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37<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel

Geneva, Switzerland, 9-10 January 2019

**Report of the Meeting**

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UNEP/MAP  
Athens, 2019

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

1. The 37<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) was held on 9-10 January 2019, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was chaired by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Coordinator and attended by the Deputy Coordinator, the Heads of MAP Components and the Programme Officer responsible for governance issues. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.
2. Mr. Gaetano Leone, UNEP/MAP Coordinator opened the meeting at 09:30 on 9 January 2019.

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

3. The meeting reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda prepared by the Secretariat, as in document UNEP/MED ECP.37/1. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

## **III. Agenda item 3: Follow-up to the 36<sup>th</sup> ECP meeting and to the 87<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Bureau**

4. The Coordinator presented the main activities of the current period, including the involvement of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in international and regional events, such as the CBD COP14 (Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt 17-29 November 2018), the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference (Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2018), the Ministerial Conference on Innovative Solutions to Pollution in South East and Southern Europe (Belgrade, Serbia, 4-5 December 2018) and the Fish Forum 2018, organized by GFCM (Rome, Italy, 10-14 December 2018). He also referred to the progress in relation to project proposals and especially the third phase of the MPA action with a complementary action on IMAP implementation (supported under the GreenMedIII Strategy), the recently approved 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the SwitchMed Project and the possibility of a joint submission with FAO/GFCM to GEF 7. The members of the ECP provided further information on activities and events.
5. The meeting also discussed the follow-up to the 36<sup>th</sup> ECP meeting and to the action items included in the 36<sup>th</sup> ECP meeting report. On the issue of finding appropriate ways to address the need for strengthening the structures of the RACs, INFO/RAC will share information on its structure and on updated contact details of the personnel when this is available, since there are currently changes in the Component. In parallel, the Coordinating Unit will prepare a consolidated text with information on strengthening RAC structures to share with the ECP.
6. On the financial situation, the Coordinator referred to the very high percentage of contributions received in 2018 (96%) which show the commitment of Contracting Parties. This will be nurtured through possible country visits in the near future.
7. The Deputy Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, referred to the financial issues noting that a technical solution is being explored to resolve the issue of exchange rate fluctuations by using the working capital reserve. She also noted that there is feasibility in having one Project Document for the whole MAP system – simple and based on the adopted Programme of Work and Budget - and separate Project Cooperation Agreements for each MAP Component to provide the necessary legal provisions / details. On the issue of the Planning and Priorities Tables (finalized for 2018 and updated planning for 2019) she noted that inputs of MAP Components are expected by the end of January, so that the tables are finalized and shared with the RAC/Thematic Focal Points in February.
8. On the issue of the UNEP/MAP Data Policy – including the possibility of a relevant COP 21 Decision - it was agreed that INFO/RAC will prepare a short concept note, which will be sent to the Coordinating Unit and then shared with the ECP, before submission to the INFO/RAC Focal Points meeting in the Spring of 2019. Participants also noted that the Data Policy is an important document for the whole MAP-Barcelona Convention system and should be also submitted to the other RAC/Thematic Focal Points meetings in 2019, as an information document, even if it is still in draft mode. Furthermore, the Coordinator highlighted the need to inform the MAP Focal Points on this issue through a letter which will refer to the relevant process, mandate and timeline.

9. In relation to the follow-up of the 87<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Bureau, the ECP members discussed the progress in relation to the implementation of the Bureau conclusions and recommendations. In relation to complementarities and synergies among databases within the MAP system with the support of INFO/RAC, the Director of INFO/RAC, Ms. Giuseppina Monacelli, informed the meeting that bilateral meetings already took place between INFO/RAC and SCP/RAC, PAP/RAC, REMPEC as well as SPA/RAC, while a meeting with Plan Bleu/RAC is being arranged. It was agreed that INFO/RAC should provide a consolidated response by the end of February, in view of reporting to the next Bureau meeting and, then, of preparing a relevant document for the MAP Focal Points meeting and COP 21.

10. On the issue of longstanding arrears, the possibility of a visit of the Coordinator to the Syrian Arab Republic was discussed. In relation to the Host Country Agreements for RACs and the draft note incorporating the comments of the Bureau, the Director of Plan Bleu/RAC, Ms. Elen Lemaitre-Curri, noted that Plan Bleu/RAC is not a public institution and that this should be taken into account in the relevant provisions. Further considerations were also provided by other participants and it was agreed to send any comments/inputs by the beginning of February to the Coordinating Unit, so that the note is revised and sent to the Bureau for consideration and guidance.

