

I. The Purpose of this Document

1. It is expected to reach two outcomes from the Workshop on the Application of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) by MAP, which will also be the first meeting of EcAp Coordinating Group:
 - to agree on methodologies for setting targets related to the Ecological and Operational Objectives;
 - to agree on the proposed context and the timeline of the EcAp process by MAP in 2012-2013 biennium.
2. This document is prepared with the objective of providing basic information on the background of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) process in the Mediterranean and addressing the emerging issues that will shape the implementation framework of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean in 2012-2013 biennium.

II. Background

3. The Barcelona Convention and its seven Protocols represent a political and legal framework for the protection of the marine environment and the coastal areas of the Mediterranean region.
4. The ecosystems approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promoted conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. The Parties to the Barcelona Convention have engaged into a process to implement the ecosystems approach in the Mediterranean, the ultimate objective of which is to influence the management of human activities.
5. UNEP/MAP Programme of work with regard to ecosystem approach (EcAp) is ambitious with the view to implementing the roadmap adopted by the Parties in 2008, through Decision IG 17/6 and an important vehicle for advancing the implementation of EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2008/56/EC). Contracting Parties decisions reflect the wish to strengthen cooperation and seek synergies with EU initiatives such as the Water framework Directive and the MSFD to achieve a shared vision of **“a healthy Mediterranean with marine and biological ecosystems that are productive and biologically diverse for the benefit of present and future generations”**.
6. Through Decision IG.17/6, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have committed to progressively apply the Ecosystem Approach to the management of human activities with the goal of effecting real change in the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment. Parties agreed that the ecological vision of the Ecosystem Approach to be realized through the following strategic goals:
 - i. To protect, allow recovery, and where practicable, restore the structure and function of marine and coastal ecosystems – thus also protecting marine biodiversity – in order to achieve and maintain good ecological status allowing for sustainable use.
 - ii. To reduce pollution in the marine and coastal environment so as to ensure that there are no significant impacts or risks to human and/or ecosystem health and/or on the uses of the sea and the coasts.
 - iii. To preserve, enhance, and restore a balance between human activities and natural resources in the sea and the coasts and reduce their vulnerability to risks.

7. In addition, Decision IG.17/6 outlines a roadmap for the implementation of the ecosystem approach. The roadmap consists of several subsequent steps:
 - a. Development of the vision and strategic goals;
 - b. provide for undertaking of an assessment of marine and coastal properties and pressures including a socio economic analysis;
 - c. development of ecological objectives, operational objectives and respective indicators;
 - d. development of good environmental status and targets;
 - e. the monitoring programmes that takes into account the agreed EA indicators, as appropriate; and finally,
 - f. to undertake the necessary management measures and programmes to achieve Good Environmental Status.

Moreover, the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention 5 year Programme of Work adopted at the Contracting Parties meeting in Marrakesh in 2009, considers EcAp as its overarching priority cutting across its six thematic areas.

8. Since 2009, various efforts took place for supporting the implementation of the first steps of the roadmap' in particular:
 - i. Four regional technical meetings, held successfully in Rome on 8-9 April 2010, in Barcelona on 6-7 July 2010, in Istanbul on 10-11 March 2011 and in Durres on 2-3 June 2011, with participation of almost all Contracting Parties, with the objective to ensure full ownership of the Contracting Parties for the successful implementation of the other subsequent steps of the ecosystem approach roadmap;
 - ii. The Integrated Assessment of the Mediterranean Ecosystem, which was peer reviewed by countries and GESAMP;
 - iii. The 11 Ecological Objectives (Biodiversity, Non-indigenous species, Harvest of commercially exploited fish and shellfish, Marine food webs, Eutrophication, Sea-floor integrity, Hydrography, Coastal ecosystems and landscapes, Pollution, Marine litter, and Energy including underwater noise) and corresponding 28 operational objectives and 61 indicators (all adopted by COP 17); and,
 - iv. The EcAp timeline for the next 10 years fully aligned with the MSFD implementation process.
9. At their 17th Meeting of Contracting Parties (COP 17) held in Paris from 8 to 10 February 2012, the Parties have taken note of the progress made and have further emphasized the priority nature of all EcAp related activities for all MAP Components during 2012 and 2013 and mandated the update of a number of MAP regional sectorial policies as provided for in the 5 year strategic programme of work of MAP, thus giving an excellent opportunity to take into account, as appropriate, the results of ecosystem approach implementation in their revision, as well as to harmonize their implementation within the EcAp concept.
10. In particular, Decision 20/4 on "Implementing the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap" validated the work done so far with regard to the 11 ecological objectives, operational objectives and indicators for the Mediterranean which is aligned with the work under the EU MSFD and other related EU legislation. The COP 17 also adopted the timeline for implementing the ecosystem approach until 2019 and established a six-year cyclic review process of its implementation. (The Ecological Objectives and the timeline is provided as a Reference Document - Decision IG.20/4 "Implementing MAP ecosystem

