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78th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Istanbul, Turkey, 3-4 September 2014

Final Report

**78th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of
the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols**

UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2014

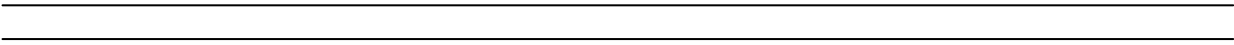


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Introduction

1. At the invitation of the Government of Turkey, the 78th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 3-4 September 2014.

Participation

2. The list of participants is contained in Annex I to this report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

3. The meeting was opened by Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emin Birpinar, President of the Bureau. He welcomed the Bureau members and the other participants. He extended his welcome to Mr. Gaetano Leone, new UNEP/MAP Coordinator, who reported for duty as of 1 June 2014.
4. Bureau members welcomed the Coordinator expressing their wishes of success and their full confidence in a fruitful collaboration. They also voiced their appreciation for the quality and timeliness of the documents submitted to the Bureau in preparation for the meeting.
5. The Coordinator welcomed in turn the Bureau members and thanked Turkey for hosting the meeting. He provided the Bureau with a brief overview of the first three months of his tenure at the Secretariat, highlighting his aspirations, goals and findings, as well as the challenges in front of the MAP system for the period leading to COP 19.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Agenda and organization of work

6. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the provisional agenda as contained in document UNEP/BUR/78/2 (Annex II)

Agenda item 3: Progress Report by the Secretariat on activities carried out during the period January – June 2014

7. The Coordinator presented the document “Progress Report by the Secretariat on activities carried out during the period January to June 2014” (UNEP/BUR/78/3) and “Progress of the Implementation of COP 18 Decisions” (UNEP/BUR/78/6). The Coordinator expressed some concern at the ambitious programme of the current biennium and the limited time and resources available at this stage, and called for the support and advice of the Bureau.
8. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:
 - i. acknowledge the work done by the Secretariat and MAP components during the first quarter of the 2014-2015 biennium;
 - ii. welcome the submission of the color-coded overview of progress in the implementation of COP decisions contained in document UNEP/BUR/78/6 and request the Secretariat to make such report part of the regular Bureau documentation;

- iii. request the Secretariat, when reporting on progress, to highlight the main implementing challenges and also pending activities, if any, and actions that have been taken to address them;
- iv. ask the Secretariat to start the implementation of Decision 21/16 as soon as possible with the view of completing it by COP 19, with the full involvement of all relevant MAP components, building on their strength, capacity and mandate.

Agenda item 4: Update on Financial Situation

9. The Coordinator presented to the Bureau members for their comments and recommendations the financial update contained in the "Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues" (UNEP/BUR/78/5) including:

- Status of contributions as of 31 July 2014
- Status of funds committed
- Interim Report with the balance between income and expenditure
- Letters requesting payments or reminders

10. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:

- i. welcome the efforts of the Secretariat and the improvements in MAP's financial situation and express appreciation to the Contracting Parties that paid their annual contribution in the first half of 2014;
- ii. note with concern the negative impact that delays in the payment of contributions may have on the implementation of MAP's Programme of Work and request the Contracting Parties to pay their 2014 annual contributions and arrears as soon as possible and to strictly adhere to the agreed timeframe for the payment of contributions of the subsequent years;
- iii. note that, unless the contributions are paid, there is a risk of postponing the recruitment of posts that were adopted at COP 18;
- iv. request the Secretariat to continue its efforts to ensure the full payment of contributions, including through a letter addressed to the relevant Parties to be co-signed by the President of the Bureau and the Executive Director of UNEP;
- v. encourage the Secretariat to continue taking a precautionary approach and to make the best use of existing human resources in order to minimize the engagement of consultants, and to continue reporting to the Bureau on the status of consultancies;
- vi. acknowledge the implications of the Umoja system for the financial management of UNEP/MAP, take note that, within the financial rules and regulations and Umoja procedures, some operational expenses may be temporarily charged to MTF within the given year on cost-neutral basis until the yearly Host Country contribution is realized, and request the Secretariat to report on this matter when such charges may have occurred.

