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Regional Meeting on NAPs Implementation – Lessons learned and the way forward

Marseille, France, 17-18 October 2016

**Report of the Regional Meeting on NAPs Implementation – Lessons learned and the way forward**

*The meeting has been organized in collaboration with the EU-funded Regional Project “SWIM and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism”*



SWIM and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism

Project funded by the European Union

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## **Introduction**

1. In COP18, Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention undertook an important commitment to update their National Action Plans (NAPs) in view of achieving GES targets through the implementation of the LBS Protocol Regional Plans and the provisions of SAP/MED. The updated NAPs were endorsed by the decision IG.22/8 “Implementation of Updated National Action Plans (NAPs) Containing Measures and Timetables for their Implementation” adopted by the COP19, which, among others, urged the Contracting Parties to implement the NAPs, strengthen the coherence between NAP programmes of measures and other national policies, foster conditions for their long-term sustainability, and report on their implementation.

2. In this context, the representatives of 18 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and other participants from the region and other countries met in Marseille, France on 17 and 18 October 2016. The meeting was co-organized by the UNEP/MAP’s MEDPOL Programme and the EU-funded Regional Project “SWIM and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism”, with the main scope to support the Contracting Parties in their effort to implement the NAPs in a coherent and coordinated manner by sharing lessons learned and paving the way forward.

3. During the Meeting, the discussions were focused on the main findings from the NAPs updating process, including the identified measures, operational targets, and indicators, the assessment of hotspot and sensitive areas, as well as the interlinkages between the programmes of measures/measures and the priority project fiches prepared for their implementation. The meeting was transformed into a forum where participants shared experiences, lessons learned and success stories in preparing updated NAPs/Programmes of Measures (PoM), and identified priority common actions, measures and targets to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES).

## **Participation**

4. The meeting was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Union, France, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey. Jordan also attended the meeting. The UNEP/MAP Secretariat was represented by the MAP Coordinating Unit, MED POL Programme, REMPEC and Blue Plan/RAC. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the SWIM and Horizon 2020 support mechanism. The full list of participants is attached as Annex I to the present report.

### **Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting**

5. The meeting was opened by Ms. Tatjana Hema, Deputy-Coordinator and MED POL Programme Officer; Mr. Michael Scoullou, SWIM-H2020 Support Mechanism Team Leader; and Mr. Didier Sauzade, Plan Bleu’s Marine Ecosystems Programme Manager.

6. In her opening remarks Ms. Hema, highlighted the large participation at this meeting as a sign of continued commitment to implement the updated NAPs/PoM in an effective and coordinated manner. She acknowledged the important work that has been undertaken by the Contracting Parties in developing their updated NAPs/PoM and the high level of coherence among these national instruments. Special reference was made to the next steps that should focus on implementation of the NAPs/PoM with an emphasis on future implementation of common measures and adoption of common indicators to achieve GES, supported, as appropriate, by UNEP/MAP and Horizon 2020.

7. Mr. Scoullou pointed out that the meeting is a demonstration of significant progress in protecting the Mediterranean Sea, resulting from more than 30 years of work in the region. He underlined the important role of the EU as a major player in the region, from a political, economic and environmental perspective and reaffirmed that environment is a key element of EU policies. In this

regard, the importance of maximising synergies, mainstreaming regional and international commitments into national activities and avoiding fragmentation, was emphasized. Finally Mr. Scoullos highlighted the importance of Horizon 2020 in achieving these objectives by supporting national initiatives and enhancing their regional dimension.

8. In his opening remarks Mr. Sauzade welcomed the participants wishing a successful meeting, thanked the City of Marseille for allowing the meeting to take place in the Villa and shared with the participants a few words on the history of the venue.

## **Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and election of officers**

### **a) Adoption of the Agenda**

9. The proposed Provisional agenda appearing in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.426/1, was adopted and appears as Annex II to the present report.

### **b) Election of officers**

10. In accordance with the Rules of procedures for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties, the meeting elected one (1) President, three (3) Vice-Presidents and one (1) Rapporteur from among the participants, as follows:

Chair:	Ms Nazli Yenel, Turkey
Vice-Chair:	Ms Naima Ghalem, Algeria
Vice-Chair:	Ms Ghada Abdel Moneim, Egypt
Vice Chair:	Ms Marion Besancon, France
Rapporteur:	Ms Barbara Skevin Ivosevic, Croatia

## **Agenda item 3: Presentation of the updated NAPs by the Contracting Parties**

- a. Midterm assessment
- b. Revised list of hotspots and sensitive areas
- c. Operational targets, Programme of measures/Measures and investment needs/Project fiches

11. Introducing this agenda item, Ms. Hema again congratulated all the countries for the excellent work undertaken at national level in updating the NAPs, by streamlining ecological objectives, GES targets and Regional Plans provisions

12. Then, representatives from the following Contracting Parties (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey) and Jordan took the floor during this agenda item to present their updated NAPs/PoM or the progress achieved so far, for those countries that are still in the process of preparing their NAPs/PoM, in order to share experiences, lessons learned and success stories.

13. During the discussions held following the presentations, the need for taking the necessary formal steps for having the NAPs adopted by the national competent authorities as soon as possible was highlighted. Participants were particularly interested in exchanging views on this procedure. The Secretariat urged the participants to pursue the adoption of the NAPs/PoM in line with relevant national legislation and offered its assistance in providing legal advice to countries as need be. In addition, the importance of socioeconomic aspect of the NAPs was highlighted and the lack of socioeconomic assessment was identified as a gap to be addressed in the future.

**Agenda item 4: NAPs Common Programme of Measures/Measures to achieve GES, NAPs operational Targets, NAPs follow up indicators and linkages to H2020 Initiative and SDG relevant indicators**

14. Under this agenda item, Mr. Mohamad Kayyal, consultant under the EU-funded Regional Project “SWIM and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism”, presented the main findings of an analysis of the updated NAPs, addressing common operational targets, priority measures, the identification of hotspots and a list of common indicators.

15. Mr. Scoullos briefly presented the main findings and recommendations of the SWIM H2020 Steering Committee meeting, held in Brussels on 27-28 September 2016. He highlighted the links between the SWIM and Horizon 2020 support mechanism and the implementation process of the NAPs, since many of the main themes of the new mechanism correspond to the areas discussed during the Meeting, including among others industrial pollution, solid waste management, hazardous wastes, marine litter, urban wastewater, environmental integration, ICZM-IWRM, Green Economy etc. and he stressed out the importance of integrative methodological framework. He further presented the main actions provided for by the mechanism that can support the implementation of NAPs, as well as the requests on water and environment related issues, most of which are in direct link with the NAPs. Finally, attention was drawn to the regional activities work plan in relation to H2020 and crosscutting themes to demonstrate the links with the NAPs, as presented during the Meeting.

16. The discussion following the presentations pointed out the importance of using the high political momentum of NAPs endorsement by COP 19 to foster their implementation. In this regard both the Secretariat and Horizon 2020 through the EU-funded Regional Project “SWIM and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism” and the work of the Pollution Reduction and Prevention Group (the investment component of H2020) would provide valuable support to the countries.

17. The Secretariat provided information on three ongoing projects in the framework of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work of UNEP/MAP that are relevant to the implementation of the NAPs, namely the EU funded projects: EcAp MED II, supporting the implementation of IMAP, the Marine Litter MED, launched in Tirana in July 2016 to support the implementation of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter, and a new project under the UfM Horizon 2020, implemented together by EEA and UNEP/MAP on SEIS, supporting PRTR, enhancing national coordination, and strengthening and streamlining the information system and reporting on marine pollution.

18. The Secretariat also informed the meeting that UNEP/MAP had applied to GEF for a large scale six year programme. Under this programme, three projects have been envisaged to address NAPs priorities in cooperation with the EIB and EBRD. If approved, this programme would provide strong support to the region in meeting its commitments towards marine pollution reduction/prevention from land based sources.

**Agenda item 5: Potential new/updated measures to achieve GES on pollution and litter**

19. Ms. Hema, introducing this agenda item, recalled the mandate given by COP19 to further analyse the gaps of the existing regional measures with regards to the GES. In this context, work was undertaken by the Secretariat in collaboration with the EU-funded ActionMed Project to identify and assess gaps related to regional measures and potential new/updated measures required to achieve GES with the objective to submit it to the EcAp Coordination Group.

20. Ms. Marina Markovic, UNEP/MAP consultant under the ActionMed Project, presented the potential new/updated measures analysis at regional level.

21. Following discussions, some participants stressed out the need to focus on a small number of sectors (e.g. plastic bags, rainwater management, agriculture etc.). The organisation of capacity building and training workshops as well as the development of pilot projects in collaboration

with Horizon 2020 was highlighted by some participants as an important step in view of assessing the applicability of measures.

**Agenda item 6: NAPs investment portfolio: lessons learned and challenges**

22. Mr. Michael Scoullou, on behalf of the EIB and Horizon 2020, presented the main findings from the analysis of the NAPs of MENA countries, namely Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia, focusing on the relation between the hotspots, the proposed measures and the project fiches. Investment measures in the framework of MeHSIP targeting NAPs hotspots and their status of implementation were also presented. General and country-specific conclusions were drawn, with regards to effective streamlining of investment needs and fiches with NAPs targets and measures.

**Agenda item 7: Recommendations on the way forward**

23. The participants reviewed, commented and approved, the draft Conclusions and Recommendations prepared by the Rapporteur, based on discussions held, highlighting key actions needed to provide support and guidance for NAPs implementation, from a regional perspective. The final Conclusions and Recommendations are attached as Annex III to the present report.

**Agenda item 8: Any Other Business**

24. A first presentation was made by Mr. Yaron Zinger, an expert from Israel on urban runoffs in the framework of the Water Sensitive City concept trying to give answers to identified challenges, such as stormwater treatment, to reduce excess of nutrients. A nature-based solution, called biofilters was presented, aiming at treating stormwater in a natural way prior to discharge. Interest was expressed by the participants regarding the function of this system, its maintenance, the management of absorbed nutrients and the total costs for its implementation. It was also stressed that biofilter treatment meets water quality guidelines and drinking water guidelines for chemical and toxins, and that it is self-maintained and cheaper than desalination.

25. Mr. Sauzade Didier from Plan Bleu/RAC made a short presentation of the EcAp based Science-Policy Interface (Meeting Information document WG.426/Inf.6), aiming at supporting IMAP implementation. The project addresses the issue of ineffective operation of the interface between policy makers and scientists and establishes actions to overcome the identified barriers, including workshops bringing together the two sides. Mr. Sauzade presented the main components of the project and the preliminary lessons learned from its implementation so far.

**Agenda item 9: From measures to investment needs and projects (Capacity building session)**

26. Representatives of the Contracting Parties participated in a training session, organised by the Secretariat, with the support of SWIM and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism, aiming at bridging the investment needs and projects with NAPs measures and operational targets.

27. Participants assessed and ranked a project fiche from their NAPs using the presented criteria and methodology.

28. Certificates were given to all the participants in the training session.

**Agenda item 10: Closure of the Meeting**

29. The Chair in her closing remarks thanked the participants for their constructive contribution to the meeting which resulted in the very good consensus about the way forward for a successful implementation of the updated NAPs/PoM and thanked the Secretariat and the SWIM

Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism for all efforts made to organize this effective and very useful meeting.

30. After the expression of usual courtesies, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 18:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 18 October 2016

**Annex I**  
**List of Participants**

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D'ACTION POUR LA MEDITERRANEE**

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<p><b>REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC) / CENTRE REGIONAL MEDITERRANEEN POUR L'INTERVENTION D'URGENCE CONTRE LA POLLUTION MARINE ACCIDENTELLE (REMPEC)</b></p>	<p><b>Mr Franck Lauwers</b> Programme Officer (Prevention)</p> <p>Tel: +356 21 337 296/7/8 E-mail: <a href="mailto:flauwers@rempec.org">flauwers@rempec.org</a>,</p>
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**Annex II**  
**Agenda of the Meeting**

### **Agenda of the Meeting**

- Agenda item 1: **Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2: **Adoption of the agenda and election of officers**
- Agenda item 3: **Presentation of the updated NAPs by the Contracting Parties**
- Agenda item 4: **NAPs Common Programme of Measures/Measures to achieve GES, NAPs operational Targets, NAPs follow up indicators and linkages to H2020 Initiative and SDG relevant indicators**
- Agenda item 5: **Potential new/updated measures to achieve GES on pollution and litter**
- Agenda item 6: **NAPs investment portfolio: lessons learned and challenges**
- Agenda item 7: **Recommendations on the way forward**
- Agenda item 8: **Any Other Business**
- Agenda item 9: **From measures to investment needs and projects (Capacity building session)**
- Agenda item 10: **Closure of the Meeting**

**Annex III**  
**Conclusions and Recommendations**

### Conclusions and Recommendations

On 17 and 18 October 2016, the Regional Meeting on NAPs Implementation – Lessons learned and the way forward was held in Marseille, France at Villa Valmer at the kind invitation of Plan Bleu and the City of Marseille. The meeting was jointly organized by UNEP/MAP {MEDPOL-Plan Bleu} and SWIM/Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism. Following its deliberations, the Meeting concluded as follows:

