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85<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the  
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment  
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2018

**Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues**

**Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues**

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**A. Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols**

1. Based on the latest communication by Spain as Depository Country, the current status of ratifications is described in Tables 1 and 2 below.

*Table 1: Summary of Status of Ratification*

21 Contracting Parties have accepted the amendments to the Convention, 1995;
15 Contracting Parties have accepted the amendments to the Dumping Protocol, 1995;
17 Contracting Parties have accepted the amendments to the LBS Protocol, 1996;
8 Contracting Parties have ratified the Offshore Protocol, 1994;
17 Contracting Parties have ratified the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol, 1995;
7 Contracting Parties have ratified the Hazardous Waste Protocol, 1996;
17 Contracting Parties have ratified the new Prevention and Emergency Protocol, 2002;
11 Contracting Parties have ratified the ICZM Protocol, 2008.

*Table 2: Ratification of Barcelona Convention and Protocols by individual Contracting Parties*

Contracting Parties Legal instruments	Albania	Algeria	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Croatia	Cyprus	European Union	Egypt	France	Greece	Israel	Italy	Lebanon	Libya	Malta	Monaco	Montenegro	Morocco	Slovenia	Spain	Syria	Tunisia	Turkey
	<b>Barcelona Convention</b>	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
and Amendments	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Dumping Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
and Amendments	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
Emergency Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Prevention and Emergency Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
LBS Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
and Amendments	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
SPA Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
SPA and Biodiversity Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Offshore Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Hazardous Wastes Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
ICZM Protocol	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue

Instrument of ratification, adhesion approval or accession deposited and Convention or Protocol entered into force	Blue
No instrument of ratification, adhesion, approval or accession deposited	White
Instrument of ratification, adhesion, approval or accession deposited but Protocol has not entered into force yet	Grey

2. Since the last meeting of the Bureau, the Depository has communicated to the Secretariat the deposit of the following instruments of ratification or accession: (a) the instrument of ratification of the ICZM Protocol by Lebanon; dated 1 August 2017; the Protocol entered into force for Lebanon on 31 August 2017; (b) the instrument of accession to the Prevention and Emergency Protocol by Lebanon, dated 3 November 2017; the Protocol entered into force for Lebanon on 3 December 2017;

and (c) the instrument of ratification of the Offshore Protocol by Croatia, dated 8 February 2018; the Protocol entered into force for Croatia on 10 March 2018.

3. The Secretariat continued its efforts to achieve universal ratification of the amended Convention by the Contracting Parties. Discussions continued with Bosnia and Herzegovina, the one country whose ratification has not yet been received). During COP 20, the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina informed the Secretariat that the process of ratification is approaching its final stages. Follow-up with Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue in order to achieve the universal ratification of the amended Convention within the current biennium.

4. The Bureau is also reminded that the amended Dumping Protocol still requires one additional ratification to enter into force. Policy direction and involvement of the Bureau to facilitate the ratification of the amended Dumping Protocol in particular, and of all other Protocols by the remaining Contracting Parties would be highly desirable. In the short term, and within the context of the revised communication strategy, further development of material on the benefits of ratifying the relevant Protocols can be considered. In addition, bilateral/multilateral diplomacy could be leveraged to promote the benefits of ratifying the relevant Protocols.

5. Proposed Recommendations:

**(a) The Bureau takes note of the current status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and urges the Contracting Parties which have not yet done so to ratify without further delay the relevant legal instruments.**

**(b) The Bureau congratulates Lebanon for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol and for the accession to the Prevention and Emergency Protocol, and Croatia for the ratification of the Offshore Protocol.**

**(c) The Bureau encourages the President and the Secretariat to continue their efforts to achieve the full ratification of the revised Barcelona Convention as well as the ratification of its Protocols.**

## **B. Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs**

6. The Secretariat reported at the 83<sup>rd</sup> and 84<sup>th</sup> Bureau meetings on the developments of Host Country Agreements (HCAs) for Regional Activity Centres (RACs) with particular focus on the challenges encountered to progress towards the implementation of the relevant parts of the Decision IG.20/13 by COP 17. These challenges vary among the RACs and are mainly related to: harmonization of the diverse and complex legal status of RACs, which makes the adoption of a common legal HCA across the board difficult; the involvement of different national competent authorities and associated challenges in coordination; and the specific requirements of the domestic legislation in the countries where RACs are hosted.

7. At the 20<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols (COP 20) (Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017), the Contracting Parties, with Decision IG.23/3, urged “the Coordinating Unit, in consultation with the Contracting Parties hosting Regional Activity Centres, to find and propose, under the guidance of the Bureau, ways and means to address a list of common reference provisions to be applied, taking into account the specificities of each Centre, with a view to have a discussion and a possible agreement by the Contracting Parties at their twenty-first meeting”.

8. To implement the relevant paragraph of Decision IG.23/3 cited above, the Secretariat has prepared a brief report, presented in Annex I, describing the status of each Host Country Agreement and the challenges encountered. The situation is similar to the one reported to the 83<sup>rd</sup> Bureau meeting (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6/REV.1); in most of the cases the work is in progress, although at different stages, and the challenges encountered differ in nature. A common challenge faced by a number of Regional Activity Centres is their national nature, rather than an international

one. This is not without its difficulties, since RACs have a regional mission and activities that cover the (21) countries riparian to the Mediterranean Sea.

9. Proposed Recommendation:

**The Bureau takes note of the status of development of the Host Country Agreements for RACs and the challenges faced, as reported by the Secretariat and ...**

#### **C. Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity**

10. The Contracting Parties, with Decision IG.23/3, requested “the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre to prepare on a trial basis, a meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity for the biennium 2018–2019, under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, to achieve the greatest possible integration with the other themes of the Mid-Term Strategy”. It also requested “the Coordinating Unit to present the results of the assessment of that trial, together with any other relevant analysis, to the Contracting Parties prior to their twenty-first meeting”.

11. In order to implement these relevant provisions of Decision IG.23/3, the Secretariat has prepared a brief concept note and roadmap, presented in Annex II to this document.

12. Proposed Recommendation:

**The Bureau takes note of the proposed roadmap for the preparation, on a trial basis, of the meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity for the biennium 2018–2019, as presented by the Secretariat in Annex II of this document, and expresses its agreement with the proposed way forward.**

#### **D. Compliance Committee**

13. At COP 20, Contracting Parties adopted Decision IG.23/1 on the Revised reporting format for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention. The revised reporting format, to which the Compliance Committee contributed to, replaces the former one adopted by COP 15 in 2005.

