



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

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

REMPEC/WG.45/16
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REPORT
OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINTS OF THE
REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE
FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)

Malta, 11-13 June 2019

INTRODUCTION

1 The Thirteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) was convened in Floriana, Malta from 11 to 13 June 2019, pursuant to the Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget for 2018-2019 of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), also referred to as UNEP/MAP, adopted by the Twentieth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (“the Barcelona Convention”) and its Protocols (COP 20) (Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017).

2 The principal objectives of the Meeting were:

- .1 to examine the implementation of the PoW of REMPEC since the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (St. Julian’s, Malta, 23-25 May 2017); and
- .2 to discuss and agree upon the proposed PoW of REMPEC for the biennium 2020-2021, prior to its submission, for approval by the next Meeting of the UNEP/MAP Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 10-13 September 2019), and for adoption by the Twenty-first Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP 21) (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019).

3 The Meeting was attended by delegations from the following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention:

ALBANIA	ITALY
ALGERIA	LEBANON
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	LIBYA
CROATIA	MALTA
CYPRUS	MONTENEGRO
EGYPT	MOROCCO
EUROPEAN UNION	SLOVENIA
FRANCE	SPAIN
GREECE	TUNISIA
ISRAEL	TURKEY

by representatives from the following UN organizations:

- INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO)
- UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME / MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (UNEP/MAP)

by a representative from the following inter-governmental organizations:

- BALTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMISSION (HELCOM)
- INTERNATIONAL OIL POLLUTION COMPENSATION FUNDS (IOPC FUNDS)
- INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION (INTERPOL)
- OSPAR COMMISSION/BONN AGREEMENT
- REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN (PERSGA)

by a representative from the following UNEP/MAP Component:

- REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION (INFO/RAC)

by representatives from other organizations:

- ADRIATIC TRAINING AND RESEARCH CENTRE FOR ACCIDENTAL MARINE POLLUTION PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE (ATRAC)
- BIRDLIFE, MALTA
- CENTRE OF DOCUMENTATION, RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTATION ON ACCIDENTAL WATER POLLUTION (CEDRE)
- INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR COMPARATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW (CIDCE)

- ENI S.p.A.
- ITALIAN FEDERATION OF THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY (FEDERCHIMICA)
- INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OIL & GAS PRODUCERS (IOGP)
- INTERNATIONAL OCEAN INSTITUTE (IOI)
- IPIECA
- ITOPI LTD.
- MEDITERRANEAN OIL INDUSTRY GROUP (MOIG)
- SEA ALARM FOUNDATION

4 A complete list of participants appears in **Annex I** to the present report.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

5 The Meeting was opened by Mr Gabino Gonzalez, Head of Office of REMPEC on Tuesday, 11 June 2019 at 09:00 hours. He welcomed the participants to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC. He welcomed the presence of twenty (20) out of the (22) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and representation from numerous partner organisations. He highlighted that the Meeting would address a wide range of technical issues and strategic decisions related to Mediterranean cooperation in the fields of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships and also the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution resulting from offshore activities. He referred to the evolution of the Centre to meet the current challenges related to air quality, climate change and marine litter and encouraged the Contracting Parties to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development). He concluded by expressing his appreciation to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), UNEP/MAP and the Government of Malta, as host country, as well as the European Union (EU), the Government of France, Italy and China for their contributions, and other partners, for their support.

6 Ms Tatjana Hema, Deputy Coordinator of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, welcomed the participants in the Meeting on behalf of the UNEP/MAP Coordinator. She referred to four decades of joint efforts made by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with the support of MAP, to protect the environment and contribute to sustainable development. She highlighted REMPEC's role in supporting the implementation of the relevant protocols and stressed the concrete support given to a number of countries on different aspects of the implementation of the Convention and protocols. She underlined a number of MAP achievements during the current biennium to be reported to COP 21, such as the 2019-State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED); the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Reports (MED QSR) Roadmap, the feasibility study for examining the possibility for establishing the Mediterranean Sea as a SECA under Annex VI to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the preparation of Sub-regional Contingency Plans (SCP), the development of the information system for integrated monitoring and assessment programme of Mediterranean Sea and Coasts, etc. In addition, she outlined the prospects of the future activities that would continue contributing to the achievement of the goals and objectives serving the Barcelona Convention and its protocols.

7 Ms Patricia Charlebois, Deputy Director, Subdivision for Implementation, Marine Environment Division (MED), IMO, extended the greetings of the Secretary General of IMO, Mr. Kitack Lim. She highlighted the achievement of the Organization in preventing oil spill events worldwide and acknowledged the valuable work and success of REMPEC for over 40 years in support of the Mediterranean Coastal States in developing and strengthening pollution response capacity at local, national and regional levels. Addressing the main priority of IMO regarding climate change affecting oceans and coastal communities worldwide, she recalled that under the new global limit, as from 1 January 2020 ships would be required to use fuel oil on board with a sulphur content of no more than 0.50%, thus significantly reducing emissions and particulate matter for the net benefit to human and environmental health for the future. Another critical issue identified was the matter of marine plastic litter and microplastics. She recalled that the Annex V to MARPOL had strictly prohibited the discharge of garbage – including plastics, for the past 30 years. She acknowledged the current work done by REMPEC to address these issues by assessing the feasibility of establishing a SECA within the Mediterranean Sea and by implementing the Marine Litter project, coordinated by UNEP/MAP.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

2.1 Rules of Procedure

8 The Meeting agreed to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, the rules of procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols to its deliberations (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI).

2.2 Election of Officers

9 Following informal consultations with the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the Head of REMPEC proposed Italy as Chair, Albania as Vice-Chair and Egypt as Rapporteur. The Meeting unanimously agreed to elect the following officers of the Meeting:

Commander Gabriele Peschiulli (Italy)	Chair
Mr Elson THANA (Albania)	Vice-Chair
Ms Kawthar ABULSOUND (Egypt)	Rapporteur

2.3 Working Languages

10 The working languages of the Meeting were English and French. Simultaneous English/French/English interpretation was provided during the Meeting. All working documents were available in both official languages of the Centre. However, information documents were available in their original language only, unless a translation was provided in the second working language.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

11 The Chair thanked the Meeting for supporting his election and proposed that the Provisional Agenda, contained in document REMPEC/WG.45/3/1 and annotated in document REMPEC/WG.45/3/2, be adopted.

12 The Meeting adopted the Agenda reproduced in **Annex II** to the present report. The list of documents is set out in **Annex III** thereto.

AGENDA ITEM 4: PROGRESS REPORT ON REMPEC'S ACTIVITIES SINCE THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINTS OF REMPEC

13 At the invitation of the Chair, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/4 setting out an outline of the activities carried out by the Centre since the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, in May 2017.

14 The Head of REMPEC introduced the part of the document related to the Report on Institutional Developments and the Report on Administrative and Financial Issues.

15 The Meeting noted that, during the period under review, from May 2017 to June 2019, Lebanon had ratified the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea ("the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol") to the Barcelona Convention, on 3 November 2017, and that Croatia had ratified the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil ("the Offshore Protocol"), on 8 February 2018.

16 The Meeting was informed that seventeen (17) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention which had, up to now, ratified or acceded to the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, whereas five (5) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were only Parties to the Protocol Concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency ("the 1976 Emergency Protocol"), and that eight (8) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention had ratified the Offshore Protocol so far.

17 The Meeting encouraged the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to ratify and effectively implement, as soon as possible, the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol and the Offshore Protocol, if they had not yet done so.

