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20th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention
for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017

Agenda items 3: Thematic Decisions

Agenda item 4: Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-2019

Agenda item 5: Ministerial Session

Reports of the Meetings of the Bureau (82nd, 83rd, 84th)

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2017



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ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

17 May 2016
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82nd Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Athens, Greece, 19-20 April 2016

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2016

Table of contents

	Pages
Report	1-7
ANNEXES	
Annex I	List of Participants
Annex II	Agenda

Introduction

1. At the invitation of the Government of Greece, the 82nd Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was held on 19-20 April 2016 in Athens, Greece.
2. Simultaneous interpretation in English and French was available for all sessions of the meeting.

Participation

3. The President of the Bureau, Ms. Christina Baritaki (Greece), the Vice-Presidents: Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania); Mr. Mohamed Abdel Monem Farouk Osman (Egypt); Mr. Victor Escobar Paredes (Spain) and the Rapporteur, Ms. Ayelet Rosen (Israel) attended the Bureau meeting. Mr. Mohamed Benyahia (Morocco) was absent with apologies. Ms. Marijana Mance (EC) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator and Programme Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

4. The meeting was opened at 09:30 on 19 April 2016 by the President of the Bureau, Ms. Christina Baritaki. She welcomed the Bureau members and other participants to their first meeting of the 2016-2017 biennium.
5. The Coordinator also made a statement of welcome to the participants.

II. Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work

6. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/1 (Annex II). The Bureau agreed to the following three issues to be added to the agenda item 7 “Any Other Matters”: (i) request by the EU to be invited as observer to all the Bureau meetings until COP 20; (ii) letter from Palestine requesting “directions to support the participation of Palestine in the Barcelona Convention conferences of parties and meetings”; and (iii) Lebanon waste crisis.

III. Agenda item 3: Progress Report for January-February 2016

7. The Coordinator introduced and presented highlights from the documents “Progress report by the Secretariat on the activities carried out for the period January-February 2016” (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/3) and “Progress report by the Secretariat on the implementation of COP 19 Decisions” (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/4), the latter being a color-coded table.
8. It was suggested that the color-coded table could be restructured around the outputs of the 2016-2021 Mid-Term Strategy. The Coordinator explained that the descriptive progress report (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/3) is organized precisely around the strategic outcomes of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work, and that the color-coded table (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/4) is important to monitor the implementation of all the operative decisions of the Parties at their last COP. It was also suggested that the Secretariat may consider the feasibility of including in the table information on the status of implementation of key decisions adopted by previous COP.
9. It was recommended that the last section of the descriptive progress report indicates in future also the proposed solutions or the efforts being made to address the challenges described therein. The

importance of timely delivery of Resource Mobilization Strategy accompanying the MTS as provided for in COP 19 decision was stressed.

Conclusions:

10. The Bureau expressed support for the work done as presented by the Secretariat, and appreciation in particular on the efforts and results of resource mobilization.

IV. Agenda item 4: Report by the Secretariat on financial and administrative issues

11. The President informed the meeting that Greece had initiated the process for the payment of its 2016 contributions, to be expected in the near future.

12. The Deputy Coordinator presented to the Bureau members for their comments and recommendations an overview of the "Report by the Secretariat on financial and administrative issues" (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/5) and updated the information as necessary, including:

- Status of contributions
- Implications of Umoja implementation
- Invoicing for 2016
- Expenditures
- Working Capital Reserve
- Interim Report with the balance between income and expenditure
- Report on personnel matters

Conclusions:

13. The Bureau noted with appreciation the high percentage of contributions received for the year 2015.

14. The Bureau welcomed the early payments of contributions by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, EU, Israel, Monaco, Slovenia, and Spain. The Bureau, taking into account Rule 4.2., which reads that "contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full", requested the other Contracting Parties to pay their 2016 contributions and arrears as soon as possible.

15. The Bureau took note of the two cases of arrears for two or more years and requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears and report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties on the outcome of its action.

16. The Bureau took note of the status of recruitment at the Coordinating Unit and, in addition, it encouraged the Contracting Parties who may be able to do so to contribute human resources to the Secretariat in the areas that are mostly needed, such as information and communication, and resource mobilization, through JPO and other similar schemes.

17. The Bureau acknowledged the views expressed by the Secretariat on the need of two full-time positions on information and communication, and resource mobilization at the Coordinating Unit to be considered through the due process at COP 20.

V. Agenda item 5: Specific issues

18. The Coordinator presented the "Report by the Secretariat on specific issues" (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/6).

19. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

- 5.1 Governance

20. The Coordinator reported that the long-standing issue of the ratification by Lebanon of the amended text of the Barcelona Convention had been finally solved. At present, only the ratification by Bosnia and Herzegovina was still pending.

21. The Coordinator also reported on the lack of progress in the finalization of revised or new Host Country Agreements for RACs. During the ensuing discussion, it was acknowledged that in practical terms, the implementation of the common agreement template at national level faced difficulties due to specific situations and legislation of each host country and legal nature of the RACs. In this context it was suggested that COP decisions that face difficulties in being executed need to be brought back to the attention of the Parties for possible reconsideration.

22. The meeting also discussed the issue of the shift to a Thematic Focal Point system. While there is an understanding of the rationale for entering in a new/updated governance system of focal points, with the view to enhance their accountability, there are practical difficulties in implementing it in a manner that should not distort the operation of the MAP system and the implementation of the PoW. Therefore, a prudent approach should be followed. In this context a gradual process could be put in place, starting for instance with biodiversity. Questions were raised about the importance of existing relationships between RAC Focal Points and the system at present, and on the readiness of national structures to adapt to a Thematic Focal Point system.

Conclusions:

23. The Bureau took note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urged the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to ratify without further delay the relevant legal instruments, and in particular the amendments to the Dumping Protocol which have not yet entered into force.

24. The Bureau encouraged the President and the Secretariat to put in place efforts to achieve the full ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in a timely manner preferably during the current biennium.

25. The Bureau took note of the current status of development of the Host Country Agreements for RACs as reported by the Secretariat and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its work with the concerned Contracting Parties and UNEP Headquarters and submit a report to its 83rd Meeting describing the status of negotiation for each Agreement including the challenges encountered.

26. The Bureau agreed with the proposed course of action as follows:

- (a) The Secretariat will prepare the amended text of the Bureau TORs adding a compliance criteria in electing the members of the Bureau; in particular, adding after the words: “and regular attendance at the meeting of the contracting Parties” the following words: “and compliance with their reporting obligations under the Convention”.**
- (b) The Secretariat will submit it to the 83rd Meeting of Bureau for review and further submission to COP 20 in December 2017.**

27. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a preliminary analysis of the current status and the options and impacts for a shift to a Thematic Focal Point system taking into account current practice as appropriate of other multilateral agreements and to submit it for further discussion and guidance at its 83rd Meeting.

- 5.2 Reporting and Compliance Issues

28. With reference to the operative paragraphs of the Decision IG.22/15 on Compliance Committee and the Decision IG.22/16 on Reporting Format, adopted by COP 19 (Athens, Greece, February

2016), the Secretariat provided an update on the status of reporting on implementation of the Barcelona Convention; the programme of work of the Compliance Committee; its membership; and the preparation of a simplified reporting format for the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Welcoming the recruitment in progress of Legal Officer, it was pointed out that timely implementation of Compliance and Reporting decisions is of high importance for assessing the impacts of the Convention.

Conclusions:

29. The Bureau urged the Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their 2012-2013 report without further delay.

