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23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the  
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment  
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Portorož, Slovenia, 5-8 December 2023

**Agenda Item 3: Thematic Decisions**  
**Agenda Item 5: Ministerial Session**

**Reports of the 92<sup>nd</sup>, 93<sup>rd</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup> Meetings 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**

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92<sup>nd</sup> 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, 24-25 March 2022

**Report: Conclusions and Recommendations**

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UNEP/MAP  
Athens, 2022

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## **Introduction**

1. At the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Turkey and in consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 92<sup>nd</sup> 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 (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 24-25 March 2022.

## **Participation**

2. The meeting was attended by the President of the Bureau, Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar, accompanied by advisors; the Vice-Presidents: Dr. Ibrahim Alarabi Munir (Libya); Mr. Mitja Bricelj (Slovenia), accompanied by advisors; Ms. Itziar Martin Partida (Spain); Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou (Tunisia); and the Rapporteur, Mr. Senad Oprasic (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Ms. Anna Bobo Remijn and Ms. Rosa Antidormi (European Union) attended the meeting virtually, as observers. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator and, Programme Management Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

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

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 (UTC+3) on Thursday, 24 March 2022, by Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar, President of the Bureau, who welcomed the Bureau members to the first Bureau meeting of the biennium. He highlighted that this was the first Bureau meeting after the very successful COP 22 and, thus, would pave the way for the implementation of the COP 22 decisions and the Antalya Ministerial Declaration.

4. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, welcomed all participants to the meeting and thanked the President, stressing that this meeting will focus on the implementation of the Programme of Work (PoW) of the current biennium, where the guidance and advice of the Bureau members is of great importance. She also thanked the host country for the special effort made to ensure the online participation of the European Union to attend the meeting as observer, highlighting that, as it is known, the Secretariat cannot hold hybrid meetings if they are organized outside UN premises and UNEP Headquarters.

5. The Bureau member from Slovenia, Mr. Mitja Bricelj, took the floor on the organization of the next COP 23 in Slovenia, noting that this will be hosted by the city of Isola; for this reason, two representatives of the municipality attended the Bureau meeting as his advisors, including the Deputy Mayor.

6. The President of the Bureau welcomed this intervention and highlighted the willingness of his country to assist with the preparation of COP 23, building on the experience of the preparation and holding of COP 22 in Antalya, Turkey. The Bureau member from Slovenia thanked with appreciation the kind offer of Turkey.

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

7. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.92/1. Following a request by a Bureau member, the Bureau agreed to add under agenda item 8 "Any Other Matters" a presentation by Turkey on their intention to submit a proposal on the possible establishment and hosting of a Regional Activity Center (RAC) on Climate Change. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

### **III. Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for December 2021 – February 2022**

8. The Coordinator introduced the documents "*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period December 2021 – February 2022*" (UNEP/MED BUR.92/3) and

made reference to the “*Report of the 46<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*”, presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.92/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively.

9. In her presentation, the Coordinator noted that this is the first such progress report aligned to the Programmes and structure of the new UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), adding that the reporting is done at the level of outcome, in an aggregated manner, and that it is process-oriented. She also mentioned that the Secretariat is looking in ways to improve the reporting format, and to this end any guidance or advice by the Bureau members would be very much appreciated. She then went through the main points of the report, outcome by outcome, recommending that the discussions maybe held after each main section. During her presentation, Ms. Hema highlighted that the issue of the MAP Data Policy will be included in the provisional agenda of the next Bureau meeting, since this is a matter needing further discussion by the Bureau, and that an updated Resource Mobilization Strategy will be prepared by the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components during this biennium, based on the existing one.

10. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat on the Progress Report and on the progress made in the short period since COP 22 on the implementation of the PoW, noting that the future seems very promising. They highlighted the key role of the Regional Seas vis-a-vis the new global instrument on plastic pollution, the important work of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components, the importance of the political support expressed through projects for the implementation of the PoW and the implementation of the decision adopted at COP 22 on the MED SOx Emission Control Area (SECA) which is a great success of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and Turkey as the host country and President of the COP 22.

11. One Bureau member, in his role as Chairperson of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), kindly asked the other Bureau members to express their needs and expectations in relation to MCSD, so as to make this body as efficient as possible. He added that MCSD can also assist in covering needs at national and sub-regional level and by using innovative governance approaches.

12. The Bureau member from Turkey, made the following statements:

a) In terms of outcome 1.3 of the Progress Report, the Turkish Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change has submitted comments to the project manager and is currently awaiting the release of the final report of the project;

b) Paragraph 25 (Target 2.1) and Paragraph 80 (Target 5.3) of the Progress Report contain the expression of “pan-European Regional Seas” and Turkey suggested that these expressions should be corrected as “Regional Seas Surrounding Europe”, bringing to the attention of the Bureau a previous occasion where this proposed expression has been used (<https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/figures/regional-ses-surrounding-europe-1>). In addition, he noted that in order to achieve the long-term goal of the project, the expression to improve the management of EBSAs was used. To this end, he reminded to the meeting that EBSAs currently serve the purpose of benefiting from relevant scientific data when deemed necessary, rather than management of those areas. He added that, for this reason, if this project aims to the management of EBSAs, Turkey believes that there should be no maritime jurisdiction disputes, and the condition of cooperation of all relevant coastal states should be ensured in terms of management of the EBSAs and establishment of marine protected areas accordingly. For the reasons explained above, Turkey requested the addition of the phrase of “where there is no ongoing jurisdictional dispute, and in collaboration with all relevant littoral states”. He added that the long-term objective of the project is to protect, preserve and restore the ecological integrity and biological diversity of the regional seas surrounding Europe through the improved management of EBSAs and the establishment of effective MPAs within EBSAs where there is no ongoing jurisdictional dispute, and in collaboration with all relevant littoral states;

c) Regarding paragraph 115, the Bureau member from Turkey noted that when the maps prepared by Plan Bleu/RAC were examined, it was seen that those maps also included the Marmara Sea. He added that, at this point, even though those are part of scientific literature, Marmara Sea is not within

the scope of geographical coverage of the Barcelona Convention. Thereby, he noted that the above-mentioned maps should be rearranged and then published. In this context, Turkey requested the Secretariat to make the necessary arrangements in this regard. Finally, also regarding paragraph 115, Turkey noted with consideration the work that has been done precisely. The Bureau member from Turkey mentioned that, as a matter of fact, the information on the maps should not cause any prejudice on maritime jurisdiction of other parties or States in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. He added that, in this regard, Turkey would like to recall that NATURA2000 sites located beyond national jurisdiction should be determined in collaboration with other relevant coastal States.

13. The President of the Bureau stressed that during UNEA5.2 in Nairobi, in February 2022, many delegations expressed congratulations for the success of COP 22 of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and especially for the adoption of the Decision on the MED SECA. He added that he is proud to Chair the Bureau and be part of the family of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention. He also reiterated the willingness of Turkey to host a RAC on climate change and to assist UNEP/MAP to be a leader on climate change in the region.

14. **Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work done in the period December 2021 – February 2022 as presented by the Secretariat, and its satisfaction for the efforts and results achieved so far through the integrated work of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components despite the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**IV. Agenda Item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**

15. The Coordinator informed the meeting on the progress made, as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.92/4 “*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*”, addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters. She noted the high rate of paid contributions, adding that Tunisia has also paid recently their assessed contribution. She added that the new invoices will include the new scale of assessment issued by the UN. On financial implementation she noted that it had gone up to 93% for 2021 and that for 2022-3 the plan is to go to 97% or even exceed it. She explained that the administrative system, including UE2, has become more demanding. She also referred to the ongoing recruitments in the Coordinating Unit, which include the key post of Deputy Coordinator, noting also the need to increase the capacity of the RACs. Finally, she referred to the Coordinating Unit’s office renovation, noting that hopefully the offices will be renovated by the end of the current year.

16. In the ensuing discussion, the members of the Bureau welcomed the efforts of the Coordinating Unit. They noted that a joint letter by the President of the Bureau and the Coordinator may be a solution for the arrears and expressed their willingness to support this process. The President of the Bureau suggested that the Coordinator and himself could visit countries in arrears to discuss the payments at a political level. The members of the Bureau also expressed their trust to the Secretariat to use the resources in the most effective way during this post-Covid19 era.

