



**UNITED
NATIONS**

EP

UNEP/MED WG.456/4



**UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

20 December 2018
Original: English

20th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee

Athens, Greece, 23-24 January 2019

Agenda Item 5: Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019, including the Preparation of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD

Updated Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2018

Updated Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019

Introduction

1. This document is an updated version of the Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019 (Working Document UNEP/MED WG.447/4), as per requested by the 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee (teleconference, 20 June 2018).
2. Focusing on a series of activities of primary interest for the work of the MCSD and its Steering Committee, the updated work plan is structured in two parts: (i) a narrative description of activities; and, (ii) the work plan summarized in a tabular format.
3. The updated work plan aims at supporting the MCSD Steering Committee in overseeing the work of the MCSD, in particular for the preparation of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD to be held in Montenegro from 11-13 June 2019, and its contribution to the 21st Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 21) to be held in December 2019 in Italy.

I. Background

4. Following the adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025 and Reform of the MCSD and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents (Decisions IG.22/2 and IG.22/17), a number of key achievements were reached in 2016-2017, including: the preparation of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard¹; the successful pilot edition of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism² (SIMPEER); the approval of the Roadmap for the MED 2050 Foresight Study on the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean – Phase I³; and, the first edition of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (Decision IG.22/19). MCSD Members, MAP Partners and other stakeholders, supported by the Secretariat, have also undertaken the launch and follow-up of various MSSD Flagship Initiatives⁴. The President of the MCSD presented the outcome of the 17th Meeting of the MCSD to MAP Focal Points during their meeting held in Athens, Greece, in September 2017, and participated in the COP 20 Ministerial Session in Tirana, Albania, in December 2017.
5. The adoption at COP 20 of Decision IG.23/4 “Implementation and Monitoring of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 and of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean” and the related activities agreed in the MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-2019 (Decision IG.23/14) paved the way for the work of the MCSD during the biennium 2018-2019.
6. Following these decisions, on-going activities at the core of the MCSD’s mandate include: Populating and updating the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard; Preparing assessment studies, i.e. 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED 2019) and MED 2050 Phase I, including case studies on the Blue Economy; Strengthening and sustaining SIMPEER through the implementation of its second edition; and, Implementing MSSD Flagship Initiatives. Progress and perspectives of these activities are described in the Report on Specific Issues (Working Document UNEP/MED WG.456/3).

II. Narrative Description of the Updated Work Plan

(a) Main Activities, as per MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-2019

7. Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard: Progress is presented in Working Document UNEP/MED WG.456/4.

¹ Annex I of Decision IG.23/4 adopted at COP 20 in Tirana, Albania, in December 2017.

² Information Documents UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.441/Inf.4 and UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.441/Inf.5 submitted to the 17th Meeting of the MCSD held in Athens, Greece, in July 2017.

³ Information Document UNEP/MED WG.447/Inf.4 – 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee.

⁴ Information Document UNEP/MED WG.447/Inf.6 – 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee.

8. Following Decision IG.23/4 and given the mission of the MCSD to ensure the follow-up of the MSSD implementation through appropriate tools, the MCSD Steering Committee is expected to coordinate the work on ensuring full consistency and synergy between the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and the ongoing work on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicators at the global level.

9. The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) informs and consults regularly the MCSD and its Steering Committee on further work to better align the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard with SDG Indicators, as well as about populating agreed indicators and issuing related factsheets (see Working Document UNEP/MED IG.456/3 and Information Documents UNEP/MED IG.456/Inf.3 and UNEP/MED IG.456/Inf.4).

10. Indicative key milestones:

- September-October 2018: Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to provide comments on and advice for the update of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard;
- January 2019: Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to discuss at their 20th Meeting (i) the draft populated dashboard and related factsheets; and (ii) the update of the dashboard; and,
- April 2019-June 2019: Populated dashboard and related factsheets, plus a proposal to update the dashboard transmitted to the MCSD Members for review and comments towards discussion at their 18th Meeting.

11. Assessment Studies (SoED 2019 and MED 2050): Progress is presented in Working Document UNEP/MED WG.456/4.

12. The MCSD Members should be regularly informed and consulted during the preparation process of the assessment studies undertaken by the Secretariat (Plan Bleu), i.e. SoED 2019 and MED 2050, including Case Studies on the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean⁵.

13. MCSD Members and MAP Partners will be also approached by the Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to possibly share case studies and experiences on the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean.

14. The progress and outcome of the MED 2050 Phase I, with business-as-usual scenarios and regional trends, will be presented to the MCSD so that the Commission is able to provide advice towards Phase II.

15. The President of the MCSD, supported by the Members of the Steering Committee and the Secretariat, will be invited to contribute to the preparation of the draft decision related to the work of the MCSD and the MSSD implementation and follow-up, including the preparation of the MED 2050 Phase II, for submission to the next Meeting of the MAP Focal Points and COP 21.

16. Indicative key milestones:

- April-June 2019: MCSD Members invited to provide comments on the first draft of the SoED 2019 and draft Roadmap for MED 2050 Phase II;
- June 2019: The 18th Meeting of the MCSD to discuss the first draft of SoED 2019 and draft Roadmap for MED 2050 Phase II; and,
- June-July 2019: The President of the MCSD, supported by the MCSD Steering Committee and Secretariat, to contribute to the draft decision related to the work of the MCSD and MSSD implementation and follow-up, including the preparation of MED 2050 Phase II, for submission to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points and COP 21.

17. SIMPEER Second Edition: At their 19th Meeting, the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee invited the Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to reflect the recommendations from the 17th Meeting of

⁵ See Working Document UNEP/MED WG.447/3 – 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee.

the MCSDD into the updated methodology to be implemented during the SIMPEER second edition (2018-2019), taking also into account ideas expressed during their meeting, as appropriate.

18. Indicative key milestones:

- January 2019: The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to publish a report capitalizing on the experience and outcome of the SIMPEER pilot edition;
- January 2019: The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to finalize the review of the SIMPEER methodology, taking into account recommendations from the 17th Meeting of the MCSDD and ideas expressed during the 19th Meeting of the MCSDD Steering Committee;
- February-April 2019: The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to draft SIMPEER national reports based on the results of the desktop analysis of background documents and in-country missions;
- June 2019: The Secretariat (Plan Bleu) to organize a Peer Review Meeting gathering volunteer Contracting Parties; and,
- June 2019: MCSDD Members to comment and discuss at their 18th Meeting the updated SIMPEER methodology and preliminary findings from the SIMPEER second edition.

19. Science-Policy Interface: The SoED 2019 and MED 2050 Phase I will benefit from co-operation with the Mediterranean Expert Network on Climate and Environmental Changes – MedECC⁶. Supported by the MAP – Barcelona Convention system and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), MedECC has the potential to achieve the flagship initiative recommended by the MSSD under its Objective 4 and to build a relevant regional science-policy interface on climate and environmental change in the region⁷. The ultimate perspective is that the MCSDD Members and Plan Bleu Focal Points, together with the UfM Climate Change Expert Group (CEEG), are consulted on the MedECC First Assessment Report and its Summary for Policymakers. Draft report will undergo review by independent experts and also governments' representatives from the Mediterranean riparian countries: it is expected that the Summary for Policy-Makers will undergo the approval procedure by the Barcelona Convention and UfM Member States representatives.

20. Indicative key milestones: By end 2018, MedECC will prepare a booklet on the risks associated to climate and environmental changes in the Mediterranean. This preliminary assessment will be shared with the MCSDD Members and Plan Bleu Focal Points. In March 2019, authors of the MedECC first assessment report will meet in Milan, Italy, to ensure the overall coherence of the report and organize its finalization. In the summer 2019, a consolidated draft assessment report will be prepared and submitted to external scientific peer review. By end 2019, the Members of the MCSDD will be consulted to review and comment the Summary for Policymakers of the draft MedECC scientific assessment report on climate and environmental changes in the Mediterranean, towards a possible ad hoc meeting involving representatives of the Barcelona Convention early 2020.

(b) Reporting Tool to Ensure the Follow-up of the MSSD Implementation

21. At their 17th Meeting, *“the MCSDD Members agreed to provide inputs in line with their responsibilities and areas of expertise for the completion of the MSSD 2016-2025 Implementation and Monitoring Plan, in particular regarding the state of play, in order to deliver a state of progress by all MCSDD Members and the Secretariat as complete as possible. To this end, the Secretariat will circulate a document/table to the MCSDD Members, asking them to fill it with relevant activities they undertake”*.

22. Such a table was submitted to and discussed at the 19th Meeting of the MCSDD Steering Committee⁸, which took note of this reporting tool to support the follow-up of the MSSD implementation, in particular in identifying gaps and areas where additional efforts are needed. This

⁶ <http://www.medecc.org>

⁷ See Information Document UNEP/MED WG.447/Inf.6 *Factsheets on the implementation of the MSSD and the work of the MCSDD* distributed for the 19th Meeting of the MCSDD Steering Committee.

⁸ See Working Document UNEP/MED WG.447/3 – 19th Meeting of the MCSDD Steering Committee.

table/tool is also an indication of the fact that the MSSD implementation is a collective endeavor of all Mediterranean partners and stakeholders that goes far beyond the responsibilities of the Secretariat.

23. The MCSD Steering Committee suggested testing the reporting tool prior the 18th Meeting of the MCSD as a “check list” to assist the MCSD Members to report on their respective activities contributing to the MSSD implementation. Such a test will be conducted by the Secretariat in order to present the results at the 18th Meeting of the MCSD.

(c) *MSSD Flagship Initiatives*

24. At their 17th Meeting, the MCSD Members urged the Contracting Parties, MCSD Members, MAP Partners, the Secretariat and other actors to undertake actions to launch the MSSD Flagship Initiatives that are not yet implemented. The MCSD called upon its Members to provide strong support and leadership in advancing the implementation of the flagship initiatives as a contribution to the MSSD and SDGs implementation, and making this work known in global and regional fora.

25. The MCSD Steering Committee was invited to consider the following MSSD Flagship Initiatives and to provide advice to the Secretariat for putting them in motion in close cooperation with MCSD Members, MAP Partners and other stakeholders:

- Under MSSD Objective 3: Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction;
- Under MSSD Objective 5: Create and promote a Mediterranean business award for environmental innovation;
- Under MSSD Objective 5: Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels;
- Under MSSD Objective 6: Encourage the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention);
- Under MSSD Objective 6: Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact assessments (EIA) and strategic environmental assessments (SEA);
- Under MSSD Objective 6: Establish a publicly-accessible Mediterranean integrated information system through a triumvirate of national governments, international institutions and the private sector to collate and transparently display information on the state of the environment.

26. At its 19th Meeting, the MCSD Steering Committee took note of the need to mobilize efforts to put in motion the six MSSD Flagship Initiatives listed above, welcoming the willingness expressed by its Members to provide, with support from the Secretariat, written proposals (concept notes) on the rationale, scope, content, indicative timeline and activities, as well as possible partners, for putting in motion these flagship initiatives.

27. COMSUD and MIO-ECSDE have drafted a concept note on launching the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction”. This concept note has been reviewed by the President of the MCSD.

28. Supported by SCP/RAC, the Secretariat has drafted a concept note on launching the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Create and promote a Mediterranean business award for environmental innovation”. This concept note has been reviewed by the President of the MCSD.

29. COMSUD and MIO-ECSDE have drafted a concept note on launching the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Encourage the accession to and implementation of the Aarhus Convention”. This concept note has been reviewed by the President of the MCSD, MEPIELAN and the Aarhus Convention Secretariat.

30. MEPIELAN has drafted a concept note on launching the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including EIA and SEA”. This concept note has been reviewed by the President of the MCSD.

