



UNITED
NATIONS

EP

UNEP/MED WG.553/2



**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention

9 January 2023
Original: English

Third (Interim) Steering Committee Meeting of the EU-funded Marine Litter MED II Project

Istanbul, Türkiye, 8 February 2023

Agenda Item 3: Progress on Marine Litter MED II Project Implementation:

Progress Report on the Implementation of Marine Litter MED II Project

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2023

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1. Introduction

1. The EU-funded Marine Litter MED II Project implemented and coordinated by UN Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) aims to support the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention from the southern Mediterranean region to further expand and support the implementation of the updated Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean. The project's activities are coordinated by UNEP/MAP Secretariat with the support of UNEP/MAP Components (i.e., MED POL, SCP/RAC, SPA/RAC and REMPEC), in close cooperation with the beneficiary Contracting Parties (i.e., Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) and the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (hereunder referred to as BSC).

2. The Marine Litter MED II project also presents a special focus on Decision IG.24/4 on the *“Roadmap and Needs Assessment for the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report”*; Decision IG.24/11 on the *“Guidelines: Adopt-a-Beach; Phase-out of Single Use Plastic Bags; Provision of Reception Facilities in Ports and the Delivery of Ship-Generated Wastes; Application of Charges at Reasonable Costs for the Use of Port Reception Facilities”*, Decision IG.25/9 *“Amendments to the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean in the Framework of Article 15 of the Land Based Sources Protocol”* as well as the COP22 Antalya Ministerial Declaration.

3. The project was launched in September 2020 and aims to achieve three principal outputs:

- Output A: Enhance national capacities on monitoring and assessing marine litter addressing pressures/sources and impacts to contribute to 2023 MED QSR with quality assured data addressing pressures and effectiveness of measures in line with COP 20 Decision on 2017 MED QSR.
- Output B: Scale up and expand the implementation of pilot implementation of selected marine litter reduction and prevention measures at national and local level.
- Output C: Maximize synergies on marine litter actions in the Region with a focus on the collaboration with the Black Sea Commission and GFCM, and other regional partners.

4. Since its launch, the project is progressing towards achieving the implementation of all three project outputs. The present progress report highlights the main activities carried out from July 2022 to December 2022. It is prepared by UNEP/MAP for the kind consideration and review of the Third Steering Committee Meeting of the EU-funded Marine Litter MED II Project with the aim to review the progress achieved; provide comments and advice; and set the next steps and the way forward for the execution of the on-the-ground activities towards the timely and effective implementation of the Project.

5. The present progress report provides an overview of accomplishments made for each activity (as outlined in the project work plan). This is presented in Chapter 2 (Table 1) titled *“Progress Table: Marine Litter MED II Project”* providing detailed information for each activity and describing remaining work and arising issues preventing the timely completion of these activities. It also includes response measures taken to address the arising issues.

2. Progress Table: Marine Litter MED II Project

Table 1: Description of achievement of results against the project’s indicators.

Outcome 1	Indicator(s)	Target vs. Actual result	Description of the results achieved
<p>Enhance national capacities on monitoring and assessing marine litter addressing pressures/sources and impacts to contribute to 2023 MED QSR with quality assured data addressing pressures and effectiveness of measures in line with COP 20 Decision on 2017 MED QSR:</p>	<p>National Monitoring Programmes/ Strategies Prepared for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24.</p>	<p>As planned and in line with the Project’s Workplan</p>	<p>The progress in the implementation of this set of activities is progressing in line with the project’s workplan.</p> <p>The National Monitoring Programmes/ Strategies for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 have been elaborated and endorsed by the MED POL and SPA/RAC Focal Points in March 2022 for Tunisia and Lebanon, through written correspondence. The final versions of the two National Monitoring Programmes/ Strategies were presented as Information Documents during the CORMON Marine Litter Meeting (Videoconference, 31 May 2022).¹</p> <p>The National Monitoring Programmes/ Strategies have been launched and made operational in Lebanon and Tunisia since September 2021 and January 2022, respectively. Moreover, the relevant first and midterm progress reports were delivered in January 2022 and September 2022 for Lebanon, and in August 2022 and October 2022 for Tunisia. These reports include the collected data from stranded marine turtles in line with the regional protocol, as developed and approved during the first phase of the project.</p> <p>A dialogue has been initiated with the EU-funded projects INDICIT I & II as well as with the INTERREG MED Plastics Busters MPA Project regarding the sharing of data for the needs of updating the BV and establishing TV for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24. A relevant inventory has been prepared supplemented by national data from Lebanon, Tunisia and to some extent Algeria. The call for consultancy to “Elaborate updated Baseline Values and a proposal for establishing Threshold Values for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 has been finalized and posted in SPA/RAC web site on 14 December 2022.</p>
	<p>Level of collection of monitoring data for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24.</p>		
	<p>Level of agreement on updated baselines values, threshold values for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24.</p>		

¹ UNEP/MED WG.534/Inf.4: Draft National Operational Strategy for Monitoring IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 in Lebanon
 UNEP/MED WG.534/Inf.5: Draft National Operational Strategy for Monitoring IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 in Tunisia