17. **Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to share the certified and audited financial statements for the year 2021 when they become available;**

**(b) The Bureau notes with appreciation the contributions received for the years 2020 and 2021 and urges the Contracting Parties which did not pay to do so as soon as possible;**

**(c) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties to adhere to Procedure 4.2.b of the Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures of the Barcelona Convention, which states that contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full;**

**(d) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties in arrears, to pay them as soon as possible, while noting the specific circumstances of each Contracting Party in arrears and to this aim agrees on the proposal to send joint letters or organize joint visit of the President with the**

**Secretariat emphasizing the importance of timely payment of the arrears and support the efforts of the respective Contracting Parties in this respect;**

**(e) The Bureau takes note of the indicated budget consumption for the biennium 2020-2021 and requests the Secretariat to take the necessary measures and make all possible efforts to increase the budget consumption in the current biennium 2022-2023 to 100%;**

**(f) The Bureau takes note of the application of the new adjusted scale of assessments for the years 2022-2023;**

**(g) The Bureau appreciates the efforts by the Secretariat to operationalize the PoW and Budget 2022-2023 into Project Documents and Legal Instruments in a timely manner, noting that information on the financial implementation of the first semester of the PoW and Budget 2022-2023 will be provided at its 93<sup>rd</sup> Meeting;**

**(h) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitments and request the Secretariat and the UNEP Headquarters to speed up the recruitment of the MAP Deputy Coordinator;**

**(i) The Bureau takes note with appreciation of the joint efforts made by the Greek Government and the Coordinating Unit with regards to the refurbishment of the premises and requests the Secretariat to accelerate the process with the support of the Greek Government and update the Bureau on the progress made at its next meeting.**

#### **V. Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues**

18. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.92/5).

19. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

##### **- A. Ratification, Reporting and Compliance**

20. The Coordinator presented the status of ratifications and appealed to the Bureau members, and to all Contracting Parties through the Bureau, to ratify the remaining Protocols of the Convention and especially the Dumping Protocol which misses one ratification to enter into force.

21. Reference was also made to the small number of ratifications of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to prepare an analysis on the possible reasons for non-ratification.

22. The Coordinator provided also an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.25/2 on “Compliance Committee”, including on the submission of national implementation reports. She noted that there is a need to revive the momentum for reporting by Contracting Parties, which has probably been also affected by the Covid-19 situation.

23. The President of the Bureau noted that together with the Coordinator, when visiting Contracting Parties on the issue of arrears, they can also discuss the ratification of Protocols as well as the submission of pending national implementation reports.

##### **24. Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to make efforts for the ratifications of the Protocols. To this aim the Bureau also invites these Contracting Parties to liaise with the Secretariat as appropriate to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments, with particular focus on the Dumping Protocol to ensure its entry into force as soon as possible;**

**(b) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts with the respective Contracting Parties to achieve the full ratification of the Protocols to the Barcelona Convention, noting the particular case of the amendments to the Dumping Protocol which are the only ones not yet entered into force;**

**(c) The Bureau strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013, 2014–2015 (2 Contracting Parties), 2016–2017 (4 Contracting Parties) and/or 2018–2019 (10 Contracting Parties) without further delay, to complete the reporting for these biennia as soon as possible;**

**(d) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to finalize streamlining work on the BCRS and to initiate the process for the timely submission by the Contracting Parties of their national implementation reports for the biennium 2020–2021.**

- **B. COP 22 Key mandates**
  - **Antalya Ministerial Declaration**
  - **2023 MED QSR**
  - **Ecosystem Approach Roadmap Evaluation**
  - **Designation of the Mediterranean Sea as SO<sub>x</sub> Emission Control Area**
  - **Regional Plans under Article 15 of the LBS Protocol**
  - **COP 22 Thematic Regional Strategies' way forward**
  - **MAP Knowledge Management Strategy**
  - **Implementation of National Activities under PoW and Externally Funded Projects**
  - **Potential Impacts of Covid-19**

25. The Coordinator presented the progress in relation to these important processes. On the implementation of the Antalya Ministerial Declaration, she noted that there are links with the Programme of Work and with the COP 22 Decisions. On the 2023 MED QSR, she mentioned the need and efforts to move towards a more data-based report and on the need for Contracting Parties to deliver real-time data. On the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) she noted that there is an ongoing process on the independent evaluation of the EcAp process/policy, that this is linked to the revision of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), as appropriate, and that an EcAp Coordination Group meeting is planned for July 2022. On MED SECA she informed the Bureau members on the process under the IMO, while on Regional Plans under the LBS Protocol she noted that a letter has been sent to all Contracting Parties and that more information will be provided in the next Bureau meeting on the measures of the old regional plans. She added that for the three new Regional Plans the same process will be followed as for the Regional Plans that were adopted in the previous biennium. She also referred to the thematic strategies presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5, noting that at the next Bureau meeting the Secretariat may come with a concrete proposal on how to update/revise the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development. On the MAP Knowledge Management Strategy, she highlighted the links with UNEP's World Environment Situation Room (WESR) and the use of UN/UNEP standards on developing, reporting and sharing data, and noted that links will also be ensured with the Knowledge Management platform under the MedProgramme. On national activities she stressed that it is important to send a clear message to Contracting Parties that the system needs to become more rigid and that the relevant commitments have to be respected.

26. One member of the Bureau stressed the importance of assessing how to be more efficient in implementation and referred to the role of the MCSD in this respect. The representative of the observer underlined the importance of the EcAp process and of the data delivered through this process. On MED SECA she highlighted the importance of continuing to work in a coordinated manner, stressing the importance of the ratification of MARPOL Annex VI and thanked the Coordinating Unit and REMPEC for their efforts in this direction. She added that there is a need for outreach also at the political level, and for the possible creation of a roadmap of ratification where countries would commit on the date of ratification, to ensure an even playing field which is important for international shipping.

27. The Coordinator responded to the last proposal noting that letters have been sent to Regional Coordinators proposing also trilateral meetings (UNEP/MAP, MAP Focal point, Resident Coordinator); these meetings will discuss the need to support the implementation of MED SECA as a priority.



28. The President of the Bureau noted that the Antalya Ministerial Declaration is an important step for UNEP/MAP and that efforts for implementation should be made by all. He expressed his wish that the MED QSR will be a significant contribution to all policy makers in the region and he highlighted that the MED SECA is one of the most important steps taken at COP 22.

29. In relation to paragraph 14 on the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap of document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5, the Bureau member from Turkey noted that there is an attribution to the EU Directives, where his country would like to suggest addition of the phrase “where applicable”, since there are some Contracting Parties which are not members of the European Union. Furthermore, he noted that document “Report of the 46<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel” (UNEP/MED BUR.92/Inf.4), mentions that there is a need for developing and coordinating actions about the climate change. He noted that his country would like to highlight this fact and stress the importance of prioritizing the strategies on this matter in the current biennium and upcoming biennia.

30. **Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau notes with appreciation the information provided on the key mandates of COP 22 and their implementation, and requests the Secretariat and the respective MAP components to ensure all steps are undertaken for their effective and timely implementation;**

**(b) Contracting Parties are encouraged to raise awareness on and maximize visibility of the Antalya Ministerial Declaration at national, regional and global fora;**

**(c) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties that have not yet done so, to take necessary actions for ratifying MARPOL Annex VI to facilitate the designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides (SECA) Pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, and requests the Secretariat and REMPEC, in collaboration with IMO, to support these processes upon request;**

**(d) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to actively participate, in line with a pre-agreed common approach, in the deliberations on the proposal and on the draft amendments to regulation 14 of, and Appendix VII to MARPOL Annex VI, related to the designation of the proposed Med SO<sub>x</sub> ECA (SECA), at MEPC 78, as well as at the following sessions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)’s Marine Environment Protection Committee, as appropriate, in line with the road map;**

**(e) The Bureau welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat in following up with countries for national activities implementation and draw the attention of the Contracting Parties benefiting support from these national activities to take all necessary measures to address the challenges mentioned in the Report of Specific Issues above and ensure proper execution of the activities;**

**(f) The Bureau also invites the Contracting Parties to streamline where appropriate commitments undertaken within the framework of the MAP-Barcelona Convention, and other MAP priorities into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) elevated by the UN General Assembly resolution 72/279 as “the most important instrument for planning and implementation of the UN development activities at country level in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda)”;**

**(g) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to respond to the data calls issued by the Secretariat in June 2020 and October 2021, considering the primary importance of reporting monitoring data in line with several decisions of COP 19, COP 20 and COP 21 including the timeline of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap. Contracting Parties are encouraged to prioritise their data submission and/or completion of the IMAP Info System validation process as a matter of urgency;**

**(h) The Bureau agrees with the approach for the evaluation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) Roadmap/Policy implementation and acknowledges the importance of ensuring coherence with relevant regional and global developments, and urges Contracting Parties to actively contribute to this process;**

**(i) The Bureau agrees with the terms of reference including timelines prepared by the Secretariat for the Working Groups of Experts for development of the Regional Plans on Agriculture Management, Aquaculture Management and Storm Water Management as presented in Annex I to the Report on Specific Issues. The Bureau urges the Contracting Parties to nominate in a timely manner the members of the relevant Working Groups and to effectively contribute to these processes to ensure their successful and smooth completion;**

**(j) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to foster and streamline the national implementation of the regional strategies adopted in the framework of UNEP/MAP, in particular those related to major global commitments.**

**- C. Collaboration and Partners**

31. The Coordinator referred to the progress in relation to collaboration and partners, noting that collaboration and visibility can be enhanced during this year, in which a large number of important global meetings and events are scheduled. She referred to the participation in the UN Ocean Conference, possibly also with side events, as an important opportunity to bring visibility to the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system's achievements. She also referred to the signature of the MoUs with PAM and COMPSUD as well as to the updated Annex of the MoU with FAO/GFCM. She highlighted the importance of synergies with other bodies and processes, such as the EU MSFD, and processes and the need to benefit from each other's strong points, as appropriate. She referred to the new bilateral agreement with the Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition (MiTE), and to the implementation of the Action Plan entitled "The Mediterranean: a model sea by 2030 - PAMEx". She also referred to the Stockholm+50 Conference and kindly asked the Bureau members participating at that meeting to make reference to MAP-Barcelona Convention in their national interventions, if possible.

32. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat for the progress achieved in relation to partnerships and collaboration and the plans for the biennium. One Bureau member highlighted that FAO/GFCM is an important partner, and that enhanced cooperation is of essence. He added the importance of the links with the EU's MSFD, as appropriate, and the importance of the collaboration between Barcelona Convention and Black Sea Commission/Bucharest Convention, as well as to the possible collaboration with the Danube River Protection Convention.

33. The President of the Bureau referred to the importance of the One Planet Summit and the UN Ocean Conference, as well as to the global legally binding agreement on plastic pollution expected to be in place by 2024. He also noted the plan of Turkey to organize an international zero waste blue summit.

34. The representative of the observer referred to the review process of the EU MSFD which include an evaluation and impact assessment of the Directive, that may even lead to a legislative proposal on a new Directive. She referred to the need to find ways to further increase cooperation, coherence and data management, noting that the evaluation will be completed in 2023.

35. The Bureau member from Turkey noted that paragraph 39 of document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5 provides information on the efforts of the Secretariat in order to improve collaboration and partnerships in and beyond the region. He added that, at this point, he would like to state that Turkey supports the participation of the Secretariat to these important meetings in order to increase awareness. He noted that Turkey attended the UNEA 5.2 meeting and is more than happy about the important decisions made, especially about the decision of plastic pollution including microplastics and marine litter. He also noted that paragraph 46 of document UNEP/MED BUR.92/5 contains the expression "pan-European Regional Seas" and that his country would like to suggest that these expressions should be corrected as "Regional Seas Surrounding Europe". In responding to this concern expressed also at a previous comment on the Progress Report, the Coordinator explained that the reference to the European Regional Seas is a geographical reference which is related to the fact that their bordering coastal states belong to Europe as a continent and this is also in line with the UN Regional Commissions. This is the case for three out of four regional seas participating in this forum, namely

OSPAR, HELCOM and Bucharest Convention. Only the Mediterranean is a sea bordered by coastal states which belong to three continents. It is also a way to distinguish the four regional seas from the regional seas programmes of other geographical areas. In this context in the Secretariat's views this reference is correct; however, she said that she would consult with their partners on the matter.

**36. Conclusions:**

**37. (a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on enhancing ocean governance and on strengthening cooperation and partnerships with global and regional organizations for joint impact on the ground;**

**(b) The Bureau welcomes the work by the Secretariat to strengthen participation and involvement in global processes, and encourages the Secretariat to further work in this direction to increase the impact of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system and to effectively promote its mandate;**

**(c) The Bureau also invites all Contracting Parties, the Bureau President and Members of the Bureau and the Secretariat to use the relevant global fora, such as the UN Ocean Conference, the Our Ocean Conference 2022, the Stockholm+50 Conference, the UN CBD and UN FCCC COPs, the Environment for Europe Conference, as an opportunity, in a proactive manner, to raise the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system's profile, its work and its contribution to the implementation of the SDGs and global commitments with a particular focus to the Antalya Ministerial Declaration and the outcome of COP 22;**

**(d) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new application submitted by the "Turkish Shipbuilders' Association (GISBIR)" for accreditation as MAP Partner and requests that the Secretariat submits it to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.**

**- D. Outreach, Communication and Advocacy**

38. Following an update by the Secretariat on the information and communication activities, the Bureau welcomed the relevant progress and the proactive work of the Secretariat in relation to outreach, communication and advocacy in view of the many international meetings and events of the biennium.

**39. Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau welcomes the efforts of the work on information and outreach, implementing also the relevant Programme of the new MTS, and requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction based on the objectives of the MAP Communication Strategy and the relevant decision of COP 22, and invites Contracting Parties to actively participate in the SPAMI Day and Mediterranean Coast Day celebrations;**

**(b) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to actively participate in the above mentioned important global events organized during 2022 to promote advocacy and visibility of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system in collaboration with Contracting Parties.**

**VI. Agenda Item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events**

40. The Programme Management Officer-Governance, Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis, presented the "Tentative Calendar of UNEP/MAP Meetings and Major International Events (UNEP/MED BUR.92/Inf.3), referring briefly to the main meetings and events until the end of the biennium. The Coordinator noted that still most meetings are held through teleconference, with the exception of smaller meetings such as the one of the Bureau, while after July the possibility to hold larger meetings face-to-face will be re-examined.

## **VII. Agenda Item 7: Date and Venue of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Bureau**

41. The Bureau discussed the possible dates of the next Bureau meeting and suggested for the next Bureau meeting to take place on 31 November-1 December, in Greece, possibly in Thessaloniki.

## **VIII. Agenda Item 8: Any Other Matters**

42. Under this agenda item, the Bureau member from COP 23 host (Slovenia) referred to the importance of working with local communities and introduced the Deputy Mayor of the city of Isola. The Deputy Mayor addressed the Bureau and made a brief presentation of the city of Isola that will host COP 23, emphasizing the activities on environmental protection and sustainable development and highlighting how pleased the local authorities of the city are to host COP 23. The President of the Bureau re-iterated the willingness of Turkey to assist with the COP 23 preparations, based on the experience of COP 22. The Bureau members highlighted once again the effectiveness of holding COP 22 face-to-face, considering the very important decision taken. The Coordinator, expressed the Secretariat's appreciation to the Contracting Parties and Turkey, the host and President of COP 22, for their strong commitment, excellent organization, solidarity, active and in person participation - during a pandemic situation - that was instrumental in reaching consensus and adopting decisions of a major and strategic importance for MAP and the region. In this respect, she also paid tribute to Slovenia for their contribution as EU presidency at that time in reaching this objective. Referring to the remarks by the Deputy mayor of Isola, the Coordinator also highlighted the important role of coastal communities in the Mediterranean as well as the importance of local authorities respecting and promoting environmental standards and to this aim she stressed that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system provides an effective framework to base related actions and measures.

43. Under the same agenda item, the Bureau member from Turkey referred to the need for the establishment of a Regional Activity Center for Climate Change. He noted that according to IPCC reports, the Mediterranean is one of the most vulnerable areas for climate change and that SoED, MAR 1 and IPCC Reports clearly indicate the threats that the region is about to face, adding that MAR 1 report highlights the importance of integrated programming in order to meet the requirements of the region and realize long term climate and environment actions, and that the Antalya Declaration also points out the importance of establishing stable natural and socio-economic systems that are resistant to the effects of climate change in the Mediterranean Region and adapting to these systems. He pointed out that given that coastal areas are exposed to the effects of climate change and that urban areas are vulnerable to changes due to rising sea levels; planning and management process and the resilience of coastal areas need to be strengthened by continuous monitoring activities. He also referred to the climate change adaptation process, noting that it strongly requires cooperation with all stakeholders and an overall integrated adaptation plan for the Mediterranean, and that, in this context, the climate-based informed decision-making process should include the adaptation process and planning involving climate scenarios. He then mentioned that, in this context, it is seen that many studies are carried out under the coordination of different regional activity centers. He referred to the example of the AdriAdapt project, mentioned in the progress report, noting that the AdriAdapt platform sets a good example in terms of climate change adaptation studies for the cities around the Adriatic, considering that it is a comprehensive study aiming to support the building of local and regional resilience by developing the necessary knowledge base to identify and plan appropriate climate change adaptation options.

44. The Bureau member from Turkey added that, due to the uncertainties that climate change will bring, the management system must be rapidly adaptable and able to cope with possible changes in the entire Mediterranean Basin. He noted that adaptation does not seem possible without integrated planning studies and that those plans may focus on specific adaptation measures for a city or region, but a single centralized and planned adaptation plan for the Mediterranean Basin is indispensable in order to cope with the complex nature and effects of climate change. He referred to the report of the 46<sup>th</sup> ECP Meeting, which discusses how to coordinate and maintain the efforts about climate change in the context of Mediterranean Action Plan. He added that there are six different Regional Activity Centers within the MAP system and that, considering their mandates, climate change is a horizontal

issue. He concluded that, for this reason, the most efficient way will be establishing a Regional Activity Center and coordinate time, effort and resources in the most efficient way. He added that, in this context, the Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of Turkey has also stated that Turkey wants to establish a RAC within the MAP system to develop joint efforts to ensure climate stability in the Mediterranean, and to this end, Turkey, will put all their efforts (financial, administrative and technical) with seriousness and determination. Following this, Turkey would like to share their work with the members of the Bureau at the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bureau meeting scheduled for November 2022. Finally, he noted that Turkey expects the support of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, including the Bureau members and the Secretariat.

45. The President of the Bureau noted that after COP 26 of UNFCCC and UNEA5.2 it is clear that it is important that all countries work together on climate change, adding that this collaboration is even more important since the Mediterranean is a climate change hotspot and that steps should be taken more decisively on climate change. He proposed that Turkey prepares a concept for the next Bureau meeting.

