



UNITED  
NATIONS

EP

UNEP/MED WG.567/9



**Mediterranean  
Action Plan**  
Barcelona  
Convention

26 July 2023  
Original: English

10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group

Istanbul, Türkiye, 11 September 2023

**Agenda Item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Elements for a draft Decision on Ecosystem Approach from the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group to the MAP Focal Points**

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.

**Part 1. Conclusions and Recommendations of the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group to be completed after the meeting**

[to be completed and submitted during the adoption session of the Meeting]

**Part 2. Elements for the draft Decision draft Decision on Ecosystem Approach from the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group to the MAP Focal Points**

Based on the Agenda of the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group (Istanbul, Türkiye, 11 September 2023), and pending final outcome of its discussion, as well as the approach used for the preparation of the draft Decisions, the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group meeting may consider the following elements for inclusion in a draft Decision related to Ecosystem Approach implementation in the Mediterranean:

- a) In the preambular part of the draft Decision:
  - Reference to the most recent relevant regulatory and policy frameworks and instruments at regional and global level,
  - Acknowledgment of the work undertaken by the Contracting Parties, CORMON and CORESA Meetings, the Secretariat, and MAP Partners for the implementation of EcAp Roadmap delivery of 2-023 MED QSR and implementation of IMAP
  - Expression of appreciation to the Contracting Parties and donors for allocating considerable financial resources for the implementation of the EcAp Roadmap, IMAP and preparation of the 2023 MED QSR in the framework of the UNEP/MAP Programmes of Work,
  - Reference to the main findings of the 2023 MED QSR assessment and of the need for strengthened efforts to achieve GES.
  
- b) In the operative paragraphs of the draft Decision:
  - Endorse the Executive Summary of the 2023 MED QSR and request the Secretariat and Contracting Parties to fully take it into consideration in their future work,
  - Adopt new/updated IMAP assessment criteria as approved by the CORMON and, as appropriate by EcAp Coordination Group, meetings,
  - Take note of the findings of the independent evaluation of the EcAp Roadmap implementation,
  - Give a mandate to revise, under the leadership of the EcAp Coordination Group, the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap during the biennium 2024-2025, taking into consideration, but not limited to, the outcomes of the 2023 MED QSR and the elements for a renewed EcAp Roadmap as presented to the Meeting,
  - Give a mandate to the CORMONs, with support from the Secretariat and MAP Components, to further develop IMAP, based on the outcomes of the 2023 MED QSR and CORMON recommendations,
  - Adopt the Terms of Reference for the CORMONs, CORESA and Online Working Groups and the flow of interaction between Ecosystem Approach and MAP governing bodies,
  - Call the Contracting Parties to take the necessary measures for the full implementation of IMAP and measures to achieve/maintain Good Environmental Status and call upon Partners, donors and scientific community to contribute to this process in the Mediterranean.

The Secretariat has made an effort based on previous practices to prepare a very first draft of the above draft Decision to facilitate the discussion by the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group, which is presented as annexed below.

**[Decision IG.26/3**

**The 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report and a Renewed Ecosystem Approach Policy in the Mediterranean**

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

*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

*Recalling also* the United Nations General Assembly resolution 76/296 of 21 July 2022, entitled “Our ocean, our future, our responsibility”,

*Recalling* the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution UNEP/EA.5/Res. 3 of 2 March 2022, entitled “Future of the Global Environment Outlook”,

*Recalling* the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) that was adopted during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 15),

*Having regard* to Article 12 of the Barcelona Convention and relevant articles of its Protocols addressing monitoring and assessment,

*Recalling* Decisions of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention related to the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap and Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme, i.e. Decision IG.17/6 (COP 15), Decision IG.20/4 (COP 17), Decision IG. 21/3 (COP 18), Decision IG.22/7 (COP 19), Decision IG.23/6 (COP 20), and Decision IG.24/4 (COP 21) and their status of implementation,

*Expressing appreciation* for the work undertaken by the entire UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention system, in primis the Contracting Parties, Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group, CORMON, CORESA, MAP and MAP Components Focal Points, MAP Partners, and the Secretariat including MAP Components, for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap,

