
**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, as a whole, as a Nitrogen Oxides Emission
Control Area (Med NOx ECA), pursuant to MARPOL
Annex VI

REMPEC/WG.62/1/1
16 October 2025
Original: English

Lija, Malta, 18-19 November 2025

Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda and draft timetable

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Note by the Secretariat

This document provides brief information on the actions to be taken by the Meeting as well as a draft timetable for the Meeting. This timetable prepared by the Secretariat is of a tentative nature and may be modified by the Meeting, as appropriate.

Introduction

1. The Regional Expert Meeting on the Possible Designation of the Mediterranean, as a whole, as a Nitrogen Oxides Emission Control Area (Med NO_x ECA), pursuant to MARPOL Annex VI, hereinafter referred to as the Meeting, is being convened in Lija, Malta from 18 to 19 November 2025.
2. The Meeting is being organised by REMPEC pursuant to the Programme of Work and Budget for 2024-2025 of the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP), adopted by the Twenty Third 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 (COP 23), which was convened in Portorož, Slovenia, in December 2023. It is financed by the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF).
3. COP 23 agreed to include the following deliverable in the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget for 2024-2025:
 - 1.4.2.c) Technical and Feasibility Study to examine the possibility of designating the Med NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI prepared under the guidance of the MAP NO_x ECA Technical Committee of Experts (NECA TCE); related roadmap prepared.
4. The NECA TCE, established in November 2023 under the Barcelona Convention framework, has coordinated regional efforts to assess the feasibility of the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as a Med NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI. Seventeen (17) Contracting Parties (CPs) participated, reviewing and refining the Terms of Reference, reviewing the draft Technical and Feasibility Study (prepared by Messrs. Ricardo AEA Ltd, in consultation with the Secretariat), and drafting a roadmap addressing technical, health, and socio-economic considerations.
5. The Secretariat notes that there were several comments from the NECA TCE regarding the above-mentioned final draft Roadmap towards the designation of a Med NO_x ECA, including on the earliest possible date of entry into force of a potential Med NO_x ECA. Therefore, the final draft Roadmap and Workplan included in the Final draft Technical and Feasibility Study, remains subject to further institutional consultations.

In this context, the principal objectives of the Meeting are:

- i. To raise awareness on MARPOL Annex VI, as well as to provide for a greater understanding and appreciation of the requirements for implementation and enforcement of the Med NO_x ECA, in order to be able to lead Governments' efforts towards ratification and more effective implementation, compliance and enforcement, both as a flag State and as a port State, including the sharing of experience and lessons learned from the designation of other similar ECAs, over the first day of the Meeting; and
 - ii. To discuss the Final draft Technical and Feasibility Study, together with the draft final recommendations, including the draft final roadmap, prepared by REMPEC, a copy of which was circulated to the NECA TCE in August 2025, over the last day of the Meeting, with a view to finalisation and onward transmission to the Seventeenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (to be tentatively held in May 2027).
6. All REMPEC Prevention Focal Points were invited to nominate, jointly and in consultation with their respective Governmental Focal Points and the representative(s) serving on the NECA TCE, their representatives at the Meeting. In the invitation, REMPEC highlighted that the target audience

for the Meeting should be Government officials responsible for the ratification, implementation and enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI.

7. In order to assist the Meeting in its work, the following annotations to the provisional agenda provide information on the actions the Meeting will be invited to take under each agenda item.

Opening of the Meeting

8. The Meeting will open on Tuesday, 18 November 2025 at 0900 hours and is expected to close on Wednesday, 19 November 2025 at 1700 hours.

Organisation of the Meeting

Rules of Procedure

9. The Rules of procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its related Protocols (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI) shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the deliberations of this Meeting.

Election of Officers

10. **The Meeting will be invited** to elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Rapporteur.

Working Languages

11. The working languages of the Meeting will be English and French. Simultaneous English/French/English interpretation services will be provided during the Meeting. All working documents will be available in both official languages of the Centre, i.e. in English and in French. Information documents will be available in their original language.

Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

12. The agenda, as proposed in Working document REMPEC/WG.62/1 and annotated in the present document, will be proposed for adoption by the Meeting. The Meeting will also be invited to agree on a timetable to carry out its work. A draft timetable, which is of a tentative nature and may be modified by the Meeting, as appropriate, is proposed in the **Annex** to the present document.