46. The Coordinator noted that, based on this discussion, the issue will be addressed in line with the Terms of Reference of the Bureau at the next Bureau meeting. She also noted the importance of climate change following the SoED and MAR1 reports as well as the Antalya Ministerial Declaration and above all the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 which identifies climate change as one of its important thematic priorities. She added that there is a need for further reflection and she kindly suggested that the proposal should clearly explain the links, with the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy, and above all the added value of a possible RAC on climate change to the MAP-Barcelona Convention system and the region, as well as the resources required. She also noted that, in line with UNEP/MAP decision making process, any follow up discussion on the matter as need be is for the MAP Focal Points to consider.

#### **IX. Agenda Item 9: Conclusions and Recommendations**

47. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions as set in this report.

#### **X. Agenda Item 10: Closure of the Meeting**

48. The meeting was closed by the President at 18:00 (UTC+3) on Friday, 25 March 2022. In his closing statement, the President highlighted that he looks forward to go to Slovenia to participate in COP 23. He re-iterated that he and his colleagues from Turkey are very willing and happy to share their experiences from the organization of COP 22 with Slovenia. Finally, he thanked all Bureau members as well as the Secretariat team and his colleagues from the host country for the very successful Bureau meeting.

**Annex I**  
**List of participants**

**MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU AND ADVISORS/MEMBRES DU BUREAU ET  
CONSEILLERS**

**TURKEY / TURQUIE  
(PRESIDENT)**

**Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar**

Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Mr. Eyyüp Karahan**

General Director  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Mr. Ertuğrul Çalışkan**

Deputy General Director  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Ms. Nazan Özyürek**

Head of Department  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Mr. Adnan Altay Altınörs**

Head of Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Ms. Özlem Örne**

Branch Manager  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Mr. Mehmet Tamer Çobanoğlu**

Expert  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Ms. Vildan Bölükbaşı Atay**

Engineer, MSc.  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Ms. Ozlem Aksoy**

Biologist  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Ms. Eda Bayar**

Expert  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
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Ankara University  
National Centre for the Sea and Maritime Law

**Mr. Ugur Sukru Biyiklioglu**

**Ms. Hilal Karaaslan**

**Mr. Turgut Eminoglu**

**Dr. Ibrahim Alarabi Munir**  
Minister of Environment

**LIBYA / LIBYE**  
**(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE**  
**(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**Mr. Mitja Bricelj**  
Secretary  
Slovenian Presidency of the Council EU - Chair  
Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

**Mr. Aleksej Skok**  
Vice-Mayor  
Municipality of Isola

**Iztok Skerlic**  
Director JZP  
Municipality of Isola

**SPAIN / ESPAGNE**  
**(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**Ms. Itziar Martin Partida**  
Deputy General Director  
Ministry of Ecological Transition

**TUNISIA / TUNISIE**  
**(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou**  
Director General  
The National Sanitation Utility  
Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA /**  
**BOSNIE ET HERZEGOVINE**  
**(RAPPORTEUR)**

**Mr. Senad Oprasic**  
Head Environmental Protection Department  
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations

#### **OBSERVER**

**EUROPEAN UNION / UNION**  
**EUROPÉENNE**

**Ms. Anna Bobo Remijn**  
Policy Officer  
Directorate-General for the Environment  
European Commission

**Ms. Rosa Antidormi**  
Senior Policy Officer  
Directorate-General for the Environment  
European Commission



**SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION AND COMPONENTS OF THE  
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN / SECRETARIAT DE LA CONVENTION DE  
BARCELONE ET COMPOSANTES DU PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE**

**Ms. Tatjana Hema**  
Coordinator

**Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis**  
Programme Management Officer

**Annex II**

**Agenda**

## **Agenda**

- Agenda item 1      Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2      Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3      Progress Report for December 2021 – February 2022**
- Agenda item 4      Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5      Specific Issues:**
- a) Ratification, Reporting and Compliance
  - b) COP 22 Key mandates:
    - Antalya Ministerial Declaration
    - 2023 MED QSR
    - Ecosystem Approach Roadmap Evaluation
    - Designation of the Mediterranean Sea as SO<sub>x</sub> Emission Control Area
    - Regional Plans under Article 15 of the LBS Protocol
    - COP 22 Thematic Regional Strategies' way forward
    - MAP Knowledge Management Strategy
    - Implementation of National Activities under PoW and Externally Funded Projects
    - Potential Impacts of Covid-19
  - c) Collaboration and Partners
  - d) Outreach, Communication and Advocacy
- Agenda item 6      Calendar of Meetings and Events**
- Agenda item 7      Date and Venue of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 8      Any Other Matters**
- a) Possible establishment of a RAC on Climate Change
- Agenda item 9      Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 10     Closure of the Meeting**



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93<sup>rd</sup> 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

Thessaloniki, Greece, 30 November-1 December 2022

**Report: Conclusions and Recommendations**

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

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## **Introduction**

1. In accordance with Article IV.2 of the Terms of Reference of the Bureau and in consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 93<sup>rd</sup> 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 (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held in Thessaloniki, Greece on 30 November-1 December 2022.

## **Participation**

2. The meeting was attended by the President of the Bureau, Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar, accompanied by advisors; the Vice-Presidents: Dr. Ibrahim Alarabi Munir (Libya); Ms. Nataša Bratina (Slovenia); Ms. Itziar Martin Partida (Spain); Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou (Tunisia); and the Rapporteur, Mr. Senad Oprasic (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Ms. Anna Bobo Remijn (European Union) attended the meeting, as observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator and Programme Management Officer-Governance). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

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

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 (UTC+2) on Wednesday, 30 November 2022, by Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar, President of the Bureau, who welcomed the Bureau members to the second Bureau meeting of the biennium and thanked the Secretariat and Bureau Members for the work done during this period. He highlighted that this was the second Bureau meeting after the very successful COP 22, noting that it is placed between two very important international events, the UNFCCC COP 27 and the UN CBD COP 15, and to this end it will be very beneficial for linking the work of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system with these international processes.

4. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, welcomed all participants to the meeting and thanked the President and Bureau members for their participation despite the fact that the Covid-19 risk has not yet been eliminated. Ms. Hema stressed that the meeting had a very demanding agenda, especially in assessing the progress in implementation of the decisions adopted at COP 22 in Antalya Turkiye, and in starting the preparations for COP 23 to take place in Slovenia in December 2023.

5. The Coordinator referred to the UNEP/MAP participation at UNFCCC COP 27 and noted that in the margins of the COP she had a meeting with the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, Mr Uroš Brežan, to discuss the organization of COP 23.

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

6. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.93/1. The Bureau agreed to include under agenda item 8 “Any Other Matters” a short discussion on the preparation of COP 23, as well as a discussion on the implementation of UNEA 5.2 Resolution regarding the development of a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

### **III. Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for March-October 2022**

7. The Coordinator introduced the documents “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period March – October 2022*” (UNEP/MED BUR.93/3) and the “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Implementation of COP 22 Decisions*” (UNEP/MED BUR.93/4). The Coordinator also made reference to the “*Report of the 47<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*” as presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.93/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively.

8. The Coordinator made a presentation of the developments and progress during this reporting period, referring to specific achievements in relation to each outcome of the seven Programmes of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 and making cross-references to the *Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period March – October 2022*, as appropriate.

9. The President of the Bureau congratulated the Secretariat for the progress achieved and the huge effort put in this report. He suggested to the Secretariat that, in future meetings, there should be an effort to accompany the presentation with power point slides, highlighting in a more colorful and vivid way specific developments and activities, such as photographs from meetings and events, videos or pictures from Marine Protected Areas, that could be obtained from relevant MAP Components. The Bureau members supported this proposal, while also noting that the structure of the presentation should follow the flow of the report, since this has been very well-structured and informative.

10. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat on the very detailed document of the Progress Report and on the extent of the progress achieved in this reporting period. They highlighted, inter alia, the very successful MedPavilion at COP 27 of UNFCCC, where UNEP/MAP was a main co-organizer. They also noted the great effort put in collaboration and partnerships, the excellent work of the MAP Components, and the contributions made by stakeholders in the work of UNEP/MAP. They highlighted several successful events, including the 7<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Conference on Marine Turtles (Tetouan, Morocco, 18 - 21 October 2022).

11. One Bureau member referred to an incident in his country with an oil tanker that took place in March 2022 and thanked the Secretariat for the timely technical assistance provided, also stressing the effective response of Tunisian authorities.

12. Another member of the Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the recent visit of the Coordinator to his country and the bilateral meetings held with two Ministers, as well as for the support provided to Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. He also noted the strong links with the work under the EUSAIR strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian sub-region, whose environmental quality pillar is co-chaired by Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. He also informed of the intention of his country to establish a new Marine Protected Area in 2023.

13. The representative of the European Union, attending the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bureau meeting as observer, made reference to the importance of the UNEP/MAP work on the designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides (Med SOx ECA) and the progress in the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, through the EcAp MED III project, for the achievement of Good Environmental Status in the Mediterranean. She referred to the revision of EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive, currently in progress, to the Zero Pollution Action Plan of the European Commission, as well as to the new EU packaging law, which are all linked to the work of UNEP/MAP.