	<p>Number of Monitoring Protocols and methodologies prepared and implemented for riverine marine litter and microplastics coming from WWTP</p>	<p>As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan</p>	<p>The first version of the "Draft Guidelines for Monitoring Riverine Inputs of Marine Litter" was prepared by MED POL and submitted for review to the CORMON Marine Litter Meeting held on 31 May 2022 (WG.534/4). Follow-up actions were identified towards updating the document and preparing its final version. Based on the Conclusions and Recommendation of the said meeting, the Online Working Group on Marine Litter (OWG-ML) has been activated since September 2022 and two online meetings were held in November and December 2022. One additional meeting will be organized in January 2023. A new outline has been agreed for the document and a revised version is under preparation which will be finalized shortly. The revised version of the document will be presented during the upcoming CORMON Marine Litter Meeting in to be held on 3 March 2023.</p>
	<p>Level of achievement of the approved marine litter environmental targets</p>	<p>Ongoing with delays</p>	<p>MED POL finalized in December 2022 the proposal for updating the Baseline Values (BV) and establishing Threshold Values (TV) for IMAF CI23 (seafloor macro-litter and floating microplastics). The document aims to address the needs of the 2023 MED QSR. It will be presented for review and endorsement to the upcoming CORMON Marine Litter Meeting (3 March 2023).</p> <p>A ToR is under preparation for assessing and further specifying and/or updating the environmental reduction targets agreed in 2016 (COP19) taking into consideration the targets included in the Naples and Antalya Ministerial Declarations. The advertisement of the call is expected to take place in early 2023. The work will be finalized by summer 2023.</p>
	<p>Number of assessment reports delivered including measures' identification</p>	<p>As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan</p>	<p>Two (2) assessment reports prepared. One on measures/instruments to prevent, control and monitor of marine litter undertaken for WTPP/Aquaculture/Rivers/Ships; and on sources for plastic pollution and measures to prevent and reduce generation of plastic waste management in the Mediterranean.</p> <p>In addition, the document "Overview of measures/instruments to prevent, control and manage marine litter generation from wastewater treatment plants, aquaculture activities, riverine inputs, and shipping" (WG.526/3) was prepared by MED POL. It was presented for the review of the Regional Meeting on Marine Litter Best Practices, held in Seville, Spain, on 17-18 May 2022.</p>

<p>Output 1-A Support countries to further advance and operationalize monitoring of IMAP Candidate Indicator 24, with a focus on the ground implementation of the operation strategy as developed during the previous ML MED Project</p>	<p>Level of preparation of national Monitoring programmes and strategies for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24</p>	<p>As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan</p>	<p>2 National Monitoring Programmes/ Strategies have been developed and approved for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 at national level for Tunisia and Lebanon. The final versions of the monitoring programmes were shared with the experts who participated at the CORMON Marine Litter Meeting (31 May 2022), namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG.534/Inf.4: Draft National Operational Strategy for Monitoring IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 in Lebanon • WG.534/Inf.5: Draft National Operational Strategy for Monitoring IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 in Tunisia. <p>The monitoring programmes are currently operational for both countries and data generation and collection are ongoing.</p>
	<p>Number of national teams and institutions involved in the process</p>		<p>National teams are in place in Lebanon (MoE, First-Aid Center of Tyre Coast Nature Reserve) since September 2021, and in Tunisia (INSTM, Sea Turtle Rescue Center in Monastir) since January 2022> the National teams are working in full speed on all relevant aspects as described, and in line with the requirements of the project document.</p>
	<p>Number of national experts trained</p>		<p>More than 50 participants participated in two capacity building trainings held on 7 and 15 Sept. 2022, as well as one workshop which was held on 17 Sept. 2022 that were organized in Lebanon for the members of the national teams which are involved in monitoring of IMAP Candidate Indicator 24.</p>

<p>Output 1-B Develop reporting templates, data standards and data dictionaries based on the agreed standardized monitoring protocols, including data quality assurance and quality control tools, to enable the reporting to the Secretariat of national data with regards to IMAP Candidate Indicator 24, through the IMAP (Pilots) Info System</p>	<p>Level of preparation of Data Standards and Data Dictionaries.</p>	<p>As planned and in line with Project's workplan</p>	<p>The "Data Standards (DS) and Data Dictionaries (DS) for IMAP Ecological Objective 10 (EO10) Candidate Indicator 24 (Ingestion and Entanglement on Marine Turtles)" (WG.534/3) have been developed by MED POL, SPA/RAC and InfoRAC and were approved by the CORMON Marine Litter Meeting on 31 May 2022. The Document was approved by the meeting with minor adjustments and currently UNEP/MAP (i.e., MED POL, SPA/RAC and InfoRAC) is working in editing the document to meet the requirements of the IMAP InfoSystem, as well as to prepare the relevant Module (excel) to enable a testing for uploading data prepared in the framework of the project from Tunisia and Lebanon.</p> <p>In the meantime, data generation and collection has been initiated in Lebanon and Tunisia (based on the national monitoring programmes) and additional data will be made available from Algeria. Additional data will be also considered in line with the Secretariat's proposal for budget reallocation and project extension.</p>
	<p>Level of preparation of quality assured reporting procedure of monitoring data sets</p>		
	<p>Level of inclusion of DS and DD in the IMAP Infosystem and operability</p>		
<p>Output 1-C Update Baseline Values and establish threshold values for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24</p>	<p>Level of further development and update of baseline values and environmental targets</p>	<p>As planned and in line with Project's workplan</p>	<p>Due to the lack of national data, MED POL and SPA/RAC have investigated for the presence of relevant data required for the development/update of Baseline Values (BV) and the establishment of Threshold Values (TV) for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24. A very active dialogue has been initiated with the EU-funded INDICIT I & II as well as with the INTERREG MED Plastics Busters MPA Projects, and currently two MoUs are under finalization and signature to enable data sharing. Additional data sources are and will also be considered.</p> <p>A preliminary inventory of data has been prepared including data from 2018 to 2021 with the scope to use them for the need of updating the BV and establishing TV for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24.</p> <p>Moreover, a call for consultancy for engaging an expert to work in updating BV and establishing TV for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24 has been advertised on SPA/RAC website on 14 December 2022. The expert will also be in charge for compiling the collected datasets and converting them in line with the IMAP InfoSystem template (Module). The expert is expected to come onboard in January 2023.</p>
	<p>Level of preparation of assessment threshold values</p>		