approach roadmap: Mediterranean Ecological and Operational Objectives, Indicators and Timetable for implementing the ecosystem approach roadmap”)

11. With regard to future actions the 17th Contracting Parties meeting mandated the Secretariat to mobilize its full capacity with the support of MEDPOL and the Regional Activity Centers, in order to:
- Prepare an **integrated monitoring programme** based on the agreed ecosystem approach indicators with the participation of and contribution from all MAP components and with a leadership role by MED POL and in cooperation with other regional competent organizations such as the Secretariats of GFCM, ICCAT and ACCOBAMS;
 - Work on the determination of **Mediterranean Good Environmental Status (GES) and targets** during the next biennium through a participatory process involving MAP components, contracting parties and scientific community, with the leadership role by the Coordinating Unit with the view of submitting the proposed Mediterranean GES and targets by the meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2013;
 - Prepare in cooperation with Contracting Parties, MAP components and competent partner organizations and with a leadership role by Blue Plan an **in-depth socio-economic analysis** developed through a common methodology for the consideration of the Contracting Parties meeting at its 18th meeting;
 - Develop a MAP-Barcelona Convention **policy on assessments** in the framework of the implementation of the EcAp
 - Work in 2012-2013, with SPA/RAC, with the national authorities and the relevant organisations to (i) evaluate the progress made so far in the **implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the conservation of Biodiversity in the Mediterranean (SAPBIO)** adopted by the 13th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Catania, 2003); (ii) to define the orientations of SAPBIO at national and regional levels for the coming years, in accordance with the Mediterranean Ecological Objectives and the Aichi targets; and, (iii) to investigate options for ensuring appropriate financial support for the **implementation of SAPBIO at national and regional levels**;
 - Establish and make operational, through INFO/RAC, by 2013, at the latest, **an information system** to support the implementation of ecosystem approach and MAP integrated monitoring system;
 - Develop with the participation of and contribution from all MAP components and with a leadership role by INFO/RAC a **MAP/Barcelona Convention data sharing policy**, taking into account the SEIS data sharing principles and with due consideration of access rights and confidentiality for the consideration of MAP Focal Points and 18th Contracting Parties meeting;
 - Ensure the **implementation of this decision** through the operational activities of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its integration in the next Strategic and 2-year Programme of work;
 - Ensure that MAP/Barcelona Convention regional policies become coherent with the ecosystem approach progress and outcome and in particular to consider systematically the EcAp indicators when coordinating work of the various MAP components, or evaluating efficiency of MAP actions;

- Consider the work carried out for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach by all MAP components where appropriate;
- Undertake under the guidance of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties the necessary analysis to **enhance MAP/Barcelona Convention governance structure** with the view to implementing the ecosystem approach for the consideration of the 18th meeting of the Contracting Parties;
- Continue **supporting the Contracting Parties** in their efforts to implement the other steps of the road map according to the agreed timeline and enhance cooperation with partners and stakeholders and other global and regional process in particular with the EU common MSFD implementation strategy;
- **Mobilize resources** for supporting financially the application of ecosystem approach by MAP as a means to effectively achieve the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention.

