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Agenda item 3: Work of the MCSD and MSSD Implementation. Review of Progress for the Period April – October 2022

Agenda item 4: Specific Issues

Progress Report and Specific Issues

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UNEP/MAP
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Progress Report and Specific Issues

1. The present document provides information on the work done for the period April – October 2022, as a follow-up of the 23rd Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), held through videoconference from 1-2 June 2022. It also includes specific issues for consideration by the 24th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee.

A. Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard

2. Since April 2022, Plan Bleu/RAC has designed a series of new regional thematic maps dealing with coastal wetlands, national SDG scores, and forests. As by end of October 2022, the outputs include more than 220 layers/views, which are publicly available and combinable with query-able data and can be consulted on the UNEP-administered World Environment Situation Room (WESR).

3. A dedicated webpage to the Mediterranean has been designed and launched in July 2022¹. It allows users to access data, information and knowledge of the MAP System, directly from the UNEP-administered World Environment Situation Room (WESR) platform, browsable by Regions and Countries or by Themes. The infrastructure is in place to update the design according to Contracting Parties' needs and expectations.

4. Data and spatial indicators, relevant for the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system and for monitoring the MSSD implementation, with a broader access to quality-ensured data for the Contracting Parties and partners, are now fully part of the UNEP-administered World Environment Situation Room (WESR) and the relevant work is in progress.

5. New MapX tailored functions have been developed, benefiting from technical support from UNEP/GRID-Geneva. The MSSD indicators are now updated directly online². In addition to that, a specific module to present the MedECC Atlas in an interactive way has been developed. MedWaves, the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP, has added new widgets such as Time Sliders that show the SCP indicators evolution through the years.

6. Categories where views / layers are available have been renamed with the objective to facilitate users' experiences. Nevertheless, references to the data from the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard; the SCP regional Action Plan and the SoED have been kept. The data managed by MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP) and by Plan Bleu/RAC are now fully integrated in one set of data and indicators.

7. Plan Bleu/RAC pursued its work regarding the definition of indicators to monitor links and trends of relations between human health and state of the environment with the IRD (the French Institut de Recherche et Développement). A concept note is under finalization as a basis for a technical and in-person meeting planned in early 2023.

Next steps (perspectives):

8. Further reflection is currently undertaken on the way to integrating legal indicators into the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard. Preliminary work undertaken by Plan Bleu/RAC (on fines, and valuation of ecological damage) and by REMPEC in the frame of its support to MENELAS, can serve as a basis to build on. In that sense, proposals for a specific session at the 20th Meeting of the MCSD (June/July 2023) may be considered.

9. In early 2023, the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, strengthened by the integration of SCP Indicators, will be updated directly through MapX, the cartographic viewer of the global UNEP-administered WESR.

10. Following the 23rd MCSD Steering Committee meeting's recommendations, Plan Bleu/RAC will draft a technical note to organize capacity building workshops in assisting the Contracting Parties for data sharing and use of the platform, also considering the importance of data quality. One of the main goals is to pursue the Secretariat's efforts in streamlining the work done on reporting, monitoring and assessment with relevant regional and global processes, including the global process on SDGs Indicators. A national workshop is planned for early December 2022 to share a French experience with

¹ wesr.unep.org/med

² https://app.mapx.org/?project=MX-R2F-467-2PL-J9H-CCR&language=en&theme=water_light

Morocco on energy and climate change data collection (emissions assessment) in reference to MSSD indicator 21.

11. In 2023, Plan Bleu/RAC and UNEP/GRID-Geneva will pursue enabling the access to geospatial datasets relevant for UNEP/MAP and for monitoring the MSSD implementation and plan to further develop the “WESR/Mediterranean” frontpage.

Issues for consideration:

12. Following-up on the conclusions and recommendations of the 19th Meeting of the MCSD, and taking into account the living nature of the list of indicators of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and the need to keep it under review, under the guidance of the MCSD Steering Committee, with the technical support of Plan Bleu/RAC and MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP), as international work on SDG indicators progresses, the members of the MCSD Steering Committee may provide advice to the Secretariat about the design of the WESR: Mediterranean frontpage, some thematic maps that could be for interest; considering this opportunity for efficient monitoring of progress towards sustainable development in the Mediterranean. That process would allow the optimal alignment and consistency of the dashboard with ongoing global processes on SDG indicators and the global UNEP data strategy, ensuring that indicators are regularly measured and adequately communicated within the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system and beyond.

B. MSSD Flagship Initiatives

13. The paragraphs below provide an overview for the MSSD Flagship Initiatives in which the Secretariat is directly involved and for which progress has been achieved after the 23rd Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee.

Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award

14. At its 23rd Meeting, the MCSD Steering Committee took note of and welcomed the Draft Roadmap for the fourth edition of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (2022-2023) and encouraged the Secretariat to implement the activities accordingly, in cooperation with relevant partners, reviewing the process and its methodology in view of simplifying them, launching the call for applicants in due time, and further strengthening communication along the way to reach more interest from Mediterranean coastal cities. It was recommended to undertake brainstorming with MCSD Members and relevant partners on how to further facilitate the whole selection and nomination process, while maintaining high sustainability standards in the methodology, assessment framework, and key performance indicators.

15. In the period June-September 2022, the Secretariat continued implementing the above-mentioned roadmap, with the in-kind support of the International Initiative for Sustainable Built Environment (iiSBE-Italy) in the context of the ENI CBC MED Sustainable Mediterranean Cities³. On the 20th of July 2022, the Secretariat organized an online consultation meeting, which gathered Members of the MCSD Steering Committee, networks of municipalities and local authorities, applicant cities’ representatives, individual experts, and colleagues from UNEP/MAP Components/Regional Activity Centres. During that online consultation meeting, the draft updated methodology of the fourth edition of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (2022-2023), including the indicator assessment framework and the application form, was presented and discussed in-depth. A number of issues were raised by participants, in particular from representatives of applicant cities, including the following ones: the difficulty met by local civil servants in charge of completing the application form in collecting information and data from other local services and administrations, and the need to strengthen communication about the Award both during the application period and after the award-giving ceremony. Following that consultation, the application form, the indicator assessment framework and the guide for indicators calculation were completed,

³ <https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/sustainable-med-cities>. This project aims at providing to “Mediterranean municipalities with a system of innovative tools and methodologies to develop effective policies, strategies and action plans in relation to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025. The project will also deliver innovative capacity-building programmes for Mediterranean cities to step up their capacity to drive the urban regeneration”. UNEP/MAP is an associated partner of that project.

with continuous support from iiSBE-Italy. Information technology practicalities were addressed by INFO/RAC in view of effectively launching the call for applicant cities which will be launched soon by the Coordinating Unit through a relevant communication campaign, with the support of MAP Components and key partners.

WeMed Green Business Award

16. Following the adoption of Decision IG.24/3 at COP 21, the Secretariat (through MedWaves, the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP) inaugurated the WeMed Award for environmental innovation and green entrepreneurship. The Mediterranean Sustainability Award aims at promoting an inclusive transition to sustainability in the Mediterranean. This award recognizes business achievements, promoting a green business ecosystem conducive to the implementation of SDG 12 “Responsible production and consumption”. The 1st edition was organized in 2021 and funded by the EU through the SwitchMed Programme. The MCSD Steering Committee was informed of the different stages of the development of the Award (visual identity, structure, jury, selection criteria).

17. Funded by the ENI CBC Med Programme, through the STAND Up! project^[1], the second edition – as introduced in Document UNEP/MED WG.523/3 of the 23rd Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee – is organized by MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP and Texfor (Textile Industry Confederation of Spain), in view of awarding success stories of sustainable businesses in the textile and clothing sector.

18. For the second edition of the WeMed Award, two categories were opened for (i) sustainable textiles business models in early and grow stage based in Southern Mediterranean countries ; (ii) sustainable textiles business models in early and growth stage based in Northern Mediterranean countries. MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP) received 62 candidatures that were reviewed with the support of a well experienced jury formed by six members. The award’s ceremony will take place on 21 November 2022.

Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC)

19. As an open and independent international scientific expert network founded in 2015, MedECC aims at providing information to decision-makers and the general public on the basis of available scientific knowledge. Since 2018, Plan Bleu/RAC hosts the Scientific Secretariat of MedECC, composed of two scientific experts, one being the employee of Plan Bleu/RAC and the second from AIR Climat in the frame of a partnership with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat (thanks to the funding from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency). The present MedECC technical assistance contract established by UfM with the association AIR Climat covers the period from June 2021 to December 2023.

20. MedECC’s current work focuses on three thematic reports related to specific challenges identified in MAR1: 1) Climate and environmental coastal risks, 2) Climate-water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus, and 3) Environmental change, conflicts and human migration. The Coordinating Lead Authors meeting was held in June 2022 in Barcelona. The Reports’ Coordinators and Coordinating Lead Authors were appointed, as well as most of the Lead Authors. The outlines of the reports have been produced. The first drafts of the full reports are being prepared.

