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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

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21st Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019

Agenda Item 3: Thematic Decisions

Agenda Item 5: Ministerial Session

Reports of the Meetings of the Bureau (85th, 86th, 87th and 88th)

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2019



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UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/7



UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

11 May 2018
Original: English

85th 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

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2018

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Introduction

1. In accordance with Article IV.2 of the Terms of Reference of the Bureau and in consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 85th 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 (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held in Athens, Greece, on 18-19 April 2018.

Participation

2. The President of the Bureau, Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania), the Vice-Presidents: Mr. Charalambos Hajipakkos (Cyprus); Mr. Ahmed Kassem Sheta (Egypt); Mr. Oliviero Montanaro, and Ms. Silvia Sartori (Italy); M. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou (Tunisia) and the Rapporteur, Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro) attended the Bureau meeting. Ms. Marijana Mance (EU) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, Programme Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 on 18 April 2018 by Ms. Klodiana Marika, President of the Bureau. She welcomed the Bureau members and other participants to their first meeting of the 2018-2019 biennium.

4. The Coordinator also made a statement of welcome to the participants.

II. Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/1 (Annex II). No additional issues were added to the agenda item 7 "Any Other Matters".

III. Agenda item 3: Progress Report for the Period January - March 2018

6. The Coordinator introduced the document "Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period January-March 2018" (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/3). He presented highlights from the document, noting that efforts were made to produce a focused and concise report. He also introduced the "Progress report by the Secretariat on the implementation of COP 20 Decisions" (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/4).

7. In his presentation, the Coordinator highlighted that work on the implementation of the PoW and other COP 20 decisions has started very early in the biennium. Special reference was made to the 34th meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel in Sophia-Antipolis, France (5-7 February 2018), and its importance for coordinating the work of the Secretariat from an early stage. Furthermore, the Coordinator presented important highlights of the progress made in the first quarter of the biennium, structured around the Themes of the Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021.

8. Highlights included the work on information and communication issues, preparation of the Common Regional Framework on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, resource mobilization and especially the GEF funded "Mediterranean Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security", bilateral cooperation with Italy, progress in the ratification by the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and progress on national reporting on implementation.

9. The Bureau members expressed great appreciation for the progress achieved in the implementation of the activities carried out and for the early start of implementation, as well as for the structure of the report (shorter and more focused document).

10. During the discussion, a member of the Bureau referred to the need of the MAP Components' Focal Points be kept involved and informed of the activities of the relevant MAP Components in the intersessional period. The Coordinator noted that a relevant tool developed by the Secretariat are the planning and priority tables; based on these, the MAP Components can submit updates on the relevant activities of 2018-2019 POW to their respective Focal Points to allow them to follow-up its implementation.

11. It was also stressed that coordination should be enhanced between projects related to specific issues and the relevant activities funded by MTF and voluntary contributions. The example of Integrated Coastal Zone Management/Marine Spatial Planning was provided, in relation to the preparation of the Common Regional Framework and the work of PAP/RAC to ensure coordination of efforts and synergistic links between relevant projects, such as the "GEF Adriatic project", the funding under the Cooperation Agreement with Italy and the MTF.

12. Furthermore, the Bureau discussed the issue of Focal Points being kept informed and involved in the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) by the MAP Components, to allow proper contribution and with the view to strengthen cooperation and coordination.

13. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the compilation of project fiches prepared by the Secretariat for the MAP Focal Points Meeting and COP 20 and asked the Secretariat to provide regular information on the development and implementation of projects relevant for the implementation of the POW, through the periodic update of project fiches.

14. Following a question by the Bureau on the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach and the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR, the Secretariat provided information on this issue, noting that: (a) the relevant work with Contracting Parties is ongoing to implement IMAP at the national level, (b) the Terms of Reference / Job Description for the Programme Management Officer (Quality Status Report Expert) at the Coordinating Unit have been prepared and are ready to be sent to Headquarters for classification, in order to have the post filled in January 2019, (c) the preparations for the regional meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups on best practices for IMAP implementation to take place in July 2018 are underway, and (d) the roadmap and Needs Assessment for the 2023 MED QSR are being prepared and will be ready before the end of 2018.

Conclusions:

15. The Bureau expresses appreciation for the work done as presented by the Secretariat, and for the efforts and results achieved so far.

16. The Bureau requests the Coordinating Unit to instruct MAP components to submit twice a year updates on the relevant activities of 2018-2019 POW to their respective Thematic Focal Points in order to allow them to follow-up its implementation.

