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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

3rd Meeting of EcAp Coordination Group

Athens, Greece, 9 September 2013

Report

3rd Meeting of the EcAp Coordination Group

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Introduction

1. The Third Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group addressed the draft Decision on the Ecosystems Approach (to be presented to COP 18 for adoption, after its consideration by the meeting of MAP Focal Points between 10-13 September 2013).

2. In particular, it (1) agreed on the proposed integrated list of targets and GES, which are related to those indicators where available data makes this realistic at the present time while establishing a process on further implementation of the EcAp Roadmap in relation to all ecological objectives (EOs); (2) set out the process for progressing on monitoring and assessment (in Correspondence Groups on Monitoring and Assessment, COR MON), (3) considered further issues to be addressed in the decision on EcAp as proposed by the Secretariat in Document WG.386/3 (the **Draft Decision**) and reflected below.

Participation

3. The meeting was attended by the members of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group (EcAp CG) from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Union (EU), France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and Tunisia.

4. The Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), the Pollution Programme (MEDPOL), the Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC), the Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC), the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) and the Cleaner Production Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC), the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), and the Regional Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC) were also represented at the meeting.

5. The following institutions and organizations were represented by observers: the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), United Nations Development Programme-Turkey (UNDP-Turkey), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Global Footprint Network, the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA), the Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles (MEDASSET), the Mediterranean SOS Network, the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), UNEP-MAP/MED Partnership and the PEGASO and PERSEUS Projects.

6. The list of participants is attached as **Annex II** to this report.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

7. The Meeting was opened on the 9th September 2013 by the Barcelona Convention Executive Secretary and Coordinator of UNEP/MAP, Ms Maria Luisa Silva Mejias by welcoming the participants.

Agenda Item 2-3: Scope and purpose of the meeting and election of officers and adoption of the agenda

8. Following informal consultations, the meeting elected its officers as follows:

Chairman:	Victor Escobar, Spain
Vice-Chairpersons:	Samira Nateche, Algeria Georges Akl, Lebanon
Rapporteur:	Charalambos Hajipakkos, Cyprus

Agenda Item 4: Discussion of Mediterranean Good Environmental Status and Targets

9. The Parties provided their comments on the Secretariat's proposal and endorsed the revised draft list of GES and Targets, as included in the revised Draft Decision.

10. Written comments recently provided by ACCOBAMS and by MEDASSET were presented at the meeting and oral comments were also provided by GFCM, HELMEPA and the PEGASO project representatives.

11. The MEDASSET recommendation to include one more turtle species (*Dermochelys coriacea* (Vandelli, 1761) in Annex I of the Draft Decision was endorsed by RAC/SPA and was agreed by the parties.

12. ACCOBAMS Secretariat presented information on GES and Targets regarding ecological objective 11, which will be presented to the ACCOBAMS scientific Committee in their meeting in November 2013. The meeting suggested that after this meeting the suggested targets and GES should be presented in the first COR-GEST meeting following COP18.

13. GFCM gave information on the foreseen process on improving EO3 in cooperation with UNEP MAP and through the by Italy funded sub-regional project in this regard. Upon the Chair's request, GFCM agreed to prepare a note describing the objectives, activities and timeline of completing the necessary information related to the EO3 tables, to be discussed further with the Secretariat, while noting that processes should be accelerated to ensure due consideration by relevant COR Groups.

14. PEGASO informed the EcAp COR Group that land-use maps of the Mediterranean, as well as statistic change of land-use on sub-regional, regional and national level will be available soon, which will be an accessible reference for further work on coast related ecological objectives.

15. Based on the discussions and comments above, the parties requested the Secretariat to:

- Develop by COP18 guidelines on how to implement the list of GES and targets, further specifying its definitions, including indicators and explaining links and foreseen future steps, as well as clarifying reasons of delays in the EcAp process;
- Produce an Information Document on the GES and Targets which needs to be further developed;
- Work closely with the GFCM to present to the next EcAp COR Group the cooperation details (process, milestones) on addressing EO3 inside the EcAp process;

- Address and analyze further the possible role of UNEP MAP regarding climate change, inside the EcAp process (including mitigation, to the extent MAP is competent);
- In relation to Harmful Algal Booms note that there is a need to continue work on this issue during the next biennium and include formal 9.5.2 of the GES and Targets list of the draft COP decision to the Annex of the Secretariat Note on GES/Targets to be further developed.

16. In order for parties to have the chance to timely contribute to the further development of the GES and targets which are not included in the current Draft Decision and to feed into the Information Note to be prepared by the Secretariat in this regard, the Chair requested the parties to provide their written comments to the Secretariat on Annex III of the Secretariat Explanatory Note on the EcAp process (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.386/Inf.3) by 30 September 2013.