31. As per in Annex I of the present document, the four concept notes mentioned above are submitted to the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee for discussion at their 20th Meeting.

(d) *Mid-Term Evaluation of the MSSD and Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean*

32. The MSSD mid-term evaluation, as recommended by MSSD Regional Action 7.2.4, and the indicator-based mid-term evaluation of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean (SCP AP) are expected to be carried out in 2020-2021 for submission to COP 22.

33. This topic is addressed in the Report on Specific Issues (Working Document UNEP/MED WG.456/3).

34. Supported by the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee and the Secretariat, the President of the MCSD is expected to contribute to the preparation of the roadmaps related to the MSSD and SCP AP mid-term evaluations. These roadmaps will be presented and discussed at the 18th Meeting of the MCSD towards submission to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points and COP 21.

(e) *MCSD Membership*

35. This topic is addressed in Working Document UNEP/MED WG.456/4 *Membership of the MCSD for the Biennium 2020-2021*.

(f) *Preparation Process of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD*

36. In line with the mandate of the MCSD (Decision IG.22/17, MSCD Terms of Reference, Annex I), the Secretariat is submitting the following points to the consideration of the Members of the MCSD Steering Committee for facilitating their discussion on the preparation process of the 18th Meeting of the MCSD and the definition of possible agenda items:

- Discussing the Analytical Report of the MAP Coordinator (as per Rule 8 of the MCSD Rules of Procedure);
- Producing opinions on the overall MAP Programme of Work for 2020-2021, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations into the MAP – Barcelona Convention system as a whole, including the topic of the MSSD mid-term evaluation;
- Implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs and producing opinions and recommendations for integration and coordination of the work of the MCSD with the other existing international and regional sustainable development and environmental programmes, policy frameworks and initiatives. Organizations to be possibly contacted for identification and invitation of potential key note speaker(s): UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA);
- Focusing a specific agenda item on peer learning exercises on national structures and processes for sustainable development (i.e. SIMPEER second edition 2018-2019 and Voluntary National Reviews/VNRs from Mediterranean countries at the 2018 and 2019 High-level Political Forum/HLPF), keeping in mind the mission of the MCSD that consist of assisting Mediterranean countries and other stakeholders in implementing sustainable development policies. Concerned Contracting Parties are the following:
 - Albania, Egypt (expression of interest to be confirmed), and Tunisia for SIMPEER;

- Albania, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Malta, and Spain for the VNRs presented at the 2018-HLPF; and;
- Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Israel, Tunisia, and Turkey for the VNRs to be presented at the 2019-HLPF;
- Ensuring the follow-up of the MSSD implementation, including inputs (presentations) from MCSD Members, MAP Components and other stakeholders. In addition of the presentation and discussion of the populated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard and its update, the follow-up of the MSSD implementation can be informed by the introduction of concept notes on launching MSSD Flagship Initiatives (Annex I) and/or national and regional actions to promote the exchange of experiences and good practices regarding the integration of environmental and socio-economic policies;
- Organizing a session on Assessment Studies carried out by Plan Bleu, i.e. SoED 2019 and MED 2050 Phase I. MCSD Members should be invited to discuss the first draft of SoED 2019, the results of MED 2050 Phase I, and draft Roadmap for MED 2050 Phase II;
- Organizing a session on the Regional Dimension of the Transition Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Blue Economy: The Case of the Mediterranean, building on the outcome of the MAP side event held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 28 November 2018, during the international Sustainable Blue Economy Conference (see leaflet in Annex II of the present document), and the case studies carried out by Plan Bleu.
- Organizing a session, in cooperation with MCSD Members representing the Local Authorities Group, on implementing sustainable development at the local/municipal level, putting the emphasis on circular economies in Mediterranean cities, with specific interventions from invited local authorities and municipalities' representatives. If relevant, this session could benefit from the outcome of the Sustainable Built Environment Conference 2019 "Policies for a Sustainable Built Environment" (Scilla, Italy, 16-17 May 2019), in which MedCities and the Secretariat are invited to organize an interactive session on "Planning and Managing Sustainable Mediterranean Cities".

III. Updated Work Plan in a Tabular Format

(Please see Table 1 in pages 7 and 8)

Table 1: Work Plan of the MCSD Steering Committee for the Biennium 2018-2019 (proposal)

Month	Task	Lead	Key contributors or reviewers
September-October 2018	Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to provide comments on and guidance for the update of the Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard	Secretariat (Plan Bleu) in cooperation with the MCSD Steering Committee	MCSD Steering Committee
November-December 2018	Preparation of the 20 th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee	Secretariat, in close cooperation with the President of the MCSD	MCSD Steering Committee
January 2019	20 th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee Members of the MCSD Steering Committee to discuss at their 20 th Meeting (i) the draft populated dashboard and related factsheets; and (ii) the update of the dashboard Publication on the experience and outcome of SIMPEER pilot edition Revision of the SIMPEER methodology taking into account recommendations from the 17 th Meeting of the MCSD and ideas expressed during the 19 th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee	President of the MCSD, with support from the Steering Committee and the Secretariat MCSD Steering Committee Secretariat (Plan Bleu) Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD Steering Committee Secretariat (Plan Bleu) MCSD Steering Committee MCSD Steering Committee
February 2019	Follow-up of the 20 th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee	Secretariat, Plan Bleu	MCSD Steering Committee
February-April 2019	SIMPEER draft national reports and in-country missions	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	Volunteer Contracting Parties
April 2019	Draft Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition submitted to MCSD Members for discussion at their 18 th MCSD Meeting	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD
April-June 2019	Populated dashboard and related factsheets, plus a proposal to update the dashboard transmitted to the MCSD Members for review and comments towards discussion at their 18 th Meeting	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD
April-June 2019	MCSD Members to provide comments on the first draft of the SoED 2019 and draft Roadmap for MED 2050 Phase II	Secretariat (Plan Bleu) in cooperation with the MCSD Steering Committee	MCSD
June 2019	18 th Meeting of the MCSD. MCSD Members to discuss the populated Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard, First Draft of SoED 2019,	Secretariat (Plan Bleu), MCSD Steering Committee, Montenegro (host country),	MCSD

Month	Task	Lead	Key contributors or reviewers
	Roadmap for MED 2050 Phase II, draft Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition, and first scientific assessment report on environmental and climate changes in the Mediterranean (MedECC) Peer Review Meeting gathering volunteer Contracting Parties	Secretariat (Plan Bleu), MCSD Steering Committee	Volunteer CPs, MCSD Steering Committee
June-July 2019	The President of the MCSD to contribute to the draft decision related to the work of the MCSD and MSSD implementation and follow-up for submission to MAP Focal Points and then COP 21 Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition submitted to MAP Focal Points as Information Document	President of the MCSD Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat MCSD Steering Committee and volunteer Contracting Parties
July-August 2019	Preparation of the MCSD's contribution to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points	President of the MCSD	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat
September 2019	The President of the MCSD to present the outcome of the 18 th Meeting of the MCSD to MAP Focal Points	President of the MCSD	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat
October-November 2019	Publication of the Final Report of the SIMPEER second edition	Secretariat (Plan Bleu)	Volunteer Contracting Parties, MCSD Steering Committee
December 2019	The President of the MCSD to present MCSD recommendations to the Contracting Parties at COP 21	President of the MCSD	MCSD Steering Committee, Secretariat

Annex I:

MSSD Flagship Initiatives – Draft Concept Notes

- A. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction”, by COMPSUD and MIO-ECSDE
- B. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Create and Promote a Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation”, by the Secretariat (SCP/RAC)
- C. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Encourage the Accession to and Implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)”, by COMPSUD and MIO-ECSDE, with support from MEPIELAN and the UNECE-Aarhus Convention Secretariat
- D. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative “Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact assessments (EIA) and strategic environmental assessments (SEA)”, by MEPIELAN

A. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction”

Prepared by COMPSUD and MIO-ECSDE. Reviewed by the President of the MCSD.

Key words: waste management, waste reduction, high- and low-tech solutions, regional assessment, awareness-raising, knowledge exchange

Rationale for Elaborating and Submitting the Present Concept Note

At its 19th Meeting held via teleconference on 20 June 2017, the MCSD Steering Committee discussed the issue of the six MSSD Flagship Initiatives that have not yet been launched. The President of the MCSD Steering Committee invited members of the Committee to take the lead on facilitating their launch, implementation and follow-up.

As Vice-President of the MCSD Steering Committee, COMPSUD offered to draft proposals (concept note), in cooperation with one Member of the MCSD (MIO-ECSDE) and following guidelines provided by the Secretariat, for two Flagship Initiatives, including this one on regional assessments and knowledge exchanges of high- and low-tech solutions that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction.

Based on the discussions and conclusions of the 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee, this Concept Note attempts to provide proposals for ways and means to put in motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction”, as well as on the scope, content, indicative activities and possible leader of this Flagship Initiative.

Background of the Concept Note

The MSSD Objective 3 focuses on “Planning and managing sustainable Mediterranean cities”, with the following rationale:

While the urbanization continues apace, in particular along its southern shores, most Mediterranean cities, notably the coastal ones, are not being managed sustainably in relation to their carrying capacities and are insufficiently resilient. Yet as engines of economic development, innovation and creativity, cities are critical for sustainable development, as the climate friendly cities agenda shows. For those reasons, a new, sustainable, inclusive and creative approach to planning and managing Mediterranean cities is the best hope for riparian urban settlements. Key elements of this approach are the following: use inclusive urban planning and management processes, promote socio-economic cohesion, reduce environmental pressures, increase resilience, protect and rehabilitate historical areas, and promote green buildings and sustainable waste management within the context of a more circular economy.

Under MSSD Objective 3, “Promote sustainable waste management within the context of a more circular economy” corresponds to the Strategic Direction 3.4, with the following description:

Solid and liquid waste production and management remain major concerns in many urban regions in the Mediterranean. The MSSD promotes national measures for implementing innovative waste management solutions, in line with the waste hierarchy: prevention, reduction, reuse, sorting, recycling, recovery, and, as the least preferred option, disposal. It is also a priority to develop behavioural change schemes that will lead to reduction in waste volumes and to develop legal and financial frameworks to support sustainable waste management.

Under Strategic Direction 3.4, the MSSD contains the Flagship Initiative 3.4.5, as one of the overall 11 MSSD Flagship Initiatives, aiming at the elaboration of a regional assessment of the effectiveness of high-tech and low-tech solutions, including but not limited to awareness-raising and economic measures that have been implemented, with a view to their more widespread utilization in waste reduction efforts. The summary of the MSSD Flagship Initiative on Waste Reduction Solutions with its associated indicators is presented as below:

Flagship Initiative	Owners	Time frame	Indicators
3.4.5. Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction.	Regional institutions, national governments, local authorities, academia, civil society, private sector	2018-onward	Status of the assessment initiative Waste generated by type per country

Putting in motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative on Regional Assessments and Knowledge Exchanges of High- and Low-Tech Solutions to Achieve Waste Reduction

In order to ensure a realistic approach and a timely launching of the Flagship Initiative, the present proposal concretely suggests that the activities envisaged under the Flagship Initiative be fully integrated / included in the Work Programme of the upcoming ENI - Water and Environment Support Mechanism (WES) project.

The WES project is entered into its tendering phase, i.e. short-listing of eligible consortia - the awarded WES proposal and consortium will not be known till April-May 2019. It is a regional EU funded project under the “EU for GreenMed III and sustainable transport” line⁹. The beneficiary countries are the following: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, and Tunisia. It is planned for a 4-year duration and approximately EUR 9 million budget. (WES Terms of Reference are not yet public).