11. The meeting was also reminded that a revised version of the draft Joint Cooperation Strategy should be prepared to reflect the comments received through the consultations with the Thematic Focal Points for SPA/BD and during the 87<sup>th</sup> Bureau Meeting. Finally, in relation to the process of development and subscription of MOUs and other legal instruments, it was agreed that the Coordinating Unit will send a short Memo to the MAP Components in February 2019.

	Action Item	Responsibility	Deadline
1.	Inputs from INFO/RAC on needs for strengthening RAC structures and personnel contact details	INFO/RAC	Early 2019-when available
2.	Consolidated information on strengthening RAC structures	CU	February 2019
3.	MAP Components to share draft Planning and Priorities Tables with the Coordinating Unit	MAP Components	End of January 2019
4.	MAP Components to share relevant parts of finalized Planning and Priorities Tables with respective Thematic Focal Points	MAP Components	February 2019
5.	Short concept note on Data Policy to be prepared and shared with the CU (and then with the ECP)	INFO/RAC	18 January 2019
6.	Letter on Data Policy to be sent to the MAP Focal Points	CU	Early February 2019
7.	Draft document on complementarities and synergies among databases within the MAP system	INFO/RAC	End of February 2019
8.	Comments to the CU on the text of minimum common provisions for HCAs of RACs	MAP Components	8 February 2019
9.	Revised version of the draft Joint Cooperation Strategy, to reflect the comments received through the consultations with the Thematic Focal Points for SPA/BD and during the 87 <sup>th</sup> Bureau Meeting	SPA/RAC	End of January 2019
10.	Memo from Coordinator on the process of development and subscription of MOUs and other legal instruments	CU	February 2019

#### IV. Agenda item 4: Preparation of the 2020-2021 UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and budget

12. The Deputy Coordinator introduced this agenda item and the document on the “Guiding elements for the preparation of 2020-2021 UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget”. She noted that the discussions in the meeting aim to enable the preparation of the narrative part and of the table with the PoW Indicators and Targets per biennium, as well as the finalization of the tables of the programme of work. She also referred to the budget, noting that there will be very limited time for discussion in this meeting and that, if the Contracting Parties decide on a budget increase this would greatly facilitate the work and execution of activities.

13. In the discussion that followed, each MAP Component, including the Coordinating Unit, presented its priorities, planned activities and main deliverables for each of the seven themes of the Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021 (MTS), as sent to the Coordinating Unit before the meeting. The general feeling of the meeting was that the MTS will be delivered in its entirety through the planned activities, while in some cases resources are lacking for the full implementation. Following the presentations and the ensued discussion and detailed comments made on each proposed PoW the following points were agreed:

- All MAP Components to start as soon as possible upgrading the tabular template (with outputs and their numbers put horizontally) and the proposed PoW (activities, deliverables, partners, lead component, other MAP component) based on discussions held during the ECP meeting. In doing so, MAP Components should try (a) to align proposed activities to the extent possible with the PoW activities of the current biennium and, in case of new activities, they should be added after the existing activities, (b) to aggregate activities to the extent possible and provide detailed deliverables, and (c) to link all inputs with the existing work, building on what is achieved during the first two biennia of the MTS;
- The Coordinating Unit (Deputy Coordinator) to send additional substantive comments to each MAP Component, by 16 January COB at the latest, on the proposed deliverables and suggestions for aggregations, etc.;
- All MAP components to send to the Coordinating Unit by 26 January their final versions of the PoW after incorporating all necessary changes;
- The Coordinating Unit (Deputy Coordinator) to send to all MAP Components some common elements for the narrative part of the PoW by 28 January at the latest, and to send to all MAP Components comments on the final versions of the PoW by 30 January;
- All MAP Components to send out the English version of the PoW and the narrative part during the first week of February (and the French version the week after, if not possible to send both at the same time) with a 10 days deadline, and to send to the Coordinating Unit their final versions of the PoW by 28 February at the latest.
- In parallel the Coordinating Unit to send a letter, signed by the Coordinator, to the MAP Focal Points, sharing the Guidance Paper and launching the consultation process, at the end of January.