18 The Head of REMPEC highlighted some developments related to UNEP/MAP pertaining to the field of activities that fell under the mandate of the Centre, as per the decisions adopted by COP 20, further expanded under Agenda Item 5. In particular, he underlined the adoption of the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents, as well as on the PoW and Budget 2018-2019.

19 He expressed his appreciation to the Government of France and Total S.A. for the continuous and instrumental support since the inception of the Centre, through the secondment of a Junior Programme Officer financed by the French Oil Industry through the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs mechanism entitled "*Volontariat International Scientifique*". He also expressed his gratitude to the People's Republic of China for the secondment of a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) within the framework of the IMO JPO Programme.

20 The Head of REMPEC further noted that internship opportunities were explored and that the Centre benefitted from one internship, during the period under review. He thanked the Republic of Korea for supporting the five-month internship aimed at further enhancing the cooperation and exchange of knowledge between REMPEC and the Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Centre (MERRAC), established within the framework of the UNEP Regional Seas Programme.

21 He announced that a Project Assistant had been recruited to support the implementation of the two-year EU-funded, Western Mediterranean Region Marine Oil & HNS Pollution Cooperation (West MOPoCo) Project, correspondingly, France had recruited a Project Coordinator for the project.

22 Further to the introduction of the Secretariat on resource mobilisation efforts and their outcome to support the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), ("Regional Strategy (2016-2021)", the Meeting congratulated the Centre and UNEP/MAP's results, in particular through the implementation of the EU-funded "Marine Litter-Med" Project and the for the establishment of a Cooperation Agreement between the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS) and UNEP.

23 The representative from UNEP/MAP stressed on the importance of Contracting Parties' collaboration and active work for the organisation of national activities, within the framework of the EU-funded "Marine Litter-Med" Project to ensure timely implementation, noting that the project was extended to December 2019. She highlighted that the level of implementation of the project was crucial to support the ongoing process of resource mobilisation in order to build on the achievements of the current project.

24 The Meeting reiterated its appreciation to IMO for its regular financial contribution towards the implementation of the PoW of the Centre through the allocation of funding under its Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) budget and other Global projects, as well as its support in the implementation and administration of the EU-Funded West MOPoCo Project.

25 The Head of REMPEC then highlighted that the activities implemented by REMPEC in the field of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships in line with the UNEP/MAP PoW and Budget for the biennium 2016-2017 and the biennium 2018-2019 were presented in Annexes II and III to document REMPEC/WG.45/4, respectively. He referred to relevant Specific Objectives of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and also briefly mentioned the following related documents:

- .1 the Report of the Second Meeting of the Mediterranean Network of Law Enforcement Officials relating to MARPOL within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS) (Valletta, Malta, 28-29 November 2017), as set out in the document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.13;
- .2 the Report of the Regional Workshop on Response to Spill Incidents involving Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) (MEDEXPOL 2018) (Valletta, Malta, 20-21 June 2018), as set out in the document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.14; and
- .3 the Report of the Regional Workshop on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI (Valletta, Malta, 11-13 December 2018), as reproduced in document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.15.

26 He concluded by referring to the activities implemented by the Centre within the context of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan as included in Annex IV to document REMPEC/WG.45/4.

27 The Meeting thanked the staff of REMPEC for the work accomplished since the last Meeting, which addressed most of the 22 specific objectives in the Regional Strategy (2016-2021). The Meeting also expressed its appreciation for the support provided in the preparation of the National Action Plans; while two delegations mentioned their interest to benefit from such support.

28 The Meeting unanimously recognised the valuable contribution of REMPEC in the coordinating activities of common interest for the Mediterranean coastal States. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the technical assistance provided in the preparation of contingency plans and emphasised the importance of the development of multilateral agreements, encouraging all Mediterranean coastal States to engage in such cooperation arrangements, with the assistance of REMPEC. A number of delegations also stressed the importance of the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU) and referred to the valuable technical support provided in real incidents.

29 In the field of prevention, various delegations underscored the importance of the assistance provided by the Centre to better manage ship-generated wastes in ports and marinas, through the EU-funded "Marine Litter-Med" Project and the Cooperation Agreement between IMELS and UNEP. Delegations also thanked the Centre for its support in examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea as Sulphur oxides (SO_x) Emission Control Area(s) (ECA(s)) under MARPOL Annex VI. One delegation expressed its appreciation to International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) for the organisation the "Operation 30 Days at Sea" and invited Mediterranean coastal States to participate in the second operation to combat in a coordinated manner illicit discharges from ships.

30 Noting the low number of ratifications of the Offshore Protocol, several delegations highlighted the important work of REMPEC in supporting the establishment of standards to assist Mediterranean coastal States in regulating exploration and production offshore activities in the region.

31 The Meeting **noted** the information contained in document REMPEC/WG.45/4 and **encouraged** Contracting Parties, the oil, chemical, port and shipping industries, governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as the international professional organisations and associations, to give due consideration to topics identified as a priority, in particular the secondment of national experts, and/or voluntary contributions targeting specific activities, noting that secondments through the JPO programme are an opportunity for Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to provide regional experience to national officers as members of the REMPEC Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 5: DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN UN ENVIRONMENT/MAP RELATED TO THE OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF REMPEC

32 The Chair invited the Deputy Coordinator of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat to introduce document REMPEC/WG.45/5 providing information on the developments within UNEP/MAP since the Twelfth Focal Points Meeting.

33 Ms Tatjana Hema referred to the main decisions adopted by COP 20, which were of relevance to the work of the Centre. She welcomed the ratification of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol as well as of the Offshore Protocol. She summarised the recent meetings of bodies of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, the main international and regional meetings and processes of UNEP/MAP, as well as the progress in relation to projects and activities undertaken during the current reporting period. She then shared relevant information on the preparations for COP 21 as well as the process in enhancing cooperation and partnership with relevant stakeholders.

34 The Meeting **noted** the information provided by the representative of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 6: DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN IMO RELATED TO THE OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF REMPEC

35 At the invitation of the Chair, Ms Charlebois introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/6/1, which provided a summary of the latest developments within the IMO in the fields of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships.

36 In particular, she addressed recent activities of the IMO related to the action plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, ballast water management, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships and measures for enhancing energy efficiency of shipping, notably the implementation of the sulphur limit, as well as the mandatory data collection system for fuel oil consumption of ships. She also referred to developments related to the Guidelines on Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems as well as controls on anti-fouling systems.

37 She made reference to the activities of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) and the IMO's Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR), including the approval of part IV of the Guidelines for the use of dispersants for combating oil pollution at sea and the Guidance on practical implementation of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC) and the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (OPRC-HNS Protocol), as well as the consideration of the recommendations resulting from MEDEXPOL 2018 addressing the outstanding challenges related to the ratification and implementation of the OPRC-HNS Protocol. She also recalled the support provided through IMO's ITCP.

38 The Chair then invited Mr Jose Maura, Director of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds), to introduce document REMPEC/WG.45/6/2 providing information on the latest developments in the field of compensation for ship-source pollution damage and the work of the IOPC Funds since the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

39 He highlighted to the Mediterranean coastal States, the implications of recent developments and the decisions of the IOPC Funds' governing bodies, as well as the resulting output of the Organisation during that period. Particular reference was made to the 40th Anniversary of the IOPC Funds, the status of the 1992 Fund Convention and Supplementary Fund Protocol and the incidents involving Mediterranean coastal States. He also addressed cooperation arrangements, relevant insurance and HNS issues, and made reference to the online claims submission system, promotional material as well as new publications.

