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

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

Sliema, Malta, 13-15 May 2025

REMPEC/WG.61/6

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Agenda Item 6: Illegal and accidental oil and HNS pollution from ships

Maritime Traffic and Offshore Oil and Gas Activities – Trends and Outlook

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Note by the Secretariat

The present document presents the Terms of reference for the update and improvement of the Study on Trends and Outlook on Marine Pollution from Ships and of Maritime Traffic and Offshore Activities in the Mediterranean, which will contribute to the development of the third edition of the Mediterranean Quality Status Report (MED QSR).

Background

1. With a view to contributing to the preparation of the [Mediterranean Quality Status Report 2023 \(\(MED QSR\) 2023\)](#), the Thirteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, June 2019) , requested the Secretariat, with the contribution of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, to prepare a Study on Marine Pollution from Ships and Maritime Traffic Trends in the Mediterranean, in the biennium 2020-2021, hereinafter referred to as the Study.
2. The Study was presented to the Fourteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Online, May-June 2021) under document REMPEC/WG.51/INF.3 and published on [REMPEC Website](#).
3. The Fifteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, June 2023), agreed on the Initial assessment findings related to IMAP Common Indicator 19 to contribute to the preparation of the MED QSR 2023, as set out in Annex 3 to document REMPEC/WG.56/3/4/Rev.1, based on the findings of the Study.
4. The Fifteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, June 2023), recognised the lack of reporting, discrepancies between the information on operational aspects and incidents of the reports and those available on the Country Profiles and the MEDGIS-MAR's 'accidents and 'equipment' databases. REMPEC, secured funds under the Programme of Work for the biennium 2024-2025, and organized the Regional Workshop on Reporting, Monitoring and Data Sharing (MEDEXPOL 2024), Malta, September 2024, to implement the recommendations of the Fifteenth Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points, pertaining to these topics.
5. MEDEXPOL 2024, recognized that reporting and monitoring are closely linked to the availability of accurate and up-to-date information and recognized the value at regional and national level for policy assessment and development of reports on marine pollution from ships and offshore activities, such as the Study on Trends and Outlook of Marine Pollution and the synthetic Brochure and encouraged contracting parties to:
 - .1 adhere to the periodic preparation of a brochure (e.g. biannual bases) for communication and awareness purposes (e.g. synthesizing the results from the updated "Study on trends and outlook of marine pollution" and other relevant assessments); and
 - .2 to agree on the preparation of an update of the "Study on trends and outlook of marine pollution", eventually considering other merging topics.

Study on Trends and Outlook

6. Following the official publication by the [UNEP/MAP Coordination Unit of the 2023 MED QSR on 23 January 2023](#), and building on the experience gained from the 2017 and 2023 MED QSR editions, REMPEC initiated the process for updating and enhancing the Study on Trends and Outlook 2021 in view of the third edition of the MED QSR. In this regard, REMPEC developed the Terms of Reference (TOR) outlining the scope, methodology, key deliverables, and implementation framework of the updated Study.
7. The TOR considered
 - .1 the analysis of the Study on Trends and Outlook and relevant literature that identified key gaps, outdated data and areas requirement improvement, including the identification of any emerging issues;
 - .2 the developments that occurred since 2021: the [UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy 2022-2027](#), [the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships \(2022-2031\)](#), the [Decision IG.26/3 of COP 23](#) link related

- .3 to IMAP CI 19;
 - .3 improvements on the maritime traffic and shipping operations components data of the 2021 Study to ensure a clear and consistent image of maritime trade in the Mediterranean;
 - .4 defining and applying improvements on the IMAP system for the considered Ecological Objectives; and
 - .5 the scope and methodology for the updating of the Study.
8. The draft Terms of Reference are provided as Annex to the present document.

Brochure/Handbook on Maritime traffic and Offshore O&G activities – Trends and Outlook

9. Regarding the enhancements to the maritime traffic and shipping operations data from the 2021 Study, as referenced in paragraph 7.3 above, the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) consider that these improvements are not only for the purposes of the MED QSR but also to ensure the regular updating of data for future Focal Points Meetings and should support the development of a periodically updated handbook or brochure

Actions requested by the Meeting

10. The Meeting is invited to:
- .1 **take note** of the information provided in the present document;
 - .2 **comment** as deemed appropriate and **agree** on the Terms of Reference for the development of the revised Study on marine pollution from ships and maritime traffic trends in the Mediterranean;
 - .3 **request** the Secretariat to undertake the update of the Study during the forthcoming biennium; and
 - .4 **invites** the Secretariat to develop from the updated Study the draft periodic Brochure/Handbook.

