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

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**Agenda Item 3: Draft regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects**

**Compilation of the feedback and comments received on the draft regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects**

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document will not be printed and is made available in electronic format only. Delegates are encouraged to consult the document in its electronic format and limit printing.

## **Note by the Secretariat**

Within the context of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on the Development of regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects, launched in November 2022, this document complies the draft Decommissioning Guidelines circulated by REMPEC on behalf of the IGC Lead as well as the comments and feedback received. The information in this document is in support of Meeting document REMPEC/WG.55/3.

**Background**

1 The draft Decommissioning Guidelines circulated by REMPEC on behalf of the IGC Lead is set out at Annex I whilst the comments and feedback received by OFOG Member and MAP partners and experts are set out at Annex II, III, and IV.

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## Annex I

**Draft prepared by the IGC Lead for the Development of regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects.**

# Offshore installations decommissioning Guidelines for the environmental aspects

## Preamble

Extracts from Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan 2016. Decision IG.22/3 in UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/28:

- 1) “In accordance with the Specific objective 3 and Article 23 of the Offshore Protocol, as the core substance of the Offshore Protocol aims at establishing common standards and guidelines to harmonise regional practices in the Mediterranean region, Contracting Parties will consider relevant existing standards and guidelines in this field (vide REMPEC/WG.34/19/Rev.1), in line with overarching ecosystem-based ecological objectives, EcAp Roadmap and in particular with the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) of UNEP/MAP”.
- 2) “Specific objective 8: to develop and adopt regional offshore guidelines  
Outputs relating to the Contracting Parties: Regional Guidelines on removal of installations and the related financial aspects”.

Intended to appropriately apply to already existing offshore installations and related infrastructures producing, compressing, giving transit, servicing hydrocarbon fields (mining decommissioning of depleted hydrocarbon fields), these guidelines are intended as a tool to help establishing sound environmentally concerned procedures in the Mediterranean Region.

The history of offshore oil & gas installation in the Mediterranean Region goes back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when hydrocarbon exploration activities started in the Aegean Sea. Along with the experience gained, the time passed and the urgent need for actions to face the environmental changes occurring in the Mediterranean Sea indicate that older hydrocarbon fields and related infrastructures may become less or at all productive and a possible source of marine pollution, as defined by GESAMP\*.

The structure and content of the following lines reflect this observation, giving those infrastructures opportunities for their reuse or removal continuing to protect the marine and coastal environments under a common regulatory framework, based on sustainability and safety principles, possibly fitting in different national legislations.

## A-Definitions

1. **Competent administration:** the administration responsible for issuing the single permit for implementation of the platform and/or related infrastructure reuse project;

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\* IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/WMO/WHO/IAEA/UN/UNEP Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP): “ ... direct or indirect introduction by humans of substances or energy into the marine environment (including estuaries), resulting in harm to living resources, hazards to human health, hindrances to marine activities including fishing, impairment of the quality of sea water and reduction of amenities”.

2. **Multicriteria decision analysis:** analysis that takes into account multiple aspects specific to the removal of a platform and related infrastructure;
3. **Mining concession:** an exclusive license permitting the development and operation of a liquid and gaseous hydrocarbon field, issued pursuant to Art. 9 of Law no. 9 of January 9, 1991, as amended and supplemented;
4. **Flowlines:** pipelines used to connect and transport production, whether produced by individual wells or from other platforms/plants to a collector or treatment facility;
5. **Hydrocarbon field:** an underground rock formation consisting of one or more levels containing hydrocarbons such that mining is technically and economically feasible;
6. **Related infrastructure:** facilities connected to the platform and used to enable the production of hydrocarbons and their transportation to other facilities;
7. **Major Hazard<sup>†</sup> Report:** report that the operator is required to submit;
8. **Reuse:** use of platforms or related infrastructure for alternative purposes, other than mining;
9. **Substructure:** structure of a platform, fixed to the seabed by piles;
10. **Superstructure:** a platform structure consisting of one or more decks on which process plants, equipment, accommodation modules and offices are mounted;
11. **Concession holder:** entity to which the hydrocarbon production concession has been granted;
12. **Sterile or depleted well:** a well that cannot be used or is not likely to secure further production in commercial quantities.

### **B-Permanent plugging of disused wells**

#### ***Mining closure of wells***

1. A well that is sterile or depleted or otherwise not usable or not likely to secure further production in commercial quantities must be shut down.
2. As part of the mining closure operations referred to in the preceding paragraph, the well casing, intermediate columns and production column must be removed below the seabed by cutting and recovery.
3. Abandonment of platforms and related infrastructure is prohibited.
4. Alternative reuse may be authorized by the competent administration when requirements and safeguards are established, or partial removal of platforms or related infrastructure.