40 A number of delegations provided comments concerning the implementation of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention), which came into effect on 8 September 2017. The Meeting noted, in particular the issue with respect to the exemptions granted in accordance with Regulation A-4, including the requirement for a *risk assessment*, as a precondition for granting such an exemption, and the difficulties associated with the operation of ships, such as the hardship of the proper conduction of ballast water exchange in compliance with the BWM Convention. The Meeting further noted the request made for assistance in guiding the relevant countries to effectively implement the Convention.

41 One delegation raised a question about IMO's latest developments related to black carbon, which has been an emerging issue due to its environmental and health impacts. The representative of IMO informed the Meeting of the recent progress highlighting ongoing efforts being made by the PPR Sub-Committee to tackle the issue, including the identification of a number of potential control measures to reduce the impact on the Arctic of Black Carbon emissions from international shipping, a simplified compilation of which was considered by the 74th session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) (London, UK, 13-17 May 2019).

42 One delegation commented on the newly-adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex II at MEPC 74 which would strengthen, in specified sea areas, discharge requirements for tank washings containing persistent floating products with a high-viscosity and/or a high melting point that can solidify under certain conditions (e.g. certain vegetable oils and paraffin-like cargoes), and suggested that the related requirements could be extended to the Mediterranean sea area, noting that this would effectively lower the risk of occurrence of such incidents, if such provisions were implemented in the area.

43 The Meeting noted the information provided by the representative of the IMO and the IOPC Funds as well as the comments made by the delegations. The Secretariat noted with interest the work carried out in defining formulas to evaluate the cost of response equipment and invited the Director of IOPC Funds to consider providing support to Parties to multilateral agreements in this matter. The Secretariat thanked the IOPC Funds for the reimbursement of the claim submitted by REMPEC in relation to the cost of the deployment of the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU), in the case of the AGIA ZONI II incident.

AGENDA ITEM 7: REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO MARINE POLLUTION FROM SHIPS (2016-2021) AND FUTURE STEPS

44 The Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/7, providing an overview of the status of implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), as well as information regarding ongoing cooperation in the Mediterranean and possible ways to strengthen it in the context of the preparation of a post 2021 Regional Strategy for the Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships.

45 The Head of REMPEC made particular reference to the support provided for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), through resource mobilisation, the preparation of National Action Plans (NAPs) and the expansion of the cooperation with regional and international organisations, bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies, and other relevant actors, including the private sector.

46 In this context, the Chair invited the representative from the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), Mr Giuseppe Russo, Senior Project Officer to introduce the SAFEMED IV, EuroMed Maritime Safety Project, and the representative from France, Ms Mathilde Kraft, Coordinator of the West MOPoCo Project at the Secretariat General for the Sea, to present the West MOPoCo Project, which are further detailed in document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.19

47 Recognizing the valuable information collected through the preparation of NAPs in Albania, Morocco, Montenegro, Tunisia and Turkey, and the Project Fiches providing information on projects supporting the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), as compiled in document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.19, the Meeting:

- .1 **invited** the Secretariat to pursue such efforts in other Mediterranean coastal States, which so request, during the biennium 2020-2021 and, subject to the availability of funds, provide them with the necessary assistance upon request; and
- .2 **reiterated** the invitation to Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention:
 - to submit a fiche for each national, bilateral, multilateral or regional activity or project relevant to the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), based on the template set out in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.45/7, preferably at the beginning of the said project or activity; and
 - to report the main developments or outcomes at the Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, following the submission of the fiche, possibly by means of information documents, with a view to increasing visibility on these projects/activities.

48 The Meeting recognised the complementary roles of REMPEC and EMSA, and that the region would benefit from a transparent dialogue to formalise the longstanding need for clarity on the complementary role in the Mediterranean and ultimately in the EU region, and to define concrete cooperation between the relevant organisations. The Meeting further acknowledged the complementarities of the work undertaken under other initiatives and projects and recommended the initiation of a coordination process to avoid confusion and overlap and to ensure the maximisation of efforts toward the implementation of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol by all Contracting Parties.

49 In light of the above, and acknowledging that the year 2021 corresponds to a major milestone in the Mediterranean region, marking the end of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS), the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and the SAFEMED IV Project, simultaneously the Meeting requested the Secretariat to:

- .1 **carry out** a joint analysis, involving IMO, relevant Directorate Generals (DGs) of the European Commission (notably DG MOVE, DG ENV, and ECHO), EMSA and REMPEC, to identify the complementarities of relevant projects implemented in the Mediterranean region, in particular the SAFEMED IV Project, and REMPEC activities in the framework of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and to propose concrete synergies.

- .2 **continue** ongoing efforts, through a specific activity of the PoW for the biennium 2020-2021:
- **to review** the progress made in the field of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships in the Mediterranean region by analysing information gathered in the NAPs, the project fiches, and the analysis above mentioned, as well as any other relevant information;
 - **to launch** a wide consultation process involving national competent authorities, relevant regional and international institutions and stakeholders addressing challenges and offering expertise, resources, and funding to progress in the improvement of the prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships in the Mediterranean region:
 - a) to define, through a collaborative approach, the vision, the strategic directions, and objectives of a post-2021 Mediterranean Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships;
 - b) to outline the main institutions and stakeholders' roles and responsibilities within their respective mandate, and identify required synergies; and
 - c) to propose a modus operandi (e.g. Action Plan) to ensure concerted planning, coordinated implementation, and monitoring procedures.
- .3 **to submit** the draft post-2021 Mediterranean Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships to the Fourteenth Meeting of the Focal Points, for consideration.

AGENDA ITEM 8: DATA SHARING, MONITORING AND REPORTING

50 The Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce document REMPEC/WG.45/8, which outlined the progress made on data sharing, monitoring and reporting since the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, 23-25 May 2017).

51 In particular, the Head of REMPEC introduced tools and systems available at Mediterranean level for data sharing, monitoring and reporting on marine pollution from ships and referred to the systems in place at international and European level as detailed in the documents REMPEC/WG.45/INF.4 and REMPEC/WG.45/INF.6, respectively. He also addressed national data access rights related issues and referred to the InfoMAP Data Management Policy (REMPEC/WG.45/INF.5).

52 The Chair recalled the obligation of all Contracting Parties to report accidents causing or likely to cause pollution by oil and other harmful substances, in particular those above 50m³ according to the MARPOL threshold, as well as the importance of the role of Contracting Parties with regard to the implementation of monitoring activities, dissemination and exchange of information, reporting of pollution incidents and reporting procedures, in accordance with Articles 5, 7, 8 and 9 of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol.

53 The representative from IMO reported developments within the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS), as detailed in document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.4.

54 The representative from the Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC) contributed to the discussion by presenting the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS) and the InfoMAP Data Management Policy and made reference to the related information in document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.5

55 The representative from the EU introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.6, providing an overview of EU systems and services for monitoring and reporting marine pollution, namely the Emergency Communication and Information System for marine pollution incidents (CECIS Marine), the

Union Maritime Information and Exchange System (SafeSeaNet) and CleanSeaNet. She provided brief information on the conditions under which non-EU Member States could be given access, where allowed. Particular reference was made to the open access of the CECIS Marine to non-EU Mediterranean coastal States, for pollution reporting and request and offer of assistance. Referring to the envisaged development of the electronic version of the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incident, within the EU-Funded 2019-2020 West MOPoCo Project, she highlighted that rather than creating a new communication tool, the adaptation of CECIS Marine to the need of the Mediterranean region could be a more viable option. Particular considerations included the cost of development and maintenance of online information systems. In this regard, she made particular reference to the Specific Objective 21 of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), which states that "*the use of the CECIS Marine Pollution is considered in order to enhance coordination of requests and offers of international assistance*".