III. Application of the Ecosystem Approach in 2012-2013 biennium

12. To fulfill COP requirements, starting with this biennium, the Ecosystem Approach becomes UNEP/MAP's core implementation strategy. It is planned to address issues related to the implementation of the EcAp road-map during this biennium by:
 - i. Facilitating concrete actions towards achieving the agreed 11 priority ecological objectives through the establishment of methodologies for defining Good Ecological Status and targets;
 - ii. Revising and/or adopting monitoring programmes and management measures;
 - iii. Further fostering integration of the sectorial approaches under UNEP/MAP Strategies and Plans of Actions, with a view to strengthen the ability to better understand and address cumulative risks and effects as well as enhancing impact of responses; and,
 - iv. Consolidating MAP strategies and action plans in a harmonized and synergistic implementation cycle which is adapted to evolving priorities and is periodically monitored, evaluated and revised on a six years basis.

It should be noted that while other UNEP/MAP initiatives also contribute to the implementation of measures relevant for the EcAp, as well as its information requirements, in this document, central issues will be addressed related to the implementation of the EcAp road-map during this biennium, such as establishing targets and good environmental status, the integrated monitoring system, the revision and launching of sectorial strategies, the governance of the application of EcAp and the socio-economic assessment as well some dimensions of the relevant measures.

13. More specifically, to support implementation activities related to the EcAp in UNEP/MAP's Programme of Work and in particular to mobilize the capacity of the Coordinating Unit, the MAP components and that of its partners to achieve the mandates received in Decision IG.20/4 on "Implementing MAP ecosystem approach roadmap" at COP17 in Paris, the efforts for this biennium are organized around five specific results which capture the main deliverables under the Decision and further

strengthen the application of the seven steps¹ for the implementation of the EcAp agreed in 2008.

These are:

- a. **Assessment (step iii).** Complement the integrated assessment of the Mediterranean Ecosystem with a socio-economic assessment and establish an assessment cycle by developing a UNEP/MAP policy on assessments of the marine and coastal environment to be periodically implemented;
- b. **Targets and Good Environmental Status (step VI).** Work on methodologies for the determination of good environmental status and target for each of the 11 agreed Ecological Objectives;
- c. **Monitoring (step vi).** Prepare an integrated monitoring system based on the indicators and targets;
- d. **Develop and review relevant measures for implementation of EcAp (step vii).** The UNEP/MAP Programme of Work foresees updates and revisions of regional measures and sectorial policies in accordance with the Ecosystem Approach;
- e. **Overall governance of the Ecosystem Approach.**

A. FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION OF EcAp STEPS

Adoption of an integrated assessment policy

14. The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have undertaken several sectorial assessments based on which regional policies to guide the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols have been developed and adopted. Such assessments and policies are revised on a regular basis in order to take into account emerging issues and progress achieved. Nevertheless, there is a need to improve the efficiency of their implementation with more holistic approaches that avoid overlapping and harmonize the assessment cycle. For this reason, the 5 year programme of work (2010-2015) has already identified the need for an integrated assessment policy. The Integrated Assessment of the Mediterranean Ecosystem underlines the need to strengthen the ability to better understand and address cumulative risks due to the increase of multiple conflictive uses of the Mediterranean space.
15. It is planned to establish an integrated policy on assessments for all of UNEP/MAP priority sectorial policies and Action Plans with a common time frame and the synergies to be established between them, in order to take into account ecological objectives and progress in their implementation in a coherent and consistent manner. In this process, the gaps identified in these assessments will be systematically addressed. Specifically,

¹ The Ecosystem Approach entails countries participating in a seven step process:

- i. Articulating a vision for the Mediterranean Sea and coastal areas.
- ii. Establishing clear strategic goals for the process.
- iii. Undertaking an initial assessment to determine ecosystem properties, ecological status and pressures, as well as to identify gaps in information.
- iv. Setting ecological objectives based on the above assessment, to reflect priorities coherent with an ecosystem approach to management.
- v. Identifying indicators and targets related to those objectives.
- vi. Setting up a monitoring plan to ensure that progress towards an Ecosystem Approach is indeed being made.
- vii. Developing issue-specific or area-specific management plans.

the integrated policy assessments will include formulation of a MAP policy regarding assessment, identification of needs for undertaking thematic assessments per ecological objective and undertaking preparatory activities leading to transform the UNEP/MAP State of the Mediterranean Environment Reports (SoMER) into Quality Status Reports. The process of integrated policy development on assessments will be led by the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit, in close cooperation with all components and particularly Blue Plan/RAC, SPA/RAC and MEDPOL. A proposal in this regard will be prepared and submitted to the next EcAp Coordinating Group meeting, tentatively scheduled for February 2013.

