



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

Regional Meeting of National Experts
on the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, and Response to
Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031) (Remote Meeting)

REMPEC/WG.49/WP.1
Date: 10 March 2021

Malta, 10 March 2021

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Agenda Item 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This working document provides the conclusions and recommendations as amended during the Regional Meeting of National Experts on the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031) held on 10 March 2021.

Related documents: REMPEC/WG.49/5 and REMPEC/WG.49/7

Conclusions and recommendations

The Regional Meeting of National Experts on the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031), which was held online on 10 March 2021, hereinafter referred to as the “Meeting”:

- 1 expressed appreciation for the financial support provided by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO);
- 2 welcomed the establishment of the “Post 2021 Mediterranean Strategy Brainstorming Group” composed of representatives from the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), IMO, the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP), the European Commission, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and IPIECA and its joint analysis to identify the complementarities of relevant projects implemented in the Mediterranean region, in particular the SAFEMED IV Project, and REMPEC activities in the framework of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021) and to propose concrete synergies;
- 3 expressed its satisfaction on the success of the ongoing wide consultation process involving national competent authorities, relevant regional and international institutions and stakeholders addressing challenges and offering expertise, resources, and funding to progress in the improvement of the prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships in the Mediterranean region:
 - a) to define, through a collaborative approach, the vision, the strategic directions, and objectives of the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031) and its Action Plan, hereinafter referred to as “the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan”;
 - b) to outline the main institutions and stakeholders’ roles and responsibilities within their respective mandate, and identify required synergies; and
 - c) to propose a modus operandi (e.g. Action Plan) to ensure concerted planning, coordinated implementation, and monitoring procedures;

4 acknowledged the collaborative and consultative approach applied for the preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan, through:

- a) the two separate surveys completed by the Focal Points of REMPEC, and by the Post 2021 Mediterranean Strategy Brainstorming Group, as set out in document REMPEC/WG.49/INF.4;
- b) the preparation of a comparative analysis of relevant strategies and action plans, National Action Plans for the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021), and sheets providing information on projects supporting the implementation of the Regional Strategy (2016-2021)), presented in document REMPEC/WG.49/INF.3;
- c) the review of the First Draft Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan by the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean ("the Barcelona Convention"), and by specialised agencies of the United Nations, other governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as to international professional organisations and associations, the activities of which are relevant to the work of the Centre; and
- d) the examination by the present Meeting of the Second Draft Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan, prepared by the Secretariat based on comments received in the consultation process referred in paragraph 4.c above, and submitted as document REMPEC/WG.49/5;

5 agreed upon the **title of the Strategy**, i.e. "Mediterranean Strategy for the prevention, preparedness and response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031)" and notably on the period of 10 (ten) years from 2022 to 2031, inclusive;

6 concurred with the proposed **vision** of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan, i.e. "A clean and healthy Mediterranean marine and coastal environment with a sustainable and pollution free maritime sector, supported by a rigorous enforcement system and strengthened multi-sectoral cooperation, for the benefit of present and future generations";

7 acknowledged the contribution of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan in meeting the regional and global objectives laid down in the amended **Overarching Objectives** and took note of links between the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan and other regional and international goals and objectives presented in the document REMPEC/WG.49/INF.5;

8 recognised the importance of the amended **Guiding Principles** to ensure a balanced and cooperative approach, in particular by building on the achievements and lessons learnt, taking into account the precautionary approach and streamlining the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp);

9 welcomed the valuable updated data on the **Mediterranean Region** extracted notably from the REMPEC (2020) Study on trends and outlook of marine pollution from ships and activities and of maritime traffic and offshore activities in the Mediterranean prepared by REMPEC to inform decision-makers;

10 acknowledged the **geographical scope** of the application of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan, as defined in in Article 1 of the 1976 Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution as amended by the 1995 Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean;

11 recognised the progress that has been achieved in the framework of the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of, Preparedness for, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), notably through the preparation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the said strategy and stressed the importance of **building the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) on the said Regional Strategy (2016-2021)**;

12 emphasised the importance of the **governance, partnership and resource mobilisation** proposal, notably the governance of the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan in the framework of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as well as the establishment of partnership agreements between regional and international institutions to formalise

their cooperation to provide financial and technical support to Contracting Parties for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031);