56 In light of the description provided on the various data reporting procedures and requirements established in the framework of the Barcelona Convention, and noting that the Centre received only a minimal number of reports, revisions and updates through the regional decision support tools, the Meeting invited the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to:

- .1 **regularly update** their Country Profiles, the Mediterranean Integrated Geographical Information System on Marine Pollution Risk Assessment and Response (MEDGIS-MAR), MENELAS Information System;
- .2 **use the Waste Management Decision Support Tool** to establish or review their national waste management strategy for oily waste resulting from accidental marine pollution;
- .3 **liaise** with the respective MENELAS Designated Representative to contribute to the discussion on the MENELAS database on illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean;
- .4 **submit** their annual reports to the IMO by 31 December of each year, using the revised reporting format set out in MEPC/Circ.318, for those who are Parties to MARPOL;
- .5 **liaise** with the respective MAP Focal Points to report on the implementation of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, through the BCRS; and
- .6 **liaise** with the respective MAP Focal Points to contribute to the revision of InfoMAP Data Management Policy **and** to explore the best way forward to reach a consensus on the access rights of national data, with a view to improving the quality, speed and effectiveness of decision-making process in case of marine pollution incidents.

57 The Secretariat recalled Decision IG.23/11 related to the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents and referred to the discussion held at PPR on exchanges of pollution incident reports.

58 Further to the consideration of the Decision IG.23/11, the Meeting:

- .1 **urged** the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to take the necessary measures to incorporate the procedures defined in the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents into their national, bilateral and multilateral systems for preparedness and response to marine pollution; and
- .2 **encouraged** them to regularly test those procedures during communication and full-scale exercises; and
- .3 **requested** the Secretariat to envisage the use of the CECIS Marine Pollution, within the West MOPoCo Project, in order to enhance coordination of requests and offers of international assistance.

59 Acknowledging that the Contracting Parties can contribute to or benefit from the relevant work carried out at a global level, in particular through PPR, the Meeting requested the Secretariat to:

- .1 **continue** promoting its work under relevant agenda items of the PPR Sub-Committee at future sessions, and
- .2 **report** and follow-up development on the proposed ways of exchanging pollution incident reports.

60 The Secretariat presented the Mediterranean Quality Status Reports (MED QSR) and the 2019-State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED), as well as the progress made to address identified gaps while proposing further measures to standardise monitoring and reporting formats for the pollution from ships.

61 Particular reference was made to the 2017 MED QSR conclusions on the common indicator 19 (“Occurrence, origin (where possible), extent of acute pollution events (e.g. slicks from oil, oil products and hazardous substances), and their impact on biota affected by this pollution”) related to the Ecological Objective 9 of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea, and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP), reproduced in Annex I to document REMPEC/WG.45/8.

62 The Secretariat also recalled the recommendations on environmental monitoring and reporting from shipping activities extracted from the report for the Development of a Quality Assurance Programme for Data Reporting and Collection, in accordance with Article 5 of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, as well as the development of the 2017 MED QSR, presented in Annex II to document REMPEC/WG.45/8.

63 The representative of the Associate Researcher, Hellenic Centre for Marine Research Institute of Oceanography, Dr Constantine Parinos contributed to the discussion related to identified data collection gap on “accidental post-spill consequences on biota and ecosystem” by referring to document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.7 related to the Study of the short- and medium-term environmental consequences of the sinking of the AGIA ZONI II tanker on the marine ecosystem of the Saronikos Gulf.

64 In light of the conclusion of the 2017 MED QSR and the recommendations on environmental monitoring and reporting from shipping activities, which underscored that monitoring initiatives should not be limited to Common Indicator 19 of the IMAP Ecological Objective 9, the Meeting requested the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to continuously monitor and report as required the following, within their national monitoring programme:

- .1 illicit discharges occurrences and its cumulative effects and impacts;
- .2 accidental post-spill consequences on biota and ecosystem;
- .3 non-indigenous species (NIS) invasion; and
- .4 underwater noise from commercial shipping.

65 Recognising the importance of a common approach on data sharing, and following the overview provided by the Secretariat, when working towards a standardised monitoring and reporting format for the pollution from ships, the Meeting requested the Secretariat to:

- .1 **carry out** (at international and regional levels) a comparative review of existing reporting procedures and formats to, as much as possible, avoid duplication and to ensure the format retained is in line with the one already developed; and
- .2 **review**, as required, relevant IMAPs Assessment Fact Sheet.

66 The Meeting underscored the relevance of the information provided in the draft section on maritime transport of the 2019 SoED Report and agreed on the version included in Annex III of the document REMPEC/WG.45/8.

67 With a view to contributing to the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR, and in light of the gaps identified and related assessment exercises, the Meeting **requested** the Secretariat, with the contribution of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to update existing information and prepare a Study on marine pollution from ships and maritime traffic trends in the Mediterranean in the next biennium.

AGENDA ITEM 9 **BETTER MANAGEMENT OF MARINE LITTER FROM SEA-BASED SOURCES IN PORTS AND MARINAS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

68 At the invitation of the Chair, the Secretariat introduced documents REMPEC/WG.45/9/1 and REMPEC/WG.45/9/2, respectively, setting out an outline of the process for the preparation of the following documents:

- .1 Operational Guidelines on the provision of reception facilities in ports and the delivery of ship-generated wastes in the Mediterranean, as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.45/9/1; and
- .2 Guidance Document to determine the application of charges at reasonable costs for the use of port reception facilities or, when applicable, application of the No-Special-Fee system, in the Mediterranean, , as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.45/9/2.

69 In particular, Mr Franck Lauwers, Programme Officer (Prevention), mentioned that the above-mentioned documents had been prepared pursuant to the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean in the Framework of Article 15 of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol), hereinafter referred to as the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean, as well as the Regional Strategy (2016-2021).

70 The Meeting was informed that the Operational Guidelines and the Guidance Document were outputs of one of the components of the EU-funded "Marine Litter-MED" Project aimed at supporting the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention from Southern Mediterranean / European Neighbourhood to implement the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean, more precisely of the component coordinated by REMPEC focusing on measures related to the better management of marine litter from sea-based sources in ports and marinas in the Mediterranean.

71 The Programme Officer (Prevention) underlined that the Operational Guidelines and the Guidance Document included placeholders with regard to the new EU Directive on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships, for which the exact reference was not available at the time of submitting the said documents to the Meeting. In this respect and, since the Directive (EU) 2019/883 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships, amending Directive 2010/65/EU and repealing Directive 2000/59/EC, was published in the Official Journal of the European Union of 7 June 2019, **the Meeting requested** the Secretariat to adjust the Operational Guidelines and the Guidance Document accordingly.

72 The Programme Officer (Prevention) also referred to the study based on a literature review on existing best practices in the Mediterranean as well as other European Regional Seas for the application of charges at reasonable costs and of the No-Special-Fee system for the use of port reception facilities, hereinafter referred to as the Study, as presented in document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.8.

73 Acknowledging the efforts of the Secretariat in preparing documents REMPEC/WG.45/9/1, REMPEC/WG.45/9/2 and REMPEC/WG.45/INF.8, through consultations with the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **took note of** the Study;
- .2 **agreed upon** the Operational Guidelines, and the Guidance Document, and **requested** the Secretariat to carry out final editing and any editorial corrections that might be identified, as appropriate;
- .3 also **requested** the Secretariat to submit the Operational Guidelines and the Guidance Document to the next Meeting of the UNEP/MAP Focal Points, for approval;

- .4 **encouraged** the Mediterranean coastal States to implement the Operational Guidelines and the Guidance Document in their ports and marinas, as appropriate, as part of their implementation of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean; and
- .5 further **requested** the Secretariat to submit the Study, the Operational Guidelines and the Guidance Document to the next session of MEPC, for information, as part of the regional contribution to the implementation of the IMO Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships.

