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**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP)  
REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE  
MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)**

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Thirteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional  
Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre  
for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.45/5  
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Agenda Item 5

**DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN UNEP/MAP RELATED TO  
THE OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF REMPEC**

**Note by the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment  
Programme (UNEP/MAP)**

**SUMMARY**

**Executive Summary:** This report covers the developments within UNEP/MAP since the last Focal Points meeting of REMPEC. It refers to the recent ratifications of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol and of the Offshore Protocol as well as to the main Decisions adopted at COP 20 of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Tirana, Albania, December 2017) of relevance to the work of REMPEC. It summarizes the recent meetings of bodies of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system as well as progress in relation to projects and activities during the current reporting period. Finally, reference is made to the preparations for COP 21 of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Naples, Italy, December 2017), to main international and regional meetings and processes of UNEP/MAP relevance and to cooperation and partners.

**Action to be taken:** Paragraph 311

**Related documents:** UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23

**Introduction**

1. This report covers the developments within the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP), referred also as UN Environment/MAP, in the framework of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean ("the Barcelona Convention") and its Protocols since the last Focal Points meeting of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), which took place in May 2017.

**Ratification of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol and of the Offshore Protocol**

2. Since the last meeting of the REMPEC Focal Points, the Depositary has communicated to the Secretariat the deposit of the instrument of accession to the Prevention and Emergency Protocol by Lebanon, dated 3 November 2017; the Protocol entered into force for Lebanon on 3 December 2017. Furthermore, the Depositary has communicated to the Secretariat the deposit of the instrument of ratification of the Offshore Protocol by Croatia, dated 8 February 2018; the Protocol entered into force for Croatia on 10 March 2018.

## **COP 20 Decisions**

3. During the period between May 2017 and December 2017, the focus was on the preparation for the Decisions to be adopted by the Twentieth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017) (COP20). The draft decisions were submitted to the MAP National Focal Points (MAP NFPs) for consideration during their meeting in September 2017. After adjustments to reflect comments from the MAP National Focal Points meeting, the revised draft decisions were then forwarded to the Contracting Parties for adoption during COP 20.

4. The main Decision<sup>1</sup> of direct relevance to the work of REMPEC was on the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents.

5. Furthermore, COP 20 adopted the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019<sup>2</sup> (PoW), which is the PoW for the second biennium of the implementation of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021 (MTS). The overarching theme of the MTS and the respective PoWs is Governance, the core themes are Land and Sea Based Pollution, Biodiversity and Ecosystems, and Land and Sea Interaction and Processes. The cross-cutting themes are Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Sustainable Consumption and Production and Climate Change Adaptation. To this end, the programme of work of REMPEC for the biennium 2018-2019 contributes to all themes.

6. COP 20 also took a number of other important, relevant, decisions, related to:

- .1 Implementation and Monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025 and of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean<sup>3</sup>,
- .2 Updated Resource Mobilization Strategy<sup>4</sup>
- .3 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report<sup>5</sup>, and
- .4 Implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol: Annotated Structure of the Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Conceptual Framework for Marine Spatial Planning<sup>6</sup>.

7. The 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (2017 MED QSR) became publicly available<sup>7</sup> at and at the MAP website<sup>8</sup>, while its graphical design, including also design of the Executive Summary, was launched by MED POL with the support of INFO/RAC. The 2017 MED QSR is an important achievement, the result of joint and integrated efforts of the Contracting Parties, MAP Partners and the Secretariat. It provides a unique basis for assessing the status of the Mediterranean ecosystems and the progress towards the achievement of its Good Environmental Status (GES). It is also an important milestone for the MAP-Barcelona Convention system 40-years long experience in monitoring and assessing the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean. REMPEC has significantly contributed in the preparation of the report, especially in relation to Common Indicator 19: Occurrence, origin (where possible), extent of acute pollution events (e.g. slicks from oil, oil products and hazardous substances), and their impact on biota affected by this pollution.