13 concurred with the need to carry out a **mid-term review and evaluation** of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan, in 2026, to ensure its adaptation to new priorities and full alignment with the Mid-Term Strategy (2028–2033) of the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP);

14 took note of the assumptions made to **mitigate risks** related to the COVID-19 global pandemic, appropriate and adequate funding and potential political instabilities;

15 agreed upon the **title of the proposed Common Strategic Objectives** (CSOs):

- a. CSO 1: Prevent, prepare for, and respond to operational, illegal and accidental oil and HNS pollution from ships;
- b. CSO 2: Promote and support the development and implementation of innovative global solutions to mitigate and respond to climate change;
- c. CSO 3: Reduce and monitor air emissions from ships to a level that is not harmful to the marine environment, or the health of the coastal population of the Mediterranean;
- d. CSO 4: Prevent and reduce litter (in particular plastic) entering the marine environment from ships, in order to limit the environmental, health, and socio-economic impact of marine litter in the Mediterranean;
- e. CSO 5: Eliminate the introduction of non-indigenous species by shipping activity;
- f. CSO 6: Achieve a well-managed safe and pollution free Mediterranean, with integrated marine spatial planning and designation of special areas, where shipping activity has a limited impact upon the marine environment; and
- g. CSO 7: Identify and understand collectively emerging issues related to pollution from ships in the Mediterranean, and define required actions to address issues identified.

16 noted the **amended content of the Common Strategic Objectives** following the consultation process, laid down in the document REMPEC/WG.49/7;

17 acknowledged **Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention's responsibility to achieve, as far as possible, the seven CSOs** with the support of all relevant stakeholders in the region through a collaborative, coordinated, and collective effort to plan, finance, and implement at national, sub-regional and regional level actions on people and institutions, as well as action for infrastructure, information and knowledge sharing;

18 understood the concept of the interconnection between the CSOs, the corresponding areas of influence (people, institutions, infrastructure, information and knowledge sharing), and the implementing / governing body responsible for delivering the actions;

19 agreed on the **practical arrangements for the management and implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan**, in particular the terms of reference and objectives of the biennial meeting, the definition of its Secretariat and members, the terms of condition for participation and the required national network;

20 concurred with the proposed **reporting and monitoring procedure**, in particular the completion of an online concise progress report providing input on ongoing and future related actions based on the action tables of the Action Plan;

21 encouraged Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to take the necessary measures to raise **public awareness** on key issues relevant to the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031);

22 agreed upon the need to define for each action, measurable indicators and targets and endorsed the proposed indicators and targets, as amended by the meeting;

23 requested the Secretariat of the present Meeting to coordinate the approach leading to the identification of the most relevant lead implementing / governing body responsible for supporting the implementation of each action, during the biannual meetings for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031);

24 valued and agreed upon the proposed prioritisation of each action as high, medium, or low, taking into account the outcome the two separate surveys completed by the Focal Points of REMPEC, and by the Post 2021 Mediterranean Strategy Brainstorming Group, as set out in document REMPEC/WG.49/INF.4;

25 took note of the **amended content of the Action Plan** following the consultation process, presented in Appendix to document REMPEC/WG.49/7;

26 invited the Secretariat in consultation with members of the "Post 2021 Mediterranean Strategy Brainstorming Group", to assess the human and financial resources required for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan;

27 invited relevant regional and international institutions and stakeholders addressing challenges and offering expertise, resources, and funding to progress in the improvement of the prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships in the Mediterranean region and Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention:

- a. to submit a sheet for each bilateral, multilateral or regional project or activity relevant to the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031), based on the template set out in the Annex to document [REMPEC/WG.41/12](#), to REMPEC by no later than 15 April 2021; and
- b. report the main developments or outcomes at the Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC following the submission of the fiche, possibly by means of information documents, with a view to increasing visibility on these projects/activities;

28 agreed upon the Second Draft Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan as amended by the Meeting; and the Conclusions and Recommendations presented in the present document, and requested the Secretariat to make the necessary editorial corrections, prior to onward transmission to the 14th Meeting of Focal Point of REMPEC for its review and approval; and

29 thanked the chair of the Meeting, and REMPEC, as Secretariat, as well as the members of the "Post 2021 Mediterranean Strategy Brainstorming Group", and all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention who activity contributed to the work carried out with regard to the preparation of the Draft Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan.