



**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention



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Meeting of Plan Bleu National Focal Points, 19-20 May 2021, videoconference

Meeting Report

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Introduction

1. In accordance with the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) Programme of Work 2020- 2021 adopted by COP 21, in Naples, Italy, in December 2019, Plan Bleu organized the meeting of the Plan Bleu National Focal Points on 19-20 May 2021, via videoconference.

2. The main objectives of the meeting were to review the activities carried out during the 2020-2021 biennium; and discuss and agree upon the activities to be implemented during the next biennium for inclusion in the MAP Programme of Work 2022-2023.

Agenda Item 1 Opening - election of meeting Chair

3. The meeting was opened by the President of Plan Bleu's board and by the Deputy Coordinator of UNEP/MAP.

4. The meeting proceeded with the election of a President, a Vice-president and a Rapporteur in accordance with the Rules of procedures for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties:

Chair: Ms. Ivana Stojanovic, Montenegro

Vice-Chair: Ms. Menekse Keski, Turkey

Rapporteur: Mr. Benoit Rodrigues, France

5. In his welcoming speech, the Plan Bleu President highlighted the importance of the meeting in developing the exchanges between Plan Bleu and its National Focal Points. He underlined the main achievements of Plan Bleu since the last meeting of its National Focal Points in May 2019, most prominently the publication of the report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean 2020, led by Plan Bleu, and the First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) prepared by the independent network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC), which is hosted by Plan Bleu. He also put forward that a new large-scale Mediterranean foresight exercise - MED2050 - has been launched, reconnecting Plan Bleu to its original *raison d'être*: foresight to enlighten decision makers about possible futures of the Mediterranean. He concluded his opening remarks by welcoming Plan Bleu's new Director, Mr. François Guerquin, who has been appointed in July 2020.

6. In her opening remarks, the UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator highlighted the strong impetus given to the international sustainable development agenda. In the Mediterranean region, this is reflected by the strong collaboration in support of Contracting Parties within the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, working together in an integrated way towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Plan Bleu plays an important role in the monitoring of progress towards sustainable development in the region, as materialized through the report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean 2020 and the monitoring of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development. Plan Bleu has also played a key role in supporting MedECC, the Mediterranean network of experts on climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean which has recently published its first Mediterranean assessment report (MAR 1), and it is hoped that the Contracting Parties continue to support this initiative. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator pointed out that Plan Bleu proposes an ambitious programme of work 2022-2023, first biennium of the to-be-adopted new Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 of UNEP/MAP. The MED 2050 foresight exercise, involving Contracting Parties in the overall process of regional foresight, is highly expected in this framework and can inspire national processes under the leadership of Plan Bleu. Other important initiatives ongoing under the UNEP/MAP system

include the SAP-BIO which is under preparation, along with Regional Plans on wastewater-related subjects, and the potential establishment of the Mediterranean as a sulphur emissions control area (SECA) which receives strong technical support from Plan Bleu.

7. The meeting was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, European Commission, France, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey. The UN Environment/MAP Secretariat was represented by the MAP Coordinating Unit, along with the following Mediterranean Action Plan regional activity centres: Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (Info/RAC). UNEP-GRID Geneva was also represented. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: European Environment Agency (EEA), Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The following non-governmental organizations and other institutions were represented: Mediterranean Institute for marine and continental biodiversity and ecology of Aix-Marseille University, France (IMBE). The full list of participants is attached as Annex I to the present report.

Agenda Item 2 Organization of work

8. The morning session of the first day of this meeting was chaired by the meeting Vice-Chair.

9. The proposed provisional agenda (UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.1 Provisional Agenda) was adopted without any changes.

Agenda Item 3 Overview of Plan Bleu's activities 2020 – 2021

10. At the invitation by the Vice-Chair, the Plan Bleu Director presented the overview of activities of the current biennium 2020-2021. The presentation included Plan Bleu's resource mobilization, partnerships and publications with a focus on the report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean 2020 (SoED). The Plan Bleu Communications officer presented the communication activities carried out by Plan Bleu during the current biennium. The supporting document for this agenda item is UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC Inf.3.

11. The meeting Vice-Chair, representing Turkey, congratulated Plan Bleu for the presented activities, especially highlighting the strong and effective effort Plan Bleu has given to communication.

12. The representative of France congratulated Plan Bleu for the accomplished work and the success of the implemented communication strategy during this difficult period. He thanked Tunisia for having hosted an SoED dissemination event. He further suggested Plan Bleu to develop innovative communication tools such as podcasts and virtual reality and congratulated Plan Bleu for the participative approach that is put into place, in particular for the MED 2050 foresight exercise.

13. The representative of Tunisia thanked Plan Bleu, UNEP/MAP and RAC/SPA for having given the opportunity to Tunisia to host an SoED dissemination event, which has achieved its objectives in terms of stakeholder mobilisation and awareness raising in Tunisia. The conference was useful to Tunisia in supporting the uptake of SoED recommendations into national strategies, in particular the updating of the national strategy for sustainable development, but also the national plan on climate and environment 2021-2025.

14. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator and the Plan Bleu Director both highlighted the relevance and success of the joint communication efforts within the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, that have been put into place during the current biennium.

Agenda Item 4 Observing the environment and the development: Regional Observatory on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean

15. At the invitation by the meeting Chair, the Plan Bleu Program Officer for Observation of the Environment and Sustainable Development presented the content of UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.2, focusing on Plan Bleu's activities as an observatory of the environment and development in the Mediterranean.