30. The Bureau urged all Contracting Parties to start as soon as possible the preparation of their 2014-2015 reports, in order to comply fully with the deadline of 15 October 2016 as set by the COP 19 Decision IG.22/16. The Bureau, considering the status of recruitment of the Legal Officer, took note of the proposal by the Secretariat with regard to the implementation of the Decision IG.22/16 as follows:

- (a) Provide advice to Contracting Parties subject to fund availability;**
- (b) Undertake consultation with the Focal Points on the needs to build capacities of the Contracting Parties and prepare a report for submission to COP 20. The first draft will be submitted to the 84th Bureau Meeting;**
- (c) Further work on a proposal for the preparation of a simplified reporting format for submission to the 83rd Bureau Meeting in 2016 for review and suggestions;**
- (d) Launch a testing process of the revised format by end of 2016-beginning of 2017 and a written consultation with the Contracting Parties;**
- (e) Finalize the revised reporting format based on testing feedback for submission to the 84th Bureau Meeting in 2017 and, as appropriate, to COP 20.**

31. The Bureau urged the relevant Contracting Parties, namely Algeria, Egypt and Monaco to submit the details of their nominated candidates by 15 May 2016 at the latest to sit as Members and Alternate Members of the Compliance Committee for a term of four years until COP 21 and agreed to their being elected by correspondence.

- 5.3 Assessment of MAP II

32. At COP 19 (Athens, Greece, February 2016), the Parties decided in favor of the option ii contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/23 on the implementation of decision IG.21/16 on Assessment of the Mediterranean Action Plan. Accordingly, the Mediterranean Action Plan Phase II document would be adjusted to reflect the key developments made in the Mediterranean Action Plan system with regard to thematic issues.

33. The Coordinator presented to the Bureau the proposed course of action for the implementation of the COP 19 conclusions on this matter for endorsement. It was proposed also that the Bureau assigned one of its members to lead the work of the open-ended Working Group that may be established for this purpose.

Conclusions:

34. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to undertake the following course of action for the implementation of the COP 19 conclusions:

- (a) the Secretariat to prepare TORs for the assignment taking also into account the MSSD, to be shared with the Bureau at its 83rd Meeting;**

- (b) the Secretariat to send invitations to the Focal Points to participate or appoint their representatives on the open-ended Working Group;
- (c) the Bureau to nominate one of its members to lead the work of the Working Group with Secretariat's support;
- (d) the Working Group to hold its meeting in the first quarter of 2017 (if the external funds are available);
- (e) the Working Group to prepare its conclusions in time for submission to the 84th Meeting of the Bureau; and
- (f) the Bureau to provide its recommendations to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points in 2017 to be presented at the COP 20 together with the conclusions of the Working Group.

35. The Bureau called upon the Contracting Parties to provide the necessary additional resources to ensure the full implementation of the process and the involvement of all Contracting Parties.

- 5.4 Cooperation and Partners

36. With reference to the operative paragraphs of the Decision IG.22/18 on Cooperation and Partners, adopted by COP 19 (Athens, Greece, February 2016), the Coordinator presented an overview of cooperation with International and Regional Organizations, and bilateral cooperation agencies, and updated Bureau members on the operationalization of current agreements and progress in development of new ones. He also reported on the constructive coordination meeting of UNEP/MAP and GFCM held in Rome on 13 April 2016 and the promising outlook for further strengthening the two Organizations' collaboration.

37. The Secretariat reported to the Bureau on the evaluation of the applications by the International Federation for Sustainable Development and Fight to Poverty in the Mediterranean-Black Sea (FISPMED) and the Fondation Mohamed VI pour la Protection de l'Environnement for accreditation as UNEP/MAP Partners, for the Bureau's review and endorsement.

38. With regard to the Joint Strategy between SPA/RAC, ACCOBAMS, GFCM and IUCN-Med in collaboration with MedPAN for the spatial conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment in the Mediterranean, currently being developed, its importance, given the current global and regional debate on ocean governance, was stressed, and it was suggested that its profile should be raised to become a strategy of the whole UNEP/MAP system rather than of SPA/RAC. Furthermore, the importance of consulting relevant governance structures of the involved organizations was highlighted.

Conclusions:

39. The Bureau welcomed the progress achieved on Cooperation and Partners and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its work on these issues.

40. The Bureau welcomed the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the applications submitted by the International Federation for Sustainable Development and Fight to Poverty in the Mediterranean-Black Sea (FISPMED) and the Fondation Mohamed VI pour la Protection de l'Environnement, decided to accept their accreditation as UNEP/MAP Partners, and requested the Secretariat to submit this decision to COP 20 for endorsement.

- 5.5 Outreach Information and Communication

41. The Coordinator presented a brief overview of the information and communication activities related to COP 19 and the plans for the biennium in this area. He highlighted the difficulties of disseminating appropriately the outcome of COP 19 and in general the MAP/Barcelona Convention

instruments and outputs, maintaining the visibility of the system, and supporting its information, communication and outreach functions without the necessary capacity at the Coordinating Unit.

42. The Bureau was invited to provide its views and considerations on this matter.

Conclusions:

43. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the very good results of the information and communication work before, during and after COP 19 and therefore thanked the external support provided to that end.

- 5.6 Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award

44. With reference to the operative paragraphs of the Decision IG.22/19 entitled “Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award” adopted by COP 19 (Athens, Greece, February 2016), the Coordinator presented the proposed plan for the finalization of the nomination and selection criteria and process and for granting the first Award at COP 20.

Conclusions:

45. In line with Decision IG 22/19, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to proceed with work to finalize the selection criteria and mobilize the necessary resources; in that regard, the Bureau expressed appreciation for the support of Turkey.

46. Under the item on Governance, the Coordinator presented an overview of the planning being developed for the implementation of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work. In particular, he reported on the planning exercise undertaken with the ECP at its 28th meeting of 22-23 March 2016. Considering the proposed calendar of meetings, some aspects related to the preparation of their working documents were also addressed such as the size of the documents and the deadline for the dissemination of working documents. The Bureau supported the idea of sticking to the 16-page UN rule as well as of using a flexible approach for the document dissemination timelines, when strictly necessary and justifiable. This would allow more time for preparing quality working documents in particular for technical meetings. Along these lines it was suggested that the Secretariat prepares a proposal for further consideration at the next Bureau meeting.

47. The Bureau discussed a number of priorities for the current biennium, as listed in the conclusions below.

Conclusions:

48. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to bring to its attention at the 83rd Meeting general issues of process and substance related to the implementation of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work, such as the preparation of the 2017 Quality Status Report, the implementation of IMAP, the preparation of the revised Resource Mobilization Strategy, the implementation of MSSD, the new reporting format, and others as necessary.

49. The Bureau decided to discuss at its 83rd Meeting details of the Agenda preparation of Decisions, theme and focus of COP 20.

50. The Bureau took note of the report provided by the Secretariat for the planning of the implementation of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work. The Bureau expressed support to the Secretariat and RACs efforts, taking into account the limited time for its implementation in 2016 and the UMOJA challenges.

VI. Agenda item 6: Date and Venue of the 83rd Meeting of the Bureau

51. The Bureau was invited to decide on the date and the venue of the 83rd Meeting of the Bureau. It recalled that document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG 22/Inf.17 entitled “Indicative Calendar of Main UNEP/MAP Meetings in the Biennium 2016-2017” and reviewed to COP 19 indicated the date of such meeting as October 2016.