### **C-Mining concession holder obligations**

#### ***Technical preliminary report***

1. The company holding the mining concession under which the platform or related infrastructure to be decommissioned is installed shall submit **(to the competent authority)** updated documents and drawings useful for the purpose of defining the operations (weights, layouts, as-built

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<sup>†</sup> The result of hazard analysis performed on the plant or equipment used to accomplish a given operation.

drawings, etc.) and their safety conditions that ensure against pollution, the results of surface and underwater inspections of the platform aimed at defining the current state of the facilities and structures (structural condition of the superstructure and submerged structures), photographic documentation and a full description of the updated environmental framework, including aspects relevant to the landscape and cultural heritage, within which the platform itself and related infrastructure are located.

2. From the date (**of the above-mentioned notice**), the holder of the mining concession within which the platform and related infrastructure being decommissioned are located is obliged not to vary its condition and to carry out routine maintenance work and, in line with the schedule, authorized mining closure work.

#### **D-Reuse of a platform and related infrastructure for purposes other than mining**

1. Companies or entities interested in the reuse of a platform and/or related infrastructure that is to be decommissioned from mining must submit a complete application of the reuse project prepared, with an (**adequate**) level of information and detail, to the competent administration.
2. The applications referred to in paragraph 1 may be submitted by companies or entities that have the appropriate general requirements and technical, economic, financial and organizational capacity for the execution and implementation of the submitted projects. Applicants must have, **in the country whose internal and territorial waters are concerned**, technical and administrative facilities adequate for the activities envisaged, or submit a declaration in which the legal representative undertakes, if conferred, to establish them. The corporate purpose must show that the applicant's activities include the activities envisaged in the reuse project.
3. The application referred to in paragraph 1 must be accompanied by a statement in which the proposing party undertakes to submit, prior to the single permit for the execution of the reuse project, a bank or insurance guarantee commensurate with the value of the removal works post reuse or of the new installations/structures, the platform and related infrastructure, and the environmental recovery works, as well as economic guarantees to cover the costs of any accident, commensurate with those resulting from the most serious accident in the different scenarios assumed during the study and risk analysis phase.
4. For the purpose of assessing the economic and financial capacity, the applicant must submit the documentation in **Annex 1**, item **1**.
5. For the purpose of assessing the technical and organizational capacity, the applicant must submit the documentation in **Annex 1**, item **3**.
6. For the purpose of assessing the technical and organizational capacity related to health, safety, environment and risk management, the applicant must submit the documentation in **Annex 1**, item **4**.
7. The applications submitted, accompanied by the reuse project as defined in paragraph 1 of this article, shall be evaluated by the relevant administrations, including for the purpose of comparing all projects referring to the same platform, on the basis of the following criteria:
  - a. industrial and/or scientific and/or energy innovation promoted by the project;
  - b. general socio-economic impact (on a national and regional scale) and specific to neighbouring areas (competition) to the facilities to be reused and its spillover effects;
  - c. economic sustainability of the project;
  - d. implementable technological synergies between the features proposed in the new design and the existing structure;

- e. environmental sustainability of the project, including assessment of aspects concerning cultural heritage and landscape and any cumulative effects with other existing structures;
  - f. facilities maintenance plan;
  - g. completeness and rationality of the proposed project;
  - h. planned time frame for project execution;
  - i. ways of carrying out the work, including referring to safety and environmental protection, as well as decommissioning and restoring the state of the site.
8. The reuse project must include at least:
- a. analysis of potential use conflicts (sea routes, protected areas, underwater archaeological cultural heritage, etc.);
  - b. post-reuse decommissioning and environmental recovery project, including any work for different purposes, of the platform and related infrastructure;
  - c. analysis of production potential at the site of interest relative to the chosen function(s) within the project (e.g., fish farming, agriculture, marine energy, etc.);
  - d. reasoned choice of the function(s) to be implemented in the platform compliance area and/or to be integrated into the platform;
  - e. complete graphical representation of the works envisaged by the project, highlighted in relation to the existing reused works, indicating any parts to be removed of the latter to be carried out at the expense of the mining concession holder;
  - f. estimated total production expected from the proposed different use;
  - g. analysis of the environmental effects during construction, operation and decommissioning of the new installations/structures, platform and related infrastructure, with reference to:
    - any changes in weather conditions, water quality, seabed and marine ecosystems;
    - natural resources, waste generation and disposal, emissions, and possible risks of serious accidents;
    - underwater archaeological cultural heritage and landscape of the coastal territories neighbouring the works, especially with regard to the land-sea intervisibility ratio;
  - h. schedule of the work, including timelines and how it will be carried out to ensure safety;
  - i. analysis of costs, broken down by category;
  - j. analysis of the social and economic impact of the project on an international, national and local scale.

## **E-Removal of infrastructures**

### 1. Removal project

The company holding the concession submits an application to the (**competent authority**) for permission to remove the platform and related infrastructure being decommissioned, attaching the removal project.

The project for the removal of a platform and related infrastructure being decommissioned must be prepared by the concession-holding company in accordance with the guidance and contents in **Annex 2** of these Guidelines.

