

Meeting of the Focal Points of the
Regional Marine Pollution Emergency
Response Centre for the Mediterranean
Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.16/5
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Agenda Item 5

THE REGIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

1. Introduction

1. In order to fulfill one of its main functions, that is to provide Contracting Parties to the Emergency Protocol to the Barcelona Convention with various information related to accidental marine pollution preparedness and response, REMPEC develops and maintains the Regional Information System (RIS) and various facilities and tools necessary for efficiently operating it.
2. Since the last Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points, a number of Sections in various Parts of RIS have been updated, re-edited and re-published. These are reported in documents REMPEC/WG.16/5/1, 2 and 3, and further described in document REMPEC/WG.16/INF.10.
3. In addition, with a view to facilitating the updating, editing and managing the Regional Information System, the Centre also endeavoured to develop a number of tools for the proper running of RIS (REMPEC/WG.16/INF.9).

2. Library

4. In order to assist the sorting of documents kept in the Centre's library and searching for information, a specific computerized database for the library was developed during 1998. The new database is described in document REMPEC/WG.16/INF.9, and will be demonstrated to the participants in the Meeting.

3. Computerized relational database

5. With a view to facilitating the maintenance, updating and managing of RIS, and in particular to make the management of relevant data more user-friendly and production of documents easier and more efficient, the Centre's computerized relational database, that forms the core of RIS, was during 1998 completely restructured, upgraded and updated. The new relational database will be presented to the participants in the Meeting.

6. It is expected that the improvements, which are described in more detail in document REMPEC/WG.16/INF.9, will significantly increase the efficiency of the Centre in providing the coastal States with the information required. This refers in particular to the updating and publishing of various Sections of Part B of the Regional Information System.

4. Proposal concerning new ways of disseminating information within the context of the Emergency Protocol

7. Taking into consideration an ever increasing role of internet in dissemination and exchange of information and data, as well as the fact that providing the coastal States with reliable and relevant technical, operational, organizational, administrative and legal information remains one of the main goals of REMPEC, the Centre considered the development of a **web site** on the internet of potential interest for the Contracting Parties to the Emergency Protocol.

8. The envisaged contents of the REMPEC's web site is described in document REMPEC/WG.16/INF.9, and the list of proposed web pages is attached as Annex 2 to the same document. In order to assist the Meeting in evaluating the usefulness of the creating the Centre's web site, a model has been developed and will be presented to the Meeting.

9. In order to enhance the exchange of information among the Parties to the Emergency Protocol, and between them and relevant national and international organizations and institutions active in the field of accidental marine pollution prevention, preparedness and response, the Centre intends to start publishing on a quarterly basis an **information newsletter** (bulletin). An outline of tentative contents of such newsletter is given in Annex 3 to the document REMPEC/WG.16/INF.9.

Action requested of the Meeting of Focal Points

10. The Focal Points' Meeting will be invited:

- a) to take note of the plans and work already carried out for the computerization of the Centre's library;
- b) to take note of the proposal for publishing REMPEC's newsletter.
- c) to comment and agree on the future status of the Centre's relational database.
- d) to consider, examine and approve the creation of REMPEC's web site and its contents.