Agenda Item 2: The International regulatory framework for preventing pollution from ships

13. Under this agenda item, the IMO representative will provide an overview of the international framework for preventing pollution from ships. The presentation will introduce the IMO's structure and decision-making process, explain the roles and responsibilities of national administrations, and briefly review the MARPOL Annexes. The IMO representative will also outline the objectives of the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) and its relevance to strengthening national and regional implementation capacities.
14. **The Meeting will be invited** to take note of the information provided and comment, as deemed appropriate.

Agenda Item 3: Overview of MARPOL Annex VI & NO_x Technical Code

15. Under this agenda item, the REMPEC consultant will provide an overview of MARPOL Annex VI and the NO_x Technical Code, explaining the rationale for regulating air pollution from ships and

presenting the current status of Annex VI and its global application. The presentation will review Chapters 1 and 2, covering provisions related to equivalents, notifications, surveys, and certification, and introduce key technical requirements, including those related to marine diesel engines and compliance with NO_x emission standards.

16. **The Meeting will be invited** to take note of the information provided as well as to comment as deemed appropriate.

Agenda Item 4: **Enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI Overview**

17. Under this agenda item, the REMPEC Consultant will present an overview of the enforcement provisions under MARPOL Annex VI, outlining the legal basis for enforcement and the relevant articles of the MARPOL Convention (Articles 5, 6, and 7).
18. The presentation will address the concept of undue delay, describe the inspection regime applicable under Annex VI, and refer to the “MARPOL Annex VI – How to do it” Manual and other relevant IMO reference materials. Attention will also be given to the roles and responsibilities of administrations, including flag State and port State obligations, and to the application of relevant IMO guidelines in ensuring effective enforcement.
19. **The Meeting will be invited** to take note of the information provided as well as to comment as deemed appropriate.

Agenda Item 5: **Challenges and opportunities for Mediterranean coastal States to ratify and implement MARPOL Annex VI**

20. Under this agenda item, a HELCOM Representative will possibly share experiences and lessons learned from the designation of the Baltic Sea as a NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI.
21. This will provide practical insights into the ratification and implementation process. The session will include a roundtable discussion to explore the challenges and opportunities facing Mediterranean coastal States in adopting and enforcing similar measures.
22. **The Meeting will be invited** to take note of the experiences shared and actively contribute to the roundtable discussion.

Agenda Item 6: **Examining the Possibility of Designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a Whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI**

23. Under this agenda item the representative of Plan Bleu will be presenting Document REMPEC/WG.62/INF.5, providing a survey-based analysis of the indirect sectoral repercussions of the potential Med NO_x ECA on highly sensitive socio-economic sectors like fisheries and tourism, addressing a knowledge gap concerning impacts beyond direct shipping.
24. **The Meeting will be invited** to take note of the findings and information provided.

End of Day 1

25. On Day 2, the **Meeting will review and discuss** the main learning points and outcomes from Day 1, ensuring alignment and setting the stage for the detailed technical discussions to follow.
26. The **Meeting will be invited** to actively contribute to the discussion and highlight key takeaways to guide Day 2 sessions.
27. REMPEC will then introduce the background to the final draft Technical and Feasibility Study and recall the establishment of the NECA TCE, tasked with supporting the technical and scientific assessment required for a potential Mediterranean NO_x ECA proposal. REMPEC will outline the Terms of Reference guiding the Committee's work and the objectives of the final draft Technical and Feasibility Study, emphasising regional collaboration and alignment with global IMO processes.
28. This will be followed by a presentation from the REMPEC Consultant, of the final draft Technical and Feasibility Study exploring the potential designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI, as set out in the Information Document REMPEC/WG.62/INF.4.
29. The presentation will be structured into **four** sections to facilitate a comprehensive review of technical, policy, environmental, and economic considerations, followed by a plenary discussion.
30. **Section 1: Introduction & Review of Current Policy Landscape (Chapters 1-3).**
 - a. Ricardo AEA Ltd will elaborate further on the final draft Technical and Feasibility Study, review criteria for ECA designation, current NO_x emission control policies and technologies, and the proposed area of application.
 - b. Key considerations including potential entry into force dates, emissions proposed for control, populations and environments at risk, and local conditions affecting air pollution will be provided. Feedback received from stakeholders will also be summarised.
 - c. **The Meeting will be invited** to take note of the final draft Technical and Feasibility Study's findings and provide comments or questions on policy and environmental considerations.
31. **Section 2: Shipping NO_x Emissions Methodology & Results (Chapter 4)**
 - a. Under this section Ricardo AEA Ltd, will present the methodology for calculating baseline NO_x emissions, including key modelling assumptions, and the results for current shipping emissions in the Mediterranean Sea. Feedback from previous consultations will also be addressed.
 - b. The **Meeting will be invited** to review the methodology and results and raise any questions for clarification.
32. **Section 3: Impact Assessment & Cost-Effectiveness Results (Chapters 5-7)**
 - a. Under this section, Ricardo AEA Ltd will outline the methodology for assessing impacts and present the results, including air quality and health benefits, economic impacts (NPV/CBR values compared to existing NO_x ECAs and alternative land-based measures), and effects on the maritime sector, economies, citizens, and authorities. Stakeholder feedback will be reviewed throughout.
 - b. **The Meeting will be invited** to consider the impact assessment results and provide feedback on their implications for policy and implementation.