21. In October 2022 the outlines of the MedECC Special Reports were shared with policy-makers (including members of the MCSD, Plan Bleu and UfM National Focal Points) for information, with the possibility to provide comments.

22. MedECC will participate in the UNFCCC COP 27 taking place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022. The Mediterranean Pavilion is the first of its kind to be set up at a UNFCCC Conference. It was conceived as a space for all regional actors – public and private, scientific and academic, technical, policymaking, civil society, finance, and business – actively engaged in facing the climate crisis in and around the Mediterranean Sea. The initiative is led by the Secretariats of UNEP/MAP and UfM and the PRIMA Foundation, while Plan Bleu/RAC and MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP) are among the partners of this initiative, along with a coalition of the most relevant organizations dealing with climate action in the region. MedECC organizes two side events: “Assessments of scientific knowledge on climate change to support

[1] <https://www.enicbmed.eu/projects/stand-up>

evidence-based decision-making”, which will be held on 10 November 2022 and “Climate change and security in the Mediterranean region”, which will be held on 12 November 2022. MedECC has also been invited by the organizers of the MedPavilion to play a role of the scientific advisory council to evaluate the proposals of side-events. A full overview of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system involvement at COP27 can be provided during the 24th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee.

23. As indicated in Chapter A. of the present report, MapX is the cartographic component of WESR, an online and digital platform for sharing UNEP information, data and knowledge products. In the framework of the “WESR: Mediterranean” project, MedECC collaborated on the development and publication of an atlas of maps of seasonal temperature and precipitation changes for the Mediterranean basin, based on the one published in MAR1.

Environmental Governance: Encourage the Accession to and Implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)

24. The first phase of the activity has been completed in close cooperation with UNEP/MAP and the Secretariat of the UNECE-Aarhus Convention, with the elaboration of a desk study for the development of a Foundation Discussion Document (FDD) for the “Mediterranean Accession Agenda” to the Aarhus Convention by the MEPIELAN Centre with the support of MIO-ECSDE and COMPSUD through the EU LIFE Programme (see also Document UNEP/MED WG.523/Inf.6).

25. At the 9th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (5-7 October 2022, Nicosia, Cyprus) COMPSUD and MIO-ECSDE co-organised a formal side event with the House of Representatives of Cyprus, the Mediterranean Action Plan – Barcelona Convention Secretariat (UNEP/MAP), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and MEPIELAN Centre, which took place on 7 October and was entitled “Environmental governance for transforming our planet – Promoting the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean region”. More than 45 stakeholders were informed of the joint efforts in the development of a Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention (Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters), encouraging the accession to and implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Mediterranean countries that are not yet members, as well as of the FDD itself and the key role that Members of Parliaments play in the proper implementation of the Convention and of the upcoming Mediterranean Accession Agenda.

26. In terms of next steps, as part of its workplan, the EU-funded Water & Environment Support project has launched a Peers/Experts process and Regional Training dedicated to “Overall environmental governance - Promotion of the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean” (Activity no. HRE-4-REG / HRE-4-P2P). The activity will provide technical assistance and networking opportunities and will strengthen the capacities of the WES Partner Countries to be able to effectively prepare and put in motion the mechanisms needed to accede to the Aarhus Convention. A first on-line meeting planned for early 2023 (most likely in February) will discuss the FDD and identify the priorities and implications of the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the Mediterranean region and countries. The Contracting Party representatives of the MCSD are expected to receive an invitation to be among the Peers by the WES Focal Point of their country. A regional in-person training will follow later in 2023.

Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and its Action Plan Towards 2030

27. During this reporting period, the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (MCESD) that is facilitated by MIO-ECSDE/MEdIES and the UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean of the University of Athens, intensified the efforts to finalize the process of revising the Action Plan of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (see UNEP/MED WG.542/Inf.5).

28. The revision process aimed to update, adjust and expand the Action Plan of the MSES to the horizon of 2030 to better serve the achievement of the SDGs in each Contracting Party and for the region as a whole. The revision of the Action Plan was initiated in early 2021 and included targeted

communication and exchange with competent stakeholders and a series of actions to collect and compile the necessary evidence and feedback.

29. The revision of the Action Plan takes into consideration and reflects the key provisions and commitments included in relevant Conventions, Strategies, Declarations and Communications and their updates (mentioned in the Background section and Annex I of the Action Plan) and, therefore, its implementation contributes to all the ESD related priorities and commitments of the countries of the Mediterranean region to the UN and other relevant international organizations and fora.

30. During June – September 2022 the draft versions of the revised Action Plan towards 2030 were shared with all Contracting Parties (Ministries of Education) and the IGOs participating in the MCESD. Comments and feedback were meticulously reflected. The finalized text was presented, agreed and adopted during the High-Level Event of Education and Environment Ministers on the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and its Action Plan towards 2030 (6 October 2022) integrated within the 9th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Nicosia, Cyprus (5-7 October 2022), bringing together Ministers and High-level officials, academia as well as representatives of IGOs and NGOs to share, reflect and harvest insights regarding their activities, in line with the implementation of the MSED and its Action Plan, and also to discuss next steps.

31. The Event approved a Statement (see UNEP/MED WG.542/Inf.5) referring to what was agreed, the adoption of the Action Plan towards 2030, and the Mediterranean Committee on ESD that will be guided by a new Bureau consisting of the Ministries of Education of Cyprus (chair), Greece, Lebanon Morocco and Palestine and UNEP/MAP, UNESCO, UNECE, UfM and LAS.

32. Issues and topics of particular importance raised were: Competences development and training of trainers; Transforming Learning Institutions through Whole Institute Approaches; Youth enhancement and engagement; Digital skills, Green skills, Inclusiveness; ESD and resilience, crisis management; Reforming curricula towards SDGs and the EU Green Deal (engaging also non-state actors); Enhanced coordination and collaboration on ESD within the institutions/organisations/ministries and among them (at national and international level).

C. MED 2050 Foresight Study

33. MED 2050 being a participatory exercise, Plan Bleu/RAC has pursued the coordination and collaboration with experts and Contracting Party representatives as below:

- Meeting once a year, the Advisory Committee was last convened on 29 November 2021 through videoconference. In addition to the membership of experts from the Scientific Committee, Contracting Parties were invited to take part in this committee, which works on the basis of MED 2050 preliminary results. Counting 27 members, the Advisory Committee also includes representatives of funding agencies and international organizations.
- The Foresight Group has been further consolidated to bring together 39 experts. Supported by 21 additional external experts during several workshops, the Foresight Group concentrated its work on the production of 35 thematic factsheets.
- MED 2050 Network (+300 subscriptions): MCSD Members remain invited to identify interested experts to contribute to the MED 2050 network, by getting involved via the MED 2050 platform, and through participation in surveys or workshops.

34. During the period under reporting, MED 2050 finalized the implementation of “Module 1: Building up the foresight baseline – past and future trends, weak signals and disruptions” and of “Module 2: Contrasting visions”, and made major progresses on “Module 3: Elaborating scenarii”, as presented below:

- Reports for Module 1 and Module 2 are under finalization and translation, and will be available by November 2022. Specific activities recently implemented include: interviews of around 50 key personalities from all Mediterranean countries; a webinar for the youth involving 44 young participants, organized on the 2nd March 2022; an on-line survey through the Med2050 website; and a presentation during Forum mondial de la Mer (Bizerte, Tunisia, 23 September 2022).
- Regarding module 3, in-presence workshops of the multi-stakeholder Med2050 Foresight Group were organized in Montpellier (29 May - 1 June 2022) and in Marseille (12 July 2022). A list of

6 scenarii for the Mediterranean by 2050 were agreed upon. A first version of these scenarii will be finalized in November 2022.

35. Participatory workshops and presentations will take place to receive feedback from a variety of stakeholders. Partnerships are established for dedicated activities or presentations expected to take place during the *Mediterranee du Futur* event, along with a workshop with the Mediterranean Youth Council (Marseille, France, 5-6 December 2022); and in Alexandria, hosted by *Fondation Anna Lindh* with contribution from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs / DIMED, and in Casablanca, hosted by *Institut Royal des Etudes Stratégiques* (events planned for 1st quarter of 2023).

36. From February to March 2023, the final messages from the study will be prepared in view of the first presentations during the meeting of the Plan Bleu Focal Points, and the meeting of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development.

37. The local project on anticipating the adaptation of the coast to climate change through participatory foresight (“CASadapt”) is developing in the South of France and will continue until 2024, with the support from the *Fondation de France*. In this framework, a first local foresight workshop took place on 25 October 2022.