14. Work is ongoing by INFO/RAC, under the guidance of the Secretariat and in consultation with relevant MAP Components, to make available the revised reporting format on the online Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), so that Contracting Parties will be able to submit their national implementation reports for the biennium 2016–2017 within the agreed deadline (December 2018).

15. For the outstanding national implementation reports corresponding to the reporting periods 2012–2013 and 2014–2015, the Secretariat has contacted the concerned Contracting Parties and has been informed that work is progressing to conclude this process as soon as possible. Since then, Egypt submitted its national implementation report for 2012–2013 on 4 March 2018.

16. As at 5 March 2018, 16 Contracting Parties have submitted their national implementation reports of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols to the Secretariat via the BCRS for the biennium 2012–2013; for 2014–2015, 15 Contracting Parties have submitted their national implementation reports. As regards the submission of the national implementation reports of the ICZM Protocol through the ICZM Reporting Questionnaire, as at 5 March 2018, 5 out of 10 Contracting Parties to the ICZM Protocol have submitted their implementation reports for the 2014–2015 reporting period. In addition, 4 out of 12 non-Contracting Parties to the Protocol have filled out the ICZM Reporting Questionnaire.

17. Arrangements have been put in place for the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Compliance Committee, foreseen to take place in Athens, Greece on 20–22 June 2018. During this meeting, the Committee will address a number of issues under its Programme of Work, including: (a) a communication from Ecologistas en Acción de la Región Murciana (Spain) regarding the implementation of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean by Spain; (b) the

evaluation of national implementation reports following Section IV of the Procedures and Mechanisms of Compliance; and (c) the establishment of criteria for assessing compliance.

18. As regards the membership of the Compliance Committee, and pursuant to Decisions IG. 17/2, on *Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols*, and IG. 23/2, on *Compliance Committee: biennium 2016–2017*, Lebanon has nominated Mr. Ahmad El-Khatib, to sit as an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee for a term of four years, until COP 22, subject to the election of the first meeting of the Bureau during the biennium 2018-2019. Mr. El-Khatib has a Bachelor Degree in Law and a Master's Degree in "Internal and International Business law", and he is an advisor to the Minister of Environment of Lebanon. His election as an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee is expected to strengthen the legal capacity of the Committee since he brings approximately nine years' experience as a lawyer, in several law firms and in the legal department of the Islamic Development Bank.

19. Furthermore, the Secretariat has been informed by Monaco on ongoing work to nominate an expert as Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee for a term of two years until COP 21, as soon as possible, as requested by Decision IG.23/2.

20. Proposed Recommendations:

**(a) The Bureau strongly urges those Contracting Parties who have not yet done so, to submit their national implementation reports for the reporting periods 2012–2013 and 2014–2015 without further delay.**

**(b) The Bureau elects Mr. Ahmad El-Khatib, nominated by Lebanon, to sit as an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee for a term of four years, until COP 22.**

**(c) The Bureau urges Monaco to nominate an expert as Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee for a term of two years, until COP 21, as requested by Decision IG.23/3.**

#### **E. Cooperation and Partners**

21. Engagement with stakeholders (civil society/NGOs, local authorities, scientific community, etc.) and identification of potential synergies with global and regional organizations to increase the effectiveness of work are crucial elements for strengthening the MAP-Barcelona Convention system governance. This is realized, *inter alia*, through the involvement in relevant international initiatives and the operationalization or conclusion of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). In this context, the initiatives described below play a significant role in implementing COP Decision IG.19/6 on MAP/Civil society cooperation and partnership as well as relevant COP decisions on governance. By promoting cooperation and partnership, MAP responds to the call from UNEP Headquarters to encourage programmatic cooperation and coordination with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and international and regional organizations, given the importance of synergies.

22. Examples of the progress done in this direction during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2018 are the implementation of the MoU between UNEP/MAP and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), with the successful Non-Indigenous Species (NIS)/Fisheries Sub-Regional Meeting held in Chania, Greece, on 5 March 2018, with all countries of the sub-region present; the joint seminar on regional assessments held with the European Environmental Agency (EEA) in Copenhagen, on 26-28 February 2018; and the participation by REMPEC in the 14<sup>th</sup> Inter-Secretariat meeting of Regional Agreement Secretariats, with the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) in Copenhagen, Denmark, 21 February 2018) to review Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response activities and discuss regional priorities and areas of possible intra-regional/European cooperation. Details are provided in the relevant sections of the Progress Report (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/3).

23. At COP 20, the Contracting Parties, with Decision IG.23/3 "invite[d] the Secretariat to continue discussions on the Draft Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity with the Contracting Parties and relevant partners for submission of

the conclusions of these discussions to COP 21 for its consideration”. Since 2016, work has been ongoing with the lead of UNEP/MAP on the Draft Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity (the Joint Strategy), with partners of ACCOBAMS, IUCN-Med and GFCM in coordination with MedPAN, with the objective to strengthen cooperation on spatial-based protection within the respective mandates of the organizations, taking into account common objectives to achieve SDG 14 and Aichi Target 10. Developments of this process were presented in 2016 in meetings of the respective bodies of the partner organizations. The 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the GFCM welcomed the process leading up to a Joint Strategy on the highest level in June 2016. Furthermore, ACCOBAMS welcomed the draft Joint Strategy through Resolution 6.11 of their Sixth Meeting of the Parties (Monaco, 22-25 November 2016).

24. The Draft Joint Cooperation Strategy was also presented and discussed at the 83<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Bureau. The Bureau encouraged the Secretariat to engage in further efforts for enhancing collaboration with the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med based on the existing bilateral agreements, and with MedPAN. The Bureau also concluded that the engagement of the Contracting Parties was to be sought. To this end, the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points (Athens, Greece, 12-15 September 2017) considered that the draft Joint Cooperation Strategy merits further attention and asked the Secretariat to share it with the Contracting Parties and to continue consultations with the partners under the guidance of the Bureau. Decision IG.23/3 as quoted above reaffirmed the importance to continue discussions on the Joint Cooperation Strategy and asked the Secretariat to submit the conclusions of these discussions to COP 21 for its consideration.