17. In addition some participants highlighted in relation to EO7 the importance of adaptation (and of adaptation plans).

18. Others asked for specific reference in relation to the GES and targets table to the agreed specifications of the SPA/RAC Rabat meeting of July 2013 and of the pollution substances list of the MEDPOL FPs Aix-En Provence 2009 meeting (while it was noted by some participants that this latter needs to be updated in line with EcAp).

Agenda item 5: Discussion of process on Integrated Monitoring and Integrated Assessment needs under EcAp

19. Based on the Secretariat's presentation, the countries endorsed the modified Annex II of the Decision in relation to the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme, with additional clarifications in relation to the process also in the Draft Decision.

20. In addition, they requested the Secretariat, to give additional information addressing the previous and current monitoring work of UNEP MAP in more detail specifically highlighting the achievements of MEDPOL in this regard, with further explanation on it regarding the whole cycle of EcAp.

21. The parties encouraged the Secretariat to start working early on a draft methodology for the COR MON groups consideration and to assess regarding this further data availability on regional and sub-regional level and clarify definitions also regards the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme.

22. It was also stated by the parties that COR MON should take into consideration the current monitoring obligations of parties and ensure that no parallel obligations will be created.

Agenda Item 6: Discussion of the Economic and Social Analysis, on-going work and beyond

23. The Plan Bleu/RAC representative provided an update on the progress of this action since the last EcAp Coordination Group meeting held in Athens in April 2013 in terms of results achieved and presented proposals for the assessment of the socioeconomic impacts of the future coordinated programmes of measures.

24. Parties welcomed the presentation and highlighted that there is a need to ensure coherence between the terminology used in all EcAp work, documents, including COR ESA documents.

Agenda Item 7: Discussion of draft EcAp related COP decision and its related Annexes (other than ones related to Agenda items 5 and 6)

25. The Secretariat presented the rest of the Draft Decision, with a focus on the EcAp timeline.

26. Parties endorsed the revised Annexes of the draft decision, with corresponding changes in the Consideranda and in the Operational paragraphs of the Draft Decision.

27. Regarding the EcAp timeline, parties requested the Secretariat to insert links with corresponding activities of the 2014-2015 Programme of Work.

28. Regarding Governance, parties asked COR ESA terms of reference to include links with sustainable development and green economy in the context of EcAp and asked that clarification regarding the role of National Focal Points being the EcAp CG members to be included in the text.

29. Regarding the data-sharing principles, parties asked clarification on the development of these principles (to be undertaken by COR MON).

30. Regarding the SAP BIO priorities the parties stated that Annex VI needs further mainstreaming of EcAp. Thus, they decided not to include this Annex in the Draft Decision.

31. The participants endorsed Annex VII of the Draft Decision, while based on the proposal of the Chair, also asked the revision of the document, referring in every place by mandates to “the Secretariat in cooperation with the relevant MAP component”.

32. Under AOB, reflecting on the recent meeting that took place on the subject in Madrid, Spain presented and distributed a non-paper called “Towards a Mediterranean perspective in the context of the Common Implementation Strategy Work Program for the MSFD (CIS-WP)”, reflecting the discussions on this topic of the EU Mediterranean countries.

Agenda item 8: Adoption of recommendations and conclusions

33. The parties adopted the above recommendations and conclusions together with the revised Draft Decision. Egypt and Israel noted their reservations on the footnote referring to the Suez Canal by Annex I, the GES and Targets Table 2.1 of the Draft Decision. In addition, Italy mentioned that it will propose two additional targets based on Article 10 of the Marine Litter Regional Plan.

Agenda item 9: Closure of the meeting

34. Following the usual exchange of courtesies, the Chairperson closed the meeting on 9 September 2013 at 19.30.

Annex I

Agenda

- Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting (09.00-09.15)
- Agenda Item 2-3: Scope and purpose of the meeting and election of officers and adoption of the agenda (09:15-09.30)
- Agenda Item 4: Discussion of Mediterranean Good Environmental Status and Targets (09:30-11:30)
- Agenda item 5: Discussion of process on Integrated Monitoring and Integrated Assessment needs under EcAp (11.45-13.00)
- Agenda Item 6: Discussion of the Economic and Social Analysis, on-going work and beyond (13.00-13.30)
- Agenda Item 7: Discussion of draft EcAp related COP decision and its related Annexes (other than ones related to Agenda items 5 and 6) (15.00-16.30)
- Agenda item 8: Adoption of recommendations and conclusions (17:30-18:30)
- Agenda Item 9: Closure of the meeting (18:30)

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