14. The Bureau member from Türkiye, made a statement noting that Paragraph 65 (Outcome 3.3) of the Progress Report contained the expression "Europe's seas" and noted that this expression should be corrected as "Regional Seas Surrounding Europe", bringing to the attention of the Bureau previous occasions where this proposed expression has been used. She also brought to the attention of the meeting a very interesting exhibition of artwork that was made at the Turkish Pavilion of COP 27 of UNFCCC; the artworks were created by waste collected and used for this purpose by the artist. She suggested that such an exhibition could take place in COP 23 of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in Slovenia in December 2023. Following a presentation of slides showing these artworks, the meeting agreed that this was an excellent idea to be followed-up.

15. The Coordinator thanked the Bureau members for their very positive comments and added that the Secretariat made an extra effort in the preparation of the *Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Implementation of COP 22 Decisions* by including in each operational paragraph of the COP decisions the relevant Programme of Work activity/ies as appropriate, addressing also a comment of the recent Audit Report. The Bureau members thanked the Secretariat for this update and asked for this inclusion to be continued in future reports.

16. **Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work done in the period March-October 2022 as presented by the Secretariat, and its satisfaction for the efforts and results achieved so far through the integrated work of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components.**

**(b) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to actively support increasing the visibility of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, for example through national or regional events related to the mandate of UNEP/MAP.**

**(c) The Bureau encourages the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties to participate in global and regional fora and events of UNEP/MAP relevance and to showcase the Mediterranean example and best practices.**

#### **IV. Agenda Item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**

17. The Coordinator informed the meeting on the progress made, as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.93/5 "*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*", addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters. She highlighted the very good financial situation, including of the fund balances, noting that the exact impact of the USD-EURO exchange rate is not yet very clear. She referred to the good rate of paid contributions, noting that further work is needed on this issue and adding that further support will be provided to Contracting Parties facing difficulties, such as Libya, Algeria, Syria and Lebanon. She stressed that a positive cash balance is crucial in order to initiate the implementation of activities. She added that, although this is the first year of the biennium and there is always a delay in starting the activities, there is a very good progress in financial implementation. In relation to consultancies she noted that the status is very good and the use of MTF funds is very limited in this respect. She referred to the progress in human resource issues where there is a number of recent good developments, such as the onboarding of the new Deputy Coordinator, Mr. Gabino Gonzalez Deogracia, in the first week of December 2022. She also referred to the importance of the new post of Scientific and Technical Senior Officer, currently advertised in Inspira, and encouraged the Bureau and Contracting Parties to promote it in their networks in order to have very good applications submitted. She added that there is now a new organigramme prepared for the Coordinating Unit. In relation to the refurbishment of the premises she noted that this is also very important for health and safety issues; the preparatory work is currently under way and the inauguration is expected possibly in September 2023. Finally, in relation to travel, the Coordinator referred to the increased pressure due to the new stricter rules adopted by the UNEP Headquarters and highlighted the importance of early nomination of meeting participants.

18. The Bureau members complimented the Secretariat for the work done and for the detailed financial and administrative information. They also expressed appreciation for the inclusion of carbon footprint in travel requests. One Bureau member noted the usefulness also of hybrid meetings, where appropriate, since these allow broader participation of experts. Following a discussion on the role of the Bureau in guiding the Secretariat between the meetings of Contracting Parties, including on the issue of collection of arrears, it was noted that a more detailed informal discussion on this issue could take place in the next Bureau meeting, if time allows. Furthermore, the Bureau urged the Secretariat to take all necessary measures and maximise efforts for the collection of arrears.

#### **19. Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau takes note of the Fund Balances as of 31 December 2021;**

**(b) The Bureau takes note of the Financial Statements provided in response to the Conclusions and Recommendations of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Bureau meeting requesting for the certified and audited financial statements to be shared as soon as they are available;**

**(c) The Bureau notes with appreciation the contributions received by 12 Contracting Parties for the year 2022 and encourages the 10 Contracting Parties which did not pay to do so as soon as possible;**



- (d) The Bureau draws the attention of the Contracting Parties to adhere to Procedure 4.2.b of the Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures, which states that contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full;**
- (e) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties in arrears to pay them as soon as possible;**
- (f) The Bureau supports the efforts made by the Secretariat and urges the Secretariat to continue its efforts to maximize the collection of contributions and arrears in line with the Financial Rules and Procedures;**
- (g) The Bureau takes note of the budget consumption level for the biennium 2020-2021;**
- (h) The Bureau takes note of the status of the financial implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 and requests the Secretariat to continue making all possible efforts to achieve its full implementation;**
- (i) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitments;**
- (j) The Bureau takes note with appreciation of the efforts made by the Greek Government with regards to the refurbishment of the premises and requests the Secretariat to accelerate the process with the support of the Greek Government and to report the final outcome of this process to the next Bureau meeting;**
- (k) The Bureau takes note of the information provided by the Secretariat with regards to the UNEP updated Travel Guidelines and urges the Secretariat to continue its efforts for their implementation and working with the Contracting Parties to ensure adherence to nomination deadlines.**

## **V. Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues**

20. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.93/6).
21. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.
  - **A. Ratification, Reporting and Compliance**
22. The Programme Management Officer-Governance, Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis, presented the status of ratifications and re-iterated the appeal of the Secretariat to the Bureau members, and to all Contracting Parties through the Bureau, to ratify the remaining Protocols of the Convention and especially the Dumping Protocol which misses one ratification to enter into force. He provided also an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.25/2 on “Compliance Committee”, including on the submission of national implementation reports. To this end, he also referred to the consultation meeting on possible amendments of Compliance Procedures and Mechanisms, to take place online in January 2023.
23. The Bureau member from Spain noted that her country is in the process of ratifying the Offshore Protocol and that the ratification is expected before COP 23. She also noted, in relation to the first case concerning compliance by a Contracting Party, that this has also been a new and very useful learning experience for her country’s administration.
24. The Coordinator brought to the attention of the Bureau that during the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 29-30 June 2022) some of the members of the Committee suggested that representatives of the Compliance Committee should attend the online meeting of Contracting Parties, to be held in January 2023, while others suggested that at least one representative of the Compliance Committee should also be invited to attend the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bureau meeting. The members of the Bureau agreed that there is no reason for the Compliance Committee representatives to be present at the Bureau meetings, while they noted that the Compliance Committee members and alternates should participate as observers at the online consultation on the Procedures and Mechanisms for compliance, scheduled for January 2023.

25. **Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to make efforts for the ratifications of the Protocols (7 Contracting Parties have not yet ratified the amendments to the Dumping Protocol; 5 Contracting Parties the amendments to the LBS Protocol; 14 Contracting Parties the Offshore Protocol; 5 Contracting Parties the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol; 15 Contracting Parties the Hazardous Waste Protocol; 5 Contracting Parties the Prevention and Emergency Protocol, and; 10 Contracting Parties the ICZM Protocol). To this aim the Bureau also invites these Contracting Parties to liaise with the Secretariat as appropriate to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments, with particular focus on the Dumping Protocol to ensure its entry into force as soon as possible;**

**(b) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts with the respective Contracting Parties to achieve the full ratification of the Protocols to the Barcelona Convention;**

**(c) The Bureau calls on Contracting Parties to submit their national implementation reports for the period 2020-2021 by December 2022 and strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013, 2014–2015 (2 Contracting Parties), 2016-2017 (4 Contracting Parties) and/or 2018-2019 (8 Contracting Parties) without further delay to complete the reporting for these biennia as soon as possible;**

**(d) The Bureau compliments the Compliance Committee on the successful conclusion of its first case concerning compliance by a Contracting Party and the government of Spain for its constructive cooperation during this process.**

**- B. COP 22 Key mandates**

- Antalya Ministerial Declaration**
- 2023 MED QSR**
- Designation of the Mediterranean Sea as SO<sub>x</sub> Emission Control Area**
- COP 22 Thematic Regional Strategies' way forward**
- MAP Knowledge Management Strategy**
- MED 2050 Foresight Study**
- Resource Mobilization Strategy**

26. The Coordinator presented the progress in relation to these important processes. On the implementation of the Antalya Ministerial Declaration, she noted the links with the implementation of the Programme of Work and COP 22 Decisions. On the 2023 MED QSR, she mentioned the progress achieved with the support of the MTS, the three EU-funded projects and the voluntary contributions by France and Italy through the Agreements signed with these two countries. She added that the CORMON meetings of March 2023 will provide the opportunity to Contracting Parties to see the first draft of the MED QSR report, adding that the Integrated CORMON meeting will take place in June 2023. On the Med SO<sub>x</sub> ECA she informed the Bureau members on the progress of the process under the IMO, stressing the importance of all Contracting Parties ratifying MARPOL Annex VI, and noting that the Resource Mobilization Strategy will also consider the implementation of the Med SO<sub>x</sub> ECA. On the COP 22 Thematic Regional Strategies and in relation to biodiversity she stressed that a very important donor for the Mediterranean, MAVA Foundation, has stopped operating and therefore new means of funding need to be explored. On the MAP Knowledge Management Strategy, she highlighted the importance and evolving nature of this process, adding that INFO/RAC plans to have a prototype ready by the end of 2023. Finally, she referred to the progress in the preparation of the Resource Mobilization Strategy and informed the Bureau that more concrete information on the preparation of the MED 2050 Foresight Study will be provided at the next Bureau meeting.