74 Welcoming the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the EU-funded “Marine Litter Med” Project, which would come to an end this year, and of the Cooperation Agreement between IMELS and UNEP, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **acknowledged** that it was essential to continue the regional efforts to prevent marine litter entering the Mediterranean Sea through ship-based activities; and
- .2 **requested** the Secretariat, in consultation with IMO and UNEP/MAP as well as the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention:
 - .1 to explore the possibilities to develop a follow-up project to the EU-funded “Marine Litter-Med” Project as well as to implement targeted technical cooperation and capacity-building activities during the biennium 2020-2021, especially in the context of the IMO’s ITCP; and
 - .2 to explore and establish synergies between the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean and the IMO Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, as well as other relevant plans or initiatives.

AGENDA ITEM 10: MEDITERRANEAN ASSISTANCE UNIT (MAU) AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

75 The Chair invited the Secretariat to present document REMPEC/WG.45/10 providing information on the achievements of the MAU.

76 Mr Malek Smaoui, Programme Officer (OPRC) recalled that the MAU provides immediate expert assistance at no cost for the Mediterranean coastal States to respond to oil and chemical spills at sea, and proposed ways forward to further strengthen the MAU for the benefit of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

77 In particular, he highlighted the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the MAU and recalled its areas of expertise, its composition as well as related mobilisation procedures and financing mechanism through the established MAU Revolving Fund.

78 While highlighting lessons learnt from a recent mobilisation of MAU experts, the Programme Officer (OPRC) also addressed some areas of developments.

79 The Chair congratulated the Centre on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the MAU, thanked the Secretariat for the submission of the document, which reminded Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, the existence, since October 1993, of such an important mechanism providing immediate expert assistance at no cost to the affected Mediterranean coastal States, who often require additional support in the first hours and days of an incident. He further encouraged Mediterranean Coastal States to include the MAU in their response tool kit and in this occasion invited delegates to share their experience.

80 Several delegations acknowledged the added value of the MAU and referred to past experiences and the quality of the assistance provided by MAU experts.

81 Further to the introduction of the lessons learnt during the mobilisation of the MAU in the aftermath of the AGIA ZONI II, and with a view to addressing identified gaps, the Meeting requested the Secretariat to add in Annex II.3 “Standard form for the request of MAU experts” to the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents:

- .1 a field entitled “other (please specify)” in the section related to the areas of expertise of Annex II.3 of the Guide; and
- .2 a new section “Dates of the mission” specifying the first and last day of the mission, including travel and a note stating that “The possible extension of the mission and the composition of the expert team will be assessed in consultation with the authorised requesting authority and the experts on site”.

82 Noting with appreciation the effort of REMPEC to seek opportunities to extend the MAU scope of expertise, geographical proximity and language diversity, with a view to strengthen the MAU emergency assistance capacity as well as to provide the countries with direct and personalised expert advice at their request, the Meeting:

- .1 **welcomed** the signing, at the Meeting, of the agreement between the newly established Adriatic Training and Research Centre for Accidental Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response (ATRAC), and REMPEC in the framework of the MAU; and
- .2 **requested** the Secretariat to continue exploring other cooperation arrangements required to provide the necessary technical support and assistance to Mediterranean coastal States to respond efficiently to accidental marine pollution.

83 Further to the intervention of the representative from the EU on the possible mobilisation of experts through the European Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), the Meeting **requested** the Secretariat to explore ways of cooperation between the MAU and ERCC to enhance coordinated assistance.

84 Further to the proposal from a delegation to establish a protocol to facilitate the mobilisation of response equipment, the Secretariat recalled the existence of “Emergency Procedures” adopted by COP 20, and while referring to the Annex II to the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents, Contracting Parties were encouraged to consult and test these procedures.

85 Recognising the importance of familiarising government official in charge of the response to oil and chemical accident at sea, with the procedures related to the mobilisation of MAU experts, including making use of the related form as laid down in Annex II.3 of the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents, the Meeting **encouraged** Mediterranean coastal States to conduct regular testing of the procedures during national and sub-regional communication and full-scale exercises.

86 Furthermore, with a view to facilitating access to the information related to the MAU members, the areas of expertise available, the revolving fund, as well as the procedures and forms for the mobilisation of the MAU the Meeting requested the Secretariat **to develop** a dedicated web page for the MAU on REMPEC’s Website.

AGENDA ITEM 11: EXAMINING THE POSSIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA OR PARTS THEREOF AS SO_x EMISSION CONTROL AREA (ECA) UNDER MARPOL ANNEX VI

87 At the invitation of the Chair, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/11, which outlined developments with regard to examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, or parts thereof, as SO_x ECA(s) under MARPOL Annex VI, hereinafter referred to as the proposed Med ECA, pursuant to Specific Objective 15 of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021).

88 In particular, the Programme Officer (Prevention) highlighted that, to date, twenty (20) out of the twenty-two (22) Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, had nominated their representatives serving on the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts established pursuant to Specific Objective 15 of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021).

89 The Programme Officer (Prevention) presented the progress made by the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts with regard to the preparation of the technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the proposed Med ECA, hereinafter referred to as the Technical

and Feasibility Study, which was financed by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) as well as the IMO's ITCP and a voluntary contribution from the Government of Italy.

90 One delegation requested that Section 3.2.2. entitled "National Allocation of Emissions in the Mediterranean Sea Area" of the Technical and Feasibility Study be adjusted since the reference to "geospatial attribution of water areas to the nearest country" was deemed too general and that the reference to "based on international treaties" would be better replaced by a reference to "based on international law, including international treaties". Following the clarification from the Secretariat that this part was referring to a database managed by the Flanders Marine Institute, **the Meeting concurred** on including a reference to the following instead: "based on, amongst others, international law, including international treaties".

91 The Programme Officer (Prevention) mentioned that the Centre had organised the Regional Workshop on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI (Valletta, Malta, 11-13 December 2018), which identified the main obstacles to ratification and effective implementation, explored possibilities for (sub)regional application and enforcement of the provisions of MARPOL Annex VI in the Mediterranean as well as discussed the draft Technical and Feasibility Study.

92 Based on the outcome of the work of the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts, the Programme Officer (Prevention) presented the recommendations, including the road map for the possible designation of the proposed Med ECA within the framework of the Barcelona Convention, which addressed the specific issues raised by the said committee, namely the type of emissions to be controlled within the proposed Med ECA, the geographical scope as well as the necessary knowledge gathering and further studies.

93 Recalling that, since 2005, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention had been examining the possibility of designating the proposed Med ECA and that, in recent years, efforts had been intensified to contribute to Specific Objective 15 of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), **the Meeting:**

- .1 **expressed appreciation** for the work of the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts carried out so far, through correspondence coordinated by the Secretariat (REMPEC), especially with regard to the preparation of the Technical and Feasibility Study, as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.9;
- .2 **welcomed** the fact that two other independent studies commissioned by the European Commission and France, as presented in documents REMPEC/WG.45/INF.11 and REMPEC/WG.45/INF.12, respectively, contributed to the work of the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts;
- .3 **further welcomed** the outcome of the Regional Workshop on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI (Valletta, Malta, 11-13 December 2018), as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.15, which noted the methodology and preliminary results of the above-mentioned studies as well as discussed that:
 - .1 all three studies suggested comparable scenarios for the proposed Med ECA;
 - .2 costs to operate vessels in the proposed Med ECA were similar among the three studies;
 - .3 the health benefits of the proposed Med ECA among the three studies were consistent with the in-study design and inputs; and
 - .4 the choices of health modelling and benefits valuation were consistent in finding that benefits provided by the proposed Med ECA were greater than the costs to meet the related requirements.
- .4 **agreed** to further examine the possibility of designating the proposed Med ECA during the biennium 2020-2021.