<p>Output 1-D Assess and further specify the environmental reduction targets as agreed by COP19 in 2016 and reconfirmed in Naples Ministerial Declaration of COP21 in December 2019, including to prevent and significantly reduce plastic leakage in the Mediterranean Sea and to progressively achieve 100% plastic waste collection and recycling by 2025.</p>	<p>Level of progress achieved in reaching the environmental targets approved by COP 19 in 2016.</p>	<p>Ongoing with delays</p>	<p>The Baseline and Threshold Values for the IMAP CI 22 (beach macro-litter) have been updated, approved, and annexed under Decision IG.25/9 (COP22, Antalya, Turkey, December 2021).</p> <p>The Secretariat (MED POL) finalized in December 2022 the proposal for updating the respective values for IMAP CI 23 (focus on floating microplastic and seafloor macrolitter. Fourteen (14) Contracting Parties have uploaded datasets to IMAP InfoSystem and were used for the said assignment. The respective document will be presented during the upcoming CORMON Marine Litter Meeting (3 March 2023).</p> <p>Based on the fact that the relevant values for IMAP CI 23 were finalized in December 2023 (pending approval of the CORMON Marine Litter, in March 2023), a ToR is under preparation for assessing and further specifying and/or updating the environmental reduction targets agreed in 2016 (COP19) taking into consideration the targets included in the Naples and Antalya Ministerial Declarations. The call is expected to be advertised in early 2023.</p>
	<p>Proposal on environmental targets or their update for IMAP Common and Candidate Indicators for Marine Litter</p>		
	<p>Number of indicators proposed to assess the reduction of plastic leakage in the Mediterranean towards the commitments in the Naples Ministerial Declaration of COP 21 with a particular on the result of the pilot projects under outcome 2 of this project</p>		
<p>Output 1-E Assess knowledge and data gaps for the riverine inputs of marine litter in the Mediterranean; propose relevant monitoring methodologies based on existing experience and adjust them into the Mediterranean needs; ensure synergies with the EU MSFD TGML work. This would prepare the ground for expanding the marine litter common indicators of IMAP to include an indicator on riverine inputs.</p>	<p>Level of preparation of Methodologies developed for monitoring and assessing riverine inputs.</p>	<p>As planned and in line with project's workplan</p>	<p>The "Draft Guidelines for Monitoring Riverine Inputs of Marine Litter" (WG.534/4) were prepared and presented for review to the CORMON Marine Litter Meeting, held on 31 May 2022.</p> <p>Further to the May 2022 CORMON Marine Litter Meeting, the Online Working Group on Marine Litter (OWG-ML) was activated in September 2022. Two (2) online meetings were held in November and December 2022, and one (1) additional meeting will be organized in January 2023. A new document outline has been agreed and a revised document was delivered in January 2023, with the aim to be presented during the upcoming CORMON Marine Litter Meeting (3 March 2023).</p> <p>The pilot projects in Israel and Morocco are progressing satisfactorily and the experience from the said pilots will be incorporated into the guidelines and based on the time availability the final version of the guidelines is expected to significantly support the pilots, as well as improve the acquisition of data.</p>
	<p>Level of Data collected to feed 2023 MED QSR preparations with regards to marine litter riverine inputs</p>		
	<p>Number of national experts trained</p>	<p>Ongoing with delays</p>	

<p>Output 1-F Assess the main uses and sources of microplastics in the Mediterranean, as well as microplastic leakages into the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean, focusing on existing studies with the aim to fill the gap for the Mediterranean and subsequently will result in proposing accordingly necessary measures as well as a protocol for microplastic monitoring coming from WWTP.</p>	Number of Regional/sub-regional reports on the sources, uses and leakages of microplastics in the Mediterranean	As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan	Two (2) assessment reports have been developed: a) Report on measures/instruments to prevent, control and monitor of marine litter undertaken for wastewater treatment plants; aquaculture activities; riverine inputs and ships, with a focus on microplastics, emerging pollutants and packaging waste management in the Mediterranean. b) Report on sources for plastic pollution and measures to prevent and reduce generation of plastic waste management in the Mediterranean.
	Number of key management and prevention measures proposed	As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan	Moreover, a report titled "Overview of measures/instruments to prevent, control and manage marine litter generation from wastewater treatment plants, aquaculture activities, riverine inputs, and shipping" (WG.526/3), was prepared and presented during the Regional Meeting on Marine Litter Best Practices (Seville, Spain, 17-18 May 2022) including a series of specific key management and prevention measures for effectively managing marine litter inputs from rivers, aquaculture, shipping and wastewater treatment plants.
	Number of Protocols developed to monitor microplastics	Ongoing with minor delays	The selection of an expert to work in developing a protocol for monitoring inputs of microplastics coming from WWTPs is close to its finalization. The expert is expected to be on board in January 2023.
<p>Output 1-G Support national Governments and competent entities in building capacity through technical assistance, training and collaboration for monitoring IMAP Candidate Indicator 24, riverine inputs, and microplastic deriving from WWTP.</p>	Number of national experts trained	Ongoing with delays	<p>Two (2) national capacity building meetings were organized in Morocco and Tunisia in July and December 2022 respectively, to review the progress of implementation of the project's activities and in particular pertinent to the execution of the pilots on AaB, FfL, riverine inputs, and in ports and marinas. Similar meetings are planned in Lebanon and Algeria in early 2023.</p> <p>Two (2) capacity building trainings and one (1) workshop were organized in Sept. 2022 in Lebanon for more than 50 persons pertinent to the implementation of activities for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24:</p> <p>a) A training was organized on 7 Sept. 2022 from the Lebanese MPA team (Tyre Coast Nature Reserve and Abbasiyeh Coast Nature Reserve) for approximately 40 participants, during which students and volunteers were trained and received targeted information on the impact of marine litter on stranded sea turtles.</p> <p>b) A training was organized on 15 Sept. 2022 in Tyre, Lebanon, at the port of Tyre, in cooperation with local Fishermen Associations, for 37 Lebanese fishermen, with a focus on providing guidance and capacity building on issues pertinent to</p>
	Number of teams involved in the pilot projects at country level		