27. The President expressed his appreciation to the Contracting Parties for the implementation of the Antalya Ministerial Declaration and noted the importance of all Contracting Parties taking the

necessary steps for its implementation as well as for the implementation of the COP 22 decisions. He especially thanked the Secretariat and REMPEC for the efforts made for the designation of the Med SOx ECA. The members of the Bureau also commended the Secretariat and REMPEC for the work on the Med SOx ECA. Furthermore, they noted the importance of the MED QSR, adding that appropriate time needs to be allocated for the review of the document by Contracting Parties.

**28. Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau takes note of the information provided on the key mandates of COP 22 and their implementation, and requests the Secretariat and the respective MAP components to ensure all steps are undertaken for their effective and timely implementation, and urges the Contracting Parties to fully participate and contribute to the effective delivery of related activities of the PoW 2022-2023;**

**(b) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to respond to the last data call issued by the Secretariat in September 2022, considering the primary importance of reporting monitoring data in line with several decisions of COP 19, COP 20 and COP 21 including the timeline of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap. The Bureau also encourages the Contracting Parties to prioritise their data submission and/or completion of the IMAP Info System validation process as a matter of urgency; The Bureau also requests the Secretariat to share with Contracting Parties the prepared draft chapters of the MED QSR as soon as possible in order to allow sufficient time for any required update and further completion with a view to the preparation of the final version for consideration by the integrated CORMONs meeting in June 2023;**

**(c) The Bureau encourages the 4 Contracting Parties that have not yet done so, to finalise the assessment of their needs, in consultation with REMPEC, and take the necessary actions for ratifying MARPOL Annex VI with a view to facilitating the designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides (Med SOx ECA) pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, and requests the Secretariat and REMPEC, in collaboration with IMO, to support these processes upon request;**

**(d) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to actively participate, in line with a pre-agreed common approach, in the deliberations on the draft amendments to regulation 14 of, and Appendix VII to MARPOL Annex VI, related to the designation of the Med SOx ECA, at the 79th session of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 79 – London, UK, 12-16 December 2022);**

**(e) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties to complete their respective National Action Plan for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031), as an important mechanism to streamline and prioritize the necessary actions at national level;**

**(f) The Bureau calls upon the Contracting Parties that are executing externally and MTF funded projects aiming at the national implementation of IMAP, with the support of several MAP Components, to make every effort for their successful delivery and reporting of related monitoring data that would allow further progress in defining common standards at regional and sub-regional level on several aspects of IMAP implementation.**

**- C. Collaboration and Partners**

29. The Coordinator referred to the progress in relation to collaboration and partners, noting that collaboration and visibility has been enhanced during 2022, when a large number of important global meetings and events took place. She added that the Secretariat has proceeded to register MAP on its own as observer to COP 15 of UN CBD, to allow MAP Components to participate, and that the plan is to follow the same procedure for the upcoming UN Ocean Conference, and possibly for the UNFCCC COP.

30. The Bureau members congratulated the Secretariat for the work done and the progress achieved in relation to partnerships and collaboration, and expressed their agreement with the Secretariat's proactiveness to register MAP as observer to COP 15 of UN CBD.

31. One Bureau member suggested some further verification from the side of the Secretariat concerning the application from an NGO that has applied for accreditation as MAP Partner, to make sure that the scope of its work and profile is in full alignment with MAP-Barcelona Convention objectives.

32. **Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on enhancing ocean governance and on strengthening cooperation and partnerships with global and regional organizations for joint impact on the ground;**

**(b) The Bureau welcomes the work by the Secretariat to strengthen participation and involvement in global processes and to raise the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system's profile, its work and its contribution to the implementation of the SDGs, and encourages the Secretariat to further work in this direction;**

**(c) The Bureau asks the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties participating at COP 15 of the UN CBD to share the Mediterranean experience and the commitments made in Antalya and encourages all Contracting Parties to contribute to global discussions as appropriate in view of maximizing coherence with the work of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system;**

**(d) The Bureau welcomes the collaboration between UNEP/MAP and ACCOBAMS and agrees with the proposal of the Secretariat that a proposal is presented at the next Bureau meeting on a new Agreement between the two organizations;**

**(e) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new application submitted by the Ankara University National Center for the Sea and Maritime Law (DEHUKAM), Enaleia and Siracusa International Institute for Criminal Justice and Human Rights (SII) for accreditation as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement;**

**(f) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to further examine the application of AMWAJ Alliance/REVOLVE Mediterraneo for accreditation as MAP Partner, and further look into the scope of this organization, and refer to it possibly at the next Bureau meeting;**

**(g) The Bureau endorses the proposal by the Secretariat to renew the accreditation as MAP Partners of the organizations "Youth Love Egypt" and "Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection" following the applications submitted by these organizations, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.**

**- D. Outreach, Communication and Advocacy**

33. Following an update by the Secretariat on the information and communication activities, where significant progress has been achieved, the Bureau welcomed the proactive work of the Secretariat in relation to outreach, communication and advocacy, especially in relation to the many international and regional meetings and events of the biennium.

34. **Conclusions:**

**(a) The Bureau welcomes the efforts of the work on information and outreach in key international and regional meetings and events, implementing also the relevant Programme of the new MTS, and requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction based on the objectives of the MAP Communication Strategy and the relevant decision of COP 22.**

**- E. Ways and Means to Streamline Reporting on Progress and on Implementation of COP Decisions**

35. The Programme Management Officer-Governance presented the work of the Secretariat on ways and means to streamline reporting on progress and on implementation of COP decisions and explained the proposed way forward.

36. The Bureau members agreed that the best way forward is to keep the structure of the report as it is done up to now (since it shows the range of efforts and activities by the MAP system) keeping the level of detail, but try to improve coherence and streamlining. They stressed that what could be changed is the presentation of the report during the Bureau meetings, by using a power point presentation with graphs, pictures and, if relevant, short videos, to make it more vivid.

37. **Conclusion:**

**(a) The Bureau expresses support of the current reporting approach with a more coherent effort in enhancing streamlining. The Bureau also requests the Secretariat to support presentation of reporting at the Bureau meetings with visual elements taken from major PoW activities.**

**- F. Proposal to Strengthen the Institutional Setup of UNEP/MAP on Climate Change**

38. The Bureau member from Türkiye presented the proposal submitted by her country (see Information Document UNEP/MED BUR.93/Inf.6) to strengthen the institutional setup of UNEP/MAP on Climate Change through the establishment of a Regional Activity Center (RAC) for Climate Change of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention. She added that it is proposed that the possible new Centre will be hosted in Ankara, within an institute under the Ankara University, which has competence on climate change and on the marine environment. She noted that the Mediterranean region, faced with increasingly catastrophic impacts of climate change, needs urgent and efficient action, and that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system must be adequately equipped to face such urgency. She stressed that Türkiye has asked the Secretariat that the proposal be submitted to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols for their consideration at the MAP Focal Points Meeting, and for possible approval at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

39. The members of the Bureau expressed their support to the proposal of Türkiye, noting that the Mediterranean is a hotspot for climate change. They added that the only concern is the related costs and stressed the need for Türkiye to cover all the expenses of the possible new centre, as was done for other Regional Activity Centres in the past.

40. The Coordinator thanked Türkiye for the fully-fledged proposal, noting the support from all Bureau members and the request for the costs to be covered by Türkiye. She added that there is also a need to ensure no overlaps with the existing RACs of UNEP/MAP. She also added that the next steps should include a review of the proposal by the Secretariat vis-a-vis the Rules of Procedure and the inclusion of this item in the MAP Focal Points meeting provisional agenda, with a working document submitted by Türkiye at the MAP Focal Points meeting.

41. **Conclusion:**

**(a) The Bureau welcomes the proposal by Türkiye regarding the establishment of a Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change, considering the need to support Contracting Parties in addressing climate change in the region and highlighting that the operational costs of this possible new center would be funded in full by the host country. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to follow the respective rules of procedure regarding the submission of this proposal to the MAP Focal Points meeting for its consideration.**

**VI. Agenda Item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events**

42. The Programme Management Officer-Governance, presented the “Tentative Calendar of UNEP/MAP Meetings and Major International Events (UNEP/MED BUR.93/Inf.3), referring briefly to the main meetings and events until the end of the biennium. The Coordinator noted that the calendar for 2023 is very demanding, especially since this is a COP year, adding that some meetings are held

through teleconference, while most meetings take place face-to-face as also reflected in the Programme of Work. She noted that face-to-face meetings provide more opportunities for interaction and added that not all Contracting Parties have the same access to technical means.