### 2. Environmental assessment of the removal project

Plans for the removal of platforms and related infrastructure, prepared by the company according to the contents in **Annex 3** of these Guidelines and accompanied by the information elements, are subject to an environmental assessment by the **competent authority**.

### 3. Major Hazard Report

The concession holder prepares the Major Hazard Report for the decommissioned platform removal operations, which must be submitted to the appropriate Committee on safety of sea operations<sup>‡</sup> for evaluation and acceptance.

Removal work may not begin until the Committee accepts the Major Hazard Report referred to in paragraph 1.

#### 4. Final Report

The license holder must send the **competent authority** a quarterly report during the execution of the removal works and a final report within six months of the removal works, including the results of the monitoring carried out in implementation of the environmental monitoring project (**Annex 2**).

Upon completion of the decommissioning work, it is obligatory to carry out the environmental restoration of the sites affected by the removal work of the platform and related infrastructure, where necessary, based on the results of the environmental monitoring referred to in paragraph 1.

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- regulatory functions, such as evaluation and acceptance of major hazard reports;
  - supervision of compliance by operators, including through inspections, investigations, and enforcement measures; advising other authorities or bodies, including the licensing authority;
  - preparation of reports; cooperation with relevant authorities or contact points in member states.



## Annex 1

### **Reuse of infrastructures not for mining activities**

#### ***Required documentation.***

1. For the purpose of assessing the general requirements, the applicant based **in the country whose internal and territorial waters are concerned** must submit:
  - a declaration that they are not subject to insolvency proceedings of any kind: bankruptcy, compulsory liquidation, arrangement with creditors;
  - a certificate with the following information about the applicant: name, company name, registered office, registered capital, VAT number and/or tax code or equivalent, website, name of the group it belongs to (if any), name of the parent company (if any), name of the beneficial owner, name and contact information of the legal representative and the person in charge of relations with the authorities;
  - an updated certified copy of the articles of incorporation and bylaws.
2. For the purpose of assessing the economic and financial capacity, the following documentation must be submitted:
  - Copies of the approved financial statements for the last three years of the applicant, or financial statements as of the time of incorporation of the company, for those incorporated for less than three years, with attached reports of the administrative body and the board of auditors and statutory auditors on the management of the company. Financial statements must be audited by a statutory auditing firm or similar standards for companies based in another state;
3. For the purpose of assessing the technical and organizational capacity, the following documentation must be submitted:
  - report with a description of the main activities, with reference to the submitted project, carried out **in the country** or abroad (in the case of a newly established company, elements relating to the parent company or corporate group to which it belongs may be provided);
  - attestation regarding the organizational structure and resources employed in the activities described in the report referred to in the previous letter;
  - report outlining the technical skills acquired in the activity indicated in the project with reference to the projects carried out;
  - any other documents they deem appropriate to demonstrate the adequacy of technical capabilities.
4. For the purpose of assessing the technical and organizational capacity related to health, safety, environment and risk management, the following documentation is required:
  - environmental policies of the institution:
    - i. environmental management system and experience documentation with specific reference to environmental liability management;
    - ii. documentation of the institution's security policies.
  - any health, safety and environmental and risk management certifications;
  - rules for supervision of health and safety and environmental contractors.

## Annex 2

### **Removal of infrastructures**

#### ***Required documentation.***

The removal project of a platform and related infrastructure, even if it is planned for only parts of them according to the reuse project, must contain at least the following data:

- general outline of the installations included in the removal project (platforms, structures and submarine pipelines);
- result of preliminary verifications carried out and updated documentation;
- information regarding the location, type, and status of other facilities not involved in the removal project but which may be indirectly affected during operations;
- information regarding weather and sea conditions, water depth, and seabed characteristics;
- information related to activities such as, for example, fishing, boating and other commercial activities performed in the area where the facilities subject to the removal project are located;
- any other background information deemed useful to the removal project.

Description of the installations to be decommissioned included in the removal project:

- substructures of fixed and floating installations (type, configuration, weights and dimensions);
- superstructures of fixed and floating installations (type, configuration, weights and dimensions);
- submarine systems and equipment (type, size, materials, details of foundation piles, and other information regarding potential interactions with other neighbouring systems and equipment);
- lengths, diameters, casing type and installation type of rigid/flexible submarine pipelines;
- details regarding the state of burial of submarine pipelines, concrete mats or bags, or other systems used to cover and protect them;
- details of systems that are integral to submarine installations such as manifolds, valves, clamps, umbilicals, electrical cables, etc;
- information on investigations carried out to verify the status and condition of submarine pipelines;
- any other information deemed useful in providing further details for the removal project.
- description of the identified removal option, based on a multi-criteria decision analysis, the selected removal method and the prepared waste reuse, recycling and disposal program;
- description of the type and categories of waste to be handled during operations;
- description of any items or materials that will be left in situ at the end of operations;
- in the case of partial removal of the substructure, details of the free water head that will be guaranteed at the end of the operations;
- Estimated cost of removal;
- Schedule of operations with start and end dates indicated;
- Characterization of the area affected by the platform or related infrastructure removal project and possible remediation project;
- Documentation pertaining to the description of the underwater archaeological cultural heritage, as well as the cultural heritage and landscape of coastal areas when affected by the execution of removal works of land-related infrastructure and subsequent site restoration;
- Environmental and post-removal monitoring program;
- Indication and description of preparatory and actual removal work.
- Preparatory work for platform removal includes the following activities to be described in detail:
  - cleaning and securing of equipment and lines including clearing of residual fluids and flushing;
  - marking of cutting lines and cleaning of cutting areas;
  - removal of any debris and excavation around the foundation piles;
  - preparation of superstructure and substructure for removal operations;
  - prior checks for the protection of underwater archaeological cultural heritage.
- Platform removal work includes the following activities to be described in detail:
  - vessels used and their characteristics;
  - location and submarine cutting systems and equipment used and monitoring of operations;