			<p>accidental catches or entanglement of marine turtles during their fisheries operations.</p> <p>c) A local workshop was organized on 17 Sept. 2022 at Tyre Resort, with the support of the Ministry of Environment, having a broad stakeholder participation [local stakeholders (divers, fishermen, beach goers) students, municipalities and MPAs, representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, and NGOs]. The aim of the workshop was to present the data collected in the framework of the monitoring activities of the project, giving particular attention on aspects related to the enforcement and execution of laws which have a focus on the protection of marine biodiversity and in particular marine turtles along the Lebanese coast. In addition, the workshop focused on aspects relevant to integration of monitoring of IMAF Candidate Indicator 24 as part of the IMAF-based national monitoring programme on marine based on the Lebanon National Strategy that has been developed.</p> <p>Additional capacity building/ training activities will take place in 2023 for the remaining aspects of the project. A dedicated capacity building meeting is also planned towards mid-2023.</p>
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Outcome 2	Indicator(s)	Target vs. Actual result	Description of the results achieved
Scale up and expand the implementation of pilot implementation of selected marine litter reduction and prevention measures at national and local level:	Number of national reports submitted showcasing and presenting results from the implementation of Adopt-a-beach pilots	Ongoing with delays	<p>Three out five countries are onboard, and AaB pilots are ongoing in Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Beaches have been selected, pilots are executed, and national teams are in place. Despite the late commencement of the pilots for some countries, the pilots are progressing very well.</p> <p>The support to Egypt and Libya was not made possible as the signature of the respective legal agreements did not materialize. A decision was made to re-allocate funds to other project's activities as described in document WG.553/3.</p>
	Number of national reports submitted showcasing and presenting results from the implementation of Fishing-for-Litter pilots	Ongoing with delays	Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia are onboard, and FfL pilots are ongoing. Fishermen/vessels/ports have been selected, pilots are executed, and national teams are in place.
	Number of national reports submitted showcasing and presenting results from the implementation of measures related to the reduction of single-use plastic bags, and promote alternatives to SUPB, including preparation of adaptation programmes for concerned national industry	Ongoing with delays	<p>In relation to SUPB, work has been successfully completed in Tunisia, with a great appreciation by the Ministry of Environment.</p> <p>In Lebanon, a baseline report has been produced and submitted to the Ministry of Environment for review and possible endorsement.</p> <p>The intervention in Egypt is still inconclusive due to the lack of response/ engagement of the country.</p>
	Number of EPR schemes prepared and developed with a particular focus on plastic packaging and beverage containers	Ongoing with delays	Work is progressing in Morocco for an EPR scheme for plastic (PET) bottles in a joint manner with the respective activities implemented in the framework of the WES project based on the relevant roadmap that is in the process to be agreed at national level, expected by January 2023. In the meantime, MedWaves (SCP/RAC) came in an agreement with the Ministry of Environment regarding the contribution from Marine Litter MED II project, pertinent to the preparation of terms of reference for a national economic study focusing on the business model for collection and final treatment of PET bottles waste, which would support the decision on EPR fees by producers. Additionally, the project will organise an awareness/information

			<p>event, particularly targeting producers and local authorities. Work is expected to start in early 2023.</p> <p>In Algeria, collaboration is underway with GIZ project FILREC, which has piloted a voluntary EPR system in Willaya of Sétif. Once completed, the National Association of Producers has requested MedWaves to provide support in extending the action to three other Willayas (regions), as well as integrating other waste products. MedWaves has approached the Ministry to validate this proposal and continue the work, which would start in early 2023, provided the Ministry confirms the approach.</p> <p>In Lebanon, WES project has started a joint activity with Palestine to promote EPR in both countries. Synergies are being created and it is expected to organise a joint online event aiming at increasing capacity for both public authorities and producers on the implementation of EPR.</p>
	<p>Number of pilots related to the enhanced management of marine litter from sea-based sources in ports and marinas</p>	<p>Ongoing with delays</p>	<p>A regional expert is onboard since July 2022 to support the execution of pilots related to the better management of sea-based litter in ports and marinas. An analysis has been prepared for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, including relevant proposals for port and marina selections, and a checklist to support the national teams during this process. Online and physical meetings have been organized. The national experts are already on board in Algeria Morocco and Tunisia.</p> <p>The work has been initiated in all three countries and the selection of the ports and marinas has been completed.</p>

