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

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

REMPEC/WG.37/6/3  
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Agenda Item 6

**POTENTIAL OIL & GAS INDUSTRY COLLABORATION WITH REMPEC THROUGH IPIECA**

**Submitted by IPIECA**

**SUMMARY**

**Executive Summary:** This document provides information about potential support from the oil and gas industry (through IPIECA) towards strengthening the cooperation between IPIECA, IMO and REMPEC in the Mediterranean.

**Action to be taken:** Paragraph 16

**Related documents:** REMPEC/WG.37/11/1, REMPEC/WG.37/15

**IPIECA and the Global Initiative**

1 IPIECA, the global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues ([www.ipieca.org](http://www.ipieca.org)), works to harness the collective expertise and technology of the oil and gas industry, to facilitate improvements in oil spill preparedness and response around the world. IPIECA has played a key role in initiating and facilitating industry forums to share oil spill preparedness and response good practice since the formation of the IPIECA Oil Spill Working Group in 1987. One of IPIECA's significant work efforts in the area of oil spill preparedness and response is the Global Initiative (GI).

2 The GI is an umbrella programme under which governments, through the IMO, and the oil industry, through IPIECA, are working together to assist countries in developing national structures and capability for oil spill preparedness and response. The GI programme is jointly led by the IMO and IPIECA, with strong participation from the International Tankers Owners Pollution Federation (ITOPF), Oil Spill Response Limited (OSRL), as well as the leveraged contributions of the industry members themselves. GI organises educational workshops, exercises and training courses to improve oil spill response capability and coordination in higher risk areas.

3 These activities stem from the Oil Pollution Response and Cooperation (OPRC) Convention (1990) which calls for regulatory authorities to work with the oil and shipping industries to develop global oil spill response capability. Of particular relevance is Resolution 5 of the Conference adopting the OPRC Convention which states:

“THE CONFERENCE INVITES the Secretary-General of the Organization, in consultation with the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, to approach the oil and shipping industries with a view to: (a) encouraging further co-operation in order to assist developing countries to implement article 6 of the OPRC Convention, including an assessment of the need for oil spill combating equipment stockpiles on a regional or sub regional basis in addition to

those already established; (b) developing a plan on the establishment of oil spill combating equipment stockpiles on a regional or sub regional basis, in order to assist developing countries in implementing article 6(2)(a) of the OPRC Convention”.

4 Since its initiation in 1996, the GI has promoted and enabled:

- Ratification and implementation of the relevant international conventions;
- Identification of responsible government agencies in charge of oil spill preparedness and response at national level;
- Approval of more national oil spill contingency plans (NOSCP) and regional plans;
- Improved communications between government and industry at national and regional levels;
- Enhanced coordination between governments for trans-boundary spill scenarios.

5 At present, four different regions have established programmes under the framework of the GI:

- China
- Black Sea, Caspian Sea and Central Eurasia (OSPRI)
- West, Central and Southern Africa (GI WACAF)
- South East Asia (GI SEA).

#### **Past activities in the Mediterranean**

6 Although no formal GI programme has ever been set up in the Mediterranean region, IPIECA and some of its members have previously been involved in the Mediterranean Oil Industry Group (MOIG).

7 Of particular note is IPIECA's collaboration with REMPEC and MOIG in 2008, where an assessment exercise was initiated with a view to obtaining a national and regional overview of the situation in the Mediterranean, with regard to preparedness for and response to oil pollution from a government and an industry perspective. Based on this assessment, REMPEC and MOIG prepared a short, medium and long term joint programme of work addressing the gaps identified in the region known as the MGICAP (Mediterranean Government/Industry Action Plan).

8 Based on the successes of the GI and with the OPRC 1990 Convention in mind, IPIECA and its members feel there is an opportunity to build upon the MGICAP work in the Mediterranean region.

#### **Potential collaboration with REMPEC/IMO**

9 At the IPIECA Oil Spill Working Group meeting in November 2014, it was agreed that there was indeed still interest from a number of IPIECA members in some form of industry/government cooperation in the Mediterranean. There was also agreement that the initiation of any activities in the region should be done in close coordination with REMPEC/IMO.

10 Following discussions amongst interested member companies in February 2015, it has been agreed that 2015 is not the right time to be considering any new formal GI programmes, which would require companies to fund activities on top of their existing IPIECA membership fee. This is mainly due to the background context of a lower oil price and the feeling from members that they would struggle to find the appropriate level of funding for such programmes. However, the industry is still keen to collaborate with REMPEC/IMO and provide input and support to activities of interest and relevance to the industry.