	Action Item	Responsibility	Deadline
11.	Preparation of PoW as per (a) the document on the guiding elements for the preparation of 2020-2021 UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget, and (b) the agreed points of paragraph 13 above	Coordinating Unit / all MAP Components	As per agreed timeline

#### V. Agenda item 5: Roadmap for the preparation of the main MAP meetings of 2019:

##### a) 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (main agenda items, main theme and format)

14. The meeting discussed briefly the preparations of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD - Budva, Montenegro, 11-13 June 2019). It was noted that the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee (Athens, Greece, 23-24 January 2019)

will provide the opportunity for a discussion on the provisional agenda and main deliverables of the MCSD meeting.

15. During the discussion, the Director of Plan Bleu/RAC referred to the possibility of working groups to be created under the MCSD to address 2-3 specific issues, with leading roles taken by MCSD members. The Coordinator noted the importance of identifying and contacting key resource persons/speakers in a timely manner. On the possible main themes of the MCSD meeting, proposals included to link it to the theme of the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference (Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2018), to the theme “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production” of UNEA-4 (Nairobi, Kenya, 11-15 March 2019), and/or to give a specific role to local authorities, e.g. through a panel of mayors.

**b) Meetings of the Focal Points of the MAP Components and of MAP (main agenda items and expected outcome)**

16. The meeting discussed briefly the preparations for the RAC/Thematic Focal Points meetings and the MAP Focal Points meeting. Special emphasis was given to the upcoming SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting, following the 87<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting conclusions. The Director of SPA/RAC, Mr. Khalil Attia, introduced the draft provisional agenda of the meeting and the relevant concept note. It was noted that all MAP Components should send the necessary inputs to SPA/RAC, that all documents submitted to the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting by other MAP Components should be formatted as per the format used by SPA/RAC and that documents should be limited to the absolutely necessary. The Coordinator stressed that the UNEP specification of maximum 16 pages (plus annexes) per document should be met, and that documents should be distributed one month before the meeting at the latest.

17. During the discussions it was suggested that the agenda items of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting should better be distributed in a way that would allow other MAP Components to attend only a part of the meeting and not its whole duration. On the meeting attendance, the possibility was discussed to fund the attendance of a second participant per Contracting Party from savings coming from other activities, in accordance with the relevant Bureau conclusions.

**c) COP 21 (list of potential decisions, theme and format of the ministerial session)**

18. The Coordinator referred to the preparations for COP 21 noting the relevant conclusions of the 87<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting and highlighting the need to timely decide on the structure and process of the COP, to identify and contact resource persons/speakers, to decide on side events, and to involve more actively the civil society. He also stressed that it is essential at COP 21 to develop the main lines of the new MTS. He added that the proposals submitted by MAP Components will be taken into account in the preparation of the relevant documents for the 88<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting (Rome, Italy, 21-22 May 2019).

	Action Item	Responsibility	Deadline
12.	2-3 proposals on possible main session/s of the MCSD meeting	Plan Bleu/RAC	January 2019
13.	All MAP Components to share the draft provisional agenda of their Focal Points meeting with the Coordinating Unit	All MAP Components	15 February 2019
14.	All MAP Components to provide to SPA/RAC 2-3 paragraphs on activities undertaken in the framework of the PoW that contribute to the MTS theme on Biodiversity and Ecosystems	All MAP Components	End of March 2019
15.	SPA/RAC to send document template to all MAP Components	SPA/RAC	15 February 2019

16.	All MAP Components to provide to SPA/RAC documents for the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting	All MAP Components	15 April 2019
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**VI. Agenda item 6: Update on the preparation of key documents for 2019:**

**a) 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report**

19. The Director of Plan Bleu/RAC referred to the preparations of the 2019 SoED report. She noted that the first meeting of the Steering Committee took place through teleconference on 17 October 2018, the second meeting is to take place on 11 January 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland, back to back with the 37<sup>th</sup> ECP meeting, and the third meeting is planned for the end of March 2019. She also noted that half of the contributions have been received from respective authors. The first draft of the 2019 SoED report is expected in April 2019, while the Summary for Decision-Makers and Chapter 9 of the report are proposed to be annexed to the relevant COP 21 decision.