*Expressing also appreciation* for the support provided through the EU-funded projects, i.e. EcAp MED III, Marine Litter MED II and IMA-PMPA, and the Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with Italy, as well as the GEF-funded MedProgramme, in the implementation of the IMA-PMPA-based national monitoring programmes and in the preparation of the Mediterranean Quality Status Report (2023 MED QSR), as well as on the implementation of Programmes of Measures/ National Action Plans at national level,

*Concerned* by the pressures caused by human activities on the marine and coastal environment and *acknowledging* that unsustainable consumption and production patterns are the main drivers of environmental change in the Mediterranean, as highlighted in the socioeconomic and assessment chapters of the 2023 MED QSR,

*Having considered* the reports of the meetings of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group, and the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups on Pollution, Marine Litter, Biodiversity and Coast and Hydrography, the MED POL and RAC Focal Points,

1. *Take note* of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (2023 MED QSR) as provided in the Meeting document UNEP/MED WG.567/Inf.3;

2. *Endorse* the Executive Summary of the 2023 MED QSR, as set out in Annex I to the present Decision;

3. *Endorse* the assessment criteria and threshold values as set out in Annex II to the present Decision, acknowledging their evolving nature, based on quality assured data availability and in this context, *highlight* that any regular update should allow sufficient time for negotiation and endorsement by the CORMON and the COP before the assessment phase of next Mediterranean Quality Status Report has started;
4. *Take note of* the findings of the independent evaluation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap, and welcome the significant progress marked in its implementation the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat including MAP Components, building on the Ecosystem Approach governance structure,
5. *Request* the Secretariat to prepare during the biennium 2024-2025, under the leadership of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group, a revised Ecosystem Approach Roadmap Policy, including IMAP enhancement, taking into account, but not limited to, the outcomes of the 2023 Mediterranean QSR; the findings of the independent evaluation of the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap as set out in Annex III to the present Decision, and other related work of the Secretariat as per the CORMONs and Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group meeting conclusions, and giving due consideration to the most recent relevant developments at global and regional level, including the expected MFSD evaluation and revision, for consideration at COP 24 in Egypt;
6. *Adopt* the Terms of Reference for the CORMONs, CORESA and Online Working Groups and the flow of interaction between Ecosystem Approach and MAP governing bodies, as set out in Annex IV to the present Decision;
7. *Call upon* Contracting Parties to continue strengthening the monitoring and assessment capacities of the national IMAP competent laboratories and authorities, with the view to delivering and reporting quality assured data and undertake reliable related assessments with support from the Secretariat and MAP Components, considering the need to ensure uniform distribution of reported data across the entire region;
8. *Invite* the Secretariat (INFO/RAC) to further enhance the IMAP Info System by undertaking its upgrade into an advanced information system which efficiently supports assessments and ensures the validation of uploaded data, first technically and then scientifically, for potential use at various scales;
9. *Invite* Contracting Parties and donor institutions to provide financial resources for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap with a particular focus on IMAP implementation at national level;
10. *Encourage* the Contracting Parties to undertake the preparation and/or update of Programmes of Measures /National Action Plans to achieve Good Environmental Status, addressing to the extent possible in their entirety the 11 Ecological Objectives adopted under the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap in an integrated way, highlighting the obligation to streamline the requirements of the recent regulatory measures adopted by the Contracting Parties on pollution prevention and biodiversity conservation, promoting circular economy, resource efficiency, and sustainability of human activities, including emerging ones;
11. *Request* the Secretariat to provide timely and effective technical and financial support in line with the adopted UNEP/MAP Programmes of Work and Budget for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap, IMAP and related Programmes of Measures/National Action Plans, as well as 2023 MED QSR assessment findings;
12. *Call upon* the scientific community at national and regional levels to contribute to the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap and IMAP based on their comparative advantages and scientific knowledge and competences, with a view to further strengthening the Science Policy Interface for IMAP implementation at all levels.]

**Annex I**  
**2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report/ Executive Summary**

## **Annex II**

**New/Updated IMAP Assessment Criteria for Nutrients, Contaminants and Marine Litter within the framework of preparation of the 2023 MED QSR**

**Annex III**  
**Elements for a Renewed Ecosystem Approach Roadmap/ Policy**

**Annex V**  
**Terms of Reference for the CORMONs, CORESA and Online Working Groups and Flow of Interaction between Ecosystem Approach and MAP Governing Bodies**