- description, size and weight of each part removed;
- description of work and its sequence;
- activities planned as a result of preventive inspections for the protection of underwater archaeological cultural heritage.
- The project for the removal of submarine pipeline must include:
  - survey to check the condition of the submarine pipeline and the state of the seabed at the end of operations;
  - description of submarine pipeline cleaning/remediation operations;
  - vessels used for both cleanup operations and submarine pipeline recovery;
  - activities planned as a result of preventive inspections for the protection of underwater archaeological cultural heritage.
- In case of complete in situ abandonment of the submarine pipeline, the project must provide at least:
  - a survey to check the condition of the submarine pipeline;
  - description of submarine pipeline cleaning/remediation operations;
  - disconnection of pipeline ends from submarine wellheads and **risers**;
  - possible burying of pipeline sections or their alternative protection;
  - vessels used;
  - activities planned as a result of preventive inspections for the protection of underwater archaeological cultural heritage.

### Annex 3

#### **Removal of infrastructures**

##### ***Environmental assessment of the removal project***

The project to remove the platform and associated decommissioned structures includes:

- a. description of the removal project with a summary of the information in **Annex 2**.
- b. description of the current status of affected environmental components prior to the start of preparatory and removal work, including but not limited to:
  - location and description of marine protected areas, national parks, Natura 2000 network sites, areas affected by underwater archaeological cultural heritage, biological protection areas, areas affected by aquaculture facilities;
  - protected natural areas, Natura 2000 sites, Important Bird Areas, wetlands of international importance, biological protection areas and areas otherwise subject to environmental protection;
  - cultural heritage and landscape of coastal areas when affected by the decommissioning and removal of shoreline-related infrastructure;
  - weather-climate characteristics of the area concerned;
  - physical, chemical characteristics of the water column;
  - characteristics of the seabed (morphology, bathymetry) and surface sediments (physical, chemical and ecotoxicological characteristics);
  - major benthic biocoenosis (with verification of the presence/distribution of habitats and species of conservation interest), demersal fish populations and nursery areas with special reference to species of commercial interest, marine mammals and reptiles, and avifauna;
  - main socio-economic activities (fishing, boating, maritime traffic) present in the vicinity of the platform and related facilities removal area.
- c. Identification and estimation of possible impacts on environmental components and socio-economic activities both direct and indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative impacts related to the platform and related structures removal works, including but not limited to:
  - identification and descriptions of project actions that may generate significant and adverse impacts on the environment (including but not limited to underwater noise, air emissions, water discharges, marine sediment handling, vessel presence, night lighting, accidental pollutant spills, transport of removed material, use of natural resources, underwater archaeological cultural heritage, etc.);
  - Environmental components affected by project actions (atmosphere, seabed, water environment, flora, fauna, marine ecosystems, cultural heritage and landscape of coastal areas, socio-economic activities, etc.);
- d. Description of measures planned to avoid, mitigate and/or compensate for significant and adverse impacts on affected environmental components;
- e. Description of previous environmental monitoring activities carried out prior to the construction of the offshore oil platform and related infrastructure and during its operation;
- f. Environmental component monitoring project;
- g. Environmental safeguard measures planned during any accidental hydrocarbon spills and accidents (information from the Major Hazard Report may be used).

## Annex II

### Comments, feedbacks and recommendations from Contracting Parties, on the first draft submitted in the framework of the ICG on the Development of regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects

- 1 Comments and recommendations received on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 from Morocco :
- .1 A-Definitions / Paragraph 3 : *To which law is the reference made?*
  - .2 D-Reuse of a platform and related infrastructure for purposes other than mining :
    - 1) Paragraph 8, a) : *Marine Protected Areas instead of Marine Areas;*
    - 2) Paragraph 8, a) : *the new international treaty aims to encourage the creation of Marine Protected Areas in waters which are not under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of States;*
    - 3) Paragraph 8, g) : *inserting between brackets “Environmental Impact Assessment” after “infrastructure”;* and
    - 4) Paragraph 8, g) : *inserting a bullet point “analysis of greenhouse gas emissions”*
  - .3 Annex I – Reuse of infrastructure not for mining activities :
    - 1) Paragraph 4 : *under environmental policies : ii) Environmental Protection Procedure Activities (Waste management, Recycling, Energy Conservation, Company and Vehicle Maintenance...);*
    - 2) Paragraph 4 : *under documents of the institution :*
      - *hazard identification and risk analysis ;*
      - *Occupational health and safety procedures ;*
  - .4 Annex II – Removal of infrastructure / Required documentation : *insertion of “telecommunication cables” prior “electrical cables “.*
- 2 Comment and recommendation received on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 from Croatia :
- .1 B-Permanent plugging of disused wells / Mining closure of wells :  
*Ad.) B - Permanent plugging of disused wells – Ad. 3. – Abandonment of platforms and related infrastructure is prohibited.*
- This is a strange formulation. According to the Law - Abandonment wells and platforms and related infrastructure are obligatory.*
- Maybe we can make exception if platforms could be reused for something else and if EIA Study shows less damage from remaining than from removal (uprooting the platform from the seabed, which would significantly devastate the flora and fauna in the environment – but it could be cleaned from all the elements that can be harmful). But, anyhow – can not be prohibited.*
- 3 Comment and recommendation received on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April from Tunisia :
- .1 *Concernant les commentaires à propos de l’ICG sur l’Élaboration de normes et de directives offshore régionales pour l’enlèvement des installations et des aspects financiers connexes, je tiens à remercier au nom Dr Ezio Amato pour la clarté et la pertinence de sa proposition.*  
*Par ailleurs, les discussions vont se poursuivre à propos de ce projet de lignes directrices lors de la 4e réunion de l’OFOG en Mai 2023.*

### Annex III

#### **Comments, feedbacks and recommendations from Non Contracting Parties, on the first draft submitted in the framework of the ICG on the Development of regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects**

1 Feedback received on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2023 from Israel :

##### **Israel Policy for Decommissioning Offshore Gas Production Facilities**

When an infrastructure that was placed on the seabed for commercial operations to produce natural gas, ended its use and it has no future purpose as such, the owner of the infrastructure will remove it from the marine environment whilst returning the seabed and its surroundings to their natural state as far as possible. This policy is addressing the obligation to leave the sensitive marine environment undisturbed to the far as possible extent, without waste, in accordance with the relevant environmental laws and principles of sustainable management and development. In addition, among other reasoning, this policy is based on the precautionary approach and the prevention at the source principles which are fundamental in the modern environmental management. This policy provides an adequate response to the environmental disturbances along the extended continental shelf in Israel, which includes the more sensitive soft-bottom habitats. Because the strip of soft bottom in the Mediterranean Sea of Israel, located between depths of 200 and 600 m, was defined as having great environmental importance that requires protection including the need to maintain its continuity (an article by Prof. Goren et al.<sup>§</sup>).

1. **Abandoned wells** need to be sealed according to the conditions of possession and guidelines 250CFR (Chapter Q) **PERMANENTLY PLUGGING WELLS**.
2. In marine areas where the sea depth is **deeper than 600 m**, well heads and gas pipelines may be left in situ, after flushing and sealing.
3. In marine areas where the sea depth is **shallower than 600 m**, a removal of all production infrastructure from the marine environment is a requirement.
4. **Gas Pipelines**, if they are laid on the bottom at a bottom depth **shallower than 600 m** - must be washed to seawater quality and then required to be removed from the marine environment.
5. **Gas Pipelines that are buried** under the seabed at any water depth deeper than 60 m (with a coverage of at least 50 cm above the top side of the pipeline and its accessories, according to a visual and/or magnetic survey), must be flushed to seawater quality, sealed, and may be abandoned at sea.
6. **Gas Pipelines that are buried** below the seabed at a water depth shallower than 60 m (with a coverage of at least 2 meters above the top side of the pipeline and its accessories, according to a visual and/or magnetic survey), must be flushed to seawater quality, sealed and may be abandoned at sea.
7. **Hydraulic and/or electrical communication pipelines** (umbilical) must be removed from the marine environment, regardless of sea depth.
8. Production infrastructure accessories (manifolds, jumpers, etc.) - must be removed from the marine environment, regardless of sea depth.
9. **Rigs and platforms** - the entire structure and its sub-structures and accessories will be removed in full of the marine environment. However, each case will be examined according to the specific situation and conditions.
10. **Abandonment and sealing plan** - will set forth all details of the types of facilities, the methods and procedures chosen for the sealing and abandonment operations. The plan will require an approval by an INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AGENCY (IVA) listed in IACS, which will base its expert opinion, also on the actual condition of the wells (e.g an Integrity test). The abandonment operations must be signed and approved by the same IVA after the completion of all abandonment operations.

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<sup>§</sup> *Vie et milieu - Life and environment*, 2019, 69 (4): 233-248 <https://www.php-obs-banyuls.fr/Viemilieu/index.php/volume-69-2019/69-issue-4/694-article-5/download.html>

11. **Monitoring plan for the left in-situ infrastructure** - infrastructure that is abandoned at place in the marine environment in accordance with the definitions detailed above, will be required for marine ambient monitoring plan. The monitoring activities will be take place beginning at the end of the first year after the abandonment and, according to the findings each year, up to 7 years after the abandonment completion.
12. **Additional requirements** may be given on a case by case basis, for other repairs or marine monitoring of the infrastructure abandoned on the seabed, as much as they may be required.

2 Comments and recommendations received on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 from Algeria :

***Remarques et observations sur les modifications des annexes du protocole relatif à la protection de la mer méditerranée contre la pollution résultant de l'exploration et de l'exploitation du plateau continental, du fond de la mer et de son sous-sol. « OFFSHORE »***

Faisant suite à l'examen de la documentation mises à notre dispositions relatives aux modifications des annexes du protocole relatif à la protection de la mer méditerranée contre la pollution résultant de l'exploration et de l'exploitation du plateau continental du fond de la mer et de son sous sol, les remarques et observations sont à soulignées sur les différents documents à savoir :

**Décision IG : 25/7** : Modification des annexes du protocole relatif à la protection de la mer méditerrané contre la pollution résultant de l'exploration et de l'exploitation du plateau continental, du fond de la mer et de son sous-sol.

L'examen des modification des annexes du protocole OFFSHORE ne soulève pas d'objection quant aux modifications proposées car l'enrichissement des annexes du protocole a été effectué sur la base d'une compilation de textes juridiques et réglementaire régionaux et mondiaux ainsi que sur la base de bonnes pratiques offshore, dont les documents sont ceux de l'agence américaine pour la protection de l'environnement (EPA), la convention OSPAR et la directive de l'UE pour les études d'impact sur l'environnement.

**Decision IG22/3** : Mediterranean OFFSHORE Action plan in the framework of 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 :

Compléter l'appendice 2 : programme de coopération technique et de renforcement des capacités par :

- Démantèlement des installations (plates formes), abandons des puits et des canalisations sous-marines.
- Surveillance et suivi à posteriori de l'environnement des sites ayant été concernés par des travaux de démantèlement d'installations, de puits et de canalisations sous-marines.

**Terms of Reference for the Intersessional Correspondence Group (ICG) on de commissioning for 2022-2023.**

3-1 il est judicieux de se concentrer sur des régions qui ont déjà développé des cadres réglementaires pour la gestion des plates formes pétrolières en fin de vie et qui pourraient ainsi servir d'exemple ou de retour d'expérience pour les autres régions qui l'auraient moins développé.

Le démantèlement peut ainsi consister à laisser l'installation sur place, in situ, à la démanteler. Aussi, cet aspect, devra englober également la pratique de bouchage et l'abandons des puits ainsi que les canalisations sous-marines et la réhabilitation du site dans ses conditions originales.

Convention internationale pour la protection de l'environnement marin en Atlantique Nord-Est	
Décision OSPAR 98/3 Elimination des Installations offshore désaffectées (ensemble quatre annexes)	
L'immersion et le maintien en place en totalité ou en partie des installations offshore désaffectées sont interdits dans la zone maritime. Toutefois, si l'autorité compétente est convaincue après qu'une	Ces aspects réglementaires sont pris en charge par des dispositions des annexes citées ci-dessus.  Annexe 1 Catégories d'installations offshore désaffectées

évaluation selon les dispositions de l'annexe 2, qu'il existe des raisons sérieuses pour lesquelles une autre option d'élimination est préférable à l'élimination finale à terre, elle peut accorder par dérogation un permis pour le maintien en place de la totalité ou d'une partie de l'installation.	<p>au titre desquelles des dérogations sont susceptibles d'être envisagées.</p> <p>Annexes 2 Schéma d'évaluation des propositions d'élimination en mer d'installations offshore désaffectées.</p> <p>Annexe 3 Procédure de consultation</p> <p>Annexe 4 Condition du permis et rapports.</p>
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3.2 Garanties Financières : Inciter le titulaire d'une autorisation d'exercer des activités pétrolières et gazières en mer, sur les conditions de constitution et de mobilisation des garanties financières à provisionner de démantèlement et de remise en état des lieux à la fin de leur activité.

Selon les dispositions de la loi 19-13 régissant les activités d'hydrocarbures, chapitre «abondons et remise en état des sites » les opérations d'abandon et de remise en état des sites au terme de la période d'exploitation sont financées par les provisions (garanties financières) constituées chaque année à compter de la date de mise en production. Les montants de ces provisions sont versés dans des comptes bancaires afin de procéder, aux opérations d'abandon et de remise en état des sites à la fin de l'exploitation.

Aussi je vous informe que les documents portant sur les Terms of Reference for the international Correspondance Group on annexes to the Offshore Productif for 2022 -2023 et le Plan d'action global et Programme de travail (Pdt) 2022-2023 ne soulèvent pas de remarque .

