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**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP)  
REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE  
MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)**

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10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional  
Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre  
for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.32/9/2  
Date: 30 March 2011

Malta, 3-5 May 2011

Original: English

Agenda Item 9

**PROPOSAL RELATED TO FUTURE POSSIBLE WORK OF  
THE MEDITERRANEAN TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (MTWG)**

**Note by the Secretariat**

**SUMMARY**

**Executive Summary:** This document proposes future activities to be integrated to the work programme of the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) for biennium 2012-2013.

**Action to be taken:** Paragraph 24

**Related documents:** [REMPEC/WG.30/6/1](#)  
[REMPEC/WG.30/6/2](#)  
REMPEC/WG.32/5  
[REMPEC/WG.32/8/1](#)  
REMPEC/WG.32/9/1

**Introduction**

1. The Programme of Work of the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) for the biennium 2010-2011 approved by the Ninth Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points and detailed in document REMPEC/WG.32/9/1, shall be partially completed by the end of the current biennium as shown hereunder:

- The Mediterranean Guidelines for the Use of Dispersants for Combating Oil Pollution at Sea in the Mediterranean Region shall be finalised, disseminated to the Contracting Parties and integrated in the in the Centre's Regional Information System (RIS).
- MIDSIS TROCS version 3.0 shall be available in August 2011 for testing by volunteering Mediterranean coastal States and subsequently will be integrated in the Centre's Regional Information System (RIS).

2. Regarding the Guidelines on Sunken Oil Assessment and Removal Techniques which was included in the programme of work of the MTWG by the Eighth Meeting of Focal Points of REMPEC and detailed in document REMPEC/WG.30/6/1 and as referred in paragraphs 27-31 of document REMPEC/WG.32/9/1, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) OPRC-HNS Technical Group is developing guidelines at international level.

3. As a regional contribution to this international forum and as agreed by the Eighth Meeting of Focal Points of REMPEC (paragraph 5 of document REMPEC/WG.30/6/1), the MTWG is invited to support the development of the Guidelines by providing comments on the document.

### **MTWG Proposed Work Programme**

4. Taking into consideration the progress made on the programme of work of the MTWG, REMPEC invited its Focal Points, by Circular Letter O5/2011 dated 23 February 2011, to submit any technical subject related to marine pollution preparedness and response, for inclusion in the MTWG work programme for the biennium 2012-2013. At the time of writing the present document, the Centre had received one proposal from Israel on biological agents.

5. According to [Specific Objectives 18 and 20](#) of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships, all Contracting Parties are requested to identify recommendations, principles and guidelines available through the Regional Information System (vide REMPEC/WG.32/5) that need to be developed, revised, updated and/or amended. This should be taken into account by the Meeting when considering the programme of work of the MTWG.

6. Bearing in mind the proposal from Israel, the Secretariat proposes to consider the following activities in the programme of work of the MTWG for the up-coming biennium.

### **Biological agents**

7. In light of the latest events in the Gulf of Mexico last year, the use of chemical dispersants had created new and perhaps inevitable questions to be raised, as relates to their efficiency and its possible added negative effects on the marine environment. To this end, biological based agents may be considered as an alternative and may require further investigations and discussions as to their use in the clean up operations of an oil spill, in a possibly more environmentally sound manner.

8. Hence, the Government of Israel proposed to include in the programme of work of the MTWG, an assessment of the current knowledge of biological agents for oil spill treatment, in view of setting guidelines for their use and assessing their advantages and limitations.

9. On the other hand, the OGP's Global Industry Response Group (GIRG) Response Group has been gathering information about the Macondo well spill and similar incidents. The Group is collating lessons learned and identifying possible gaps for action. The outcome of the GIRG's investigation will provide new knowledge and understanding about dispersants including in particular sub-surface application.

10. Taking the above into consideration, the Mediterranean Guidelines for the Use of Dispersants for Combating Oil Pollution at Sea in the Mediterranean Region reviewed by the MTWG in the biennium 2010-2011 will eventually require further updates reflecting the latest lessons learnt from this landmark incident and the results from the work proposed by the Government of Israel.

