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**SUB-REGIONAL MARINE OIL POLLUTION CONTINGENCY PLAN BETWEEN  
CYPRUS, GREECE, AND ISRAEL**



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Ad-hoc meeting of the NOA for the preparation of a joint real  
case exercise (CypEx 2024)

SCP CGI /NOA 4/7

Opatija, Croatia, 17 May 2023

**Report of the Ad-hoc Meeting**



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REMPEC  
Malta, 2023

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Note by REMPEC

This document presents a summary of the discussions of the Ad-hoc meeting of the National Operational Authorities of Cyprus, Greece and Israel, held in Opatija - Croatia on 17 May 2023 for the preparation of a joint spill response exercise within the framework of the Sub-regional marine oil pollution contingency plan between Cyprus, Greece and Israel.

## Report

### Introduction

1. The Ad-hoc meeting of the National Operational Authorities of Cyprus Greece and Israel (NOA) responsible for the implementation of the Sub-regional Marine Oil Pollution Contingency Plan between Cyprus, Greece and Israel (SCP CGI) was held in Opatija, Croatia the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to prepare for a joint spill response exercise to be implemented in Cyprus October 2024 (the Real case Exercise or Exercise). The Ad-hoc Meeting (the Meeting) which was recommended by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the NOAs, held in Israel, September 2022 to initiate the preparation of the Exercise, was organized by REMPEC and attended by the representatives of the three NOAs, and REMPEC. The list of participants is provided as **Annex 1** to the present report.

2. The principal objective of the Meeting was to agree on ways to achieve the objective expressed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the NOAs (Greece October 2021) for a satisfactory level of communication, cooperation and coordination among the operational personnel of the three Parties.

3. The specific objectives were to:

- .1 agree on the concept and design of the Exercise, the timeline for its preparation and delivery;
- .2 define the role and contribution of the NOAs and the support from other national actors ;
- .3 define the needed consultancy support; and
- .4 define the expected technical and financial support from REMPEC and EMSA.

### Opening of the Meeting

4. The Meeting was opened by the representative of REMPEC who welcomed the delegates from the three countries members of the SCP CGI. He then referred to the agenda, provided as **Annex 2** to the present report, its objectives and expected outputs.

5. He then recalled the Meeting with previous development that preceded the present meeting notably the 2<sup>nd</sup> Preparatory Meeting of the NOA (Greece October 2021), which considered conducting a joint spill response exercise of high priority, in order to achieve a satisfactory level of communication, cooperation and coordination among the operational personnel of the three Parties, and agreed Cyprus to host the joint response exercise on October 2023, with the participation of the personnel and means of the three Parties, and requested REMPEC to finance the engagement of a consultant with the task of preparing the scenario of the exercise, assist in its organization and to draft the recommendations and the lessons learned after the exercise.

6. He followed with the findings of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the NOA (Israel, September 2022):

- .1 the information provided by REMPEC that funds were ensured within the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget (2022-2023) to engage a consultant with the task to prepare the scenario of the joint response exercise;
- .2 the request of Cyprus to postpone the Exercise to 2024 and to assist in its preparation considering the planned acquisition of three autonomous oil recovery vessels within the framework of the EU Recovery and Resilience Fund, scheduled to be delivered by 2024; and
- .3 the decision to organize an Ad-hoc meeting, in the margins of the Adriatic Spill Conference (Croatia, May 2023) focusing on the Exercise, postponed to 2024, considering the use of the funds allocated to this activity in 2023 for its preparation.

## **Consultancy Services**

7. The Ad-hoc meeting recognized that the experience and knowledge gained from national exercises is useful but not sufficient to enable the NOA to organise jointly the key parts of the SCP which will be meant to be tested during the Exercise.

8. The meeting also supported REMPEC's proposal that this exercise, the first of its kind, apart those organized within RAMOGEPOL, will be beneficial not only for the members of the SCP CGI but all those of the other SCPs.

9. As mentioned in invitation letter, 8/2023 dated 11 April 2023 to the Ad-hoc meeting it will examine and approve the bases of a process facilitating the Contracting Parties the preparation, development, and implementation of a joint real case exercises with Cyprus on 2024 as a pilot action

10. The Meeting unanimously agreed on the necessity to provide the appropriate support along the preparation, implementation and the reporting on the Exercise, and requested REMPEC to ensure this support through highly qualified and experienced Consultants(s) capable to carry out the assignment with competence.