43. The representative of Slovenia noted that there are some challenges faced with the dates of COP 23, since the dates of COP 28 of UNFCCC have changed and there is now an overlap with COP 23 of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and asked to explore the possibility of holding COP 23 in January 2024. The Coordinator explained that it is not possible to hold the COP 23 in 2024, since this will delay the implementation of the Programme of Work, jeopardizing its effective and full implementation. Following the ensuing discussion, it was decided to keep the dates of COP 23 as originally set, while the Secretariat will follow-up on the dates, also in relation of any future changes of the UNFCCC COP dates, and will inform the Bureau accordingly. It was added that every effort will be made to ensure high-level participation, including by finetuning the High-Level segment of the COP so as to not coincide with the High-Level segment of the UNFCCC COP.

44. The Bureau member from Türkiye informed the Bureau of the kind offer of the Government of her country to host the next MAP Focal Points Meeting in September 2023 in Istanbul. The Coordinator thanked the representative of Türkiye for the kind offer and noted that according to the Rules of Procedure the country hosting such a meeting will need to cover some of its costs, including the venue and some additional expenses incurred to the Secretariat.

#### 45. Conclusions

**(a) The Bureau notes the change of dates of the UNFCCC COP 28, which now coincides with the dates of COP 23 of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, to take place in Portoroz, Slovenia on 4-8 December 2023. The Bureau agrees to keep the originally proposed dates for COP 23 and requests the Secretariat to monitor closely the developments regarding COP 28 of UNFCCC and especially its High-level Segment, in order to finetune the date of the High-Level Segment of COP 23 to minimize any possible impact on high-level participation. The Bureau encourages all Contracting Parties to be represented at Ministerial Level at the ministerial session of COP 23.**

**(b) The Bureau takes note of the proposal of Türkiye to host the next MAP Focal Points Meeting in September 2023 in Istanbul.**

### VII. Agenda Item 7: Date and Venue of the 94<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Bureau

46. The Bureau discussed the possible dates of the next Bureau meeting and agreed for the next Bureau meeting to take place on 20-21 June 2023, in Izola, Slovenia, following a kind offer by the representative of Slovenia.

#### 47. Conclusion

**(a) The Bureau welcomes the information provided by Slovenia on the 94th Bureau meeting, that will take place in Izola, Slovenia, on 20-21 June 2023.**

### VIII. Agenda Item 8: Any Other Matters

#### a) Outcome of the Audit of UNEP/MAP

48. The Coordinator referred to the outcome of the recent Audit of UNEP/MAP noting that its outcome was very good and that it contained only three recommendations, which she presented to the members of the Bureau. In relation to the recommendation “to effectively track and regularly report on implementation of all thematic decisions of the Conference of Parties to enhance accountability and assure that the decisions are implemented in a timely manner” it was noted that this is implemented through the new format of the document “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Implementation of*

*COP 22 Decisions*” which also includes the PoW activities. The President of the Bureau suggested that this can be further enhanced if the loading (percentage completed) of activities is also included in this document.

#### **b) Preparation of COP 23**

49. The representative of Slovenia noted that the COP will take place in Portoroz and that the venue has already been secured for 4-8 December 2023. It was added that the Secretariat and Host Country are in close collaboration for the preparation of the Host Country Agreement for COP 23. The Coordinator added that during her meeting with the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, in the margins of COP 27 of UNFCCC, they discussed the preparations and main theme of the COP and added that the Secretariat will come at the next Bureau meeting with a concrete proposal on the theme. The Host Country will be preparing a short concept note on the theme and main elements of the declaration, while the Bureau members were encouraged to also reflect from their side on the issues to be discussed at the Ministerial level, in order to have an effective discussion at the 94<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting.

50. The President of the Bureau referred to the “troika” approach used by other bodies, such as the G20 and G7, and suggested that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system could use a similar approach, with both the last and next presidencies participating in the Bureau together with the current presidency. The Bureau members discussed the issue, noting that the next presidency already participates ex-officio at the Bureau, and that if the last presidency will also participate then the Terms of Reference of the Bureau would need to change, including possibly the number of Bureau members. It was added that care should be taken to keep ensuring the balanced geographical representation. The meeting agreed that the Secretariat should take note of the discussion and prepare a proposal for the next Bureau meeting.

#### **c) Implementation of UNEA 5.2 Resolution regarding the development of a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution**

51. The Bureau member from Türkiye provided a brief overview of the process for the negotiations of the new global legally binding instrument on plastic pollution including in the marine environment, and proposed to establish an informal Task Force of the Contracting Parties, facilitated by the Secretariat, to enable coordination among Contracting Parties’ representatives during the negotiations. She noted that it is important to establish such a Task Force since the MAP-Barcelona Convention system has an accumulated experience on this issue and also since Regional Seas are part of the negotiation process. She added that Türkiye is ready to support and lead this Task Force.

52. The Bureau members agreed with this proposal in order to have a coordinated approach, while noting that the statements of Contracting Parties at the meetings of this process have an individual nature. The Coordinator noted that the Secretariat can send a letter to MAP Focal Points asking for the name of their representative in the negotiation process in order to initiate a discussion between the representatives of the Contracting Parties. She added that the work will be virtual, and the Secretariat will be pleased to participate and facilitate the work of the Task Force.

#### **53. Conclusions**

**(a) The Bureau agrees with the proposal by Türkiye to establish an informal Task Force to enable coordination among Contracting Party representatives during the negotiations of the new global legally binding instrument on plastic pollution including in the marine environment. The meeting agrees that the Secretariat will inform Contracting Parties regarding this proposal and will take measures to support its coordination functions with a view to facilitate coordinated inputs, as appropriate, to the global process.**

**(b) The Bureau after an exchange of views on ways and means to enhance sharing of experiences and best practices from one biennium to another, asks the Secretariat to make a proposal for consideration of the next Bureau meeting that would allow contribution of the former Presidency to Bureau meetings through a troika approach, while maintaining the equitable**

**geographical balance in Bureau representation in line with Article 19 of the Barcelona Convention.**

**IX. Agenda Item 9: Conclusions and Recommendations**

54. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions as set in this report.

**X. Agenda Item 10: Closure of the Meeting**

55. The meeting was closed by the President at 14:30 (UTC+2) on Thursday, 1 December 2022.



**Annex I**  
**List of participants**

**MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU AND ADVISORS/MEMBRES DU BUREAU ET  
CONSEILLERS**

**TURKIYE / TURKIYE  
(PRESIDENT)**

**Prof. Mehmet Emin Birpınar**  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Mr. Eyyüp Karahan**  
General Director  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Ms. Nazan Özyürek**  
Head of Department  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Mr. Mehmet Tamer Çobanoğlu**  
Expert  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Mr. Prof. Hakan Karan**  
Legal Advisor  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Ms. Berilşah Kocabiyik**  
Legal Advisor  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**Ms. Busra Deniz**  
Legal Advisor  
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate  
Change

**LIBYA / LIBYE  
(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**Dr. Ibrahim Alarabi Munir**  
Minister of Environment

**SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE  
(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**Ms. Nataša Bratina**  
Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

**SPAIN / ESPAGNE  
(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**Ms. Itziar Martin Partida**  
Deputy General Director  
Ministry of Ecological Transition

**TUNISIA / TUNISIE  
(VICE-PRESIDENT)**

**Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou**  
Administrateur de l'Unité Changement Climatique  
Office National de l'Assainissement

Ministère de l'Environnement

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA /  
BOSNIE ET HERZEGOVINE  
(RAPPORTEUR)**

**Mr. Senad Oprasic**  
Head Environmental Protection Department  
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations

**OBSERVER**

**EUROPEAN UNION / UNION  
EUROPÉENNE**

**Ms. Anna Bobo Remijn**  
Senior Policy Officer  
Directorate-General for the Environment  
European Commission

**SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION AND COMPONENTS OF THE  
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN / SECRÉTARIAT DE LA CONVENTION DE  
BARCELONE ET COMPOSANTES DU PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE**

**Ms. Tatjana Hema**  
Coordinator

**Mr. Ilias Mavroeidis**  
Programme Management Officer-Governance

**Annex II**

**Agenda**

## **Agenda**

- Agenda item 1      Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2      Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3      Progress Report for March – October 2022**
- Agenda item 4      Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5      Specific Issues:**
- a) Ratification, Reporting and Compliance
  - b) COP 22 Key mandates:
    - Antalya Ministerial Declaration
    - 2023 MED QSR
    - Designation of the Mediterranean Sea as SO<sub>x</sub> Emission Control Area
    - COP 22 Thematic Regional Strategies' way forward
    - MAP Knowledge Management Strategy
    - MED 2050 Foresight Study
    - Resource Mobilization Strategy
  - c) Collaboration and Partners
  - d) Outreach, Communication and Advocacy
  - e) Ways and Means to Streamline Reporting on Progress and on Implementation of COP Decisions
  - f) Proposal to Strengthen the Institutional Setup of UNEP/MAP on Climate Change
- Agenda item 6      Calendar of Meetings and Events**
- Agenda item 7      Date and Venue of the 94<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 8      Any Other Matters**
- a) Outcome of the Audit of UNEP/MAP
  - b) Preparation of COP 23
  - c) Implementation of UNEA 5.2 Resolution regarding the development of a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution
- Agenda item 9      Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 10     Closure of the Meeting**

**Conclusions and Recommendations of the 94<sup>th</sup> 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**

Izola, Slovenia, 20-21 June 2023

**94<sup>th</sup> 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**

Izola, Slovenia, 20-21 June 2023

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

*(Advanced Edited Copy)*

**Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for November 2022 – May 2023**

- (a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the work done in the period November 2022 – May 2023 as presented by the Secretariat, and its satisfaction for the efforts and results achieved by the Secretariat and the MAP Components.
- (b) The Bureau welcomes the presentation of the progress report through an interactive powerpoint presentation with visual elements taken from major PoW activities and asks the Secretariat to continue this very good practice in future meetings.
- (c) The Bureau stresses the importance of timely nominations by the Contracting Parties of representatives to UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention meetings and the need to respect these nominations for the efficient and cost-effective operation of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system.

