products						
EO5 Eutrophication	13: Concentration of key nutrients in water column (nitrite, nitrate, ammonium, DIN (dissolved inorganic nitrogen), phosphate, silicate (in addition to nutrients, also oxygen)	yes	Sea basin maps, as 6-years products						

Section	Potential Contribution from Partners				
		14: Chlorophyll-a concentration in water column	yes	Sea basin maps, as 6-years products	
	EO9 Pollution	17: Concentration of key harmful contaminants measured in the relevant matrix (EO9, related to biota, sediment, seawater)  (Antifoulants, Heavy metals, hydrocarbons, pesticides & biocides, pharmaceuticals, PCBs, radionuclides)	yes	Maps of metadata	
	EO10 Marine litter (Beach litter, seafloor litter, microlitter in the water)	22: Trends in the amount of litter washed ashore and/or deposited on coastlines	& compliancy		
		23: Trends in the amount of litter in the water column	yes	Annual maps	
See Appendix I for EMODnet product examples.					
<p><b>European Space Agency (ESA)</b> (Marie-Helene Rio) – In the frame of the MedEOS project (March 2021-March 2023) a number of water quality indicators will be produced for the entire Mediterranean coastal area:</p>					
<p>(i) Total Suspended Matter, Chlorophyll-a concentration, Turbidity, Secchi Depth, Coloured Dissolved Organic Matter, Faecal Bacterial Contamination Indicator, Eutrophication Indicator, Harmful Algae Bloom Indicator, Global Environmental Anomaly detection, River Plume monitoring.</p>					
<p>(ii) One year of product will be available in March 2022, over a selected number of test sites (including two Southern Shore areas). At the end of the project, products will be available over the entire Mediterranean Coastal Area over the period 2015-present.</p>					
<p><b>European Topic Centre at the University of Malaga (ETC-UMA)</b> (Dania Abdul Malak) – Use the results of the MedBioLitter database: Updated twice a year since 2017. It reports on the increased evidence on marine litter sources, occurrence and impacts, and the understanding of marine litter concerns to help reduce pressures coming from marine litter and impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems in the Mediterranean region. Dashboard: <a href="https://cica-esri.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/670e73343bc645ef9a8b10da0aab8542">https://cica-esri.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/670e73343bc645ef9a8b10da0aab8542</a>. Use the updated outcomes of the Mediterranean-wide assessment on the interaction between biodiversity and marine litter report (an updated version of the report is expected by Q.4 2022): <a href="http://www.etc.uma.es/wp-content/uploads/PAN_report_Mediterranean-biodiversity-and-marine-litter_LowRes.pdf">http://www.etc.uma.es/wp-content/uploads/PAN_report_Mediterranean-biodiversity-and-marine-litter_LowRes.pdf</a> (this is the link to the current version).</p>					

Section	Potential Contribution from Partners
	<p><b>EEA</b> (Matteo Mattiuzzi). Land cover / landuse dataset, covering the EIONET, not the whole Mediterranean, but good data. Proposed engaging with Copernicus Marine Service (Mercator Océan)</p> <p><b>CMCC Italy</b> (Giovanni Coppini). Modelling pollution. Publication on marine litter in the Mediterranean, based on modelling capacity, which could be updated and improved, although that would take some months. Part of Copernicus marine service on Mediterranean monitoring and forecasting and has indicators with OGS and HCMR on ocean currents and hydrography, pollution and physical parameters. Could be good background information on Mediterranean.</p> <p><b>REMPEC</b> (Claudette Spiteri). Study on trends and outlook of marine pollution from ships and activities and of maritime traffic and offshore, was developed in view of the upcoming 2023 MED QSR (available by end of year <a href="https://www.rempec.org/en/knowledge-centre/online-catalogue/ep_med_wg-498_inf4-regional-study.pdf">https://www.rempec.org/en/knowledge-centre/online-catalogue/ep_med_wg-498_inf4-regional-study.pdf</a>). In biennium 2022-2023 REMPEC is planning (subject to COP 21) to continue the work on offshore monitoring in relation to the following Pollution and Litter IMAP indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CI17: Concentration of key harmful contaminants measured in the relevant matrix (EO9, related to biota, sediment, seawater),</li> <li>• CI18: Level of pollution effects of key contaminants where a cause-and-effect relationship has been established (EO9),</li> <li>• CI19: Occurrence, origin (where possible), and extent of acute pollution events (e.g., slicks from oil, oil products and hazardous substances) and their impact on biota affected by this pollution (EO9),</li> <li>• CI26: Proportion of days and geographical distribution where loud, low, and mid-frequency impulsive sounds exceed levels that are likely to entail significant impact on marine animals (EO11),</li> <li>• CI27: Levels of continuous low frequency sounds with the use of models as appropriate (EO11).</li> </ul> <p><b>University of Siena</b> (Christina Fossi). Data on the presence and concentration of marine litter on beaches (micro and macro), sea surface (micro and macro) and sea floor (macro) in the Mediterranean MPA of the Tuscan Archipelago, and in the SPAMI area of the Pelagos Sanctuary and in a few other areas of the Adriatic Sea. Also, data on the marine litter ingestion and the impacts it causes on biodiversity (cetaceans, sea turtles, commercial fishes, etc), such as occurrence of ingestion, quantification and characterization of litter and biological effects (immune-related, inflammatory and ecotoxicological effects, for instance). Some of the other partners of the Plastic Busters MPAs project also have similar data for other Mediterranean MPAs (Cabrera, Zakynthos, etc.).</p> <p>Processing of data and final deliverable expected in November 2021. In a year's time there will be several other litter projects under another EU-funded project.</p> <p><b>MIO-ECSDE</b> (Thomais Vlachogianni). MIO-ECSDE can contribute with data on marine litter. The availability of these data will heavily rely on the specified/requested timeframe/period of their recording.</p> <p><b>CNRS</b> (Gäelle Darmon). With INDICIT I and II INDICIT I and II projects, stakeholders belonging to more than 100 institutions, harmonised efforts to collect standard data on litter impacts (litter ingested by living and dead sea turtles and impacts on health) across the Mediterranean. Sharing agreements should be necessary to share the raw data because some are protected by stakeholders, but analysed data can be shared. Results will be published soon.</p>