### **Regional Risk Assessment Methodology**

11. As mentioned in document REMPEC/32/8/1, the assessment carried out by the Centre in preparation for the "Regional Government and Industry Workshop on Co-operation, Preparedness for and Response to Oil Spills in the Mediterranean Sea" (11-12 May 2009, Marseilles, France) together with the conclusions of the Workshop identified the question of a shared methodology for risk assessment as an effective tool to support the countries in enhancing their level of preparedness.

12. The outcome of the Workshop related to risk assessment extracted from the activity report is reproduced in **Annex**.

13. Based on this conclusion, REMPEC, in partnership with the Mediterranean Oil Industry Group (MOIG), have initiated discussions to organise a Regional Workshop "MEDEXPOL 2011 on Risk Assessment in the Mediterranean region".

14. The objective of MEDEXPOL 2011 will be to share experiences and knowledge on risk assessment methodologies/practices with a view to developing a Government/ Industry Regional Risk Assessment common methodology (i.e. the combined analysis of hazard and vulnerability), to improve the national preparedness.

15. It is therefore proposed that based on the outcome of MEDEXPOL 2011, the MTWG should work together with the Secretariat and MOIG towards the elaboration of a risk assessment methodology.

16. The active participation of the industry to this specific objective is instrumental:

- The industry has already developed and applied Risk Assessment methodologies, which could be shared with the countries.
- The industry is able to provide the relevant information about its activities, considered as potential sources of hazard, and the results of their Risk Assessment (which should be carried out for all their facilities).

17. It should be further noted that the European Commission (EC) Communication on the "Internal Security Strategy" which was published on 22 November 2010 states that "the Commission will develop together with Members States, EU risk assessment and mapping guidelines for disaster management".

18. The EC, later, on 21 December 2010, published a Staff Working Paper entitled "[Risk Assessment and Mapping Guidelines for Disaster Management](#)<sup>1</sup>". It is understood that the EC intends to establish by 2014 a coherent risk management policy linking threat and risk assessments to decision making.

19. In the meantime, it is worth noticing that in other regional sea areas as well as at the global level, renewed interest has been shown in reviewing risk assessment methodologies and results. This is the case in the Baltic Sea with the "BRISK" project or other work carried out in the OSPAR Convention and also in the Black Sea. In March 2010, the IMO and the WMU also organised a worldwide workshop on this topic.

20. Considering the conclusions of the Workshop referred to in paragraph 11 as well as the EU risk assessment and mapping guidelines for disaster management, the Secretariat proposes to include the development of a Regional Risk Assessment Methodology in the programme of work of the MTWG for the period 2012-2013.

### **Inventory of equipment**

21. Reference is made to paragraph 14 and 15 of document REMPEC/WG.32/8/1 highlighting the importance of maintaining, at national and regional level, an inventory of available means in order to fasten the identification of equipment and human resources that could be made available to a third party in case of emergency.

22. Taking into account the upgrade of the Regional Information System (RIS), in particular its [Part B on directories and inventories](#) and the [country profile](#) updated by the respective Contracting Parties, and recognizing that having a clear overview on the existing stockpiles and human resources available in the region, can contribute to a regional assistance mechanism and to eventual mobilization planning; the Secretariat proposes to include, in the programme of work of the MTWG for the period 2012-2013, a review of the existing inventory of means with a view to upgrade and update it for more efficiency in an emergency situation.

### **Guidelines for the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG)**

23. According to the [Guidelines for the Mediterranean Technical Working Group \(MTWG\)](#), the Meetings of REMPEC Focal Points should periodically examine and review these guidelines and make recommendations as appropriate to facilitate the work of the MTWG. It is thus proposed that the current existing guidelines will be assessed by the MTWG during the next biennium with a view to decide on the need to review/ amend/ update them, as necessary.