<p>Output 2-A Implement Adopt-a-Beach measures, with the scope to expand their geographical scope (at least 1 additional pilot per country) and related impact on further enhancing awareness raising of national/local communities.</p>	Number of countries implementing Adopt-a-beach pilots	Ongoing with delays	<p>Three countries (Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia) are implementing AaB pilots. Workplans have been agreed and national teams are in place. At least two additional sites/beaches per country have been selected and the surveys are ongoing in line with the relevant seasonal frequency. The level of engagement of local communities and volunteers is very good.</p> <p>The AaB interventions in Egypt and Libya have ended inconclusively, and UNEP/MAP proposal for budget re-allocation is described in detail under WG.553/3.</p> <p>Despite the late commencement of the pilots, they are progressing very well in Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia. Provided that additional time can be granted, the pilots will deliver results of great quality, including two additional seasonal surveys (at least 4 surveys per country).</p>
	Number of sites selected per country to implement adopt of beach measures.		
	Number of data collected in line with IMAP guidance factsheets and Adopt a Beach Guidelines		
	Number of local actors involved in the process		
	Level of marine litter reduction in pilot areas		
<p>Output 2-B Implement Fishing-for-Litter measures (i.e., passive scheme), in at least one additional fishing port with the scope to remove existing marine litter from the marine environment; Efforts will be made to test to the extent possible the FAO voluntary guidelines on marking of fishing gear and to cooperation with GFCM towards addressing the contribution of aquaculture in marine litter and microplastic generation</p>	Number of countries implementing FfL pilots	Ongoing with delays	<p>All three Countries (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia) are onboard and are implementing FfL pilots. National teams are in place and workplans have been agreed. The selection of fishermen/vessels/ports have been completed and progress in ongoing. For some cases, scuba divers have been also to support the implementation of the pilots.</p> <p>Despite the late commencement of the pilots, they are progressing satisfactorily in all three countries. It is expected that with additional time, the pilots will deliver quality results, including a high level of engagement of the local fishermen.</p>
	Number of sites selected per country to implement FfL measures		
	Number of data collected in line with IMAP guidance factsheets and FfL Guidelines.		
	Number of local actors involved in the process.		
	Level of marine litter item reduction in pilot areas.		

<p>Output 2-C Further sensitize and engage fishermen to the purpose of minimizing sea-based sources; and contribute to extent possible with data on seafloor marine litter.</p>	<p>Number of fishermen engaged in the implementation of the pilots.</p>	<p>Not yet started</p>	<p>The capacity building component of the project will be executed in 2023, with a proposal to organize a capacity building meeting in one of the beneficiary countries in mid-2023.</p>
<p>Output 2-D Phase out priority single-use marine litter items from the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment, with a focus on advancing the existing work on single-use plastic bags promoting proper and sustainable alternatives, including on single-use plastic items intensively used, or produced during the COVID-19 Pandemic; and to further support the improvement of the legislator framework for other single-use items ending up as marine litter , in line with the new EU Single-Use Plastics Directive and possibly the updated Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean</p>	<p>Number of national workshops.</p> <p>Number of countries to review and draft up to date regulations and law on reduction of single use plastics.</p> <p>Number of laws/regulations developed on reduction of single use plastics.</p>		

	<p>Number of counties and sectors implementing EPR schemes for plastic packaging and beverage containers</p>	<p>Ongoing with delays</p>	<p>Work is progressing in Morocco regarding the development of an EPR scheme having a focus on plastic (PET) bottles, which is in line with the national EPR roadmap. This scheme is close to its finalization having been developed in the framework of the WES Project. The roadmap is expected to be approved by January 2023. In the meantime, MedWaves agreed with the Ministry of Environment regarding the contribution of the Marine Litter MED II project, which will enable the preparation of terms of reference for a national economic study having a focus on a business model to focus on the collection and final treatment of PET bottles ending up as waste. This would further support the decision on EPR fees by producers. Additionally, the project will organise an awareness/information event, particularly targeting producers and local authorities. Work is expected to start in early 2023. It is expected that with additional time, the pilots will deliver quality results, including a greater communication and outreach impact.</p> <p>In Algeria, collaboration has been followed with GIZ project FILREC, which has piloted a voluntary EPR system in Willaya of Sétif. Once completed, the National Association of Producers has requested MedWaves to provide support in extending the action to 3 other willayas, as well as integrating other waste products. MedWaves has approached the Ministry of Environment to validate the latter as well as to continue the work, which would start in early 2023, provided the Ministry confirms the approach. Provided that additional time can be granted, the intervention will be completed in a smoother way, having a greater communication and outreach impact.</p> <p>In Lebanon, WES project has started a joint activity with Palestine to promote EPR in both countries. Synergies are being created and it is expected to organise a joint online event aiming at increasing capacity both from public authorities and producers on the implementation of EPR. Provided that additional time can be granted, this joint intervention will be completed in a smoother way, having a greater communication and outreach impact.</p>
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<p>Output 2-E Expand the implementation of pilots (at least one additional port and one marina for the countries participated to the first phase of the project and, where possible, one port and one marina for those countries that did not participate in the first phase of the project) related to the enhanced management of marine litter from sea-based sources in ports and marinas in the Mediterranean, with a focus on advancing the existing work on the application of charges at reasonable costs for the use of port reception facilities or, when applicable, application of the No-Special-Fee system as well to the provision of reception facilities in ports and the delivery of ship-generated wastes, and to explore and establish synergies between the Marine Litter Regional Plan and the IMO Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, as well as other relevant plans or initiatives.</p>	<p>Number of pilots related to the enhanced management of marine litter from sea-based sources in ports and marinas implemented.</p>	<p>Ongoing with delays</p>	<p>The pilots have been initiated in 2022 and are progressing satisfactorily in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. A regional expert is onboard since July 2022 supporting the overall activity, as well as the beneficiary countries.</p> <p>An analysis has been prepared for all three Countries regarding available options for selecting a port/marina. A checklist has been also developed to support and guide the countries during the selection process. Online and/or physical meetings have been organized in all 3 countries. Moreover, a ToR template has been prepared for the kind support of the beneficiary countries.</p> <p>The national experts are onboard in Morocco and Tunisia and the same is expected to happen for Algeria in December 2022.</p> <p>The selection of ports and marinas has been completed for all 3 countries, and currently workplans and relevant annotations are under preparation including a detailed programme for the field/site visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Algeria: Port of Skikda (Wilaya of Skikda, East-Algeria) and the marina of Store (Wilaya of Skikda, East -Algeria). (b) Morocco: Port and Marina in Al Hoceima. (c) Tunisia: Port of Sousse and Cape Monastir Marina.
	<p>Number of targeted diagnosis prepared for the selected ports and marinas.</p>		
	<p>Number of Waste Reception and Handling Plans (WRHP) prepared or revised.</p>		