Section	Potential Contribution from Partners																		
	<p>(i) According to marine litter distribution, CNRS worked on data extracted from SAMM aerial surveys in order to highlight the overlapping areas with turtles (<a href="http://gtmf.mnhn.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/08/Darmon-et-al-2016_Turtles-Debris-spatial-DSRII.pdf">http://gtmf.mnhn.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/08/Darmon-et-al-2016_Turtles-Debris-spatial-DSRII.pdf</a>), a study that CNRS will make at the Mediterranean level thanks to the ACCOBAMS surveys.</p> <p>(ii) No raw data on litter distribution and abundance but CNRS worked from simulation models at a monthly basis at the entire Mediterranean scale. This study has been published: <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/inee.bib.cnrs.fr/science/article/pii/S0079661120300069">https://www.sciencedirect.com/inee.bib.cnrs.fr/science/article/pii/S0079661120300069</a></p> <p>(iii) Now starting to work on river-sea continuum (litter distribution and impacts).</p> <p><b>Mercator Ocean International (MOI) general contributions:</b>  MOI provides and computes different ocean products and indicators derived from model computations and/or observations  The possibility of defining 5 MED subregions as it has been done in the previous report has not been discussed yet.  For eutrophication, it is accepted that surface density is adopted as a proxy indicator for static stability of a coastal marine system. More information on typology criteria and setting is presented in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG 417/Inf.15:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type I coastal sites highly influenced by freshwater inputs,</li> <li>Type IIA coastal sites moderately influenced not directly affected by freshwater inputs (Continent influence),</li> <li>Type IIIW continental coast, coastal sites not influenced/affected by freshwater inputs (western Basin),</li> <li>Type IIIE not influenced by freshwater input (Eastern Basin),</li> <li>Type Island coast (western Basin).</li> </ul> <p><b>Table 1.</b> Major coastal water types in the Mediterranean</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="495 826 987 911"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Type I</th> <th>Type IIA, IIA Adriatic</th> <th>Type IIIW</th> <th>Type IIIE</th> <th>Type Island-W</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><math>\sigma_t</math> (density)</td> <td>&lt;25</td> <td>25&lt;d&lt;27</td> <td>&gt;27</td> <td>&gt;27</td> <td>All range</td> </tr> <tr> <td>salinity</td> <td>&lt;34.5</td> <td>34.5&lt;S&lt;37.5</td> <td>&gt;37.5</td> <td>&gt;37.5</td> <td>All range</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Hereafter are listed the present indicators available on the Copernicus Marine Service and also the identified products eligible to compute missing indicators.  <b>MOI contribution for EO5:</b>  Availability of accurate information on biogeochemical parameters, such as chlorophyll-a (satellite or model), nutrient (model) and oxygen content (model).  <b>Request for an OMI/product providing Near-bottom-oxygen:</b> this request is under discussion (seems to be easily satisfied).  <b>Common Indicator 13:</b>  <b>No indicator available by now for nutrients.</b>  <b>Model products available for computation of CI13:</b>  Concentration of <b>key nutrients in water column</b> (nitrogen, phosphate, silicate) : daily and monthly. From model only.  MOI identify a need to compute maps and trends from model. Not available yet.  <b>Common indicator 14:</b> Chl-a Mediterranean trend  Chl-a maps and trends are derived from OC satellite data by calculating climatology over 1997-2019 (update up to 2020 available soon).  Chl-a trend (map): <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-trend">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-trend</a></p>		Type I	Type IIA, IIA Adriatic	Type IIIW	Type IIIE	Type Island-W	$\sigma_t$ (density)	<25	25<d<27	>27	>27	All range	salinity	<34.5	34.5<S<37.5	>37.5	>37.5	All range
	Type I	Type IIA, IIA Adriatic	Type IIIW	Type IIIE	Type Island-W														
$\sigma_t$ (density)	<25	25<d<27	>27	>27	All range														
salinity	<34.5	34.5<S<37.5	>37.5	>37.5	All range														