Conclusions:

52. The Bureau agreed to hold its 83rd Meeting on 25-26 October 2016 in Athens, Greece or Tirana, Albania. The final decision will be taken following further consultations.

VII. Agenda item 7: Any Other Matters

53. The Bureau had agreed on the participation of the European Union as an observer to the present meeting; if interested, the EU, as any other party, should submit a request to be invited to participate as an observer in the deliberations of any matter of particular concern to them at each following Bureau meeting.

54. The Secretariat informed the Bureau on the letter it received on 21 March 2016 from the Chairman of Environment Quality Authority regarding “support to the participation of Palestine in the Barcelona Convention conferences of parties and meetings”. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to be updated on this issue.

55. The Coordinator reported on the questions being raised by media representatives and the concerns over the situation and the pollution of the Mediterranean due to the garbage crisis of Lebanon. The Bureau acknowledged that UNEP is already looking at ways to respond to the situation.

56. Some Bureau members raised concern over the issue of interpretation needs and costs at Bureau meetings, as no other language but English was used during the 82nd meeting. The possibility of providing interpretation upon explicit advance request of the members of the Bureau, as appropriate, was evoked.

VIII. Agenda item 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

57. The Secretariat submitted for adoption the set of conclusions and recommendations prepared in accordance with Article VII of the Terms of Reference of the Bureau.

58. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions and recommendations as set on this report.

IX. Agenda item 9 Closure of the Meeting

59. The meeting closed by the President of the Bureau at 16:30 on Wednesday, 20 April 2016.

Annex I

List of participants

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Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda item 1** **Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2** **Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3** **Progress Report for January-February 2016**
- Agenda item 4** **Report by the Secretariat on financial and administrative issues**
- Agenda item 5** **Specific issues:**
- 5.1 Governance
 - 5.2 Compliance
 - 5.3 Assessment of MAP II
 - 5.4 Cooperation and Partners
 - 5.5 Outreach Information and Communication
 - 5.6 Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award
- Agenda item 6** **Date and Venue of the 83rd Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 7** **Any Other Matters**
- Agenda item 8** **Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 9** **Closure of the Meeting**



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17 November 2016
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83rd Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Tirana, Albania, 25-26 October 2016

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2016

Table of contents

	Pages
Report	1-9
ANNEXES	
Annex I	List of Participants
Annex II	Agenda
Annex III	TORs for the Assessment of MAP II

Introduction

1. At the invitation of the Government of Albania, the 83rd Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was held on 25-26 October 2016 in Tirana, Albania.

Participation

2. The President of the Bureau, Ms. Christina Baritaki (Greece), the Vice-Presidents: Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania); Mr. Mohamed Abdel Moneim Farouk Osman (Egypt); Ms. Nassira Rheyati (Morocco), Mr. Victor Escobar Paredes (Spain) and the Rapporteur, Ms. Ayelet Rosen (Israel) attended the Bureau meeting. Ms. Marijana Mance (EU) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, Programme Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 on 25 October 2016 by the President of the Bureau, Ms. Christina Baritaki. She welcomed the Bureau members and other participants to their second meeting of the 2016-2017 biennium.

4. The Coordinator also made a statement of welcome to the participants.

II. Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/1/Rev.1 (Annex II). No additional issues were added to the agenda item 7 "Any Other Matters".

III. Agenda item 3: Progress Report for March-August 2016

6. The Coordinator introduced the document "Progress report by the Secretariat on the activities carried out for the period March-August 2016" (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/3), containing also a short section on "Issues at stake for a sound implementation of the 2016-2017 PoW". He presented highlights from the document, noting that efforts had been made to produce a focused and concise report.

7. The Secretariat also presented the updated "Progress report by the Secretariat on the implementation of COP 19 Decisions" (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/4).

8. Regarding resource mobilization, the Coordinator stressed that two main prerequisites in relation to participation in project proposals is that they should be of regional relevance and immediately linked to the Programme of Work and/or the Mid-Term Strategy.

9. Bureau members expressed appreciation of the progress achieved on the implementation of the activities carried out and advised the Secretariat in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Bureau.

Conclusion:

10. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the work done as presented by the Secretariat, and for the efforts and results achieved so far.

IV. Agenda item 4: Report by the Secretariat on financial and administrative issues

11. The Coordinator informed the meeting on progress made regarding the financial situation since the submission of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/5 “Report by the Secretariat on financial and administrative issues”, and noted that Greece had paid the 2016 Host Country Contribution. He informed the meeting that, in addition to those included in the above-mentioned document, contributions to the MTF had also been received from Morocco, Algeria and Bosnia and Herzegovina, bringing the collection rate for 2016 to 91%.

Conclusions:

12. The Bureau noted with appreciation the high level of contributions received for the year 2016 as early as June and requested those Contracting Parties which have not done so to pay their 2016 contributions and arrears as soon as possible.

13. The Bureau took note of the actions taken by the Secretariat for the two cases of arrears for over 24 months and requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears and to report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties on the outcome of its actions.

14. The Bureau encouraged the Contracting Parties who may be able to do so to contribute human resources to the Secretariat in the areas that are mostly needed such as information and communication, resource mobilization, and Information Technology through JPO and other similar schemes.

15. The Bureau took note of the considerations expressed by the Secretariat on the needs for additional human resources in the above mentioned areas and the Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a paper suggesting options for consideration at its 84th meeting.

V. Agenda item 5: Specific issues

16. The Coordinator presented the “Report by the Secretariat on specific issues” (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/6).

17. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

- 5.1. Governance

18. The Coordinator presented the update contained in the above-mentioned document on issues regarding the status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols; a report describing the status of each RAC Host Country Agreement; the amended text of the Bureau TOR with the added compliance criteria in electing the members of the Bureau; and a preliminary analysis of the current status and the options and impacts for a shift to a Thematic Focal Point system.

19. The Coordinator reported that regarding the 1995 Amendments to the Barcelona Convention, only the ratification by Bosnia and Herzegovina was still pending.

20. The President noted that Greece has initiated the process for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol.

21. Furthermore, in relation to reporting, the Secretariat informed Bureau members that regarding the 2012-2013 reporting period, 12 Contracting Parties had officially submitted their reports, two Contracting Parties have provided final drafts, four Contracting Parties have provided working drafts and four Contracting Parties have not provided texts. Regarding the 2014-2015 biennium, 12 Contracting Parties have provided at present their draft reports. Reminders are being sent on a regular basis.

22. The Coordinator reported also on the progress of the preparation of a simplified reporting format for the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as well as on the programme of work and membership of the Compliance Committee.
23. Following the request of the 82nd Bureau meeting, the Secretariat updated the Bureau on the issue of the letter received on 21 March 2016 from the chairman of the Environment Quality Authority regarding “support to the participation of Palestine in the Barcelona Convention conferences of parties and meetings”.
24. In this respect, the Bureau recalled Rule 6 of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols.
25. In addition, it was noted that at its 55th Meeting in 2000, the Bureau had decided to endorse the request from the Palestinian Authority to take part in MAP’s activities. At that time, the Bureau had recommended that “As a first stage, the Palestinian Authority would be associated with the MED POL programme and MCSD activities. The Secretariat would, within reason, assure the appropriate resources for this purpose.”. Following discussions the Bureau agreed to continue the current practice.
26. It was further noted that by Decision IG 22/17, the 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Regional of the Mediterranean and its Protocols (Athens, Greece, 9-12 February 2016) requested the Secretariat “to invite Palestine to attend future MCSD meetings as an observer”.