17. The Bureau requests the Coordinating Unit:

- (a) To provide legal advice on the process of development and subscription of MoUs relevant for the implementation of POWs, for discussion at the 86th Meeting of the Bureau;**
- (b) To instruct the MAP components to involve the relevant Thematic Focal Points in the process of development of MoUs to allow proper contribution and with the view to strengthen cooperation and coordination;**
- (c) To provide regular information on the development and implementation of projects relevant for the implementation of the POWs and based on the periodic update of Project Fiches.**

18. The Bureau acknowledges the work undertaken for the implementation of Decision IG.23/6 focusing on the implementation of IMAP at national level and the organization of best

practices meeting to foster it. The Bureau requests that the roadmap and Needs Assessment for the 2023 MED QSR, prepared in close collaboration with the EcAp Coordination Group, is presented at its 86th meeting.

IV. Agenda item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

19. The Coordinator informed the meeting on progress made regarding the financial situation as presented in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/5 “Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues”. He noted the importance of the early receipt of the assessed contributions by Contracting Parties, in order to allow the Secretariat to start the implementation of activities using the budget approved by the COP. Furthermore, in addition to the contributions included in the above-mentioned document, contribution to the MTF had also been received from Italy, bringing the collection rate for 2018 to 29.47 % at the time of the Meeting. It was also noted that, currently, the Secretariat has no Fund Management Officer since the incumbent temporarily vacated the position and the recruitment for the replacement in the interim is underway.

20. Concern was expressed by the Bureau in view of the fact that the position of the Fund Management Officer is currently vacant and on how this will affect the work of the Secretariat.

21. The Coordinator noted that the transfer of the staff member was done in line with the UN Rules and Regulations and he stressed that the Headquarters provide continuous support to the Coordinating Unit in ensuring the smooth administrative and financial operations of MAP in the interim.

Conclusions:

22. The Bureau notes with appreciation the high level of contributions received for the year 2017. It requests the Contracting Parties to pay their 2018 contributions and arrears as soon as possible. It requests the Coordinating Unit in consultation with UN Environment Headquarters to submit a proposal to the 87th meeting of the Bureau on a mechanism to ensure that the timing of the payment of contributions does not affect the implementation of the POW.

23. The Bureau takes note of the actions taken by the Secretariat for the cases of arrears for over 24 months and requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears and report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties on the outcome of its actions. It also requests the Coordinating Unit to liaise with UN Environment Headquarters as appropriate to identify means to address the issue of longstanding arrears and their impact on the effectiveness of the POWs implementation.

V. Agenda item 5: Specific Issues

24. The Coordinator presented the “Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues” (UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6).

25. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

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

26. The Coordinator presented the update contained in the above-mentioned document on issues regarding the status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

27. The Coordinator reported that, since the last meeting of the Bureau, the Depositary 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, (b) the instrument of accession to the Prevention and Emergency Protocol by Lebanon, and (c) the instrument of ratification of the

Offshore Protocol by Croatia. He also informed the meeting about updates on the progress of the process of ratifications received by other Contracting Parties.

28. The Bureau discussed the issue and advised accordingly.

Conclusions:

29. 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, and especially the amended Dumping Protocol that requires one ratification to enter into force.

30. 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.

31. 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

32. The Coordinator presented the status of the Host Country Agreement of each RAC and the challenges faced in relation to the implementation of the common template. The Secretariat asked for the guidance of the Bureau on how to best comply with the relevant requirements of Decision IG.23/3.

33. The Bureau discussed the issue and provided its guidance accordingly.

Conclusion:

34. The Bureau takes note of the status of development of the Host Country Agreements for RACs and requests the Secretariat to prepare a first draft of minimum common provisions to ensure effective operation of the RACs based on their mandates and taking into account the approved Host Country Agreement template, as well as the challenges faced so far as reported by the Secretariat, for further discussion at the 86th Bureau meeting.

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

35. The Coordinator presented the timeline and process of preparing a meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity for the biennium 2018–2019 in accordance with Decision IG.23/3, noting that the relevant information is provided in Annex II of the “Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues” (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6).

36. The Bureau discussed the issue and advised accordingly. It was noted that, in relation to the substance of the meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity, the issue of Artificial Reefs may be included in the meeting agenda.