16. The process of the preparation of the integrated assessment policy will start by a stocktaking analysis of current situation (planned to take place in the first half of 2013), followed by analysis of challenges, requirements and elements of EcAp Approach and internal consultations within MAP System (by October 2013). The integrated cyclical assessment policy for MAP, according to the guidance received by the COP, will be finalized in first half of 2014.
17. It is also envisaged to complement the integrated assessment through developing by 2014 a **socio-economic assessment of the Mediterranean**, which further develops the preliminary study on ecosystem services carried out by Blue Plan/RAC - UNEP/MAP during the previous biennium. Consideration of social and economic dimensions is important to elaboration the programs of measures aiming to achieve or maintain the GES. This process is expected to be influential for a common understanding and a fair appropriation of EcAp principles by Mediterranean coastal countries. Based on a terms of reference and the roadmap to be discussed (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG. 369/5 "Economic and Social Analysis" Terms of Reference) and agreed by parties during this Workshop, the socio-economic assessment will be presented as a major Mediterranean contribution to the UN Regular Process of the General Assembly on the state of the marine environment including socio-economic aspects, in accordance with the Paris Declaration, adopted by COP17 in February 2012.
18. These efforts will support the definition of the program of measures needed to achieve the EcAp strategic objectives and will contribute among others to the development of targets at regional, sub-regional and national levels. They will enable the contracting parties to establish a common understanding and standards with regard to the analysis to be undertaken and impacts to be taken into account while deciding on targets, as well as common methodologies including the scale of the assessment per ecological objectives adopted at COP17.
19. The process will involve elaborating a common understanding through close consultation and negotiation with countries including through the established EcAp structure and the establishment of an ad hoc working group with the Parties, as required. It will also require internal consultation and mobilization of technical external expertise, collaboration frames with the MAP system and other partners and workshops with the representatives of the contracting Parties.

The development of Good Environmental Status and targets for the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal region

20. Once the overall methodology for defining targets, which are lunched during this meeting are agreed, specific targets, indicators and thresholds will be established for each of the 11 Ecological Objectives of the EcAp for the Mediterranean Sea and coastal region with a new approach to agree on good environment quality and ecological status. The process will be led by the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit, with the involvement of all MAP

components. This will require a combination of the following activities:

- Identification and consultation with regard to GES and targets: technical workshops with regional, sub regional and national experts, scientific expert advice on GES and targets;
 - Scientific assistance to Secretariat;
 - Existing Data gathering, data gap analysis, analysis of available data through consultations processes for 11 ecological objectives and their associated indicators;
 - Proposal to the Contracting Parties meeting in 2013 of GES and targets, for those that data would be available and subject to agreement by the Contracting parties.
21. Contracting Parties ownership will be generated and enhanced through an intensive consultation process, during which the parties will be deciding on policy level. The continuation of the work by ad hoc ecosystem approach working groups.
22. The process of the development of GES and targets is envisaged to be carried out through the series of workshops of these working groups. It is proposed to structure the working groups under **Pollution and Litter, Biodiversity and Fisheries, and ICZM** clusters. The number of workshops and content of clusters with reference to the Ecological Objectives is expected to be agreed in this Workshop. It is planned to finalize this process by the end of 2012, and submit the outcomes to EcAp Coordinating Group meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for February 2013.

