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12th Meeting of SCP/RAC National Focal Points

Barcelona, Spain, 14-15 May 2019

Conclusions of the 12th ordinary meeting of SCP/RAC National Focal Points

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Conclusions of the 12th Ordinary Meeting of the SCP/RAC National Focal Points
14-15 May 2019, Barcelona (Spain)

General conclusions

The SCP/RAC National Focal Points (hereinafter “NFPs”) expressed their appreciation for the valuable work and notable results achieved by SCP/RAC in the development of its activities under the MAP Programme of Work for the biennium 2018-2019. They congratulated the Centre on its efforts to raise further funds to strengthen actions on the basis of Contracting Parties’ priorities.

They welcomed the draft proposal of the SCP/RAC Programme of Work for 2020-2021 which gives continuity to the activities developed during 2018-2019 biennium and which is fully in line with the Strategic Outcomes and Indicative Key Outputs of several core and crosscutting themes of the MAP Mid-Term Strategy, especially the themes of sustainable consumption and production, land and sea based pollution, biodiversity and ecosystems as well as governance.

On the basis of comments made by the NFPs, SCP/RAC will review the proposed Programme of Work 2020-2021 and transmit the updated version to the MAP Focal Points, sharing it also with the SCP/RAC NFPs.

It was decided that the proposed SCP/RAC-led activities under the above-mentioned themes be recommended for consideration in the MAP PoW.

Moreover, the NFPs took note of the information provided by SCP/RAC on funding resources during biennium 2018-2019. In this regard, the need for Contracting Parties to support SCP/RAC, especially in its operational costs, to enable it to continue its activities in the Mediterranean countries was stressed.

On the progress in the implementation of Regional Action Plan on SCP in the Mediterranean (Hereinafter “SCP Action Plan”)

NFPs took note of the expected reporting on the implementation of the SCP Action Plan, as part of the Contracting Parties’ reporting obligation under the Barcelona Convention. As this is the first time that such reporting on SCP has to be done, MAP Coordinating Unit and SCP/RAC will send further information to clarify the obligations, process and deadlines by the end of May 2019.

In this regard, MAP CU and SCP/RAC stressed the importance of this reporting in order to be able to conduct an appropriate mid-term evaluation of the SCP Action Plan, as requested in Decision IG. 22/5. This evaluation will be conducted during the next biennium and presented at COP22 as decided at the 85th Meeting of the Bureau and communicated to the MAP focal points. It will feed into the preparation process of the next MAP Mid-Term Strategy.

The NFPs welcomed the planned Decision for the next COP21 on Implementation and Monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025 and of the SCP Action Plan. They noted that the proposed decision will include the update of the SCP indicators, the first edition of the Green Business award as flagship initiative of the MSSD as well as the mid-term review process of the SCP Action Plan.

Strong support was expressed for the preparation of a decision on a “Set of regional measures to acknowledge and to support the development of green and circular businesses and to strengthen the

demand for more sustainable products”. This draft decision will build upon the existing commitments made at the regional and global levels (UNEA4, MSSD, SCP Action Plan, MAP MTS) on the need to strongly support green and circular businesses to reach SDGs. This decision is also expected to respond to the NFPs comments according to which support to green and circular businesses requires strong policy backing at the regional and national levels. NFPs took note of the process for the preparation of this decision, as proposed by SCP/RAC.

On activities related to the prevention of plastic pollution and toxic chemicals

The NFPs acknowledged the valuable work developed by SCP/RAC in the framework of the BRS Conventions, in particular the role it plays as a bridge between the Barcelona Convention and the BRS System on marine plastic litter, plastic waste and microplastics.

The NFPs strongly supported the need to strengthen prevention approaches in order to avoid the release of plastic waste and toxic substances into the environment.

In particular, the work of SCP/RAC on the issue of additives in plastics was appreciated and NFPs encouraged further relevant actions in this respect.

The NFPs requested technical assistance to address microplastics intentionally added in products or production processes, as well as on the implementation of circular economy measures in the packaging sector.

On the guidelines on phasing-out single use plastic bags in the Mediterranean

The NFPs congratulated SCP/RAC for the quality of the document, and highlighted its relevance to national efforts to combatting plastic pollution.

On the basis of comments made by the NFPs, SCP/RAC will prepare and circulate a final draft of the Guidelines by the end of May. Thereafter, SCP/RAC is expected to proceed with their submission for the consideration of the MAP Focal Points.

Additionally, the NFPs highlighted the need to strengthen capacities of local authorities on that matter and to further support eco-innovation and research of alternatives to single use plastics.

Further to the preparation of the Guidelines on phasing-out single use plastic bags, NFPs also expressed their wish for SCP/RAC to prepare similar guidelines on measures to phase-out single use plastic items.

On policy support to SCP and circular economy

NFPs highlighted that pilot projects should be framed into long-term strategies and should benefit from the engagement of policy makers and an enabling policy environment to ensure their impact.

Several NFPs referred to their countries’ efforts to decentralise circular economy initiatives and invited SCP/RAC to support them in this endeavour.

NFPs requested further support in order to implement SCP National Action Plan and a related national legal framework.

On the SCP/RAC Support Programme for Green and Circular businesses in the Mediterranean

The SCP/RAC Support Programme to green and circular businesses was welcomed and was recognised as a pioneer initiative in the region.

In this regard, the NFPs expressed appreciation for the continuous support of the EU in the different projects aimed at contributing to SCP/RAC Support Programme, in particular SwitchMed and ENI-CBC Med.

In particular, NFPs welcomed the new approach adopted by SCP/RAC which consists of training of trainers in order to guarantee the ownership of the programme at the national level and the long-term sustainability of its impact.

The access to finance and to markets activities as proposed by SCP/RAC were considered as highly relevant to accompanying circular and green businesses in scaling up their efforts.

NFPs noted the importance of capacity-building to green and circular businesses provided by SCP/RAC in relation to networking, marketing and communication for them to be able to attract financing and increase sales thereby creating new green jobs.

On collaboration with other organisations

Further to the presentations by key SCP/RAC institutional partners, NFPs took note of the recent MoU signed between the BRS Conventions and the Barcelona Convention where areas of cooperation were presented, as well as of the preparation process of the post-2020 initiative coordinated by the UfM Secretariat, which covers circular economy, pollution prevention and reduction, and ecosystems and biodiversity.