One of the objectives of the WES project is to reduce the pollution reaching the Mediterranean Sea by providing technical assistance and trainings to enforce national regulatory frameworks, to foster dialogue at national and regional levels and, to promote the exchange of best practices among various stakeholders. A special attention will be given to measures aimed at reduction and prevention of plastic pollution. The support to the pollution prevention under the WES project should be done within the framework of the Horizon 2020 for a cleaner Mediterranean and the Barcelona Convention. Therefore, the implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025 is of direct relevance to the WES project.

As soon as the WES contract is awarded to one of the submitting consortia in 2019, COMPSUD and/or MIO-ECSDE, with support from the Secretariat, should approach the European Commission / DG NEAR Project Manager and/or the project implementers during its inception phase (foreseen from May-July 2019) in order to practically see how to best incorporate the implementation of the Flagship Initiative in the WES project. EC DG NEAR could also be approached in advance for anticipation. Furthermore, if a few Contracting Parties request the MSSD Flagship Initiative to be part of the WES work programme at the first project steering committee meeting (or even during the inception missions), the MSSD Flagship Initiative could be included as a needed driven request.

The MSSD Flagship Initiative on Waste Reduction Solutions could include a number of practical actions, subject to availability of resources, in line with the WES project objectives, to be carried out by the WES project consortium, such as suggested in the following table. It is worth to note that this table will be revisited once the WES project is awarded and running.

What	Who	By when
Conduct a regional assessment of high- and low-tech solutions including but not limited to awareness-raising and economic measures, that have been successfully implemented in Mediterranean countries and elsewhere (e.g. in the EU) to achieve waste reduction and promote the principles of circular economy, relevant to the Mediterranean countries’ context and needs. Approaches to be assessed might indicatively include <i>inter alia</i> : the overall application of the hierarchy approach in waste	The WES consortium COMPSUD and/or MIO Support from MCSD Members and the Secretariat	September 2019 – February 2020 (tbc)

⁹ EuropeAid/139671/DH/SER/MULTI

What	Who	By when
management to promote a circular economy; for municipal waste: methods for sorting at source bio-wastes and other streams of recyclable wastes (glass, paper, aluminium, plastic) to increase levels of recycling, reuse of treated wastewater, etc; for non-municipal waste: the promotion of use of secondary or by-products in other production processes, possibilities for industrial symbiosis, the collection and management of specific streams of waste, e.g. lubricant oils, accumulators, tires, WEEEs, construction waste; etc.		
Develop a ‘repository’ or on-line tool for facilitated access to the solutions and their more widespread utilization in waste reduction efforts	The WES consortium COMPSUD and/or MIO Support from MCSD Members and the Secretariat	January – April 2020 (tbc)
Integrate the above elements in the relevant WES trainings	The WES consortium COMPSUD and/or MIO Support from MCSD Members and the Secretariat	September 2019 – December 2022 (tbc)

References

H2020 Supporting Mechanism: <https://www.swim-h2020.eu/category/solid-waste-management/>;
<http://www.cprac.org/es/proyectos/horizon-2020>

Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and sustainable Resource management (ACR+MED):
<http://www.acrplus.org/en/>

SWEEP-Net, the Regional Solid Waste Exchange of Information and Expertise Network in Mashreq and Maghreb countries <http://www.sweep-net.org/> See also: <http://nswmp.net/in/sweep-net/>

MED-3R Euro-Mediterranean Strategic Platform for a suitable waste management: <http://www.med-3r.org/index.php/en>

B. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Create and Promote a Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation”

Prepared by the Secretariat (SCP/RAC).

Key words: Resource efficiency, Eco-innovation, Environmental-friendly business innovations, Eco-design, Sustainable products and services, Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), Green/Blue/circular economy, Green entrepreneurship, Green and social incubators, Corporate social and environmental responsibility

Rationale for Elaborating and Submitting the Present Concept Note

At its 19th Meeting held via teleconference on 20 June 2017, the MCSD Steering Committee discussed the issue of the six MSSD Flagship Initiatives that have not yet been launched. The President of the MCSD Steering Committee invited members of the Committee and the Secretariat through its MAP Components to take the lead on facilitating their launch, implementation and follow-up.

Based on the discussions and conclusions of the 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee, this Concept Note attempts to provide proposals for ways and means to put in motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative to “Create and Promote a Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation”.

Background of the Concept Note

The MSSD Objective 5 focuses on Transition towards a Green and Blue Economy, with the following rationale:

A green economy – called blue economy when applied to the coastal, marine and maritime sectors – is one that promotes sustainable development whilst improving human well-being and social equity, and significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. Besides being about renewable energy, waste management, and sustainable consumption and production, the green economy concept draws on new and emerging paradigms such as the circular economy, the collaborative economy and the functional economy. The green economy explicitly includes the objectives of decent jobs creation for all, particularly youth and women, and social inclusion, in order to eradicate poverty and promote a more healthy and just society. The Strategy encourages the measurement of development, progress and well-being, as well as environmental friendly and social innovation. It promotes sustainable consumption and production patterns, as well as the integration of sustainability principles into decision-making on public and private investment. The Strategy also recommends a greener and more inclusive market that integrates the true environmental and social cost of products and services. The Strategy is complemented by the UNEP/MAP Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan for the Mediterranean.

The MSSD Objective 5 is complemented by the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean (SCP Regional Action Plan), which was adopted by the Contracting Parties at COP 19 (Decision IG.22/5), as a forward-looking framework, to complement and work in full synergy with existing national and regional policy frameworks, and to support the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. The SCP Regional Action Plan is aligned with the MSSD Vision and Objectives, particularly the Objective 5.

Under MSSD Objective 5, “Encourage environmentally-friendly and social innovation” corresponds to the Strategic Direction 5.4, with the following description:

A large part of the pollution in the Mediterranean is due to inefficient industrial processes and poor management of waste. Apart from harming the environment and health, it also jeopardizes the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of industries. Strategic direction 5.4 promotes resource efficiency and eco-innovation as critical tools to allow businesses and economies to be more productive, while reducing cost, waste and use of raw materials. Creating and connecting green and social incubators and training programmes, including through partnerships between universities, businesses and research centres at national and regional scales is also necessary. At a regional level, a Mediterranean network of green and social incubators and training programmes is envisaged.

Under Strategic Direction 5.4, the MSSD contains Flagship Initiative 5.4.5, as one of the overall 11 MSSD Flagship Initiatives, on the Creation and Promotion of a Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation. The summary of this MSSD Flagship Initiative is presented below:

Flagship Initiative	Owners	Time frame	Indicators
5.4.5. Create and promote a Mediterranean business award for environmental innovation.	Regional institutions, national governments	2016-2020	Business award put in place

Environmental innovation is based on efforts from entrepreneurs to “green” their practices, processes, products, and services. Such “green efforts” – in the domains of waste management and recycling, natural products, renewable energy, and water saving – and the principles of a circular economy aims at decoupling prosperity and use of resources, and to provide credible market-oriented responses to sustainability challenges. Environmental innovation means also “doing more with less”, optimizing use of natural resources, reducing/reusing/recycling/recovering waste and promoting “better-for-the-planet” goods and services. For the private sector, environmental innovations lower costs, increase revenues, and ensure stable supply chains. They are profitable for nature, for society and for the private sector.

Putting in motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative on the Creation and Promotion of a Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation

The implementation of the MSSD Objective 5 and SCP Regional Action Plan was supported by the SwitchMed Programme¹⁰ and SCP/RAC’s activities, as indicated by the conclusions of the 17th Meeting of the MCSD, held in Athens, Greece, on 5-7 July 2018, when the MCSD Members expressed support to the continuation of these activities to foster green entrepreneurship ecosystems in the region. MCSD Members also acknowledged the successful example of the Catalonia Eco-Design Award developed by the Waste Agency of Catalonia (ARC: *Agència de Residus de Catalunya*).

The Catalonia Eco-Design Award was created in 2001 under the name of Design for Recycling Award. Then, it evolved into the Eco-Design Award as part of the Catalan Eco-Design Strategy (*Ecodiscat*) 2012-2015, promoted by the Ministry of Territory and Sustainability of the Government of Catalonia and coordinated by the Directorate General for Environmental Quality. Its goal is to encourage the incorporation of eco-design in the production process, to foster a cross-cutting approach and knowledge transfer, and to boost the consumption and production of sustainable products and services. The Award recognizes innovative products and services (e.g. existing products, products in development, strategies for sustainable product design, young designers) that promote eco-design and circular economy solutions.

The Award has five categories: Categories A, B, C and D are for entrants from Catalonia, and Category E - Euro-Mediterranean Design opened to entrepreneurs for all Mediterranean countries, Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. The 2015-pilot edition of the Category E was supported by the SwitchMed programme, with 45 applications from 11 countries¹¹; the Award Ceremony held in Barcelona brought +150 representatives from Mediterranean countries. This successful pilot edition has not been reproduced so far.

The present concept note proposes to create a proper Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation, based on the solid experience of the Catalan Eco-Design Award and in particular on the lessons learned from the creation of its Euro-Mediterranean Category E. This edition will be operationally linked to the implementation of the relevant MSSD Flagship Initiative.

More specifically, the MAP – Barcelona Convention system has the institutional mandate, via the MSSD Flagship Initiative 5.4.5, to create and promote a Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation, and SCP/RAC as a centre hosted by the Waste Agency of Catalonia and

¹⁰ <http://switchmed.eu/>

¹¹ Croatia, Egypt, Spain, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey.

the initiator of the Euro-Mediterranean Category E of the Catalan Eco-Design Award has the necessary skills and experience to support the technical process of such initiative. Therefore, a possible avenue would be that the Secretariat flags the Mediterranean Award. This setting-up requires external funds to cover the implementation of the MSSD Flagship Initiative. The forthcoming launch of the EU funded SwitchMed II at the beginning of 2019 includes resources to fund the organization of a Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation and the preparation of a long-term strategy for its replication over the years. It is expected that the first edition will target southern Mediterranean countries, including Jordan and Palestine, as beneficiaries of the SwitchMed II programme; eligible applicants should be based in the following countries: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Palestine and Lebanon. A specific attention will be put on awarding initiatives led by women and youth. It should be possible to develop several categories of the Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation.

Objectives of the Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation

The Mediterranean Business Award for Environmental Innovation will be based on the proceedings of the Eco-Design Award developed in 2015 by the Waste Agency of Catalonia, as explained above. This Award will aim to recognize, reward, and encourage the efforts of entrepreneurs to incorporate environmental innovation and eco-design in the production process, to foster knowledge transfer and a cross-cutting approach between the three pillars of sustainable development, and to boost circular economy solutions and the consumption of sustainable products and services in the Mediterranean.

The objectives of such an Award could be to:

- Recognize and reward the efforts of entrepreneurs to incorporate environmental innovation and eco-design in their production process;
- Encourage entrepreneurs to move towards more environment friendly patterns of production, boost circular economy solutions and their practical application, as well as the consumption of sustainable products and services;
- Enable entrepreneurs to act as a role model to inspire other entrepreneurs, to foster knowledge transfer between green entrepreneurs, and to further promote corporate social and environmental responsibility;
- Raise the awareness of the general public regarding environmental-friendly business innovations;
- Provide a practical response to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 12, in the Mediterranean region.

Mediterranean green entrepreneurs and circular businesses – including members of the SwitchMed community, i.e. the Switchers – will be invited to submit an application, following an open call for submissions. The possible categories could include products already available in the market, products under development or product promotion strategies that are developed in Mediterranean countries and that take into account environmental considerations with the goal of reducing the environmental impact of the product over the course of its life cycle.

For the first edition, applications should be submitted by entrepreneurs and circular businesses from a SwitchMed beneficiary country (listed above). Any person or corporate entity, domiciled or with corporate headquarters in those countries, who designs or manufactures a product or service, promotes or designs a product or service under development, or promotes any eco-innovation strategy, should be invited to submit an application.

