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**Agenda Item 4: Progress and next steps for MSSD implementation**

**Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD 2016-2025): Implementation and Monitoring Plan**

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## **Introduction**

1. The main purpose of this document is to present in a concise form, focused on the Targets and Flagship Initiatives, the actions stemming from the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD 2016-2025) and to propose the main elements of the work plan for the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025. The Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) is invited to review and discuss the work plan (as contained in Table 3 including the owners/actors and timeline, and taking into consideration the necessary resources), so that it can be further elaborated and finalized in view of the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD.

## **Context and Background**

2. The MSSD 2016-2025 was prepared and endorsed by the MCSD through a highly inclusive process. It was adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) at their 19<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting (COP19, Athens, Greece, February 2016), as a strategic guiding document for all stakeholders and partners to translate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the regional, sub-regional and national levels (Decision IG.22/2).

3. This plan provides a framework to promote and facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025. It is based on Chapter 3 of the Strategy, which highlights that the implementation is a collective process: while facilitated by the MAP system, it is the participation and active role of all stakeholders, *in primis* national governments, which will play a decisive role in its delivery.

4. The MSSD 2016-2025 also highlights the important role of the MAP system, which includes the MCSD and its Steering Committee, and the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat including all its Components, in providing leadership and guidance with respect to implementing the Strategy.

5. Recent activities related to the implementation of the Strategy were presented in the *Progress report by the Secretariat on the activities carried out for the period March-August 2016* (Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.83/3) submitted to the 83<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Tirana, Albania, 25-26 October 2016) and are also presented in the *Progress Report* submitted to the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee (Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.428/3).

6. The Plan described in this document will be possible only with the adequate commitment, awareness-raising and advocacy by the parties listed above, including to mobilize the necessary political will (for example through the Barcelona Convention governance structure), the visibility and the resources that are pre-conditions for its success. Furthermore, it is necessary for all Members of the MCSD to ensure that its dissemination and application is as wide as possible, with the support of the Secretariat.

7. The MSSD 2016-2025 mentions the following as essential tools for the implementation of the Strategy:

- a. The Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management for the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol);
- b. The Roadmap for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean (EcAp Roadmap);
- c. The Strategic Action Programme for the conservation of Biological diversity in the Mediterranean region (SAP BIO);
- d. The Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean (SCP AP);

- e. The Strategic Action Programme of regional and national activities to address land-based pollution;
- f. The Marine Litter Regional Plan;
- g. The Offshore Action Plan;
- h. The Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas (RCCAF);
- i. The action programmes of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM);
- j. The Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD).

8. In addition to those essential tools for implementation, the MSSD 2016-2025 indicates that the MAP system will provide support to the Contracting Parties for the implementation of the Strategy. This support may include technical guidance, the coordination of implementation actions and monitoring processes, as well as a platform for the exchange of relevant information, experience and synergies developed at regional or sub-regional level.

9. This document begins by outlining the objectives of the MSSD monitoring and implementation process, then provides a list of actions related to these objectives. It continues by outlining a list of priority areas for implementation, and concludes with a work plan.

10. The actions listed below are called for by the MSSD 2016-2025. It is expected that the MCSD Steering Committee will review this set of actions and provide comments, including suggestions on how to implement them.

### **Objectives**

11. The objectives of the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation and monitoring process are:
  - a. to raise awareness amongst key stakeholders and implementers about the Strategy;
  - b. to identify the optimal mechanisms for the participation of national institutional frameworks responsible for sustainable development in the implementation of the Strategy's actions at the national level;
  - c. to collect baseline and updated data on monitoring indicators related to all the MSSD 2016-2025 actions, formulating a monitoring database, as well as a Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard with a set of populated indicators;
  - d. to explore a variety of tools and processes that might be used to implement the Strategy;
  - e. to report on progress on the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation and monitoring to the MCSD and the Contracting Parties every two years, establishing synergies with other existing sustainable development mechanisms and monitoring systems at regional and global level; and,
  - f. to ensure successful implementation of the Strategy and of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