Outcome 3	Indicator(s)	Target vs. Actual result	Description of the results achieved
Maximize synergies on marine litter actions in the Region with a focus on the collaboration with the Black Sea Commission and GFCM, and other regional partners:	Level of marine litter reduction observed in pilot areas in two eligible BS countries addressing beach marine litter (Adopt-a-beach) and prevention measures (phasing out single-use plastic bags)	Ongoing with delays	An SSFA has been signed since Nov. 2021, bilateral exchanges are taking place, including an online meeting between UNEP/MAP Coordinator and BSC Executive Director which took place in September 2022. No substantive progress can be reported for both the national and regional components of the activities due to the emerging situation in the Black Sea region.
	Number of national marine litter monitoring programmes prepared		
	Number of marine litter assessment reports for the Black Sea region updated/prepared		
	Number of joint workplans prepared and established with GFCM and BSC on marine litter issues and cooperation with regional partners enhanced, including with G7 and G20 as appropriate	Ongoing with delays	No progress is reported. The activity will be initiated with tangible progress and results in 2023.
	Number of additional memberships from organizations/institutions from the project eligible countries join the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine litter in the Mediterranean.	As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan	The 5 th Meeting of the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter was held online in July 2022, and a review to the joint workplan was undertaken. A 6 th Meeting has been agreed to be organized in 26 April 2023, including an extended review of the joint workplan.
	Number of project reports prepared and submitted, and steering committee meetings successfully organized.	As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan	The 2021 Annual Project Progress and Financial Report was timely submitted to the donor and was approved. TLS reports for 2022 have been successfully submitted for the reporting period. The preparation of the 2022 annual progress and financial reports are undergoing to be submitted in early 2023 in line with the reporting requirements. Two (2) Steering Committee Meetings were organized in Sept. 2021 and July 2022. Relevant meeting reports were drafted, reviewed and approved.

Output 3-A	Number of national monitoring programmes	Ongoing with delays	An SSFA has been signed with BSC since Nov. 2021; however, no substantive progress is reported regarding the national and regional components of the project. The current emerging situation in the Black Sea Region do not allow for the effective execution of the activities as provided for in the signed SSFA. Efforts are ongoing and options are explored to progress regarding the regional component of the project.
	Number of regional assessment reports		
	Number of baseline values formulated		
Output 3-B	Adopt-a-beach pilots are implemented in at least, two Black Sea countries	Ongoing with delays	An online meeting between UNEP/MAP Coordinator and BSC Executive Director which took place in September 2022.
	National regulatory framework for phasing out single-use plastic bags is reviewed, and technical assistance is provided in two countries		
Output 3-C	Joint workplan between UNEP/MAP and GFCM is prepared and agreed.	Ongoing with delays	An updated MoU between UNEP/MAP and GFCM has been endorsed by COP22, including a section (Section 5) dedicated on the bilateral cooperation on marine litter. A bilateral meeting was expected to be organized during 2022 but this was not possible. Efforts will be further strengthened in 2023 scoping to finalize the activity by the summer of 2023.
Output 3-D	Participation and membership of key Mediterranean actors and stakeholders into the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter in the Mediterranean expanded; and synergies maximized.	As planned and in line with the Project's Workplan	The 5 th Meeting of the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter was held online in July 2022. The 2022-2023 joint workplan was reviewed, and a meeting was agreed on 26 April 2023 in order to provide an extensive review to the joint workplan.
	Additional memberships from organizations/institutions from the project eligible countries join the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine litter in the Mediterranean		

3. Progress Report on Project Management

6. Progress during the second and third year of implementation has progressed well; mainly focusing on streamlining the Project's support to the countries. The Secretariat's efforts mainly focused on engaging the remaining countries and operationalizing all national activities, including the engagement of the national teams.

7. In terms of reporting, the UNEP/MAP PMU has successfully submitted the 2nd Annual Project Progress Report covering the year 2021. The report was approved by the donor. Moreover, the relevant periodic ENRTP/GPGC traffic light reports required during the reporting period have been successfully submitted. The process for preparing the third annual progress and financial reports for the year 2022 have been initiated and are expected to be finalized in 2023.

8. The Associate Programme Management Officer (P2) (Marine Litter MED II Project Manager) is on board since October 2021 and is following up to his duties. At the Secretariat, a project assistant through the UNV modality was onboard till October 2022. In parallel the G5 position (50% funded from the project) was advertised in June-July 2022. The written assessment was conducted, and interviews were completed. The final selection is undergoing.

9. The Project budget was released for 2022 in accordance with yearly allocations, as per the Project document and is operational in UMOJA/UE2. Moreover, the 3rd installment of the project has been effectively released from UNEP HQ's and is now operational in UMOJA/UE2. More information on the budget can be found under working document UNEP/MED WG.553/3.

10. Eight (8) SSFAs are operational with MAP Components (SCP/RAC/MedWaves and SPA/RAC), beneficiary countries (Algeria, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia) and with implementing partners (BSC). Relevant installments have been released and reporting is ongoing. No additional legal agreement is expected in the framework of the project.