Issues for consideration by the MCSD Steering Committee:

38. In 2023, Plan Bleu/RAC would like to embark on an exchange with MCSD Members on how MED 2050 results can best feed into the MSSD Review process in particular, and in the Mediterranean Sustainable Development agenda in general.

D. Updated Draft Rationale for the MSSD Review Process

Background: MSSD implementation and mid-term evaluation

39. Adopted by COP 19 (Athens, Greece, February 2016) with Decision IG.22/2, the MSSD 2016-2025 provides an integrative policy framework for all stakeholders and partners to translate the global 2030 Agenda and SDGs at the regional, sub-regional, national and local levels in the Mediterranean. Being supported by UNEP/MAP under the guidance of the MCSD and of its Steering Committee, the implementation of the MSSD is a collective process, based on synergetic efforts of all stakeholders.

40. Based on an inclusive consultation process with MCSD Members and MAP Partners, and as mandated by Decision IG.24/03, adopted by COP 21, (Naples, Italy, December 2019), the MSSD mid-term evaluation, that was completed in 2020-2021, reminded that the MSSD is the unique regional sustainability strategy, providing an integrative roadmap to improve the state of the region by 2025 – five years ahead of the 2030 Agenda deadline. As a driver to reach the SDGs in the Mediterranean, the MSSD contributes to the regional sustainability agenda, influencing practices on the field.

41. The MSSD mid-term evaluation highlighted the role of the MCSD in supporting and promoting the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD, noting that the Commission contributes to experience sharing and peer learning among Contracting Parties, MCSD Members and MAP Partners. The active role of partners and stakeholders is significant in implementing the Strategy, including through MSSD Flagship Initiatives, which corresponds to concrete achievements, increases the visibility of the MSSD, and supports the advancement of the SDGs in the Mediterranean.

42. Other key achievements linked with the work of the MCSD were pointed out, such as the publication of regional assessment reports (e.g. 2020 State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED), MedECC MAR1 on climate and environmental change); the continuous improvement of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, which provides an indicator-based picture of the state of sustainability in the Mediterranean countries and region; and peer review mechanisms (i.e., two editions of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism / SIMPEER).

43. However, there are also considerable gaps in the MSSD implementation. The path of implementation of the MSSD is not fast enough to match with the 2025 deadline; the MSSD requires much more visibility, awareness, and engagement from non-UNEP/MAP stakeholders; the level of financial investment into the MSSD activities is not sufficient enough to reach its objectives; and the MSSD monitoring mechanisms should be strengthened in view of providing a timely and comprehensive picture of the state of sustainability in the Mediterranean region.

44. According to SoED (2020) and data of the SDSN Sustainable Development Report (2019)⁴, despite notable and measurable progress, Mediterranean countries are not on track to achieve and fully implement SDGs and MSSD Objectives, including in terms of Good Environmental Status (GES) of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast. Nine out of the 21 Mediterranean countries had not yet achieved any of the SDG targets in 2019. Eleven SDGs remained unachieved in all Mediterranean countries, among which figure SDG 13 “Climate action” (corresponding to the MSSD Objective 4), SDG 14 “Life below water” (MSSD Objective 1) and SDG 15 “Life on land” (MSSD Objective 2). Concerning SDG 2 on “Zero hunger” (MSSD Objective 2), SDG 5 “Gender equality”, 11 “Sustainable cities and communities” (MSSD Objective 3) and 14 “Life below water”. Major changes in production and consumption patterns (SDG 12 and MSSD Objective 5) are urgently needed, to progress decisively towards inclusive sustainable development, with focus on climate change concerns, biodiversity protection and ecosystem restoration, pollution prevention, and circular economy. Transition towards blue/green economy is a key challenge in the region that requires funding of environmentally impactful activities to be reoriented towards sustainable activities.

45. Building on IDDRI’s reflections about the 2030 Agenda, the MSSD could also be considered as a complex policy object that Mediterranean countries have difficulty grasping for their own national policies, but it still has a very strong policy legitimacy for many countries.⁵

Updated draft rationale for the MSSD Review Process

46. Under its Strategic Direction 7.2, the MSSD plans that the Strategy will be reviewed after ten years of implementation, taking into consideration global developments, towards a new Strategy to be defined by 2025: see MSSD Action 7.2.5 *Review the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (2023-2025), issuing a new Strategy for the period 2026-2035*.

47. As the initial MSSD (2005-2015), of which the deadline matched with the global Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015), the MSSD 2016-2025 has also a ten-year timeline. Having started the same year as the SDGs (2016), the Strategy is expected to come to its end in 2025, namely at the end of the next biennium (2024-2025) and five years prior to the deadline of the 2030 Agenda.

48. At their 23rd Meeting, the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee brainstormed on the MSSD Review process, considering the regional (2025) and global (2030) milestones, in view of possibly aligning the regional process with the global one. The MCSD Steering Committee agreed on the uniqueness of the current MSSD 2016-2025, which has been developed in parallel and benefited of the preparation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, noting that important MAP assessment products can be mobilized in the context of the forthcoming MSSD Review process.

49. Plan Bleu/RAC pointed out that the end of the MED 2050 foresight exercise, planned to be finalized in 2023, is in time to inform the work that could take place in 2024-2025 to prepare the post-2025 MSSD. Since MED 2050 is expected to identify different scenarios of the future of the region and the possible transition pathways to reach the desired scenario, MED 2050 outcomes will be relevant for any strategic long-term reflection on the sustainability of the Mediterranean. In addition, the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, supported by the regional observatory on the environment and development, is one of the relevant tools feeding strategic and assessment studies, supporting the preparation of the regional State of the Environment and Development, which forms a basis to conduct strategic foresight study (e.g. MED 2050), which, in turn, can usefully feed into the elaboration of strategic work, such as a post-2025 MSSD, which will require monitoring and follow-up on its implementation and impact. The year 2023 should be also noted as an important milestone for the SDGs: at the SDGs Summit, to be held in September 2023, UN Member States will be mobilized to take stock of the progress made midway through the 2030 Agenda.⁶

⁴ Sachs et al. (2019), Sustainable Development Report 2019, New York: Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).

⁵ IDDRI Blog Post, 8 September 2022, “Undo the status quo” to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/blog-post/undo-status-quo-achieve-sustainable-development-goals>

⁶ Ibidem.

50. Two possible approaches were examined by Members of the MCSD Steering Committee at their 23rd Meeting, namely:

- The first approach would consist of postponing the deadline of the MSSD until 2030 to match with the 2030 Agenda, with the new MSSD starting then. In this respect, a Member of the MCSD Steering Committee mentioned that, although the Mediterranean was the first region to develop a regional strategy on sustainable development, the national strategies are considering in priority their links with the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, with 2030 or 2035 as deadline. That first approach could give more chance to the Mediterranean countries and stakeholders to achieve the MSSD: extending the timeline of the MSSD would give an opportunity to achieve the targets which have not yet been met and to undertake a more robust evaluation. It would allow to have more time and resources for undertaking the MSSD evaluation, noting that implementing in parallel the MSSD evaluation and the MSSD Review process, may be time-sensitive and challenging; the results of the evaluation are needed to then carry out properly the review process.
- Under the second approach, considering that the Mediterranean region and its MCSD should remain a proactive driving and pioneering force, and that the MSSD should provide overall directions for long term planning, a second approach/option would consist of launching the MSSD evaluation and review as soon as possible for not losing the momentum. With that approach, and with the guidance of the MCSD and its Steering Committee, the Secretariat could undertake a ‘light evaluation’ of the MSSD, focusing on a few priorities instead of being comprehensive, and mobilizing the SoED and MED 2050’s knowledge, awhile also consider emerging issues such as risks for food and energy security with the consequences of the recent conflict, as well as Gender equality, since SDG 5 is not stated as such in the Objectives of the MSSD 2016-2025 – although several MSSD Strategic Directions are targeting specifically women (Strategic directions 2.4 and 5.1).

51. A possible compromise between the two above-mentioned and distinct approaches/options that can be considered, would be to undertake the MSSD final evaluation during the next biennium 2024-2025, which should also be the last biennium of implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025, mobilizing important MAP assessment products and collective intelligence through exercises of stakeholder consultation, and then to prepare the MSSD post-2025 during the biennium 2026-2027, towards a MSSD starting in 2028 for a period of 10 to 15 years: i.e., new MSSD 2028-2037 (10 years) or MSSD 2028-2042 (15 years), considering also global developments. In such a scenario, the MSSD final evaluation undertaken in 2024-2025 could also inform and support the independent indicator-based evaluation of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy planned for 2026-2027 and the preparation of the next SoED (2027). The new/next MSSD would be then drafted on the basis of a wider stakeholder consultation in 2026-2027, in parallel to the preparation of the new MTS 2028-2033.

52. Whichever scenario for the MSSD Review process is envisaged, it remains relevant to explore the following opportunities raised by the MSSD mid-term evaluation, depending *inter alia* on funding:

- Political commitment and leadership: Mirroring the global High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Commission, as well as Regional Forums on Sustainable Development organized on a yearly basis by the UN Regional Economic Commissions, and taking into account the linkages between SIMPEER and the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) presented at the HLPF, there may be an opportunity to organize Mediterranean Forums on Sustainable Development, increasing political visibility and stakeholder empowerment.
- Governance and coordination mechanisms: Empowering the MCSD Members representing the Contracting Parties to interact with relevant ministries, in view of a cross-ministerial political dialogue and engagement to improve the coordination mechanisms on sustainability affairs at the national scale, could be supported by revisiting peer review mechanisms (e.g. SIMPEER). Encouraging synergies and strengthening inter-connections with other international and regional commitments and platforms for sustainable development would also give a new impetus to the MCSD.
- Further involvement of the private sector: Engaging the UNEP/MAP system and *in primis* the MCSD with the private sector would allow regional business actors to become more aware of the MSSD and involved in its implementation. Communication campaigns could target the private sector, showing opportunities and benefits of the MSSD for socio-economic actors. Implementation of Decision IG.25/18 “Set of Regional Measures to Support the Development of Green and Circular

Businesses and to Strengthen the Demand for more Sustainable Products” could serve this purpose and the transition towards circular economy.

- **Finance mechanisms:** Defining a roadmap for financing the MSSD implementation, including public and private financial mechanisms and potential investments sources, is another avenue to be explored for making the MSSD better funded.
- **Communication mechanisms:** Designing a specific MSSD label, with a logo, could reward the most relevant sustainability initiatives and promote the efforts of regional and national implementers (issue of recognition). Through this ad-hoc labelling process, the successful MSSD Flagship Initiatives could be promoted as best practices, scaled-up through adequate funding, and replicated. In addition, a dedicated on-line platform, with updated information, would contribute to share valuable learnings at regional and national level.
- **Monitoring mechanisms:** Reporting all initiatives that contribute to the MSSD implementation, at all levels, through a dedicated on-line platform, would allow a continuous and open monitoring process, engaging with relevant stakeholders.

Draft roadmap for the MSSD final evaluation (2024-2025)

- The MSSD final evaluation will be designed through existing methodologies (including UNEP ones) to inform on (i) the state of the sustainability in the Mediterranean, based on MAP assessment studies and data available in international/UN databases (desktop analysis) and (ii) achievements and gaps regarding the strategy’s implementation. The effectiveness of the MSSD should be also assessed.
- The MSSD final evaluation should be based on quantitative and qualitative criteria, considering the MSSD indicators and target and taking advantage of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and MAP assessment studies (SoED, MED 2050), capitalizing on the implementation of MSSD Flagship Initiatives, and collecting inputs from MCSD Members, MAP Partners, MAP Components, and other stakeholders and partners.
- The MSSD final evaluation should inform the MSSD Review process, e.g., identification of priority issues and emerging challenges (Covid-19 pandemic, energy crisis, food security, etc.).
- The MCSD, through its Steering Committee, should have a leading role for the participatory component of the MSSD final evaluation. The “self-assessment” component of the MSSD final evaluation should be based on UNEP/MAP bodies’ and partners’ consultations, through questionnaires, interviews and workshops, mobilizing relevant communication channels within the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system.
- The MSSD final evaluation may focus in priority on flagship initiatives’, strategic directions’ and regional actions’ implementation, as well as on the level of achievements of the MSSD targets through the dedicated indicators. The national dimension should be mainly based on best available practices and success stories, as a source of inspiration for other countries – keeping in mind the role of the MCSD in terms of experience sharing and peer learning.
- The results of the MSSD final evaluation will be submitted to COP 24 at the end of 2025, with a proposed roadmap for the MSSD Review process in 2026-2027:

Phase I (February-September 2024): Prepare and support the launch of the MSSD final evaluation

- Develop the organizational set-up and prepare a detailed work plan.
- Develop a relevant methodology (based on existing approaches) and design a relevant consultation process.
- Identify relevant sources of information and a list of stakeholders to be consulted.
- Collect evidence and materials on SDGs and MSSD implementation in the Mediterranean (success stories, good practices, and challenges) (i) within the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system, including best practices/experiences and obstacles/gaps, at regional and national levels, and (ii) beyond (literature review).
- Undertake a gap analysis of the MSSD/SDGs implementation in the Mediterranean.

- Review the collected evidence and materials and prepare a consultation document that may consist of the first annotated table of contents of the MSSD evaluation report, taking also into account the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard/MSSD indicators and targets.

Phase II (October 2024 – February 2025): Conduct the MSSD final evaluation under the guidance of the MCSD Steering Committee

- Support the launch and manage the consultation process (e.g. questionnaires, interviews, webinars) based on the consultation document, and review comments and inputs received from that process, addressing MSSD regional actions and flagship initiatives, as well as national case studies/success stories.
- Prepare the final report and its summary for decision-makers, including recommendations towards the MSSD Review process.

Phase III (March-December 2025): Finalize the MSSD evaluation towards submission for approval

- Review of the draft reports by relevant MAP bodies (MCSD Steering Committee, Plan Bleu Focal Points) towards discussion at the 21st Meeting of the MCSD (June/July 2025).
- Review final reports of the MSSD final evaluation and its summary for decision-makers (synthesis report) for submission to the 2025 MAP Focal Points meeting and COP 24, through a relevant draft decision on the MSSD Review process (July-December 2025).

Draft Roadmap for the MSSD Review process (2026-2027) – if this option is the preferred one

Preparation (January-April 2026):

- Prepare the methodology (work plan) and launch the MSSD Review process.
- Set up stakeholder groups and a virtual online platform to facilitate collaboration.
- Set up thematic expert groups to assist with the drafting of the MSSD post-2025.
- Set up an advisory group to support the drafting of the MSSD post-2025. This group should be geographically and thematically balanced and chosen on the basis of criteria agreed with MCSD Steering Committee. The MCSD Steering Committee, other MCSD Members, MAP Components and MAP Partners will take part in this group, which should be limited to 20 members to keep it manageable and effective.

Stakeholder consultation (May-December 2026):

- Based on a Stakeholder Consultation Document, launch a wide participatory process through the online platform, with MCSD Members and other key regional stakeholders, about the challenges to be addressed by the MSSD post-2025 and for its alignment with relevant global and regional processes, in particular the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.
- Based on the work of the thematic expert groups and advisory group, use the results of the stakeholder consultation to prepare a draft structure for the MSSD post-2025, to be considered and approved by the MCSD Steering Committee meeting in December 2026/January 2027, and thereafter start the drafting of the revised MSSD.

Finalization, review and submission for approval (January-December 2027)

- Finalization of the first draft of the MSSD post-2025 and circulation to MCSD Members and MAP Partners (at least six weeks prior the MCSD Meeting).
- The MCSD Meeting to comment on and endorse the first draft of the revised MSSD.
- Draft MSSD post-2025 submitted to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points for initial comments.
- Document revised to integrate MAP Focal Point's comments.
- MSSD post-2025 submitted to COP 25 for adoption.

Issues for consideration by the MCSD Steering Committee:

53. The Members of the MCSD Steering Committee are invited to consider in their 24th meeting the updated draft rationale for the MSSD Review process, including the draft roadmap for the MSSD final evaluation and the draft roadmap for the MSSD review process, in view of defining a suitable approach that will be submitted and discussed at the 20th Meeting of the MCSD in June 2023.