Conclusion:

37. 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 document BUR 85.85/6/Rev.1 “Report on Specific Issues”. The Bureau recommends that the Coordinating Unit, in line with the COP Decision, provides the necessary legal advice and that the need for external expertise be evaluated after the meeting in order to extract and apply its lessons learned. In

order to cover any additional need for the organization of the Thematic Focal Points meeting, available budget from other budget lines may be used, in accordance with the financial rules.

- D. Compliance Committee

38. The Coordinator reported on the implementation of Decisions IG.23/1 and IG.23/2 and especially on the submission of national implementation reports by the Contracting Parties, as well as on the composition of the Compliance Committee.

39. The Bureau discussed the above issues and advised accordingly. The Bureau noted the importance of timely submission of national implementation reports, which will allow the preparation of the analysis of the general status of the progress in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols for submission to COP 21.

Conclusions:

40. The Bureau congratulates the Secretariat for the good results of the efforts leading to an increased rate of submissions of national implementation reports and 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.

41. As requested by Decision IG.23/2 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.

42. The Bureau urges the Secretariat to continue consultation with 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.23/2. In order to ensure that by the 14th Compliance Committee meeting the membership is complete, the Secretariat should consult with the relevant regional group to solve this issue.

- E. Cooperation and Partners

43. The Coordinator updated the Bureau on the efforts to contribute to regional governance and cooperation and to create and strengthen partnerships, in order to enhance the impact of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system.

44. With reference to Decision IG.19/6 on MAP/Civil society cooperation and partnership, the Coordinator updated Bureau members on the evaluation of the application by “OceanCare”, for accreditation as MAP Partner.

45. The Bureau discussed the above issues and advised accordingly. The members of the Bureau noted that, following the legal advice provided by the Secretariat, they understand that the list of criteria for the accreditation of MAP Partners (as in Annex II of Decision IG. 19/6) is prescriptive.

Conclusions:

46. 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.

47. The Bureau acknowledges that “OceanCare” meets all the criteria but criterion “e)” of COP Decision IG.19/6 (annex II) and requests the Secretariat to contact “OceanCare” on this matter and report to the 86th Bureau meeting for final decision.

48. The Bureau asks the Secretariat to launch a formal written consultation of the SPA/BD Thematic Focal Points on the draft text of the Joint Cooperation Strategy to collect the comments and proposals for amendments and to prepare an advanced draft text accompanied by an explanatory note for submission to the 86th Bureau meeting.

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

49. The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the process and timeline for the preparation of the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED), as presented in Annex IV of the “Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues” (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6).

50. The Bureau discussed the above issue and advised accordingly. Further to the conclusions presented below, the Bureau noted that the Secretariat is expected to:

- a) Enable Contracting Parties, through the Plan Bleu Focal Points, to designate experts for the review process of the 2019 SoED report;
 - b) Explore ways for Contracting Parties to participate in the Steering Committee of the process (for example through the participation of two Contracting Parties per sub-regional group, thus, six Contracting Parties in total);
 - c) Explore ways to enable participation of national experts in the Scientific Committee.
- Furthermore, each MAP Component to reach to its Focal Points and ask if they have experts to propose to assist in the preparation each chapter of the report.

Conclusion:

51. The Bureau takes note with appreciation of the work done for the elaboration of the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report and asks the Secretariat:

- (a) To review the Table of Contents of SoED, as well as the process and timeline for the preparation of the Report to take into account comments and proposals from Thematic Focal Points and MCSD members;**
- (b) To ensure full consideration in the structure of the SoED of the 2016-2021 MTS and of the provision of Strategic Outcome 1.4 of the MTS itself;**
- (c) To carry out the review process with the timely and full involvement of the Thematic Focal Points.**

- G. Evaluation of MAP Regional Strategies and Action Plans

52. The Coordinator introduced this agenda item, referring to the process and timeline for the evaluation of MAP Regional Strategies and Action Plans, as mandated by the Contracting Parties. Such evaluations include the mid-term review of the status of implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025, the midterm evaluation of the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in the Mediterranean, the independent evaluation of the implementation of the Mid-Term Strategy and the mid-term evaluation of the implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs).

53. Special emphasis was placed on the timeline of the mid-term evaluations of the MSSD 2016-2025, of the Regional Action Plan on SCP and of the NAPs, where the text of the relevant COP Decisions required further clarification.

54. The Bureau discussed the issue and advised accordingly.

Conclusions:

55. 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 of document BUR 85.85/6/Rev.1 “Report on Specific Issues”.