24. **The Meeting of Focal Points is invited to:**

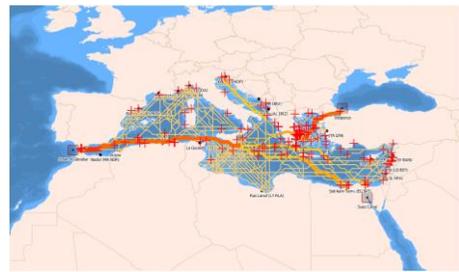
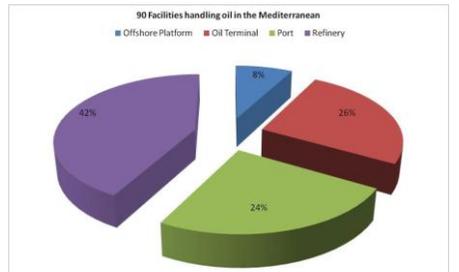
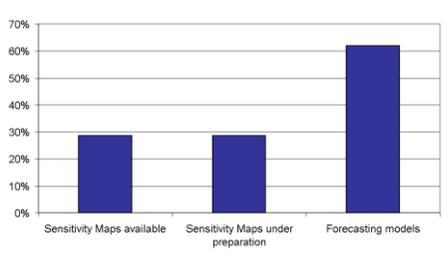
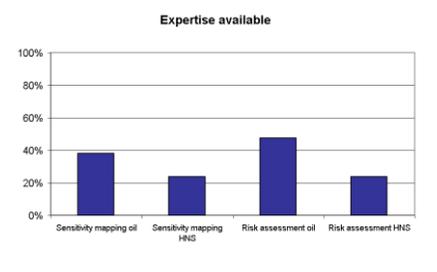
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- **take note** of the information provided by the Secretariat in the present document; and
- **provide views and comments and decide** on the proposals of the Secretariat referred to in paragraphs 10, 20, 22 and 23 of the present document.

**Annex**

Extract of the report of the Regional Government and Industry Workshop on Cooperation, Preparedness for and Response to Oil Spills in the Mediterranean Sea, which was held in Marseille, from 11 to 12 May 2009:

<b>REMPEC/MOIG Assessment</b>			
	<p>90 Facilities handling oil in the Mediterranean</p> 		<p>Expertise available</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to now 75% of the oil entering the Med originated from the southern side of the Med (Algeria to Egypt)</li> <li>• 25% remaining are originating from the Black Sea through Bosphorus straight and eastern pipelines</li> <li>• There were more than 4200 Loaded tankers voyages/calls in the Med in 2006</li> <li>• Pipelines in the eastern Mediterranean sea are used at 22% of their capacities.</li> <li>• The development of the projected new capacities and their use at their full capacity could raise the number of shipments (120.000dwt) from 300 to more than 2500 a year</li> <li>• Distribution of the 90 facilities identified by MOIG/IPIECA: 42% refineries, 26% Oil Terminals, 24% Ports, and 8% Offshore Platforms.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little sensitivity maps available</li> <li>• Few risk assessment available</li> <li>• Possible need for a regional risk assessment</li> <li>• Little expertise available on sensitivity mapping &amp; Risk Assessment</li> <li>• Need for regional capacity building</li> </ul>	
<b>Group Discussion</b>		<b>National Consultation</b>	
<p>The Groups suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to have a joint Mediterranean Risk Assessment approach/methodology</li> <li>• to avoid complex models and ensure realistic assessments,</li> <li>• to centralize GIS (Sensitivity &amp; Vulnerability information on a GIS hosted at REMPEC website</li> <li>• to analyse past incidents and the measures taken following the accident to reduce the risk (Prevention – integration of lessons learnt)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current risk assessments are not sufficiently comprehensive</li> <li>• Data is available but spread</li> <li>• Sensitivity mapping have to be developed</li> <li>• Existing sensitivity maps are currently focused on biological sensitivities</li> <li>• Need to standardize the methodology</li> <li>• Existing risk analysis are mainly based on experience of past casualties</li> </ul>	