25. In line with the above, the Secretariat is asking the guidance of the Bureau in relation to further work on the Joint Cooperation Strategy, as follows:

- On the content of the draft Joint Cooperation Strategy (as shared with the MAP Focal Points in October 2017) and of the discussions that the Secretariat needs to continue with the Secretariats of ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, in coordination with MedPAN, with the aim to facilitate the consideration by COP 21 of the draft which has been reviewed - and in some cases endorsed - by the partners;
- On the opportunity to explore expanding the Joint Cooperation Strategy partnership with other relevant international organizations active on spatial protection in the Mediterranean, such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO); and on the possibility to invite as observers and/or participants for the implementation of the Joint Cooperation Strategy other interested partners/NGOs, such as WWF.

26. The Secretariat has received the application of “OceanCare”, for accreditation as MAP Partner. The Secretariat has reviewed the documentation submitted in line with Decision 19/6 on MAP/Civil Society cooperation and partnership and found that “OceanCare” meets the criteria for such accreditation, with the exception of the criterion that reads: “to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country”, since OceanCare is based in Switzerland and does not have regional offices. The results of the evaluation of the application are presented in Annex III to the present report for the Bureau’s consideration.

27. Following the information provided in the application to become MAP Partner, OceanCare activities and relevant projects at the regional level in the Mediterranean Sea are focused on the promotion of the ecosystem approach, with emphasis on species protection and conservation and on raising public awareness. To this end, OceanCare has launched several campaigns and surveys to improve conservation efforts of cetaceans in the Mediterranean and has been engaged in sustainable solution-oriented cooperation with several partners, including scientific institutions. This work has resulted in peer-reviewed publications and data collection on all cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea for the central data base OBIS-SEAMAP to provide a holistic picture about the abundance and trends of Mediterranean cetaceans. Most recently, a scientific campaign was launched in the Balearic Islands (still ongoing) with a view to increase protection in this area. Furthermore, OceanCare is a partner to the Global Partnership on Marine Litter launched by UNEP. The relevant work of OceanCare includes awareness raising on marine plastic debris and micro plastics.

28. In view of the information provided, the evaluation of the application, and also responding to the call of the Contracting Parties to expand the partnership base and to enhance the engagement of partners and other relevant stakeholders in the work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, the Secretariat recommends that the Bureau approves “OceanCare” to be admitted as MAP Partner. It is to be noted however that, as indicated above, it meets all the substantive criteria for accreditation, but not the one on having offices in a Mediterranean country.

29. Proposed Recommendations:

**(a) The Bureau welcomes the progress achieved on issues related to Cooperation and Partners, and especially the close collaboration with GFCM and with EEA, and encourages the Secretariat to continue its work on these issues.**

**(b) In relation to the Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats, the Bureau concluded that...**

**(c) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the application submitted by “OceanCare” for accreditation as MAP Partner and requests that the Secretariat submits it to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement.**

#### **F. Process for the Preparation of the State of the Environment and Development Report**

30. Considering that the last report on the State of Environment and Development (SoED) in the Mediterranean was published by UNEP/MAP in 2009, the Contracting Parties agreed on the preparation of a SoED report for submission to COP 21, as per Decision IG.23/14 on Programme of Work and Budget for 2018–2019 (activity 1.4.1.1).

31. The Secretariat through Plan Bleu/RAC prepared a specific roadmap, which was discussed during the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) (Sophia-Antipolis, France, 5-7 February 2018). Following this discussion and the comments provided by the MAP Components, a concept note with the description of the process and a timeline for the elaboration of the SoED was prepared and is attached in Annex IV of the present report.

32. The elaboration of the SoED will be linked with the preparation of the MED2050 foresight study (Decision IG.23/4) and is expected to feed the process for the preparation of the next UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy.

33. Proposed Recommendation:

**The Bureau welcomes the work done for the elaboration of the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report and expresses support to the process and timeline for the preparation of the report, as described in the concept note included in Annex IV to the Report on Specific Issues.**

#### **G. Evaluation of MAP Regional Strategies and Action Plans**

*(a) Mid-term evaluation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025*

34. The Contracting Parties, through Decision IG.22/2 on the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016–2025, requested “the MCSD to carry out a mid-term review of the status of implementation of the MSSD 2016–2025 at regional and national level and to report the results to COP 21”.

35. However, the MSSD Regional Action 7.2.4 recommends to “Undertake a participatory mid-term evaluation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 based on the first 5 years of data regarding its implementation, using indicators associated with the actions, as well as the proposed dashboard of Sustainability Indicators”. 2022 is indicated as the year of reference for undertaking such an evaluation and this is in contradiction with the timing of the mid-term review



referred to in the text of the decision. In addition, the MSSD Regional Action 7.2.5 recommends to “Review the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025, issuing a new Strategy for the period 2026-2035”. 2023–2025 is indicated as the period of reference for such a review. The new Strategy shall be defined by 2025.

36. A MSSD mid-term evaluation during the 2020–2021 biennium will have the opportunity to be informed by the SoED 2019 report, to be submitted to COP 22 in 2019. Furthermore, this timing is in-line with the cycle of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) 2016–2021 and will enable both processes (i.e. the drafting of the new MTS and of the MSSD mid-term evaluation) to mutually inform each other, as indicated in Table 1 below.

37. Finally, the MSSD mid-term evaluation will require significant human and financial resources, which have not been included in the Programme of Work and Budget for 2018–2019 (Decision IG.23/14).

38. It is proposed that the MSSD mid-term evaluation is conducted during the 2020–2021 biennium for submission to COP 22.

*(b) Mid-term evaluation of the Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production*

39. The Contracting Parties, through Decision IG.22/5 on the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean (SCP Regional Action Plan), requested “the Coordinating Unit in coordination with SCP/RAC to undertake in 2020 an indicator-based midterm evaluation of the Action Plan implementation for submission to COP 21”.

40. As in the case of the MSSD mid-term evaluation, there is an internal inconsistency in this request: the evaluation is to be undertaken in 2020 for submission to COP 21, that will take place in 2019.

41. Therefore, and taking also into account the arguments presented above in relation to the timing of the MSSD mid-term evaluation and the cycle of the MTS, it is proposed that the indicator-based mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the SCP Regional Action Plan is submitted to COP 22.

*(c) Evaluation of MAP National Action Plans*

42. The Contracting Parties, through Decision IG.22/8 on the Implementation of Updated National Action Plans (NAPs), Containing Measures and Timetables for their Implementation, requested “the Secretariat (MED POL) to undertake in 2020 an indicator-based midterm evaluation of the NAPs implementation based on the existing reporting system and in close collaboration with the Contracting Parties for submission to COP 21.”

43. Like in the case of the SCP Regional Action Plan mid-term evaluation, there is an internal inconsistency in this request: the evaluation is to be undertaken in 2020 for submission to COP 21, that will take place in 2019.

44. Therefore, and taking also into account the arguments presented above, it is proposed that the indicator-based mid-term evaluation of the NAPs implementation is submitted to COP 22.

*Table 1: Indicative timeline of MAP Regional Strategies and Action Plans processes*

	<b>MTS process</b>	<b>MSSD process</b>	<b>SCP Regional Action Plan process</b>	<b>MAP National Action Plans process</b>
COP 21 (end of biennium 2018–2019)	To launch the MTS 2016-2021 Evaluation and Review	To launch the MSSD mid-term evaluation (5 years of data - period 2016–2020)	To launch the indicator-based mid-term evaluation	To launch the indicator-based mid-term evaluation

COP 22 (end of biennium 2020–2021)	To adopt MTS 2022–2027	To approve the MSSD mid-term evaluation	To approve the indicator-based mid-term evaluation	To approve the indicator-based mid-term evaluation
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*(d) Revision/development of Regional Plans*

45. Following the conclusions of the 2017 MED POL Focal Points Meeting (Rome, Italy, 29-31 May 2017) and of the 6<sup>th</sup> EcAp Coordination Group Meeting (Athens, Greece, 11 September 2017), COP 20 mandated the development of the main elements for 6 Regional Plans addressing Municipal WWTP; Sewage Sludge Management; Agriculture Nutrients Management; Aquaculture Nutrients Management; Urban Storm Water Management and Marine Litter. The Secretariat has started the work to develop a methodology and participatory consultation process for their elaboration.

46. The proposed course of action includes the following steps:

- i) Assess the measures provided for in the 10 existing Regional Plans against the list of measures identified in the 2017 Regional Measures Analysis report (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.444/3) and identify gaps;
- ii) Undertake in depth assessments based on updated National Baseline Budget data with the view to prioritize sectors and substances and the relevant pollution loads trend;
- iii) Take into account lessons learnt and results from NAPs/Programmes of Measures implementation and NAPs mid-term evaluation, as well as the 2018 - 2020 Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis to be undertaken with the support of GEF;
- iv) Identify the main elements, measures and requirements of the 6 Regional Plans, building on the best practices of existing Regional Plans' Measures implementation, NAPs/PoMs implementation, identified priority pressures with the objective of maintaining and achieving GES and keeping the right balance between reduction and prevention measures;
- v) Take into account best practices and lessons learnt from regional measures negotiated and implemented in the framework of other regional seas, of relevance for the Mediterranean.

47. Two meetings of experts are planned for this purpose in 2018 and 2019 with the view to having a formal discussion of the main elements of the 6 Regional plans at the MED POL Focal Point meeting in 2019. This work will be also linked with the work for the preparation of the relevant chapters of the ICZM Regional Framework.

48. Due to the legally binding character of the measures and the timetables contained in the Regional Plans adopted in the framework of article 15 of the LBS Protocol, as well as their expected impacts towards GES, Contracting Parties will play a crucial role in this process.

49. Proposed Recommendations:

**(a) In relation to the evaluation of MAP Regional Strategies and Action Plans, the Bureau takes note of the discrepancies brought to its attention by the Secretariat and invites the Secretariat to inform the Contracting Parties of the correct schedule as reflected in Table 1.**

**(b) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to prepare, in due time, a draft thematic decision, including a dedicated roadmap, related to the processes of the MSSD mid-term evaluation and the indicator-based mid-term evaluation of the SCP Regional Action Plan, and to submit it to the next meetings of the MAP Focal Points for consideration and further submission to COP 21.**

**(c) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to consider upstream pollution prevention measures on a priority basis for the development of the main elements of the 6 Regional Plans to reduce/prevent marine pollution from land based sources and invites the Contracting Parties to fully participate and contribute to this important process.**

## H. Outreach, Information and Communication

50. The Secretariat (Coordinating Unit and INFO/RAC) has started to work in implementing Decision IG.23/3 on Governance in relation to information and communication issues. To this end, and following relevant discussions at the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECP (Sophia-Antipolis, France, 5-7 February 2018), INFO/RAC has prepared a draft concept note on a communication plan for the current biennium, presenting objectives, processes, timeline and evaluation criteria. Focused activities for the preparation of the revised Communication Strategy will take place in the second quarter of 2018.

51. The 2017 Mediterranean QSR became publicly available at <https://www.medqsr.org> and at the MAP website, <https://unepmap.org>, while its graphical design, including also design of the Executive Summary, was developed by MED POL with the support of INFO/RAC. The 2017 Mediterranean QSR is an important achievement, the result of joint and integrated efforts of the Contracting Parties, MAP Partners and the Secretariat. A dissemination campaign has taken place to support its distribution.

52. The Coordinating Unit and the MAP Components provide regular updates regarding their activities on their respective websites, including the publication of newsletters and relevant documents and studies. To this end, recent publications include the following:

- [Towards a blue economy for a sustainable Mediterranean: Indicators and recommendations](#), Plan Bleu Note n°34, November 2017
- [“The New plastic economy” FR version of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation publication](#), SCP/RAC, December 2017
- [25 innovative solutions to combat plastic marine litter in the Med” FR & EN version](#), SCP/RAC contribution, December 2017
- [Science-policy interfaces for environmental governance in the Mediterranean](#), Plan Bleu Note n°35, February 2018

53. The Secretariat participated/will participate in a number of outreach events during the first quarter of 2018, including events organized by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), IMO and the European Commission / European Environment Agency. Relevant information is presented in the Progress Report (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/3).

54. A cartoon on marine biodiversity is being finalized by SPA/RAC, and will be disseminated at the occasion of the 2018 International Day of Biological Diversity (22 May 2018), to be screened at schools. An infographic (poster) on Coralligenous in the Mediterranean has been produced and displayed for the first time at COP 20 of the Barcelona Convention, and then published on the SPA/RAC website.

55. Proposed Recommendation:

**The Bureau expresses appreciation for the efforts and results of the information and communication work and requests the Secretariat to further progress in this direction, in parallel with the process for the preparation of the revised Communication Strategy.**

## I. Preparations for COP 21

56. The Secretariat has initiated the dialogue with Italy, as Host Country of COP 21, on the relevant Host Country Agreement, in order to launch the preparation of the logistical aspects of the meeting.

57. During the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECP (Sophia-Antipolis, France, 5-7 February 2018) the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components discussed the major assignments and strategic priorities for the current biennium, which are also relevant to the thematic decisions to be prepared for COP 21, as well as to the selection of the main theme of the COP.

58. To this end, special emphasis was placed on starting the process for the preparation of the next MTS, on working together in a coordinated manner (both within the Secretariat as well as with the Contracting Parties and partners), on information and communication (including the preparation of the revised Communication Strategy), and on focusing on substantive, thematic, issues of relevance to current regional and global processes, such as such as biodiversity (CBD post 2020 strategy, fisheries, effects of marine litter, etc.), integrated coastal zone management-marine spatial planning, sustainable consumption and production and assessments.

59. Following the conclusions of the 34<sup>th</sup> ECP meeting and the deliberations of the 85<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting, which is the first Bureau meeting of the current biennium, the Secretariat plans to launch a deeper discussion on the substantive issues of COP 21.

60. Proposed Recommendations:

**(a) The Bureau welcomes the proactive approach taken by the Secretariat for the preparation of COP 21 from an early stage;**

**(b) The Bureau invites Italy, as Host Country, and the Secretariat to provide more information on the preparations of COP 21 at its 86<sup>th</sup> meeting, including on the substantive issues and possible theme of COP 21.**

**Annex I**

**Status of Host Country Agreements of Regional Activity Centres**

## **Status of Host Country Agreements of Regional Activity Centres**

The Host Country Agreements of the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) are still in very different stages of preparation. The status and main challenges encountered for each RAC are summarized below:

### **PLAN BLEU/RAC**

A main challenge in concluding a Host Country Agreement with France derives from the fact that Plan Bleu has the status of an association (similar to a non-governmental organization) under the French law (Law 1901) and not of an international organization. This has implications concerning the application of the privileges and immunities regime accorded to UN Officials and Experts on Missions for the United Nations under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, 1946 (General Convention). Article 12 of the Host Country Agreement template, as adopted by Decision IG.20/13 follows the spirit of the General Convention. Under Article 12 “UN personnel assigned to work in the RAC and experts on missions traveling to ..... in their official capacity in connection with the activities of the RAC, shall enjoy the privileges and immunities provided for in Articles V and VI of the General Convention”.

### **PAP/RAC**

PAP/RAC was established as a national institution entrusted with the mandate to implement international programme approved by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. A Host Country Agreement was signed in 1996 between UNEP/MAP and the Croatian Ministry of Environment that regulates the status of PAP/RAC within the Barcelona Convention system.

As a national institution, PAP/RAC is subject to Croatian rules and regulations. In the daily functioning of the Centre, in some cases these rules and regulations leave room to unclarity and inconsistency with regard to the regional mission of PAP/RAC and its status within the Country, e.g. in relation to UNEP’s bank account used by PAP/RAC, exemption of taxes, UNEP rules for DSA that are different from the ones of Croatia, etc. This is amplified by the fact that the 1996 HCA has never been ratified by the Croatian Parliament.

To address these difficulties, a new HCA was discussed with the Croatian Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection. This new Host Country Agreement largely follows the Host Country Agreement template, as adopted by Decision IG. 20/13 and cleared by UNEP Headquarters, and incorporates the comments made by Croatia at the time of the discussion. At that time, it was also recommended that the new Host Country Agreement is signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and not the Minister of Environment, as it was the case for the current one.

Signing of the new HCA and its ratification by the Croatian Parliament would fully secure the specific status of PAP/RAC within the Country’s institutional and legal setting, thus facilitating its functioning in many aspects.

Being aware of the importance of PAP/RAC for the Country and the Region, as well as of the difficulties that the Centre faces, the Croatian Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection, as the operational Focal Point for the Barcelona Convention and president of the PAP/RAC’s Steering committee, is ready to re-open the discussion on the new HCA with the objective to have it signed in 2018, when PAP/RAC celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Finally, PAP/RAC is supportive of the possibility to give to the RACs the status of intergovernmental organizations (without being a UN organization) and have it specified in the HCA, since this would facilitate the implementation of the RACs’ regional mission in the Mediterranean.

## **REMPEC**

The Agreement between the Government of Malta and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) concerning the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) was signed in 1990. In November 2006, the IMO Secretary-General sent a draft HCA to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta. The signature of the draft is still pending, subject to the outcome of the discussions between REMPEC and Malta on the provisions of the draft regarding the maintenance of the premises, including the undertaking of major works. Two meetings were held in the last quarter 2017, with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion and the Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects to progress on this matter. Once the discussions were concluded, the draft HCA should be signed by the Maltese Government and IMO.

## **SPA/RAC**

SPA/RAC's relationship with the Tunisian Government is ruled through a Host Country Agreement signed between UNEP and the Tunisian Government, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, in 1991 and the addendum signed in 2013, between UNEP and the Tunisian Government represented by the Ministry of Environment.

The Tunisian Ministry of Environment is leading the process for the signature of the new HCA, which implies the involvement of different national competent authorities (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Interior, mainly). Work is underway, although the challenges in coordinating national authorities remain.

The main obstacle faced is in relation with the legal nature of the Center which is, according to the existing HCA as well as to the proposed new draft Agreement, a Tunisian local entity (and not an international organization) entrusted with a regional mission and mandate as a Regional Activity Center (RAC) for the Barcelona Convention.

As a national organization, SPA/RAC will have to be in conformity with the Tunisian regulatory framework relative to public institutions. But this legal framework is not adequate in relation to the actual regional mission of SPA/RAC and does not facilitate the implementation of its activities that cover the (21) countries riparian to the Mediterranean Sea.

On the other hand, as a national organization, SPA/RAC cannot benefit of the financial privileges (taxes, customs duty, etc.) specified in article 11 of the draft new HCA template, or of the privileges specified in article 12 (for staff members recruited as international staff).

This contradiction between its legal nature (as Tunisian local organization) and its regional mission as regional RAC, is seen as the main obstacle for stepping ahead towards the acceptance by the Tunisian authorities of the new drafted text of the HCA template, even though, the existing HCA text includes the same contradiction. However, the existing HCA is considered as a transitional legal document that had allowed the creation of SPA/RAC and facilitated its entry into activity. It is preferable, now, to clarify its vocation and its legal nature, in the draft new HCA template, in conformity and coherence with its mission and mandate, since it will have to go through the ratification procedure.