In the further elaboration of the objectives and criteria of the Award, the recently launched “European Sustainability Award” by the European Commission with the support of the EU Multi-stakeholder Platform on SDGs aiming to recognize the initiatives (by the private sector, large companies and SMEs, public agencies, civil society and youth) working towards turning the SDGs into concrete solutions and opportunities, could be used as a possible source of inspiration and information.

Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

Below are listed possible evaluation criteria that could be used for the eligibility and evaluation of applicants. Those criteria will be reviewed after the launch of SwitchMed II in 2019. A specific focus will be put on awarding initiatives led by youth and women.

a) Basic Criteria:

- Incorporation of significant eco-design strategies in the product life cycle. For example: reduction in resource consumption; selection of materials with a smaller environmental impact; reduction of the environmental impact of the production process; optimization of the distribution process; reduction of environmental impact during use; lengthening of the useful-life stage; optimization of the end-of-life stage, enhanced potential for recyclability, utilization of waste, secondary or by products from other production processes as primary material for its production.
- Quality of the design: What the design offers in respect of emotional and functional aspects, paying special attention to usability, ergonomics, safety, aesthetics, functionality, *repairability*, its perception and acceptance by end-users, and its capacity to meet a need.
- Innovation: The added value offered by the product, project or strategy in respect of the possible alternatives that exist in the market.

For products under development, other considerations could be taken into account such as whether the submitted entry has been comprehensively studied and developed, how close it is to completion, and its feasibility from an economic and market-based perspective.

b) Additional Criteria:

- Application of environmental evaluation methodologies, for example: MET (materials, energy and toxicity) matrices, SEA (strategic environmental assessment), LCA (life-cycle assessment).
- Potential environmental benefit: Estimate of the savings associated with the use of the product in terms of its overall impact, taking into account the environmental improvement per product unit and the global sales volume.
- Possession of labels that accredit the environmental benefits of the product: Eco-labels granted by official bodies or recognized private organizations.
- Implementation of an environmental management system in the design and development process: Eco-design, EMAS, ISO 14006.
- Socio-economic impact of the entry on the market or on its scope of application.
- Implementation, quality and repercussion of the communication and awareness-raising strategies.

c) Exclusion from Participation:

Products already in the market, products under development or product promotion strategies should not be eligible for submission to the Award if they are in any of the situations listed below:

- If they are submitted simultaneously in more than one of the Catalan Eco-Design categories, whether approached from the same or a different perspective;
- If their main value is artistic (works of art);
- If they are buildings or other complex architectural elements;
- If they are one-off items that cannot be mass-produced;
- If a member of the judging panel has participated actively in the entry submission as a designer, as a manufacturing company or distributor of the product, or as the promoter of a strategy.

Application, Evaluation and Nomination Process

An application form should be developed in two main parts: (i) open questions to introduce the entrepreneur/business and its products/services/strategies; (ii) specific questions based on criteria enumerated above.

The evaluation should be undertaken through the criteria proposed above.

After a first screening to check eligibility of applicants, the accepted applications should be evaluated by a team of independent experts selected by the Secretariat (Coordinating Unit and SCP/RAC), taking into account their different backgrounds and experiences in relation to the scope of the Award and the evaluation criteria.

The composition of the Jury will be decided at a later stage and should include the President of the MCSD.

Questions from possible applicants should be allowed before submission. To this end a helpdesk should be established when the call of submissions is launched, so possible applicants are able to further inquire about the Award through the helpdesk.

The selection will probably be carried out via the following three steps:

First Step: Initial Screening

With the end of the submission deadline, an initial screening will be conducted by the Secretariat and its SCP/RAC to ensure that the applicants fulfill the eligibility criteria and that the submission forms are correctly filled.

Second Step: Short-Listing

The Secretariat and its SCP/RAC supported by independent experts will select the appropriated number of applicants for the Award. An evaluation report will be sent electronically to the Jury for approval.

A letter will be sent to the short-listed entrepreneurs regarding their nomination.

Third Step: Selection

The Jury will select the winning entrepreneur(s)/business(es) through electronic means. Every effort should be made to take a decision by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, 4/6 majority should be applied. In the case of more than one winner, geographical balance should be ensured.

Award Giving and Ceremony

The Award should consist of at least an honorary board (commemorative object) and the permission to use the logo of the Award by the winning entrepreneur(s)/business(es). Access to finance to the awardees will be also considered for the ones that will have an eco-designed product at the ideation stage or early stage of development. This will be done as part of the Switchers Fund¹² currently being developed by SCP/RAC.

Media coverage and visibility will also bring added value. The Award should be conferred on a biannual basis during the Meeting of the MCSD, the Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, or the SwitchMed Connect events.

In terms of planning and timelines, and according to the MSSD stating that the Flagship Initiative should be launched for the period 2016-2020, a possible timeline could be the following (proposal):

When (period)	What (task, step)
1 st semester 2019	Definition of the categories and criteria for the Award Definition of the visual identity, including logo

¹² <https://www.theswitchersfund.eu/en/>

When (period)	What (task, step)
2 nd semester 2019	Development of a database of contacts for the dissemination of the Award (based on the SwitchMed Action Network and Switchers) Preparation of a Communication Strategy Definition/mobilization of the Jury
1 st semester 2020	Launch of the Award Extensive communication campaign Evaluation of the candidates
2 nd semester 2020	Selection and nomination of the candidates Celebration of the Award Design of the strategy for the replication of the Award to be considered at COP 22 (for instance in the context of the implementation of the MAP Resource Mobilization Strategy)

References:

SwitchMed Programme: <http://switchmed.eu/>

The Switchers Platform: <https://www.theswitchers.eu/en/>

The Switchers Fund: <https://www.theswitchersfund.eu/en/>

Catalonia Eco-design Award 2015:

Webpage:

http://residus.gencat.cat/en/ambits_dactuacio/sensibilitzacio/premis_medi_ambient/premi-catalunya-decodisseny/index.html

General Information:

http://residus.gencat.cat/en/ambits_dactuacio/sensibilitzacio/premis_medi_ambient/premi-catalunya-decodisseny/informacio-general-del-premi/

Category E – Euro-Mediterranean design:

http://residus.gencat.cat/en/ambits_dactuacio/sensibilitzacio/premis_medi_ambient/premi-catalunya-decodisseny/categoria-e.-disseny-euromediterrani/

C. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative to Encourage the Accession to and Implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)

Prepared by COMPSUD and MIO-ECSDE. Reviewed by the President of the MCSD, MEPIELAN and the Aarhus Convention Secretariat.

Key words: Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention); Public participation; Access to information; Access justice; Integrity in decision making; Environmental matters; Governance

Rationale for Elaborating and Submitting the Present Concept Note

At its 19th Meeting held via teleconference on 20 June 2017, the MCSD Steering Committee discussed the issue of the six MSSD Flagship Initiatives that have not yet been launched. The President of the MCSD Steering Committee invited members of the Committee to take the lead on facilitating their launch, implementation and follow-up.

As Vice-President of the MCSD Steering Committee, COMPSUD offered to draft proposals (concept note), in cooperation with two Members of the MCSD (MIO-ECSDE and MEPIELAN) and following guidelines provided by the Secretariat, for two Flagship Initiatives, including this one on the accession to and implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

Based on the discussions and conclusions of the 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee, this Concept Note attempts to provide proposals for ways and means to put in motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative on Public Participation via the Aarhus Convention, as well as on the scope, content, indicative activities and possible leader of this Flagship Initiative.

Background of the Concept Note

The MSSD Objective 6 focuses on Improving Governance in support of Sustainable Development, with the following rationale:

Governance is a crosscutting objective and concerns the inclusion of non-state actors in decision-making processes, using new forms of cooperation arrangements. Regional challenges for environmental governance include fragmentation of responsibility, uncoordinated and non-results-based planning and implementation, as well as weak human and financial resources in the public sector, particularly at the local level. Regarding improvement of environmental governance in the Mediterranean, the MSSD rests on five pillars: Enhance international dialogue and cooperation, including on emergency-preparedness; Promote stakeholder engagement to secure inclusive processes and integrity in decision-making; Promote implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including through policy coherence based on inter-ministerial coordination; Promote education and research; and, Enhance regional capabilities for information management.

Under MSSD Objective 6 on Governance, “Promote the engagement of civil society, scientists, local communities and other stakeholders in the governance process at all levels, in order to secure inclusive processes and integrity in decision-making” corresponds to the Strategic Direction 6.2, with the following description:

Public participation is particularly important at the local level, which is the level of government closest to the people, and the level of decision-making where many environment-related decisions are taken. Increased public participation has to be achieved through support for national and local governments and institutions by means of improved legal frameworks and human and financial resources, and has to include skills related to partnership building, negotiation and conflict resolution. The MSSD also envisages support for and strengthening of the organizational capacity of local, national and regional stakeholders, including voluntary organizations, cooperatives, associations, networks, and producer

groups, in terms of legal frameworks and human and financial resources. That will contribute to better decision-making, implementation of policies, plans and projects, and monitoring.

Under Strategic Direction 6.2, the MSSD contains Flagship Initiative 6.2.3, as one of the overall 11 MSSD Flagship Initiatives, on the accession to the Aarhus Convention¹³. The summary of the MSSD Flagship Initiative on Public Participation and Aarhus Convention with its associated indicator and target is presented as below:

Flagship Initiative	Owners	Time frame	Indicators
6.2.3. Encourage the accession to and implementation of the AC on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.	International institutions, national governments, local authorities, civil society	2016-2020	Number of countries accessing the Aarhus Convention <u>Target:</u> by 2025 two-thirds of Mediterranean countries have acceded to the Aarhus Convention

Background information on the Aarhus Convention is reported in Annex 1 of this concept note.

Relevance of the Aarhus Convention for the Mediterranean Countries and Potential Benefits of the Accession to the Convention

The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have already a series of commitments to engage stakeholders and the public, at large, in consultations and participatory governance: e.g. for the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), for the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp). These commitments concern all the countries of the region, most of which, apply participatory processes for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), management of specially protected areas, adaptation to climate change, etc. Participatory and information/communication processes are also related and supported by the Mediterranean Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD) and its Action Plan¹⁴, both of which are endorsed and constitute integral parts of the MSSD. Accession to the Aarhus Convention provides a solid and comprehensive framework for governance to engage the public effectively.

The Aarhus Convention is widely accepted to be the leading example of implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration. Apart from engaging the public, accession to the Convention, could facilitate the design and implementation of National Strategies for Sustainable Development, green economy strategies and, most importantly, the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at national level, as also stipulated by SDG Target 12.8 “by 2030 ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature”. Being a Party to the Aarhus Convention will significantly contribute to country’s efforts to promote citizen-centred and environmentally sound policies.

Accession to the Aarhus Convention would greatly support Government’s policies to tackle poverty and inequality by ensuring that all persons, including the poorest segments of society and rural communities, are able to participate in decision-making processes regarding issues that impact their lives and, as a result, to benefit from the income generated by different sectors of the economy, including the mining and extractive industries.

Owing to their cross-cutting nature, the implementation of the Aarhus Convention and of its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) have multiple benefits to the successful implementation of the overall 2030 Agenda, as a whole, and to all SDGs apart from just the environment ones, and are directly linked to a very wide array of issues and policies such as: ending poverty (SDG 1); health protection (SDG 3); water and sanitation management (SDG 6); clean energy

¹³ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/aarhus/>

¹⁴ <http://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Mediterranean-Strategy-on-Education-for-sustainable-development-.pdf>; http://www.esdmedcyprus.pi.ac.cy/files/ENG_Action_Plan.pdf

(SDG 7); green economy (SDGs 8, 9 and 12); reduction of inequalities (SDG 10); sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12); climate action (SDG 13); tourism (SDGs 8, 12, 14 and 15); urban planning (SDGs 11 and 13); and, most importantly, the promotion of effective, accountable and transparent institutions, effective access to information, effective and inclusive public participation and transparency in national and international decision-making and effective and equal access to justice for all (SDG 16).