Section	Potential Contribution from Partners
	<p>and Chl-a time series and trend: <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-time-series-and-trend">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-time-series-and-trend</a></p> <p>+ new <b>high resolution products (100 m resolution</b> for a 20 km coastal bandwidth) = daily satellite observation Sentinel 2 with parameters: turbidity, chl-a, suspended matter: <a href="https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/OCEANCOLOUR_MED_BGC_HR_L4_NRT_009_211/INFORMATION">https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/OCEANCOLOUR_MED_BGC_HR_L4_NRT_009_211/INFORMATION</a></p> <p>MOI contribution for EO10:  No products dedicated to marine litter distribution, but Ocean current model products (MEDSEA_MULTIYEAR_PHY_006_004, 4 km over 1987-2019) useful to derive litter trajectories.  Mercator also provide a global Ocean Monitoring Indicator focused on current anomaly (not adapted here)</p>
<p><b>2.2 Biodiversity and NIS Cluster</b></p> <p><b>2.2.1 Biodiversity (EO1)</b></p> <p><b>2.2.2 Non-indigenous Species (EO2)</b></p> <p><b>2.2.3 Harvest of commercially exploited fish and shellfish (EO3)</b></p> <p><b>2.2.4 Elements for Marine Food Webs (EO4) and Sea-floor integrity (EO6) (NEW)</b></p>	<p><b>OSPAR</b> (Julien Favier). Two main areas of cooperation:</p> <p>(i) general discussion on methodology (different QSR products, data integration, system thinking with the DAPSIR framework, etc..) and the different approaches on data we had for the different topics (for example, specific data calls for common indicators Vs collection and analysis of some already existing data for the feeder reports); and</p> <p>(ii) An idea (at this stage it has not been discussed with OSPAR CPs) to work on a sea turtle joint assessment/case study between the Atlantic and the Med in the QSR 2023 framework. This could prove relevant to look at the life cycle of the sea turtles which are nesting in the Med and spending a large part of their adult life in the Atlantic. The RAC/SPA for example could provide data on abundance (monitoring of nesting sites) and OSPAR could provide data on pressures sea turtles face in the Atlantic.</p> <p><b>GFCM</b> (Miguel Bernal). Traditionally for QSR GFCM compiles a chapter on commercial fish and shellfish (<a href="http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi">http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi</a>). Next report in 2022 could contribute to 2023 assessment. Will discuss with Parties in November for a new framework to compile and expose data on stock status that could be made publicly available. Estimates of bycatch and discards of vulnerable species in the 2022 report. Sea floor integrity, there will be an estimation of fishing footprint in the coming 2 years. Latest reports on non-indigenous species in fisheries <a href="http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/studies-reviews/87/en/">http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/studies-reviews/87/en/</a> and incidental catches of vulnerable species <a href="http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/studies-reviews/101/en/">http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/studies-reviews/101/en/</a></p> <p><b>EEA</b> (Cécile Roddier-Quefelec). Process and outcomes of the Biodiversity in Europe's seas project. Environmental trends report. Dashboards and datasets from the latest nature reporting (Habitats – Birds Directives). <a href="https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/biodiversity/state-of-nature-in-the-eu/explore-nature-reporting-data">https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/biodiversity/state-of-nature-in-the-eu/explore-nature-reporting-data</a></p> <p><b>REMPEC</b> (Claudette Spiteri). Study on trends and outlook of marine pollution from ships and activities and of maritime traffic and offshore, was developed in view of the upcoming 2023 MED QSR (available by end of year <a href="https://www.rempec.org/en/knowledge-centre/online-catalogue/ep_med_wg-498_inf4-regional-study.pdf">https://www.rempec.org/en/knowledge-centre/online-catalogue/ep_med_wg-498_inf4-regional-study.pdf</a>). In biennium 2022-2023 REMPEC is planning (subject to COP 21) to continue the work on offshore monitoring in relation to the following Biodiversity &amp; NIS IMAP indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CI1: Habitat distributional range, to asl consider habitat extent as a relevant attribute (EO1),</li> <li>• CI2: condition of the habitat's typical species and communities (EO1).</li> </ul> <p><b>Mercator Ocean</b>  MOI contribution to EO1:</p>



Section	Potential Contribution from Partners
	<p>Ocean properties impacting biodiversity: we provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) for the Med Sea Sea Surface Temperature anomaly (1993-2019): time series and trend (<a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-anomaly-time-series-sea-surface">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-anomaly-time-series-sea-surface</a> )</li> <li>→ <b>no similar indicator for salinity anomaly</b></li> <li>→ Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) temporal evolution of the mean vertical temperature anomaly profile (0-1000m ) over 1993-2019: <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface</a></li> <li>→ Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) temporal evolution of the mean vertical salinity anomaly profile (0-1000m ) over 1993-2019: <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface-salinity">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface-salinity</a></li> <li>→ Chl-a concentration conditioning marine food: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) Chl-a time series and trend (1997-2019): <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-time-series-and-trend">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-time-series-and-trend</a></li> <li>○ OMI chl-a trend map (1997-2019) : <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-trend">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-chlorophyll-trend</a></li> <li>○ + new <b>high resolution products (100 m resolution</b> for a 20 km coastal bandwidth) = daily satellite observation Sentinel 2 with parameters: turbidity, chl-a, suspended matter: <a href="https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/OCEANCOLOUR_MED_BGC_HR_L4_NRT_009_211/INFORMATION">https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/OCEANCOLOUR_MED_BGC_HR_L4_NRT_009_211/INFORMATION</a> since 01/2020 : <b>monthly means data not delivered yet</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) Heat content of the Med Sea: time series and trend over 1993-2018 <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-heat-content-anomaly-0-700m">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-heat-content-anomaly-0-700m</a></li> </ul> <p>Nutrients and oxygen data are also available for the whole water column in our Mediterranean model products: <a href="https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/MEDSEA_MULTIYEAR_BGC_006_008/INFORMATION">https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/MEDSEA_MULTIYEAR_BGC_006_008/INFORMATION</a> and we are presently discussing the possibility to include in 2022 a separate dataset providing <b>oxygen concentration on sea floor</b>.</p> <p>We also deliver model products providing information on low and mid-trophic levels including micronekton at global scale only (no Mediterranean products for the moment) covering the 1993-2019 period: <a href="https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/GLOBAL_MULTIYEAR_BGC_001_033/INFORMATION">https://resources.marine.copernicus.eu/product-detail/GLOBAL_MULTIYEAR_BGC_001_033/INFORMATION</a></p>
<p><b>2.3 Coast and Hydrography Cluster</b>  <b>2.3.1 Hydrography (EO7)</b>  <b>2.3.2 Coastal ecosystems and landscapes (EO8)</b></p>	<p><b>ETC-UMA</b> (Dania Abdul Malak) – <u>Update some relevant Mediterranean-wide spatial indicators</u> (the current ones are listed below) on the following building on <u>Med-IAMER</u> (Integrated actions to mitigate environmental risks in the Mediterranean Sea) project results. Specifically, the following indicators could be of interest (but in the group meetings, we can identify others that might be of relevance to this cluster as Med-IAMER generated around 60 spatial indicators on environmental pressures from which the relevant ones are extracted the below, to consider):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cruise port index</i>: The map shows the distribution of main cruise ports in the Mediterranean Sea. Ports are classified in groups according to its level of activity.</li> </ul>