Preparation of a regional integrated monitoring programme for ongoing assessment of the quality of the marine and coastal environment

23. An important effort in this biennium will be designing an updated integrated monitoring system for the Mediterranean to fit the data needs to assess progress towards GES achievement. The expected regional monitoring programme will take into account the agreed ecosystem approach indicators including biodiversity related. The integrated monitoring programme will be prepared by MED POL in cooperation with SPA/RAC (with contribution from PAP/RAC and REMPEC where appropriate), in line with the EcAp Ecological Objectives, Operational Objectives relevant targets and indicators. The summary of the process is as follows:
- a. Mobilisation of the necessary scientific and technical expertise, including national experts, research projects (i.e. PERSEUS, CoCoNet and others), and international/regional institutions' experts groups (i.e. other Regional seas Conventions around Europe, IUCN, CIESM, etc.);
 - b. organisation of technical consultation meetings;
 - c. coordination and consultation within MAP system and with other regional bodies where appropriate as per their respective mandates;
 - d. submission of the proposal to MAP decision making bodies;
 - e. assessment of countries needs to implement the integrated monitoring programme; and,
 - f. capacity building activities in countries in cooperation with on-going initiatives (i.e. PERSEUS).
24. The initial phase of the process will include the mobilization of the necessary scientific and technical expertise through the organization of technical consultation meetings,

synergies and coordination with other Partner organizations for elaboration and implementation platform of the integrated monitoring programme. The process is explained under “C-GOVERNANCE OF EcAp” chapter.

25. Needs assessment for capacity building and technical assistance to countries based on the requirements identified providing an indication of the needs for drafting national monitoring programmes is planned to take place in 2014. This work will include preparation of assessment on national and regional needs, review of the assessment by the countries and finalization of the assessment by the end of 2014.

B. MAINSTREAMING EcAp INTO SECTORIAL POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND MEASURES

26. The UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention has already developed several systems to enhance the quality and management of the marine environment and its resources many of which are planned to be revised in the course of the current biennium including SAP BIO, SAP MED and others. All those revisions as foreseen in the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work will be undertaken through the specific measures and mechanisms identified in the Programme of Work taking into account the progress achieved in the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach both in terms of the objectives to be achieved as well as in terms of the harmonized timeline and cycle agreed.
27. Regarding the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region (SAP BIO), work in 2012-2013, with the national authorities and the relevant organizations will focus on:
 - i. evaluating the progress made so far in the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the conservation of Biodiversity in the Mediterranean (SAPBIO);
 - ii. defining the orientations of SAPBIO at national and regional levels for the coming years, in accordance with the Mediterranean Ecological Objectives and the Aichi targets; and,
 - iii. investigating options for ensuring appropriate financial support for the implementation of SAPBIO at national and regional levels.
28. The EcAp timeline provides for reviewing and developing of Action Plans and Programmes of measures to take into account the EcAp application progress and update as appropriate of NAPs and SAPs to reflect the targets and commitments under the regional plans. In this respect the evaluation of NAPs and SAP MED implementation that is expected to start soon will be the first activity that would review progress achieved and propose the necessary recommendation on how to mainstream and integrate EcAp in the NAP/SAP update and the Regional Plans/measures elaboration.
29. In view of the recent entry into force of the Offshore Protocol, as requested by the Contracting Parties in Decision IG.20/12 adopted during their 17th Ordinary Meeting, an ad hoc working group established by the Coordinating Unit, coordinated by REMPEC and composed of representatives of the Contracting Parties and observers from representatives of the concerned industries, relevant international organizations and MAP partners will, subject to the availability of human and financial resources, carry out an assessment and analysis of the existing practical measures in place in the Mediterranean countries with regard to Offshore activities as a baseline to measure progress towards Protocol implementation in the future. Moreover, subject to the availability of resources, the ad hoc working group will draft an action plan for the

implementation of the Offshore Protocol, including indicators and socio economic information (to be defined in a later stage) relevant to future phases of ecosystem assessments. In carrying out the above work related to offshore activities in the Mediterranean, every effort will be made to mainstream EcAp in the regional Mediterranean policy on this sector and in the related monitoring programme for the ongoing assessment of the quality of the marine and coastal environment.