**Agenda Item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**

- (a) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to share the certified and audited financial statements for the year 2022 as soon as they are available and asks the Secretariat to provide a clear picture and related figures on the 2023 expenditure per MAP Component/Programme, as soon as possible for the MAP Focal Points meeting and COP 23.
- (b) The Bureau notes with appreciation the contributions received for the years 2022 and 2023 and encourages the Contracting Parties which did not pay to do so as soon as possible.
- (c) The Bureau draws the attention of the Contracting Parties to adhere to Procedure 4.2.b of the Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures, which states that contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full.
- (d) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties in arrears to pay them as soon as possible, while noting the specific circumstances of each Contracting Party in arrears.
- (e) The Bureau supports the efforts made by the Secretariat and urges the Secretariat to continue its efforts to maximize the collection of contributions and arrears in line with the Financial Rules and Procedures.
- (f) The Bureau takes note of the status of the financial implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023 and requests the Secretariat to continue making all possible efforts to achieve its full implementation.
- (g) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitment and asks UNEP to accelerate the recruitment processes to enable the Secretariat to function properly.
- (h) The Bureau encourages the Host Countries of Regional Activity Centres to ensure that the new Directors of the Centres are selected in a timely manner to allow an efficient transition, taking into account national legislation as well as the “Common Operational Principles for

MAP Components” adopted at COP 22 and in consultation with the CU in line with relevant COP decisions.

(i) The Bureau takes note with appreciation of the efforts made with regards to the refurbishment of the premises and requests the Secretariat to accelerate the process with the support of the Greek Government and to report the final outcome of this process to the next Bureau meeting.

### **Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues**

#### **A. Ratification, Reporting and Compliance**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to make efforts for the ratifications of the Protocols (7 Contracting Parties have not yet ratified the amendments to the Dumping Protocol; 5 Contracting Parties the amendments to the LBS Protocol; 14 Contracting Parties the Offshore Protocol; 5 Contracting Parties the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol; 15 Contracting Parties the Hazardous Waste Protocol; 5 Contracting Parties the Prevention and Emergency Protocol, and; 9 Contracting Parties the ICZM Protocol). To this aim the Bureau also invites these Contracting Parties to liaise with the Secretariat as appropriate to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments, with particular focus on the Dumping Protocol to ensure its entry into force as soon as possible.

(b) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts with the respective Contracting Parties to achieve the full ratification of the Protocols to the Barcelona Convention.

(c) The Bureau calls on Contracting Parties to submit their national implementation reports for the period 2020-2021 which supposed to be submitted by December 2022 and strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013 and 2014–2015 (2 Contracting Parties), 2016-2017 (4 Contracting Parties), 2018-2019 (9 Contracting Parties) and/or 2020-2021 (12 Contracting Parties) without further delay to complete the reporting for these biennia as soon as possible.

#### **B. COP 22 Key mandates:**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the information provided on the key mandates of COP 22 and their implementation, and requests the Secretariat and the respective MAP components to ensure all steps are undertaken for their effective and timely implementation, and urge the Contracting Parties to fully participate and contribute to the effective delivery of related activities of the PoW 2022-2023.

(b) The Bureau welcomes the adoption of the amendments to MARPOL Annex VI concerning the Med SOx ECA at the 79<sup>th</sup> session of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)’s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 79) (London, UK, 12-16 December 2022), and recalls the urgency of ratification, transposition and effective implementation of MARPOL Annex VI by those countries that have not yet done so, particularly in view of the expected date of entry into effective application of the Med SOx ECA on 1 May 2025.

(c) The Bureau encourages the Contracting Parties that have not yet done so, to finalise the assessment of their needs, in consultation with REMPEC and to take the necessary actions for ratifying MARPOL Annex VI with a view to facilitating the designation of the Med SOx ECA pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, and requests the Secretariat and REMPEC, in collaboration with IMO, to support these processes upon request.



### **C. Main directions of the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025**

- (a) The Bureau welcomed the principles and main elements for the PoW 2024-2025 and urged the Secretariat to make an effort to send the proposed PoW and budget with detailed figures for the 2024-2025 biennium to the MAP Focal Points as early as possible well in advance of the deadline.
- (b) The Bureau took note of the preference of the Secretariat to go for the option of using both the savings and a recommended 5% increase of assessed contributions based on the UN scale.

### **D. Preparations for COP 23: Format, Ministerial Session and Declaration, Host Country preparations**

- (a) The Bureau welcomes the work by Slovenia and the Secretariat for the preparation of COP 23, and urges all Contracting Parties to ensure high level participation to the extent possible to maximise the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention's system visibility considering also that UNEP Executive Director has confirmed her participation.
- (b) The Bureau agrees with the proposed theme of the Ministerial Session, "Green transition in the Mediterranean: from decisions into actions", and requests the Secretariat to timely proceed on the preparation of the Ministerial Session of COP 23.
- (c) The Bureau agrees with the approach proposed by the Secretariat for the preparation of the Ministerial Declaration, and encourage both the Secretariat and the Host Country to draft the concept note and the first main elements of the Ministerial Declaration for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points, where the theme will be agreed and the main elements of the Ministerial Declaration subsequently discussed.
- (d) The Bureau takes note of the proposed list of draft Decisions for consideration by the MAP Focal Points and requests the Secretariat to finalize their preparation, taking into account the considerations of the Bureau at its 94<sup>th</sup> Meeting, in a timely manner for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points.

### **E. Partnerships**

- (a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on enhancing ocean governance and on strengthening cooperation and partnerships with global and regional organizations for joint impact on the ground.
- (b) The Bureau welcomes the work by the Secretariat to strengthen participation and involvement in global processes and to raise the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system's profile, its work and its contribution to the implementation of the SDGs, and encourages the Secretariat to further work in this direction.
- (c) The Bureau welcomes the strengthened collaboration between UNEP/MAP and UfM Secretariat and requests the Secretariat to proceed in updating the Appendix of the MoU between UNEP/MAP and UfMS for submission to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.
- (d) The Bureau welcomes the collaboration between UNEP/MAP and ACCOBAMS, Black Sea Commission and PERSGA and agrees that, following the expiration of the existing MoUs with these organizations, new MoUs with each of these partners are prepared and submitted to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.
- (e) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new application submitted by Zoï Environment Network (Zoï), Agreement on the creation of a

marine mammals Sanctuary in the Mediterranean Sea (Pelagos Agreement), European Boating Industry (EBI), Euro-Mediterranean Economist Association (EMEA), European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD), Cyprus Marine Environment Protection Association (CYMEPA) and AMWAJ / REVOLVE Mediterraneo (AMWAJ) as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.

(f) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to prepare a proposal in order to allow more flexibility in the accreditation of MAP Partners, so as to enlarge the scope to other stakeholders/non-profit organizations, and to allow entities which do not have their headquarters or regional offices in the Mediterranean, but which have activities in the Mediterranean and actively contribute to the objectives of UNEP/MAP, to become MAP Partners, and to submit this proposal to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.

(g) The Bureau endorses the proposal by the Secretariat to renew the accreditation as MAP Partners of the organizations “FISPMED Onlus” and from “University of Siena – SDSN (Sustainable Development Solution Network)” following the applications submitted by these organizations, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 23 for consideration and endorsement.

#### **F. Outreach, Communication and Advocacy**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the Secretariat’s efforts in the field of outreach, communication and advocacy.

#### **G. Internal Reflections on the Mandate and Composition of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the clarifications provided by the Secretariat on the role of the Bureau and its mandate in the period between two meetings of Contracting Parties, based on the ToRs of the Bureau approved by the Contracting Parties.

(b) The Bureau underlines the importance of using other effective models of governance, including a Troika approach, to ensure continuity of the work of the Bureau.

(c) The Bureau takes note of the proposals by the Secretariat to amend the ToRs of the Bureau in order to allow the possibility for the election of the Contracting Party representing the Presidency of the previous COP as a Bureau member or ex-officio member, for the consideration of the MAP Focal Points at their meeting of September 2023.

#### **H. Emerging Issues of Global and Mediterranean Relevance and Importance**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the proposal of the Secretariat to examine the implications of the identified emerging issues at global level to the work and mandate of UNEP/MAP, in the context of the MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027, and bring them to the attention of the MAP Focal Points.