Section	Potential Contribution from Partners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number of marina moorings per km coastline (NUTS3)</i>: The spatial indicator shows the number of moorings in marina ports per kilometre of coastline for each NUTS3 region. Data source: Plan Bleu, Spanish Yachting Port Federation, Portbooker, EEA, 2014.</li> <li>• <i>Marine exposure due to marinas and recreational shipping</i>: The spatial indicator highlights the potential intensity of pressure related to marinas on marine ecosystems. The dispersal of yachting port-derived pollution was modelled as a diffusive plume up to 20 km based on the data on mooring capacity of each yachting port. The spatial proximity of yachting ports increases the overall pressures. The influence was modelled as a buffer with an exponential decay based on self-calculations using mooring capacity of each yachting port. Calculations were made following the same methodology developed for ESaTDOR Project (ESPON, 2013). The extension area is based on HELCOM, 2012 and it is the theoretical maximum expansion distance for pressures generated by recreational shipping.</li> <li>• <i>Number of establishments per km<sup>2</sup> in coastal areas</i>: The indicator represents the number of establishments per km<sup>2</sup>, as an indicator of the local intensity of tourism capacity. This pressure index is based on Eurostat tourism statistic on number of tourism accommodation establishments and the DMSP-OLS Night-time Lights Time Series image. Eurostat's tourism capacity statistics differentiate between coastal and non-coastal areas within a NUTS2 region. The total number of establishments in coastal areas of a NUTS2 region was disaggregated to the most intense night-time light emission pixels of the Night-time Lights Time Series assuming that most bed places are in areas with high night-time light emissions. Results are showing low to highly intensive tourism capacity per km<sup>2</sup> pixel.</li> <li>• <i>Marine exposure due to port activity: Ferry transport (thousand passengers)</i>: The indicator shows the distribution of main ferry ports in the Mediterranean Sea. Pressures on marine regions are represented by the port influence area, based also on their activity level. The dispersal of port-derived pollution was modelled as a diffusive plume based on their activity level using Eurostat data on transport of goods (thousand tonnes) and passengers (thousand passengers). Calculations were made following the same methodology developed for ESaTDOR Project (ESPON, 2013).</li> </ul> <p><b>EEA</b> (Cécile Roddier-Quefelec). Copernicus CLMS – Coastal service. Process and outcome of the hydro-morphology project. Soil sealing (contribute to EEA's ecosystem condition accounts and assessments and to climate change adaptation assessments <a href="https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/dashboards/soil-sealing-and-ecosystem-impacts">https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/dashboards/soil-sealing-and-ecosystem-impacts</a>).</p> <p><b>ESA</b> (Marie-Helene Rio). Two recently ended ESA projects on coastal erosion could be of interest (with some activity in the Med Sea, but not covering the entire basin). Also, a currently running project (2021-2023) on Soil Sealing estimate from satellite data around the entire Mediterranean Basin.</p> <p><b>REMPEC</b> (Claudette Spiteri). Study on trends and outlook of marine pollution from ships and activities and of maritime traffic and offshore, was developed in view of the upcoming 2023 MED QSR (available by end of year <a href="https://www.rempec.org/en/knowledge-centre/online-catalogue/ep_med_wg-498_inf4-regional-study.pdf">https://www.rempec.org/en/knowledge-centre/online-catalogue/ep_med_wg-498_inf4-regional-study.pdf</a>). In biennium 2022-2023 REMPEC is planning (subject to COP 21) to continue the work on offshore monitoring in relation to the following Coast &amp; Hydrography IMAP indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CI15: Location and extent of the habitats impacted directly by hydrographic alterations (EO7).</li> </ul> <p><b>Mercator Ocean</b> MOI contribution for EO7</p>

Section	Potential Contribution from Partners	
	<p><u>Wave</u>: Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) displaying the extreme variability map (mean 99<sup>th</sup> percentile of significant wave height 2006-2017) from model reanalysis. We also provide satellite wave products whose resolution is 2° (quite low).</p> <p><u>Currents</u>: Ocean current model products (MEDSEA_MULTIYEAR_PHY_006_004, 4 km over 1987-2019) useful to derive litter trajectories. No indicator Tides: NA in MED sea since CMEMS products do not include tide</p> <p><u>Oxygen on seafloor</u>: not available yet</p> <p><u>Bathymetry</u>: no product or OMI at this moment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) temporal evolution of the mean vertical temperature anomaly profile (0-1000m ) over 1993-2019: <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface</a></li> <li>➔ Ocean Monitoring Indicator (OMI) temporal evolution of the mean vertical salinity anomaly profile (0-1000m ) over 1993-2019: <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface-salinity">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-depth-time-anomaly-map-sub-surface-salinity</a></li> </ul> <p>Reanalysis products giving access to 1993-2019 data: possibility for the user to define thresholds per sub region and compute frequency of threshold exceedance.</p> <p><b><u>Climate change indicators</u></b> Mercator Ocean International also provide Ocean monitoring Indicators reflecting the climate change context that can impact ocean processes and biodiversity.</p> <p>Mercator Ocean provides via the Copernicus Marine Service different Ocean Monitoring Indicators (OMI) dealing with climate change. These indicators are computed following the state-of-the-art methodologies recommended by IPCC community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Sea Level trend in the Mediterranean Sea under the shape of a time series and trend computed over the period 1993-2020: <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/time-series-mean-sea-level-trends-over-mediterranean-sea">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/time-series-mean-sea-level-trends-over-mediterranean-sea</a></li> </ul> <p>Ocean Heat Content in the Mediterranean Sea under the shape of a time series and trend computed over the period 1993-2018: <a href="https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-heat-content-anomaly-0-700m">https://marine.copernicus.eu/access-data/ocean-monitoring-indicators/mediterranean-sea-heat-content-anomaly-0-700m</a></p>	
2.4 Towards an integrated assessment of GES in the Mediterranean	Depending on level of progress on UNEP/MAP integrated assessment methodologies, this section could propose a brief DPSIR-based integrated GES assessment of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and cumulative pressures and impacts; or describe current efforts and status of progress on developing these methodologies, and summarise key pressures, overall state and impacts based on the assessments provided in sections 2.1-2.3.	<b>EEA</b> (Cécile Roddier-Quefelec) – EEA/MAP strategic partnership & EIONET MED

Most work streams of REMPEC address shipping and offshore activities and therefore also link to the proposed sub-group on socioeconomics (REMPEC also works on emissions to air. However, it needs to be confirmed whether air emissions/air pollution will be covered in the 2023 MED QSR). Claudette Spiteri [cspiteri@rempec.org](mailto:cspiteri@rempec.org) is willing to participate in all four sub-groups, on behalf of REMPEC, with the support and expertise of programme officers Malek Smaoui (related to pollution) and Franck Lauwers (in relation to NIS & pollution discharges), as required.

