



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

Regional Expert Meeting on the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides (Med SO_x ECA) pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI

REMPEC/WG.50/INF.4
Date: 23 April 2021

Online, 27-28 April 2021

Original: English only

Agenda Item 5

SUBMISSION BY REMPEC TO THE 76TH SESSION OF THE IMO'S MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE (MEPC 76)

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document presents the submission by REMPEC to the 76th session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 76), pursuant to the Road Map for a Proposal for the Possible Designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides Pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, within the Framework of the Barcelona Convention.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 3

Related documents: MEPC 76/INF.63, REMPEC/WG.50/INF.3

Background

1 As presented in document REMPEC/WG.50/INF.3, COP 21¹ adopted Decision IG.24/8 on the Road Map for a Proposal for the Possible Designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides Pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, within the Framework of the Barcelona Convention, hereinafter referred to as the road map.

2 The information document related to the adoption of Decision IG.24/8, as prepared by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) and submitted to the seventy-sixth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (MEPC 76), pursuant to the road map, is presented in the **Appendix** to the present document.

Action requested by the Meeting

3 **The Meeting is invited to take note** of the information provided in the present document.

¹ Twenty-first 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 (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019).

APPENDIX

**Submission by REMPEC to the 76th session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection
Committee (MEPC 76)**

(MEPC 76/INF.63)

MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
COMMITTEE
76th session
Agenda item 13

MEPC 76/INF.63
7 April 2021
ENGLISH ONLY
Pre-session public release:

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Road Map for the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, within the Framework of the Barcelona Convention

Submission by REMPEC

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides information on the adoption and implementation of a road map for the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, within the Framework of the Barcelona Convention

*Strategic direction,
if applicable:* 4

Output: 4.1

Action to be taken: Paragraph 19

Related documents: MEPC 76/11/1 and MEPC 74/INF.5

Introduction

1 COP 19¹ adopted Decision IG.22/4 on the Regional Strategy for Prevention of, and Response to, Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021) (the Regional Strategy (2016-2021)), which addresses, *inter alia*, the issue of the prevention of air pollution from ships.

2 In accordance with the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), administered by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), in cooperation with the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP), established a Technical Committee of Experts, which worked through correspondence, nominated by the Contracting

¹ Nineteenth 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 (Athens, Greece, 9-12 February 2016).

Parties to the Barcelona Convention². The Technical Committee of Experts decided to carry out a technical and feasibility study to examine, if it is appropriate, at the current stage, to put in place a road map for preparation of a submission to the IMO, to designate certain areas of the Mediterranean Sea requiring specific environmental protection, as a sulphur oxides (SOx) Emission Control Area (ECA) and to explore possible further steps.

3 COP 20³ agreed to include in the UNEP/MAP Work Programme and Budget for 2018-2019, an activity aimed at examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, or parts thereof, as SOx ECA(s), under Annex VI to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL Annex VI) and effectively implementing the existing energy efficiency measures.

4 In this context, and on the basis of the outcome of the work of the SOx ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts, including the Technical and Feasibility Study and the initial draft submission to the IMO prepared by REMPEC, COP 21⁴ adopted Decision IG.24/8 on the road map for a proposal for the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides Pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, within the Framework of the Barcelona Convention⁵ ("the road map").

Goals and main steps

5 The road map outlines the steps towards a proposal for the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as defined in Article 1 of the Barcelona Convention, as a SOx ECA pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, within the framework of the Barcelona Convention ("the proposed Med SOx ECA"), elaborating the goals, steps, timetable, including milestones and actions.

6 The goals of the process are two-fold:

- .1 to reach consensus amongst the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention with a view to formulating a joint and coordinated proposal on the designation of the proposed Med SOx ECA to the IMO; and
- .2 if consensus is reached, to submit the joint and coordinated proposal for the designation of the proposed Med SOx ECA to the IMO, in accordance with the rules and procedures established by the Organization, to have the proposal assessed and approved by the Organization that may consider, adopt and bring into force an amendment to regulation 14 of MARPOL Annex VI related to the designation of the proposed Med SOx ECA, and to have the proposed Med SOx ECA effectively entering into force within a reasonable and practical timeframe, as defined by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

² The 22 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, and the European Union.

³ Twentieth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017).

⁴ Twenty-first Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019).

⁵ Available at: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31706/19ig24_22_2408_eng.pdf.

7 As presented in document MEPC 76/11/1, REMPEC, in cooperation with the Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL) and the *Plan Bleu* Regional Activity Centre (PB/RAC) of UNEP/MAP, has been overseeing the implementation of the road map, through the SOx ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts, since its adoption at COP 21.

8 The main steps arising from the road map are to be implemented over the 2020-2021 biennium and essentially consist of national and regional actions. The global actions beyond 2021 will only be implemented at the IMO level if consensus is reached amongst the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention on the joint and coordinated proposal for the designation of the proposed Med SOx ECA to the IMO.

Progress to date

9 In terms of national actions, as requested, REMPEC has been providing continued assistance for the ratification and effective implementation of MARPOL Annex VI to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, in line with the road map. These activities were financed by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and the IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP), during the biennium 2020-2021, in line with the road map.

10 In 2020, REMPEC organized three national workshops (virtual) on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI, for Egypt (25 November), Algeria (26 November), and Lebanon (10 December).

11 These were follow-up activities to those carried out by REMPEC during 2018-2019, namely the Regional Workshop on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI (Valletta, Malta, 11-13 December 2018) as well as the three national workshops on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI for Albania (25-26 November 2019), Bosnia and Herzegovina (28-29 November 2019) and Libya (5-6 December 2019). Since then, Albania has become the 99th country to ratify MARPOL Annex VI.

12 With regard to regional actions, the mandate of the SOx ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts was extended by COP 21 until 30 April 2021 to oversee the completion of the knowledge gathering and the preparations of further studies, notably socio-economic impacts on individual Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, *inter alia*, as indicated in the road map. This includes the development of their respective terms of reference, through correspondence coordinated by REMPEC, when examining the possibility of designating the proposed Med SOx ECA.

13 The following knowledge gathering based on existing knowledge and studies⁶ was completed according to the road map:

- .1 synopsis of the assessment;
- .2 quantification of the impacts associated with deposition of PM_{2.5} and air toxics;
- .3 additional detail of land-based emissions controls of SO_x and PM in the Mediterranean coastal States; and
- .4 additional elements on the economic impacts on shipping engaged in international trade.

14 The following studies were also carried out in accordance with the road map:

- .1 additional economic impact evaluation, more precisely:
 - .1 analysis of the impacts on shipping engaged in international trade as well as on trade modal shift outside the Mediterranean; and
 - .2 analysis of the impacts on short-sea shipping activity as well on the social and economic impact on Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention including on development for islands, insular and remote areas.
- .2 Additional fuel supply and technology analyses (regional fuel production, fuel availability, and alternative compliance technologies).

15 Finally, the initial draft submission to the IMO for a proposal for the possible designation of the Med SO_x ECA, was updated by REMPEC under the guidance of the SO_x ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts in line with the agreed road map.

Next steps and timelines

16 The road map was adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention with a view to developing a mutually agreed joint and coordinated proposal for the possible designation of the Med SO_x ECA in accordance with Appendix III to MARPOL Annex VI, and with the view of formally submitting the proposal to the 78th Session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 78) scheduled for 2022.

⁶ These include, *inter alia*, the Technical and Feasibility Study (available at: <https://www.rempec.org/en/our-work/pollution-prevention/hop-topics/med-eca/study>) **Error! Bookmark not defined.** prepared by REMPEC as well as the final reports commissioned and funded by France and the European Commission respectively entitled "*ECAMED: a Technical Feasibility Study for the Implementation of an Emission Control Area (ECA) in the Mediterranean Sea*" (MEPC 74/INF.5) and "*The potential for cost-effective air emission reductions from international shipping through designation of further Emission Control Areas in EU waters with focus on the Mediterranean Sea*" (refer: https://iiasa.ac.at/web/home/research/researchPrograms/air/news/190131_SR13_shipping.html).

17 REMPEC will be organizing a virtual Regional Experts Meeting on the possible designation of the Med SOx ECA from 27-28 April 2021. The main objectives will be to:

- .1 examine implementation of the road map, notably the completion of the necessary knowledge gathering, the carrying out of the further studies to more fully address the criteria and procedures for designation of emission control areas laid down in Appendix III to MARPOL Annex VI, and the updating of the initial draft submission to the IMO based on the completed knowledge gathering and the further studies carried out;
- .2 examine the draft joint and coordinated proposal on the designation of the Med SOx ECA to the IMO, and to discuss about the next steps; and
- .3 discuss and approve the proposed conclusions and recommendations, prior to their submission to the Fourteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC to be held remotely from 31 May to 2 June 2021.

18 Further discussions on the possible designation of the Med SOx ECA will be held in accordance with the road map, at the following meetings:

- .1 Fourteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (to be held virtually from 31 May-2 June 2021);
- .2 Meeting of the MAP Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 14-17 September 2021); and
- .3 Twenty-second Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Antalya, Turkey, 7-10 December 2021).

Action requested of the Committee

19 The Committee is invited to note the information provided in this document.