**b) Pollution Reduction/Prevention Regional Plans**

20. The preparation of six Pollution Reduction/Prevention Regional Plans was briefly discussed, especially in relation to possible contributions from MAP Components, such as a contribution from SPA/RAC on aquaculture. It was also noted that a relevant COP decision should focus on the vision, main elements and mandate for the preparation of the regional plans.

**c) Operational Communication Strategy**

21. The Programme Officer responsible for governance issues, Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis, introduced this issue and noted that a first draft of the strategy has been prepared through a very close collaboration between the Coordinating Unit and INFO/RAC. The director of INFO/RAC noted that the draft strategy was submitted to the Communication Task Force. She added that MAP Components can provide further comments on this first draft by the set deadline of 8 February 2019, to be incorporated in the draft strategy which will be submitted to the INFO/RAC Focal Points meeting (Rome, Italy, 16-17 April 2019).

22. The Coordinator noted that the implementation of the strategy will be included in the Programme of Work and Budget under the relevant output 1.6.1 of the Governance MTS theme. It was also noted that the communication activities will be coordinated in the MAP system through the Communication Task Force.

	Action Item	Responsibility	Deadline
17.	Provide comments on the draft Operational Communication Strategy	All MAP Components	8 February 2019

**VII. Agenda item 7: Date and Venue of the 38<sup>th</sup> ECP meeting**

The next ECP meeting is planned to be held in Marseilles, France, possibly in the last week of March 2019.

**VIII. Agenda item 8: Any Other Matters**

**a) Cooperation with MAVA Foundation**

23. A meeting between the ECP members and Ms. Paule Gros, Programme Director for the Mediterranean Basin of the MAVA Foundation took place at the end of the ECP meeting. Initially a presentation of the work of the MAVA Foundation was made by Ms. Gros, who noted that the MAVA Foundation is active in the Mediterranean for approximately 20 years, focusing on conservation and biodiversity, that it is the biggest supporter of the civil society and that it will be changing focus at the end of 2022. Therefore, ongoing and planned activities are to end by that year, while further work is to take place only through partnerships/partners. Then, a tour-de-table was conducted during which each

participant had the opportunity to describe the main aspects of work of the MAP Component he/she represented, as per the PoW, and the existing or possible concrete areas and ways of cooperation with the MAVA Foundation.

24. Possible areas of collaboration, further to those that already exist, that were identified during the meeting included the support of MAVA Foundation to articulate and increase the visibility of the work of MAP, the issue of cultural landscape, the possible collaboration in the framework of GEF funded projects, and the scaling up of specific activities from pilot to regional scale. The possibility of the MAVA Foundation to apply for MCSD Member and MAP Partner was also discussed.

**b) Cooperation with Black Sea Commission**

25. The Deputy Coordinator referred to the very positive discussions between UNEP/MAP and the Black Sea Commission, to be followed-up through further bilateral contacts in February/March 2019. The main MAP Components involved in this process beyond the Coordinating Unit and MED POL are SPA/RAC and PAP/RAC. It was noted that the joint workplan also included activities under other MAP components mandate.

**c) Policy for publications and use of logo**

26. During this agenda item it was noted that the logo of MAP should be used together with the logo of the RACs, and that the UNEP publishing policy and guidelines should be considered for the MAP-Barcelona Convention system publications. The Coordinator noted that this issue will be further looked into, including through consultations with the Headquarters, and further advice will follow from the Coordinating Unit. He also took this opportunity to alert the participants on the stricter policy of UNEP Headquarters on travel and the relevant guidelines that were recently distributed, which *inter alia* set a strict deadline of 21 days for notification of travel.

	Action Item	Responsibility	Deadline
18.	Further explore policy for publications and use of logo, including through consultations with the Headquarters	Coordinating Unit (information / communication and governance)	February/March 2019

27. The meeting was closed by the Coordinator at 18:45 on 10 January 2019.



**Annex I**

**List of participants**

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**Annex II**  
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## Agenda

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b) Meetings of the Focal Points of the MAP Components and of MAP (main agenda items and expected outcome)  
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b) Cooperation with Black Sea Commission  
c) Policy for publications and use of logo