Conclusions:

27. **The Bureau took note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urged the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to ratify without further delay the legal instruments.**
28. **The Bureau congratulated Italy for the ratification of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol and Israel for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol.**
29. **The Bureau encouraged the President and the Secretariat to continue efforts to achieve the full ratification of the revised Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in a timely manner.**
30. **The Bureau took note of the current status of development of the Host Country Agreements for RACs as reported by the Secretariat and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its work with the concerned Contracting Parties and UNEP Headquarters and submit a report to its 84th Meeting describing the progress of negotiation for each Agreement since the 83rd Meeting, including a proposed timetable for the implementation of the respective COP Decisions, in order for the Bureau to advise on the way forward.**
31. **The Bureau took note of the amended text of the TORs that will be submitted to the MAP Focal Points Meeting in 2017 and to COP 20.**
32. **The Bureau welcomed the preliminary analysis of the current status and the options for a shift to Thematic Focal Points presented by the Secretariat as a follow-up of the Governance Decisions 21/13 and 22/1.**
33. **The Bureau invited the Secretariat to further develop option I, i.e. shift on a trial basis of the PAP/RAC and SPA/RAC Focal Points to ICZM and SPA/BD Focal Points respectively. The paper will clarify in particular the Terms of Reference for one of the two Thematic Focal Points for consideration at the 84th Bureau meeting.**
34. **The Bureau urged the remaining Contracting Parties that have not yet done so, namely Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Monaco, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the European Union to proceed with the “official submission” of their 2012-2013 reports without further delay.**

35. The Bureau urged all Contracting Parties to expedite the submission of their 2014-2015 reports, in order to comply fully with the deadline set by the COP 19 Decision IG.22/16.

36. The Bureau reiterated the importance of a timely analysis of the information mentioned in the national reports in order to draft a report addressing the general status of the progress in the region, on the legal, institutional and technical points of view, in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (as mandated by Operational Paragraph 9, Decision IG.22/16).

37. The Bureau elected Dr. Joseph Edward Zaki, national of Egypt, as Member of the Compliance Committee for a term of four years until COP 21, as per Decision IG 21/16.

38. The Bureau strongly urged Algeria and Monaco to nominate their candidates without further delay, to enable smooth operation of the Compliance Committee. Once such nominations are received, the Secretariat will seek the Bureau's concurrence to their election by electronic means.

- 5.2. Assessment of MAP II

39. The Coordinator noted the outcome of COP 19 (Athens, Greece, February 2016), where the Parties decided in favor of the option ii contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/23 on the implementation of decision IG.21/16 on *Assessment of the Mediterranean Action Plan*, as well as of the discussions held during the 82nd Meeting of the Bureau that took place on 19-20 April 2016, in Athens, Greece. He presented the main elements of the TORs for the assignment that were prepared by the Secretariat.

40. As agreed at the 82nd Bureau Meeting, the Bureau nominated one of its members to lead the work of the open-ended Working Group that may be established for this purpose. The Egyptian member indicated that Egypt is considering hosting the meeting of the Working Group.

Conclusions:

41. The Bureau approved the TORs for the assignment prepared by the Secretariat in their general lines, as revised and attached to this report (Annex III), with the understanding that they may be further refined according to the needs specified by the Open-ended Working Group.

42. The Bureau assigned Mr. Ahmed Abou Elseoud of Egypt, Vice President of the Bureau, to lead the Open-ended Working Group.

43. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to continue undertaking the course of action for the implementation of the COP 19 conclusions on this matter, as per the conclusions of the 82nd Bureau Meeting (paragraph 34 of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.82/7). In this context the Secretariat was also requested to identify the process for the approval of the updated text of MAP II.

44. The Bureau called upon the Contracting Parties to provide the necessary additional resources to ensure the full implementation of the process and their involvement.

- 5.3. Cooperation and Partners

45. The Coordinator presented an overview of cooperation with International and Regional Organizations and bilateral cooperation agencies, updated Bureau members on the operationalization of current agreements and progress in development of new ones.

46. The Bureau discussed and provided its guidance in relation to the "Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN".

47. With reference to the operative paragraphs of Decision IG.22/18 on Cooperation and Partners, the Coordinator updated Bureau members on the evaluation of the application by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) through the Università di Siena (UNISI), for accreditation as UNEP/MAP Partners.

Conclusions:

48. The Bureau welcomed the progress achieved on issues related to Cooperation and Partners and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its work on these issues.

49. The Bureau encouraged the Secretariat to engage in further efforts for enhancing collaboration with the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med based on the existing bilateral agreements, and with MedPAN. The Bureau having considered the draft "Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity among the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC and in collaboration with MedPAN", concluded that the engagement of the Contracting Parties is to be sought, in developing a joint cooperation strategy on marine protected areas and other area-based management tools among the Intergovernmental Organizations, in order to enhance the protection and sustainable use of marine biodiversity. For this purpose, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a paper for consideration at the next MAP Focal Points Meeting in 2017.

50. The Bureau welcomed the approval of the MedProgramme by the GEF Council and expressed appreciation for the work done by the MAP Secretariat for this achievement.

51. The Bureau invited the Secretariat to continue supporting the sub regional initiative of the Western Mediterranean sub-sea basin and considered it as an opportunity to support the commitments under the MAP/Barcelona Convention and the MSSD objectives at sub regional level.

52. The Bureau endorsed the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the application submitted by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) through the Università di Siena (UNISI) for accreditation as UNEP/MAP Partner.

- 5.4. Outreach, Information and Communication

53. The Coordinator presented a brief update of the information and communication activities and the further plans for the biennium, noting the need to enhance the capacity of the Coordinating Unit in this area.

Conclusion:

54. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the very good results of the information and communication work, and highlighted the need for making every effort to enhance visibility of the UNEP MAP Barcelona Convention system.

- 5.5. Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award

55. With reference to the operative paragraphs of Decision IG.22/19 on the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, the Coordinator presented an overview of the progress regarding the finalization of the nomination and selection criteria and template and the proposed plan and process for granting the first Award at COP 20.

56. The Bureau suggested some amendments to the proposed nomination and selection process presented in Annex V of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/6, in order to grant the first Award at COP 20.

Conclusions:

57. The Bureau welcomed the work done by the Secretariat and the Task Force on the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, approved the nomination and selection process and the Application Form, as amended especially in relation to including an electronic public voting before the final selection of the winning city.

58. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to proceed with launching the award in accordance to this process, so that the first, pilot, edition of the Award is granted at COP 20 and the following editions to be refined based on the experience of this edition of the award, as appropriate.

59. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the support of Turkey to this process.

- 5.6. Preparations for COP 20

60. The Coordinator presented options for a possible theme and outcome of COP 20, as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/6. He also updated the Bureau on the recent information regarding the dates of UNEA-3 and the possible need to change the dates of COP 20. Bureau members discussed and provided guidance on the main theme, focus and dates of COP 20.

61. The Coordinator also expressed the Secretariat's intention to focus on a limited number of forward-looking decisions. With this opportunity, he also informed the Bureau that certain flexibility in regard to the two months deadline for distributing the documents would be extremely appreciated by the Secretariat, especially due to the extremely short length of the biennium and the multitude of overlapping deadlines that occurred as a consequence. In this respect, the Bureau members reflected on the need to prioritize more complex decisions while they noted that certain flexibility can be sought for the others.

Conclusions:

62. The Bureau was informed about the dates for UNEA-3 and decided the dates of COP 20 to be from Sunday 17 December 2017 until Wednesday 20 December 2017.