56. 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 meeting of the MAP Focal Points for consideration and further submission to COP 21.

57. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to develop a roadmap for the evaluation of the current MTS and the preparation of the next MTS, taking into account the relevant evaluation and assessment processes, by the 87th Bureau meeting.

58. 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. To this aim, the Bureau requests the Coordinating Unit to invite MED POL Thematic Focal Points to designate experts for the participation in the two meetings to be held in 2018-2019 and to follow-up the drafting process.

- H. Outreach, Information and Communication

59. The Coordinator presented a brief update on the information and communication activities and plans for the biennium in this area, with special reference to the process for the preparation of an operational Communication Strategy of UNEP/MAP.

Conclusion:

60. 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

61. The Coordinator briefly introduced this agenda item, noting that preparations for COP 21 and collaboration with its host country, Italy, have already started from the first quarter of the current biennium.

62. The Bureau member from Italy, host country of COP 21, provided preliminary information on the organization of the event.

63. The Bureau members discussed the main aspects of the meeting and provided their guidance in relation to the process for the preparation of the substantial aspects of COP 21, as follows:

- a) The 86th Bureau meeting to discuss the general themes/issues of COP 21 and the preliminary list of COP 21 Decisions;
- b) Information/consultation with the Contracting Parties to follow and related timelines;
- c) The 87th Bureau meeting to discuss the main elements of the Ministerial Declaration;

- d) The MAP Focal Points meeting to discuss a first draft of the Ministerial Declaration;
- e) The Ministerial Declaration to be further elaborated for COP 21.

Conclusions:

64. The Bureau welcomes the proactive approach taken by the Secretariat for the preparation of COP 21 from an early stage.

65. The Bureau invites Italy, as Host Country, and the Secretariat to provide more information on the preparations of COP 21 at its 86th meeting, including on the substantive issues and possible theme of COP 21.

VI. Agenda item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 86th Meeting of the Bureau

66. The Bureau agreed that its 86th Meeting will be held on 6-7 November 2018, in Athens, Greece.

67. The Bureau also agreed to confirm the exact dates of the MAP Focal Points meeting and of COP 21 at its 86th meeting. The Secretariat noted the two-month deadline for meeting documents and the constraints that this poses in identifying an adequate calendar of meetings.

VII. Agenda item 7: Any Other Matters

68. No other matters were raised by the Bureau members.

VIII. Agenda item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

69. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions and recommendations as set in this report.

IX. Agenda item 9: Closure of the Meeting

70. The meeting was closed by the President of the Bureau at 12:00 on Thursday, 19 April 2018.

Annex I

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Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

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- Agenda item 2 Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3 Progress Report for January - March 2018**
- Agenda item 4 Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5 Specific Issues:**
- a) Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols
 - b) Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs
 - c) Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity
 - d) Compliance Committee
 - e) Cooperation and Partners
 - f) Process for the Preparation of the State of the Environment and Development Report
 - g) Evaluation of MAP Regional Strategies and Action Plans
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14 September 2018
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86th 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

Extraordinary Meeting
Teleconference, 11 July 2018

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2018

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Introduction

1. In accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Bureau and in consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the extraordinary, 86th 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 (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held through electronic means (teleconference), on 11 July 2018.

Participation

2. The President of the Bureau, Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania), the Vice-Presidents: Mr. Charalambos Hajipakkos (Cyprus); Mr. Ahmed Kassem Sheta, and Ms. Heba Sharawy (Egypt); Mr. Oliviero Montanaro (Italy); M. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou (Tunisia) and the Rapporteur, Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro) attended the Bureau meeting. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Programme Officer for Governance, Legal Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The meeting was opened at 13:30 (Athens Time) on Wednesday, 11 July 2018 by Ms. Klodiana Marika, President of the Bureau, who welcomed the participants.

II. Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work (13:30-13:45)

4. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.86/1 (Annex II).

III. Agenda item 3: Nomination by Monaco of an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee (13:45-14:45)

5. The Coordinator, Mr. Gaetano Leone, introduced this Agenda item. He referred to the relevant conclusion of the 85th Bureau meeting (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2018) and noted that since then, the Secretariat continued consultations with Monaco to nominate an Alternate Member to the Compliance Committee until COP 21, as per Decision IG. 23/2. Following these consultations, Monaco, through a letter dated 6 June 2018, nominated Mr. Elie Jarmache as an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee. The nomination letter was accompanied by a short CV of Mr. Elie Jarmache, who has a long and relevant legal experience related to marine and environmental issues and is a member of the Scientific Council of "Institut du droit économique de la mer" (INDEMER) in Monaco. The nomination from Monaco was transmitted by the Secretariat to the Bureau on 23 June 2018.