11. Covid-19 and its consequences continued to affect project execution in 2022 and the Secretariat is increasing its efforts towards overcoming the persisting delays through constant follow-ups and bilateral exchanges/meetings. Case-to-case delays have been also observed and will be elaborated during the Steering Committee. The Secretariat including its MAP Components have undertaken the necessary corrective actions.

4. Interlinkages and Synergies with Other Projects

12. The project is executed in full synergy and complementarity with the approved UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) 2022-2027 (Decision IG.25/1, COP22) and the Programme of Work (PoW) 2022-2023 (Decision IG.25/19, COP22).

13. The project will also ensure that synergy and coherence are enhanced as much as possible with other relevant projects and initiatives, and in particular with other EU-, Interreg-MED and GEF-funded projects (i.e., GEF Med Programme Child 1.1; EcAp MED III; IMAP-MPA; PlasticBusters MPAs; INDICIT II; Water and Environment Support (WES); GloLitter; etc.), as well as with the activities supported from the Cooperation Agreement between UNEP/MAP and the Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition and from the French Voluntary contribution.

14. The work pertinent to single-use plastics and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is having a very strong synergistic component with the EU-funded WES Project in both the regional and national components. The respective synergies are listed hereunder (Table 2):

15. Cooperation with several other projects can be showcased in Tunisia for the component of the project which focuses on further developing IMAP Candidate Indicator 24:

- a) Life MEDTURTLES Project: SPA/RAC signed an MoU, through which the Faculty of Sciences of Sfax, who is coordinating the project in Tunisia, particularly the data collection on marine litter ingested by stranded sea turtles, is committed to putting its expertise and the data acquired for the execution of the Marine Litter MED II project.
- b) COMMON Project: The "Coastal Management and Monitoring Network for tackling marine litter in Mediterranean Sea" (COMMON) Project is funded by the ENI CBC MED programme. In the framework of its work package 3.3, SPA/RAC is discussing the possibility to retrieve the data collected from the monitoring of macrolitter and microlitter on the stranded and live turtles. The project has ensured the characterization and quantification of litter ingested by sea turtles and the centralization of stomach content samples.
- c) SPA/RAC supported the COMMON project team (INSTM) for the organization of a 2-day training workshop (21-22 December 2021) aimed to improve knowledge on monitoring and assessing the impact of marine debris on Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (M&CPA) and threatened species. The training was an opportunity to present the Marine Litter MED II Project and to implement a practical training on the implementation of the Protocol for monitoring interactions between marine litter and marine turtles (ingestion and entangling) with a view to harmonizing methods of data collection for monitoring and assessment (Prepared within the phase I of the project).
- d) Marine Turtles Project: the MAVA funded project aims to reinforce sea turtles stranding national monitoring. SPA/RAC organised a sub-regional training on marine turtle rescue, networking at the Lampedusa Turtle Rescue Centre during 15-19 November 2021. This regional training included lectures and practical sessions on onboard first aid, sampling techniques, turtle rescue surgery, clinical treatments and necropsy. Marine turtle specialists and veterinarians from Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Lebanon benefited from the workshop.
- e) SPA/RAC co-organised with MEDASSET and INFO/RAC a workshop "PAN-MEDITERRANEAN STRANDING PROTOCOL & DATABASE" in the framework of the 7th Mediterranean marine turtles conference (Morocco, 18-21 October 2022), during which the progress and tangible deliverables deriving from the first and second phase of the Marine Litter MED project were presented.

16. Within the Project Output 1.3 "Update baseline values and threshold values for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24", synergies have been established with the EU-funded INDICIT I and II projects, as well as with the INTERREG-MED Plastic Busters MPA Projects, including an exchange of results and datasets for the need of updated the Baseline Values (BV) and establishing Threshold Values (TV) for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24.

Table 2: Synergistic execution of activities between Marine Litter MED II and WES projects relevant to SUPs and EPR.

	Marine Litter MED (2016 – 2019)	Marine Litter Med II (2020 – 2023)	WES
Regional	<p>Preparation of regional guidelines to phase out single-use plastic bags, adopted by COP21 (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2021).</p> <p>Contribution to the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter, and organization of the Regional Meetings on Marine Litter Best Practices (Izmir, Turkey 2018 and Seville, Spain, 2019).</p>	<p>Contribution to the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter by sharing details of activities implemented at regional and national level and their inclusion in the approved joint workplans.</p> <p>Contribution to the Regional Meeting on Marine Litter Best Practices (Seville, Spain, 17-18 May 2022) in terms of content preparation in relation to circular economy and plastics, including policy recommendations.</p>	<p>Organization of a regional training on microplastics (May-June 2021) to enhance the competences of the trainees on technical aspects of microplastics (definitions, types, pathways, impact, etc.); monitoring approaches and knowledge gaps; links between microplastics and chemical pollution; the pros/cons of potential measures; policy options and decision-making based on sound scientific evidence. More than 60 stakeholders from 10 Mediterranean countries participated in the on-line training, delivered via 3 modules (approx. 3 hours each; 9 hours in total). (More info)</p>
Morocco	<p>Technical assistance provided on options to implement EPR in the country, with a focus on plastic packaging products.</p>	<p>Implementation and support through providing technical assistance for the implementation of selected measures as provided for in the national roadmap.</p> <p>The final scope of the project's intervention has been defined vis-à-vis the finalization of the national roadmap (link with WES Project). Based on the above, the contribution from Marine Litter MED II project would be the preparation of terms of reference for a national economic study having a focus on a business model for the collection and final treatment of PET bottles ending up as waste. The latter will support the decision on EPR fees by producers. Additionally, the project would organize an awareness/information event, particularly targeting producers and local authorities. Work is expected to start early 2023</p>	<p>Development of a national roadmap for the implementation of EPR scheme on PET drink bottles (expected to be finalized in September 2022).</p> <p>A national workshop took place in April 2022 where the main directions and scope of work were agreed. The experts' team has drafted a first version of the roadmap, shared with the Ministry of Environment which has approved it. The next step is the organization of a consultation meeting to take place in January 2023, for final adoption.</p> <p>The roadmap (4-years action plan table) contains key elements and steps that should be taken into consideration when establishing relevant systems/schemes.</p>