63. The Bureau took note of the possible themes of COP 20 and suggested to focus on the implementation of the SDG 14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development", addressing in particular land-sea interaction, including ICZM, marine biodiversity, marine litter/plastics, in relation to specific sectors such as tourism.

64. The Bureau agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to focus on a limited number of forward-looking Decisions, guided by the UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy 2016-2021 and the Programme of Work 2016-2017.

- 5.7. Progress in implementation of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work

65. The Secretariat presented issues of process and substance related to the implementation of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work, such as the preparation of the 2017 Quality Status Report, the implementation of IMAP, the preparation of the revised Resource Mobilization Strategy and the implementation of MSSD. The Bureau expressed its views and guidance on the issues contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/6.

Conclusions:

a) Preparation of the 2017 Quality Status Report

66. The Bureau agreed with the proposed process and timetable for the preparation of the 2017 QSR, and requested the Secretariat to share them along with the proposed annotated table of contents with the MAP Focal Points/EcAp Coordination Group members immediately after the 83rd Bureau Meeting for their consideration and approval, as follows.

Date	Action
November – December 2016	<p>Initial mapping of data and information sources (by the Secretariat)</p> <p>Establishment of the online CORMON and thematic expert groups through InfoMap Groupware (by the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat)</p> <p>Lead countries per chapter/Common indicators defined, as appropriate (by the Contracting Parties)</p> <p>Case studies proposed on a voluntary basis (by the Contracting Parties)</p>
January – February 2017	<p>First draft of the 2017 QSR delivered with inputs of and for review by the CORMON (online consultation and physical meetings) (CORMON Litter, Biodiversity, Coast, Pollution with separate and joint sessions, as appropriate)</p> <p>(the initial draft to be prepared by the Secretariat)</p>
March – May 2017	<p>Second draft of the 2017 QSR delivered with inputs by the CORMONs and EcAp Coordination Group (through on line consultation), the Component Focal Point Meetings and pending budget availability by the EcAp Coordination Group Meeting</p>

June – September 2017	Final draft for review by the EcAp Coordination Group and MAP Focal Points (by the Secretariat)
October – December 2017	Submission to COP 20
2018	QSR Online Publication Publication of the QSR Executive Summary

67. The Bureau encouraged Contracting Parties to actively contribute to the preparation of the 2017 QSR and provide data and information, as appropriate, to enhance full ownership over the process.

b) Implementation of IMAP

68. The Bureau urged the Contacting Parties to accelerate their efforts in developing and submitting to the Secretariat their updated, integrated national monitoring programmes in line with their specificities, and to implement where appropriate the existing monitoring programmes and urgently submit the relevant, already available quality assured data to the Secretariat.

c) Implementation of the MSSD

69. The Bureau welcomed the progress in relation to the implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025.

70. The Bureau welcomed the effort by the Secretariat to mobilize external resources for the implementation of the MSSD and to support MCSD activities, in particular the proposal submitted to UN/DESA, “*Strengthening regional implementation of 2030 Agenda in the Mediterranean through support to the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (2016-2025)*”.

d) Preparation of the revised Resource Mobilization Strategy

71. The Bureau took note of the progress of the preparation of the revised Resource Mobilization Strategy (RMS) for submission to the MAP Focal Points meeting and COP 20.

72. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare the revised RMS in consultation with the Contracting Parties to allow them to provide inputs during the entire process and enhance their ownership.

73. The Bureau also requested the Secretariat to address within the RMS the ways and means for the Contracting Parties to be involved in the development of the project proposals.

VI. Agenda item 6: Date and Venue of the 84th Meeting of the Bureau

74. The Bureau was invited to decide on the date and the venue of its 84th Meeting. It was recalled that document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG 22/Inf.17 entitled “Indicative Calendar of Main UNEP/MAP Meetings in the Biennium 2016-2017” and reviewed by COP 19 indicates the date of such meeting as 28-29 June 2017.

75. The updated “Tentative calendar of UNEP/MAP meetings and major international events” was presented in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/Inf.3.

Conclusions:

76. The Bureau agreed to hold its 84th Meeting on 19-20 June 2017 in Athens, Greece.

VII. Agenda item 7: Any Other Matters

77. No other matters were raised by the Bureau members.

VIII. Agenda item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

78. The Secretariat submitted for adoption a set of conclusions and recommendations prepared in accordance with Article VII of the Terms of Reference of the Bureau.

79. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions and recommendations as set in this report.

IX. Agenda item 9: Closure of the Meeting

80. The meeting was closed by the President of the Bureau at 15:30 on Wednesday, 26 October 2016.

Annex I

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Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda item 1** **Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2** **Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3** **Progress Report for the period March-August 2016**
- Agenda item 4** **Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5** **Specific Issues:**
- 5.1 Governance
 - 5.2 Assessment of MAP II
 - 5.3 Cooperation and Partners
 - 5.4 Outreach Information and Communication
 - 5.5 Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award
 - 5.6 Preparations for COP 20
 - 5.7 Progress in the implementation of the 2016-2017 Programme of Work
- Agenda item 6** **Date and Venue of the 84th Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 7** **Any Other Matters**
- Agenda item 8** **Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 9** **Closure of the Meeting**

Annex III

TORs for the Assessment of MAP II

Terms of Reference of MAP II Assessment

1. Background

At COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, 3-6 December 2013) the Contracting Parties adopted Decision IG.21/16 on the *Assessment of the Mediterranean Action Plan* and decided to “Launch a process to assess MAP phase II with the intention of addressing effectively the challenge of sustainable development and the irreversible nature of impacts on the environment and resources, with a view to proposing a Decision on the appropriate way forward including the possible adoption at the 19th meeting of the Contracting Parties of MAP phase III;”.

At COP 19 (Athens, Greece, February 2016), the Parties decided in favour of the option ii contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/23 on the implementation of decision IG.21/16 on the *Assessment of the Mediterranean Action Plan*. Accordingly, the Mediterranean Action Plan Phase II document would be adjusted to reflect the key developments made in the Mediterranean Action Plan system with regard to thematic issues. The Contracting Parties also agreed that an open-ended working group of the MAP focal points, under the guidance of the Bureau, should be assigned to update the document for submission to the Contracting Parties at their twentieth meeting. The Group would require at least one meeting during 2016-2017.

At the 82nd Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the Coordinator presented to the Bureau the proposed course of action for the implementation of the COP 19 conclusions on this matter for endorsement. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to undertake the following course of action for the implementation of the COP 19 conclusions:

- (a) the Secretariat to prepare TORs for the assignment taking also into account the MSSD, to be shared with the Bureau at its 83rd Meeting;
- (b) the Secretariat to send invitations to the Focal Points to participate or appoint their representatives on the open-ended Working Group (WG);
- (c) the Bureau to nominate one of its members to lead the work of the Working Group with Secretariat's support;
- (d) the Working Group to hold its meeting in the first quarter of 2017 (if the external funds are available);
- (e) the Working Group to prepare its conclusions in time for submission to the 84th Meeting of the Bureau; and
- (f) the Bureau to provide its recommendations to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points in 2017 to be presented at the COP 20 together with the conclusions of the Working Group.

2. Tasks of the Working Group

In order to implement option ii contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/23, on the implementation of decision IG.21/16 on the *Assessment of the Mediterranean Action Plan*, the Mediterranean Action Plan Phase II document needs to be adjusted to reflect the key developments since its adoption in COP 9 (Barcelona, Spain, 5-8 June 1995). As noted in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/23, there is a deep matching of the thematic areas of MAP II, with effectively addressing the challenge of sustainable development and the irreversible nature of impacts on the environment and resources. Option ii appreciates that there is a need, nevertheless, for certain updates in the text of MAP II to reflect the evolution of the reality of sustainable development and of the MAP system itself. On the same time, the context of MAP II, its objectives, thematic priorities and activities are still relevant, as its text is flexible enough to accommodate new global developments and

it is fully complemented by the new tools and instruments, comprehensive protocols and amendments that the MAP system has adopted and implemented.

The task of the WG is therefore to factually update MAP II in order to reflect the evolution of sustainable development and of the MAP system itself. In order to do so, three main steps are identified:

- i) Identify the main evolutions since the adoption of MAP II and the relevant COP decisions and other documents that reflect them,
- ii) Identify the main parts/sections of MAP II that are outdated and require factual updates, and
- iii) Recommend an updated text of MAP II based on the evolutions since its adoption for submission to the MAP Focal Points and COP 20.

In the following section of this document a brief summary of the main evolutions since the adoption of MAP II is presented, in order to facilitate the work of the open-ended WG.

3. Main evolutions since the adoption of MAP II

As described in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/23, MAP Phase II was adopted twenty years ago and the MAP agenda has since evolved in response to the global agenda. The main evolutions include:

Developments in the MAP system since the adoption of MAP Phase II

- Entry into force of the amended Barcelona Convention in 2004;
- Entry into force of the Offshore Protocol in 2011;
- Adoption of a new Protocol on Hazardous Wastes in 1996, entry into force in 2008;
- Adoption of amended SPA and Biodiversity Protocol in 1995, entry into force in 1999;
- Adoption of new Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in 2008, entry into force in 2011;
- Adoption of the amended LBS Protocol in 1996 (entered into force in 2008) and of ten Regional Plans with Programmes of Measures and Timetables for their implementation, as provided for in Article 15 of the LBS Protocol;
- Adoption of the Strategic Action Programme to Address Pollution from Land-based Activities (SAP-MED) in 1997, as well as adoption of the NAPs in 2005 and revision in 2015;
- Adoption of the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SAP-BIO) in 2003;
- Adoption of the amended Prevention and Emergency Protocol 2002, entry into force in 2004;
- Adoption of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships in 2005;
- Establishment of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) in 1996;
- Adoption of the roadmap and timetable to implement the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean including the vision, goals and the Mediterranean Ecological Objectives and GES targets (Decisions IG.17/6, IG.20/4 and IG.21/3);
- Adoption of the Almeria Governance Paper (Decision IG.17/5);
- Adoption of the UNEP-MAP Five Year Programme of Work 2010-2014 (Decision IG.19/17, Appendix I);
- Adoption of the Governance decision at COP 18 (Decision IG.21/9);
- Adoption of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021 (introducing a six-year cycle) at COP 19 (Decision IG.22/1);
- Formulation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development in 2005, and renewed commitment with the Adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 at COP 19 (Decision IG.22/2);

- Adoption of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP) at COP 19 (Decision IG.22/7);
- Adoption of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean at COP 19 (Decision IG.22/5);
- Endorsement of the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas at COP 19 (Decision IG.22/6).

Developments outside the MAP system since the adoption of MAP II

- The Rio+10 and Rio+20 Conferences, especially in the fields of:
 - Green Economy;
 - Climate Change;
 - Sustainable Consumption and Production.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including its Sustainable Development Goals (adopted at the United Nations Summit in September 2015);
- Wide recognition and application of the Ecosystem Approach;
- Increased attention to Climate Change:
 - IPCC Fourth and Fifth Assessment Reports;
 - Adoption of the Paris Agreement.
- Widened legislation on marine and coastal environment of the EU, with particular focus on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Marine Spatial Planning Directive;
- Increased emphasis on Environmental Governance:
 - Establishment of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA);
 - Strengthening of the International Framework of Sustainable Development, and especially the establishment of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF);
 - Emergence of other actors in the Mediterranean (e.g. establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean as evolution of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership/Barcelona Process, World Bank, GEF);
 - Developments in the ocean governance at the global and UN level (e.g. ABNJ, MPAs, Deep Sea Mining).

4. Process and Timeline

The work of the open-ended WG will be guided by the decisions and recommendations described in the section on Background. More specifically, it is proposed that:

- During its 83rd Meeting, the Bureau will nominate one of its members to lead the work of the Working Group with Secretariat's support;
- After the 83rd Bureau meeting, by mid-November 2016, the Secretariat will send invitations to the Focal Points to participate or appoint their representatives on the open-ended WG;
- Once the WG is set, the Secretariat will facilitate its work and provide necessary background information;
- The WG will work mainly through electronic means.
- The WG will hold a two-day meeting in the first quarter of 2017 (February/March 2017), provided that external funds are available. The meeting will be held in Athens, Greece (UNEP/MAP Headquarters) and interpretation will be provided in English and French. The Secretariat will continue efforts to secure the external resources of EUR 70,000, in order, inter alia, to enable the realization of this meeting;
- Following this meeting, the WG will finalize its conclusions in April 2017, for submission to the 84th Meeting of the Bureau (planned for June 2017);
- The Bureau at its 84th Meeting will discuss the issue and provide its recommendations to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points in 2017 (planned for September 2017);
- If necessary and provided that external funds are available, a one-day meeting of the WG may be organized back-to-back with the MAP Focal Points Meeting, in order for the WG to revise its input taking into account the recommendations of the Bureau;

- Following the discussion in the MAP Focal Points Meeting, the final document will be presented (in the form of a Decision) at COP 20 together with the conclusions of the Working Group.

5. Indicative budget

Meeting of WG (2 days in February/March 2017)	50,000 EUR
Meeting of WG (September 2017-before NFP Meeting)	10,000 EUR
Consultant (to facilitate the WG)	10,000 EUR
TOTAL	70,000 EUR



UNITED
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UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

25 July 2017
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84th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Athens, Greece, 19-20 June 2017 and Teleconference 14 July 2017

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2017

Table of contents

	Pages
Report	1-8
ANNEXES	
Annex I List of Participants	
Annex II Agenda	

Introduction

1. At the invitation of the Government of Greece, the 83rd Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was held on 19-20 June 2017 in Athens, Greece, and was resumed through teleconference on 14 July 2017.

Participation

2. The President of the Bureau, Ms. Christina Baritaki (Greece), the Vice-Presidents: Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania); Mr. Mohamed Abdel Moneim Farouk Osman (Egypt); Mr. Victor Escobar Paredes (Spain) and the Rapporteur, Ms. Ayelet Rosen (Israel) attended the Bureau meeting. Mr. Mohamed Benyahia (Morocco) was absent with apologies. Ms. Marijana Mance (EU) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, Programme Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 on 19 June 2017 by the President of the Bureau, Ms. Christina Baritaki. She welcomed the Bureau members and other participants to their third meeting of the 2016-2017 biennium.

4. The Coordinator also made a statement of welcome to the participants.

II. Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.84/1 (Annex II).

6. The review of the initial agenda of COP 20 was added to the agenda. Furthermore, the EU observer informed the meeting that, under “Any other Business”, she would briefly provide information on the Conference “Our Ocean, an Ocean for Life”, to be held in Malta, on 5-6 October 2017.

III. Agenda item 3: Progress Report for September 2016 - May 2017

7. The Coordinator introduced the document “Progress report by the Secretariat on the activities carried out for the period September 2016-May 2017” (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.84/3). He presented highlights from the document, noting that efforts had been made to produce a focused and concise report.