**Proposition d'amendement à l'annexe II de la décision IG 25/7 du protocole OFFSHORE :**

Inclure l'aluminium et sels d'aluminium en raison de son pouvoir bio accumulatif dans l'écosystème aquatique et des conséquences néfastes sur les espèces aquatiques et la santé de l'homme. Aussi ces sels peuvent provenir aussi de la corrosion des installations liées à l'activité OFFSHORE.

**Proposition d'amendement des annexes I à VIII de la décision IG 25/7 du protocole OFFSHORE :**

Certaines substances chimiques dont le rejet est interdit dans la zone du protocole sont utilisées de manière minime par les navires de pêche. Il convient de signaler que ce protocole sera en partie contraignant pour les pays en voie de développement, notamment de point de vue d'utilisation de **peinture antifouling** par les navires de pêche. Ces peintures antisalissure contiennent certaines substances nocives énumérées dans les annexes du protocole. , nous tenons à vous informer que les navires algériens ne pratiquent pas le nettoyage des coques des navires sous-l'eau (underwater hull cleaning), comme se fait dans les pays développés, comme le royaume unis par exemple. Cette activité de nettoyage des coques de navires sous-l'eau permet la libération de ces substances chimiques nocives pour les écosystèmes, la biodiversité marine, et la santé humaine. Elle se fait sous l'eau pour minimiser les couts d'exploitation des navires l'aide de plongeurs et de technologies dédié à cet effet ((ROV, jet d'eau à haute pression...etc), tout en récupérant les matières nocives dans un circuit fermé.

En Algérie, l'activité de nettoyage des coques de navires (carénage) se fait dans des chantiers navals à intervalle de temps régulier, ce qui minimise considérablement l'impact des substances chimiques de l'antifouling sur l'environnement marin. Le problème que présentent les revêtements antifouling (la désintégration de la peinture après un certain temps d'utilisation), sera résolu par le passage des navires en cale sèches à un intervalle de temps régulier, pour nettoyer et revêtir leur coque.

A cela, s'ajoute le fait que ces peintures utilisées par les navires de pêche artisanale en Algérie sont importées de pays ayant des exigences strictes en matière de pollution, conformément aux recommandations du comité de protection de l'Environnement Marin de l'OMI (exemple : Danemark, Royaume Unis).



Comme la plupart des pêcheries artisanales dans le monde, les navires de pêche algériens ne sont pas dotés de ballast et ne sont pas concernés par la pollution due au rejet des eaux de ballast. Pour les autres types de pollution résultant de l'activité des navires, à savoir les huiles usagées, nous tenons à vous informer que nous avons mis au point un système de gestion et de récupération des déchets huileux au niveau des ports de pêches et qu'aucun rejet en mer de ces matières n'est autorisé. A ce titre, nous vous demandons de tenir compte de l'aspect artisanale des pêcheries de pays en voie de développement et de leurs donner un délai pour se conformer.

Dans le cadre du plan d'action global, comprenant une stratégie de mobilisation des ressources de ce projet, les pays en voie de développement peuvent bénéficier du programme de coopération technique et de renforcement des capacités afin de veiller à l'exécution plus durable du plan d'action offshore pour la méditerranée.

3 Comments and recommendations received on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 from Israel :

.1 A-Definitions :

- 1) Paragraph 3 : *In our opinion, this is not the right term, it is recommended to change it to - production concession. (and change the term "mining" in the entire document). Also, we are not familiar with LAW no. 9. we only comply the national laws ;*
- 2) Paragraph 4 : *Products instead of production ;*
- 3) Paragraph 4 : *How about umbilicals? Hydraulic fluids lines made for the control of the subsea operation? ; and*
- 4) Paragraph 8 : *This is a too wide definition. Like what facilities?*

.2 B-Permanent plugging of disused wells / Mining closure of wells :

- 1) Title : *What is "mining closure of wells"?*;
- 2) Paragraph 1 : *It must be shut, abandoned, with no relation to whether it is commercial or not; and*
- 3) Paragraph 3 : *The meaning of abandonment is not clear, you may consider to add a definition to **abandonment**. Also, It is recommended to divide this section to the type of infrastructure, so that there is a reference to the abandonment of a platforms and the decommissioning and removal of pipelines from the marine environment.*

.3 D-Reuse of a platform and related infrastructure for purposes other than mining : *It is recommended to consider adding that the applicant will be required to declare and commit that he will act to deal with any environmental damages if such are discovered after the approval of the reuse.*

.4 E-Removal of infrastructure :

- 1) Title : *What are the general and detailed provisions for the removal of infrastructure from the sea? There is no word about it;*
- 2) Paragraph 2 : *Who is making the EIA? The competent authority or the operator?; and*
- 3) Paragraph 3 : *It is important to emphasize in this section that the hazard report must also refer to hazard analysis of marine pollution.*

.4 Annex II – Removal of infrastructure / Required documentation ; “in case of complete in-situ abandonment” : *What cases are these? There must be some criteria.*

## Annexe IV

### Comments feedbacks and recommendation, from an accredited MAP Partner, on the first draft submitted in the framework of the ICG on the Development of regional offshore standards and guidelines on the removal (decommissioning) of installations and the related financial aspects

1 Comments and recommendation received on the 06<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 from IOGP :

#### **IOGP's comments on "Offshore installations decommissioning Guidelines for the environmental aspects" issued on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2023**

IOGP welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the draft "Offshore installations decommissioning Guidelines for the environmental aspects" issued by the REMPEC general via email on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2023.

