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Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Portorož, Slovenia, 5-8 December 2023

Agenda Item 3: Thematic Decisions

Draft Decision 26/12: Proposal by Türkiye on the Establishment of Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change hosted by Türkiye

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Note by the Secretariat

The Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change of the Republic of Türkiye has requested the Secretariat, through the letter sent by its Deputy Minister to the Coordinator on 25 May 2023, to submit for consideration by the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points and, as appropriate COP 23, a draft Decision for the establishment of a new UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change (CC/RAC).

The draft Decision on the establishment of the CC/RAC together with its proposed Mandate and Terms of Reference for its Focal Points, attached as Annexes to the draft Decision, as submitted by Türkiye are presented in the present document. Additional documentation relevant to the proposal of Türkiye on the establishment of CC/RAC are presented as part of the information document UNEP/MED IG.26/Inf.12.

This draft decision and its Annexes was submitted to the Meeting of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Focal Points 2023 (Istanbul, Türkiye, 12-15 September 2023) that decided to transmit it to the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 23) (Portorož, Slovenia, 5-8 December 2023) in square brackets in its entirety.

Decision IG.26/12

**Proposal by Türkiye on the Establishment of Regional Activity Centre
on Climate Change hosted by Türkiye**

The Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols at their 23rd Meeting,

Deeply concerned by the unfolding climate crises and their impact on the Mediterranean region and its marine and coastal environment and by the adverse effects of climate change, with serious economic and social implications,

Conscious that recent extreme events such as deadly floods, draught, and unprecedented wildfires across Mediterranean countries, are symptomatic of the rapidly worsening condition of the climate of the region,

Recognizing the gaps between the gravity of the effects of climate change and the urgency of responding to them, and the ongoing efforts to reduce and prevent such effects by building on and strengthening current regulatory and implementation systems,

Recalling the conclusions of numerous scientific reports and assessments that point to the vulnerability of the Mediterranean basin, as a hotspot for climate change, such as recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the 2020 State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean Report (SoED), and the First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1),

Recalling the Kunming Declaration adopted by the CBD COP 15 part 1 (Kunming, China, 11-15 October 2021) towards the development, adoption and implementation of an effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework; the Glasgow Climate Pact adopted by the UNFCCC COP 26 (Glasgow, UK, 31 October-13 November 2021) towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement objectives as crucial milestones for addressing the threats of biodiversity loss and climate change universally; and the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan adopted by the UNFCCC COP27 (Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, 6-20 November 2022),

Recalling also the relevant United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) Resolutions, as well as Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international instruments, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and instruments regulated under the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS) among others to strengthen the regional dimension of the implementation of climate change activities,

Noting with appreciation the Decisions taken by the Contracting Parties of UNFCCC in COP20 and COP25, expressing the intentions of Parties to cooperate and engage through multilateral, bilateral and regional complementary initiatives that aim to raise awareness and enhance education on climate change and its impacts, opportunities, and co-benefits,

Recalling the Decisions IG.17/5 “Governance” taken at the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, Decision 20/13 taken by the 17th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, Decision IG.25/3 “Governance” taken by the 22nd of the Contracting Parties that aim to ensure an effective MAP governance based on stronger cooperation and integration among MAP Components,

1. *Reiterate* the commitments expressed by the Conference of the Parties in the context of its previous Meetings through political declarations and decisions, and in the context of global and regional inter-governmental processes towards strengthened efforts to build resilience to climate change, to curb greenhouse gas emissions and to provide the necessary finance for both,
2. *Decide* to establish the MAP Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change (CC/RAC) as one of the Components of the MAP system, in accordance with the mandate of the system and the Governance mentioned above,
3. *Admit* the “Mediterranean Climate Change Research Center/Akdeniz İklim Değişikliği Araştırma Merkezi (AIDAM)” Institution at Caferağa, Gürbüz Türk Street. No:38, 34710 Kadıköy/İstanbul, a structure of the Ankara University National Center for the Sea and Maritime Law (DEHUKAM) to be the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change,
4. *Emphasize* that the establishment and operations of the newly established CC/RAC will not bear any cost for the Mediterranean Trust Fund, and accepts with gratitude the generous offer of Türkiye to cover all the establishment and operational costs of the CC/RAC as its Host Country,
5. *Request* the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention to fully collaborate with the CC/RAC, and to appoint national Focal Points for the CC/RAC previous decisions on Governance,
6. *Adopt* the Mandate of the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre, as contained in Annex I. to this Decision, including the following sections, in line with Decision IG.19/5, "Mandates of the Components of MAP":
 - i. Background;
 - ii. Objective and mission statement;
 - iii. Scope of action and key issues;
 - iv. Source of funding;
 - v. Synergies with other Components; and
 - vi. Partnerships.
7. *Adopt* the Terms of Reference for the National Focal Points, as contained in Annex II. to this Decision;
8. *Request* the Secretariat and the MAP Components to ensure that the establishment of the CC/RAC takes place in the most expeditious fashion, and that any implications of such establishment on the programmatic activities of the MAP system be rapidly addressed so as to avoid unnecessary duplications and delays;
9. *Also request* the Secretariat and the MAP Components to collaborate with the CC/RAC for the full and successful implementation of the relevant activities of the MAP system, ensuring full complementarity and maximized synergies, for the benefit of the Mediterranean region and the implementation of global and regional commitments.