6. During the discussion, it was noted that Mr. Jarmache is a national of a country that belongs in Group II (France), while Monaco belongs in Group III; reference was also made to the fact that there are already one Member and one Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee holding the French nationality. In this context, it was highlighted that paragraph 7 of the "Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols" (Decision IG. 17/2 as amended by Decisions IG. 20/1 and IG. 21/1) states that "The members of the Committee shall be nationals of Parties to the Barcelona Convention. The Committee shall not include more than one national of the same State". It was also recalled that paragraph 3 reads that "The Committee shall consist of seven members elected by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties from a list of candidates nominated by the Contracting Parties. For each member of the Committee, the Meeting of the

Contracting Parties shall also elect an alternate member from the above-mentioned list”. It was further recalled that paragraph 9 states that “In electing members of the Committee and their alternates, the Meeting of the Contracting Parties shall take into consideration equitable geographical representation (...)”.

7. The discussion addressed the issue of to whom the nationality criteria should be applied, whether to both Members and Alternate Members or only Members. Regarding the possibility for nominating an Alternate Member holding the nationality of one of the countries belonging to Group III, the Secretariat noted that that nationals from all other Contracting Parties of Group III have already been elected as Members or Alternate Members of the Compliance Committee.

8. One member of the Bureau raised the question whether the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Compliance Committee could be Alternate Members of the Committee. The current situation is that the Chair is an Alternate Member from Group III. The same member argued that, being the Chair vested with the right to vote and being an Alternate Member, this situation raises to eight the number of voting members of the Compliance Committee, in contrast with the “Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols” that set to seven the number of voting members.

9. The Bureau discussed options in relation to the way forward regarding the nomination of the Compliance Committee Alternate Member by Monaco. It was highlighted that for certain issues there is a need to seek clarifications from the Contracting Parties. In this respect, the Secretariat informed the Bureau that the Compliance Committee at its 14th meeting (Athens, Greece, 27-29 June 2018) agreed on the following conclusions: “(a) to seek clarification from Contracting Parties on whether Alternate Members can be elected as Officers and on the timing of the election of Officers, (b) any other matters of the Procedures and Mechanisms requiring interpretation by the Contracting Parties will be discussed at the 15th Meeting of the Compliance Committee, and (c) the Compliance Committee recommends to hold a meeting for the purpose of the election of its Officers immediately following the COP, where its membership is endorsed. Depending on resources availability, the meeting may be held via electronic means”.

Conclusions:

10. The members of the Bureau feel that the provisions of paragraph 7 of the “Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols” might be considered as referring only to Members of the Compliance Committee, applying a strict interpretation of this disposition;

11. Considering the need for equitable geographical representation in the Compliance Committee, the Bureau requests the Secretariat to contact Monaco, copying the Members of the Bureau and the Contracting Parties of Group III, and invite Monaco to nominate as an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee an individual holding the nationality of Monaco, or, if this is not possible, an Alternate Member holding the nationality of another country of Group III, taking into account the “Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols”;

12. Considering also the need to comply with the number of seven as voting members of the Compliance Committee, there is a need to urgently address and solve existing issues that are critical for the functioning of the Compliance Committee;

13. The Bureau took note of the conclusions of the 14th Meeting of the Compliance Committee and wished to bring to the attention of the Compliance Committee the following issues for discussion at the 15th Meeting of the Compliance Committee: (a) the scope of application of paragraph 7 of the “Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols”; and (b) the implications of electing an Alternate Member as Chair of the Compliance Committee;

14. The Bureau also asked the Compliance Committee to prepare, with the support of the Secretariat, a list of procedural issues, also based on the results of its 15th Meeting, that require clarification and interpretation by the Contracting Parties and to present it, together with the Compliance Committee recommendations, to COP 21 for consideration.

IV. Agenda item 4: Any Other Matters (14:45-15:00)

15. The Rapporteur, Ms. Ivana Stojanovic, informed the Bureau on the joint activities planned by Albania, Croatia and Montenegro on marine litter. She noted that the above Contracting Parties are also planning to prepare project proposals to be submitted to the European Commission for funding, in which they plan to seek the involvement of the Secretariat.