8. The Secretariat also presented the updated “Progress report by the Secretariat on the implementation of COP 19 Decisions” (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.84/4).

9. The Coordinator highlighted the successful resource mobilization efforts, especially - but not only - in relation to the approval by the GEF Council of the “GEF Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security”. He also referred to the SWITCH MED project, which is soon coming to an end, and to the possibility of supporting its continuation through a follow-up project, to take advantage of its success and momentum. Bureau members welcomed the results of the resource mobilization by the Secretariat.

10. Referring to a question by a Bureau member on the timing of issuance of tickets for meeting related travels, the Coordinator stressed the importance of early nominations of meeting participants, and especially sponsored ones, by Contracting Parties.

11. Bureau members expressed appreciation for the progress achieved in the implementation of the activities carried out. The Bureau also indicated that efforts should continue towards the preparation of reports that show impact more clearly.

12. The Bureau considered the desirability of reflecting on strategic thematic issues of relevance for the future work of the MAP system. It was suggested that the next biennium may offer opportunities to initiate an unstructured strategic discussion among the Parties, under the leadership of the Bureau.

Conclusion:

13. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the work done as presented by the Secretariat, and for the efforts and results achieved so far.

IV. Agenda item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

14. The Coordinator informed the meeting on progress made regarding the financial situation since the submission of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.84/5 "Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues", and noted that in addition to those included in the above-mentioned document, contribution to the MTF had also been received from Slovenia, bringing the collection rate for 2017 to 65.04 %.

Conclusions:

15. The Bureau notes with appreciation the high level of contributions received for the year 2016 and the promising collection rate in 2017 as at end April. It requests those Contracting Parties which have not paid their 2017 contributions and arrears to do so as soon as possible and asks the Secretariat to send a letter to those Contracting Parties regarding their arrears;

16. The Bureau takes note of the actions taken by the Secretariat for the two cases of arrears for over 24 months. It requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears and report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties on the outcome of its actions and the responses provided by the two Contracting Parties;

17. The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitment at the Coordinating Unit and in addition, it encourages the Contracting Parties who may be able to do so to contribute human resources to the Secretariat in the areas that are mostly needed through JPO and other similar schemes. It also encourages the Contracting Parties to consider the needs in terms of the allocation of funds to the required human resources for the effective and consistent delivery of the Programme of Work.

V. Agenda item 5: Specific Issues

18. The Coordinator presented the "Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues" (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.84/6).

19. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

- A. Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

20. The Coordinator presented the update contained in the above-mentioned document on issues regarding the status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

21. The Coordinator reported that, since the last meeting of the Bureau, the Depositary had communicated to the Secretariat the deposit of the instrument of ratification of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol by Algeria.
22. The President noted that Greece has progressed in the process for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol, which is expected to be finalized within the current biennium. This was a much welcome development.
23. The Bureau also discussed the desirability of an analysis of the constraints that generate a low rate of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, including their amendments for individual Contracting Parties. It was suggested that the Secretariat should pursue further contacts with those Parties at a political level, in order to identify such constraints and ways to address them.

Conclusions:

- 24. The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to ratify without further delay the relevant legal instruments;**
- 25. The Bureau congratulates Algeria for the ratification of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol;**
- 26. The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts to achieve the full ratification of the revised Barcelona Convention as well as the ratification of its Protocols.**

- B. Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs

27. The Coordinator reported on the developments of Host Country Agreements for RACs, noting the difficulties faced for a full harmonization of HCAs, especially due the different nature and specificities of each RAC and the related legislation of the host countries regulating RACs' activities.
28. The Bureau discussed the issue and advised accordingly.

Conclusion:

- 29. The Bureau takes note of the current status of development of the Host Country Agreements for RACs as reported by the Secretariat and refers the issue to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points for further consideration by the 20th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties; the Bureau, noting the difficulties in the implementation of a unified template of HCAs recommends that the Secretariat explores other modalities, as appropriate, for submission to the MAP Focal Points.**

- C. Shift to Thematic Focal Points

30. The Coordinator reported on the developments regarding the shift to Thematic Focal Points, noting that the relevant information is provided in the "Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues" (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.84/6). Its Annex I, presents the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for a possible shift on a trial basis of the PAP/RAC and SPA/RAC Focal Points to LSI/ICZM and SPA/BD Focal Points respectively.

31. The Bureau discussed the issue, noting that any possible change should be done on a trial basis and without creating disruption to the system, and advised accordingly.

Conclusion:

32. The Bureau takes note of the draft revised Terms of Reference for PAP/RAC (LSI/ICZM) and SPA/RAC (SPA/BD) Focal Points, as presented by the Secretariat in Annex I of the Report on Specific Issues, and requests the Secretariat to prepare on a trial basis a meeting of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points for the 2018-2019 biennium.

- D. Reporting and Compliance

33. The Coordinator reported on the submission of national implementation reports by the Contracting Parties, on the progress in the preparation of a revised, simplified, reporting format for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as well as on the composition of the Compliance Committee.

34. The Bureau discussed the above issues and advised accordingly.

Conclusions:

35. The Bureau strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 without further delay;

36. The Bureau expresses its appreciation to those Contracting Parties who volunteered to test the draft revised reporting format and encourages Contracting Parties to participate in this exercise as a means to ensure that the revised reporting format is user-friendly;

37. The Bureau urges Monaco to nominate an expert as Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee for a term of four years, thus completing the membership of the Compliance Committee as per Decision IG.22/15;

38. The Bureau invites the Secretariat to undertake an analysis of the information mentioned in the national reports for the 2014-2015 biennium in order to draft a report addressing the general status of the progress in the region, on the legal, institutional and technical points of view, in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and present it as an information document for the meeting of the MAP Focal Points.

- E. Assessment of MAP II

39. The Coordinator informed the Bureau on the outcome of the Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the MAP II Assessment (Athens, Greece, 16-17 May 2017) and on the comments received by two Contracting Parties after its meeting, as included in the Report of the Meeting (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.440/4). He also noted that the Bureau, at its 82nd meeting, decided, *inter alia*, that: (a) the Working Group to prepare its conclusions in time for submission to the 84th Meeting of the Bureau; and (b) the Bureau to provide its recommendations to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points in 2017 to be presented at the COP 20 together with the conclusions of the Working Group.

40. The Bureau discussed the issue at its session of 19-20 June 2017 and at its resumed session by teleconference on 14 July 2017, i.e. after the completion of the work of the above-mentioned Working Group. The Bureau agreed on its recommendations as follows, to be forwarded to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points in 2017, in order to be presented at the COP 20 together with the conclusions of the Working Group.

Conclusions:

41. The Bureau welcomes the course of action taken by the Secretariat;

42. The Bureau takes note of the conclusions of the Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the MAP II Assessment (Athens, Greece, 16-17 May 2017) as in Annex II of the Report on Specific Issues;

43. The Bureau agrees with the opinion of the Secretariat that an update of MAP II as the one proposed can be done through a Decision of a Meeting of the Contracting Parties;

44. The Bureau acknowledges the outcome of the work of the Open-Ended Working Group and agrees to transmit it to the MAP Focal Points for consideration at their next meeting, in a consolidated document together with the comments received by Italy and France. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to also transmit the “Legal issues associated with the MAP II Assessment” provided by the Secretariat to MAP Focal Points as an Information Document.

- F. Cooperation and Partners

45. The Coordinator presented an overview of cooperation with International and Regional Organizations and bilateral cooperation agencies, and updated Bureau members on the operationalization of current agreements and progress in development of new ones.