The suggested solution is to give SPA/RAC the status of an intergovernmental organization (without being a UN organization) in such a way, it will not have to fulfill the Tunisian legal framework of public institutions on one hand and on the other hand, it could benefit from the above privileges and advantages (specified in article 11 and 12 of the draft new HCA) which will significantly contribute in facilitating the implementation of its regional mission as RAC to the Barcelona Convention.

### **SCP/RAC**

Since its establishment, the national institutional framework of SCP/RAC has been articulated through a series of collaboration agreements signed between the Spanish Ministry of Environment and the Government of Catalonia, on the basis of which a public entity belonging to the latter was established with the mandate of SCP/RAC.

So far, two different public agencies have hosted SCP/RAC, namely the *Center for the Business and the Environment* (Centre per la Empresa i el Medi Ambient, CEMA), for the period 1996-2005, and the Catalan Waste Agency (Agencia de Residus de Catalunya, ARC), as of 2006.

Since then, the Spanish Ministry of Environment and the Government of Catalonia have regularly updated their collaboration agreement, thereby renewing the Centre's mandate as SCP/RAC. The collaboration agreement currently in force covers the period 2011-2015, and has been extended through annual agreements. The current extension covers the year 2018.

In 2011, the Spanish Ministry of Environment and the Government of Catalonia agreed to work on the preparation of a consortium as a new structure to provide SCP/RAC with a legal status, to fulfil a previous requirement for Spain, through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, to negotiate with UNEP a Host Country Agreement with respect to the Centre. The process involving both administrations lasted for a period of three years, until the last quarter of 2015. Negotiations were put on hold due to discrepancies between the parties concerning several provisions of the draft statute of the proposed consortium, especially with regard to the labour status of the Centre's personnel.

To SCP/RAC knowledge, the concerned administrations have not resumed their negotiations in this regard. The tense political relationship between the Central Government of Spain and the Government of Catalonia, in particular due to the independence claims of the latter, has not favoured an enabling environment for negotiations.

As an entity legally hosted by a local governmental agency, SCP/RAC faces challenges and difficulties similar to those referred to by SPA/RAC. In this sense, the local regulatory framework is inadequate when it comes to exercising the mission of SCP/RAC, and impedes the implementation of its activities as an organization with an international mandate to support the Mediterranean countries. Difficulties increase when actions are to be developed through the support of organisations based in developing countries, as in several cases they are often unable to comply with all the requirements required by the regulatory framework within which SCP/RAC has to operate.

SCP/RAC supports the possibility to give to the RACs the status of an intergovernmental organization (albeit not being a UN organization).

### **INFO/RAC**

A Host Country Agreement does not exist. It was not signed in the past mainly due to the need to first formalize the legal status of INFO/RAC.



**Annex II**

**Concept Note on the Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected  
Areas/Biodiversity**

### **Concept Note on the Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity**

The analysis of the modified ToRs for the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points, which were presented to the 84<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Bureau (Document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6/REV.1), showed that there is not much difference between the old ToRs and the modified ones. The main reason is that the tasks and functioning rules of the focal point are derived from the new SPA/BD protocol provisions. Thus, the fields and areas of action remain the same.

According to the exact wording of the COP 20 decision the main aim of this process is to achieve the greatest possible integration with the other themes of the Mid-Term Strategy. The themes of the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021 that are most linked to marine and coastal biodiversity and ecosystems are the core themes “Land and Sea-based Pollution” and “Land and Sea Interaction and Processes”. Of course, the cross-cutting themes of “Climate Change Adaptation”, “Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)” and “Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)” are also relevant and have an important relationship with the quality status of the coastal and marine ecosystems. This is also in accordance with the vision developed in the Ecosystem Approach.

The integration of biodiversity with these themes will affect the preparation of the next SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting, since it most probably implies a need to invite to the meeting other experts/thematic focal points along with the SPA/BD ones. This will have budgetary implication in relation to the organization of the meeting (e.g. in relation to participants travel, conference facilities, etc.).

The above considerations are mainly based on the internal interpretation and vision of SPA/RAC. To further examine the issue, with an external/more objective contribution, it is suggested to rely on the services of an external consultant (legal/institutional expert) to assist in assessing and identifying the relevant new or different tasks and implications of the implementation of Decision IG.23/3 in relation to the “SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points” meeting.

To this aim, the following roadmap is suggested to implement Decision IG.23/3:

- 1- Recruitment of a legal/institutional expert to elaborate a legal/institutional analysis of the modified ToRs, and identify the relevant new or different tasks and implications of the implementation of Decision IG.23/3 in relation to the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting: 2nd quarter of 2018 (reflecting the guidance of the Bureau at its 85<sup>th</sup> meeting, if any).
- 2- Elaboration of the draft version of the tasks to be implemented and of the implications in relation to the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting, and consultation among the MAP Secretariat and SPA/RAC on the main considerations in relation to the preparation, on a trial basis, of the 2019 SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting: May-June 2018.
- 3- Preparation of the draft document describing the organization of the “trial test” of the 2019 SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting and its submission to the 86<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting: 3rd quarter of 2018.
- 4- Guidance by the Bureau of the process/organization of the “trial test” of the 2019 SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting (as described in the relevant document to be prepared): 86<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting (November 2018).
- 5- Preparation of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting, including the meeting documents: 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2018 and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2019.
- 6- Organization of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points meeting: June 2019.
- 7- Preparation of the report on the results of the trial assessment and relevant analysis, as per Decision IG.23/3: End of June 2019.

**Annex III**

**MAP Partner Applications Evaluation Table**

**INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANTS**

ACRONYM	FULL NAME	Country	Aims
OceanCare	OceanCare	Switzerland	OceanCare has been committed to marine wildlife and environment protection (fauna and flora) in the oceans and coastal regions. With research and conservation projects, environmental education campaigns (for children, teenagers and adults), engagement in legislation, and participation in international fora, OceanCare strives for long-lasting improvements in ocean conservation. In the process OceanCare builds sustainable, solutions-oriented cooperative relationships with scientific expert committees and other partners, and promotes a consciousness of ocean conservation with all stakeholders, with a special emphasis on the Mediterranean Sea where several OceanCare projects are ongoing. Finally, OceanCare draws attention to the influence residents and users of inland waters and coastal regions have on fragile ocean ecosystems. The sphere of the organisation's activities and its projects are focused on both animal life, species protection, conservation, and raising public awareness on these topics.