16. The Vice-President from Italy, Mr. Oliviero Montanaro, informed the Bureau that the venue of COP 21 will be Naples, Italy. In relation to the dates of the meeting he explained that the dates currently planned, 10-13 December 2019, will be problematic in logistical terms as that period is a very high touristic season in Naples with impacts on costs and availability of hotels. Therefore, Italy proposes that the meeting takes place on 26-29 November 2019.

17. The Secretariat highlighted the need to revise the calendar of governance meetings preceding the COP in order to ensure the effectiveness of those meetings and the necessary time for the completion and submission of COP documents. To this end, it was noted that the time between the MAP Focal Points meeting and the deadline for submission of documents to the COP needs to be at least 3 weeks and therefore proposes to consider the first week of December at the latest; the Secretariat will continue the discussion with Italy to reach an agreement as soon as possible.

Conclusion:

18. The Bureau welcomes with appreciation the information provided by Italy as host country of COP 21, and asks the Secretariat to consult further with the Host Country on the exact days of COP 21, considering also the preceding governance meetings, and to inform Contracting Parties accordingly.

V. Agenda item 5: Conclusions and Recommendations (15:00-15:30)

19. The Bureau agreed on a set of conclusions and recommendations as set in this report.

VI. Agenda item 6: Closure of the Meeting (15:30)

20. The meeting was closed by the President of the Bureau at 15:15 on Wednesday, 11 July 2018.

Annex I
List of participants

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Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda item 1** Opening of the Meeting (13:30, Athens time)
- Agenda item 2** Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work (13:30-13:45)
- Agenda item 3** Nomination by Monaco of an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee (13:45-14:45)
- Agenda item 4** Any Other Matters (14:45-15:00)
- Agenda item 5** Conclusions and Recommendations (15:00-15:30)
- Agenda item 6** Closure of the Meeting (15:30)



UNITED
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UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

18 December 2018
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87th 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, 6-7 November 2018

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2018

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Introduction

1. In accordance with Article IV.2 of the Terms of Reference of the Bureau and in consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 87th 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 (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held in Athens, Greece, on 6-7 November 2018.

Participation

2. The President of the Bureau, Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania), the Vice-Presidents: Mr. Charalambos Hajipakkos (Cyprus); Mr. Ahmed Kassem Sheta (Egypt); Mr. Oliviero Montanaro (Italy), accompanied by Ms. Silvia Sartori; Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou (Tunisia) and the Rapporteur, Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro) attended the Bureau meeting. Ms. Marijana Mance (European Union) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Programme Officer, Administration and Finance Officer, Legal Officer). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 on 6 November 2018 by Ms. Klodiana Marika, President of the Bureau. She welcomed the Bureau members and other participants to their third meeting of the 2018-2019 biennium.

4. The Coordinator also made a statement of welcome to the participants.

II. Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.87/1. No additional issues were added to agenda item 7 “*Any Other Matters*”. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

III. Agenda item 3: Progress Report for April - September 2018

6. The Coordinator introduced the document “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period April - September 2018*” (UNEP/MED BUR.87/3). He presented highlights from the document, noting that efforts were made to produce a focused and concise report. He also introduced the “*Progress report by the Secretariat on the implementation of COP 20 Decisions*” (UNEP/MED BUR.87/4) and made reference to the “*Reports of the 35th and 36th Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*”, presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.87/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively, for the information of the Bureau.

7. In his presentation, the Coordinator highlighted that work on the implementation of the Programme of Work (PoW) and other COP 20 decisions has been very intense during the past six months, and that this work is ongoing. Special reference was made to the 35th and 36th meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel (Paris, France, 6 June 2018, and Split, Croatia, 27-28 September 2018) noting their importance in coordinating the work of the Secretariat. He mentioned that these meetings showed once again the good team spirit and coordination prevailing.

8. Further highlights included the progress in relation to resource mobilization, including the preparations of the GEF MedProgramme Child Projects, the conclusion of the negotiations with the European Commission to support the 3rd phase of the Marine Protected Areas project under the GreenMedIII Strategy, the preparation of the 2nd phase of the SwitchMed Project, and the

implementation of the Cooperation Agreement with the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS). Furthermore, the Coordinator informed the Bureau of the work of the Secretariat towards strengthening partnerships and synergies in the global and regional levels, including the contributions by UNEP/MAP to UN processes and the cooperation with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMS), the Benguela Current Convention, the European Environment Agency (EEA), and Plastics Europe.

