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

Meeting of the Mediterranean Network of
Law Enforcement Officials relating to MARPOL
within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS)

REMPEC/WG.38/6
Date: 28 September 2015

Toulon, France, 29 September – 1 October 2015

Original: English

Agenda Item 6

MENELAS INFORMATION SYSTEM

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document provides information on the MENELAS information system, including the status of its development and the next steps envisaged by the Secretariat with a view to officially launching the MENELAS website by the end of October 2015.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 11

Related documents: REMPEC/WG.37/8, REMPEC/WG.37/16, REMPEC/WG.38/INF.3

Introduction

1 According to the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the Mediterranean Network of Law Enforcement Officials relating to MARPOL within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS) (REMPEC/WG.38/INF.3), the MENELAS information system will be an internet based tool comprising two main parts:

- .1 a public one where general information will be made available to the public in order to raise awareness on the problem of illicit discharges from ships at sea, the aim of the network, its participating and associate members, its activities and achievements. The public part could also contain an analytic database of the legislative framework and procedural requirements in each participating country related to the prosecution of illicit discharges offenders. Statistical data should be also available; and
- .2 A restricted area used for participating members only, where any request for assistance could be posted. Besides this secured communication link, this area should also contain relevant information on 24/7 contact points, past cases analysis in order to highlight elements of success or failure, "tips" for investigators such as illustrations of specific techniques/devices found during on board investigations, which could facilitate the identification of similar practices.

2 As reported in document REMPEC/WG.37/8, the Project Steering Committee of the Regional – Governance and Knowledge generation (ReGoKo) Project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), decided to implement a specific activity aimed at developing and maintaining a MENELAS website, which started in March 2015 and was implemented in close coordination with REMPEC and Plan Bleu, as implementing Agency of the ReGoKo Project.

Status of development of the MENELAS information system

3 The design of the MENELAS website was finalised by the Consultant in June 2015. The Uniform Resource Locator (URL) was purchased and the hosting entity was contracted in August 2015 for an initial three-year period until August 2018. Arrangements are being made to ensure that this is extended for a further three-year period until August 2021.

4 In terms of design, the MENELAS website is made of six (6) main sections:

- .1 "About MENELAS", which provides information on the scope, governance, membership, method of work, information system and activities of the network;
- .2 "Member Profiles" providing publicly available information on the participating members' legal framework, operational structure, including MENELAS Designated Representative and other relevant authorities, annual reports as well as surveillance activities carried out individually or in cooperation with others in the Mediterranean Sea Area;
- .3 "News & Events", which provides information on latest news, archived news and a calendar of forthcoming events and activities relevant to MENELAS;
- .4 "Information Resources" providing access to relevant documents, namely annual reports, case studies, decisions of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean ("the Barcelona Convention"), past training/workshops/meetings/exercises/operations reports, technical reports and other documents as well as information on the MENELAS database on illicit ship pollution discharges in the Mediterranean, the related reporting format and reporting guidance;
- .5 "Links", which provides a list of relevant websites, including those of similar networks in other regional agreements; and
- .6 "Forum / Hotline", which is a restricted area aimed at facilitating the exchange of information between participating members only, where requests for specific information can be made, restricted information can be shared on *inter alia* their legal framework, "tips" for investigators, special techniques/devices/tools, evidence gathering/procedures, lessons learnt, post-case analyses, and where all participating members can be alerted of a specific emergency through a hotline with the possibility to interact with each other accordingly.

5 In terms of contents, the Secretariat is currently transferring relevant information and documents from the REMPEC website, namely with regard to the issue of illicit ship pollution discharges, the AESOP (Aerial & Satellite Surveillance of Operational Pollution) Project, the MarCoast (Marine & Coastal Environmental Information Services) Project, the prosecution of offenders as well as past training/workshops, exercises/operations (e.g. OSCAR-MED), meetings and technical reports.

6 During the present meeting, the Secretariat will showcase the MENELAS website, which may be considered as the official soft launch of the MENELAS information system. The MENELAS website will go public by the end of October 2015 when the transfer of relevant information as well as documents from the REMPEC website is completed and when participating members will provide the necessary input to the Secretariat, as detailed below.

Next steps

7 According to the MENELAS ToRs, the MENELAS Designated Representative (DR) is responsible for updating the "country page" of his/her country in the MENELAS website.

8 Therefore, it is the prerogative of each DR to ensure that the information on the "Member Profiles" section of the MENELAS website is up-to-date. In this respect, the Secretariat will request each participating member to provide publicly available information on the participating member's

legal framework, operational structure, annual reports as well as surveillance activities carried out individually or in cooperation with others in the Mediterranean Sea Area.

9 All DRs will be provided with secured access to the restricted area of the MENELAS information system (“forum/hotline”). They will be invited to inform the Secretariat of the names of the 24/7 contact points, other enforcement personnel, investigators, sanctioning officials as well as prosecutors, magistrates or officials from penalising authorities in their respective country, who should be given similar access.

10 The above-mentioned information should be provided to the Secretariat by mid-October 2015 with a view to ensuring that the MENELAS website can go public and the “forum/hotline” can be activated by the end of October 2015.

Actions requested by the Meeting

11 **The Meeting is invited to:**

- .1 **take note** of the information provided in the present document; and
- .2 **comment** as deemed appropriate.