Annex

**Terms of Reference for the Update and Upgrade of the
Study on Maritime Traffic and Offshore Oil and Gas Activities
- Trends And Outlook**

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**FOR THE UPDATE AND UPGRADE OF
THE STUDY ON MARTIME TRAFFIC AND OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS ACTIVITIES -
TRENDS AND OUTLOOK****Background**

1 The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) is a Regional Activity Centre established within the framework of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), also referred to as UNEP/MAP, with a view to coordinating the activities of the Mediterranean coastal States related to the implementation of 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 Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the “Barcelona Convention”). The Centre is based in Malta, hosted by the Maltese Government, and is administered by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in cooperation with UNEP/MAP.

2 One of the objectives of REMPEC is to develop regional co-operation and to facilitate co-operation among the Mediterranean coastal States in order to respond to pollution incidents which result or may result in a discharge of oil or other hazardous and noxious substances, and which require emergency actions or other immediate response. Among the main tasks of REMPEC is providing a framework for the exchange of information on operational, technical, scientific, legal and financial matters and facilitating dialogue to conduct coordinated action at national, regional and global levels to implement Prevention and Emergency Protocols.

3 With a view to contributing to the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR, and in light of the gaps identified and related assessment exercises (for example, the SoED identified a lack of comprehensive knowledge about offshore activities), REMPEC, in collaboration with the Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (PB/RAC), the Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MEDPOL), and the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), prepared a Study on *Trends and Outlook on Marine Pollution from Ships and of Maritime Traffic and Offshore Activities in the Mediterranean*, in the framework of the Programme of Work 2020-2021 of the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP).

4 The Study was published as an Information document to the 14th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (May-June 2021) under document REMPEC/WG.51/INF.3, and published on [REMPEC Website](#).

5 The 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 23) (Slovenia, December 2023) endorsed the provisional Executive Summary of the 2023 MED QSR, the 2023 MED QSR was published to the public on 23 January 2025. This concludes the process of the second edition of MED QSR.

6 At their 22nd Meeting, the Contracting Parties (COP 22) to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), adopted the *UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027* (MTS 2022-2027). The MTS 2022-2027 contains 7 Programmes addressing 11 Ecological Objectives with 27 monitoring indicators (Common Indicators or Candidate Indicators). The Ecological Objectives and the Indicators have been introduced at the 19th meeting of the Contracting Parties with Decision IG.22/7 *Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria* (IMAP).

7 Also at COP 22, the Contracting Parties adopted the *Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031)*. This Strategy defined seven Common Strategic Objectives (CSO) with a detailed action plan for each CSO.

8 To support the implementation of both, the MTS 2022-2027 and the Mediterranean Strategy 2022-2031, an up-to-date assessment of the current situation of marine pollution from ships and offshore activities based on comprehensive analysis of latest data available, facilitates the accomplishment of the objectives.

9 Taking into account the changes in the regulatory and economic situation since finalization of the study, such as the adoption of the IMO Marine Litter Action Plan in 2021, the designation of the Mediterranean as Sulphur Emission Control Area (Med SO_x ECA) in 2022, the designation of the North

Western MED as PSSA in 2023, the adoption of the IMO 2023 GHG Strategy in 2023, the introduction of the EU ETS Regime, or the impact on trade routes and volume in the Mediterranean due to war and security reasons in the Black-Sea and the Red-Sea, just to mention a few, a revision and update of the study was suggested.

10 Taking also into account, that the maritime sector plays a critical role in global trade, energy security, and environmental sustainability, and given the increasing complexity of maritime traffic and offshore oil and gas activities, especially in the Mediterranean region, it became evident that there is a need to update the Study. This will support evidence-based policymaking, risk assessment and regulatory frameworks, including the effective implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031) and in the development of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2028-2033.

11 Subsequently REMPEC presented a proposal for consideration by Contracting Parties, at the 16th Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points (Malta, May 2025), of key elements for the Secretariat's contribution to the third edition of the MED QSR, building on the experience gained from the 2017 and 2023 editions, that will define the scope, methodology, key deliverables and implementation framework to update and upgrade the Study.

12 [Decision of 16th Meeting of focal points to be added]

Objectives

13 The main objective of the consultancy services is to update and upgrade the “Study on trends and outlook of marine pollution from ships and activities and of maritime traffic and offshore activities in the Mediterranean” [under activity].