33. Section 4: Recommendations and Roadmap for Mediterranean NO_x ECA Designation (Chapter 7)

- a. Under this section, Ricardo AEA Ltd will summarise the key recommendations and propose a roadmap for potential designation. Feedback from prior consultations will be highlighted to guide discussion.
 - b. **The meeting will be invited** to take note of the proposed draft recommendations and roadmap and actively engage in the subsequent plenary discussion.
34. A structured **plenary session** will follow, focusing on the feasibility and potential steps for designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, or parts thereof, as a NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI.
35. **The Meeting will then be invited** to share their views, discuss potential challenges and opportunities, and provide guidance on next steps as outlined in Working Document REMPEC/WG.62/6, with a view to **finalisation and onward transmission of the draft roadmap and workplan included in the Final draft Technical and Feasibility Study, to the Seventeenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.**

Agenda Item 7: **Any other business**

36. **The Meeting will be invited** to consider any other relevant matters that may be raised under this agenda item.

Agenda Item 8: **Conclusions and recommendations**

37. Under this agenda item, the Rapporteur will present the draft conclusions and recommendations, which result from the Meeting discussions, as set out in Working Document REMPEC/WG.62/8.
38. **The Meeting will be invited** to review, amend, as appropriate, and adopt the conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting.
39. Following the completion of Agenda Item 8, the **Meeting will be invited** to engage in an open discussion to review and reflect on the key themes addressed throughout the meeting. The session will include the collection of feedback forms, a review of deliberations on the implementation of MARPOL Annex VI, and an opportunity for participants to share perspectives and recommendations.
40. The report of the Meeting will be prepared by the Secretariat and circulated after the Meeting.

Closure of the Meeting

41. The Meeting is expected to be closed by the Chairperson on Wednesday, 19 November 2025 at 1700 hours.

Annex

Draft timetable

Day One	Tuesday, 18 November 2025	Speaker
08:30-09:00	Arrival and registration of participants	
09:00-09:15	Opening of the Meeting - Welcome and opening remarks by REMPEC - Organisational matters - Election of Officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur	REMPEC
09:15-09:30	Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda - Introduction to workshop programme - Roundtable introduction to facilitators and participants	Chairperson, REMPEC and participants
09:30-10:00	Agenda Item 2: The international regulatory framework for preventing pollution from ships - Introduction to the IMO, structure, decision making process - Roles and responsibilities of Administrations - Brief overview of MARPOL Annexes - Introduction to IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme	Mr Yusuke Kawai, IMO Representative
10:00-10:45	Agenda Item 3: Overview of MARPOL Annex VI & NO_x Technical Code - Why regulate air pollution from ships - Current status of MARPOL Annex VI and its application - Review of chapters 1 and 2 including equivalents, notifications, survey and certification - Key technical provisions of MARPOL Annex VI and NO_x Technical Code, with an introduction to technical notions (marine diesel engines)	Ms Marie Caillerie (REMPEC consultant)
10:45-11:15	Refreshments	
11:15-12:30	Agenda Item 3: Overview of MARPOL Annex VI & NO_x Technical Code Overview - NO_x and SO_x: regulatory framework and future limits, Emission Control Areas, requirements and compliance - Ozone depleting substances (ODS): regulatory framework, current and future developments, compliance aspects (e.g. record books and reception facilities) - Volatile organic compounds (VOC), incineration, fuel oil quality and availability - Other aspects in relation to enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI	Ms Marie Caillerie (REMPEC consultant)
12:30-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-14:45	Agenda Item 4: Enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI Overview - Legal base - MARPOL Convention Articles 5, 6 and 7 - Undue delay - Inspection regime - MARPOL Annex VI – How to do it Manual; and other reference material - Roles and responsibilities of Administrations - Flag State considerations - Port State control under MARPOL Annex VI - Reference to and use of relevant IMO guidelines	Ms Marie Caillerie (REMPEC consultant)