## **Proceedings**

11. In delivering his opening remarks, the representative of Cyprus, thanked REMPEC for the organization of this Meeting on the sidelines of ADRIASPILLCONF 2023, which provided the opportunity to the representatives of members of the SCP CGI as well as those of other SCPS to attend the Conference in its fifth edition since its inception in 2010. He also thanked REMPEC for the continuous support provided to the NOAs of the three countries to implement the SCP CGI activities. He also thanked Greece and Israel for their engagement and commitment to ensure adequate implementation of the activities of the SCP.

12. Regarding the Exercise, the representative of Cyprus stressed on the need to approach the exercise in three separate phases. The first, to be completed with the appointment of the consultant(s) plan, organization and monitoring in close coordination with the NOAs and REMPEC, consists on the definition of the Scenario, the contribution of the NOA and the technical and financial support of REMPEC and EMSA, the second, which consists on the delivery of the Exercise preparatory activities (operational and capacity building) and the third related to the implementation and assessment of the Exercise.

13. The meeting agreed on the proposal put forward by Cyprus and to build on along the process starting from the present Meeting

## **Joint activities**

14. A round table focused on the contribution in kind and logistics of the members of the SCP, as well as those of REMPEC and EMSA to be considered in the Scenario and the Terms of Reference of the Consultant(s).

15. In addition to the logistics to be deployed by Cyprus, Israel will mobilize the Bat-Galim Deep-Sea Research Vessel operated by Israel Oceanographic & Limnological Research; Greece will contribute in the aerial surveillance with the Helicopter of the Hellenic Coast Guard and personnel for the deployment of other equipment.

16. REMPEC will activate the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU), for the remote and onsite experts advice. EMSA will contribute with the deployment of the Standby Response vessels

17. In this regard, REMPEC insisted on taking into consideration: (i) the observations, lessons learnt of the “Preview 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Oil Pollution Exercise” (Haifa, Israel October 2017), and its recommendations concerning future exercises, (ii) the experience gained from national trainings and

experienced incidents in the region in Greece 2017 and Israel 2021, (iii) the recommendation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, June 2021) on the use of CECIS MP for the request of Assistance by the whole CPs to the Barcelona Convention, (iv) the findings the national workshops on the self-assessment of the level of preparedness to respond to Oil spills organised in Greece (July 2022), Cyprus (September 2022) and Israel (April 2023), (v) the use of the databases of MEDGIS-MAR, the Country profiles, as well as the decision support Tools: MIDSIS-TROCS 4.0 and the Oil Spill Waste Management.

## **Work Plan and Timeline**

18. The meeting finally invited Cyprus to develop the Scenario of the Exercise to be reviewed in the margins of the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Focal Points Meeting to enable REMPEC completing the TOR of the Consultant(s) and agreed on the timetable for the forthcoming activities:

- Within the PoW 2022-2023 - Q3 and Q4 2023 .

|    |   |                  |
|----|---|------------------|
| .1 | Completion of the ToR and the selection of the Consultant(s)  | 30 July          |
| .2 | Signature of the Contract REMPEC/Consultants  | 16 August        |
| .3 | Invitation to the training and the 4 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the NOA   | 18 August        |
| .4 | Kick of Meeting with the consultant and commencement of Duties  | 24 August        |
| .5 | Documents of the Training on the preparation of the Exercise  | 22 September     |
| .6 | Organization of Training on the preparation of the Exercise and the 4 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the NOA on SCP CGI | October 2023     |
| .7 | Detailed report of the preparatory activities of the Exercise among them the two Table Top Exercise               | 10 November      |
| .8 | Report on the implementation of the Exercise  | 24 November 2023 |
- Within the PoW 2024-2025

Capacity Building and Operation

- Q1 and Q2 2024
  - .1 Table Top Exercise 1
  - .2 Table Top Excise 2
- Q4 2024
  - .1 Exercise 30-31 October or 6-7 November 2024
  - .2 Workshop on the results, remarks and way forward
  - .3 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the NOA

## **Closure of the Meeting**

The meeting was closed at 5pm 17 May by the representative of REMPEC informing that the report of the present meeting will be the reference for the future activities related to the Exercise.

## **Annex I**

### **Agenda of the Ad-hoc meeting**

1. Introduction
2. Opening of the Meeting
3. Consultancy Services
4. Proceedings
5. Joint activities
6. Work Plan and timeline
7. Closure of the Meeting

## Annex 2

## List of Participants