## Annex V: 2023 MED QSR Communication and Visibility Strategy – UNEP/MED WG.514/6 (extract)

### 1. Introduction

This Communication and Visibility Strategy for the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (MED QSR) is developed in line with the UNEP/MAP Operational Communication Strategy, Activity 1.1.1, which provides for the development of a communication pack for MAP flagship publications, including the 2023 MED QSR.

### 2. Overall Objective

The overall objectives of the 2023 MED QSR Communication and Visibility Strategy are to:

- Ensure that the 2023 MED QSR publication has a wide dissemination and receives a high level of visibility;
- Promote the findings of the 2023 MED QSR on the status of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast, in order to support evidence-based marine and coastal management, and advocate policies and measures based on this enhanced knowledge to underpin efforts aimed at achieving GES.

The achievement of these objectives will be measured through a range of specific indicators, as detailed below:

Objective	Indicators of success
Ensure that the 2023 MED QSR publication receives a high level of visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of speaking engagements on the 2023 MED QSR by MAP representatives in conferences and events pertaining to environment and development</li><li>• Total number of recipients targeted by MAP-initiated communication activities</li><li>• Aggregated download metrics of the 2023 MED QSR from the dedicated website</li><li>• Prominence of 2023 MED QSR in Google search results with the key words: Mediterranean+ environment+ assessment (the 2023 MED QSR should appear in the first 20 results returned by Google).</li><li>• Number of press clippings and prominence (circulation/following of media organizations reporting on or quoting from the 2023 MED QSR) of media material citing and/or using content, findings, and/or messages from the 2023 MED QSR</li></ul>
Promote the findings and key messages of the 2023 MED QSR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number and size (i.e., number of participants) of outreach events in key policy fora attended by decision-makers in Mediterranean countries where 2023 MED QSR messages are disseminated.</li><li>• Number of stakeholders and decision makers informed about the 2023 MED QSR findings;</li><li>• 2023 MED QSR messages appear in statements by Ministers of the Environment and other decision-makers in Mediterranean countries</li><li>• 2023 MED QSR messages appear in partners and other stakeholders' statements/interventions/presentations around the Mediterranean</li></ul>

### 3. Target Groups

Target groups have been identified as relevant for the communication and visibility activities of the 2023 MED QSR: decision-makers; experts/scientists; multipliers (non-media); conventional media; and social media. The list may include the following:

- Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention
- UN Country Teams in Mediterranean countries
- Mediterranean countries' Permanent missions to the UN in New York, Geneva, Nairobi, and Athens
- Members of environment and development commissions in the Parliaments of the Mediterranean countries
- UN Global Compact network offices in the Mediterranean region
- the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean – GFCM

- UfM fora
- World Bank, GEF, EBRD, EIB and other financial institutions
- MAP partners
- Local / elected authorities in Mediterranean coastal cities
- SciDev MENA Network
- Other regional (Mediterranean) projects, institutions, networks, initiatives and processes (e.g., MedProgramme, MEDREGION, QuietMED II, INDICIT II).
- Other Intergovernmental Organizations and relevant Conventions/Agreements (e.g., the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (FAO/GFCM), UNESCO-IOC).
- UN Decade on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and its actors
- etc.

### Experts/Scientists

#### Conventional Media

- UNEP/MAP contact list, including news agencies in Mediterranean countries
- RACs media contacts
- Media representatives at Palais des Nations via UNEP Geneva press office
- International and regional media outlets offering an Environment section
- Africa 21 and network of Maghreb journalists
- Networks of green journalism

#### Social media

- Users of social platforms with an interest in environment and development issues in the Mediterranean region

### **4. Other aspects**

- The 2023 MED QSR will receive an ISBN as UNEP publication; UNEP broadcasting resources must be harnessed to maximize visibility.
- Focus on the Key Findings of the 2023 MED QSR in all communication activities.
- Create a topical and clear hashtag: (to be defined; possible examples include #2023MEDQSR and #MedReport2023).
- Enlist members of the wider MAP-Barcelona Convention system “community”, including MAP partners and MCSD members, to promote the 2023 MED QSR at all relevant events/conferences with a view to advancing reflections and dialogue based on evidence (provided by the 2023 MED QSR).
- Provide visibility to the overall Ecosystem Approach implementation process in the region ensuring coherence and continuity of communication with related past and ongoing projects funded by the EU (e.g., EcAp MED III, Marine Litter MED II, IMAP MPA and MedProgramme) and other relevant UNEP/MAP initiatives and projects within the UNEP/MAP Communication Strategy as well as UNEP Regional Seas work on ecosystem approach implementation at global level.

## Annex VI: Brochure – A push for the achievement of Good Environmental Status in the Mediterranean

The non-formatted content of the brochure before can be found below.



**Mediterranean  
Action Plan**  
Barcelona  
Convention

### Bright spots in the Mediterranean

An assortment of projects funded by the European Union and executed by the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP) is strengthening the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols



### A push for the achievement of Good Environmental Status in the Mediterranean

In 2008, under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme's Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols — 21 coastal countries and the European Union (EU) — decided (COP 15, Decision IG.17/6) to progressively apply the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) to the management of human activities that may affect the health of the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment for the promotion of sustainable development.

