

APPENDIX IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regional Expert Meeting on National Action Plans for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), which met in Barcelona, Spain, from 8 to 9 November 2016:

1 expressed appreciation for the financial support provided to the activity related to National Action Plans for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), hereinafter referred to as the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP);

2 thanked the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), as Secretariat of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), as well as the Consultant specifically contracted for the above-mentioned activity, for their respective contributions to the preparation and organisation of this meeting;

3 took note of the lessons learned and the way forward with regard to the National Action Plans for the implementation of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities ("the LBS Protocol") and its Regional Plans in the framework of the Strategic Action Programme to address Pollution from Land-Based Activities ("SAP MED") to achieve Good Environmental Status for pollution related Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) ecological objectives;

4 noted with interest the proposal from the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to address measures related to marine litter from sea-based sources as well as marine pollution from dumping and offshore activities, as appropriate, in the National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) as these were not fully covered by the National Action Plans for the implementation of the LBS Protocol;

5 recognised that the National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) were linked with the IMO's efforts concerning the definition of IMO instruments compliance gaps, *inter alia* the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS), including the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (IIC Code), IMO's plans to assist developing countries with the preparation of national maritime policies focusing on IMO related issues, and, ultimately, to define a plan of action to fill the identified gaps;

6 acknowledged that a substantive number of activities, including projects or initiatives, relevant to the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), were carried out at the national, sub-regional or regional level, and that other activities were foreseen in the near future;

7 recalled that the preparation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) was a high priority, and that it would enable the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to fully implement the said Strategy in a timely and thorough manner;

8 further recalled that a National Action Plan should be well-structured and specific to each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention clearly defining the procedures and required actions that were necessary to implement the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) at the national level with a view to ensuring, or at least facilitating, the attaining of the aims and objectives of the said Strategy with the support of REMPEC;

9 welcomed the draft Guidance Document for the preparation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), including Common Template, List of Examples of National Actions and National Assessment Form, hereinafter referred to as the draft Guidance Document, which was set out in the Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.39/4;

10 was of the opinion that the draft Guidance Document provided the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention with a useful tool to assess progress in individual countries and guide them in their implementation efforts of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) in a tailored manner, including the carrying out of a national assessment and the definition of the remedial action that might be deemed necessary;

11 agreed with the rationale set out in Part I (Background) of the draft Guidance Document and recognised the benefits for Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to adopt a common approach for the preparation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021);

12 concurred with the work methodology for the preparation of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), as presented by the Secretariat (REMPEC) during the Meeting;

13 agreed in principle with the use of the Common template for the preparation of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), hereinafter referred to as the Common Template, based on that set out in Annex I to the draft Guidance Document and circulated during the practical session, with a view to ensuring that the Secretariat (REMPEC) may be in a position to provide the necessary assistance to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in enhancing their national capacities and in facilitating the means for regional and sub-regional cooperation;

14 also agreed in principle with the use of the National Assessment Form, as set out in Annex III to the draft Guidance Document, with a view to ensuring that the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention may be guided by the same questions when assessing their level of implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and preparing or updating their National Action Plans for the implementation of the said Strategy;

15 requested the Secretariat (REMPEC) to prepare a final draft Guidance Document prior to its submission to the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, to be tentatively held in Malta in May 2017, for their review and recommendations, taking into consideration the comments and amendments proposed by the Meeting;

16 further acknowledged that the preparation of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) was a complex undertaking requiring the involvement of various stakeholders at the national level;

17 appreciated the limited time within which the ultimate aim of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) consisting in implementing the whole of the said Strategy by all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and the Secretariat (REMPEC) should be achieved, well before the end of 2021, and the subsequent need for them to start preparing National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), with a matter of urgency;

18 encouraged Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to use the outcome of the assessment of the level of implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2005-2015) as a basis for the preparation of their first National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021);

19 invited the Secretariat (REMPEC) to explore the possibility of carrying out pilot projects or activities as soon as possible with a view to assisting Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention that so request in preparing or implementing their National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021);

20 also requested the Secretariat (REMPEC) to continue to explore the possibility of obtaining further financial assistance for the above-mentioned purposes under the MTF and the IMO's ITCP as well as to mobilise other external resources and means, as appropriate; and

21 further requested the Secretariat to report to the Twelfth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC on the outcome of this meeting.