### **Actions for the MSSD 2016-2025 Implementation and Monitoring (based on Chapter 3 of the Strategy):**

12. Structures for implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025:
  - a. Report on and encourage, when possible by targeted trainings and capacity development activities, the setting up of national sustainable development commissions, councils, fora, and networks as appropriate (in line with Action 7.1.1 of the MSSD 2016-2025);
  - b. Strengthen resources for Sustainable Development at the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat (in line with Action 7.1.2);

- c. Ensure wider participation with stronger involvement of Main Groups of Stakeholders (MGS), which is central in the COP19 Decision IG.22/17 on the MCSD Reform (in line with Action 7.1.3);
  - d. Carry out activities to raise awareness on the MSSD 2016-2025 with key stakeholders to improve visibility, including within the United Nations system (in line with Action 7.1.4); and,
  - e. Promote exchange of good practices and networking by the MCSD and, in case funding available, create specific mechanism for exchange of best practices between the Contracting Parties and MGS (in line with Action 7.1.5).
13. The on-going test of the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (SIMPEER), as decided in COP19 (Decision IG.22/17 – Annex II) is fully in line with points a) and e) above. The SIMPEER aims at engaging a dialogue between volunteer Mediterranean countries, on equal participation, for a mutual improvement and learning process on National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs). The SIMPEER seeks to establish the exchange of experiences, policies and good practices on implementing sustainable development at national level. The SIMPEER represents an important incentive to enable NSSDs review in line with the MSSD 2016-2025 and as a contribution to the global 2030 Agenda and its SDGs specifications.
14. Regional process for monitoring and implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025:
- a. Allocate funding within MAP system for MSSD 2016-2025 monitoring and implementation (in line with Action 7.2.1);
  - b. Prepare an implementation plan of the Strategy (in line with Action 7.2.2);
  - c. Prepare guidelines for countries to adapt the Strategy to national contexts and undertake capacity-building measures (in line with Action 7.2.3);
  - d. Undertake a participatory midterm evaluation of the Strategy based on the first 5 years of data (in line with Action 7.2.4); and,
  - e. Review the MSSD 2016-2025 with a view to formulate a new MSSD 2026-2035 (in line with Action 7.2.5).
15. It should be noted that point a) above is dealt with the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget, point b) is dealt with the present document, and point c) with the SIMPEER process.
16. Strengthening capacity for financing the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD 2016-2025:
- a. Prepare a funding strategy, to be followed up by donor outreach, and a project portfolio associated with possible funding sources (in line with Action 7.3.1);
  - b. Organize capacity-building workshops for Contracting Parties and stakeholders on fundraising (in line with Action 7.3.2);
  - c. Set up a Mediterranean Investment Facility for sustainable development (in line with Action 7.3.3); and,
  - d. Undertake actions to encourage private sector to engage with civil society and foster greater corporate social responsibility (in line with Action 7.3.4), which is similar to Action 21 under the SCP Action Plan, Appendix 1 (Roadmap for Implementation).
17. It should be noted that point a) above will be covered in the overall updated Resource Mobilization Strategy of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention (under preparation, for adoption at COP 20).
18. Monitoring the MSSD 2016-2025:
- a. Ensure the provision of regular biannual support from the Contracting Parties and stakeholders to the Secretariat in providing data for monitoring the Strategy (in line with Action 7.4.1);
  - b. Use the meetings of the MCSD to monitor the implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025, facilitated through break out groups (in line with Action 7.4.2);

- c. Link the Strategy's monitoring systems with the wider UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention data and information systems (in line with Action 7.4.3); and,
- d. Set up a dashboard of sustainability indicators (in line with Action 7.4.4).

19. It should be noted that point d) – and partly point c) – above are dealt with the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Dashboard, developed by the Secretariat through its Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre. Point b) will be initially implemented at the forthcoming 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MCSDD.