14 The structure of the study should provide for mechanisms to facilitate the regular updating of data for future Focal Points Meetings and should support the development of a periodically updated handbook or brochure.

15 Since finalisation of the previous study, various new initiatives have been launched, aiming at medium and long term effects against the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea and the sea in general:

16 With a specific focus on the Mediterranean a set of political and strategical initiatives have been launched in the last few years, to name the most relevant:

- The Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031).
- The UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027.
- The 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report and a Renewed Ecosystem Approach Policy in the Mediterranean.
- MED 2050, The Mediterranean by 2050, A foresight by Plan Bleu.

17 The IMO adopted new regulations dedicated to the Mediterranean Sea:

- Designation of the Mediterranean Sea as a Sulphur Emission Control Area (Med SO_x ECA) (2022)
- Designation of the North Western Mediterranean as Particular Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA)(2023)

18 New IMO Initiatives with a global focus dedicated to pollution are:

- The IMO 2023 GHG Strategy
- The IMO Revised Action Plan on marine plastics

19 In addition the EU set into force new regulations with a specific focus on exhaust emissions, in particular:

- The EU ETS regime and linked to it the MRV reporting requirements; and
- The Fuel EU Maritime Regulation.

20 In preparing a new study the consultant shall reflect these new initiatives and the expected impact on the ecological situation in the Mediterranean.

Scope

21 As a basis, the study shall review statistics and trends of maritime traffic and offshore activities in the Mediterranean and the related various kinds of pollution emanating from shipping and offshore industry. Furthermore, an estimation of future traffic trends as well as pollution trends is sought after.

22 Key pollution scenarios for consideration are

- Oil pollution,
- Chemical - pollution,
- Air pollution,
- GHG Emissions
- Marine litter,
- Non-indigenous species,
- Underwater noise.

23 Within this scope of pollution scenarios, the study should specifically address or further expand on specific topics of particular interest in the Mediterranean, i.a. following:

- One of the crucial measures to reduce and prevent operational and illicit pollution is the availability of Port Reception Facilities (PRF). An overview about the current situation of PRF in the Mediterranean Sea including acceptance by shipping and shortage of PRFs should be provided.
- The Mediterranean Sea in large has become the most favourite destination of large passenger vessels. The study should describe the impact of these large and very large passenger ships on the pollution situation in the Mediterranean Sea, in particular related to sewage, litter and air emissions.
- An analysis of the impact of pleasure craft and in particular large pleasure craft on the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea under specific consideration of the typical sailing patterns of such vessels.
- Being aware that the major volume of sewage introduction into the sea is shore based, nevertheless, the development of operational and illicit discharge of sewage by ships should be considered.
- In view of upcoming alternative fuels, preparedness and response to alternative fuels, such as Hydrogen, Ammonia or Methanol, and Low Flashpoint Fuels.
- In 2023 the MEPC adopted Resolution MEPC.378(80), 2023 Guidelines for the control and management of ships' biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive species. These guidelines provide procedures for hull cleaning as well as for recycling facilities, in particular in view of the large fleet of mega yachts this is a topic of concern for the Mediterranean Sea.
- Since a number of Mediterranean countries, mainly EU Member States, are producing significant amounts of fish in aquaculture, potential pollution impacts through aquaculture, the current situation and trends should be discussed.
- Emerging pollution issues to come into focus in foreseeable future.

The further objectives of the consultancy are:

24 The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention introduced an Integrated Monitoring and Assessment System (IMAP) consisting of 11 Ecological Objectives (EO) with 61 Indicators to monitor the environmental status of the Mediterranean Sea. Useful for consideration within the scope of the Study appear in particular:

- EO2 Non-Indigenous species - Common Indicator 6;
- EO9 Pollution - Common Indicator 19;
- EO10 Marine litter - Common Indicators 22, 23 and Candidate indicator 24;
- EO11: Energy including underwater noise: Candidate indicators 26 and 27.

25 The Study should analyse the status of reporting related to relevant EOs and Indicators and provide suggestions to improve the system.

26 In addition, the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031) provides a set of 7 Common Strategic Objectives (CSO) with a comprehensive set of action items for each of the CSOs. One group of proposed action items refer to

actions for information and knowledge sharing. It is understood that the Study could provide input to contribute to action items related to information and knowledge sharing.

Methodology

Identification of sources and data collection

27 To meet the objectives, as a first step the consultant shall review relevant publications, reports and databases to identify the most suitable and reliable sources. As a starting point a set of documents will be provided by REMPEC, Plan Bleu, the Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL), and the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC).