**EVALUATION**

**General conditions for accreditation**

**Two categories of NGOs are eligible for observer status**

	OceanCare
International and regional NGOs	√
National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states	√

**Both categories of NGOs should satisfy the following general conditions:**

	OceanCare
be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action by the Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
be able, through their work, to support the achievement of the objectives of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√

be able to make known the work of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in the region and/or their respective countries;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific project or programme, to the implementation of MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols programme of activities;	√
be able to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to a Mediterranean Action Plan field of activity, to public awareness-raising;	√
be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice on the definition of Mediterranean Action Plan policies, programmes and actions;	√
be able regularly to disseminate information to their members, where applicable, on the standards, activities and achievements of the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention in their own field(s) of competence;	√
be able to furnish, either spontaneously or at the request of the Mediterranean Action Plan's different bodies, information, documents or opinions relating to their own field(s) of competence.	√

**Part II: Specific accreditation criteria and procedures**

**Accreditation**

**The following criteria apply to international and national/local NGOs:**

	<b>OceanCare</b>
to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols;	√
to have existed for at least 4 years;	√

to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years;	√
to operate democratically;	√
to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country;	NO
to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;	√
to demonstrate what contributions the NGO could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols.	√

**The following specific criteria apply to national/local NGOs:**

	<b>OceanCare</b>
NGO objectives genuinely related to the marine environment and coastal zones;	√
NGOs participating or wishing to participate in specific national or local programmes or projects on the implementation of the objectives of the MAP/Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.	√

**Annex IV**

**Concept Note: 2019 Report on the State of the Environment and Development (SoED 2019)**

## Concept Note: 2019 Report on the State of the Environment and Development (SoED 2019)

### 1. Mandate, objectives, context and guiding principles

The UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) 2016-2021 Strategic Outcome 1.4 reads: “*Knowledge and understanding of the state of the Mediterranean Sea and coast enhanced through mandated assessments for informed policy-making*”. It is stated: “*Periodic assessments based on DPSIR approach and published addressing inter alia status quality of marine and coastal environment, interaction between environment and development as well as scenarios and prospective development analysis in the long run. These assessments include climate change related vulnerabilities and risks on the marine and coastal zone in their analysis, as well as knowledge gaps on marine pollution, ecosystem services, coastal degradation, cumulative impacts and impacts of consumption and production*”<sup>1</sup>.

The 2019 report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean (SoED 2019) will present a comprehensive and updated assessment of the environmental status and main sustainability issues related to the environment and development in the Mediterranean region. As a key output of the biennium 2018-2019, the SoED 2019 will be aligned with the work conducted by the Mediterranean Action Plan under its MTS 2016-2021 and will be the result of a collective effort of all MAP components and several partners, with Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre supporting its delivery.

The last comprehensive report on the State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean was carried out by Plan Bleu and published in 2009 by UNEP/MAP, following the 1989 and 2005 foresight analyses (prospective studies).

The SoED 2019 will be prepared in consistency and synergy with previous reports and other relevant MAP initiatives (such as the Roadmap for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, 2017 MED QSR, MED 2050 foresight study, while incorporating new developments. In 2012, UNEP/MAP published the more thematically targeted State of the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Environment, the results of which will also be taken into account for the preparation of the SoED 2019. Since then, many changes have occurred regarding the status of the environment and development and related policies. This is the case for instance for climate change, which is starting to show its effects, and for the profound changes that the Mediterranean region has undergone in recent years, or the transition towards a green and blue economy. At the global level, the 2030 Agenda was adopted in 2015, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. At the regional level, the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025 was adopted by COP 19 of the Barcelona Convention (Athens, Greece, 9-12 February 2016) as a strategic guiding document for all stakeholders and partners to translate the 2030 Agenda at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

All these changes call for a new assessment. By applying an integrated, systemic and holistic approach, the SoED 2019 will aim at:

- (i) Increasing awareness and understanding of environmental and development status and trends in the Mediterranean, their driving forces and impacts;
- (ii) Providing an up-to-date foundation for improved decision-making at all levels, from the individual to national governments and international organizations;
- (iii) Facilitating the measurement of progress towards sustainable development;
- (iv) Enhancing the delivery of the 2030 Agenda, the achievement of its SDGs, and the implementation of the MSSD 2016-2025.

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021, Decision IG.22/1, UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22/28, p.109.



The SoED 2019 will synthesize disparate data into meaningful and relevant information, and communicate the results to decision-makers. Throughout its different chapters, the SoED 2019 will address the following main questions: **What are the state, the evolution and the trends** of the environment and development in the Mediterranean region? What are their **driving forces and root causes**? What are the current and required **policy and societal responses** to the situation? The SoED 2019 will identify priority areas for action, based on available scientific data and reliable information.

Preliminary consultations with partners emphasized the importance of:

- (i) Following a **systemic and integrated** analysis putting on the same level the three pillars of sustainable development (environmental, economic and social);
- (ii) Keeping the **marine environment** and the **land-sea interface** as a guiding principle;
- (iii) Incorporating as much as possible a **multiscale approach**, highlighting geographic differences, while maintaining a readable and easily accessible structure for the report;
- (iv) Specifically focussing on **responses** (either political, regulatory, economic, technical...) to address the identified issues, while following the **DPSIR** (Driving forces-Pressures-States-Impacts-Responses) approach;
- (v) The report will draw upon all **available sources of information**: UN system data and other existing data, state of knowledge and research, reports, projects, national reports and data bases.

The governance of the project presented below is the preliminary result of the consultative process underway and incorporates recent comments delivered by the MAP Coordinating Unit, the MAP Components and the Bureau of the Plan Bleu. It outlines a draft table of contents comprising 8 chapters (in addition to an introduction and a conclusion) consistent and in line with the MSSD 2016-2025, the 2030 Agenda and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Each chapter will be introduced by a cross-section contextualizing the chapter content in a broader perspective, mentioning the global context and highlighting the interrelationships between the sections of the chapters through a systemic analysis. Each thematic sub-chapter will be presented in a way to allow for an easy readability and quick accessibility of the specific information the reader is looking for. Each chapter will then be ended with a cross-section highlighting the political, institutional, legal, economic or technical responses identified.

