

Draft decision

on the Action Plan to implement the Protocol of the Barcelona Convention concerning the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil

The 17th Meeting of the Contracting Parties

Having regard to Resolution I of the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries on the Protocol concerning the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil, hereinafter referred to as Offshore Protocol, that adopted the Offshore Protocol in Madrid, Spain in 1994,

Acknowledging the major importance of the entry into force of the Offshore Protocol on 23 March 2011 following ratification by 6 Contracting Parties (Albania, Cyprus, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia),

Recognizing the importance of having the Offshore Protocol ratified by all Contracting Parties with a view to establishing effective and environmentally sound regional and national regimes for the management of offshore activities so as to prevent, prepare for and respond to marine pollution accidents,

Desirous of ensuring that the Protocol shall begin to produce beneficial effects at the earliest possible moment and facilitating its implementation at different levels through coordinated actions with the support of the Coordinating Unit and REMPEC,

Noting the EU Communication in autumn 2010 with regard to offshore activities,

Conscious that significant accidents caused by Offshore activities could have long term adverse consequences for the fragile ecosystems and biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea due to its enclosed nature and special hydrodynamics as well as negative consequences on the economies of the Mediterranean Countries especially for tourism and fisheries,

1. **Urges** all the Contracting Parties who have not yet done so to ratify the Offshore Protocol as early as possible with the view to having the Protocol entering into force for all the Parties by the 18th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties;
2. **Invites** the Contracting Parties to ensure that the 18th Contracting Parties' Ordinary Meeting considers the Action Plan on measures and actions necessary for the successful implementation of the Offshore Protocol.
3. **Establish, subject to the availability of resources**, an ad hoc working group composed of experts appointed by the Contracting Parties, as well as representatives of the concerned industries relevant international organizations and other actors to develop the Action Plan, the objective of which shall be to:

- Identify the scope of the work of MAP for a 10 year period, objectives, key activities and major outputs, timeframe and resources needed for its effective implementation;
- address governance related issues with regard to the role of the Coordinating Unit, REMPEC and other MAP components for facilitating the implementation of the Offshore Protocol Action Plan;
- address necessary partnerships with other organizations, industry and other actors to be established for the successful implementation of the Offshore Protocol;

Request the Coordinating Unit to

1. support, in cooperation with REMPEC, the preparation of the Offshore Protocol Action Plan through a participatory process and in close interaction with the concerned actors, UN agencies, EC and in particular with the Offshore industries;
2. undertake an in depth assessment and stock taking analysis of the existing practical measures in place in the Mediterranean countries with regard to the environmental sound management of Offshore activities as a baseline to measure progress towards Protocol implementation in the future;

Requests REMPEC, in accordance with the provisions of the Offshore protocol and Prevention and Emergency protocol (2002) as well as REMPEC mandate, to take into consideration, to the extent possible, offshore oil exploration and production activities when assisting in the revision of national or sub-regional oil pollution contingency plans;

Invites all the Contracting Parties to complete, by the 18th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties, the reporting format on the implementation of the Offshore Protocol and report on the difficulties encountered according to the format adopted by the 15th CP meeting in Almeria in 2008, in order to enable the Secretariat to develop an effective capacity building and assistance programme based on the needs of the Contracting Parties.