16. The Chair and Vice-Chair congratulated Plan Bleu and expressed their appreciation for the impressive work done in relation to the tool World Environment Situation Room (WESR) and its cartographic tool MapX.

17. Two Plan Bleu Vice-Presidents highlighted the relevance of the strengthening of the Plan Bleu Observatory on environment and development in the Mediterranean to function as a science-policy interface for evidence-based decision making in the region. The need to interpret the collected information for example with regard to the follow-up of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), has also been put forward.

18. The Plan Bleu Director emphasized the usefulness of WESR in making data stemming from time-bound platforms available in the long term by integrating content from databases that are funded through time-limited projects. WESR is based on connecting information systems to share data in a network, making it accessible via the WESR interface. He also underlined the transversal nature of WESR being able to integrate data relevant to all themes Plan Bleu and the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system deal with. WESR can also be a relevant tool to be used at national level.

19. The UNEP/MAP deputy coordinator highlighted that WESR provides the opportunity to streamline efforts and maximize synergies for UNEP, UNEP/MAP, its Regional Activity Centres and the Contracting Parties, avoiding to spend resources on parallel tools. With Plan Bleu holding a clear mandate for the monitoring of Sustainable Development and the MSSD, she invited Plan Bleu National Focal Points to support using WESR.

20. The Plan Bleu programme officer for Observation of the Environment and Sustainable Development clarified that Plan Bleu is cooperating with UNEP-GRID Geneva in the framework of WESR. The tool can support common reporting and the elaboration of assessment reports. He invited National Focal Points to designate a contact person per Contracting Party to facilitate cooperation.

21. The representative of Montenegro indicated that Montenegro is in the process of establishing an SDG monitoring platform and that work is underway for a coastal observatory which could potentially be connected to WESR in the future. She recommended taking advantage of the functionalities offered by WESR and MapX and using these tools as much as possible, including in the framework of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system.

22. The Plan Bleu President highlighted the speed and flexibility provided by WESR and MapX. He further underlined that support from Contracting Parties in identifying databases to which WESR can connect would be beneficial and much appreciated.

23. The representative of Spain congratulated Plan Bleu for the necessary and interesting work done in relation to WESR. He indicated Spain's willingness to contribute to the further deployment of WESR and stands ready as national contact person.

24. The representative of Morocco indicated Morocco's willingness to collaborate with Plan Bleu and the National Focal Points for the further development of WESR.

25. The representative of Turkey congratulated Plan Bleu for the presentation of WESR and highlighted her satisfaction concerning the updating of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, the linked web platform of the observatory and the partnership established with WESR.

26. The Chair of the meeting indicated that WESR has also been discussed positively in the framework of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD). She observed a general consensus and satisfaction of the meeting regarding the work carried out by Plan Bleu in relation to migrating data to WESR. She encouraged Plan Bleu to further integrate and develop WESR including providing capacity building as needed and invited the meeting to contribute to this effort.

Agenda Item 5 Integrating Climate Change as a priority

27. At the invitation by the meeting Chair, the MedECC Science Officer presented the content of UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.3, focussing on work conducted in the field of climate change.

28. The representative of France welcomed the strengthening of the partnership between MedECC and the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system. He highlighted that this partnership is mutually beneficial with MedECC's work being central for delivering the climate change pillar of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027, and UNEP/MAP's support being vital for MedECC's functioning. He congratulated MedECC for the MAR1 report which was much acclaimed by the public and was awarded the North-South prize from the Council of Europe, and which has made MedECC a reference for climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean.

29. The MedECC Coordinator encouraged Plan Bleu National Focal Points to take the messages of MAR1 to their national governments, translating them into action. MAR1 delivers an analysis of risks without being policy-prescriptive. He invited Focal Points to be proactive, communicate on the risks highlighted in MAR1 and foster action to avoid these risks becoming reality.

30. The representative of Italy put forward the importance of climate change for Mediterranean countries and thanked MedECC for the relevant work delivered. He indicated that Italy stands ready to cooperate further with MedECC and to promote and strengthen cooperation between the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and MedECC, including through integrating support for MedECC and related activities in an upcoming bilateral agreement between Italy and UNEP/MAP.

31. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator indicated that the new UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy is proposed to provide the necessary political and financial support to MedECC to continue its work in an efficient way. She highlighted the importance of MedECC being based on a voluntary approach, uniting independent scientists from all Mediterranean countries. She invited the Contracting Parties to support the strengthening of the network and to take up results of MAR1 in policy making and design, including adaptation to climate change. She put forward that MedECC is an example of an effective and successful science-policy interface, which could inspire a similar approach to be implemented for UNEP/MAP's Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP).

32. The meeting Chair recalled the successful partnership between UNEP/MAP and the Union for the Mediterranean in providing support to MedECC. She further indicated that COP22 of the Barcelona Convention will discuss the integration of MedECC activities into its Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 and the support to be given to hosting the secretariat of MedECC at Plan Bleu. The MAR1 Summary for Policymakers will also be submitted for approval to COP22.

Agenda Item 6 Accompanying transition towards sustainable development

Agenda item 6.1 – Blue Economy

33. At the invitation by the meeting Chair, the Plan Bleu Programme Director presented the content of UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.4, focussing on work conducted in the field of Blue Economy.

34. The meeting Chair put forward the relevance of activities on Blue Economy for sustainable development, both at the national and the regional scale. She highlighted that Montenegro has done work on Blue Economy in the framework of the GEF Adriatic project.

35. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator underlined the relevance for the UNEP/MAP - Barcelona Convention system to be involved in Blue Economy projects at the EU level, such as those presented. She would like to explore together with the Contracting Parties the options to implement Blue Economy activities in the entire Mediterranean region and the UNEP/MAP - Barcelona Convention system.

36. The Plan Bleu Programme Director responded that Interreg Med projects cover essentially the European Mediterranean countries. She added that Blue Economy activities that cover the whole Mediterranean are proposed for the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work 2022-2023, in the field of marine renewable energies and that work with SCP/RAC is planned to cover the Southern basin in particular. On sustainable aquaculture as well as sustainable cruising and recreational boating, roadmaps are being developed that cover the whole Mediterranean. Partnerships with WestMed, CIHEAM and GFCM are developed and aim at strengthening the deployment of activities in all Mediterranean countries. She also indicated that a stronger involvement of Southern Mediterranean countries has been suggested for the next generation of Interreg Med projects.

37. The Plan Bleu Officer for capitalization and science-policy-practice interfaces added that the Interreg Med project “Sustainable Tourism Community” hosts a specific territorial antenna to involve the South of the Mediterranean.

38. The Plan Bleu Vice-President in charge of Blue Economy proposed to further take into account the economic dimension, including for example trade, in Plan Bleu’s work on Blue Economy.

39. The representative of Morocco congratulated Plan Bleu for the work done in the field of Blue Economy. She put forward that Morocco has a national Blue Economy Strategy and that Morocco is interested in exchanges between Contracting Parties on their respective Blue Economy Strategies, which might be finalized or under development. She further indicated that Morocco has a national plan on integrated coastal zone management (Plan national de gestion intégrée du littoral-PNL), which contains strategic orientations, indicators, measures and coastal management schemes per region to ensure coherence.

40. The Plan Bleu Programme Director underlined the opportunities that lay in establishing inventories of innovative Blue Economy solutions and disseminating them all around the Mediterranean. She also underlined the role of digitalization in the Blue Economy, potentially allowing for efficiency gains, more security and improved monitoring.

41. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator highlighted that the Blue Economy has become an important pillar of the work conducted under the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and that several MAP components are involved in implementing Blue Economy activities. She thanked Italy for the past bilateral agreement between Italy and UNEP/MAP, which was an important support for developing Blue Economy activities. The new Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 includes a programme on Blue and Green Economy which aims at further developing Blue Economy activities under the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator invited the National Focal Points to refer to Plan Bleu for any

opportunity to link up with or develop other initiatives on Blue Economy in the Mediterranean to maximize synergies and communicate in a coordinated way. She also put forward the particular relevance of close coordination between Regional Activity Centers for a strengthened integration and dissemination of Blue Economy activities. She also highlighted that UNEP has a strong focus on Blue Economy and that good practice and lessons learned from the Mediterranean could be shared at the global level through UNEP.

42. The UNEP/MAP Programme Management Officer for Socio-Economic Affairs indicated that the Blue Economy can benefit from the expertise of all Regional Activity Centers because it is one of the rare themes that embrace all three pillars of sustainable development. The entire UNEP/MAP - Barcelona Convention system can benefit from and contribute to the newly set up UNEP Blue Economy Coordination Group, by (i) leveraging on the system's avant-garde legal framework and the established and continuous dialogue with a varied array of stakeholders and by (ii) learning more about tools and economic frameworks found elsewhere in the world.

43. The Plan Bleu Director underlined that many Blue Economy activities are implemented in close coordination with other Regional Activity Centers and that regular exchanges between Regional Activity Centers are in place.

Agenda item 6.2 - Living in Harmony with Nature

44. At the invitation by the meeting Chair, the Plan Bleu Officer for capitalization and science-policy-practice interfaces presented the content of UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.5, focusing on living in harmony with nature.

45. The representative of Montenegro indicated that Montenegro is part of the MBPC project which is very helpful for the country. She encouraged further work on Marine Protected Area management and monitoring and supported the participation of Plan Bleu in the MBPC project.

46. The representative of Tunisia asked if the mentioned pilot sites for ecosystem restoration and valorization projects have been already selected. The Plan Bleu Director responded that the pilot sites for the EU-funded projects are located in Europe and that Plan Bleu does not play a major role in pilot sites but rather in capitalizing on the results coming from the pilot sites, thus making results relevant for all Mediterranean countries. Plan Bleu stands ready to further discuss.

47. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator thanked Plan Bleu for their work on this subject and its linked transversal issues and reiterated the relevance of joint work between MAP components for the next biennium.

48. The representative of the European Environment Agency shared the following links in the chat, which are of relevance for this agenda item: https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/research-area/environment/nature-based-solutions_en; <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/nature-based-solutions-in-europe>.

49. The representative of Morocco informed the meeting through the chat that Morocco was to celebrate the International Day of Biodiversity, 21 May, with a videoconference on the subject "we are part of the solution".

Agenda item 6.3 - Socio-economic analysis

50. At the invitation by the meeting Chair, the Plan Bleu Deputy Director presented the content of UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.6, focusing on socio-economic analysis.

51. The meeting Chair underlined the relevance of the presented proposed activities.

52. The Plan Bleu Vice-President in charge of Blue Economy indicated that OECD has accomplished significant work on environmentally harmful subsidies, covering also some of the Mediterranean countries. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has also worked on the subject and could be a reference for the work proposed by Plan Bleu in the field of environmentally harmful subsidies. He further mentioned a recent report by the IEA on zero net carbon emissions by 2050: <https://www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050>.

53. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator congratulated Plan Bleu for the work and presentation. She underlined the importance of socio-economic aspects for the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, particularly concerning policy mixes that include economic and fiscal tools which can support the implementation of the Barcelona Convention. She highlighted that socio-economic analysis is crucial to support countries to take informed measures. Plan Bleu's attendance of the EU WG POMESA is much appreciated by the Coordinating Unit.

54. The meeting Chair closes the first day of the meeting on 19 May 2021.

55. The meeting Chair opens the second day of the meeting on 20 May 2021.

Agenda Item 7 Building regional vision and strategies: Med 2050 and MSSD

56. At the invitation by the meeting Chair, the Plan Bleu Deputy Director presented the content of UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.7, focusing on foresight.

57. The Meeting Chair recommended that the participatory approach developed for MED2050 be pursued and continued throughout MED2050.

58. The Plan Bleu team highlighted that the MED2050 foresight exercise, as a transversal programme, is being implemented in synergy with all other activities carried out by Plan Bleu, in particular the observatory of the environment and development and the recent report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean 2020 (SoED).

59. The UNEP/MAP Programme Management Officer for Socio-Economic Affairs posted in the chat that the SoED has received global attention when the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General mentioned the report in the noon briefing and through coverage on the global UN website and social media accounts. <https://bit.ly/31GFECCL>; <https://twitter.com/UN/status/1318961746954969089>.

60. The representative of Italy put forward that MED2050 answers the need for common views of the Mediterranean future in order to adopt effective policies and prevent worse scenarios. He underpinned the importance to duly take into account biodiversity in the further development of the programme and to work in collaboration with all MAP components.

61. The Plan Bleu Vice-President in charge of Blue Economy underlined the need to make the results of MED2050 as directly useful as possible for governments and enterprises and to anticipate the communication on MED2050 results in a way to facilitate uptake by decision makers. MED2050 results clearly need to indicate the main levers of change that need to be activated along transition pathways for sustainable development.

62. The representative of the European Environment Agency recalled the need for a participatory approach for MED2050, which is necessary to bring about collective intelligence to build common visions and to take into account multi-level governance. He encouraged all Contracting Parties to get involved in the MED2050 process and to foster the participatory approach whenever possible by connecting relevant stakeholders and the civil society to MED2050. He also indicated that 2030 is a relevant intermediate horizon for the Mediterranean being inscribed in the political agenda in the region via the 2030 UN Agenda and the SDGs but also the 2030

Greener Med Agenda of the Union for the Mediterranean. Many European normative, if not prescriptive policies are in place with a horizon at 2030 in the framework of the European New Green Deal. The EU has also adopted a new Mediterranean Strategy with a dedicated budget and MED2050 can help in identifying necessary investments for a sustainable Mediterranean.

63. The UNEP/MAP Programme Management Officer for Socio-Economic Affairs emphasized the relevance of the participative approach adopted for MED2050 and encouraged to pursue the collaboration with the MCSD in synergy with the preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2026-2035, which would also adopt a participatory approach under the lead of the MCSD and its Steering Committee. He encouraged exchanges with national fora for sustainable development.

64. The representative of Tunisia recalled the relevance and success of the past SIMPEER exercises. He stated Tunisia's interest to pursue this process of peer review of national sustainable development strategies and suggested to enlarge the mechanism to national blue/green economy strategies.

65. The representative of Montenegro agreed with the Tunisian suggestion and also pointed out the role of the MCSD in the SIMPEER process.

66. The Plan Bleu Director welcomed all suggestions made during this discussion. He invited Contracting Parties to express interest in participating in a new round of SIMPEER, recalling that at least three Contracting Parties are needed to run the process.

Agenda Item 8 Other elements of the proposed Plan of Work 2022 - 2023, in particular new topics proposed

67. At the invitation by the meeting Chair, the Plan Bleu Director presented the content of UNEP/MED WG.503 PLAN BLEU/RAC Inf.3, focusing on new activities proposed for the Programme of Work 2022-2023.

68. The representative of France welcomed the transversality of the subjects presented and underlined the relevance of all proposed new activities in the fields of nature-based solutions, one health approach, aquaculture, sustainable tourism, etc. He further encouraged the proposal to work on legal indicators for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, which is of specific interest to the Convention's Compliance Committee. He informed the meeting that there could potentially be a motion on the issue of legal indicators during the IUCN congress in September 2021, as an innovative activity that could inspire work on legal indicators in the framework of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system.

69. Answering to a question from the Plan Bleu Vice-President concerning clarifications of the operational working links between UNEP and Plan Bleu, the Plan Bleu Director recalled that Plan Bleu is collaborating actively within the UNEP working group on Blue Economy and with UNEP-GRID Geneva in the framework of WESR. The UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit has a more direct collaboration with UNEP and can link Plan Bleu's work to relevant UNEP initiatives.

70. The UNEP/MAP Programme Management Officer for Socio-Economic Affairs added that the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system supports the translation of international processes at regional and national levels in the Mediterranean, with well-established working connections with UNEP on specific subjects such as marine litter, biodiversity, climate change adaptation etc. The UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system is also particularly involved in the global reporting on SDG 14. Flagship publications, such as the report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean 2020, are co-published with UNEP and thus published in the UN e-library.

71. The representative of Morocco asked if the MSSD is planned to be regularly reviewed and if a review has been conducted recently. She further informed that Morocco's Strategy for Sustainable Development covers around 70 % of SDGs and that an evaluation of this Strategy has been launched.

72. The UNEP/MAP Programme Management Officer for Socio-Economic Affairs explained that the MCSD, created in 1996, has supervised the first MSSD adopted in 2005. At COP18 in December 2013, the Contracting Parties asked to launch a review process of the first MSSD to reflect the global process of the Agenda 2030 and linked SDGs. The MSSD 2016-2025 was then adopted at COP19 in February 2016 as a regional translation of SDGs. During the current 2020-2021 biennium, a mid-term evaluation of this second MSSD and the Sustainable consumption and production Action Plan has been launched and the results will be presented at the upcoming 19th meeting of the MCSD on 7-9 June 2021 and subsequently submitted to the MAP Focal Points and COP22.

Agenda Item 9 Review of recommendations

73. The meeting Chair invited the Rapporteur to present the draft conclusions and recommendations of the meeting. The Rapporteur guided the meeting through the review process of the draft conclusions and recommendations, which the meeting discussed one by one. The agreed conclusions and recommendations are attached in Annex 3 of the present report.

Agenda Item 10 Concluding session

74. At the invitation of the meeting Chair, the Plan Bleu Director took the floor and thanked all participants, especially the meeting's Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur, for their active involvement in the meeting.

75. The UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator thanked the Plan Bleu Director and the meeting Chair for the preparation of this successful meeting of the Plan Bleu National Focal Points. She underlined that the meeting has approved the ambitious activities proposed by Plan Bleu for the Programme of Work 2022-2023, which would feed into the delivery of the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 and help UNEP/MAP, Plan Bleu and the Contracting Parties to progress. She concluded by thanking the Plan Bleu Director, Plan Bleu President, the Plan Bleu team, Plan Bleu National Focal Points and colleagues who have participated in the meeting for making the meeting a success.

76. The Plan Bleu President congratulated the Plan Bleu Director, the Plan Bleu team, UNEP/MAP and the National Focal Points for their participation and the outcomes of this meeting. He recalled that the National Focal Points are backbones of Plan Bleu and that their active involvement is very important. He highlighted that new scientific knowledge about sustainable development issues is gained on a daily basis and that UNEP/MAP and Plan Bleu must remain reactive to maintain a functioning science-policy interface.

77. The meeting Vice-Chair thanked all participants and expressed her wish to meet in person during the COP22 in Antalya, Turkey.

78. The meeting Chair thanked Plan Bleu for the good work and for the preparation of the meeting. She also thanked the Vice-Chair for having chaired the morning sessions of the first day of the meeting. She closed the meeting.

Annex I List of Participants

Annex II Agenda of the Meeting

Annex III Conclusions and Recommendations

Annex I – List of participants

Représentants pays / Country representatives

Ms.	Ledjana	KARALLIU	Albania	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
Ms.	Sabina	HADZIAHMETOVIC	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Hydro Engineering Institute Sarajevo
Mr.	Jacques	DELSALLE	European Commission	Commission Européenne
Mr.	Benoît	RODRIGUES	France	Ministère de la transition écologique et solidaire
Mr.	Roberto	GIANGRECO	Italy	Ministero dell'Ambiente e della
Ms.	Roberta	DEBONO	Malta	Environment & Resources Authority
Ms.	Julie	DONATI	Monaco	Département des Relations Extérieures et de la Coopération - Ministère d'Etat
Ms.	Ivana	STOJANOVIC	Montenegro	Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism
Ms.	Farah	BOUQARTACHA	Morocco	Ministère de l'Énergie, des Mines et de l'Environnement
Ms.	Amal	MOUFARREH	Morocco	Ministère de l'Énergie, des Mines et de l'Environnement
Mr.	Jorge	URETA	Spain	Ministerio para la Transición Ecológica Y El Reto Demográfico
Mr.	Mosbah	ABAZA	Tunisia	Ministère des affaires locales et de l'environnement
Dr.	Menekse	KESKI	Turkey	Ministry of Environment And Urbanism

Partenaires / Partners

Mr.	Ronan	UHEL	European Environment Agency
Prof.	Wolfgang	CRAMER	IMBE
Mr.	Pierre	LACROIX	GRID-Genève
Mr.	Pascal	PEDUZZI	GRID-Genève
Ms.	Wafa	AYADI	Union for the Mediterranean

PNUE/PAM – UNEP/MAP

Ms.	Tatjana	HEMA	PNUE/PAM - UNEP/MAP
Mr.	Julien	LE TELLIER	PNUE/PAM - UNEP/MAP
Mr.	Stavros	ANTONIADIS	PNUE/PAM - UNEP/MAP
Ms.	Céline	NDONG	CAR/INFO - INFO/RAC

Plan Bleu

Mr.	Thierry	LAVOUX	Président /President	Plan Bleu
Mr.	Jean	DE MONTGOLFIER	Secrétaire général /General Secretary	Plan Bleu
Dr.	Yves	HENOCQUE	Trésorier / Treasurer	Plan Bleu
Mr.	Christian	AVEROUS	Vice-président /Vice-president	Plan Bleu
Mr.	Aldo	RAVAZZI DOUVAN	Vice-président / Vice-president	Plan Bleu

Mr. Jacques THEYS Vice-président / Vice-president Plan Bleu

Mr. François GUERQUIN Directeur / Director Plan Bleu

Ms. Lina TODE Directrice adjointe /Deputy Director Plan Bleu

Dr. Céline DUBREUIL Directrice des programmes/ Programme Director Plan Bleu

Mr. Florian AGULLO Ressources Humaines / Human resources Plan Bleu

Dr. Antoine DOLEZ Post doctorant / PhD student Plan Bleu

Ms. Anna GOUBERT Post doctorant /PhD student Plan Bleu

Mr. Michael KARNER Coordinateur de projets / Project coordinator Plan Bleu

Mr. Antoine LAFITTE Chargé de programme / Program Officer Plan Bleu

Ms. Gloria LAZARO Chargée de mission / Project Officer Plan Bleu

Dr. Katarzyna MARINI Science Officer Plan Bleu

Ms. Méлина RODITIS Stagiaire / Intern Plan Bleu

Ms. Isabelle ROSSI Comptable / Accountant Plan Bleu

Ms. Pauline SIMON Chargée de communication / Communication Officer Plan Bleu

Annex II Agenda of the Meeting

Provisional Agenda / Agenda provisoire

19 May 2021 / 19 mai 2021

Agenda Item 1 **Opening - election of meeting Chair / Ouverture - élection du Président de la réunion**

Agenda Item 2 **Organization of work / Organisation du travail**

Agenda Item 3 **Overview of Plan Bleu's activities 2020 – 2021 / Vue d'ensemble des activités du Plan Bleu 2020-2021**

Agenda Item 4 **Observing the environment and the development: Regional Observatory on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean / Observer l'environnement et le développement : Observatoire régional sur l'environnement et le développement en Méditerranée**

Agenda Item 5 **Integrating Climate Change as a priority / Intégrer le changement climatique comme une priorité**

Agenda Item 6 **Accompanying transition towards sustainable development / Accompagner la transition vers un développement durable**

20 May 2021 / 20 mai 2021

Agenda Item 7 **Building regional vision and strategies: Med 2050 and MSSD / Bâtir une vision et une stratégie régionales: Med2050, et SMDD**

Agenda Item 8 **Other elements of the proposed Plan of Work 2022 - 2023, in particular new topics proposed / Autres éléments de la proposition de programme de travail 2022-2023, particulièrement les nouveaux sujets proposés**

Agenda Item 9 **Review of recommendations / Revue des recommandations**

Agenda Item 10 **Concluding session / Session de conclusion**

Detailed provisional agenda / Agenda provisoire détaillé

Timetable is in Central European Time (CET) / *Les horaires sont en Heure normale d'Europe Centrale (HNEC)*

19/05/2021: Day 1 / Jour 1	
08:30 – 09:00	Participants welcome / <i>Accueil des participants</i>
09:00 – 09:30	Agenda item 1: Opening - election of meeting Chair and officials / <i>Ouverture - élection du Président et des officiels de la réunion</i>
09:30 – 09:50	Agenda item 2: Organization of work and adoption of agenda / <i>Organisation du travail et adoption de l'agenda</i>
09:50 – 10:45	Agenda item 3: Overview of Plan Bleu's activities 2020 – 2021 / <i>Vue d'ensemble des activités du Plan Bleu 2020-2021</i>
09:50 – 10:15	Presentation of the activities and main results, including a focus on communication / <i>Présentation des activités et principaux résultats, y compris un point sur communication PLAN BLEU/RAC Inf.3</i>
10:15 – 10:45	Discussion – roundtable / <i>Discussion – tour de table</i>
10:45 – 12:30	Agenda item 4: Observing the environment and the development in the Mediterranean / <i>Observer l'environnement et le développement en Méditerranée</i>
10:45 – 11:10	Presentation of activities and main results / <i>Présentation des activités et principaux résultats</i> PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.2
11:10 – 12:30	Discussion – Roundtable – recommendations / <i>Discussion - Tour de table - recommandations</i>
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break / <i>Pause déjeuner</i>
13:30 – 15:30	Agenda item 5: Integrating Climate change as a priority / <i>Intégrer le changement climatique comme une priorité</i>
13:30 – 14:00	Presentation of activities and main results / <i>Présentation des activités et principaux résultats</i> PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.3
14:00 – 15:30	Discussion – Roundtable – recommendations / <i>Discussion - Tour de table - recommandations</i>
15:30 – 17:45	Agenda item 6: accompany transition towards a sustainable development / <i>Accompagner la transition vers un développement durable</i>

15:30 – 15:45	Agenda item 6.1: Blue economy: Presentation of activities and main results / <i>Agenda item 6.1: Economie bleue: Présentation des activités et principaux résultats</i> PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.4
15:45 – 16:15	Discussion – Roundtable – recommendations / <i>Discussion - Tour de table - recommandations</i>
16:15 – 16:30	Agenda item 6.2: Living in harmony with nature: Presentation of activities and main results / <i>Vivre en harmonie avec la nature: Présentation des activités et principaux résultats</i> PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.5
16:30 – 17:00	Discussion – Roundtable – recommendations / <i>Discussion - Tour de table - recommandations</i>
17:00 – 17:15	Agenda item 6.3: socio-economic analysis and economic instruments / <i>Analyse socio-économique et instruments économiques : Présentation des activités et principaux résultats</i> PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.6
17:15 – 17:45	Discussion – Roundtable – recommendations / <i>Discussion - Tour de table - recommandations</i>
17:45 – 18:00	Synthesis and conclusions - day 1 / <i>Synthèses et conclusions - Jour 1</i>
18:00	End of day 1 / <i>Fin du jour 1</i>
20/05/2021: Day 2 / Jour 2	
09:00 – 11:15	Agenda item 7: Build a regional vision and strategy: Med2050 and MSSD / <i>Bâtir une vision et une stratégie régionales: Med2050, et SMDD</i>
09:00 – 09:45	Presentation of activities and main results / <i>Présentation des activités et principaux résultats</i> PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.7
09:45 – 11:15	Discussion – Roundtable – recommendations / <i>Discussion - Tour de table - recommandations</i>
11:15 – 12:30	Agenda item 8: Other elements of the proposed Plan of Work 2022 - 2023, in particular new topics proposed / <i>Autres éléments de la proposition de programme de travail 2022-2023, particulièrement les nouveaux sujets proposés</i>
11:45 – 12:30	Discussion – Roundtable – recommendations / <i>Discussion - Tour de table – recommandations</i> PLAN BLEU/RAC WD.8
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break / <i>Pause déjeuner</i>

14:00 – 16:00	Agenda item 9: review of recommendations / <i>Revue des recommandations</i>
14:00 – 16:00	Presentation and discussion for finalization of recommendations envisioned in thematic sessions / <i>Présentation et discussion pour finalisation des recommandations envisagées en séances thématiques</i>
16:00 – 17:30	Agenda item 10: concluding session / <i>Session de conclusion</i>
16:00 – 17:15	Discussion around the table on the 2-days meeting results / <i>Tour de table sur le bilan des deux journées</i>
17:15 – 17:30	Synthesis and conclusions / <i>Synthèse et conclusions</i>
17:30	End of day 2 / <i>Fin du jour 2</i>

Annex III Conclusions and Recommendations

Agenda Item 1: Opening - election of meeting Chair

1. The meeting elects Ms. Ivana Stojanovic, representative of Montenegro, as Meeting Chair, Ms. Menekse Keski, representative of Turkey, as Vice-Chair and Mr. Benoit Rodrigues, representative of France, as rapporteur.

Agenda Item 2: Organization of work (WD.1)

2. The meeting adopts the proposed provisional agenda.

Agenda Item 3: Overview of Plan Bleu's activities 2020 – 2021 (Inf.3)

3. The meeting appreciates Plan Bleu / RAC's strong implementation of both the common UNEP/MAP Operational Communication Strategy and Plan Bleu / RAC's own communication activities; and expresses special satisfaction regarding the successful communication campaign rolled out for the SoED 2020.

4. The meeting encourages Plan Bleu / RAC to pursue its strong communication efforts, especially for the Observatory of the Environment and Development, the MED 2050 Foresight exercise, and in support of MedECC and further invites Plan Bleu / RAC to use innovative communication tools such as podcasts.

5. The meeting recognizes Plan Bleu / RAC's fundraising efforts to complement MTF funding which allow for a smooth implementation of activities contained in the Programme of Work and implementation of Plan Bleu / RAC's overall mandates.

6. The meeting expresses appreciation of the relevant publications of Plan Bleu / RAC this biennium.

7. The meeting takes note with appreciation of Plan Bleu / RAC's collaboration with Aix-Marseille Université; and further encourages Plan Bleu / RAC to pursue its collaborations with academic and knowledge management institutions as well as technical expert groups.

Agenda Item 4: Observing the environment and the development: Regional Observatory on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean (WD.2)

8. The meeting acknowledges the timely delivery of the updated version of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard.

9. The meeting recognizes the major role of Plan Bleu / RAC to strengthen and coordinate the regional network of observatories and environmental information systems.

10. The meeting takes note with appreciation of the migration of Plan Bleu / RAC's observatory to the central UNEP platform WESR and of the new functionalities it offers.

11. The meeting supports Plan Bleu / RAC's proposals to further structure its regional observatory in collaboration with UNEP/GRID-Geneva and further requests Plan Bleu / RAC to explore the building of technical and methodological capacities of Contracting Parties' specialized institutions to serve environmental information during the current or next biennium, as appropriate. This will facilitate the use of WESR and effectively reduce

Contracting Parties' reporting burden regarding monitoring progress towards sustainable development (MSSD/Agenda 2030).

12. The meeting encourages Plan Bleu / RAC to organize the modalities for Contracting Parties and MCSD to guide the development of the regional observatory in network, capitalizing on countries' capacities related to observation and information systems.

13. The meeting agrees on / supports the proposed activities and outputs related to the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and the regional observatory, to be included in the Programme of Work 2022-2023; and on their further submission to MAP Focal Points.

Agenda Item 5: Integrating Climate Change as a priority (WD.3)

14. The meeting notes with appreciation the timely finalisation of the MedECC First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) and its Summary for Policymakers (SPM), as well as the integration of the results of the consultation held on 22 September 2020.

15. The meeting encourages the proposal to submit the MAR1 Summary for Policymakers to COP22 for consideration and possible endorsement.

16. The meeting notes with appreciation the proposals for further activities of MedECC in liaison with the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work 2022-2023 and Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027.

17. The meeting notes with appreciation the renewed framework for collaboration between Plan Bleu/RAC and the Union for the Mediterranean, aiming at supporting MedECC in the implementation of the workplan defined by the MedECC Steering Committee for the 2021 - 2023 period.

18. The meeting supports Plan Bleu / RAC's strong efforts to fund the MedECC Secretariat since January 2021, and encourages Plan Bleu / RAC to pursue its efforts in mobilizing funding for MedECC to provide continuity to this important science-policy interface, including through the UNEP/MAP system. The meeting appreciates current support provided by Contracting Parties and further encourages other partners to contribute to the work of MedECC, including through funding.

19. The meeting welcomes the integration in Plan Bleu / RAC statutes as host of the MedECC Secretariat, in line with Plan Bleu / RAC's mandate, which strengthens Plan Bleu / RAC's and the overall UNEP/MAP capacity to deliver on critical issues linked to climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean.

20. The meeting agrees on the proposed activities and outputs in the field of climate change to be included in the draft Programme of Work 2022-2023 and on their further submission to MAP Focal Points.