The implementation of the Ecosystem Approach underpins efforts by the Contracting Parties in fulfilling their shared vision: “a healthy Mediterranean with marine and coastal ecosystems that are productive and biologically diverse contributing to sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations”.

In line with this vision, the overall objective of the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap is to achieve and, in some contexts, to maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) of the Mediterranean Sea and coasts.

GES is well defined in terms that have been negotiated and adopted (COP 17, Decision IG. 20/4) by the Contracting Parties. It is based on 11 Ecological Objectives (EOs) addressing key elements of the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment. To facilitate implementation and reporting, the EOs come in two main sets: operational objectives and associated targets.



In 2016 the Contracting Parties adopted (COP 19, Decision IG.22/7) the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP). Devised and introduced by UNEP/MAP, IMAP has transformed the way environmental monitoring is conducted in the region, introducing greater harmonisation and rigor in the collection of crucial environmental data.

The adoption of IMAP was an unprecedented achievement as it provided Mediterranean countries with a harmonised toolkit to monitor the environment and to assess progress towards achieving GES under the Barcelona Convention.

Based on the flow of harmonised data generated by IMAP, UNEP/MAP delivered in 2017 the first edition of the Quality Status Report for the Mediterranean ([2017 MED QSR](#)), a flagship report endorsed by the Contracting Parties (COP 20, Decision IG.23/6). The preparation of an enhanced version of the report entitled 2023 MED QSR, to be published in 2023) was decided at COP 21 (Decision IG. 24/4).

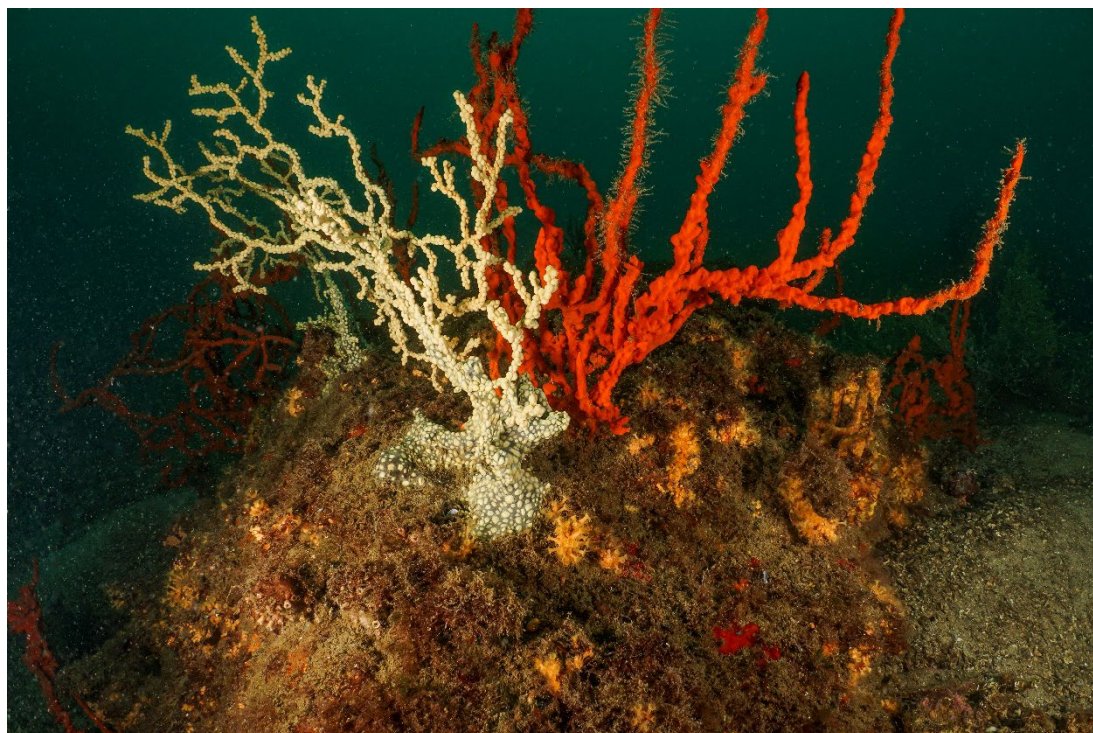
In the context of the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, the quest for quality data on the state of the marine and coastal environment continues to generate benefits for the Contracting Parties and the region as a whole. All Mediterranean countries have established national IMAPs, developed centralized data collection and management infrastructure, which are linked to the **IMAP Info System**-- a central data platform maintained by UNEP/MAP--, refined technical specifications on IMAP indicators, and are in the process of devising common methodologies for the integrated assessment of the marine and coastal environment.

An assortment of three projects funded by the European Union and implemented by UNEP/MAP provide support to national teams as they set about activating IMAP. Project activities are coordinated by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat and implemented with the participation of several Regional Activity Centres of the Mediterranean Action Plan. In addition to capacity building, activities include the sharing of experience and best practices among communities of practice nurtured by the three projects, namely EcAp MED III, IMAP-MPA, and Marine Litter MED II.



## EcAp MED III

**“Support to Efficient Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach-based Integrated Monitoring and Assessment of the Mediterranean Sea and Coasts and to the delivery of the 2023 Quality Status Report (MED QSR) in synergy with the EU Marine strategy framework directive (MSFD)”**



### Factsheet

#### **A project funded by the European Union**

**Implementation period:** September 2020 – August 2023

**Budget:** USD 2,494,790, including an EU allocation of USD 2,200,000 and the co-financing from the Mediterranean Trust Fund ([MTF](#)) of USD 294,790

**Beneficiary countries:** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.

**Implemented by** [MAP Components](#) (INFO/RAC, MED POL, PAP/RAC, SPA/RAC and Plan Bleu), under the coordination of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit.

