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

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**REPORT**

**ONLINE TRAINING WORKSHOP**

**“THE APPLICATION OF COMMON STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE ON THE DISPOSAL OF OIL  
AND OILY MIXTURES AND THE USE AND DISPOSAL OF DRILLING FLUIDS AND CUTTINGS  
(DECISION IG. 24/9 ANNEX A)”**

Online, 30 November 2021

This activity is financed by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and implemented by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

**December 2021**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The online training workshop on “The application of [Common Standards and Guidance on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures and the Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings](#)” organized by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) was held on Tuesday 30 November 2021. These common standards and guidance were adopted by the Contracting Parties in their 21<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Meeting (COP 21, Naples, Italy, December 2019, Decision IG. 24/9) in accordance with the requirements of the [Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan](#).

1.2 In line with Specific Objective 3: *To establish a technical cooperation and capacity building programme* of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, and the discussions that took place at the Third Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental Impact (June 2021) on mobilizing support for capacity building, the aim of this online training workshop was to share perspectives and challenges on the application of these standards and guidance.

1.3 The target audience for the workshop included Contracting Parties’ regulators and competent authorities, as well as industry stakeholders with understanding of the processes and technologies used in the upstream industry to manage oil in water and drill cuttings discharges. The participation of observers from national oil and gas industries as well as environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the activities of whom are relevant to the objectives of the Workshop, was also welcome.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the workshop were:

- .1 To share perspectives and challenges on the application of the common standards and guidance;
- .2 To provide the opportunity for representatives of national competent authorities, industry and other regional organizations to exchange experiences and best practices on the management of discharges from offshore platforms, with the aim of reducing such discharges and their impacts on the environment;
- .3 To provide lessons learned on the development process and application of other standards and guidance documents.

## 3 ORGANIZATION

### Workshop programme

3.1 The workshop programme is provided in **Annex 1**.

### Participants

3.2 The session was attended by thirty (30) representatives from 11 Mediterranean coastal States, the private sector and other organizations, including participants from outside the Mediterranean region.

3.3 The full list of participants is provided in **Annex 2**.

### Working Languages

3.4 The working language of the workshop was English with simultaneous interpretation to French language and vice versa was provided by two interpreters that were hired by REMPEC.

## 4 PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Mr. Gabino Gonzalez, Head of Office of REMPEC, opened the workshop and welcomed the participants. He made reference to the discussions that took place at the 3<sup>rd</sup> OFOG (June 2021) on

mobilising support for capacity building, design of the training programme and operational modalities as part of the Comprehensive Plan of Actions (UNEP/MED WG. 498/6).

4.2 Acknowledging that the stage to start training on existing standards and guidance documents has now been reached, this was the first of a series of online workshops to be organized by REMPEC, capitalizing on online facilities and strengthened partnerships with industry parties and international organizations for the delivery of online training courses and other technical support.

4.3 Following a country-led approach and the ambition to establish Intersessional Correspondence Groups for which Terms of Reference on Monitoring, Annexes to the Offshore Protocol and Decommissioning for 2022-2023 have been circulated, Mr. Gonzalez informed the participants on the discussion, planned for early 2022, to frame further work on the development of the new standards and guidelines.

4.4 Mr. Gonzalez then reiterated the objectives and introduced the programme and speakers.

4.5 Dr. Claudette Briere Spiteri, REMPEC Offshore Consultant, introduced the structure and content of the “Common Standards and Guidance on the Disposal of Oil and Oily Mixtures and the Use and Disposal of Drilling Fluids and Cuttings”, setting the stage for the subsequent presentations.

4.6 Representatives of the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP), Mr. Harvey Johnstone, Environment Director at IOGP, and Mr. Mathijs Smidt, Sr. ecotoxicologist at Shell International, were invited to share technical insights on the industry good practice related to the management of offshore discharges and chemical use.

4.7 Mr. Saravanan Marappan, Chair of the OSPAR Offshore Industry Committee (OIC), then delivered a presentation providing information on OSPAR measures related to discharges from offshore sources.

4.8 In the session on “National application, experiences and challenges”, representatives from Cyprus, Israel and Croatia shared their experiences on the practical application of the guidance.

4.9 Dr. Theodora Ioannou, Environment Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment of Cyprus gave a detailed overview of the main relevant legislative frameworks applicable to Cyprus and of the aspects in the guidance applicable to Cyprus’ exploration activities. She highlighted that as of today, Cyprus has no permitting experience on exploitation activities.

4.10 Mr. Fred Arzoiné, Deputy Director at the Marine Environment Protection Division of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Israel, shared information on the oil and gas exploration and production activities in Israel. He referred to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on offshore oil and gas exploration and production, the collaboration between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Ministry of Energy, and explained how Israel uses the guidance in its practical implementation.