11 This was further confirmed following IPIECA's participation at the Meeting of National Experts on the Revision of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships held in Malta from 11 to 12 March 2015. The addition of the sentence “[...] the shipping industry and the relevant private sectors' cooperation and participation should be enhanced through consultations, technical and financial contribution, whilst implementing the Regional Strategy” to Section 2.4 of the Strategy is of particular note. There are also a number of obvious synergies between the Specific Objectives and the objectives of a Global Initiative programme that further justify collaboration between IPIECA and REMPEC/IMO, in particular:

- **Specific Objective 1:** Ratification of relevant international maritime conventions related to the protection of the marine environment
- **Specific Objective 20:** To increase as much as practical, the level of knowledge in the field of preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution by oil and other harmful substances
- **Specific Objective 22:** To strengthen the capacity of individual coastal States to respond efficiently to marine pollution incidents through development of sub-regional operational agreements and contingency plans, adopting national contingency plans & the development of sub-regional operational agreements and contingency plans.

12 Given the above specific objectives are closely aligned with the objectives of the IPIECA-IMO GI, collaboration between government (through REMPEC/IMO) and industry (through IPIECA) to achieve these common goals appears to be the most appropriate way forward.

### **Potential activities**

13 In early 2015, IPIECA members were asked to provide feedback on what their key priorities would be for any OPRC related activities in the Mediterranean. The below is a digest of the feedback and proposals received and their linkage to the aforementioned objectives. Please note these are just ideas at this stage, and IPIECA is keen to discuss the relevance and feasibility of these ideas at the 11th Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), as well as hear about the proposed programme of work of REMPEC for biennium 2016/2017.

- .1 *Shipping hotspots & dispersants (Specific Objective 20):*  
There is a suggestion to initiate a study focusing on identifying the areas in the Mediterranean with the highest densities of traffic, crossing traffic and history of collisions that are remote from the coast with deep waters and sensitive areas that may be potentially impacted, building upon work completed by REMPEC, and by the MEDESS 4MS project. Suggestion to identify hotspots then assess the status of these waters in terms of response with dispersants, then potentially organise workshops on dispersants where a need is identified.
- .2 *IMS (Specific Objective 22):*  
Suggestion that a key priority could be to encourage the advancement of the use of the IPIECA Incident Management System and to look for opportunities to incorporate use of this IMS into mutual support agreements or NCP revisions.
- .3 *NCPs/NOSCPs (Specific Objective 22)*  
Suggestion that encouraging and supporting improvements in NCPs or response agreements as regards international resourcing, and response strategy pre-approvals (e.g. dispersants, in-situ burn, etc.) would also be a priority.
- .4 *Training and exercises (Specific Objective 20)*  
Industry would be keen to support relevant training activities and/or exercises in the region, promoting wider uptake of existing good practice guidance for example from the IPIECA-IOGP Oil Spill Response Joint Industry Project (OSR-JIP).

### **Industry commitments**

14 IPIECA is keen to avoid a situation where industry makes a greater commitment to activities in the Mediterranean region than it is able to fulfil, and therefore outlined below is the anticipated level of contribution to relevant activities that industry could commit when such activities are defined, both financial and resource-wise.

- .1 *Financial commitment*  
Industry can provide a small financial input to relevant activities in the region through the IPIECA Oil Spill Working Group budget. This does not require IPIECA members to make any extra contribution in terms of funds, and is therefore not as directly influenced by current industry context (e.g. lower oil price). The IPIECA business plan for each year is not approved until November in the previous year (e.g. the 2016 business plan will be approved in November 2015) so any financial contribution can

only be confirmed once the business plan is approved. IPIECA and its members are interested to collaborate on a long-term basis, therefore it is likely this level of financial contribution could be sustained over several years if there are continued activities planned, however as stated above this would have to be approved by the IPIECA membership on an annual basis.

.2 *Resource commitment*

- The IPIECA Oil Spill Working Group manager would be available to support REMPEC with any planning and logistical arrangements for any agreed collaborative activities. It may also be possible for the IPIECA Executive Director to attend any events of relevance and lend his support where appropriate (e.g. by providing a keynote speech to open an event)
- A number of IPIECA members are keen to support any relevant collaborative activities with REMPEC. The involvement of IPIECA members in collaborative activities will need to be approached on a case-by-case basis, however it is hoped that members will be able to provide input to relevant activities e.g. by attending workshops to share technical expertise, helping to deliver training.
- IPIECA and its members can also promote relevant activities/events as necessary through industry networks, ensuring industry participation is encouraged where relevant.

### Next steps

15 IPIECA's anticipated next steps would be as follows:

- To attend the 11th Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), and present this paper.
- Participate in the meeting to gain a better understanding of the proposed programme of work of REMPEC for biennium 2016/2017, and provide an initial indication which activities it would be relevant for IPIECA to be involved in.
- Following the meeting, IPIECA will liaise with its members to confirm which activities it could support and provide a more exact indication of the level of financial and resource commitments that can be made.
- IPIECA and REMPEC/IMO can then agree on the exact nature of IPIECA's involvement in REMPEC's 2016/17 activities, and formalise as appropriate.

16 **The Meeting is invited to:**

- .1 **take note** of the information provided in the present document; and
- .2 **consider** the proposals put forward by IPIECA as laid down in paragraphs 13 and 15 of the present document.