46. With reference to the operative paragraphs of Decision IG.22/18 on Cooperation and Partners, the Coordinator updated Bureau members on the evaluation of the applications by “Plastics Europe AISBL” and by “Youth Love Egypt”, for accreditation as UNEP/MAP Partners.

Conclusions:

47. The Bureau welcomes the progress achieved on issues related to Cooperation and Partners, and especially the close collaboration with GFCM and with WWF MedPO and the extension of the MoU with UfMS, and encourages the Secretariat to continue its work on these issues; furthermore, it requests the Secretariat to prepare an updated implementation plan of the MOU with UfMS in line with the priorities of the MTS;

48. The Bureau welcomes action taken by REMPEC to strengthen synergies with relevant international actors, such as EMSA;

49. The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the applications submitted by “Plastics Europe AISBL” and by “Youth Love Egypt” for accreditation as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 20 for consideration and endorsement.

- G. Outreach, Information and Communication

50. The Coordinator presented a brief update on the information and communication activities. He also reported on the active participation in high visibility events, such as the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 (New York, 5-9 June 2017), the G7 Environment Ministers' meeting (Bologna, Italy, 11-12 June 2017) and the G20 High Level Conference on Marine Litter (Bremen, Germany, 30 May-1 June 2017). Finally, he elaborated on the further plans for the biennium, and noted the need to enhance the capacity of the Coordinating Unit in this area.

Conclusions:

51. The Bureau expresses appreciation for the very good results of the information and communication work and for the successful efforts of the Secretariat for increasing the visibility and impact of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in spite of the limited resources available to information and communication;

52. The Bureau congratulates REMPEC for the celebration of its 40th Anniversary and acknowledges the work of the Centre and the high commitment of the Government of Malta, as its Host Country, as well as the support provided by IMO.

- H. Preparation for Main MAP Meetings (MAP Focal Points, 17th MCSD, COP 20)

53. The Coordinator informed the Bureau on the preparations for the 17th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) to take place in Athens, Greece, on 3-5 July 2017. He noted the importance of the participatory process for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD), where all MCSD members should be actively involved.

54. The Bureau members discussed the most important aspects of the meeting, including the MSSD implementation and monitoring plan, the Mediterranean Dashboard of Sustainable Development and its indicators, as well as the roadmap for the preparation of the MED2050 report.

55. The Coordinator then informed the meeting on the preparations for the next Meeting of MAP Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 12-15 September 2017) and for the 6th Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) Coordination Group that will also take place in Athens, Greece, on 11 September 2017. He noted the intention of the Secretariat to limit the number of draft Decisions submitted for consideration by the MAP Focal Points and to minimize the text of the draft Decisions.

56. The meeting agreed with the intention of the Secretariat and also noted the possibility for a working group on the biennial Programme of Work and Budget to be established during the MAP Focal Points meeting.

57. The Coordinator introduced the proposals of the Secretariat on the theme of COP 20, as presented in Annex IV of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.84/6, noting that they were prepared taking into account the focus of major international events on oceans in the context of sustainable development and the theme of UNEA-3. He also presented the preliminary provisional agenda of COP 20, as agreed during the adoption of the agenda of the Bureau meeting.

58. The Bureau members discussed and provided guidance on the theme and preliminary provisional agenda of COP 20.

Conclusions:

59. The Bureau welcomes the main topics and progress in the preparation of the 17th MCSD Meeting;

60. The Bureau takes note of the proposed list of draft Decisions for consideration by the MAP Focal Points and requests the Secretariat to finalize their preparation in a timely manner for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points;

61. The Bureau welcomes the proposals of the Secretariat regarding the theme of COP 20, and decides on the theme: “Implementation of SDG 14 within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a Focus on Marine Pollution and Biodiversity”;

62. The Bureau agreed with the preliminary provisional agenda for COP 20 prepared by the Secretariat and asked the Secretariat to present it to the MAP Focal Points.

- I. Other Issues

63. The Secretariat presented the progress in the preparation of the 2017 Quality Status Report (QSR) and noted that the final draft of the 2017 QSR is under finalization for review by the EcAp Coordination Group and the MAP Focal Points.

Conclusion:

64. The Bureau welcomes the progress achieved in the preparation of the 2017 QSR and requests the Secretariat to make every effort in order to finalize the report in a timely manner for the EcAp Coordination Group and the MAP Focal Points.

VI. Agenda item 6: Preparation of the draft Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019

65. The Secretariat presented the progress in relation to the preparation of the draft Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019 (PoW), highlighting that the process for this biennium included some new elements, and mainly: (a) the preparation of the PoW based on the recently adopted Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021, (b) the very strong cooperation with the MAP Components from the early stages of the PoW preparation, and (c) the regular involvement of the MAP Focal Points, and of the Contracting Parties in general, from an early stage.

Conclusions:

66. The Bureau takes note of the proposal by the Secretariat on the outline, principles and assumptions for the PoW 2018-2019 and notes that the Secretariat intends to finalize the work along these lines for submission to the MAP Focal Points;

67. In relation to the total budget for 2020-2021, the Bureau invites the Secretariat to prepare a proposal on a non-binding prospective total budget for the biennium, taking into account the MAP system needs to deliver the new mandates decided by the Contracting Parties over the last decade and to meet the increasing operation costs of all its components. The Bureau further notes that the budget proposal for the biennium 2020-2021 is a matter to be considered by all Contracting Parties at the MAP Focal Points meeting and at the COP;

68. The Bureau welcomes the approval of the GEF MedProgramme, the GEF Adriatic Project, the GEF Special Climate Change Funds Project, as well as the EU funded projects SIMWESTMED and SUPREME MED, and requests the Secretariat to continue its good work in attracting external funding and their matching in line with the priorities of the MTS and the PoW.

VII. Agenda item 7: Date and Venue of the 85th Meeting of the Bureau

69. The Bureau agreed that its 85th Meeting will be held in mid-2018 in Tirana, Albania, and that the exact date will be decided at a later stage.

VIII. Agenda item 8: Any Other Matters

70. The EU representative referred to the upcoming Conference “Our Ocean, an Ocean for Life”, to be held in Malta, on 5-6 October 2017, noting that it will focus on issues such as marine pollution, marine protected areas, and climate change impacts. She also informed Bureau members that the meeting will focus on three regions, namely the Indian and Atlantic Oceans and the Mediterranean Sea, and that voluntary commitments can be submitted to the Conference.

IX. Agenda item 9: Conclusions and Recommendations

71. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions and recommendations as set in this report.

X. Agenda item 10: Closure of the Meeting

72. The meeting was suspended by the President of the Bureau at 17:30 on Tuesday, 20 June 2017, resumed through teleconference at 10:00 on Friday 14 July 2017, and closed at 11:15 on Friday 14 July 2017.

Annex I

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Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda item 1** **Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2** **Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3** **Progress Report for September 2016 - May 2017**
- Agenda item 4** **Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5** **Specific Issues:**
- a) Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols
 - b) Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs
 - c) Shift to Thematic Focal Points
 - d) Reporting and Compliance
 - e) Assessment of MAP II
 - f) Cooperation and Partners
 - g) Outreach, Information and Communication
 - h) Preparation for main MAP meetings (MAP Focal Points, 17th MCSD, COP 20)
- Agenda item 6** **Preparation of the draft Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019**
- Agenda item 7** **Date and Venue of the 85th Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 8** **Any Other Matters**
- Agenda item 9** **Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 10** **Closure of the Meeting**