The background of governance and administrative culture of Mediterranean countries vary widely. However, this diversity is not a problem; the current Parties to the Aarhus Convention also come from a wide range of political and economic backgrounds.

Informed participation in the decision-making process leads to better decisions, as the government or implementing agencies take into account valuable information from the public concerned. This process ultimately enhances public confidence to governmental decisions and reduces the instances of lengthy legal procedures and appeals and costly remedial measures by the State. It also helps to achieve greater political stability and sustainable economic development at the national level.

In addition, countries would draw many specific benefits from being a Party to the Aarhus Convention, including:

- Increased efficiency due to the sharing of resources and know-how between the various Parties and organizations. It creates opportunities for cooperation and exchange with other Parties;
- Aarhus Convention's bodies under the instrument that carry out technical assistance, workshops, capacity building, and a dedicated secretariat to provide on-going support;
- The Aarhus Convention's requirements provide a structure upon which partner organizations (international organizations, IFIs, bilateral donors) can channel their support.

Moreover, officially declaring to the international community that your country is a country which aspires to be strong supporter of environmental democracy provides greater political visibility at international level. Accession to such convention will send a strong signal to other States, including trade and aid partners, as well as foreign investors and international institutions of the Government's commitment to effective governance and democracy.

The Aarhus Convention is therefore recognized to bring value to all its Parties, wherever on the political or economic spectrum they stand and it brings more benefits than costs to the countries that have ratified it.

Putting in Motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative on Public Participation via the Aarhus Convention

The Aarhus Convention is open for accession by any UN Member State. For States which are not Members of UNECE accession requires an approval by the Aarhus Convention's Meeting of the Parties. In recent years, Parties to the Aarhus Convention have made clear their strong encouragement for countries outside the UNECE region to join. To guide interested non-UNECE Member States on the accession, they adopted a decision IV/5¹⁵, encouraging States outside the UNECE region to accede to the Aarhus Convention and welcoming any expression of interest to do so. The major steps of the accession procedure for non UNECE Member States are outline in paragraph 4 of the decision.

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http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/mop4/Documents/Post_Session/ece_mp.pp_2011_2_add.1_eng.pdf - in English (page 26);

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/mop4/Documents/Post_Session/ece_mp.pp_2011_2_add.1_fre.pdf - in French (page 28).

In the Budva Declaration¹⁶ adopted at their recent Joint High-level Segment (Budva, Montenegro, September 2017), the Aarhus Convention's and its Protocol's Meetings of the Parties once more stated: "We invite interested States to accede to the Convention and its Protocol or to apply their provisions, and we stand ready to offer our experience and knowledge in that regard. In the forthcoming period, we will strive to encourage new accessions, in line with the Strategic Plan for 2015–2020" (para. 28).

The table below provides an overview of the Mediterranean countries which are or are not Parties to the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs.

Barcelona Convention and UNECE Member States	Barcelona Convention Member States, which are not UNECE Member States	Party to the Aarhus Convention	Party to the Protocol on PRTRs
Albania		X	X
	Algeria		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		X	
Croatia		X	X
Cyprus		X	X
	Egypt		
France		X	X
Greece		X	X
Israel			X
Italy		X	
	Lebanon		
	Libya		
Malta		X	X
Monaco			
Montenegro		X	X
	Morocco		
Slovenia		X	X
Spain		X	X
	Syria		
	Tunisia		
Turkey			
European Union		X	X

12 of the 22 (54,5%) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are already Parties to the Aarhus Convention. The MSSD Target of two-thirds can be achieved by having five more Mediterranean countries joining the Aarhus Convention. The table above shows that the priority should be given to:

¹⁶ http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/mop6/HLS/ECE_MP.PP_2017_16_Add.1-ECE_MP.PRTR_2017_2_Add.1_E.pdf - in English;
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/mop6/HLS/ECE_MP.PP_2017_16_Add.1-ECE_MP.PRTR_2017_2_Add.1_F.pdf - in French.

- (a) Three UNECE Member States: Israel, Monaco and Turkey. No approval by the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention is required for their accession.
- (b) Seven not-UNECE Member States: Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, and Tunisia. Their accession requires an approval by the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention.

The familiarization with and possible accession to the Aarhus Convention by the Mediterranean countries mentioned above requires first and foremost a strong political will from the governments of these countries to fulfill in a solid way the commitments concerning access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters.

Activities aimed at familiarization with and promotion of the accession to the Aarhus Convention requires also dissemination of information and capacity building meetings, which may be co-organized by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the Barcelona Convention and Aarhus Convention Secretariats, and/or programmes such as for instance the SWIM-Horizon 2020 SM¹⁷.

With respect to the political dimension of the present MSSD Flagship Initiative, an awareness raising and information campaign to make the benefits of joining the Aarhus Convention known to the above target countries could be undertaken by COMPSUD, on a voluntary basis, with advisory and expert support from both Secretariats of the Barcelona Convention and Aarhus Convention, as well as from MIO-ECSDE for the simultaneous mobilization of NGOs and other civil society organizations. Relatedly, and in view of the catalytic interconnection between law and policy aspects associated with the process of development of the Aarhus Convention regime, its promotion and expansion to other States, and the development of capacity building through training on targeted creative negotiation knowledge and skills for the construction of environmental common interest could be undertaken by MEPIELAN with the support of the Secretariats of the Barcelona Convention and Aarhus Convention.

Regarding its law and governance dimension, the compatibility of the legislation of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention with the provisions of the Aarhus Convention in combination with the necessary institutional arrangements for the effective exercise of the procedural rights set in the Aarhus Convention should be explored. Relatedly, there should be examined the process element of this dimension: how public authorities take all the necessary measures to ensure both access and dissemination of the environmental information and how they can effectively arrange public consultation procedures, also through the elimination of the relevant barriers. In addition, the establishment of specific administrative bodies or other independent institutions established by law (Ombudsman) that could contribute to the implementation of the relevant requirements should be examined. Further, the promotion of the active engagement of the subnational levels of government (municipalities, regional authorities) in decision-making processes, through the organization of a series of training workshops and/or by the establishment of relevant working groups aiming at improving coordination and cooperation in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention should also be pursued. Of particular importance would be the discussion and dissemination of best practices among the Mediterranean countries of the Aarhus Convention concerning access to environmental information and public participation. The examination of these necessary reformative actions could be undertaken by MEPIELAN with the support from the Secretariats of the Barcelona Convention and the Aarhus Convention.

Furthermore, an important “added value” for the present MSSD Flagship Initiative would be the examination of the interaction between the Aarhus Convention and the very recently adopted Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2018 (the Escazú Agreement) for the purpose of developing an appropriate platform of facilitating the accession of Developing States to the Aarhus Convention, and thus paving the way to the process of exploring the expansion of operation of the Aarhus Convention in view of the contextual particularities, the need for their informed management at all levels, and in the light of

¹⁷ An effort will be made to include the relevant activities in the Work Programme of the follow-up project of SWIM-H2020 SM.

the implementation of the transformative Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 17 and SDG 16). This action could be undertaken by MEPIELAN with the support of the Secretariats of the Barcelona Convention and Aarhus Convention.

The MSSD Flagship Initiative on Public Participation provides a great opportunity for the Mediterranean countries to be familiarized, use and, eventually, accede to the Aarhus Convention. There are a number of practical actions to promote this, subject to availability of resources, such as suggested in the following table:

What	Who	By when
Present the benefits of acceding the Aarhus Convention and urge more Mediterranean countries to join, by delivering a keynote speech on the matter at the 18 th Meeting of the MCSD	Aarhus Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with the Barcelona Convention Secretariat, with support from the MCSD Steering Committee (in particular COMPSUD) and MIO-ECSDE	2019 (18 th Meeting of the MCSD)
Participation of the Aarhus Convention Secretariat and/or experts in the Aarhus Convention (as appropriate) in relevant meetings in the region as to provide expert and advisory support	Aarhus Convention Secretariat	On-going (cont'd)
Provision of information to relevant Ministries and Parliaments of interested countries	Barcelona Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with the Aarhus Convention Secretariat, with support from the MCSD and its Steering Committee. COMPSUD may facilitate to the extent possible the flow of this information, through its membership	By 2022
Provision of appropriate information and mobilization of the civil society of interested countries in encouraging the governments to use and eventually accede to the Aarhus Convention	Barcelona Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with the Aarhus Convention Secretariat, with support from MAP Partners and MCSD Members. MIO-ECSDE could play an active role through its own membership	By 2022
Participation of Governments and relevant stakeholders in the Aarhus Convention capacity building events and policy meetings	Governments, supported by the Secretariats of the Barcelona and Aarhus Conventions, with support from MAP Partners and MCSD Members.	Ongoing (cont'd)
Organization of specific targeted meetings/trainings in the region to promote the Aarhus Convention	Barcelona Convention Secretariat, the MCSD Steering Committee and relevant MCSD Members and MAP Partners, in cooperation with the Aarhus Convention Secretariat. MEPIELAN could play an active contributing role through its own membership and specialty.	By 2024
Preparation of Mediterranean countries' overviews of compatibility of their laws and institutional arrangements with the Aarhus Convention's requirements, including the necessary practical measures taken by the public authorities at all levels and the dissemination of best practices among the Mediterranean countries	Aarhus Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with the Barcelona Convention Secretariat and the contribution of MEPIELAN that will play an active role through its own membership and specialty.	By 2024

What	Who	By when
Translation of practical guidelines/recommendations developed under the Aarhus Convention in national languages	Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and Barcelona Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with the Aarhus Convention Secretariat	By 2025
Examination of the interaction between the Barcelona Convention and the Escazú Convention - expansion of the Aarhus Convention to Developing Mediterranean countries and in light of the SDGs implementation	Secretariats of the Barcelona Convention, the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Convention, in cooperation with MEPIELAN	By 2024

References, Additional Information, Key Links and Materials

- UNECE Welcome page: <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/welcome.html>
- Text of the Aarhus Convention: <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/treatytext.html>
- Status of ratification: <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/ratification.html>
- Brochure about the Aarhus Convention for general public, available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35452>
- Implementation Guide to the Aarhus Convention available in Chinese, English, French and Russian: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35869>
- Maastricht Recommendations on Public Participation in Decision-Making, provide step-by-step practical tool on how to organize effective public participation, available in English, French and Russian: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=49142>
- Almaty Guidelines on promoting the principles of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in international forums dealing with matters relating to the environment, available in English
(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2005/pp/ece/ece.mp.pp.2005.2.add.5.e.pdf>),
French
(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2005/pp/ece/ece.mp.pp.2005.2.add.5.f.pdf>)
and Russian
(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2005/pp/ece/ece.mp.pp.2005.2.add.5.r.pdf>).
- Lucca Guidelines on access to information, public participation and access to justice with respect to genetically modified organisms, available in English
(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/documents/gmoguidelinesenglish.pdf>), French
(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/documents/gmoguidelinesfrench.pdf>), and Russian
(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/documents/gmoguidelinesrussian.pdf>).

For the Protocol on PRTRs

- Text of the Protocol: <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr/docs/prtrtext.html>
- Brochure about the Protocol for general public, available in English, French and Russian: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=25411>
- Implementation Guidance to the Protocol provides detailed explanation on how to implement the Protocol, available in English, French, Russian and Spanish: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=4800>

For the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2018 (the Escazú Agreement)

- Text of the Agreement: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/43583/1/S1800428_en.pdf

Annex 1: Background Information on the Aarhus Convention

The UNECE¹⁸ Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was adopted on 25 June 1998 in the Danish city of Aarhus at the Fourth Ministerial Conference in the 'Environment for Europe' process. Together with its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs), it protects every person's right to live in an environment adequate to his or her health and well-being. They are the only global legally binding instruments on environmental democracy, which are open for accession by any UN Member State interested to join¹⁹ – that put Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in practice and in legal terms.