8. Following COP 20, the focus of work since January 2018 was on the implementation of the relevant COP decisions and of the activities under the PoW for the biennium 2018-2019. Since the last meeting of the REMPEC Focal Points, REMPEC is implementing a number of activities of the previous as well as of the current PoW. More information about these activities is presented in following sections of this document and in the Working Documents and Reports of the Meetings described below, as well as in the other documents submitted to the 2019 REMPEC Focal Points meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23, Decision IG.23/11

<sup>2</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23, Decision IG.23/14

<sup>3</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23, Decision IG.23/4

<sup>4</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23, Decision IG.23/5

<sup>5</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23, Decision IG.23/6

<sup>6</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23, Decision IG.23/7

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.medqsr.org>

<sup>8</sup> <https://unepmap.org>

### **Main MAP meetings**

9. Coordination between the different MAP Components is very important. To this end, during the period commencing May 2017, six meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP, which includes the MAP Coordinator and the Heads of all MAP Components) were conducted. The most recent is the 38<sup>th</sup> ECP Meeting (Marseille, France, 7-8 March 2019), while the next 39<sup>th</sup> ECP Meeting (8 September 2019), will be held back to back with the MAP Focal Points Meeting (Athens, Greece, 10-13 September 2019).

10. For the period commencing May 2017, four meetings of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties were conducted. The most recent, 87<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Bureau (Athens, Greece, 6-7 November 2018) agreed upon conclusions and recommendations, which are presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.87/7, whilst the 88<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Bureau (Rome, Italy, 21-22 May 2019) will review the progress report (October 2018 – April 2019), as well as financial and administrative issues and specific issues.

11. Other meetings include the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (Athens, Greece, 4-6 July 2017), the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the MCSD Steering Committee (Teleconference, 20 June 2018 and Athens, Greece, 23-24 January 2019, respectively) as well as the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> meetings of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 26-27 September 2017 and 27-29 June 2018, respectively).

12. The last MAP Focal Points meeting (Athens, Greece, 12-15 September 2017) reviewed the progress achieved in the implementation of the PoW adopted by Nineteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP19) (Greece, 9-12 February 2016) for the 2016-2017 biennium and discussed a number of substantive documents prepared for consideration by the MAP Focal Points and submission to COP 20, including the PoW for 2018-2019. The 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group (Athens, Greece, 11 September 2017) was convened, back-to-back, with the MAP Focal Points Meeting. As mentioned in previous paragraphs, COP 20 discussed and adopted a number of decisions, while its Ministerial Session focused on the “Implementation of SDG 14 within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a Focus on Marine Pollution and Biodiversity”.

### **Projects and Activities**

13. In the following paragraphs, progress is presented particularly in relation to projects and activities under MAP where REMPEC is participating in collaboration with other MAP Components. More details on specific activities of REMPEC and full report on the relevant progress is presented in other meeting documents.

14. In the framework of the Cooperation Agreement between UNEP and the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS), a voluntary contribution of 2,015,000 EUR has been provided by Italy in support of activities included in the MAP Programme of Work 2018-2019. The four components of this Agreement are:

- .1 Development and strengthening of an effective Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs) management,
- .2 Enhancement of Marine Litter Management,
- .3 Creation of a Mediterranean Network of CAMP Projects, and
- .4 Promotion of governance tools for “Blue Growth”: Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and other relevant tools.

15. REMPEC is involved in the implementation of the agreement and in particular its first two components. A number of activities have been undertaken in the current period, including the development of full-fledged activity fiches, the integration of the fiches' main elements into the approved MAP Components' Project Documents, the establishment of a coordination mechanism with technical Focal Points nominated by each MAP Component, and the preparation of vision papers for all the activity fiches. The budget for 2018 was received by MAP and transferred to the respective MAP Components as agreed. A concrete work plan has been in place and activities' implementation is ongoing in 2019.

16. The “Marine Litter-MED” project is a European Union (EU)-funded project implemented and coordinated by MAP. UNEP and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) finalised a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with the aim of utilising their respective areas of expertise and capabilities towards the successful joint implementation of the project by REMPEC. The activities coordinated by REMPEC focus on measures related to the better management of sea-based litter in selected major ports and marinas in the Mediterranean, more specifically:

- .1 The application of charges at reasonable costs for the use of port reception facilities or, when applicable, application of No-Special-Fee system; and
- .2 The provision of reception facilities as well as the delivery of ship-generated wastes.

17. REMPEC ensured the necessary interlinkage and synergy between the activities related to the better management of sea-based litter in selected major ports and marinas in the Mediterranean to be implemented within the framework of the Marine Litter-MED project and those to be implemented within the framework of the Cooperation Agreement with IMELS in 2018 and 2019.

18. REMPEC is involved in several aspects of regional cooperation, including cooperation of the MAP - Barcelona Convention system with other Regional Seas, such as OSPAR and HELCOM. REMPEC is also an active member of the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter in the Mediterranean, which includes more than 20 organizations. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Regional Cooperation Platform was organized in Izmir, Turkey (11-12 October 2018) to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the joint 2018 work plan, as agreed by the members of the Platform during their 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in November 2017.

### **Preparations for COP 21**

19. Preparations for the Twenty-first Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 21) (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019) are currently under way, with the full involvement of all the MAP Components and with relevant discussions conducted in the ECP meetings. Special emphasis is placed on the preparation of the PoW and Budget of MAP for the biennium 2020-2021 in a fully inclusive manner. A document titled “Guiding elements for the preparation of 2020-2021 UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget”, was shared with all ECP members, before the 37<sup>th</sup> ECP meeting (Geneva, Switzerland, 9-10 January 2019). The document was composed by very detailed indications focusing on each step of the PoW and Budget preparation process. The overall purpose of the paper was to provide guidance to all MAP components for developing the 2020-2021 PoW and Budget, for the delivery of the MTS 2016-2021. It also proposed a roadmap for undertaking consultations with the Focal Points of each MAP Component and MAP Focal Points as provided for in the Governance Paper, to enhance Contracting Parties’ ownership. The process was fine-tuned during the ECP meeting, while the early involvement of all MAP Components in the process was much welcomed. Preparations for the PoW are proceeding as scheduled, with the involvement of all MAP Components and in consultation with MAP Component Focal Points, including REMPEC’s.

20. As noted in the document on “Guiding elements for the preparation of 2020-2021 UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget”, the preparation of 2020-2021 PoW and Budget follows a process inspired from the following main principles:

- .1 Strong ownership by the Contracting Parties through regular consultation and better reflection of regional priorities and country needs;
- .2 Coherence with the most recent development in global processes such as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the preparation of the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, UNEA resolutions and the Paris Agreement, to link and justify the proposed action also to these global processes;
- .3 Internal transparency, consultation, communication, efficiency and flexibility;
- .4 Learning from the lessons of PoW and Budget of the current and previous biennia (design and implementation);
- .5 Delivering as one, as MAP system and in an integrated manner;

- .6 Setting activity priorities and related funding based on common and consistent sound criteria;
- .7 Total MTF amount is fixed at MAP level, with flexibility to keep the right balance between activities and operational costs at MAP level and per each component;
- .8 Partnership and outreach to boost implementation and efficiency;
- .9 Wise and balanced use of core and external resources, recognizing the increasing role of projects, to fund both activities and operational costs;
- .10 The definition of the PoW must also consider the need to verify priorities and themes that will influence the development of the next MTS.

21. Several draft decisions are also being prepared for submission to the MAP Components Focal Points meetings, as appropriate, then to the MAP Focal Points meeting, and finally for submission and possible adoption at COP 21. Main documents under preparation in view of COP 21 include the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report, the Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Conceptual Framework for Marine Spatial Planning and the MAP Operational Communication Strategy. Furthermore, a draft decision is under preparation regarding a roadmap to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea or parts thereof as SOx emission control area (ECA) under MARPOL Annex VI.

22. Several guidelines are being prepared with the involvement of REMPEC for submission to the respective MAP Components Focal Points meetings, and then to the MAP Focal Points meeting and to COP 21. These include regional standards and guidelines for offshore activities (Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Guidelines for the Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings; Guidance on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures; Common Standards and Guidelines for Special Restrictions or Conditions for Specially Protected Areas (SPA) within the Framework of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan) as well as guidelines related to marine litter (draft guidance document developed to determine the application of charges at reasonable costs for the use of port reception facilities or, when applicable, application of No-Special-Fee system; Draft operational Guidelines developed on the provision of reception facilities in ports and the delivery of ship-generated wastes).

23. Following COP 20 Decision on Governance<sup>9</sup>, the Secretariat is working in consultation with the Contracting Parties hosting Regional Activity Centres (RACs), to find and propose, under the guidance of the Bureau, ways and means to address a list of common reference provisions to be applied for the Host Country Agreements of RACs, taking into account the specificities of each Centre, with a view to have a discussion and a possible agreement by the Contracting Parties at COP 21.

24. In relation to the preparatory meetings of COP 21, the Contracting Parties, with Decision IG.23/3, requested “the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre to prepare on a trial basis, a meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity for the biennium 2018–2019, under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, to achieve the greatest possible integration with the other themes of the Mid-Term Strategy”. To this end, the Provisional Agenda of the meeting will include discussion on subjects that go beyond the regular agenda items, including (a) the Environment Impact Assessment guidelines for Offshore activities and (b) the Common offshore standards and guidelines for special restrictions or conditions for Specially Protected Areas.

### **Main international and regional meetings and processes of UNEP/MAP relevance**

25. The Secretariat participated in several outreach events during 2018 and 2019, including COP 14 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Egypt, November 2018) as well as events organized by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), IMO and the European Commission / European Environment Agency. Relevant information is presented in the Progress Report of the 85th and of the 87<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the Bureau (documents UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/3 and UNEP/MED BUR.87/3, respectively).

<sup>9</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/23, Decision IG. 23/3

26. The fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4) (Nairobi, Kenya, 11-15 March 2019) was convened under the main theme of “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”, which is of major relevance to the work of UNEP/MAP. Oceans and Seas have a central role in the work of UNEP, and UNEA-4 provided a great opportunity to showcase the achievements in relation to ocean governance and the prevention and control of pollution in the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment. This central role also follows on the relevant Resolutions adopted in UNEA-3 (4-6 December 2017, in Nairobi, Kenya), under the main Theme “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet”. The Ministerial Declaration and full set of UNEA-4 Resolutions and Decisions is provided in the website of UNEP<sup>10</sup>.

### **Cooperation and Partners**

27. The Secretariat launched a campaign to attract new MAP Partners. As a result of this campaign, a number of applications have been received for new MAP Partners to be endorsed at COP 21, including from partners working in areas closely linked with the mandate of REMPEC, such as “The International Association of Oil & Gas Producers” (IOGP), which were endorsed by the Bureau that requested that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement.

28. Furthermore, letters were sent by the Secretariat to all MAP Partners that were endorsed at COP 18, reminding them that they need to renew their accreditation, since according to Decision IG.19/6. Following these reminders, the Secretariat has received a number of applications from MAP Partners for renewal of their accreditation, including from partners working in areas closely linked with the mandate of REMPEC, such as the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA).

29. Furthermore, following the request of the Bureau regarding the process of development and subscription of MOUs and other legal instruments, the Secretariat is working with the MAP Components to reinforce the flow of information among RACs-Coordinating Unit-Bureau; set up a process, whereby the Coordinating Unit would be consulted on any MOUs or other legal instruments proposed by RACs; strengthen the role of the Coordinating Unit in ensuring that MOUs or other legal instruments between RACs and other entities are within RACs mandate as set forth by Sixteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to Barcelona Convention and its Protocol (COP 16)<sup>11</sup> (Marrakesh, Morocco, 3-5 November 2009) and linked to the MTS and/or corresponding output of the PoW; and ensure the timely involvement of, and the regular sharing of information with the relevant thematic Focal Points on MOUs and other legal instruments, including their content.

30. To strengthen cooperation with the Compliance Procedures and Mechanisms established under other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), representatives of the Compliance Committees of (a) the IMO London Convention/Protocol, (b) the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), and (c) the Basel-Rotterdam-Stockholm Conventions, presented the work of their Committees at the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 27-29 July 2018). Furthermore, the work of the Barcelona Convention Compliance Committee was presented to the GFCM Compliance Committee Meeting (Madrid, Spain, 5-6 July 2018). These exchanges have led to closer collaboration on areas of mutual interests, such as the establishment of criteria for assessing compliance.

### **Actions requested by the Meeting**

31. **The Meeting is invited to take note** of the information provided in this document and **to comment** as deemed appropriate.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://web.unep.org/environmentassembly/ministerial-declaration-resolutions-and-decisions-unea-4>

<sup>11</sup> UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.19/8, Decision IG.19/5