

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES CONCERNING COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

Adopted by the Seventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, Cairo, 11 October 1991 (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.2/4, Annex IV, Appendices I-VI)

- I. **Principles and guidelines concerning the role and responsibilities of experts sent on mission by the Centre, following the request of a State in case of emergency, and duties and obligations of States towards them**
1. The Contracting Parties to the Protocol concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and Other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency (Protocol to the Barcelona Convention) may, in case of accidents causing or likely to cause marine pollution, request *inter alia* assistance in the form of expert advice either from the Regional Centre or from another Contracting Party.
2. A directory of experts and Centres of expertise able to offer this type of assistance in case of emergency has been established and is regularly updated by the Regional Centre.
3. On the request of a State in case of emergency, the Centre can, if the circumstances necessitate it, send an expert with a view to providing national authorities with advice and technical expertise which they may need during the initial period in order to decide which measures to take. This advice and technical expertise may include:
 - assessment of the situation;
 - adapting national response organization to the circumstances of the accident;
 - response methods and techniques;
 - experts, equipment and products which can be requested from other Contracting Parties or from private organizations
4. The role and responsibility of the expert are to help national authorities in taking decisions and, in this respect, s/he only has an advisory role. Every operational decision, as well as its consequences, falls under the complete responsibility of the competent authorities of the requesting State.
5. In all his/her activities related to such an advisory mission, the expert should endeavour to protect the interests of the State which requested his/her services, in particular concerning protection of the environment and of the resources and taking into account economic and financial implications.
6. The State requesting the assistance of an expert should endeavour to specify as precisely as possible, considering the given circumstances, the field or fields of expertise required.
7. The State requesting the assistance of an expert should make the necessary arrangements concerning immigration procedures and customs clearance for the expert and material (including written or electronically recorded) which the expert may bring with him/her in order to help him/her in executing his/her duties.
8. The authorities of the requesting State should also make the necessary arrangements for accommodation of the expert and provide him/her with necessary working space and office facilities. They should also provide for free access of the expert to necessary communication facilities (telephone, telex, telefax, radio) which he/she may need in his/her work.

9. Initial financing (air tickets, daily subsistence allowance, etc.) of the expert's mission will be taken in charge by the Regional Centre.