As a new kind of environmental agreement, the Aarhus Convention links environmental rights and human rights; acknowledges that we owe an obligation to future generations; establishes that sustainable development can be achieved only through the involvement of all stakeholders; links government accountability and environmental protection; focuses on interactions between the public and public authorities establishing procedural rights in the framework of environmental governance; safeguards the rights to passive and active information.

The subject of the Aarhus Convention goes to the heart of the relationship between people and governments. The Convention is not only an environmental agreement, it is also a Convention about government accountability, transparency and responsiveness. It grants the public rights and imposes on the Parties and public authorities' obligations regarding access to information and public participation and access to justice. Moreover, the Aarhus Convention is also forging a new process for public participation in the negotiation and implementation of international agreements.

The adoption of the Aarhus Convention in June 1998 was a major step forward in the field of procedural environmental rights. For the first time, the interlinked rights of access to information, public participation and access to justice were addressed in a comprehensive way in a single international treaty.

The 47 Parties (as of 24 September 2018) to the Aarhus Convention include:

- Countries with some of the world's lowest GDPs per capita (for example, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan) to countries with some of the highest (for example, Germany, Norway);
- A wide range of political and legal traditions from former Soviet countries to western democracies;
- Countries with federal systems (for example, Belgium, Germany, Spain) and national governments only (for example, Azerbaijan, Ukraine);
- Countries concerned with a diverse range of environmental activities and issues (e.g. mining, oil and gas exploration, water pollution and shortages, nuclear energy, renewable energies, desertification).

With forty-seven States and the European Union Parties to the Aarhus Convention, the latter is having a substantial impact in promoting environmental democracy in countries across the Eurasia continent. A number of countries with economies in transition including those from Central Asia – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan and Caucasian countries, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – are Parties to the Convention. Other former Soviet countries such as Ukraine, Belarus, Republic of Moldova are Parties. Balkan non-EU countries, such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, are also Parties. Importantly, the Convention provides that any other State that is a Member of the United Nations may accede to the Convention upon approval of the Meeting of the Parties.

¹⁸ UN Economic Commission for Europe: <https://www.unece.org/info/ece-homepage.html>

¹⁹ Unlike the Aarhus Convention, which is open for accession by any United Nations Member State, the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Participation and Justice in environmental Matters in Latin American and the Caribbean (the Escazú Agreement) is open only to States in the ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) region.

Twenty years since adoption of the Aarhus Convention have seen a number of important achievements. Laws and practices have been revised to bring them into line with the Convention. Citizens are learning to use the Convention to make their governments more transparent and accountable. There is a growing body of jurisprudence based on the Convention and the legislation that implements it. The entering into force of the Kiev Protocol on PRTRs in 2009 established a new legally binding international benchmark for reporting on emissions of pollutants from a wide range of potentially harmful activities. An amendment to the Aarhus Convention adopted in 2005 at the second meeting of the Parties underpins the rights of the public to participate in decision-making on genetically modified organisms. The Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums, adopted at the same meeting, reflect a growing recognition that where the environment is concerned, public involvement is important not only at national and local levels but also at the international level. The Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy²⁰ and PRTR.net²¹ have emerged as leading global repositories of information on activities relevant to the Aarhus Convention, the Protocol on PRTRs and Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

The Aarhus Convention's innovative compliance and reporting mechanisms, both of which provide a role for the public, have yielded valuable information on the extent and nature of the challenges in implementation. They serve as an important reminder that the value of an international treaty lies not only in the quality of its text, or in how many Parties it has, but also in how well it is implemented.

The governing and operational structure of the Aarhus Convention

The Meeting of the Parties is the main governing body of the Aarhus Convention. It meets approximately every three/four years to review progress under the Convention and take decisions to guide its future implementation. It comprises all Parties to the Convention. In its meetings, Signatories and other States as well as numerous stakeholders, such as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and members of the public participate as observers.

In between sessions of the Meeting of the Parties, a Working Group of the Parties meets approximately once per year to oversee the implementation of the work programme for the Aarhus Convention. All Parties take part in the meetings of the Working Group. Signatories and other States as well as the above stakeholders can participate as observers.

The Working Group also oversees and directs the activities of the three thematic Task Forces established by the Meeting of the Parties: Task Force on Access to Information, Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making and Task Force on Access to Justice. Each task force provides a forum through which Parties, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders can come together to exchange good practices and challenges with respect to that topic. The task forces each meet two/three times during an intersessional period.

The Compliance Committee is a non-confrontational, non-judicial and consultative nature to review compliance with the provisions of the Aarhus Convention. Subject to the availability of domestic remedies, it allows members of the public, as well as Parties, to bring issues before it. The Compliance Committee works in a transparent and consultative manner. It is recognized by the Parties as a valuable asset and, *inter alia*, a helpful way for partner organizations to identify opportunities to provide capacity-building and technical assistance.

All the Aarhus Convention's bodies work in a "friendly" and "collaborative" manner, through open and participatory rules and procedures. There are many opportunities for exchange of information and good practices, as well as for technical support.

Finally, the small but dedicated Secretariat of the Aarhus Convention supports all work carried out by the Convention's bodies and also undertakes advisory support and coordinates capacity-building.

²⁰ <http://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org/>

²¹ <http://www.prtr.net/>

D. Draft Concept Note on the MSSD Flagship Initiative “Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact assessments (EIA) and strategic environmental assessments (SEA)”

Prepared by MEPIELAN. Reviewed by the President of the MCSD.

Key words: Capacity building, Compliance, Environmental obligations and agreements, Environmental impact assessment (EIA), Interlinkages between institutional arrangements, Negotiation, Precautionary principle, Public trust approach, Strategic environmental assessment (SEA)

Rationale for Elaborating and Submitting the Concept Note

At its 19th Meeting held via teleconference on 20 June 2018, the MCSD Steering Committee discussed the issue of the six MSSD Flagship Initiatives that have not yet been launched. The President of the MCSD Steering Committee invited members of the Committee to take the lead on facilitating their launch, implementation and follow-up.

MEPIELAN, as a Member of the MCSD and following guidelines provided by the Secretariat, offered to draft a Concept Note for the MSSD Flagship Initiative on developing capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements.

Based on the discussions and conclusions of the 19th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee, this Concept Note attempts to provide proposals for ways and means to put in motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative on developing capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, as well as on the scope, rationale, content, indicative timeline and activities and possible leader of this initiative.

Background of the Concept Note

The MSSD Objective 6 focuses on *Improving Governance in support of Sustainable Development*, with the following rationale:

Governance is a crosscutting objective and concerns the inclusion of non-state actors in decision-making processes, using new forms of cooperation arrangements. Regional challenges for environmental governance include fragmentation of responsibility, uncoordinated and non-results-based planning and implementation, as well as weak human and financial resources in the public sector, particularly at the local level. The Strategy for improving environmental governance in the Mediterranean rests on five pillars: Enhance international dialogue and cooperation, including on emergency-preparedness; Promote stakeholder engagement to secure inclusive processes and integrity in decision-making; Promote implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including through policy coherence based on inter-ministerial coordination; Promote education and research; and, enhance regional capabilities for information management.

Under MSSD Objective 6, “Promote implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements including through policy coherence based on inter-ministerial coordination” corresponds to the Strategic Direction 6.3, with the following description:

The Strategy promotes implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements to guide actions at national and regional levels (strategic direction 6.3). It highlights the importance of ensuring policy coherence, based on mechanisms for inter-ministerial coordination and cross-sectoral planning. The Strategy promotes the implementation of the precautionary principle through instruments such as environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments. It encourages the support, through legal provisions where relevant, of partnerships in planning and implementation, including but not limited to private sector involvement, public-private partnerships, and innovative financing at regional (subnational) and/or local level

Under Strategic Direction 6.3, the MSSD contains Flagship Initiative 6.3.5, as one of the 11 MSSD Flagship Initiatives, to develop capacity-building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact

assessments (EIA) and strategic environmental assessments (SEA). The summary of this MSSD Flagship Initiative is presented below:

Flagship Initiative	Owners	Time frame	Indicators
6.3.5. Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements, including environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments.	International institutions, national governments, local authorities, academia, civil society, private sector	2016-2020	Number of countries where capacity development programmes developed on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements are put in place

Key Areas of Capacity Building Actions for the Implementation and Compliance with the MAP – Barcelona Convention System

Key areas that require capacity-building actions related to the implementation and compliance of the Barcelona Convention and its seven Protocols, as well as relevant MAP policies, should be considered in a flexible and transparent manner, based on a contextual, integrated and process approach to law and governance. Such an approach will address the need for an integrated, sustainably implementing, relationally complying with, and continuously evolving MAP – Barcelona Convention system in relation to the internal context (different situations, needs, capabilities and stages of development of each Contracting Party) and the external context (relevant international conventional environmental regimes) and the promotion of synergies and actions related to capacity-building.

The key areas that require capacity-building actions related to the implementation of and compliance with the MAP – Barcelona Convention framework refer to:

- The stewardship-related and participatory application of the precautionary approach;
- The development of the capacity to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development through interlinkages between institutional arrangements related to global and regional conventional (treaty-based) obligations with regard to environmental sustainability and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- The advancement of trusteeship approaches to participatory governance as sustainability-related innovative legal conceptions and practices; and,
- The development of the capacity to negotiate implementative and governance aspects of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system, and the introduction of a “talanoa dialogue” approach²² for discussion and participation at the local, national, and regional level.

In their combination, these Key Areas of Capacity Building Actions not only strengthen, in a substantive and practical manner, the participatory approach to the effective and efficient implementation and compliance of the Barcelona Convention, its protocols, and relevant MAP policies in coherence with the international and national contexts of their development; they also point to the urgent need for recognizing the importance of law and policy protection of the interests of the vulnerable “voiceless community” (future generations, wildlife, natural resources), thus making law and governance of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system to be evolved into a more sustainability-equipped, stewardship-focused and ecosystem-serving conventional regime. Hence, a more effective and efficient environmental governance is promoted addressing important gaps in this governance, already indicated in the MSSD, like “horizontal and vertical fragmentation of responsibility”,

²² Talanoa, a traditional word used in Fiji and the Pacific, reflects a process of inclusive, participatory and transparent dialogue aiming to share stories and build empathy and trust among the participants in order to make wise decisions for the collective good. The process involves the sharing of ideas, skills and experience through storytelling – *a narrative approach to issues*. The “talanoa dialogue” was launched at the UNFCCC - COP 23 by Fiji as a way to determine contributions for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and long-term greenhouse gas reduction targets on a national level.

“uncoordinated and non-result based implementation”, “inadequate awareness and education”, and the imperative need to “devise new forms of institutions based on discussion and participation, as well as innovative legal conceptions and constructive practices directly related to sustainability governance”.

Putting in Motion the MSSD Flagship Initiative on Capacity Building Actions for the Implementation and Compliance with the Barcelona Convention system

1. Developing a Stewardship-related and Participatory Implementation of the Precautionary Principle

Capacity building on the implementation of and compliance with environmental obligations, at multiple levels (regional, national and local), can be promoted by enhancing the determination of the *due diligence* of Contracting Parties, and indirectly connecting with the participation of non-state actors within their jurisdiction, through advancing a more *stewardship-related and participatory approach to the implementation of the precautionary principle*.