Annex I
The Mandate of the Proposed CC-RAC

THE MANDATE OF THE PROPOSED CC-RAC

Background

The Climate Change Regional Activity Center (CC/RAC) [was established by Decision IG.... of the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Portoroz, Slovenia, 4-8 December 2023)] with the aim to work on the impacts of climate change by strengthening collaborative efforts in the Mediterranean as the most effective method to accelerate action and leverage resources.

Objective and Mission Statement

The vision of the CC/RAC takes shape in conformity with the vision, mandate, strategies, and programmes of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. This vision expresses the achievement of increased effectiveness of the work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change, based on values such as participation, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision.

In line with Decision IG.19/5 "Mandates of the Components of MAP", the mission of the CC/RAC is to contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change in the Mediterranean region, in the context of the governance set-up of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, by providing assistance to the Contracting Parties in meeting their obligations under the Convention and Protocols, and in implementing the Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work, as well as the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD). In particular, under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, CC/RAC provides a focal point to complement and support the activities that the MAP-Barcelona System has on climate change, amplify them through the additional availability of expertise and resources, and fill existing gaps for the full execution of the approved Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) and its climate change-related programmes.

The CC/RAC's strategic directions and objectives are coherent with those set out by the Convention and Protocols, the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas, endorsed by Decision IG.22/6 of the 19th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Athens, Greece, 9-12 February 2016), and other relevant COP Decisions, including Medium-Term Strategies and Programmes of Work. In particular:

1. To strengthen the resilience of the Mediterranean natural and socioeconomic systems to climate change by promoting integrated adaptation approaches and better understanding of impacts; and
2. To reduce anthropogenic pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems to maintain their contribution to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Scope of Action and Key Issues

The CC/RAC supports the MAP-Barcelona Convention System on the following main areas of activity: governance (appropriate institutional and policy frameworks, increased awareness and stakeholder engagement, and enhanced capacity building and cooperation); development of best practices for effective and sustainable adaptation to climate change impacts; access to existing and emerging finance mechanisms relevant to climate change adaptation, including international and domestic instruments; and better informed decision-making through research and scientific cooperation and availability and use of reliable data, information, and tools.

The scope of action and key issues of CC/RAC are the following:

- to provide focal point's functions to the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change issues and work;

- to contribute from an expert position to the definition of strategies, policies, programmes and activities of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in the field of climate change, including through cooperation with relevant institutions and organizations;
- to review and evaluate global and regional processes of relevance to the MAP-Barcelona Convention system's work of climate change, and ensure consistency with global commitments and strategies;
- to support strong and cooperative relationships with the other UNEP/MAP Components and with key actors in the field of climate change;
- to incorporate the ecosystem approach adequately in the response to climate change;
- to supervise, coordinate and/or support as appropriate the implementation of climate change related projects consistent with the mandate of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and support technical activities on climate change, including those executed by other MAP Components;
- to promote and support coordinated action at the national, regional, and global levels for the implementation of the climate change-related obligations of Contracting Parties;
- to support Contracting Parties and Partners in developing and executing such action and strengthening commitments on climate change;
- to develop a strategic approach to climate adaptation research in the region involving academic, industry and government bodies and their partnership;
- to enhance the knowledge regarding effects of climate change on the Mediterranean Sea and its coasts;
- to provide a forum for the exchange of information on operational, technical, scientific, legal, and financial matters and support a platform to enhance sharing of knowledge, technical expertise and experiences on climate among Contracting Parties;
- to liaise with NGOs, the academic and scientific community and socioeconomic actors concerned with climate change related issues;
- to train experts;
- to conduct fundraising activities from the public and private sectors to support the activities, projects and programmes to be developed or carried out in the context of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system;
- to bring to the attention of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components relevant contacts, programmes, networks, innovations, etc., that could assist the system in its activities and mandate;
- to support the efficient work of the proposed national Focal Points.