30. Ecosystem Approach being one of the principles of ICZM, as stated in Art. 6c of the ICZM Protocol, PAP/RAC will continue its efforts in creating the enabling environment for the implementation of the EcAp achievements, in particular through CAMP projects and its activities related to ICZM strategies and plans. In this, special attention will be paid to the creation of appropriate governance mechanisms that, among others, allow for the integration of land and sea parts of the coastal zone as defined by the ICZM Protocol in its Art. 3. This will be also reflected in the PAP/RAC's work on methodologies and tools for ICZM. Together with its partners in the EU FP7 "PEGASO" project, PAP/RAC has already started developing coastal indicators defined within EcAp while in the "MedPartnership" project the ecosystem approach is in the focus of the Integrated Management Framework (IMF) that is being developed for integrated coastal and river basin management. Two pilot projects to test this converging management approach have already started, namely "The Transboundary Buna/Bojana Project" in Albania and Montenegro, and "The Reghaia Project" in Algeria.
31. *CP/RAC's preliminary study on the SCP role in the implementation of the MAP's ecosystem approach to human activities:* CP/RAC has developed a study on tools to assess on one hand the impact that current human patterns of production and consumption have on the Mediterranean ecosystem and on the other hand the potential of SCP tools in the identification of priorities to adapt human activities to the MAP's ecosystem approach ecological objectives. Indeed, the study tries to identify the main human activities impacting on the Mediterranean Sea, assess the upstream and downstream drivers to these activities that exert as result a pressure on the Mediterranean, and how they reflect on the ecological objectives. This mapping is used to do an analysis on how specific SCP tools can address the upstream and downstream drivers of impacting activities to lay off the environmental pressures on the ecosystems and thereby show the SCP benefits to the environment. CP/RAC has in his Work Plan for the biennium some activities focused on the integration between SCP and Ecosystem Management Approach, through:
 - Capacity development on green entrepreneurship targeting new entrepreneurs providing technical support to develop, to scale-up their business projects and create new green local employment opportunities;
 - Award for innovation for green economy granted to an entrepreneurship project initiative and disseminated among Mediterranean countries; and,
 - Clean Production audits to boost the adoption of green competitiveness (GRECO) as tool for Mediterranean companies to succeed in the global market.

C. GOVERNANCE OF EcAp

32. Until the COP 17 Decision IG.20/4, the work for the implementation of EcAp has been guided by the Government-designated expert (GDE) group supported by the meetings of the technical expert group, the MAP Coordinating Unit and MAP components (in particular MED POL, SPA/RAC and BP/RAC) that have provided substantive, scientific and technical support to its deliverables.

33. As per the decision of COP 17, the Government Designated Experts Group will be replaced by an EcAp Coordination Group (CG) consisting of MAP focal points, the Coordinating Unit, the MAP components and MAP partners to oversee the implementation of the ecosystem approach, identifying progress gaps in the implementation of the road map and finding feasible solutions for the advancement of the EcAp agenda. The group will validate at policy level and in an integrated manner the results of the scientific and technical work carried out at regional and sub-regional level and prepare the necessary draft decisions for the MAP and CPs meetings' consideration.
34. In accordance with the EcAp decision , EcAp Coordination Group CG shall integrate and give guidance to the work of UNEP/MAP through:
 - a. Delivery of the ecosystem approach, making sure that all elements for its implementation are taken into account, weighting of priorities and resource implications;
 - b. Coordinating the facilitation by UNEP/MAP of Contracting Parties in their implementation of EcAp.
35. In addition, implementation of EcAp demands constant coordination and coherence of activities through UNEP/MAP sectorial activities and components as well as an intense programming cycle with tight deadlines for which the UNEP/MAP will put additional efforts to meet the requirements of effective programming and coordination.
36. Three working groups will be formed in the process of application of EcAp in the Mediterranean:
 - a. *Working Group on GES and Targets (WG-GEST)*: The WG-GEST will be composed of national experts designated by the Contracting Parties. In order to ensure efficient coverage and in-depth discussions and analysis of all EOs within budgetary limitations, it is proposed to form 3 sub-groups, which are Biodiversity and Fisheries related EOs (EOs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6), pollution and litter related EOs (EOs 5, 9, 10 and 11), and ICZM related EOs (EOs 7 and 8). A relevant Regional Thematic Expert will be assigned to provide technical assistance to the work of the sub-group. The expected outcome of the WG-GESTS is determination of Mediterranean Good Environmental Status (GES) and targets through a participatory process involving contracting parties and MAP components with the view of submitting the proposed Mediterranean GES and targets by the meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2013. The UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit, in coordination with the components, will assist in the coordination of the work of the sub-groups and ensure consolidation of the outcomes into one single document to be submitted to the EcAp CG for endorsement.
 - b. *Working Group on Monitoring (WG-MON)*: The WG-MON will follow the similar structure and the process. Its work will take the outcomes of WG-GEST into consideration and will be coordinated by MEDPOL in cooperation with all relevant RACs. The expected outcome of the WG-MON will be the methodology to be applied for the preparation of the integrated monitoring programme, which will be submitted to EcAp CG for endorsement.