Agenda Item 6.1: Accompanying transitions towards sustainable development (WD.4 Blue Economy)

21. The meeting of Plan Bleu / RAC's Focal Points welcomes the role of Plan Bleu / RAC in the Interreg Med Programme and notes with appreciation the numerous outputs and the implementation of activities by Plan Bleu / RAC during this biennium and further invites Plan Bleu / RAC to involve non-EU Contracting Parties in these activities whenever feasible.

22. The meeting invites Plan Bleu / RAC's National Focal Points to inform Plan Bleu / RAC about the status of elaboration of potential National Blue Economy Strategies and further invites Plan Bleu to revert this information to all Plan Bleu / RAC National Focal Points.

23. The meeting agrees on the proposed activities and outputs in the field of blue economy to be included in the draft Programme of Work 2022-2023 and on their further submission to MAP Focal Points.

Agenda Item 6.2: Accompanying transition towards sustainable development (WD.5 Living in harmony with nature)

24. The meeting welcomes the role of Plan Bleu / RAC in the Interreg Med Programme and notes with appreciation the numerous outputs and the implementation of activities by Plan Bleu / RAC during this biennium and further invites Plan Bleu / RAC to involve non-EU Contracting Parties in these activities whenever feasible.

25. The meeting agrees on the proposed activities and outputs in the fields of ecosystem restoration (pending external funding) and of Nature-based solutions to be included in the Programme of Work 2022-2023 and on their further submission to MAP Focal Points.

Agenda Item 6.3: Accompanying transitions towards sustainable development (WD.6 Socio-economic analysis and economic instruments)

26. The meeting supports Plan Bleu / RAC's proposal to step up the ambition of, and lead the work in the fields of socio-economic analysis and economic instruments under the framework of the UNEP/MAP - Barcelona Convention system.

27. The meeting agrees on the proposed activities and outputs in the fields of socio-economic analysis and economic instruments to be included in the Programme of Work 2022-2023 and on their further submission to MAP Focal Points.

28. The meeting encourages Plan Bleu / RAC to pursue its involvement in the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Working Group on Programmes of Measures – Economic and Social Analysis (WG POM ESA), representing the UNEP/MAP - Barcelona Convention system as a Regional Seas Convention, and, whenever possible, to establish links between the findings of this working group and the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) in the Mediterranean.

Agenda Item 7: Building regional vision and strategies: Med 2050 and MSSD (WD.7)

29. The meeting recognizes strategic foresight as a complete tool for policy making and evaluation and stresses its relevance for a strategic, long-term and systemic approach to design and implement sustainable development in the Mediterranean.

30. The meeting notes with appreciation the governance structure established for the implementation of MED 2050, in particular the Advisory Committee, which enables guidance by the Contracting Parties, and further encourages Plan Bleu / RAC to implement MED 2050 in a participatory way and to involve all MAP components as relevant.

31. The meeting welcomes the extensive expert work unfolding under module 1 of MED 2050 with the aim of providing a solid knowledge and analytical base on long-term trends, disruptions and weak signals relevant for the Mediterranean region; and further requests Plan Bleu / RAC to inform the Contracting Parties about the outcomes of module 1 in a timely and synthetic manner, via the relevant established governance bodies of MED 2050.

32. The meeting agrees with the further scheduled activities and timetable of MED 2050, building on module 1 to draw up the visions (Module 2), scenarios (Module 3) and transition paths (Module 4).

33. The meeting welcomes Plan Bleu / RAC's efforts to implement local focus projects of MED 2050, to inform forward looking policy making for sustainability transitions at the local scale and encourages Contracting Parties to get involved in or propose focus projects.

34. The meeting requests Plan Bleu/RAC to further implement MED 2050 in an efficient way so as to allow for the establishment of strong links between the outcomes of the strategic foresight MED 2050 and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2026-2035 (MSSD 2026-2035); and further encourages Plan Bleu / RAC to establish relevant exchanges with the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development to ensure that MED 2050 provides outcomes of high relevance for the establishment of the MSSD 2026-2035, taking into account relevant analyses of developments, implementations and measures of progress towards the UN 2030 Agenda in the Mediterranean region.

35. The meeting requests Plan Bleu / RAC to design and implement a specific communication strategy for MED 2050 with the aim of maximizing outreach and impact of MED 2050 as well as stakeholder participation.

36. The meeting agrees on the proposed activities and outputs in the field of foresight to be included in the draft Programme of Work 2022-2023 and on their further submission to MAP Focal Points.

37. The meeting requests Plan Bleu / RAC to reach out to its national focal points to identify potential new candidate Contracting Parties interested in participating in a new round of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER). Should at least three new volunteer countries be identified prior to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points (planned 14-17 September 2021), the meeting requests Plan Bleu / RAC to include a third round of SIMPEER into the Programme of Work 2022-2023.

Agenda item 8: Proposed Plan of Work 2022 - 2023 (WD.8)

38. The meeting welcomes Plan Bleu / RAC's proposed transversal involvement in all seven programmes of the proposed Programme of Work and draft Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027, aligned with Plan Bleu / RAC's transversal mandate, and in cooperation with other MAP components, in support of a systemic approach to sustainably developing the Mediterranean.

39. The meeting appreciates Plan Bleu / RAC's efforts to include emerging subjects in its programme of work, including the One Health Approach in the Mediterranean, or the development of legal indicators to follow up on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and further welcomes that these activities are proposed to be implemented in a collaborative way with other MAP components and partners.

40. The meeting agrees on the proposed Programme of Work 2022-2023 and on its further finalization and submission to MAP Focal Points.