9. The Coordinator informed the Bureau on the ongoing work on information and communication and on assessment reports, in relation mainly to the preparation of the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report (2019 SoED) and the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (2023 MED QSR). On pollution, he noted the work under MED POL on the Six Pollution Reduction Regional Plans. He presented the progress related to biodiversity and ecosystems, highlighting the creation by Spain of a new 46,385 km² Marine Protected Area (the Cetaceans Migration Corridor) as a very positive development. In relation to land and sea interactions and processes and integrated coastal zone management, he stressed the progress made with regards to the CAMP Bosnia and Herzegovina Agreement, and highlighted the work of the open-ended Working Group on the Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management. Finally, he presented several activities on Sustainable Consumption and Production that took place to enhance cooperation at regional, sub-regional and national levels, as well as progress in relation to climate change adaptation.

10. The Bureau members expressed appreciation for the progress achieved in the implementation of the activities carried out and for the early start of implementation and the efforts provided. Furthermore, they welcomed the structure of the report, noting with appreciation that it is a shorter and focused document. They also expressed their appreciation for the compilation of project fiches, since it enables an overall understanding of how projects are implemented. Projects have become a structural element for the implementation of the POW, and specific mention was made of the fact that the project fiches include the link between each specific project and the relevant activities of the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work. One member of the Bureau noted that it would be very useful to publish the project fiches on the UNEP/MAP web site and to update their content periodically in order to reflect progresses in their implementation.

11. In reviewing the document, Bureau members referred to the need to ensure complementarity and synergies among databases within the MAP system, with the support of INFO/RAC. They reiterated the need to enhance coordination between projects related to specific issues, such as Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)/Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), and the relevant activities funded by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and voluntary contributions.

12. One member of the Bureau, referring to the preparation of the Common Regional Framework on ICZM, noted that this document provides an opportunity to create a common operational guide, with clear added value. He also noted that the evaluation of the Pelagos Sanctuary for the conservation of marine mammals of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI) should be performed in 2019; he highlighted, however, that the post of Executive Secretary of the Pelagos Agreement is currently vacant creating possible delays to the process, and that this issue should be addressed. The Bureau highlighted the importance of contributing to the ongoing consultation on the Common Regional Framework on ICZM in view of the revised version to be presented at the PAP/RAC Focal Points meeting.

13. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the early initiation of the preparation and consultation on the PoW. Being of overarching importance, the Bureau asked to be informed on the preparation of the PoW 2020-2021, so as to be able to comment on even before the next Bureau meeting. The Secretariat noted that the issue will be discussed at the Executive Coordination Panel meeting scheduled to take place in January 2019 and that the relevant documentation will then be shared with the Bureau.

14. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses appreciation for the work done in the period April - September 2018 as presented by the Secretariat, and for the efforts and results achieved so far;

(b) Considering the specificity of the Pelagos Sanctuary as SPAMI and the current operational condition of the Permanent Secretariat of the Pelagos Agreement, the Bureau asks the Secretariat to liaise with the President of the mentioned agreement to explore ways for completing the review process of the Pelagos Sanctuary as SPAMI in line with the Decision IG.23/9 adopted at COP 20;

(c) The Bureau also asks the Secretariat to ensure complementarity and synergies among databases within the MAP system, with the support of INFO/RAC.

IV. Agenda item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

15. The Coordinator informed the meeting on progress made as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.87/5 "*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*", addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters.

16. He noted the importance of the early receipt of the assessed contributions by Contracting Parties, for allowing the Secretariat to start the implementation of activities using the budget approved by the COP. He highlighted the high level of assessed contributions received (almost 93% by September 2018). Furthermore, he introduced the new Fund Management Officer (FMO) at the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit, who was invited to join the meeting.

17. The Bureau members expressed appreciation for the high level of contributions received and welcomed the new FMO, while they were invited to raise any questions in her presence. In response to a question on the existing surplus, the FMO highlighted that the surplus is made up of a number of distinct parts, such as the working capital reserve, arrears and advance payments that are recorded but not yet accounted for. She informed the Bureau that a detailed review of the accounts since 2012 is under way not only of the MTF but also of the other Trust Funds, in order to clarify issues. Further information in this respect is to be provided at the 88th Bureau meeting.