Agenda item 5: Specific Issues

11. The Coordinator presented the “Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues” (UNEP/BUR/78/4).

5.1. Governance and Organizational Matters

12. With reference to the operational paragraphs of the Governance Decision IG.21/13 and the Decision on MAP Programme of Work and Budget for the 2014-2015 biennium (Decision IG.21/17), adopted by COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013), the Coordinator presented an update on issues regarding the status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Related Protocols; Host Country Agreements with countries hosting MAP Regional Activity Centers; LBS Protocol National Action Plans update; and a proposal on evaluation method on measures to enhance the functioning of the Secretariat and MAP Components.

13. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:

Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

- i. take note of the progress achieved during this period on governance and legal priorities;
- ii. request the Secretariat to continue following closely with the Contracting Parties that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the amended Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and to make particular efforts to ensure the entry into force of the revised Dumping Protocol by COP 19;
- iii. remind all Contracting Parties to officially submit their reports on measures taken to implement the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as soon as possible in compliance with the obligations of Article 26 of the Convention, and for the review by the Compliance Committee;
- iv. encourage the Contracting Parties that have ratified or signed the ICZM Protocol to submit on a voluntary basis a report on its implementation;
- v. request the Secretariat to continue close follow-up with concerned governments and UNEP Headquarters to finalize as soon as possible the Host Country Agreements related to RACs, as per the Decision IG.21/13.

LBS Protocol National Action Plans update

- i. encourage the Contracting Parties to make their utmost efforts to update their National Action Plans (NAPs) as per the agreed Guidelines in a timely and participatory manner, so as to enable COP 19 to endorse the updated NAPs, and urge their efficient implementation in partnership with major actors including the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the H2020 Initiative;
- ii. encourage the Contracting Parties to use the NAP update process as a crucial opportunity within the UNEP/MAP system to develop ECAP-based pollution prevention and control programmes of measures, and to streamline it within on-going processes of policy development and/or implementation at MAP and other relevant frameworks (EU MSFD, H2020);

- iii. request the Secretariat to continue its active participation in the H2020 initiative process and governance with the view to support the NAP update process and related capacity building activities.

Proposal on evaluation method on measures to enhance the functioning of the Secretariat and MAP Components

- i. take note of the proposal of the Secretariat regarding the evaluation method on measures to enhance the functioning of the Secretariat and MAP Components; in addition ask the Secretariat to consider developing such evaluation method on the basis of success indicators and cost analyses, including delivery rates of targets as set in the Programme of Work. The Secretariat will present a detailed proposal to the 79th meeting of the Bureau;
- ii. request the Secretariat to check other Regional Seas Programmes' RACs' evaluation methods as reference.

5.2. Development of the 2016-2021 Midterm Strategy: Update

14. With reference to the operational paragraphs of the Decision on MAP Programme of Work and Budget for the 2014-2015 biennium (Decision IG.21/17), adopted by COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013), the Coordinator updated Bureau members on the external evaluation process of the Five-Year Strategic Programme of Work (2010-2014, with one year extension to 2015) and the roadmap of the development of the Mid-Term Strategy for the period 2016-2021. He emphasized the need for integration of the development process of major strategic documents mandated by COP 18, which is a priority for the Secretariat.

15. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:

- i. endorse the revised process of external evaluation and development of the Mid-term Strategy, underlining the importance of synchronization of the parallel but complementary processes of: follow-up of Decision 21/16, review of the MSSD, development of the SCP Regional Action Plan, EcAp measures, regional framework on climate change adaptation, and other relevant strategies and action plans and projects;
- ii. request the Secretariat to make use of existing evaluations and audits within the MAP system as relevant references;
- iii. request the Coordinating Unit to lead these processes in close cooperation with and involvement of MAP Components to ensure timely and successful delivery before COP 19.

5.3. Environment Friendly Cities Award

16. The Coordinator recalled the relevant text of the Istanbul Declaration adopted by COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013), and summarized the action taken by the Secretariat on this issue in order to define nomination and selection principles and criteria for the award.

17. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:

- i. request the Secretariat to develop jointly with RACs, in particular with Plan Bleu, SCP/RAC and PAP/RAC, possible criteria and methodology for such award, reflecting also the Protocols of the Barcelona Convention;
- ii. highlight the fact that the award should act as an incentive that will promote Mediterranean coastal cities for better environmental standards and be an added value to the region, as well as raise awareness and bring visibility to its recipients;
- iii. request the Secretariat to liaise with UN-Habitat, UfM Secretariat and other organizations, to review their similar initiatives in order to set up a distinct award;
- iv. recommend to the Secretariat to make use of the Thematic Working Group on “sustainable cities” and its experts in the context of the MSSD review as an opportunity to discuss and agree on the Award criteria;
- v. the Government of Turkey will host a meeting to finalize the draft award criteria proposal prepared by the Secretariat after necessary consultations before its submission to COP 19.

5.4. Applications for status as MAP Partners

18. With reference to the operational paragraphs of the Decision on Cooperation Agreements (Decision IG.21/14), adopted by COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013), the Coordinator updated Bureau members on the status of MAP Partners and brought to their attention extension and new partnership proposals.

19. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:

- i. endorse the requests of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) MEDASSET (in Greece) and TURMEPA (in Turkey) and ask the Secretariat to include them in the list of MAP Partners that will be submitted to COP 19 for adoption;
- ii. request the Secretariat to continue its efforts to ensure the inclusion of Southern and Eastern Mediterranean NGOs in the MAP Partners List and request relevant individual Parties to take all efforts to ensure wider participation of stakeholders in the work of the MAP system.

5.5. Cooperation Agreements

20. With reference to the operational paragraphs of the Decision on Cooperation Agreements (Decision IG.21/14), adopted by COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013), the UNEP/MAP Coordinator presented an overview of recent activities for the development of cooperation with International and Regional Organizations and bilateral cooperation agencies, and an update on the operationalization of current agreements. He referred in particular to the draft Memorandum of Understanding between UNEP/MAP and the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS), as well as the cooperation with the Secretariats of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and of the Black Sea Commission respectively.

21. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:

- i. express support to the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ACCOBAMS, with a view to proceed with completing consultations with, and clearance by UNEP Headquarters. The MoU could then be submitted to COP 19;

- ii. welcome the progress made on the cooperation agreements between the UNEP/MAP and CBD Secretariats;
- iii. ask the Secretariat to continue working on possible cooperation with OSPAR and HELCOM;
- iv. welcome the progress made on the cooperation between the UNEP/MAP and Bucharest Convention Secretariats and support the preparation of a MoU between these two conventions for submission to COP 19.

5.6. Information and Communications Activities– 40th Anniversary of Mediterranean Action Plan

22. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator presented an update on communication and outreach activities and initiated the discussion on possible activities for the observance of the 40th Anniversary of the Mediterranean Action Plan in 2015.

23. After discussions, the Bureau agreed to:

- i. express support and share the views that the 40th anniversary of MAP is an opportunity to showcase results of major strategic processes (MSSD review, Decision 21/16, SCP Action Plan and others) and enhance the visibility of MAP, build new partnerships and mobilize resources;
- ii. encourage parties and partners to host national events, as appropriate, and provide full support to the observance of this important anniversary;
- iii. highlight the importance of Coast Day as an excellent public awareness tool, which needs to be maintained and reinforced;
- iv. request the Secretariat to mobilize INFO/RAC to actively take part in the communications and outreach activities regarding the 40th anniversary of MAP, as relevant to its mandate;
- v. request the Secretariat to strengthen its communication means.

Agenda item 6: Conclusions and recommendations

24. The Bureau discussed and adopted the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting as listed above.

Agenda item 7. Date and Venue of 79th Meeting of the Bureau

25. The 79th Meeting of the Bureau will be organized in Turkey in late January 2015. It was accepted that the financial report will be submitted by the Secretariat to the Bureau only two weeks prior to the meeting in order to ensure the inclusion of data from end-of-year financial reports. The rest of the documents will be distributed as per the Terms of Reference of the Bureau.

Agenda item 8: Any Other Matters

26. There were no other issues for consideration by the meeting.

Agenda item 9: Closure of the Meeting

27. The meeting was closed by the President at 17:00 on 4 September 2014.

Annex I
List of Participants

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**Annex II
Agenda**

AGENDA

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