EcAp MED III builds on the successful outcomes of the previous two instalments of the EcAp MED project (2012-2015, 2015-2019). The third phase focuses on supporting the implementation of IMAp in the field and the delivery of the 2023 MED QSR. This support comes in various forms, including capacity-building at the national level. The delivery of EcAp MED III project activities is carried out in synergy with the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).

#### **EcAp MED III activities**

- ✓ boosting the effective implementation of the IMAp in the Mediterranean;
- ✓ contributing to the fine-tuning and harmonisation of monitoring and assessment of the marine and coastal environment at the regional and sub-regional levels;

- ✓ expanding the current [IMAP Info System](#) to cover all IMAP Common Indicators and feeding into the IMAP database that will underpin the delivery of the 2023 MED QSR;
- ✓ strengthening Science-Policy Interface (SPI) at national and regional levels.

**When it reaches full implementation, the project will deliver two main outcomes:**

- Progress is made and consensus reached on environmental monitoring and assessment processes at national, sub-regional and regional levels.
- Operational national IMAPs are in place in all beneficiary countries, thus producing and providing quality-assured data that will feed into the 2023 MED QSR and other knowledge products and decision-support tools that the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system provides to support evidence-based policymaking in the region.

The third phase of the EcAp MED project continues to deliver benefits to a wide range of stakeholders, including policymakers, national institutions responsible for the implementation of IMAPs, the scientific community, data experts and scientists, and, by boosting the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, all citizens of the Mediterranean.

## IMAP-MPA

**“Towards achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean Sea and coast through an ecologically representative and efficiently managed and monitored network of Marine Protected Areas”**



The IMAP-MPA project's main thrust is directed towards the achievement of Good Environmental Status (GES) in the Mediterranean through rigorous monitoring and assessment, including areas under high pressure and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), in a comparative and integrated manner.

In addition to the set-up of mechanisms that ensure the reliable, regionally agreed assessment of MPAs, the project is meant as a contribution to the establishment of a connected, ecologically representative, effectively managed and monitored network of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean.

The IMAP-MPA project also aims to enhance capacity in beneficiary countries to implement IMAP and report reliable data regarding the IMAP common indicators. This will be achieved through harmonized monitoring and assessment including at sub-regional level.

Under the project, the monitoring of IMAP common indicators for biodiversity and non-indigenous species, pollution and marine litter, and hydrography is undertaken both within and in the periphery of MPAs.

### **IMAP-MPA project activities**

- ✓ assisting Southern Mediterranean Contracting Parties to implement the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme ([IMAP](#)), adopted in 2016, as part of the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap;
- ✓ contributing to enhanced MPA management through coordinated implementation of the MAP Roadmap

### **Factsheet**

#### **A project funded by the European Union**

**Implementation period:** August 2019 – February 2023

**Budget:** EUR 4,000,000

**Beneficiary Countries:** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia

**Implemented by** [MAP Components](#) (SPA/RAC, MED POL), in close collaboration with PAP/RAC and INFO/RAC under the coordination of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit.

for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to achieve the Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean (adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity). The project will also conduct important ecological and socio-economic studies within three MPAs: Rachgoun Island (Algeria), Tyre Coast (Lebanon) and the Gulf of Sirte (Libya).

### **When it reaches full implementation, the project will deliver three main outcomes:**

- National capacity to implement IMAP and report reliable data for the IMAP common indicators is enhanced.
- Enhanced implementation of policies that relate to the MPAs in the Southern Mediterranean is ensured.
- Effective on-site MPA management mechanisms that ensure MPA sustainability are in place.

Boosting monitoring and data collection systems in a conservation context is an innovative endeavour in the Mediterranean. The IMAP-MPA project can therefore serve as a pilot that can be upscaled for wider benefits. By supporting the achievement of the Aichi Target 11 and the Ecosystem Approach implementation, the project illustrates the UNEP/MAP's ability to integrate objectives stemming from the global environment and development framework into the regional endeavour under the Barcelona Convention.

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## Marine Litter MED II

### Catalysing national action to stem the tide of marine litter in the Mediterranean

#### Factsheet

#### A project funded by the European Union

**Implementation period:** September 2020 – August 2023

**Budget:** USD 1,140,000 including PSC with co-financing sources from MTF of USD 149,955

**Beneficiary Countries:** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia

**Implemented by** [MAP Components](#) (INFO/RAC, MED POL, SCP/RAC, SPA/RAC, REMPEC), under the coordination of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit.

The second phase of the Marine Litter MED project focuses on strengthening the implementation of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean, adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. The project expands pilot activities related to the reduction and prevention of marine litter, especially in terms of geographical scope and impact.

More broadly, Marine Litter MED II will contribute to a comprehensive assessment of existing knowledge, data gaps, monitoring techniques and methodologies pertaining to riverine inputs (marine litter carried by rivers and water courses) and microplastic deriving from Wastewater Treatment Plants.

#### Marine Litter MED II activities

- ✓ Scaling up and expanding the implementation of pilots related to key reduction and prevention measures presented in the Marine Litter Regional Plan and achieving the reduction targets adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona at COP 18 and reaffirmed at COP 21.
- ✓ Supporting the beneficiary countries to enhance national capacities to implement IMAP EO10 Candidate Indicator 24: “Trends in the amount of litter ingested by or entangling marine organisms focusing on selected mammals, marine birds, and marine turtles”.
- ✓ Monitoring and assessing marine litter riverine inputs and the uses and sources of microplastics in wastewater treatments.
- ✓ Enhancing interregional cooperation of UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention Secretariat with other European Regional Seas Programmes and Conventions, including the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (BSC) and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

Marine litter, including plastics and microplastics, represents one of the main pressures to the marine and coastal environment in the Mediterranean. Every day a staggering **730 tons of plastic** are thought to reach the Mediterranean Sea.