94 Acknowledging that MARPOL Annex VI did not impose requirements on Particulate Matter (PM) despite the fact that SO_x and PM were closely associated in both Regulation 14 thereof and Appendix III thereto, and that Specific Objective 15 of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) exclusively focused on SO_x, **the Meeting agreed in principle** that the proposed Med ECA should only cover SO_x.

95 Recognising the benefits of designating the whole of the Mediterranean Sea as a SO_x ECA and, acknowledging that designating only parts of the Mediterranean Sea would compromise the achievement of the projected health and environment benefits and would have potential implications, *inter alia* on competitiveness, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **recalled** that international shipping must be regulated at the global level for any control regime to be effective (e.g. to prevent pollution from ships) and to maintain a level playing field for all ships; and
- .2 **agreed** that the proposed Med ECA should cover the Mediterranean Sea area, as defined in Article 1 of the Barcelona Convention.

96 Highlighting the importance of providing continued assistance for the ratification and effective implementation of MARPOL Annex VI to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, which so request, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **encouraged** the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to ratify and effectively implement MARPOL Annex VI, if they had not yet done so, as soon as possible; and
- .2 **acknowledged** the need to ensure the necessary synergy in supporting these efforts, through the technical cooperation and capacity-building activities carried out by IMO, REMPEC, the European Commission and EMSA, in the Mediterranean region.

97 Recognising that the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were yet to decide on a possible joint and coordinated proposal for the designation of the proposed Med ECA to the IMO, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **took note of** the initial draft submission to the IMO, as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.10;
- .2 **concurred with the need** to complete the knowledge gathering necessary to examine the possibility of designating the proposed Med ECA, and add the following information in the initial draft submission to the IMO, as appropriate:
 - .1 synopsis of the assessment (Annex I, Section 3.1);
 - .2 quantification of the impacts associated with deposition of PM_{2.5} and air toxics (Annex I, Section 5.3);
 - .3 additional detail of land-based emissions controls of SO_x and PM in the Mediterranean coastal States (Annex I, Sections 8.1 and 8.2); and
 - .4 additional elements on the economic impacts on shipping engaged in international trade (Annex I, Section 9.6).
- .3 **acknowledged** that not all of the above-mentioned information necessarily required new analysis, and that these sections might actually be completed following the necessary compilation of existing data, studies, including the independent studies, respectively commissioned by the European Commission and France, as well as policy documents.

98 With a view to more fully addressing the criteria and procedures for designation of emission control areas laid down in Appendix III to MARPOL Annex VI when examining the possibility of designating the proposed Med ECA, **the Meeting:**

- .1 **agreed** that the following further studies were necessary and should be carried out in view, amongst others, of developing the necessary mitigation measures, if any:
 - .1 additional economic impact evaluation, more precisely:
 - analyses of the impacts on shipping engaged in international trade as well as on trade modal shift outside the Mediterranean; and
 - analyses of the impacts on short sea shipping activity as well on the social and economic development for islands, insular and remote areas.
 - .2 additional fuel supply and technology analyses (regional fuel production, fuel availability, and alternative compliance technologies).
- .2 **recognised** the need to extend the mandate of the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts to oversee the preparations of the above-mentioned studies, including the development of their respective terms of reference, through correspondence coordinated by the Secretariat (REMPEC); and
- .3 **called on** the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to provide full support, both technically, in terms of expertise, and financially, in terms of voluntary contributions, where appropriate, to the further work of the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts in order to ensure that the above-mentioned studies are carried out in a coordinated, timely and effective manner.

99 One delegation mentioned that it would also be useful if the Centre was updating the Study on Maritime Traffic Flows in the Mediterranean Sea, which was an activity already covered by the proposed PoW of REMPEC for the biennium 2020-2021, as set out in document REMPEC/WG.45/14.

100 The representative of the OSPAR Convention/Bonn Agreement, indicated that the Contracting Parties to the 1983 Agreement for Cooperation in Dealing with Pollution of the North Sea by Oil and Other Harmful Substances (Bonn Agreement) were in the process of approving a decision to extend the scope of application of the Bonn Agreement with a view to cooperating on surveillance in respect of the requirements of MARPOL Annex VI.

101 In order to build upon, and bring together, the various streams of activity that have already been taking place within the framework of the Barcelona Convention, and the various technical cooperation activities, in particular with regard to Specific Objective 15 of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021),
the Meeting:

- .1 **agreed in principle** with the road map for the possible designation of the proposed Med ECA within the framework of the Barcelona Convention, as set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.45/11; and
- .2 **requested** the Secretariat to carry out the agreed modifications to the road map as well as final editing and any editorial corrections that might be identified, as appropriate, and to submit it to the next Meeting of the UNEP/MAP Focal Points, for further consideration and approval.

AGENDA ITEM 12: MEDITERRANEAN TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (MTWG) AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

102 At the invitation of the Chair, the Programme Officer (OPRC) presented document REMPEC/WG.45/12/1 providing an update on the progress made by the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) since the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC and proposing future activities to be integrated to the PoW of the MTWG for the biennium 2020-2021.

103 Recalling that the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points, established an OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group under the MTWG to implement its PoW 2018-2019 and noting that so far only thirteen (13) out of twenty-two (22) Contracting Parties designated, their national entities and/or officials, the Meeting invited Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to:

- .1 **nominate** their national entities and/or officials as contact points for the OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group, if they have not done it yet; and
- .2 **keep** the Centre updated about any changes related to nominated entities and/or officials.

104 While noting that the MTWG shall be maintained as a correspondence group, according to “Guidelines for the Mediterranean Technical Working Group”, the Meeting:

- .1 **recognised** the added value of gathering experts during regional technical events such as MEDEXPOL 2018 to review the work of the MTWG; and
- .2 **proposed** to align the PoW of the MTWG with capacity building activities scheduled within the PoW of REMPEC to allow follow-up discussions on MTWG activities at regional event.

105 The Meeting acknowledged the valuable work carried out by the MTWG which was established to facilitate the exchange of technical data and scientific information in the subject area of preparedness and response in relation to marine pollution emergencies. The Meeting also recognised that the MTWG had achieved its objective to become a regional forum through which the Contracting Parties can contribute to or benefit from the relevant work carried out at a global and European level (e.g. IMO’s PPR Sub-Committee). Taking the above into account, the Meeting **agreed to include**, in the PoW of the MTWG for the biennium 2020-2021, the following tasks to be implemented through the established OPRC-HNS Correspondence Group to:

- .1 **test and enhance** of the communication system to be developed, in the framework of the West MOPoCo Project, including specific forms of the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incidents, to ensure systematic and smooth communication during an emergency situation through usage of the forms reproduced in Annex I, Annex II and Annex III of the said Guide;
- .2 **contribute** to the development of the Joint Inter-Regional HNS Response Manual and provide input as required to future sessions of the PPR Sub-Committee to develop the operational guide compiling good practices on preparedness and response to spills of HNS, the proposal of which was agreed at MEPC 74.

106 In the context of the discussions on the outcome of MEDEXPOL 2018 regarding the need to develop a guidance document on marine pipeline, specific guidelines for specific chemicals and guidelines for response to air contamination as a result of chemical incidents at sea, one delegation proposed to conduct a study on the issue related to spills of condensate. Noting that the traditional techniques and response methods to combat marine oil spill may not be fit for the purpose of handling incidents involving condensate, **the Meeting agreed to include** in the PoW of the MTWG 2020-2021 the preparation of a study on the issue related to spills of condensate.