20. Overall, the implementation of the Strategy will be also facilitated through the promotion of awareness and education for sustainable development. In this respect, the Action Plan of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (a Strategy endorsed by the UfM Ministers of Environment and Climate Change in Athens, May 2014) adopted by the “Ministerial Conference on the Action Plan for Education for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean” (Nicosia, Cyprus, 8-9 December 2016) is directly related to the MSSD 2016-2025.

### **Priority Areas for Implementation**

21. The MSSD 2016-2025 contains two types of priority actions: those related to Targets and those related to the Flagship Initiatives, both of which should be accorded specific attention in the implementation process.

22. The list of the MSSD 2016-2025 Targets is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: MSSD 2016-2025 Targets**

<b>MSSD 2016-2025 Objective</b>	<b>MSSD 2016-2025 Action</b>	<b>Target</b>
1. Ensuring sustainable development in marine and coastal areas	1.1.1. Strengthen the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and other regional policy instruments, through enhanced prioritization and results-based management through ministries with environmental and budget portfolios and implementing line agencies.	By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on best available scientific information (14.5) <sup>1</sup>
	1.2.5. Safeguard the Mediterranean fisheries by ensuring that all fish stocks are being fished sustainably and effectively.	By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics (14.4)
2. Promoting resource management, food production and food security through sustainable forms of rural development	2.1.1. Ensure that legal measures are in place to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services in line with international and regional commitments.	Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation and fragmentation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species, and take further action as needed by 2030 (15.5)
3. Planning and managing sustainable Mediterranean cities	3.2.1. Strengthen urban governance by establishing communication and participatory mechanisms to enhance urban stakeholders' involvement and engagement in decision-making.	By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries (11.3)

<sup>1</sup> The bracketed numbers refer to the targets in the final draft of the outcome document for the United Nations Summit in September 2015, which adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

MSSD 2016-2025 Objective	MSSD 2016-2025 Action	Target
	3.4.1. Implement innovative, integrated and sustainable waste management solutions, in line with the waste hierarchy: prevention, reduction, reuse, sorting, recycling, recovery, and disposal.	By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse (12.5)
5. Transition towards a green and blue economy	5.6.5. Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels.	By 2025, the majority of Mediterranean countries are committed to green or sustainable public procurement programmes
6. Improving governance in support of sustainable development	6.2.3. 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.	By 2025, two-thirds of Mediterranean countries have acceded to the Aarhus Convention

23. The list of the MSSD 2016-2025 Flagship Initiatives is provided in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: MSSD 2016-2025 Flagship Initiatives**

No	Flagship Initiative
1.1.10.	Support the Trust Fund for Mediterranean marine protected areas.
2.3.5.	Promote the “Green list” (IUCN World Parks Congress) in riparian states to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of parks managing bodies created.
3.1.9.	Promote the “Environment Friendly City” Award recommended by COP18 (Istanbul Declaration, December 2013) and approved by COP19 (Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award).
3.2.5.	Create a sustainable urban toolbox for the Mediterranean, with a view to planning cities that will work for everyone, in order to make them inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
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.
4.1.9.	Establish a regional science-policy interface mechanism, including the social and behavioural sciences, endorsed by all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with a view to preparing consolidated regional scientific assessments and guidance on climate change trends, impacts and adaptation and mitigation options.
5.4.5.	Create and promote a Mediterranean business award for environmental innovation.
5.6.5.	Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels.
6.2.3.	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.
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.
6.5.5.	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.

### **Work Plan for the MSSD 2016-2025 Implementation and Monitoring**

24. The main elements of the work plan for the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation and monitoring are provided in Table 3 below. The implementation is on-going for several actions (see also Progress Report, Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.428/3). A more detailed work plan with key dates for the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation and monitoring process, and with further information on responsible actors and partners for the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation, will be developed at the next stage, based on the actions presented in this document and following the suggestions by the MCSD Steering Committee. A more detailed work plan could also consider indicative values of the necessary resources for the implementation of the priority actions.