The **Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean** provides for legally binding measures and timetables for their implementation. An upgraded version of the Regional Plan is expected to be adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention during the upcoming COP22.

**When it reaches full implementation, the project will deliver three main outcomes.**

- Reduction and prevention measures are scaled up, priority Single-Use Plastics are addressed along with an increase of awareness-raising at national and local level in the Mediterranean.
- National capacities on monitoring and assessing marine litter are enhanced and contribute to the 2023 MED QSR report, a flagship publication also supported by the EcAp MED III project.
- International cooperation on priority areas, as identified by the Regional Seas Conventions and Programmes and their respective Marine Litter Regional Action Plans are boosted.



Marine Litter MED II will generate benefits in the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach and IMAP with a focus on edging closer to a litter-free Mediterranean. The project's delivery is conducted in synergy with the European Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive (EU MSFD) and the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive.

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### **Views from the field**

"Egypt welcomes continuing the mutual regional cooperation in order to achieve the conservation and sustainability of the marine ecosystems under the implementation of the sustainable development goals and the Barcelona Convention."

Mr Mohamed Said Abdelwarith, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, Egypt

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"The EU-funded IMAP-MPA project supports the national conservation efforts through monitoring and assessing the status of endemic, threatened species and key habitats that they contain. Tunisia has a variety of rich and unique ecosystems destined to become Marine and Coastal Protected Areas"

Samia Boufares, APAL, Tunisia

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"The researchers of the National Centre for Marine Sciences succeeded in preparing the IMAP for Lebanon, implementing the monitoring programme for 2019 and uploading the obtained data onto the IMAP Info System. The collaboration with UNEP/MAP proved successful, especially with the preparation of the National IMAP Monitoring Programme for Pollution and Marine Litter cluster as part of the EcAp MED project and the generation of new data sets aligned with the IMAP requirements."

Dr. Milad Fakhri, National Centre for Marine Sciences/CNRS-L, Lebanon

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"We are excited about the opportunity that the IMAP-MPA project provides to improve the monitoring in our region, so that we can all improve the conservation and protection of the Mediterranean Sea that we all love."

Dr. Simon Nemtsov, Israel Nature and Parks Authority, Israel

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"Libya has a rich, diverse and unique marine biodiversity, and has still pristine habitats. The EU-funded IMAP-MPA project will contribute to monitoring and assessing the status of threatened species and important habitats containing these species, making them highly qualified as marine and coastal protected areas".

Mr. Ali Elkekli, Ministry of Environment, Libya

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The two pilot activities "Adopt a Beach" and "Waste fishing" of the Marine Litter MED project were able to involve the territorial actors, NGOs, fishermen and local volunteers in cleaning, communication and awareness campaigns for a good management of marine litter at the various sites of these activities.

Mohammed EL BOUCH : Point focal du Programme MEDPOL au Maroc

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## **A word from the UNEP/MAP Coordinator**

The UNEP/MAP partnership with the EU, one of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, has expanded and taken multiple forms: from [joint assessments conducted with the European Environment Agency](#) to launching projects that made it possible for UNEP/MAP to deploy targeted capacity-building and to channel the expertise required to build novel systems, such as the national IMAPs, and to better address compounded issues such as marine litter.

UNEP/MAP and the EU have sought to make synergy an in-built feature of the EcAp MED, Marine Litter MED and IMAP-MPA projects.

The IMAP-MPA project builds on the achievements and outputs of the previous EcAp MED II (2015-2019) and the MedMPA Network (2016-2018) projects, both funded by the EU.

While the EcAp MED III project seeks to make national IMAPs fully operational, the IMAP-MPA focuses on testing the implementation of joint monitoring in high-pressure and MPA sites, including on sites, in monitoring stations or other areas in the field.

Together, IMAP-MPA and EcAp MED III provide consolidated support to national teams that will build capacity in the monitoring of IMAP Clusters on Biodiversity and Non-Indigenous Species (EO1, EO2); Pollution and Marine Litter (EO5, EO9, EO10); and Coast and Hydrography (EO7, EO8).

Building on the outcomes of its first phase (2016-2019), Marine Litter MED II notably contributes to enhancing national capacities to implement the provisions of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean, a key instrument under the Barcelona Convention. The project also stimulates inter-basin cooperation through collaborations with the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (BSC), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and other regional partners within the framework of the G7 and G20 Marine Litter Action Plans.

Taken together, the EU-funded projects constitute a coordinated, action-oriented push for the implementation of several key decisions adopted by the Contracting Parties regarding the Ecosystem Approach and IMAP. The projects are also bolstering national capabilities to monitor several SDG indicators, including those pertaining to Goal 14: "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development", as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 11.

This UNEP/MAP-EU partnership is bringing benefits to a variety of stakeholders, including policymakers at local and national levels, national institutions responsible for the implementation of IMAP, the scientific community, data experts and scientists, as well as citizens of the Mediterranean who have a stake in healthy and productive marine and coastal ecosystems in the Mediterranean that underpin sustainable development.

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Annex VII: Pictures taken during COP 22 illustrating the exhibition (7-10/12/21, Antalya, Turkey)

VIRTUAL EXHIBITION  
TWO YEARS OF BARCELONA CONVENTION ACHIEVEMENTS



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of the next edition of the QSR in 2023

Through 3 projects funded by the European Union, namely **EcAp MED III**, **IMAP-MPA**, and **Marine Litter MED II**, UNEP/MAP provides support to national teams, as they set about activating the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast (IMAP)

**The GEF-UNEP “Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security” (2020-2025)** started its implementation through priority actions to reduce major transboundary environmental stresses in coastal areas, to strengthen climate resilience and water security and to improve the health and livelihoods of coastal populations

**MAP Operational Communication Strategy** adopted by the Contracting Parties, has been implemented with a coordinated communication effort, involving the components of the MAP system. This has translated into an enhanced broadcasting capability and a greater capacity to pursue the MAP objectives by communicating and influencing key

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**SIMPEE**

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