Tunisia	Technical advice provided on the draft decree for the banning of single-use plastic bags, and the development of the complementary legal framework.	Work has been successfully completed in Tunisia, with a great appreciation by the Ministry Environment, which co-authored the final report: https://arc.fastfolder.net/index.php/s/IBB5CsvDAkXve7c This includes the summary of activities, mainly the implementation of the communication campaign in the country, the results of the survey on consumption of SUPB and perceptions, as well as policy recommendations. The Ministry welcomed this and showed willingness to follow them	N/A
Algeria	A feasibility study for an EPR pilot project was prepared for the area of Willaya of Oran, focusing on beverage packaging.	In Algeria, collaboration has been followed with GIZ project FILREC, which has piloted a voluntary EPR system in Willaya of Sétif. Once completed, the National Association of Producers has requested MedWaves to provide support in extending the action to 3 other willayas, as well as integrating other waste products. MedWaves has approached the Ministry to validate this and continue the work, which would start early 2023, provided the Ministry confirms the approach.	N/A

Lebanon	<p>SUPs: A study on production and consumption of single-use plastic bags, and views from stakeholders on potential policy measures was prepared.</p>	<p>Technical support to MoE in moving forward focusing on policy measure/s for phasing out single-use plastic bags. Focus is given in the development of a tax system or a consumers' reward system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the baseline on the consumption of plastic bags in supermarkets; • Propose of 2 scenarios: (i) a tax system, (ii) an incentive system • Meetings with MoE (Organized jointly with the WES project/activities); • Consultation meeting with stakeholders (Organized jointly with the WES project/activities); • Support to the MoE in the development of relevant targeted policies. 	<p>Technical assistance to the MoE in defining and implementing policy measures to tackle on-the-go single-use plastics (excluding plastic bags):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of the baseline situation (production and consumption) for the selected SUP items in Lebanon: on-the-go food and beverage single-use packaging; • Identification and discussion on priorities and recommendations for policy measures; • Larger consultation meetings to validate the results and agree on the way forward for the reduction of SUPs; • Support to the MoE in the development of specific policies to take action to reduce SUPs.
	<p>EPR: N/A</p>	<p>Technical support is provided to the Ministry of Environment to raise awareness and capacity on EPR implementation, particularly for plastic packaging waste. Following the WES activity kick-off on EPR, it is expected to organise a joint online meeting to showcase other EPR experiences in the region and beyond, aiming to increase capacity and start planning EPR in the country.</p>	<p>In Lebanon, WES project has started a joint activity with Palestine to promote EPR in both countries (no MedWaves involvement in this activity).</p>

5. Gender aspects

17. Gender balance and equity are among the ML MED II Project's core values, and pertinent provisions are taken into account in Project's activities. Gender equality and women's empowerment are also recognized as a cross-cutting priority across all aspects of UNEP's work, including for UNEP/MAP. The Secretariat, through its core work but also through projects' implementation, promotes women and men's participation in all environmental protection and sustainable development activities.

18. Provisions for gender balanced participation is also included in correspondence between UNEP/MAP and the beneficiary Countries for the nomination of Project Focal Points, as well as in the future calls for the recruitment of experts/consultants.

19. The Secretariat is exploring ways and means to streamline gender parity and gender dimension in the Project activities from the substantive point of view based on best practices from other projects and at UNEP level.

20. For the selection of experts and executing partners at national level under the Project activities of the Marine Litter MED II Project it is also required to take into consideration the gender equality.

6. Communication

21. The [Project's mini site](#) was significantly updated in line with the recommendations of the 1st Steering Committee Meeting, and since then is constantly updated.

22. The brochure presenting the three EU-funded projects is available on the website of [UNEP/MAP](#) including on the [project's mini-site](#).

23. A complementary video is being produced including for Marine Litter MED II project and has been uploaded in [project's mini-site](#).

24. The Second Steering Committee Meeting of the Project was the occasion to shed lights on the progress made in the past months through an article published on the website of UNEP/MAP in August 2022. A news item titled "[How the UNEP/MAP EU-funded projects contribute to achieving Good Environmental Status](#)" was released with very clear references to the Marine Litter MED II project.

25. UNEP/MAP always ensured appropriate EU visibility and the acknowledgement of its financial contribution in the abovementioned actions. All the UNEP/MAP Components are paying particular attention to the promotion of Marine Litter MED II project in the framework of the numerous international and regional meetings and activities planned during the lifespan of the project.

26. MedWaves has published and disseminated news regarding the activities under its responsibility, particularly in Tunisia and Lebanon:

- <https://www.medwaves-centre.org/new/medwaves-strengthens-support-to-the-southern-med-in-the-second-phase-of-marine-litter-med-project/>
- <https://www.medwaves-centre.org/new/addressing-single-use-plastic-bags-challenges-a-tunisian-story/>
- <https://www.medwaves-centre.org/new/campagne-soyons-responsables-70-des-tunisiens-connaissent-le-decret-dinterdiction-de-sacs-en-plastique/>
- <https://www.wes-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/N-E-LB-2b-2022.11.24-Press-Release.pdf>