The precautionary principle is formulated in Article 4.3(a) of the Barcelona Convention which, transposing Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration, enshrines a weaker formulation of the precautionary approach, setting out that the Contracting Parties, in order to protect the environment and contribute to the sustainable development of the Mediterranean, “apply, in accordance with their capabilities, the precautionary principle, by virtue of which where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation”. A stronger formulation that entails a reversal of the burden of proof is contained e.g. in the OSPAR Convention (Art.2 (2)). The precautionary approach, being an integral part of the general duty-obligation of due diligence of the Contracting Parties, may play a central role in the interpretation and application of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols (see ICJ: *Pulp Mills Case*, Judgment, ICJ Reports 2010) and gains considerable importance for its implementation, especially in view of the general inherent limitations in the mechanism of reparation of the often irreversible character of damage to the environment (see ICJ: *Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Project Case*, Judgment, ICJ Reports 1997). Relatedly, in the framework of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system, the long negotiation process for the determination of liability and compensation for damage from pollution of the marine environment, geared for the specification of the framework obligation of the Contracting Parties provided in Article 16 on Liability and Compensation, has failed to produce “appropriate rules and procedures” in this regard and is currently confined to the implementation of Guidelines on Liability and Compensation.

In the light of all this, the implementation of the precautionary approach as an integral part of the due diligence duty-obligation of the Contracting Parties in the governance of environmental protection and sustainability of the Mediterranean requires a stronger participatory dimension. It should be closely associated with the application of prior environmental impact assessments (EIA, SEA), including on the transboundary level, through specific procedures which enable the decision-makers to consider all relevant factors, facilitate the effective engagement of non-state actors in the decision-making process, and make the final decisions more sustainable. The determination of due diligence is related to a more stewardship and participatory implementation of the precautionary principle requiring effective EIA and SEA procedures containing contributing public consultation, continuous monitoring of the impacts and further using environmental assessment procedures to assess not only environmental but also social consequences of the projects (such as the certification schemes operated by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)) since economic aspects are taken into account from the feasibility and design of the project itself. In the transboundary context, the UNECE 1991 Espoo Convention on EIA and its 2003 SEA Protocol usefully include standards for the conduct of transboundary consultation, including public consultation, and incorporate the importance of continuous environmental assessment. In this context, a model EIA and SEA legislation can be elaborated, considering well-developed legal schemes (EU EIA Directive, SEA Directive), such as the scope of application, the quality of EIA or SEA, the cross-agency coordination and the public participation procedures, and the content of the development consent. The development of risk assessment procedures should also complement the stewardship approach to the implementation of the precautionary principle. Such procedures, constituting expert-based and science-driven procedures, may effectively address

precaution in certain aspects of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols, e.g. the implementation of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol or the cross-cutting development of a regional approach to climate change adaptation at the regional, national and local levels and in more sustainable directions. It is an open question whether risk assessment procedure can become more participatory (“civic science”). Such a stewardship and participatory implementation of the precautionary principle can be effectively carried out by identifying the current status of operation of the precautionary principle between the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, by organizing a dialogue between the Contracting Parties and relevant stakeholders with a view to inject strong participatory and stewardship elements in the implementation of the precautionary principle (*talanoa dialogue*), and, consequently, organize a regional conference/meeting to develop an appropriate recommendation in this regard, in the context of the official multi-stakeholder platform of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system, i.e. the MCSDD.

2. Enhancing Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development through Interlinkages between Institutional Arrangements

Another area of capacity building on the implementation and compliance with environmental obligations at multiple levels is related to the promotion of sustainability governance through “working with interlinkages” with a view to advance policy coherence for sustainable development at all levels. That is, by developing the capacity to a holistic and relational understanding of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system, enhancing policy coherence with its interlinkages between institutional arrangements and synergies regarding global and regional conventional (treaty-based) regimes related to environmental sustainability, as well as the implementation of SDGs and their appropriate integration into domestic environmental sustainability governance. The former direction concerns the interlinkages with e.g. the Paris Agreement (2016) and the UNFCCC (1992), the relevant IMO Conventions, the Convention on Biodiversity (1992), the Aarhus Convention (1998) and its PRTR Protocol (2003) and the development of actions for their effective and efficient implementation in relational coherence and complementarity with the Barcelona Convention and at all levels from global to local. The latter direction concerns the development of appropriate and innovative management approaches, tools and actions, which promote the implementation of the SDGs, and enhance policy coherence for sustainable development, in line with SDG Target 17.14 “Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development”.

In the case of conventional (treaty-based) regimes related to environmental sustainability, the Mediterranean countries should be appropriately prepared, on the one hand, to manage the interlinkages and synergies inherent in specific areas (e.g. biodiversity, climate change, marine use and wastes) and, on the other hand, to manage an important coordination deficit. This latter requires an effort to build a more consistent, more relational and more effective “polycentric environmental and sustainability conventional governance” by establishing a better coordination between related conventional regimes at both the law-making and implementation levels in order to ensure policy coherence, mutual supportiveness and synergies in implementation. Relatedly, the harmonization of their various aspects, such as reporting, should also be pursued, in order to preempt potential tensions among them, as well as to avoid unnecessary reporting burdens. In the light of all this, national implementation needs to be improved by developing appropriate national legislation, by mainstreaming of environmental considerations into other sectors, by developing institutional arrangements (Inter-Ministerial Committees, establishment of an Agency responsible for cross-sectoral coordination) that could promote cross-sectoral cooperation, and by enhanced participation of non-State actors in decision-making and implementation, effectively supporting public-private partnerships in planning and implementation. In this context, a right to a clean and healthy environment and the principles of non-regression and progression have to be recognized and fully developed. Specific targeted meetings/conferences and the development of relevant educational and training programmes promoting interlinkages and synergies regarding global and regional conventional (treaty-based) regimes related to environmental sustainability should be provided. Good practices should be identified and disseminated.

In the case of SDGs, institutional mechanisms and processes should be identified, at centre of government and public administration level (e.g. inter-Ministerial coordination committees / networks), aimed at monitoring and coordinating the implementation of SDGs-related legislation and

policies, and at ensuring the coherence, complementarity and interlinkages of the SDGs through key assessment and evaluation reports, and compliance reports. A mechanism for dialogue and coordination with stakeholders involved, among others, in the process of monitoring legislation and policies associated with the implementation of the SDGs, should also be identified and strengthened. At the same time, an educational and training capacity building should be developed through the organization of regional and national collaborative workshops and educational programmes for peer-learning among Mediterranean countries on frameworks/schemes to promote policy coherence and SDGs implementation.

3. *Advancing Sustainability-related Innovative Legal Conceptions and Practices: The Public Trust Approach*

Another area of improving capacity building on the implementation of and compliance with environmental obligations at multiple levels refers to the development of a trusteeship approach, and particularly of the innovative, sustainability-related legal concept of the public trust approach, exploring its appropriate application to the law and governance canvass of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system. In terms of Governance, the MSSD makes a clear reference to “the need to advance public trusteeship concepts in the existing instruments for better and more equitable governance and more effective and efficient public participation”. This is reinforced by contributions of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) “to explore new legal concepts related to governance such as the “public trust approach”, which constitutes an interesting legal perspective for the coherent implementation of a number of SDGs” (Report of the 17th Meeting of the MCSD, Athens, Greece, 4-6 July, 2017, UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.441/9). Relatedly, the public trust approach is well-reflected in the textual language of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system (Preamble of the Barcelona Convention, para. 2, Art. 4 of the Convention, Preamble of the ICZM Protocol, para. 3).

Under the public trust approach, governments are legally entrusted by the public to protect and conserve the environment and natural resources, for the benefit of present and future generations. More specifically, governments are vested with a “fiduciary” legal obligation to hold and govern natural resources in trust for its people, protecting and preserving the environment and resources as a unit in a sustainable manner, for the benefit of present and future generations. It is noted that the contemporary approach to the public trusteeship has mainly been developed in the framework of domestic orders: public trusteeship is well established in the United States, emanating from the English Common Law of Charitable Trust, and is widely internationalized, in an expressed or implied form, in the Constitutions and Statutes of many States all over the world. The introduction of the public trust approach into the MAP – Barcelona Convention system brings an important “added value” to this MSSD Flagship Initiative. It provides a solid legal and policy platform to address the sustainability aspects of the Barcelona Convention and MAP policies and, as a result, to substantially enhance their implementation and produce their more robust compliance, thus legally fleshing out the sustainability dimension of the obligations of the Contracting Parties and giving concrete legal substance to the overarching ecosystem-based approach, recognized as a guiding principle for the overall work of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system (COP 17, Paris, France, 2012). At present, the MAP – Barcelona Convention system is faced with a decisive gap in the implementation of its sustainability objective and obligation at regional and national levels. Approaches to sustainability governance and the application of the ecosystem-based approach have developed at the technical, scientific and political levels within the MAP – Barcelona Convention system. However, the legal basis for such governance is relatively weak, as static traditional legal concepts and rules of international law entirely overlook the fiduciary legal aspect of the relational basis and the sustainability governance of the dynamic MAP – Barcelona Convention system. Revisiting the operation of the Barcelona Convention and MAP policies from the perspective of the public trust approach would allow:

- to promote the sustainable use, management and conservation of natural resources and ecosystems (MSSD Strategic Direction 2.1), ensuring that legal measures conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services in line with international and regional commitments;

- to promote the engagement of civil society, scientists, local communities and other stakeholders in the governance process at all levels, in order to secure inclusive processes and integrity in decision-making (MSSD Strategic Direction 6. 2), supporting the organizational capacity of stakeholders and encouraging the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention;
- to promote the implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements (MSSD Strategic Direction 6.3) related to environmental sustainability and to guide actions at national and regional levels; and,
- to promote the education and research for sustainable development (MSSD Strategic Direction 6.5).

Relatedly, the public trust approach as an innovative legal concept may effectively and efficiently contribute to the coherent implementation of a number of SDGs in the Mediterranean, with which the MSSD is fully aligned:

- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – Promoting a proactive sustainability society, reinforcing the access to justice for all and building accountable institutions at all levels supporting their effective coordination;
- SDG 14: Life Below Water: Providing an important legal platform for conserving and sustainably managing oceans, seas and marine resources
- SDG 15: Life on Land – Legally contributing to the protection and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems, the sustainable management of forests, the combat of desertification, the halting and reversing of land degradation and the halting of biodiversity loss;
- SDG 13: Climate Action – Providing an important legal platform for citizen action and state enhanced due diligence for urgent actions to combat climate change
- SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation – Legally contributing, at all levels, for a sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- SDG 4: Quality education – Promoting an important law and governance perspective in the education and research for sustainability

Capacity development is a key element to improve the understanding of the public trust approach and its applicability at both national and regional levels as well as of the fiduciary obligations of the Barcelona Convention to support the conservation and sustainable use of the marine and coastal environment. Improved understanding of this concept and its applicability to support the delivery of sustainable development-related objectives can directly influence policy discussions and inform the development of policy but, more importantly, build a legal basis for the sustainable implementation and compliance with the Barcelona Convention and relevant MAP policies by:

- developing a fiduciary-oriented public participation pattern related to the implementation of the Barcelona Convention within domestic orders;
- streamlining the fiduciary duty of the Contracting Parties to institutional coordination at the domestic level, abandoning diverse, sectoral approaches and actions and operating as trustees with complementary activities for the comprehensive attainment of a common interest purpose;
- developing a fiduciary duty of due diligence, that State authorities/agencies should act prudently, *making use of knowledge, expertise and skills* and *applying continuous monitoring* with a view to attain an effective, efficient and socially acceptable sustainable governance of Mediterranean marine and coastal environment and its natural resources;
- elaborating a relational approach to compliance with the MAP – Barcelona Convention system, strengthening public participation in the compliance procedure and mechanism of the Barcelona Convention (Compliance Committee), enhancing certain aspects of their direct

involvement, like those provided in the Aarhus Convention (1998), the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979), the Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (1999) or in the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) (1996); and,

- allowing the harmonisation and clarification of a variety of concepts currently in use and advancing its holistic conservation objectives governing coastal zone management, marine specially protected areas and biodiversity, as well as pollution from human activities (offshore exploration and exploitation, dumping, emergencies, land-based sources and activities) that impact marine life and habitats.