1. The Contracting parties were commended for preparing their updated NAPs/PoM addressing the three major ecological objectives adopted by UNEP/MAP related to Eutrophication (EO5), Contaminants (EO9) and Marine Litter (EO10).
2. It was acknowledged that most of the updated NAPs were developed following the guidelines prepared for this purpose as approved by the MEDPOL focal points meeting in 2015. This led to the formulation of NAP documents with a harmonized outline and a considerable number of common operational targets and measures. Common priority measures selected by the Countries address different aspects including building/extending sewage networks, upgrading municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants, upgrading municipal and hazardous waste treatment facilities, remediating contaminated industrial sites, establishing and reinforcing collection, reduction, prevention and recycling of municipal waste, constructing municipal solid waste landfills, strengthening waste collection and disposal systems, and closure and rehabilitation of illegal dump sites, etc.
3. It was noted that the PoMs prepared by the Contracting Parties which are members of EU to implement the MSFD, overall meet also the requirements of the NAPs. There are relevant synergies between both these policy documents aiming at the same goals.
4. It was highlighted that the large number of existing measures analyzed in the framework of NAPs attest to the good work carried out in the Mediterranean in the last decade. It was agreed to continue these efforts and to improve the efficiency of their implementation.
5. It was also acknowledged that the NAPs/PoM selected operational targets, measures and their timetables are fully aligned with the commitments taken at the regional level with a particular focus on the Regional Plans taking into account specific national circumstances, and that the successful and the effective implementation of the NAPs/PoM will systematically contribute in a concrete manner to the achievement of GES and H2020 targets for a cleaner and healthy Mediterranean, where appropriate, taking also into account the need for external support.
6. It was highlighted that the key to successful NAPs/PoM implementation hinges on the ability of countries to implement existing and new measures; enforce related national regulatory frameworks; inform and achieve the cooperation of stakeholders including partnerships with other actors to support national efforts; strengthen their capacities; and realize key investments.
7. Complementarities were highlighted and recommended to be further strengthened between UNEP/MAP and H2020 Initiative in the three components: Investment, Review and Monitoring, and Capacity Building. Countries were strongly urged to use every opportunity offered by the project SWIM/H2020 Support Mechanism for the implementation of priority measures in the NAPs/PoM including capacity building.
8. Countries are encouraged to ensure coordination and synergies with other relevant national policies and inter-sectoral coordination to achieve effective implementation of the NAPs/PoM.

9. The Contracting Parties that have not completed their NAPs/PoM are encouraged to conclude the consultation process as early as possible with the view to have their NAPs/PoM submitted to the Secretariat as soon as possible.
10. Following the endorsement of the NAPs by decision IG 22/8 of COP 19, the Contracting Parties were encouraged to get the NAPs approved by the national competent authorities in line with the national procedures. The meeting calls for the highest commitment of the countries for implementation of the NAPs.
11. Taking into consideration the progress made since the adoption of the first cycle of the NAPs in 2003; the meeting remarked the significant achievements accomplished by the Contracting Parties in reducing the number of hotspots in 2015. The meeting noted however that there remain a considerable number of hotspots of Categories A and B. Every effort should be exercised to eliminate them. Strong synergies with H2020 investment component including MeHSIP and other relevant available mechanisms should be further strengthened and streamlined for that purpose.
12. It was acknowledged that the proposed list of indicators selected using the bottom-up approach contains relevant IMAP indicators, H2020 indicators, as well as SDG indicators. It was agreed to provide written feedback by Mid November 2016 on the list of proposed indicators at the latest. It was also recommended to take into account the process related to the indicators for MSSD implementation and to continue this work in the framework of H2020 Review and Monitoring sub-group co-chaired by the EEA and UNEP/MAP, for final consideration at the MEDPOL focal point meeting in 2017.
13. It was noted that the Regional Gap analysis carried out under MAP PoW in synergy with the EU funded Action Med Project and the experience the Contracting parties shared regarding the NAP update are reinforcing each other and is a good basis for outlining the need for new/updated regional measures in the future.
14. A more concrete proposal on potential new updated regional measures will be further developed based on document WG 426/4, as well as the Contracting Parties' written feedback by Mid November 2016 to be presented at the next MEDPOL FP meeting for its consideration and guidance on the next steps.
15. Finally the meeting concluded that the timely implementation of the NAPs/PoM is the responsibility of the Contracting Parties, and for this purpose written comments regarding priority areas for support by the Secretariat to foster regional and sub-regional cooperation should be provided by end of November 2017 at the latest. In this context, annual review of and meetings on the progress of the NAPs implementation involving directly the Contracting parties should be considered by the Secretariat for inclusion in the biannual programme of work.