28 In addition to information collected through the literature review the consultant shall review suitable data sources on traffic and pollution, such as the online databases from Lloyd's List Intelligence, the online Clarkson Offshore database, EMSA CleanSeaNet, Copernicus Maritime Surveillance information, AIS traffic data, etc. to establish trends in trade, ship routing, and in pollution.

Geographical scope of the assignment

29 The Consultant will primarily perform the assignment from office/home.

Assignment

30 For the completion of this consultancy, which shall not exceed [to be defined] in total, the Consultant shall:

- .1 attend a kick-off Meeting to be held, [through videoconference], preferably within three (3) days of signing of the contract, to discuss the content of the reference documents to be analysed, the scope of the assignment, as well as to collect required information for the completion of this consultancy and to agree on the method of work and communication channel;
- .2 draft a brief summary of the kick-off Meeting reflecting the main outcomes of the meeting;
- .3 conduct a literature review and investigation of sources for pollution data and information to identify sources suitable for the Study;
- .4 define the scope and methodology for the updated Study, which shall include defined key thematic areas, including maritime traffic trends, offshore oil and gas activities, environmental impacts and regulatory developments.
- .5 prepare the draft Study considering the findings of the deliverables above, as reviewed by REMPEC, which shall:
 - .1 outline objectives, scope and expected outcomes;
 - .2 define data collection and analysis methods;
 - .3 specify key deliverables, timeline and reporting requirements;
 - .4 specify expertise and qualifications required for the research team, and
 - .5 define the mechanism to facilitate, using the Study, the regular updating of data for future Focal Points Meetings and support the development of a periodically updated handbook or brochure.
- .6 prepare, in consultation with REMPEC, a revised draft Study, taking into account the feedback and comments provided by REMPEC on the draft Study referred to in paragraph 30.5 above, which shall include:
 - .1 a draft executive summary detailing the study findings, including data analysis, and
 - .2 a set of draft recommendations tailored to the Mediterranean context, taking into account the specific challenges and opportunities in the region.

- .7 prepare, in consultation with REMPEC, a final draft Study, taking into consideration feedback provided by REMPEC, and the cover page of the Working Document to be submitted for consideration by the 16th Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points.
- .8 prepare, in consultation with REMPEC, a PowerPoint presentation summarising the key outcomes of the final draft Study referred to in paragraph 30.7 above, for dissemination to CPs, including relevant stakeholders.

Deliverables and deadlines

31 The Consultant shall:

- .1 prepare and submit to REMPEC, not later than one week from the Kick-off Meeting, the draft kick-off Meeting summary referred to in paragraph 13.2 above;
- .2 prepare and submit to REMPEC, not later than **[To Insert Date]**, the first draft Study, referred to in paragraph 30.5 above;
- .3 prepare and submit to REMPEC, not later than **[To Insert Date]**, the revised draft Study, together with the draft executive summary and the set of draft recommendations, referred to in paragraph 30.6 above;
- .4 prepare and submit to REMPEC, not later than **[To Insert Date]**, the final draft Study, referred to on paragraph 30.7 above;
- .5 prepare and submit to REMPEC, not later than **[To Insert Date]**, the following documents:
 - .1 the final draft Study, together with the revised draft executive summary, the set of revised draft recommendations, referred to in paragraph 30.7 above; and
 - .2 the PowerPoint presentation referred to in paragraph 30.8 above.

32 All documents produced by the Consultant shall be prepared using the Established Guidelines for the preparation of reports on seminars, symposia, courses, workshops, and similar events, provided in Annex II to the “REMPEC Consultant Booklet” unless instructed otherwise by REMPEC (i.e. specific document template(s) to be provided by REMPEC) and shall be drafted in English, formatted according to REMPEC requirements, as well as provided in electronic format using software compatible with Microsoft Office.

33 The following disclaimer shall appear in all documents prepared by the Consultant:

“This activity is financed by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and is implemented by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC).

The views expressed in this document are those of the Consultant and are not attributed in any way to the United Nations (UN), the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) or REMPEC.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the UN Secretariat, UNEP/MAP, IMO or REMPEC, concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.”

Schedule

34. The work and tasks set out in the present document shall be completed by **[To Insert Date]**. The contract will be terminated following the submission by the Consultant of final draft Study and the PowerPoint presentation referred to above, as well as the subsequent certification by REMPEC that the performance of the duties and the work carried out are satisfactory.

35. Within that timeframe, the Consultant shall organise work in the best possible manner and ensure the successful completion of the consultancy.