In this context, a Mediterranean Stakeholders Public Trust Forum may be established in liaison with the Secretariat and in partnership with Earth Charter International, WWF, the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law and other relevant organizations and bodies, to advance the understanding and applicability of the public trust approach at the national and regional levels, by coordinating high-level participation, discussion and research. At the same time, an educational and training capacity building should be developed through the organization of regional and national workshops promoting the public trust approach in the implementation and compliance with the Barcelona Convention and its sustainability governance.

4. *Capacity to negotiate implementative and governance aspects of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system and introducing the “talanoa dialogue” for discussion and participation at the local and regional level*

Developing the capacity to negotiate implementative and governance aspects of the Barcelona Convention and relevant MAP policies in combination with the introduction and effective application of the “talanoa dialogue” for an ongoing engagement of the relevant stakeholders is an important, and as yet neglected, area of capacity building on the implementation and compliance with environmental obligations, at multiple levels from regional to local.

The knowledge of the nature and practice of international environmental negotiation as a process governing the construction and continuous development of international common interest within every treaty-based environmental regime is catalytic. In order to be creative and effective in all aspects of constitution, implementation and revision of any treaty-based environmental or any other regime, international negotiation should be understood and explained as *a structured process of relational governance generating international common interest*: that is, on the basis of a holistic, interdisciplinary approach that conceptualizes it as a relational, context-dependent, textual, phased-structured (Pre-negotiation, Constitutive Negotiation, Renegotiation), and authoritatively intersubjective process governing treaty-based relations. In consequence, the conduct of negotiations within the MAP – Barcelona Convention system should always be associated with:

- the construction of a Mediterranean-based international common interest (consistency and creative synergy with interlinked relevant treaty-based regimes, global and regional);
- the application of such approach to all levels of implementation and operation of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system and its infusion into all levels of negotiating participants (national delegates, representatives of non-state participants - stakeholders) also benefiting from the format of the MCSDD; and,
- identifying and defining the roles of the various disciplines involved in the negotiating process (technical/scientific, legal, political, economic, administrative) when preparing, drafting, implementing and textually developing various legal or declarative (decisional) instruments for their more effective and socially acceptable implementative and compliance quality.

At the same time, it is important to stress that the negotiating process, as mentioned above, can be substantially strengthened if relevant stakeholders are more effectively engaged, influence and support the negotiating process, by widening the opportunities for such involvement and providing financial

resources to effectively participate. It is pertinent that relevant stakeholders are effectively involved in all stages of the negotiating process, especially in the pre-negotiation of an issue while informal consultations should be open to them. An important step towards this direction can be made by the broader introduction and organization of the so-called “talanoa dialogue” in the framework of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system. In fact, a better socially, scientifically and politically (democratically) informed party-driven negotiating process requires a pragmatically more constructive participation of the relevant stakeholders in this process, and this can be effected by a recommendation setting up a Talanoa Dialogue Platform. Its principles such as “constructive, facilitative and solutions oriented” could inform national approaches, facilitating a continued sharing of national experiences through a multi-stakeholder dialogue and between networks of non-party stakeholders, regarding the implementation and compliance with specific aspects of the Barcelona Convention and relevant MAP policies, as well as with related treaty-based environmental regimes. Creating two different phases, the preparatory phase and political phase (which includes high level round tables of Parties and non-party stakeholders), the “talanoa dialogue” will craft coalitions of common interest among non-party stakeholders and develop the domestic support needed to further drive more effective implementation, compliance and more participatory and enlightened negotiating process. Parties, non-Party stakeholders and expert institutions will be encouraged to prepare their inputs, addressing the three “talanoa dialogue” questions (*Where are we? Where do we want to go? How do we get there?*) to inform the dialogue and submit these to the process.

Guidelines should be developed regarding the operation of the “talanoa dialogue” and a knowledge-exchange platform should be established fostering subject matter networks and collaborations and improve the effectiveness of inputs into the implementation, compliance and negotiating process in the MAP – Barcelona Convention system. Better coordination of non-party stakeholder inputs, including through the use of technology for remote participation, can support constructive participation to inform the party-driven process of multilateral negotiations. In this context, partnerships can be built, organized around implementation, compliance and negotiation issues and a permanent forum for stakeholders can be set up for stakeholder-driven open, organized and constructive dialogue to complement the negotiation process and support domestic implementation and compliance.

What	Who	By when
Present Capacity Building Actions for the Implementation and Compliance within the MAP – Barcelona Convention system and promote their relational approach in an innovative context, by delivering a keynote speech on the matter at the 18th Meeting of the MCSD	The Barcelona Convention Secretariat, with support from MEPIELAN	June 2019 (18 th Meeting of the MCSD)
Building the capacity to a holistic and relational understanding of the interlinkages between institutional arrangements and synergies regarding global and regional agreements related to environmental sustainability, as well as the implementation of relevant SDGs for more sustainably effective implementation and compliance, by providing educational programmes, capacity building and training for preparing Mediterranean States to better manage interlinkages and coordination deficits, developing appropriate legislation, enhancing public participation and “polycentric sustainability governance”, as well as appropriate national institutional mechanisms and processes, mechanisms for dialogue and coordination with stakeholders based on	Contracting Parties, Barcelona Convention Secretariat, with support from the MCSD and its Steering Committee, MEPIELAN and relevant stakeholders.	By 2023

What	Who	By when
successful existing such examples (through peer-learning).		
Introducing the Public Trust Approach as an innovative legal concept providing a solid legal and policy platform to address the sustainability aspects of the Barcelona Convention and MAP policies, promoting its sustainability objective and the ecosystem approach, by establishing a Mediterranean Stakeholders Public Trust Forum and developing educational and training capacity.	Barcelona Convention Secretariat, with support from the MCSD and its Steering Committee, in cooperation with MEPIELAN	By 2023
Development of stewardship-related and participatory approach to the implementation of the precautionary principle connecting it with EIA and SEA procedures, including transboundary and social impacts, as well as with risk assessment procedures, by identifying the current state of affairs in the Mediterranean countries, elaborating a model EIA and SEA legislation, developing a talanoa-type dialogue between Contracting Parties and relevant stakeholders, and organizing meetings in the region to develop appropriate recommendations	Barcelona Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with the Espoo Convention Secretariat, with support from MAP Partners and MCSD Members. MEPIELAN could play an active contributing role through its own membership	By 2024
Development of the capacity to negotiate implementative and governance aspects of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system by developing educational and training capacity, including workshops and webinars, and introducing the “talanoa dialogue” for discussion and participation at the local and regional level, complementing the capacity to negotiate implementative and compliance aspects of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system, by developing recommendations and guidelines for its conduct, for developing a knowledge-exchange platform, and for a permanent forum for stakeholders at the national and local level.	Contracting Parties, supported by the Barcelona Convention Secretariat, in cooperation with MEPIELAN, with support from MAP Partners, MCSD Members and appropriate institutions	By 2024

Annex II:

Leaflet of the MAP Side Event:

**“The Regional Dimension of the Sustainable and Inclusive Blue Economy:
The Model of the Mediterranean Sea”**

28 November 2018, 0900-1100 am, Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC)

**Sustainable Blue Economy Conference
(Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2018)**



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط



The model of the Mediterranean

The regional dimension of a sustainable and inclusive Blue Economy



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THE CURRENT AND POTENTIAL FUTURE VALUE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN'S BLUE ECONOMY IS IMMENSE. ONLY A COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND A JOINT EFFORT INVOLVING KEY ACTORS WILL ALLOW US TO APPROACH THE CHALLENGE AT THE SCALE NEEDED.

Ocean-related activities in the Mediterranean Sea represent the fifth largest economy in the region and 20% of the world's annual "Global Marine Product" (GMP) in an area which makes up only 1% of the world's oceans¹. Today, more than ever, Blue Economy sectors are important engines for the region's economy, with enormous potential for innovation and sustainable and inclusive prosperity².

However, the health of the Mediterranean is failing due to local stresses, such as habitat destruction, overfishing and pollution. The economic opportunities provided by the Mediterranean Sea are closely linked to an increasing need for new management models which respect its ecosystems and are able to maintain and increase their value over time, benefiting local communities.

Continuous dialogue and close co-operation between Mediterranean countries and multi-stakeholder governance frameworks are key conditions to reach a common goal: the conservation and the sustainable and equitable use of the Mediterranean Sea.

The UN Environment Mediterranean Action Plan-Barcelona Convention, the Union for the Mediterranean, Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre, the European Union, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (FAO-GFCM) and WWF are coordinating their strategies and working towards improved cooperation with governments, local authorities, businesses, universities and civil society.

Beyond ministry walls, and across borders between economic sectors and countries, now is the time to have everyone moving together towards a sustainable and inclusive future for the ocean and for the coming generations.

A sustainable and inclusive Blue Economy

A sustainable and inclusive Blue Economy should³:

- ensure that Blue Economy investments deliver long-term social and economic benefits while protecting and restoring the diversity, productivity and resilience of marine ecosystems
- be based on participatory and effective governance that is inclusive, accountable and transparent
- promote sustainable use in marine areas through far-sighted, anticipatory and preventive spatial planning to ensure Good Environmental Status, through the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach
- be based on clean technologies, renewable energy and circular material flows and promote innovation and research in all Blue Economy sectors to achieve zero carbon net emissions
- enable the creation of employment opportunities for blue jobs in the marine and maritime sectors.

¹ Randone, et al. 2017. Reviving the Economy of the Mediterranean Sea: Actions for a Sustainable Future. WWF Mediterranean Marine Initiative, Rome, Italy.

² Union for the Mediterranean. 2017. Blue Economy in the Mediterranean.

³ Plan Bleu. 2017. Towards a Blue Economy for a sustainable Mediterranean: indicators and recommendations. See also the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (UNEP/MAP, 2016).

Sustainable Blue Economy Conference: Side event

28 November 2018, 09:00-11:00am
Kenyatta International Conference Center (Tent C)

Side event organizer: UN Environment

Partners:

- UN Environment Mediterranean Action Plan – Barcelona Convention Secretariat (MAP)
- Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
- Mediterranean Marine Initiative of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (Plan Bleu)

Opening speech and moderator: UN Environment Deputy Executive Director, Joyce Msuya

Keynote speaker: Leader of the WWF International Oceans Practice, John Tanzer, to provide a global framework for sustainable and inclusive Blue Economy and to introduce the Mediterranean context

Panel:

- MAP Coordinator, Acting Director and Regional Representative for UN Environment Europe Office, Gaetano Leone
- UfM Deputy Secretary General in charge of the Environment and Water, Miguel García-Herraiz Roobaert
- WWF Mediterranean Director, Paolo Lombardi
- Plan Bleu Director, Elen Lemaitre-Curri

The side event aims to foster improved models of regional cooperation to promote the achievement of a truly sustainable and inclusive Blue Economy. It will build on Blue Economy concept implementation in the Mediterranean region and countries, both from the perspective of policy (governance and institutional framework) and from an operational point of view (partnerships, best practices), with a specific focus on Fisheries Co-Management Models and Sustainable Tourism.

Beyond advocacy, communication and experience sharing, the main expected outcomes are:

1. to establish and strengthen coordinated partnerships among Mediterranean decision makers and stakeholders from various categories
2. to develop new initiatives and collaboration and to promote the exchange of best practices at the global and regional levels.



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