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

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Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil  
and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental  
Impact

REMPEC/WG.55/10  
24 May 2023  
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Floriana, Malta, 23-24 May 2023

**Agenda Item 10: Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Initial draft conclusions and recommendations**

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## **Note by the Secretariat**

This document provides a set of initial draft conclusions and recommendations put forward to the Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact, held on 23-24 May 2023, for its consideration. The document, prepared by the Secretariat, is of a tentative nature and may be modified by the Meeting, as appropriate.

### **Initial draft conclusions and recommendations**

The Fourth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact, which was held in Floriana, Malta, 23-24 May 2023, hereinafter referred to as the “Meeting”:

1 acknowledged the consultative approach followed by the Secretariat on the monitoring programmes under the Offshore Protocol, and approved the list of 5 IMAP Common Indicators (CI) to be monitored as key monitoring indicators for the oil and gas operations, namely the IMAP CIs 1, 2, 15, 17, and 18 ; in this respect, it requested the Secretariat to inform the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group and Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Focal Points Meetings accordingly;

2 emphasised the importance of reporting under the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), in particular by Contracting Parties (CPs) that are Parties to the Offshore Protocol, and by CPs with ongoing or planned oil and gas activities and encouraged all CPs to strengthen their national implementation reporting through the BCRS, with the support of the Secretariat as requested;

3 noted the information received and feedback provided on the proposed way forward with respect to the regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects, and in particular agreed on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for establishing an Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG), as set out in document REMPEC/WG.55/3, to further the work on the development of the guidelines on “Removal of installations and the related financial aspects” during the biennium 2024-2025, for review and endorsement by the 5<sup>th</sup> OFOG meeting before submission to MAP Focal Points meeting in 2025;

4 noted the information received and feedback provided on the proposed way forward with respect to the technical review of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol and in particular agreed on the ToR to establish an ICG, as set out in document REMPEC/WG.55/4, to work on the Technical review of the Annexes to the Offshore Protocol for consideration by the next OFOG meeting in 2025;

5 took note of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (MOAP), including limited dedicated financial and human resources, which resulted in limited progress, in particular on objectives related to the ratification of the Offshore Protocol, the provision of technical support and capacity building and the regional transfer of technology; in this respect, it encouraged the Secretariat to explore and mobilise external resources for the implementation of priority MOAP activities, in line with the MAP Resource Mobilisation Strategy which is under preparation;

6 reiterated the view expressed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> OFOG Meeting that to ensure effective implementation of the MOAP, there is a need for a fixed-term staff position on the Offshore Protocol within the Secretariat to organize and support the coordination of the defined activities in the Plan;

7 provided guidance to the Secretariat on the next activities to be undertaken, as a priority, in the implementation of the Offshore Protocol, and the MOAP, including developing guidance on liability and compensation, and on the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material;

8 agreed on the text of a draft decision for consideration by the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Focal Points Meeting and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties’ (COP 23) as appropriate, providing for an extension of one year of the current MOAP for it to expire at the end of 2025, and mandating the Secretariat to prepare a reviewed Offshore Action Plan;

9 endorsed the importance on capitalizing on strengthened partnerships with industry Partners and international organizations for the delivery of online training courses and other technical support;

10 welcomed the identified areas for “technical cooperation for the development of standards and guidelines”, stressing the importance of prioritization, considering a realistic allocation of capacities and resources from both the Secretariat and Contracting Parties;

11 noted that the work on “technical cooperation on safety measures, and minimum standards of qualifications for professionals and crews” is pertinent to the OFOG sub-group on Safety and asked the Secretariat to reflect in consultation with the MAP Focal Points about a potential establishment of this OFOG sub-group in the next biennium;

12 concurred with the proposed design of the training programme, as specified in the reviewed comprehensive plan of actions set out in document REMPEC/WG.55/8, and expressed priority for the following topics for training:

- .1 under training block (A), planned for 2023, consider a training activity on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures and Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings, as well as on the Use and Discharge of Harmful or Noxious Substances and Materials, keeping the two topics addressed under separate guidelines. Such an activity should address the requirements on the use of chemicals by an operator as reflected in a Chemical use plan;
- .2 Include in the proposed Programme of Work (PoW) 2024-2025 the organisation of a training on the decommissioning of installations under training block (B), in parallel with the preparation of the respective guidelines, and consider, if possible and depending on availability of resources the organisation of a training on the Offshore Platform Preparedness and Response and Contingency Plan Assessment;
- .3 the remaining trainings under block (C) should be considered pending mobilisation of additional external resources;

13 emphasised the importance of increasing the number of CP ratifications and took note of the main challenges expressed by CPs that have not yet ratified the Protocol ;

14 supported the suggestion to conduct a gap analysis, with support of the Secretariat, between the Offshore Protocol and the countries regulations that have not yet ratified the Protocol, which is to be included in the future revised Offshore Action Plan;

15 expressed its commitment to increase the level of leadership and engagement by the CPs in achieving the specific objectives of the MOAP by proposing to take the lead in the development of concrete action/outputs and/or in tasks related to the organization of the OFOG work in general; and

16 thanked the Chair of the Meeting, the Secretariat, and partner organizations for providing essential technical and strategic support in the preparation of the working documents for this Meeting or through their interventions during the Meeting, and for their interest in sustaining their support and cooperation in the further implementation of the MOAP.

#### **Actions requested by the Meeting**

17 The Meeting is invited to approve the conclusions and recommendations, as amended, for inclusion in the final report.

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