107 The Programme Officer (OPRC) presented document REMPEC/WG.45/12/2, which describes the process leading to the preparation of the final version of the revised Guide for Risks of Gaseous Releases resulting from Maritime Accidents, as laid down in Appendix to the said document.

108 In particular, the Secretariat recalled that the revision of the Guide for Risks of Gaseous releases resulting from maritime accidents prepared in 1996, had been requested by the Eleventh Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Attard, Malta, 15-17 June 2015).

109 Noting with appreciation the consultation process carried out through correspondence and during MEDEXPOL 2018, the Meeting:

- .1 **adopted** the Guide for risks of gaseous releases resulting from maritime accidents, as laid down in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.45/12/2; and
- .2 **requested** the Secretariat to explore the required synergies to address the need to establish, in collaboration with the national competent authorities, a stronger partnership with the private sector, in particular with chemical companies, harbours and salvage companies, with a view to raising the awareness on the risks of gaseous

releases and HNS marine pollution and improve knowledge on the operational response to be implemented.

110 The representative from the Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (Cedre) introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/12/3, providing the main outcome of the Joint Inter-Regional HNS Response Manual Preparatory Meeting.

111 Further to the introduction of the document, one delegation requested the inclusion of a chapter on HNS spill risk assessment and modelling.

112 The representative from the Secretariat of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM) informed that the HELCOM Response Working Group had established a Correspondence Group to contribute to the development of the Joint inter-regional HNS Response Manual, as appropriate. The Group further supported the outline of the Manual and provided suggestions on its content, title and format. He highlighted that the Meeting of the Response Working Group is expected to approve the final version of the said manual replacing Volume 2 of the current HELCOM Response Manual, prior to its adoption by the Helsinki Commission.

113 The representative of OSPAR informed that the Bonn Agreement would include the final version of the Joint inter-regional HNS Response Manual as a new Chapter to the Bonn Agreement Counter Pollution Manual. She mentioned that the Meeting of the Bonn Agreement Working Group on Operational, Technical and Scientific Questions Concerning Counter Pollution Activities (OTSOPA) (May 2019, Southampton, UK), agreed to contribute to the development of the manual.

114 Welcoming the progress made since the last Meeting of Focal Points by the Secretariat of the Bonn Agreement, the Secretariat of HELCOM and REMPEC, in consultation with their respective technical working group to join efforts and resources to produce a joint manual based on existing guides and tools on HNS response, in the framework of the EU-Funded West MOPoCo Project, the Meeting:

- .1 **noted** the information provided in this document REMPEC/WG.45/12/3, which reports the main outcome of the Joint Inter-Regional HNS Response Manual Preparatory Meeting; and
- .2 **agreed upon** the initial draft table of content of the Joint Inter-Regional HNS Response Manual.

AGENDA ITEM 13: MEDITERRANEAN COMMON OFFSHORE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

115 Under this agenda item, the Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce the documents REMPEC/WG.45/13/1 and REMPEC/WG.45/13/2, which outlined, respectively, the process leading to the preparation of the Draft Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the Draft Guidance on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures and on the Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings. In doing so, the Secretariat also referred to documents REMPEC/WG.45/INF.16 and REMPEC/WG.45/INF.17, which describe the best practice and guidance documentation reviewed and the rationale for the preparation of the guidelines and standards.

116 While thanking the Secretariat for the work accomplished and noting that the draft guidelines and standards were in line with existing documents produced by OSPAR and the EU, and appreciating the opportunity given to provide comments on these documents, one delegation and the representative from IOGP provided an overview of their proposed amendments.

117 Further to the discussions on the proposed amendments to documents REMPEC/WG.45/13/1 and REMPEC/WG.45/13/2, and acknowledging that the Meeting of Focal Points of REMPEC did not have the technical knowledge nor the mandate to address offshore related matters, which are followed-up by designated national Offshore Focal Points, the Meeting:

- .1 **noted** the information provided in the documents REMPEC/WG.45/13/1 and REMPEC/WG.45/13/2 as well as the proposed amendments to these documents; and

- .2 **requested** the Secretariat of the Offshore Protocol to submit the proposed amendments to the next Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) for its consideration.

118 Referring to the activities relating to the Offshore Protocol, which were assigned to REMPEC, presented in document REMPEC/WG.45/4, including the preparation of the documents reviewed under this agenda item, and recalling similar comments at the last Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC and at COP20, several delegations remarked that the Centre was not adequately equipped in terms of human and financial resources to handle such tasks. As a consequence, it was proposed that within the context of the UNEP/MAP, opportunities should be explored in consultation with IMO and the oil and gas industry to mobilise the financial and human resources required for the full implementation of the Protocol and the related Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan.

119 Following a question from the floor regarding the possibility of strengthening REMPEC staffing to respond to the needs for supporting the implementation of the Offshore Protocol, the Deputy Coordinator of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat responded that this issue was addressed several time but due to financial constraints the outcome was not successful. She suggested to the REMPEC Focal Points to raise this matter with their respective MAP Focal Points. She also highlighted the need for more ratification by the Contracting Parties of this important Protocol of the Barcelona Convention.

120 The representative of the IMO acknowledged that initial discussions have taken place to explore possible collaboration with the oil and gas industry, namely IPIECA and IOGP. She informed the Meeting that the IMO and IPIECA, have been working together since 1996 to develop global oil spill preparedness and response capacity, under the Global Initiative (GI), an umbrella programme where various activities are organized under the supervision of IMO and IPIECA to promote effective oil spill contingency planning and regional cooperation on oil spill preparedness and response. She further referred to the successful Global Initiative for West, Central and Southern Africa (GI WACAF Project), the GI South East Asia (GI SEA) and recent development to support the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre – Caribe (RAC- REMPEITC Caribe) one of four Regional Activity Centres of the Caribbean Environment Programme. However, to progress in any form of cooperation, she also stressed that further ratifications of the Offshore Protocol by Mediterranean coastal States were crucial.

121 Following these deliberations, the Meeting

- .1 **acknowledged** the need to define a sustainable and collaborative approach to implement effectively the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, through the development of a comprehensive plan of action including milestones, budgets and manpower required to implement the Offshore Protocol in the Mediterranean countries; and
- .2 **encouraged** Contracting Parties, the oil, chemical, port and shipping industries, governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as to the international professional organisations and associations to continue exploring in close cooperation with the IMO, UNEP and REMPEC possible ways of providing support to the full implementation of the offshore protocol and its action plan by either appropriate voluntary funding or secondment.

AGENDA ITEM 14: PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK OF REMPEC FOR THE BIENNIUM 2020-2021

122 At the invitation of the Chair, the Secretariat introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/14, which presented, in its Annex, the proposed PoW to be implemented by the Centre during the biennium 2020-2021, and explained the rationale used to prepare it.

123 The Head of REMPEC recalled the consultation process leading to the proposed PoW for the biennium 2020-2021, which included all inputs received from the first technical round of consultation.

124 The Secretariat highlighted that, the PoW was prepared as a follow-on to the 2018-2019 PoW and in full alignment with the UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy (2016-2021) and was aiming towards completing the full delivery of the MTS.

125 It was further noticed that the proposed PoW aims at rendering continuous support to Mediterranean countries in their efforts towards the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in particular, SDG 14 on the conservation and sustainable use of the seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

126 The Secretariat underpinned that these activities will also contribute to the implementation of the IMO Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 further reinforcing and linking the work of the wider UN-family in the Mediterranean Sea region. It was further noted that in addition, the PoW was based on relevant current and emerging global and regional frameworks and processes, such as the IMO Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, and the launch of the IMO-managed GloFouling Partnerships Project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to combat the negative environmental impacts of invasive species transferred through biofouling.

