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Mediterranean Action Plan**

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Third Steering Committee Meeting of the EU-funded EcAp MED III Project

Thessaloniki, Greece, 29 November 2022

Agenda Item 3: Revised Budget and Workplan

EcAp MED III Project Revised Budget and Workplan

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1. Introduction

The consequences of Covid-19 continue to impact the implementation of the project. Due to the late conclusion of legal agreements with some national authorities and the seasonal dimension of the monitoring activities on the ground, the Secretariat suggests the Steering Committee explores the possibility of a six-month no-cost extension. It would not modify the nature of the Project and it would give the national implementing partners sufficient time to carry out monitoring programmes in the field and to submit data to the IMAP Info System. Although the submission of some countries' data will be after the cut-off date for their inclusion in the QSR, the realisation of IMAP monitoring programmes in the beneficiary countries, the training they will receive and the data that they will submit are extremely valuable activities for progressing implementation of the IMAP in the southern Mediterranean countries for the longer term.

The implementation plan of EcAp MED III was updated to capture the progress of the Project since its second Steering Committee meeting, as described in the Progress Report (UNEP/MED WG.537/2). This document proposes revisions to the budget and timeline of the workplan. Section 2 proposes revisions to the budget. Section 3 summarises the activities of EcAp MED III expected to be implemented with a modified timeline. Section 4 subsequently presents a proposed updated workplan. The objective of this Report is to inform the Steering Committee and to support the oversight of the Project execution and the related strategic guidance of its third Steering Committee meeting.

2. Revised Budget

2.1 Status of legal agreements with countries

Table 1 provides an overview of the status of implementation of legal agreements with the Beneficiary Countries for the SSFAs managed by UNEP/MAP and those managed by SPA/RAC.

Table 1: Legal Agreement status per country

Beneficiary Country	SSFA managed by UNEP/MAP <i>Pollution and marine litter cluster</i>	SSFA managed by SPA/RAC <i>Biodiversity cluster</i>
Algeria	SSFA signed on 25/10/22 with the Agence Nationale des Déchets (AND).	Preliminary agreement reached not countersigned due to administrative and banking issues. Despite the continuous attempts, no response was received from Algerian biodiversity Focal Point.
Egypt	Agreement has been pending confirmation from the implementing agency EEAA since summer 2021. Numerous follow-ups and communication have taken place, most recently on 18/10/2022, but the agreement is not concluded yet.	The Arab Federation for Wildlife Protection (AFWP) was designated by the EEAA for the implementation of the project activities. The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was signed with AFWP July 2022
Israel	SSFA signed on 29/09/21 with IOLR. Ongoing implementation.	SSFA signed (by the Secretariat) on 10/05/22 with INPA. Ongoing implementation.
Lebanon	Signed SSFA shared on 27/10 with the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS-L) for counter signature.	SSFA signed 29/09/2022 with CNRS-L. Implementation initiated.
Libya	As it has not been possible to establish a legal agreement with the Ministry of Environment, a proposal was sent to the Focal Point and Minister at the beginning of October to engage a consultant to conduct the desk-based activities. TORs for a consultant have been drafted and will be published.	SSFA signed on 23/12/21 with the Ministry of environment and amended on 25/05/22. Implementation initiated.

Morocco	SSFA signed on 30/11/2021 with the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development. Ongoing implementation.	SSFA signed on 01/12/21 with the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development. Ongoing implementation.
Tunisia	Negotiation with INSTM is close to finalisation. SSFA was signed by UNEP/MAP Coordinator 28/09/22 and awaiting Tunisia's countersignature.	SSFA signed on 26/11/21 with the Coastal Protection and Planning Agency. Ongoing implementation as planned.

It has not been possible to secure a legal agreement with Libya. Instead, it is proposed that a call for a consultant will be published to undertake the desk-based aspects of the national IMAP implementation work, using budget from the "Staff & Personnel" class.

2.2 Overview of project budget implementation

The project budget implementation is detailed in table 2.

While the level of commitments and payments of the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) is progressively advancing, the Project Management budget is the object for a proposal for budget revision, as per next subsection.

Table 2: Project budget commitments and expenditures (without 7% PSC)

Coordinating Unit/MED POL				
	Budget	Commitments	Expenditures	Balance
Management Cost	\$ 560,749.00	\$ 15,425.00	\$ 87,513.00	\$ 457,811.00
Activities	\$ 437,484.00	\$ 9,480.00	\$ 38,856.00	\$ 389,148.00
Total	\$ 998,233.00	\$ 24,905.00	\$ 126,369.00	\$ 846,959.00

Regional Activity Centres (RACs)				
	Budget	Commitments	Expenditures	Balance Expenditures
SPA/RAC	\$ 369,526.00	\$ 168,059.88	\$ 50,474.00	\$ 319,052.00
PAP/RAC	\$ 211,682.00	\$ 156,771.00	\$ 156,771.00	\$ 54,911.00
PB /RAC	\$ 74,766.00	\$ 41,198.00	\$ 35,263.00	\$ 39,503.00
INFO/RAC	\$ 401,869.00	\$ 124,000.00	\$ -	\$ 401,869.00
Total	\$ 1,057,843.00	\$ 490,028.88	\$ 242,508.00	\$ 815,335.00

GRAND TOTAL	\$ 2,056,076.00	\$ 514,933.88	\$ 368,877.00	\$1,662,294.00
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2.3 Unspent budget and proposal for budget revision

There is unspent and uncommitted budget in the activities of Outcome 3 Project Management, which is a consequence of the delayed recruitment of the P3 Project Officer and the Admin & Finance Assistant. If the Steering Committee agrees to a six-month no-cost extension, a budget revision is proposed. Setting aside sufficient budget to support the contracts for the P3 Project Officer and an Admin & Finance Assistant from October 2022 with an extension until February 2024, the remaining unspent budgets are shown in Table 3. It is proposed to reallocate the unspent budgets in Table 3 to the Beneficiary Countries national Implementing Partners to conduct further monitoring in autumn 2023, followed by data collation and submission.

Table 3: Proposed transfer of Project Management unspent and uncommitted budget to Output 1.1

Outcome and activities	Budget available (\$) (-7% PSC)
3.1 Project Management: P3 project officer	50,000
3.1 Project Management: G5 admin/finance	20,000
3.3 Project Management: Steering Committees	9,000
3.4 Office supplies	3,000
3.5 Equipment	5,000
3.9 Miscellaneous	3,000
Transfer to: Output 1.1 national IMAP implementation (Transfers & Grants class)	Total: US \$90,000

Table 4: Original and proposed budget revision at project Outcome level

Activities	Total Budget	Revised Budget
Outcome 1: Effective 'On the ground' national IMAP implementation with beneficiary countries providing quality assured data for the development of a quality-assured, region-	\$ 1,109,999	\$ 1,199,999
Outcome 2: Regional scale progress and consensus for the monitoring and assessment as well as the reporting processes at national, sub-regional and regional levels	\$ 490,000	\$ 490,000
Overall project management	\$ 600,001	\$ 510,001
Grand Total, Inclusive of 7% PSC	\$ 2,200,000	\$ 2,200,000
7% PSC	\$ 143,925	143,925
Grand Total, without 7% PSC	\$ 2,056,075	\$ 2,056,075

2.4 Reallocating budget classes only

For the Outputs and Activities shown in Table 4, it is proposed that only the classes are changed and not the budget allocations. For activities 2.1.2, 2.2.4, reallocation of the budget to Contractual services enables securing external contractors e.g., to ACCOBAMs for noise assessment, and for the QSR publication, translation and website. For activities 3.6 and 3.7, reallocate to Staff & Personnel and Contractual Services. Finally, for activity 3.8, the Terminal Project constitutes the end-of-project evaluation, for which an individual contractor can be engaged under Staff & Personnel class.

Table 5: Assignment of activities to new budget classes

Outcome and activity	Assign from class	Assign to new class	Budget (\$) (-7% PSC)
2.1.2: Assessment criteria/thresholds/baseline values proposed/updated for the 10 IMAP Common Indicators included in	Staff & personnel	Contractual Services	20,000

the current IMAP Pilot Info System as well as one candidate indicator (Noise)			
2.2.4 Develop and publish QSR in 2 languages, make available online and present at COP23	Staff & personnel	Contractual Services	25,000
3.6 Publication, translation, communication	Operating & other direct costs	Staff & Personnel Contractual services	5,000 5,000
3.7 Communication (telephone, email, etc.)	Operating & other direct costs	Contractual services	3,000
3.8 Terminal project	Operating & other direct costs	Staff & personnel	15,000

3. Activities with proposed modified timeline

In this section, details are given on changes and revised deadlines from the workplan of the first and second Steering Committee meetings for the activities expected to be performed during the period July 2022 – August 2023, i.e., until the scheduled end date of the project. Activities which would strongly benefit from an extension beyond August 2023 are highlighted in blue.

Outcome 1: Effective ‘on-the-ground’ national IMAP implementation by the beneficiary countries providing quality-assured data that will enable the development of the quality-assured, region-wide and data-based 2023 MED QSR

Output	Activity planned (07/22-08/23)	Deadline		Remarks
		Original	Revised	
1.1: National and Joint Monitoring carried out of selected Common Indicator(s) (CIs) in beneficiary countries based on national IMAP	1.1.1 Design concrete monitoring plans for each beneficiary country for Pollution, Marine Litter and Biodiversity	Q3/21	Q4/23	Achieved for all the countries with which a legal agreement has been signed. Other beneficiary countries are pending but are under preparation
	1.1.2 Prepare and support implementation of field survey programmes for each beneficiary country for Pollution, Marine Litter and Biodiversity	Q1/23	Q4/23	
	1.1.3 Organize national and sub-regional validation meetings/workshops and provide technical support through thematic regional consultancies	02/22	Q1- Q3/23	Ongoing. In the framework of both the EcAp Med III and IMAP-MPA, activities are foreseen to support national capacity building regarding assessment at national level. National teams and experts will receive the support from regional experts, including training in the application of (sub)regional assessment tools. Pilot areas in which the regional assessment tools will be applied should be and agreed by the trainees identified. The lessons learnt and outputs will be considered as the deliverable to be shared with Coordinating Unit and/or SPA/RAC in the framework of the signed legal agreements.
	1.1.4 Prepare national assessment factsheets for the selected indicators (CI 13, 14, 17, 21, 22, 23)	02/22	Q1- Q3/23	
1.2: Joint monitoring pilots designed and implemented	1.2.3 Develop national and sub-regional assessment factsheets	Q1/23	Q2/23	Ongoing as described in 22wg537/2 Progress Report. The work is ongoing to implement the joint monitoring and assessment programme on non-indigenous species (NIS) related to fisheries
1.4: IMAP Info System expanded to include all mandatory CI of IMAP, fully	1.4.2 Develop Data Standards (DSs) and Data Dictionaries (DDs) for CORMON	Q4/22	Q2/23	Ongoing as described in 22wg537/2 Progress Report. Many DDs and DSs complete. Other ongoing, e.g., OWG meetings will be organised ahead of the next CORMON meeting,

Output	Activity planned (07/22-08/23)	Deadline		Remarks
		Original	Revised	
operational enabling the Contracting Parties to report their monitoring data in 2020, 2021 and 2022	review and approval, and implement data flows (EO3 not included)			starting with OWG Habitats to discuss the EO6 proposal and the draft assessment elements for habitats, in November 2022; INFO/RAC started the development of CI 19 in close cooperation with REMPEC
	1.4.3 Assess the capacity, compatibility and interoperability with IMAP Info System of National information systems	06/22	Q2/23	Ongoing as described in 22wg537/2 Progress Report. As such, there is no interoperability with the national information systems, hence a slower process (between policy dialogue and training) with each country to increase their compatibility during the entire lifespan of the Project.
	1.4.4 Define and implement QA/QC procedures	Q4/22	Q4/23	Ongoing. Quality assurance and quality control are continuously carried out as per regular practice
	1.4.5 Provide dedicated support to beneficiary countries to use IMAP Info System	Q2/23	Q4/23	Ongoing support to countries as they submit their data. Additionally, INFO/RAC has also organized workshops on IMAP training/ assistance
	1.4.6 Implement IMAP data policy	Q4/21	Q4/23	Ongoing. IMAP Data Policy endorsed by COP22. INFO/RAC has started to develop an IMAP Data Policy Annex to facilitate its implementation by Contracting Parties and to be submitted to COP23.

Outcome 2: Regional scale progress and consensus for the monitoring and assessment as well as the reporting processes at national, sub-regional and regional levels

Output	Activity planned (07/22-08/23)	Deadline		Remarks
		Original	Revised	
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	2.1.1.2 Propose updated/new scales of monitoring and assessment for all mandatory Common Indicators as applicable	04/22	Q2/23	Ongoing work for CI 13 and CI 14 which will be finalized during quarter 3 2022. The CORMON meetings have been considering elements of monitoring and assessment, including scales, for CIs during 2022 and Q2 2023.
	2.1.1.3 Prepare GIS atlas for scales of monitoring and scales of assessment to be integrated into IMAP Pilot Info System	09/22	Q2-Q3/23	Based on the results of Activity 2.1.1.2 and the relevant GIS-based maps that will be produced, the subsequent step is to develop the Atlas. This Activity would benefit from an extension of the Project.
	2.1.1.5 Undertake a desk review of available data sources, best practices and methodologies in the	Q4/21	Q1-Q2/23	Ongoing, the work will be reviewed by the next CORMON meeting in spring 2023.

Output	Activity planned (07/22-08/23)	Deadline		Remarks
		Original	Revised	
	Mediterranean and under MSFD for the monitoring and assessment of seafloor damage			
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)	2.1.2.2 Develop guiding documents for the application of assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values for all IMAP clusters at the national level	Q3/22	Q2/23	Ongoing for PAP/RAC towards CORMONs Coast & Hydrography in spring 2023
	2.1.2.3 Test integrated assessment approaches/methodologies, including approaches to interrelate pressures/impacts/state of the marine environment	12/22	Q2-Q3/23	Ongoing as planned with one testing in Morocco by PAP/RAC. In 2023, the Project would also consider the ongoing testing of assessment criteria and integrated methodologies on pollution and marine litter carried out by MED POL (under a SIDA-funded project and the Programme of Work 2022-2023).
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 Support organization of regional/sub-regional expert group meetings to share experience between countries	Q1/21	Q2-Q3/23	Ongoing. Meetings to share expertise and experience were postponed due to Covid preventing in-person meetings
2.2.1 Establish and implement a communication and visibility strategy for the MED 2023 QSR; Outreach to key partners is undertaken and relevant meetings held	2.2.1.1 Develop and implement a communication and visibility strategy/plan for 2023 MED QSR	Q2/23	Q1/24	The communication strategy has been developed and will need to be implemented until COP23 and following adoption of the QSR
	2.2.1.2 Develop and implement a collaboration mechanism and Partnership Plan for the 2023 MED QSR	Q2/23	Q4/23	The partnerships have been established and ongoing collaboration is necessary in the event of revisions to drafts of the QSR until it is adopted by COP23

Output	Activity planned (07/22-08/23)	Deadline		Remarks
		Original	Revised	
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	2.2.2.3 Develop ToRs and set up 2 national SPI pilots in 2 beneficiary countries	Q2/21	Q3/23	Ongoing. The national workshop in Morocco is planned to be organised back-to-back with a CORMON on coast and hydrography in spring 2023.
	2.2.2.4. Organize national thematic events/workshops in line with the respective country priorities and needs	09/22	Q2- Q3/23	The SPI activity is directly supporting the IMAP cluster on coast and hydrography. Since the next related CORMON meeting is planned later than initially envisaged, the SPI session is <i>de facto</i> rescheduled and the workshop in Morocco will be held in spring 2023 as a specific SPI session of the CORMON meeting. Draft of Deliverable 1 is under review (September – October 2022). Drafting of Deliverable 2 will start in November 2022.
2.2.4: Develop and Publish 2023 MED QSR in 2 languages; make it available online and present at COP 23	2.2.4.1 Define the methodology, outline, structure and contents of 2023 MED QSR	04/22	07/22	The methodology, outline, structure and contents of 2023 MED QSR were further elaborated in quarter 1 2022 and presented to the 9 th EcAp Coordination Group meeting on 5 July 2022.
	2.2.4.2 Review, revise and finalize 2023 MED QSR publication and present it at COP23 in two languages (including editing, layout, translation and printing)	Q2/22	Q3- Q4/23	Preparation and final editing including the online QSR website will likely be necessary up to COP23
	2.2.4.3 Establish a web-based platform to host the contents of the 2023 MED QSR online, including procurement, design, content management and maintenance	Q2/22	Q3- Q4/23	The activities describe work on the website and the QSR reports up to an including presentation to COP23, which support a proposed extension to Q4 2023
	2.2.4.4 Review, revise and finalize 2023 MED QSR publication and present it at COP23 in two languages (including editing, layout, translation and printing)	Q2/22	Q1/24	

	Prepare a report on lessons learned to be discussed at sub-regional/CORMON meetings																
	D) Project Output: 1.4: IMAP Info System expanded to include all mandatory CI of IMAP, fully operational enabling the Contracting Parties to report their monitoring data in 2020, 2021 and 2022.	INFO/RAC															
1.4.1	Upgrade hardware and software (HW&SW) platform	INFO/RAC															
1.4.2	Develop Data Standards (DSs) and Data Dictionaries (DDs) for CORMON review and approval, and implement data flows (EO3 not included)	INFO/RAC															
1.4.3	Assess the capacity, compatibility and interoperability with IMAP Info System of National information systems	INFO/RAC															
1.4.4	Define and implement QA/QC procedures	INFO/RAC															
ID	Project Outputs & Activities	Responsible Entity	2020		2021				2022				2023				2024
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
1.4.5	Provide dedicated support to beneficiary countries to use IMAP Info System	INFO/RAC															
1.4.6	Implement IMAP data policy	INFO/RAC															

Outcome 2: Regional scale progress and consensus for the monitoring and assessment as well as the reporting processes at national, sub-regional and regional levels