E. Preparation of the 20th Meeting of the MCSD

54. In line with the mandate of the MCSD (Decision IG.22/17 adopted at COP 19 in 2016), the Secretariat is submitting the following topics to the consideration of the MCSD Steering Committee Members for facilitating their discussion on the preparation of the 20th Meeting of the MCSD and the definition of possible agenda items:

- Discussing the Analytical Report of the UNEP/MAP Coordinator. This report should include inputs from the Members of the MCSD and from MAP Components;
- Producing opinions on the overall draft UNEP/MAP Programme of Work for 2024-2025, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations;
- Addressing a substantive theme through the organization of a roundtable on a specific theme. A number of alternative options are presented below for the Steering Committee's consideration:
 - a) *Sustainable and Inclusive Blue Economy*, as a follow-up of the meaningful discussion held at the 23rd Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee on interregional and regional/global synergies and cooperation, considering the outcome of the UN Ocean Conference held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 27 June – 1 July 2022. That session would allow MCSD Members to become more familiar with the work of UNEP on SDG 14, including *inter alia* key outcomes of the fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) and the UNEP Sustainable Blue Economy Initiative. A possible follow-up could consist of providing support to interested countries to develop their national strategy or roadmap on the sustainable blue economy. MCSD Members may be interested to contribute to the roundtable, which could also mobilize the EU4Ocean Coalition for Ocean Literacy, the OECD Ocean Economy Group, and/or the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMS).
 - b) *Tourism and Circularity for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean*, building on the outcome of the side event organized by UNEP/MAP at the 9th Efe Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, Cyprus, 5-7 October 2022). The side event aimed at showcasing the environmental and socio-economic footprint of the tourism sector in the Mediterranean region, which is the most visited worldwide, and the work done by the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system, its Plan Bleu/RAC and partners in the context of the Interreg Med Sustainable Tourism Community, as well as global and regional initiatives such as the One Planet Network – Sustainable Tourism Programme, Blue Tourism for Marine Regions, and the Mediterranean Ecotourism Consortium. The side event also promoted good practices at national level (e.g. draft National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in Greece) and local level, e.g. implementation by the private sector of a local strategy on circular economy in the Balearic Islands, Spain, as a source of inspiration for other destinations towards a greener, sustainable tourism.
 - c) *Mainstreaming gender equality in MAP operation and activities*: Building on the high-level women leadership dialogue organized by Türkiye in the margins of the COP 22 Ministerial Session, UNEP/MAP committed to renew that experience in the future, and the MCSD Meeting represents an opportunity to materialize those efforts. The Antalya Ministerial Declaration clearly states, for the first time, that the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are committed to support gender mainstreaming and to consider women as agents of change. Gender mainstreaming and links with SDG 5 are also integrated into the MAP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2022-2027 adopted by COP 22, including also a specific indicator and target under the MTS Programme 7. Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls represent a major goal for the United Nations and several Mediterranean organizations. That roundtable could be fed by the work done by UNEP/MAP in the context of the EU-funded IMA-MPA project, the GEF-Med Programme, and the updated Gender Action Plan for UNEP/MAP. It could be also supported by GWP-Med (MCSD Member), following the regional event they have organized on women leadership in water diplomacy, and by relevant UN agencies to facilitate gender mainstreaming within the MCSD, i.e. UN Women, UNEP Gender Unit, UNDP Arab States Regional Hub – Gender Unit, etc. Another relevant initiative to be mobilized is the second edition of the WeMed – Green Entrepreneurship Award, which is organized in co-operation with the ENI CBC MED STAND Up! Project, giving visibility to business models that promote sustainable production and consumption patterns in the textile and

clothing sector, led by women and/or youth. It should be noted that the clear identification of SDG 5 “Gender equality” in the MSSD post-2025 would be an added value for that new strategy and for its further alignment with the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. A discussion could also be initiated on the integration of additional indicators related to gender in the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, including sex-disaggregated approach for existing indicators.

d) *Follow-up of the CBD and UNFCCC COP*, with high-level keynote speakers, building on the participation of MAP in the two COPs and the outcomes of the side events organized by MAP. The UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system will participate in the CDB COP 15 (Montreal, Canada, 7-19 December 2022). A joint Mediterranean Stand will exhibit the achievements of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and other regional partners involved in biodiversity conservation actions (confirmed partners: ACCOBAMS, CEPF, MedPAN, the MBPC Community led by ETC-UMA, Prince Albert II Foundation, the “*Together for the Med*” partnership led by BlueSeeds, and the MedFund). Furthermore, UNEP/MAP will take part in the Mediterranean Pavilion located in the Blue Zone at UNFCCC COP 27 (6-18 November 2022, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt). The Mediterranean Pavilion is the first of its kind to be set up at a UN Climate Change Conference. It is an initiative led by UfMS together with UNEP/MAP and the PRIMA Foundation, along with a coalition of institutions dealing with climate action in the region (further information on the MedPavilion is presented in an earlier section of this report). A discussion could be held in the MCSD meeting on the issues of climate change and of biodiversity and ecosystems focusing at the follow-up to the outcomes of these important COPs and the expected contribution of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system in their implementation.

- Launching a stakeholder consultation and a science-policy-society dialogue on the MedECC draft thematic reports, noting that the 23rd Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee invited MedECC and the Secretariat to organize a discussion on the outcome of MedECC’s work in 2022-2023 during the 20th Meeting of the MCSD.
- Implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs and producing opinions and recommendations for integration and coordination of the work of the MCSD with other existing international and regional sustainable development and environment programmes, policy frameworks and initiatives, as per the mandate of the MCSD. For this specific topic, several complementary options may be envisaged:
 - a) Mobilizing international and regional organizations and programmes towards invitation of potential keynote speakers: UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and/or relevant bodies in charge of the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration and/or UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development;
 - b) Building on previous collaboration with the three UN Regional Economic Commissions sharing the Mediterranean basin (UNECA, UNECE, UNESCWA) and strengthening the regional dimension through a meaningful dialogue. UNEP Regional Offices for Africa, Europe and Western Asia may be also considered;
 - c) Establishing a dialogue between the MCSD and Mediterranean Youth Organizations; Youth SDSN could be mobilized in that direction through SDSN Med – University of Sienna, Italy (MAP Partner).⁷ The experiences of the Youth Regional Forums organized by UNEP/MAP and host countries of COP 21 and COP 22 could be also valued and mobilized;

⁷ UNEP/MAP has supported the first edition of the SDSN Med Youth Solutions Report (2021), which is available at this link: <https://bit.ly/MYSR2021>. SDSN Med and Santa Chiara Lab launched the call for projects for the second edition of the Mediterranean Youth Solutions Report (2022), which aims at addressing students, young innovators, entrepreneurs, and researchers from the Mediterranean region. The objective is to identify, display, and celebrate transformative, youth-led solutions projects that are contributing or will contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, showcasing success stories from the youth as innovators and the skills they bring in terms of digitalization and new technologies. For this second edition, the focus is on innovation in the agri-food sector, which plays an essential role in the social and economic well-being of Mediterranean countries. More information are available at the following webpage: <https://bit.ly/3SYZ12O>, while the application form is available at the following link: <https://forms.gle/fsFafJymziGwUUAo9>.

d) Dedicating a special session to the sub-regional level, with emphasis on the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and the West Med Blue Economy Initiative.

- Focusing a specific agenda item on peer learning and experience sharing on national structures and processes for sustainable development, keeping in mind the mission of the MCSD to support Mediterranean countries and stakeholders in implementing sustainable development policies. Contracting Parties which presented in 2022 or will present in 2023 their Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF could be mobilized to report on their experience with the VNR process at the HLPF. In addition, at the 23rd Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee, it was suggested to relaunch the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER) approach by focusing on SDG 14, as a means to facilitate ownership of the MSSD by the Mediterranean countries. The meeting agreed to test this approach at the 20th Meeting of the MCSD; the Secretariat was invited to work in that direction with interested Contracting Parties on their respective national roadmap/strategy for implementing SDG14.
- Ensuring the follow-up of the MSSD implementation, including inputs (presentations) from MCSD Members, UNEP/MAP Components and other stakeholders, including MSSD Flagship Initiatives, and launching a consultation about the roadmaps and subsequent draft Decision to be submitted to the COP about the MSSD 2016-2025 final evaluation and the MSSD Review process.
- Organizing an interactive session (consultation) on the MED 2050 foresight study prepared by Plan Bleu/RAC. MCSD Members will be invited to discuss the preliminary outputs of MED 2050 towards possible recommendations to COP 23.

F. Cooperation and Partners

Cooperation among Regional Seas in the context of the UN Decade for Ecosystems Restoration

55. Developed in the context of the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), which is led by UNEP and FAO, and coordinated by UNEP Regional Office of Europe in cooperation with GRID-Arendal, the “5 Seas Cooperation for Ecosystem Restoration” project is a new initiative aimed at catalyzing the effective restoration and regeneration of the marine environment in five sea basins: Baltic Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Mediterranean Sea, and North-East Atlantic basin. The project partners include the Black Sea Commission, the HELCOM Commission, the OSPAR Commission, the Tehran Convention Secretariat, and the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention Secretariat, including SPA/RAC, Plan Bleu/RAC, and PAP/RAC. The partnership is complemented by the CBD Secretariat, providing a global multilateral perspective.

56. These five sea basins represent a set of highly productive and biodiverse coastal and marine regions, each with its own unique properties. They provide a wide range of ecosystem services as well as valuable climate change adaptation and mitigation capacity. They are also of huge importance for livelihoods in coastal communities and beyond. Each of the five basins is under threat from an overlapping range of pressures, including overfishing, hydrocarbon exploitation, pollution, mass tourism, shipping, and coastal urbanization. These pressures have caused significant ecosystem degradation in each of the five sea basins. Efforts are being made to better protect the ecosystems within each of the five sea basins, including through multilateral agreements (e.g., Regional Sea Conventions and Actions Plans) that support regional cooperation in a range of measures such as the establishment of marine protected areas. The 5 Seas project will build on these existing efforts, acting as a catalyst for progress.

57. The project will combine work at the local scale through a series of specific “case studies”, with trans-basin scale work on knowledge exchange and capacity building across all project partners. It will consist of three work packages (WPs) that will, respectively, support local on-the-ground restoration and regeneration initiatives (WP1); trans-basin knowledge exchange and capacity building on ecosystem restoration across the five sea basins (WP2); and dissemination of knowledge on restoration within and beyond the five sea basins (WP3). The project partners will work together to create a handbook on marine ecosystem restoration and regeneration that will draw from the project’s case studies and trans-regional knowledge exchange and capacity building programme. The handbook will aim at the global ocean community and at actors working within the five sea basins of the project.

58. The 5 Seas project will support the implementation of relevant international mechanisms, including the global CBD post-2020 30% spatial conservation target and, at the

regional/Mediterranean level, the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region. A virtual workshop on “The benefits of ecosystem restoration: and European perspective” was organized by UNEP-WCMC on 24 May 2022. The key messages and lessons learned from the session on oceans, coasts and wetlands, which was facilitated by UNEP ROE and UNEP/MAP, are summarized below: Support of governments and policymakers is important to upscale restoration initiatives; Advocacy is an important tool to showcase the benefits of restoration at the highest levels; Governance needs to be inclusive and local stakeholders involved; Monitoring is a meaningful tool for the success of any restoration effort; the private sector, green bonds, blue bonds, foundations and insurance companies are all potential sources of funding.

59. The draft project proposal is under finalization. The partners are preparing communication materials in view of launching consultation with government representatives. The Secretariat will inform the MAP Focal Points in due course in view of obtaining support from interested Contracting Parties and donors.

UNECE Ninth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, Nicosia, Cyprus, 5-7 October 2022

60. The Environment for Europe (EfE) process has been launched in 1991 to support efforts from UNECE Member States to advance environmental governance. Fourteen UNECE Member States are also Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, and it was the first time that the EfE Ministerial Conference was organized in a Mediterranean country⁸. This important regional event hosted more than 700 participants and about 38 side-events and thematic exhibitions. The two themes of the Conference were 1. Greening the economy in the pan-European region: working towards sustainable infrastructure, and; 2. Applying principles of circular economy to sustainable tourism. The Third High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries was organized as part of the Conference, with a strong involvement of MIO-ECSDE (MAP Partner) through the Mediterranean Strategy and Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development, an integral part of the MSSD.

61. The MAP Coordinator participated at the Conference, while a UNEP/MAP side event on “Tourism and Circularity for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean” was held on 5 October. It included a presentation by Plan Bleu/RAC on the recent state of play on tourism and sustainability in the Mediterranean (environmental and socio-economic assessment), with a focus on the cruise and recreational boating sector. Relevant regional and global initiatives to accelerate the transition towards circular/sustainable tourism were also introduced: the One Planet Network – Sustainable Tourism Programme (UNEP) and the Glasgow Declaration for Tourism Climate Action (UNWTO); the Blue Tourism initiative in three marine regions (IDDRI, eco union); the DestiMED Plus and Mediterranean Ecotourism Consortium (IMC CPRM). Regarding the national level, Greece presented the draft National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism. Finally, the side event reported on local good practices in the Balearic islands, Spain, on implementation of the local strategy on circular economy by the private sector, i.e. the Garden Hotels group.

62. The UNEP/MAP delegation also participated, as speaker, in the High-Level Event on the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD) and its Action Plan towards 2030, as well as side events organized by partners on marine litter; ocean literacy; public participation and the Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention.

Other activities under cooperation and partners

63. The UNEP/MAP – EEA Joint Work Plan (JWP) 2022-2030, concluded at the end of 2021, is aligned with the strategic outlook of both institutions, as outlined in the MTS 2022-2027 and the EEA-Eionet Strategy 2021-2030. The JWP was published, and its implementation has been launched with a first meeting between EEA and UNEP/MAP and its Regional Activity Centres held in September 2022, to identify priority areas of common interest, on which cooperation should be focused. A second online meeting dedicated to assessment work is planned to be held in November 2022.

⁸ Host country website: <https://nicosiaefe.gov.cy/>; UNECE webpage, including official documents: <https://unece.org/nicosia-conference>

64. An important part of the JWP is related to the generation of data and information, including indicators' development/calculation, capacity building activities, as well as the development of tools, methods and approaches to measure sustainability achievements and effectiveness of responses and to prepare a sustainability gap report, addressing achievement of SDGs and targets, as well as objectives of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system. This component aims at complementing the work on monitoring and assessment of the status of the marine and coastal environment, under the IMAP.

65. The new Cooperation Agreement between UNEP and the Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition (MiTE) signed in November 2021, to support the implementation of activities included in the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget 2022-2023, with a significant financial contribution of 2.8 million Euros is under implementation and all activities are ongoing. The Agreement funds provide essential support for the implementation of the MAP PoW 2022-2023 in the framework of MTS 2022-2027, focusing on two main cooperation objectives, i.e. (i) the strengthening of the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach and the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) as key tools in delivering the Good Environmental Status in synergy with the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) at regional level and (ii) strengthening of pollution prevention, reduction and control actions towards a pollution and litter free Mediterranean.

66. UNEP/MAP continues to participate in the implementation of the Action Plan entitled "The Mediterranean: a model sea by 2030 - PAMEx". As provided for in the governance structure of the Action Plan, France has seconded a Technical Expert who took office in September 2022 in the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit to support the coordination of the Action Plan implementation, ensuring synergies with the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system as well as with the work of other regional instruments and initiatives. The implementation of the Action Plan, which incorporates key objectives of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, is expected to support the implementation of the UNEP/MAP MTS 2022-2027 and other key MAP regulatory and strategic documents. A first meeting of the countries and regional organisations that have endorsed the PAMEX will be organised in Athens, Greece, on 24-25 January 2023, with the support of a contribution of 40,000 EUR from the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France to the Secretariat. In addition, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France allocated a voluntary contribution of 1,143,000 EUR to support a number of activities of the MAP PoW 2022-2023, in line with the axes of the PAMEX. UNEP/MAP is also involved in the discussions for the establishment of the PAMEX 2030 Local Invest Finance Facility (PLIFF), aiming to support investments and financing of actions, including from the private sector, under the PAMEX implementation. UNEP/MAP involvement will aim at ensuring that its development and operationalization will fully take into account and contribute to the obligations and priorities under the MAP-Barcelona Convention system. An initiative is also under consideration to set up a Local Investors Financing Facility to secure funding from the private sector for local Mediterranean projects relevant to this Action Plan. The Secretariat and Plan Bleu/RAC are following up on this initiative.

67. In line with the MoU between FAO-GFCM and UNEP/MAP, SPA/RAC continues to support effective actions for sustainable fisheries in the framework of the MedBycatch project, funded by the MAVA Foundation, and implemented through a partnership between ACCOBAMS, FAO-GFCM, UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC, IUCN-Med, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, MEDASSET and WWF, in collaboration with local partners. The project addressed the knowledge gaps regarding the incidental catches (bycatch) of vulnerable species during fishing operations in the Mediterranean, conduct trials of mitigation measures, and support the development of policies and the formulation of national/regional strategies to reduce bycatch and increase the sustainability of fisheries. Project implementation involves field observation programmes covering different fishing gears, together with trainings and awareness raising. Although activities are implemented in five Mediterranean countries (Croatia, Italy, Morocco, Tunisia, and Türkiye), the project aims at developing tools and building knowledge applicable to the entire Mediterranean and Black Sea basins.

68. In the context of the UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (Geneva, Switzerland, 6-7 April 2022), the Secretariat collaborated with the UNEP Europe Office and UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe to organize the SDG 14 peer learning round table on "Enhancing ocean literacy and the sustainable development of regional seas".

69. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator participated at the 16th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 9-10 March 2022. The ceremony for the signature of the MoU between UNEP and PAM took place during this event.

70. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator also participated in the ceremony for the signature of the MoU between UNEP and COMPSUD during the Plastic Busters MPAs Hybrid Capitalization Conference held in Athens, Greece, from 12-13 April 2022.

71. The strengthening of collaboration with UfMS continued beyond the MedPavilion of COP 27 of UNFCCC. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator had on 21 October 2022 a bilateral meeting with the Senior Deputy Secretary General of UfM for Energy and Climate Action, Mr. Grammenos Mastrojeni, and on 2 November 2022 with the new Deputy Secretary General of UfM for Water, Environment and Blue Economy, Mr. Almotaz Abadi, to discuss issues of common interest, including current activities on the implementation of the MoU, the possible update of the Areas of Cooperation of the MoU, major upcoming meetings and events of joint interest, as well as ways to strengthen cooperation.

G. Outreach, Information and Communication

72. UNEP/MAP took part in two important gatherings to advocate for swifter action on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as the shortest path to securing a resilient and sustainable future in the Mediterranean region:

- The 2022 UN Ocean Conference (27 June-1 July 2022): three side-events organized/co-organized by UNEP/MAP addressed important elements of the regional response to the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The highlights of the UNEP/MAP participation are captured in this special web page: <https://bit.ly/Med-UNOC22>.
- Plan Bleu/RAC has contributed with an expert essay on "Vision Setting: A Sustainable Coastal and Marine Tourism Sector in 2030 and 2050" to the "40 Expert Perspectives on the future of coastal and marine tourism" that gather and showcase a wide range of perspectives on the future of coastal and marine tourism based on emerging themes and issues selected by the 16 members of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy. These perspectives accompany the report on "Opportunities for Transforming Coastal and Marine Tourism: Towards Sustainability, Regeneration and Resilience". Both documents were presented at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, during the Launch of the Sustainable coastal and marine tourism knowledge platform and the UNOC Side Event on Building Sustainable and Resilience Ocean Tourism Economies and Coastal Cities.
- The UNECE Ninth Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, Cyprus, 5-7 October 2022): UNEP/MAP joined forces with several MAP Partners to promote sustainable tourism and advance ocean literacy. The highlights of the UNEP/MAP participation are captured in this special news article (dated 20 September 2022): <https://bit.ly/MAP-EfE>. More information on the side event on "Tourism and circularity for sustainable development in the Mediterranean" is available at: <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/news-and-events/events/tourism-and-circularity-sustainable-development-mediterranean-side-event>.

73. An ongoing collaboration with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) will deliver the Parliamentarian's Guide to protecting the Mediterranean Sea and coast during the biennium in progress. This will serve as a practical manual for parliamentarians around the Mediterranean, harnessing their role for a greater implementation of, and compliance with, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols through adequate national laws and by holding governmental actors to account.

74. As indicated under section B above, the Secretariat is implementing the draft Roadmap for the fourth edition of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, with the in-kind support of the International Initiative for Sustainable Built Environment (iiSBE-Italy) in the context of the ENI CBC MED Sustainable Mediterranean Cities. The Secretariat is ensuring that cooperation is strengthened with relevant partners in implementing the Award, is reviewing the process and its methodology in view of simplifying them, is launching the call for applicants in due time, and is further strengthening communication along the way to reach more interest from Mediterranean coastal cities. On 20 July 2022, the Secretariat organized an online consultation meeting, which gathered Members of the MCSD Steering Committee, networks of municipalities and local authorities, applicant cities' representatives, individual experts, and the MAP Components. During that meeting, the draft updated

methodology of the fourth edition of the Award, including the indicator assessment framework and the application form, was presented and discussed in-depth. Then, the application form, the indicator assessment framework and the guide for indicators calculation were completed and the call for applicant cities will be soon launched through a dedicated webpage, with an application available online for the first time.

75. The Coordinating Unit and SPA/RAC organized, in collaboration with the Pelagos Agreement Permanent Secretariat, the 2022 and the first-ever edition of the SPAMI Day. It started with a digital campaign launched on 15 April 2022 on the web and social media under the slogan “Together to protect the Mediterranean biodiversity”, followed by a special event celebrating the SPAMIs as a cooperation tool for biodiversity conservation in the Mediterranean (Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, 20 May 2022). The event was attended by SPAMI managers, key partners and representatives of the environmental authorities of the countries having SPAMIs. A high-level segment as well as the SPAMI Certificates’ award ceremony was honoured by the presence of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco. A press briefing attended by the UNEP/MAP Coordinator and the SPA/RAC Director took place on the sidelines of the event.

76. The Moroccan city of Tangier hosted the 2022 edition of the regional celebration of the Mediterranean Coast Day. Held on 28 September 2022, the main event in Tangier provided an opportunity to engage with decision-makers, planners, local authorities and civil society to join efforts and tackle the challenges pertaining to climate change in the coastal context. The General Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Transition and Sustainable Development of Morocco opened the event. Two panel sessions ensued: the first dedicated to the issues, challenges and solutions for the sustainable development at the Mediterranean level and the second one on the local level i.e. the particularities of the Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima region which is currently developing the regional coastal plan (Schéma régional du littoral) in the framework of the GEF MEDProgramme’s Child Projects 2.1. and SCCF. As highlighted by the panelists, the elaboration of the plan will enhance the sustainable development of the region and represents an important step in the Morocco’s implementation of the ICZM Protocol. Various awareness-raising activities were organized by the Moroccan Association for Sustainable Environment - on the Malabata beach of Tangier, in which approximately 200 schoolchildren of Tangier showed their knowledge and enthusiasm to keep the environment clean.

77. Several local Coast Day celebrations took place with the support and participation of PAP/RAC: in Croatia (at three different locations on the coast), in Slovenia (where the Coast Week has become a tradition for more than 10 years now), in Bosnia-Herzegovina (back-to-back with the Final CAMP BiH Conference), while online events were organised by HELMEPA in Greece and by the Syrian Virtual University (SUV).

78. The digital campaign organized by UNEP/MAP with support from the MAP communication taskforce secured visibility for the 2022 edition of Mediterranean Coast Day with several institutional partners and individuals sharing the material and messages prepared with the support of INFO/RAC, which provided support on graphic design and was instrumental in the delivery of an updated website dedicated to this regional observance: <https://bit.ly/Med-Coast-Day2022>. Evidence of engagement is provided by the use of the #MedCoastDay hashtag on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/hashtag/MedCoastDay>) and other platforms.

79. A joint effort at the MAP system level is on-going regarding gender mainstreaming and for potential better inclusion of gender aspects in the PoW 2024-2025. Gender focal points were identified by the RACs and together with the Coordinating Unit, a potential MAP Gender Strategy is under discussion, to support and coordinate efforts made at the MAP level to reach the objectives of SDG5.

80. The “Young Person’s Guide to the Mediterranean Action Plan and the Barcelona Convention”, produced by the Coordinating Unit’s communication team and released on 8 February 2021, has been translated into Italian by INFO/RAC to serve as an outreach product at the Festival of Mediterranean Citizens (2-5 June 2022, Catania, Italy). The publication will also be made available in Arabic during this biennium. MedWaves, the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP, recently designed and prepared a downloadable poster with a QR code to offer the Guide for download. The Guide offers a simplified introduction to the legal framework of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, covering a wide range of themes pertaining to the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment and

its sustainable development. This communication product and outreach tool is aimed at MAP Partners, ocean literacy practitioners, educators and young readers aged 11-17 in the Mediterranean region and beyond: <https://bit.ly/334k92q>.

81. The Coordinating Unit delivered a suite of communication products for the EU-funded projects being implemented by UNEP/MAP, including a video clip (<https://youtu.be/oTdQIID-8B0>) and a brochure titled "Bright spots in the Mediterranean" (<https://bit.ly/BrightSpotsMed>). The brochure is offered in the four official languages. Both products are accessible from the project pages on the UNEP/MAP website and have been disseminated widely with the support of the Regional Activity Centres. The EU-funded projects have also benefited from other forms of communication support, including web stories (example: <https://bit.ly/3PJZcMo>) and topical posts on social media. A similar effort is being undertaken in support of the MedProgramme's work programme on communication (e.g. <https://bit.ly/3D3JYPv>).

82. This year, the Mediterranean region celebrated a new official observance featuring Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs). The theme of the 2022 [SPAMI Day](#) celebration was "Cooperation and Collaboration", with the following slogan: *Together to protect the Mediterranean biodiversity*. The celebration started with an online campaign led by SPA/RAC in collaboration with the SPAMI managers and the support of the Coordinating Unit and INFO/RAC, and culminated with a special event held in Monaco on 20 May 2022 under the auspices and with the participation of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco. The Monaco "SPAMI Day special event", which SPA/RAC organized jointly with the Pelagos Agreement Permanent Secretariat and the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco, was attended by the managers of the 39 SPAMIs, representatives of national institutions and NGOs involved in SPAMIs' management and governance.

83. The [Mediterranean Symposia](#) on Marine Vegetation, Coralligenous, Dark Habitats and Non-Indigenous Species, was held from 19 to 23 September 2022 in Genoa, Italy, and provided an opportunity to share science, showcase best practices and promote cooperation for the conservation of the Mediterranean ecosystems. This event was organized by UNEP-MAP-SPA/RAC, in partnership with the Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA), the University of Genoa and its Department of Earth, the Environment and Life Sciences, and the association "Società Italiana di Biologia Marina" (SIBM). The Mediterranean Symposia was endorsed as an Ocean Decade Action by IOC-UNESCO.

84. In collaboration with its MAVA projects partners, SPA/RAC produced and contributed to the production of documentary films on the conservation efforts in various Mediterranean countries, including [Salt in the eyes](#) (produced by SPA/RAC - to be launched in November and soon available on WaterBear), [Sentinels of the Mediterranean](#) (Blue seeds), and [My name is blue](#) (MEDASSET).

85. Following the submission of the joint and coordinated proposal on the designation of the Med SOx ECA to the IMO in early February 2022, Plan Bleu/RAC launched a series of thematic videoconferences "Les Rendez-Vous du Plan Bleu"; the first edition focused on the Med SOx ECA, in coordination with the Coordinating Unit and REMPEC. The second edition took place on 7 June and focused on the recent publication of the Guidelines for Sustainable Cruising and Recreational Boating in the Mediterranean. During the third edition, on 27 October, experts and specialists from Plan Bleu/RAC, but also from its partners MedECC and the platform Océan Climat explained coastal risks linked to climate change in the Mediterranean basin.

86. Plan Bleu/RAC launched "Planet Med", the first podcast dedicated to save the Mediterranean, with five episodes with different specialist from Mediterranean, including from UNEP/MAP, Plan Bleu, WWF, Surfrider, IUCN, Paul Ricard Oceanographic Institute, MedECC and UfM. The podcasts aim to inform and raise awareness about the state and future of the Mediterranean.

87. The Resilience Information Platform for Adriatic Cities and Towns, prepared within the EU Interreg Croatia-Italy project AdriAdapt⁹, and in which PAP/RAC was strongly involved, was populated with a set of adaptation options ranging from societal, green (nature-based) and grey (engineering) options; adaptation guidelines and handbooks including the Integrated Adaptation

⁹ <https://adriadapt.eu>

Planning tool; good practices; awareness raising material; and many other useful information. The tools and information contained in the platform can be easily used by all Mediterranean countries.

88. MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP) turned the set of *Regional Measures to Support the Development of Green and Circular Businesses and to Strengthen the Demand for more Sustainable Products*, adopted at COP22 (Decision IG.25/18), into a [publication](#) (see Document UNEP/MED WG.523/Inf.1). Furthermore, a network of Business Support Organizations has been created and a call to action was launched to establish Measure F1 “the first Sustainable Finance MED Observatory”, gathering regional financial experts and impact investors around a platform for dialogue and promotion of common sustainable investment solutions. MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP) is also working on the creation of the Switchers Policy Hub, launched at the SwitchMed Connect 22 (Rimini, Italy, 9 November 22). MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP), CPMR and Plan Bleu, launched a publication on the Blue Economy (see Document UNEP/MED WG.523/Inf.5), aiming to foster the development of circular economy practices, thus contributing to Measure T2 “Creating an enabling framework for sustainable and inclusive businesses within sectors of the Blue Economy”. A conference to share the main findings took place in Barcelona, Spain, on 10-11 May 2022. Finally, regarding regional measure D1 “Strengthening access to sustainable products and services /sustainable consumption”, MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP) joined forces with ACR+ to develop the **Euro-Med Weeks for Waste Reduction (EWWR)**, a sister campaign of the well-established European Week for Waste Reduction, currently managed by ACR+. This first edition, launched on 9 November, during SwitchMed Connect 22, will be limited and used to test the idea, start spreading the message of the campaign and see the reaction/engagement of the targeted stakeholders. It will be divided into 2 main actions:

- **A communication campaign** based on the theme of the 2022 edition of the EWWR (19-27 November 2022). This year it will focus on the **textile industry** to highlight the strong impact it has on the planet and, mainly, to inspire actions that will bring more circularity into the textile sector. This is a sector particularly relevant for the Mediterranean Region. Communication material prepared by the EEWWR were adapted to the Mediterranean context and translated.
- **A Call to Action** that, this year, will target action developers from the southern Mediterranean countries (SwitchMed countries). At its first edition, the EMWWR addresses Action Developers legally established in the Southern Mediterranean that engage **youth** in the implementation of waste prevention and treatment actions in the field of textiles and that respond exclusively to specific categories (NGO/Civil Society Organization; Educational Establishment; Public Entity). A total of 5 vouchers of **2.900 euros** each will be awarded to 5 Action Developers. Furthermore, the selected action developers will be invited to present their activities during the EWWR2022 Awards Ceremony.

89. UNEP/MAP participated in the MARLICE 2022 Conference (Seville, Spain, 18-20 May 2022). Directors/coordinators of the Regional Seas surrounding Europe and the European Union participated to the open session “Connecting Seas” to discuss the way forward after the outcomes of UNEA-5.2, including the UNEA-5.2 Resolution “End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument” and the role of the Regional Seas in supporting the implementation of the envisaged actions framed and planned in the framework of that global treaty on plastics. Plan Bleu/RAC, as partner of the Interreg Med project “Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community”, in collaboration with MedWaves – MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP also participated in the organization of a roundtable during the MARLICE international Forum.

90. Plan Bleu/RAC, in the framework of the Interreg Med Sustainable Tourism Community, co-organised the II Med Sustainable Tourism Convention on 8-9 June in Barcelona, Spain. With more than 200 attendees online and 150 representatives in situ of the Tourism sector, academic world, European-funded projects in the field of tourism and coming from several Mediterranean countries, it was the opportunity to debate on the main challenges and the current situation of the tourism industry in the world and in the Mediterranean area. Plan Bleu/RAC published a Catalogue on Best Practices on Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean Region to showcase concrete examples and good practices of the Interreg Med Sustainable Tourism Community project which have been successfully incorporated into policies (at the local, regional or state level) in the Mediterranean with concrete results.

91. During the EU Green Week 2022 and in the framework of the Interreg Med Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community (MBPC) project, Plan Bleu/RAC in collaboration with ETC-UMA, co-organised the capitalisation event entitled: “A Green Deal for Mediterranean wetlands: building resilience through collaborative management”, on 3 June 2022, gathering international experts, EU decision makers and the regional biodiversity conservation community to take stock of the latest scientific and policy developments concerning Mediterranean wetlands, discussing ideas and presenting urgent actions to restore these crucial ecosystems. Plan Bleu/RAC also organised on 18 January 2022 a workshop on “Mediterranean Wetlands and MPAs Governance experiences from TUNE UP and the MBPC – capitalizing best practices and building a stronger network” to foster effective governance in Mediterranean wetlands and Marine Protected Areas.

92. Plan Bleu/RAC participated at RAMSAR COP14. During a side-event “Unpacking the potential of wetlands for addressing climate change and biodiversity loss” co-organised by IUCN and GEN (Wuhan, China, 8 November 2022), PLAN Bleu/RAC presented the WaterLANDS project funded by the European Horizon 2020 Green Deal programme. The project officially started on 1 December 2021, with a duration of five years. Coordinated by the University of Dublin (UCD), it brings together 32 other organisations, including Plan Bleu/RAC, from research, industry, public authorities and NGOs from 14 European countries to achieve a deeper understanding of the opportunities and challenges for wetlands restoration at a continental scale. WaterLANDS will support decision makers, local communities and restoration practitioners to intensify cooperation towards the large-scale restoration of wetlands in Europe through 7 objectives, from aligning governance, fostering community engagement, to tailoring financial solutions and resources for wetland restoration.

93. Plan Bleu/RAC led roundtables and workshops at the Forum des Mondes Méditerranéens, organized on the initiative of the President of the French Republic, in Marseille on 7-8 February 2022. As an extension of the commitments made at the *Sommet des deux rives* in 2019, the Forum brought together civil society actors from all over the Mediterranean around concrete solutions to meet common challenges. Plan Bleu/RAC co-organized with the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation a round table on the blue economy in the Mediterranean, which was also attended by MedWaves (the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP). Based on their first assessment report, the MedECC network of scientists organised a side-event on “Climate Change Solutions” to highlight new challenges posed by climatic and environmental changes in the Mediterranean. Plan Bleu/RAC also organised the event on “Future generations and sustainable tourism to safeguard the Mediterranean”.

94. In the framework of the Interreg Med Blue Growth Community Project, Plan Bleu/RAC co-organized with the Port of Sète a Capitalization event (Sète, France, 13 April 2022) to foster the sustainability of cruise and yachting sector in the Mediterranean region through concrete solutions. On this occasion, Plan bleu announced the official release of the “Guidelines for the sustainability of cruises and recreational boating in the Mediterranean” (English, French), carried out by Plan Bleu/RAC in the framework of the Interreg Med Blue Growth Community project in partnership with Interreg Biodiversity Protection Community and Sustainable Tourism Community. These guidelines provide targeted information on sustainability objectives and sustainable practices for the cruise and leisure boating sectors, and aim to support the main actors involved in promoting the long-term transition of both sectors towards sustainability.