Source of Funding

The principal funding source for the CC/RAC operations and staffing is the Government of Türkiye through the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change. Sources of funding for the activities of CC/RAC include the MTF, voluntary contributions by Contracting Parties, global and regional financing facilities, institutions and programmes, sponsorships, and partnership with the private sector.

Synergies with other Components

The CC/RAC complements and enhances the mandate and on-going work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change, providing the needed focal point where such work gets structured, harmonized and amplified under the guidance of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit, and in coordination with the other Components.

The CC/RAC does not duplicate or compete with the activities on climate change that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system has already in place. Under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, it provides a focal point to complement and support those activities, to amplify them through the additional availability of expertise and resources, and to fill existing gaps for the full execution of the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) and its climate change-related programmes. This enhances the coherence, structure, visibility and impact of the MAP-Barcelona Convention responses to climate change, as it has been demonstrated in other priority areas mandated by the Convention and its Protocols, thanks to the work of the existing MAP components.

Progressively, the CC/RAC takes a leading role in defining and executing the strategies and programmes of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change, leveraging financial resources through projects consistent to the approved Programme of Work, and strengthening the MAP system overall capacities related to programming, implementation, research, information and communication, monitoring and assessment in the field of climate change.

Partnerships

In addition to the Partnerships listed in Decision IG.19/5 “Mandates of the Components of MAP”, Appendix III, others are identified and developed in areas of relevance to the mandate of CC/RAC under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit and in accordance with the governance and programmatic decisions of the Contracting Parties.

Annex II

Terms of Reference for CC/RAC Focal Points

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CC/RAC FOCAL POINTS¹

Designation

The CC/RAC Focal Point shall be designated by the competent Ministry/body of the Contracting Party, in consultation with the MAP Focal Point.

The CC/RAC Focal Point shall be an appropriately empowered person appointed by the governmental/administrative body responsible for environmental and climate change policies.

The name and the function of the designated Focal Point shall be communicated by the MAP Focal Point to the MAP Secretariat and CC/RAC Director, as well as to concerned bodies in the Contracting Party.

Tasks

CC/RAC Focal Points shall be responsible for:

- Maintaining the relationship between CC/RAC and Contracting Party bodies;
- Contributing to the preparation of CC/RAC Focal Point meetings through comments and proposals either made on their own initiative or relating to documents prepared by CC/RAC, after consultation with Contracting Party bodies as necessary;
- Attending meetings of the Focal Points and reporting on their conclusions to governmental/administrative bodies and MAP Focal Points;
- Disseminating CC/RAC technical and information documents, guidelines, studies, etc., to concerned Contracting Party bodies;
- Following, in consultation with MAP Focal Points, the implementation of relevant decisions and recommendations of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties;
- Liaising with NGOs, the academic and scientific community and socioeconomic actors concerned with CC/RAC activities;
- Communicating to MAP Focal Points all information and documents needed for the execution of out their tasks;
- Assisting CC/RAC to obtain other useful information by identifying relevant sources and key contact persons;
- Liaising with local representatives of international financial facilities, institutions and programmes for the support of projects related to the implementation of CC/RAC activities;
- Producing, where necessary, joint publications with CC/RAC;
- Assisting CC/RAC in the identification of relevant experts for specific initiatives or consultations;

Support Measures

In order to fulfil their tasks; it is advisable for CC/RAC Focal Points to receive the following support, as appropriate:

¹ In accordance with Decision IG 17/5: Governance paper

Contracting Party bodies shall:

- Associate CC/RAC Focal Points with the formulation and implementation of Contracting Party policies, strategies, and projects on adaptation and mitigation of climate change;
- Provide CC/RAC Focal Points with adequate resources as required for the execution of their tasks, within the context of broader fiscal and staffing policies and priorities in the Contracting Party;
- Transmit to CC/RAC Focal Points all necessary information, in particular for following up those recommendations of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties addressed to the Contracting Parties.

CC/RAC shall:

- Provide CC/RAC Focal Points with all information needed for the execution of their tasks, including technical details considered useful for proper understanding and evaluation;
- Provide support, including appropriate training, to CC/RAC Focal Points to enable them to carry out their tasks.]