14:45–15:30	Agenda Item 5: Challenges and opportunities for Mediterranean coastal States to ratify and implement MARPOL Annex VI - Sharing the experience and lessons learnt from the designation of the Baltic Sea as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI - Roundtable discussion	HELCOM(tbc) All facilitators and participants
15:30-16:00	Refreshments	
16:00-17:00	Agenda Item 6: Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI Plan Bleu Papers	Mr Constantin Tsakas, Plan Bleu
17:00	End of Day 1	

Day Two	Wednesday, 19 November 2025	Speaker
09:00-09:30	Review of Day 2 learning points Participants will discuss the main learning points of Day 2	All facilitators and participants
09:30-09:45	Agenda Item 6: Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI Draft technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA(s) under MARPOL Annex VI - Background - NO_x ECA Technical Committee of Experts - Terms of reference	REMPEC
09:45-10:15	Agenda Item 6: Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI (cont.) Draft technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, or parts thereof, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI Section 1: Introduction & Review of current policy landscape (Chapters 1-3) - Criteria for designation of an ECA - Review of NO_x emission control policies and technologies - Possible designation of the Med NO_x ECA - Area of application - Possible entry into force dates - Emissions proposed for control - Population and environment at risk from exposure to ship emissions - Local conditions influencing air pollution <i>Review of feedback received and questions</i>	Ricardo
10:15-10:45	Agenda Item 6: Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI (cont.)	Ricardo

	Draft technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, or parts thereof, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI Section 2: Shipping NO_x Emissions Methodology & Results (Chapter 4) • Method of calculating baseline NO_x emissions • Key assumptions used during modelling • Results for current shipping emissions • <i>Review of feedback received and questions</i>	
10:45-11:15	Refreshments	
11:15-12:00	Agenda Item 6: Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI (cont.) Draft technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, or parts thereof, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI Section 3: Impact assessment & Cost-effectiveness Results (Chapters 5-7) • Methodology for the impact assessment • Review of the results of the impact assessment: ○ Air quality and health impact ○ Economic impacts (NPV / CBR values for Med NO_x ECA compared to recent NO_x ECA regions and alternative land-based measures) ○ Impacts on the maritime sector ○ Other impacts on economies, citizens and authorities • <i>Review of feedback received and questions</i>	Ricardo
12:00-12:30	Agenda Item 6: Examining the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI (cont.) Draft technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, or parts thereof, as NO_x ECA under MARPOL Annex VI Section 4: Recommendations and Roadmap for Med NO_x ECA Designation (Chapter 7) • Summary of key recommendations • Summary of roadmap • <i>Review of feedback received and questions</i>	Ricardo
12:30-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:15	Plenary discussion on the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as NO_x ECA(s) under MARPOL Annex VI	All facilitators and participants
15:15-15:30	Agenda Item 7: Any other business	
15:30-16:00	Refreshments	
16:00-16:30	Agenda Item 8: Conclusions and recommendations	Rapporteur and Chairperson
16:30-16:45	Feedback, group discussion and deliberations • Feedback forms to be collected	All facilitators and participants

	• Review and deliberations on MARPOL Annex VI • Group discussion	
16:45-17:00	Closing of Meeting • Closing remarks	REMPEC and Chairperson
17:00	End of Meeting	