- c. *Working Group on economic and social analysis (WG-ESA)*: The WG-ESA will be composed of national experts designated by the Contracting Parties, and its work will be coordinated by Blue Plan/RAC. The WG-ESA will further develop a socio economic analysis of marine ecosystems uses, focusing on priority sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, maritime transport, recreational activities, oil industry and offshore; the overall objective being to elaborate a common understanding and to foster a broad appropriation by Mediterranean riparian countries of the social and economic dimensions involved in the EcAp implementation.

In addition, the Contracting Parties will nominate one expert per each EO, acting as a contact person in the process, which will help coordination of EcAp process at national level as well.

IV. Coordination and synergy with other regional partners and processes including the EU MSFD

37. Since July 2008 when the work on identification of important ecosystem properties and assessment of ecological status and pressures started the MAP Secretariat and its components have been working in close cooperation with different regional bodies in order to compile the necessary data for the Integrated Assessment Report.
38. Beyond the compilation of the information for the Integrated Assessment Report close cooperation has been established with regional partners (IUCN, WWF, GREENPEACE, MEDASSET, MIO-ECSDE, CIESM, GFCM-FAO, EC-JRC) other Regional Seas and their partners (OSPAR, HELCOM, ICES) in order to get and incorporate their input and views and benefit from similar experiences. The cooperation with GFCM-FAO has been very close in the development of the final EOs, OOs and Indicators related to the harvest of fisheries and the trophic chain.
39. UNEP/MAP is signing a MoU with GFCM to cooperate and respond to current and newly emerging issues through ecosystem based approaches for the conservation of marine and coastal environment and ecosystems and the sustainable use of marine living and other natural resources through an Ecosystem Approach.
40. Cooperation with other regional initiatives will also be given high priority, like PERSEUS and PEGASO Projects. PERSEUS (Policy-orientated marine Environmental Research for the Southern European Seas) is a research project funded by the EU under FP7 Theme "Oceans of Tomorrow" that assesses the dual impact of human activity and natural pressures on the Mediterranean and Black Seas. PERSEUS merges natural and socio-economic sciences to predict the long-term effects of these pressures on marine ecosystems. The project aims to design an effective and innovative research governance framework, which will provide the basis for policy-makers to turn back the tide on marine life degradation. People for Ecosystem-based Governance in Assessing Sustainable development of Ocean and coast Project – PEGASO has the objective to build on existing capacities and develop common novel approaches to support integrated policies for the coastal, marine and maritime realms of the Mediterranean and Black Sea Basins in ways that are consistent with and relevant to the implementation of the ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean.

41. The Contracting Parties to Barcelona Convention and its Protocols agreed in COP17 (February 2012, Paris) that EU MSFD is a source of inspiration for the implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean. With a view to continue ensuring the synergies between the application of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean and the MSFD relevant UNEP/MAP staff follow closely and participate in the relevant discussions at the EU implementation structure level. Progress in establishing a common understanding for determining good environmental status, establishing environmental targets, define a common monitoring system, exchanging data, information and knowledge as well as carrying out a socio-economic assessment are of particular relevance in this process.

V. EcAp Process beyond 2012-2013 biennium

42. The timeline adopted by COP 17 for implementing the ecosystem approach until 2019 will be the main framework reference of the efforts.