4.11 Ms. Vlatka Vaniček, Director of Environment Protection and Safety Sector of the Croatian Hydrocarbon Agency, provided a brief overview of the history of the sector, with the first exploratory wells dating back to the early 1970s. She elaborated on the legal framework in place for managing offshore discharges, and highlighted the importance of good relationships with scientists and the link to scientific research that support continuous improvement of environmental monitoring.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 In the last session, the participants agreed upon the following conclusions and recommendations. The workshop:

- .1 welcomed the organization of the online workshop, as the first of a series of online workshop on adopted common standards and guidance;
- .2 appreciated the quality of the speakers’ interventions and the added value of the shared knowledge and experiences;

- .3 thanked the representatives of national competent authorities who shared their experiences and best practices on the practical application of the guidance for the management of discharges from offshore platforms;
- .4 appreciated the cooperation with other Regional Seas Conventions, in particular OSPAR and the private sector, notably IOGP;
- .5 highlighted the need for OFOG to sustain the establishment of such fora on the exchange of technical best practices;
- .6 welcomed the proposed training topics for the next biennium (2022-2023) as agreed by the 3rd OFOG meeting and subject to the adoption of the Programme of Work 2022-2023, by COP 22, on the relevant guidelines that are already developed:
  - Special Restrictions or Conditions for Specially Protected Areas (SPA)
  - Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- .7 welcomed the initiative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) for the identification of synergies and possible cooperation activities in marine regions on improving the coherence and the links between the Espoo Convention on EIA in a Transboundary Context, its Protocol on SEA, and invited the Secretariat to take opportunity of the next training on EIA to enhance these synergies; and
- .8 acknowledging the need for further discussions on the implementation of Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, invited the Secretariat to organize a discussion in early 2022 to frame the work in the next biennium.

### Annex 1 – Workshop programme

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Time</u>
1. <b>Opening of workshop</b>	Gabino Gonzalez REMPEC Head of Office	9.30 - 9.45
2. <b>Introduction to the guidance (Decision IG. 24/9)</b>	Claudette Spiteri REMPEC Offshore Consultant	9.45 - 10.00
3. <b>Technical aspects of the guidelines</b>	Harvey Johnstone Mathijs Smidt IOGP representatives	10.00 - 10.45 (35 mins presentation + 10 mins Q&A)
<b>BREAK – 15 mins</b>		
4. <b>Sharing of experiences in OSPAR region</b>	Saravan Marappan Chair of the OSPAR Offshore Industry Committee (OSPAR-OIC)	11.00 – 11.20 (15 mins presentation + 5 mins Q&A)
5. <b>National application, experiences and challenges</b>	Representatives from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyprus</li> <li>• Israel</li> <li>• Croatia</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>	11.20 – 12.20 15 mins each (45 mins) 15 mins discussion
6. <b>Conclusion and recommendations</b>	Gabino Gonzalez	12.20 – 12.30

## Annex 2 – List of participants

<b>Participants – Contracting Parties</b>	
Charles Galea	Continental Shelf Department, Malta
Claudia Virno Lamberti	ISPRA, Italy
Daniela Berto	ISPRA, Italy
David Dobrinic	Croatian Hydrocarbon Agency, Croatia
Didem Ugur	Ministry of Environment, Turkey
Fred Arzoine	Ministry of Environmental Protection, Israel
Linda Rizou	Ministry of Environment, Algeria
Luigi Alcaro	ISPRA, Italy
Marios Josephides	Department of Fisheries and Marine Research, Cyprus
Samir Khedhira	ANPE, Tunisia
Senida Dzajic-Rghei	HEIS, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Silvia Ceracchi	ISPRA, Italy
Theodora Ioannou	Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, Cyprus
Vlatka Vanicek	Croatian Hydrocarbon Agency, Croatia
Yevgeny Malkin	Ministry of Environmental Protection, Israel
<b>Participants – Other country representatives</b>	
Ahmed AL-Ajaj	Ministry of Environment, Iraq
Husam Abdulmuttaleb Hashim	Ministry of Environment, Iraq
Asraa Abdullah	Ministry of Environment, Iraq
Josimar Bioso	National Agency for Environmental Quality Control (AQUA), Mozambique
<b>Regional Sea Programmes</b>	
Laura De La Torre	OSPAR Commission
Saravan Marappan	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, UK; Chair OSPAR OIC
<b>Partners</b>	
Harvey Johnstone	IOGP
Mathijs Smit	Shell International
<b>Other participants</b>	
Mays Abbas Kadhim	Dhi Qar Oil Company, Iraq
Osama Abu-Libda	Pi Academy, Libya
<b>Secretariat to the Barcelona Convention and Components of the Mediterranean Action Plan</b>	
Gabino Gonzalez	REMPEC
Claudette Spiteri	REMPEC
Tania Liles	REMPEC