IOGP is available to support the REMPEC general in the development of a decommissioning guidelines that can support the intent of the objectives of the Barcelona Convention, towards promoting safe, environmentally sustainable, and economically efficient decommissioning. We recognise the importance of future REMPEC decommissioning in light of the expected increase in offshore decommissioning activities in the region. We think the current draft needs additional clarity of purpose, including governance relating to implementation and compliance. The draft content should be revised and shaped in accordance with the objectives of the Guidance, in particular to promote a robust intent-based policy framework with key principles to underpin decommissioning projects in the Mediterranean region.

**IOGP's specific comments are as follows:**

- 1. IOGP recommends that this guideline sets out the ways in which it is intended to be used, including how it relates to national guidelines and legislation and any requirements as regards reporting and the monitoring of compliance.**
  - Is this guideline intended to be used as support for national competent authorities as they oversee and permit decommissioning projects?
  
- 2. IOGP recommends that the document starts with referencing applicable international guidelines.**
  - This includes IMO's London Convention for assessment of Offshore Structures, Basel convention, etc. and a discussion on how this guideline interfaces with other applicable guidelines. There's reference to a law (Art 9 etc.) but unclear if this is a specific country's law.
  
- 3. IOGP recommends that the guideline enables the selection of the most suitable decommissioning option for the asset, considering safety, environment, and stakeholder factors.**
  - Within this guideline, there seems to be contradictory requirements between the options clean seabed and decommissioning *in situ*. E.g., B3 states that "Abandonment of platforms and related infrastructure is prohibited". There does not seem to be any derogation criteria or section describing the assessment of "in-situ" options, while in Annex 2 in the 16th bullet under "required documentation" the required documentation listed includes "description of any items or materials that will be left in situ at the end of operations" and "in the case of partial removal of the

substructure, details of the free water head that will be guaranteed at the end of the operations". In addition, no reference appears to have been made to IMO guidelines for free passage of shipping.

- For facilities, IOGP advocates for a regulatory process with decommissioning requirements that are fit for purpose to enable the industry to conduct a comparative risk assessment (CA) process to determine an optimal outcome that balances safety, environmental outcomes, stakeholder needs, technical feasibility and economic impacts. For wells, IOGP favors and applies intent-based abandonment approaches, which enable industry to identify the appropriate well P&A methodology in accordance with industry guidelines.
- 4. In the scenario for reuse and repurposing, it is recommended that the guideline makes a recommendation on transfer of ownership and tax treatment.**
- IOGP recommends that in the event of a divestment, reuse or new use, the decommissioning liabilities should be transferred to the new owner. There should be due diligence by national competent authority to check that the new owner can meet their legal commitment to decommissioning, including by assessing buyer financial and technical capabilities as part of divestment approvals.
- 5. IOGP recommends that the requirement for documents (typically in most jurisdictions called a 'decommissioning plan') as described within Annex 2 should include key aspects that allow the competent authority to perform assessment.**
- What is currently described focuses on details that are unnecessary for assessment of the appropriate decommissioning solutions. Some details required will only be available after a contractor has been engaged to execute the work. The timing of information submission will depend on project specificities including supply chain approaches and should not follow a prescriptive approach.
- 6. Overall readability (structure and flow) of the documents needs further improvement. This includes the need for consistent technical and regulatory terminology throughout.**
- The document needs to be -proofread as the language and sentence structures are difficult to understand.
  - There are inconsistent terminologies and terminologies not commonly used in the industry used throughout. This includes "competent authority" instead of Competent Administration, "Decommissioning Plan" which refers to the main document describing the decommissioning activities, decisions, and justifications etc. instead of 'preliminary technical report'; 'Mining concession' should be hydrocarbons license, unless these are terms normally used by the Barcelona protocol.
  - There are some missing definitions e.g., "infrastructure", while it should be noted that reuse vs. repurpose have different meanings - where reuse means to reuse it again for O&G production and repurpose implies alternative function than oil and gas. "Well decommissioning" is more commonly used instead of "mining closure of wells"; "mining" is not used in other offshore jurisdictions.
  - The use of "must" throughout the document: Are the provisions within this guideline intended to be binding? If these are non-binding recommendations, then we recommend the use of "should" where it's a recommendation and "shall" where it is a binding requirement.
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