The conclusion will present priorities for action in the next ten years. These conclusions will be based on sound scientific analysis and exchanges with experts involved in the report elaboration process. In addition, a short summary for policy-makers will be issued, consolidating main results and recommendations of the report. Internet thematic fact sheets will also be made available.

## 2. Governance of the project

Under the overall supervision of the **MAP Coordinating Unit**, the **Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre** will be responsible of the SoED 2019 elaboration process.

Plan Bleu mobilizes a team of two **technical experts**, who are organizing the whole process assigned to a specific **Task Force**, under the guidance of the **Plan Bleu Director**. This **Core Team** will be assisted by **Chapter Working Groups** (one per chapter) composed of experts from all **MAP Components**, as well as a range of technical and institutional partners (international and regional organizations, experts and scientists, etc.). The Members of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSO), MAP and Plan Bleu Focal Points will be consulted and invited to participate or suggest relevant contributors.

Plan Bleu will also be assisted by a **Steering Committee** composed of experts from the Secretariat (MAP Coordinating Unit and Components) and a few key thematic partners. The Steering Committee

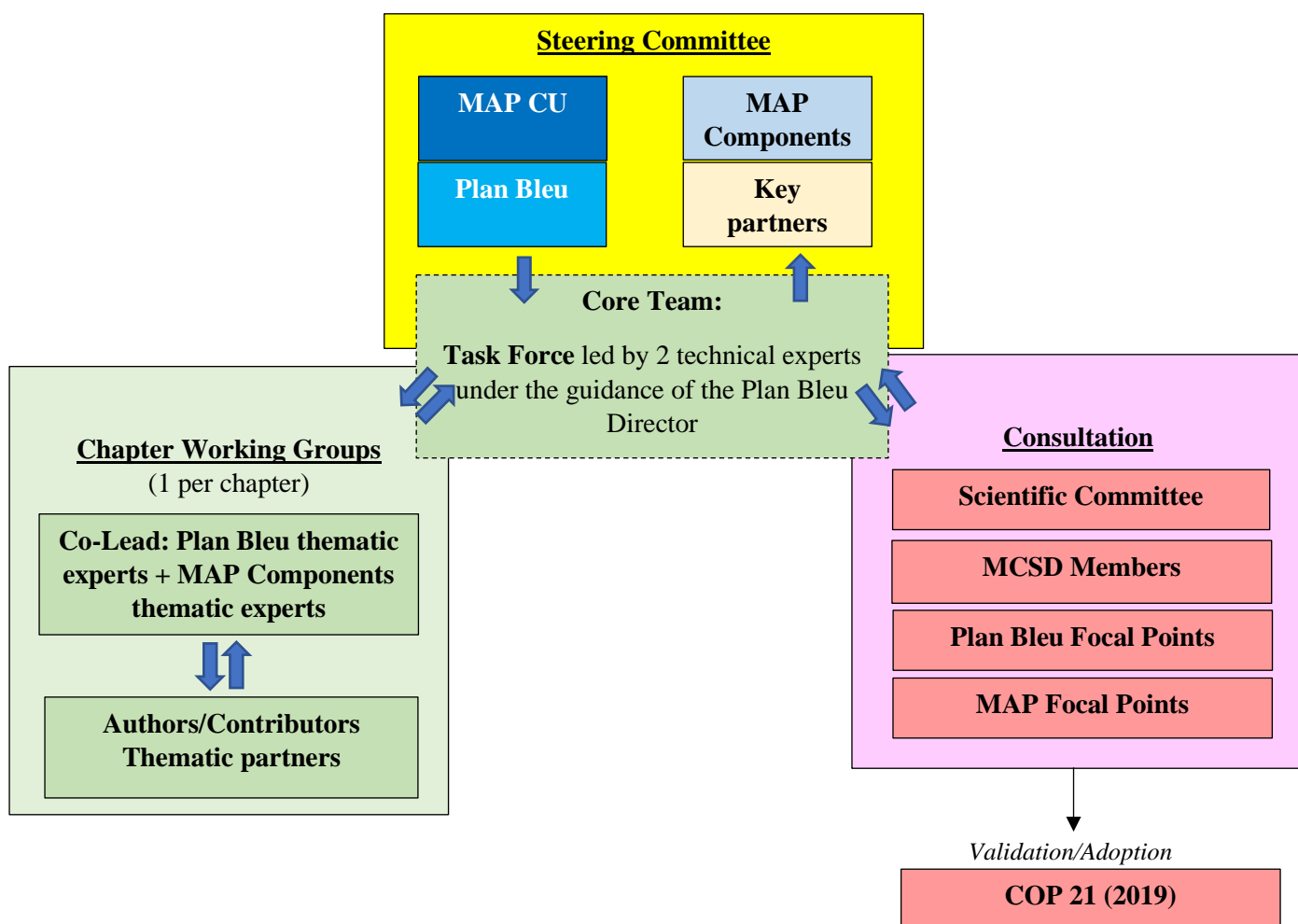
will discuss each major step of the production process, i.e. the table of contents, the draft chapters and reports.

Other partners will also be consulted at two key stages of the report preparation by reviewing the draft table of contents and the draft chapters and reports. The latter are:

- The **Scientific Committee** composed of up to 10 scientific experts to be designated (with a North-South representation balance, and with a background covering both environment and development).
- The MAP and Plan Bleu Focal Points.
- The members of the MCSD.

The drafting of the report will be a collective effort involving a number of experts who will be invited to contribute according to their field of expertise. The Core Team will convene trimestral virtual meetings with the authors and contributors.

**Flow chart**



**Tentative timeline for the SoED 2019**

Step	Tentative date	Who?
Establishing a detailed table of contents	12 March 2018	Plan Bleu and Steering Committee
Deadline for review of detailed table of contents	2 April 2018	Scientific Committee, MCSD Members, Plan Bleu Focal Points
Working groups per chapter (virtual meetings)	April – November 2018	Authors and contributors, Plan Bleu
Deadline for SoED contributions	15 November 2018	Authors and contributors
Review of draft 0	February – March 2019	Scientific Committee, MCSD Members, Plan Bleu Focal Points
Consultations during official meetings Draft 1 Draft 2	June 2019 10 September 2019	Plan Bleu Focal Points and MCSD Members MAP Focal Points
Presentation of draft 3 and validation	10 December 2019	COP 21
Publication of the SoED 2019	Spring 2020	Plan Bleu – MAP Coordinating Unit