127 The Secretariat underlined that, the Centre would only be in a position to implement the proposed activities for which sufficient funds would be ultimately secured and made available following the approval of:

- .1 the programme of activities of the IMO's ITCP for the biennium 2020-2021, which would be reviewed and approved by the Sixty-ninth Session of the IMO's Technical Cooperation Committee (TCC) to be held in London, United Kingdom from 25 to 27 June 2019; and
- .2 the UNEP/MAP PoW and Budget for the biennium 2020-2021, including the proposed PoW of the Centre for the said biennium as detailed in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.45/14, which would be reviewed and approved by the next Meeting of the UNEP/MAP Focal Points scheduled in Athens, Greece, from 10 to 13 September 2019, prior to its submission for adoption by COP 21 to be convened in Naples, Rome, from 2 to 6 December 2019.

128 Following the review of all proposed activities set out in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.45/14, **the Meeting**

- .1 **endorsed** the proposed activities, as amended, and
- .2 **requested** the Secretariat to integrate the revised PoW of the Centre into the UNEP /MAP PoW for the biennium 2020-2021 to be submitted for approval by the next Meeting of the MAP Focal Points prior to its submission for adoption by COP 21.

AGENDA ITEM 15: OTHER BUSINESS

129 The Meeting considered other matters that were raised under this agenda item.

130 In particular, the representative of the INTERPOL introduced activities related to law enforcement carried out by the Organization and presented document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.18 providing an overview of the outcome of the INTERPOL Operation 30 Days at Sea.

131 The representative of the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research Institute of Oceanography introduced document REMPEC/WG.45/INF.7 summarising the outcome of the study of the short- and medium-term environmental consequences of the sinking of the AGIA ZONI II tanker on the marine ecosystem of the Saronikos Gulf.

132 The representative of the Sea Alarm Foundation delivered a presentation on recent developments in the field of oiled wildlife response.

AGENDA ITEM 16: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

133 The Meeting adopted the present report together with its annexes.

AGENDA ITEM 17: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

134 The Chair closed the Meeting at 16:15 hours on Thursday, 13 June 2019.

ANNEX(E) I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS / LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

CONTRACTING PARTIES / PARTIES CONTRACTANTES

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Mr Elson THANA
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Mr Carlo CIPOLLONI
Deputy Director

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Professional Secretary, Finland

**International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC FUNDS) / Fonds internationaux
d'indemnisation pour les dommages dus à la pollution par les hydrocarbures (FIPOI)**

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Director

**International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) / Organisation internationale de
police criminelle**

Mr Lionel TRY
Representative of INTERPOL - Environmental Security Program

**Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR
Commission/Bonn Agreement) / Commission pour la protection du milieu marin de
l'Atlantique du Nord-Est (OSPAR Commission / Accord de Bonn)**

Ms Laura de la TORRE
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**Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of
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Birdlife Malta

Ms Anna GEROMETTA
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Mr Arnaud GUÉNA
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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Organisation of the Meeting
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Progress Report on REMPEC's activities since the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC
5. Developments within UN Environment/MAP related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC
6. Developments within IMO related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC
7. Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021) and future steps
8. Data sharing, monitoring and reporting
9. Better management of marine litter from sea-based sources in ports and marinas in the Mediterranean
10. Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU) and related activities
11. Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea or parts thereof as SOx emission control area (ECA) under MARPOL Annex VI
12. Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) and related activities
13. Mediterranean Common Offshore Guidelines and Standards
14. Proposed Programme of Work of REMPEC for the biennium 2020-2021
15. Other business
16. Adoption of the report of the Meeting
17. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

WORKING DOCUMENTS

REMPEC/WG.45/3/1	Provisional agenda
REMPEC/WG.45/3/2	Annotated provisional agenda and draft timetable
REMPEC/WG.45/4	Progress Report on REMPEC's activities since the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC
REMPEC/WG.45/5	Developments within UNEP/MAP related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC (Submitted by UNEP/MAP)
REMPEC/WG.45/6/1	Developments within IMO related to the objectives and functions of REMPEC (Submitted by IMO)
REMPEC/WG.45/6/2	Latest developments in the field of compensation for ship-source pollution damage (Submitted by IOPC Funds)
REMPEC/WG.45/7	Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021) and future steps
REMPEC/WG.45/8	Data sharing, monitoring and reporting
REMPEC/WG.45/9/1	Operational Guidelines on the provision of reception facilities in ports and the delivery of ship-generated wastes in the Mediterranean
REMPEC/WG.45/9/2	Guidance Document to determine the application of charges at reasonable costs for the use of port reception facilities or, when applicable, application of the No-Special-Fee system, in the Mediterranean
REMPEC/WG.45/10	Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU) and related activities
REMPEC/WG.45/11	Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea or parts thereof as SOx emission control area (ECA) under MARPOL Annex VI
REMPEC/WG.45/12/1	Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) and related activities
REMPEC/WG.45/12/2	Guide for Risks of Gaseous releases resulting from Maritime Accidents
REMPEC/WG.45/12/3	Draft outline of the Joint Inter-Regional HNS Response Manual
REMPEC/WG.45/13/1	Mediterranean Offshore Guidelines and Standards: Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
REMPEC/WG.45/13/2	Mediterranean Offshore Guidelines and Standards: Draft Guidelines on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures, and on the Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings

REMPEC/WG.45/14	Proposed Programme of Work of REMPEC for the biennium 2020-2021
REMPEC/WG.45/WP.1	Draft report of the Meeting
REMPEC/WG.45/16	Report of the Meeting

INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

REMPEC/WG.45/INF.1	List of documents
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.2	List of participants
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.3	Guidance Document for the preparation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.4	Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.5	MAP Data Management Policy (Submitted by INFO/RAC)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.6	Information document on European Union system and services for monitoring and reporting marine pollution (Submitted by the European Union)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.7	Study of the short- and medium-term environmental consequences of the sinking of the AGIA ZONI II tanker on the marine ecosystem of the Saronikos Gulf
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.8	Study based on a literature review on existing best practices in the Mediterranean as well as other European regional seas for the application of charges at reasonable costs for the use of port reception facilities and of the No-Special-Fee system
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.9	Technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, or parts thereof, as SOx ECA(s) under MARPOL Annex VI (English only)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.10	Initial draft submission to the International Maritime Organization entitled "Proposal to Designate the Mediterranean Sea area, [or parts thereof,] as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides [and Particulate Matter]" (English only)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.11	Technical feasibility study for the implementation of an emission control area (ECA) in EU waters with focus on the Mediterranean Sea (Submitted by the European Union) (English only)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.12	Technical Feasibility Study for the implementation of an emission control area (ECA) in the Mediterranean Sea (Submitted by France)
REMPEC/WG.45/INF.13	Report of the Meeting of the Mediterranean Network of Law Enforcement Officials relating to MARPOL within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS) (Valletta, Malta, 28-29 November 2017) (English only)

- REMPEC/WG.45/INF.14 Report of the Regional Workshop on Response to Spill Incidents involving Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) (MEDEXPOL 2018) (Valletta, Malta, 20-21 June 2018)
- REMPEC/WG.45/INF.15 Report of the Regional Workshop on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI (Valletta, Malta, 11-13 December 2018) (English only)
- REMPEC/WG.45/INF.16 Rationale for the Draft Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (English only)
- REMPEC/WG.45/INF.17 Rationale for the Draft Guidelines on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures, and on the Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings (English only)
- REMPEC/WG.45/INF.18 INTERPOL Operation 30 Days at Sea: Briefing Note (Submitted by INTERPOL) (English only)
- REMPEC/WG.45/INF.19 Compilation of Project Fiches (English only)