18. With regards to a question by the Bureau on the losses/gains due to the exchange rate fluctuations, she reminded the Bureau of the provision adopted by the COP, noting that these can be covered from the working capital reserve. She also informed the Bureau that this issue is being discussed with UNEP Headquarters, and it was requested that the experiences of other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements on this issue are collected and presented.

19. The members of the Bureau welcomed the information provided, stressed the importance of clarifying the issue of the surplus, and agreed with the proposal to develop a financial strategy allow better allocation of funds.

20. The Coordinator referred to the issue of countries with arrears for over 24 months, noting the particularity of the situations of the Syrian Arab Republic and the State of Libya. The Bureau members appreciated that this is a difficult situation to address. It was proposed to examine if there is a possibility of exemptions, due to specific situations of force majeure, from the mechanism on sanctions that can be introduced for Contracting Parties with longstanding arrears.

21. The Bureau members referred to the UN scale of assessment and to the need to align the assessed contributions to the MTF with the UN scale that will be issued at the end of 2018, noting that a new UN scale is adopted every three years, while the UNEP/MAP PoW and Budget every two years.

22. Finally, the Coordinator updated the Bureau with regards to the MAP premises and the possibility of renovation of the existing premises due to the difficulty of finding new premises.

23. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau notes with appreciation the high level of contributions received for the year 2018. It requests the Contracting Parties whose 2018 contributions are still pending to pay them and the arrears, as soon as possible;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the actions taken by the Secretariat for the cases of arrears for over 24 months and requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to collect the arrears and report to the Bureau and to the Contracting Parties on the outcome of its actions;

(c) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts at finding a solution for the long-standing arrears of the Syrian Arab Republic and the State of Libya, considering their current situation, and to report to the next session of the Bureau on any development;

(d) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to report to its 88th Meeting on existing UN procedures to address the issue of long standing arrears of countries in specific situations of force majeure that may also allow for a suspension of their loss of rights;

(e) The Bureau asks the Secretariat to report on the composition of the positive balance in the next Bureau meeting as reflected in the Financial Statement of 31.12.2017. The Secretariat, under the guidance of UNEP Headquarters, will also recommend a standard mechanism for the utilization of any surplus in line with UN Financial Rules and Regulations;

(f) The Bureau asks the Secretariat to update the next Bureau meeting the exchange rate mechanism under the current UMOJA accounting system and obtain information on comparative handling of the situation in other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). The Secretariat will present to the next Bureau meeting a procedure for the use of the Working Capital Reserve to compensate for past exchange rate losses;

(g) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to provide at its 88th meeting the UN Scale of Assessments from the UN Headquarters as the basis for the calculation of the Assessed Contributions to the MTF and a proposal to ensure that contributions are constantly in line with the assessed scale. Such proposal will then be submitted to the MAP Focal Points Meeting and COP 21.

V. Agenda item 5: Specific Issues

24. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.87/6).

25. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

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

26. The Coordinator reported that Annex II of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean of 1995 (SPA/BD Protocol) entered into force on 14 September 2018. He informed the Bureau of the ongoing process in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim to achieve the universal ratification of the Barcelona Convention by COP 21. He also highlighted the constant efforts of the Secretariat in encouraging Contracting Parties towards ratifications, and especially of the Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution in the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft or Incineration at Sea (Dumping Protocol) which is not yet into force, ensuring that these efforts will continue.

27. The Bureau discussed the issue and advised accordingly.

28. Conclusions:

(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 liaise with the Secretariat to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments;

(b) 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, and specifically of the amended Dumping Protocol which would allow its entry into force.

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

29. The Coordinator presented the first draft of minimum common provisions to be included in the Host Country Agreements (HCAs) for Regional Activity Centres (RACs), to ensure their effective operation, in accordance with Decision IG.23/3 on *Governance*. He noted that the provisions are described in detail in Annex I of the Report on Specific Issues and informed the meeting that the Secretariat has looked at the different legal instruments used by other UN organizations to address their relationships with regional centres, such as the Basel Convention and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for GFCM.

30. The members of the Bureau welcomed the document prepared by the Secretariat on the minimum common provisions, and discussed this matter.

31. The Coordinator proposed to contact the countries hosting the RACs and invite them to provide inputs and comments on the proposed minimum common provisions. The aim of these contacts will be to reach a text acceptable by all parties involved, to be presented to the 2019 MAP Focal Points meeting and COP 21.

32. The Bureau members asked for clarifications regarding the Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) and if these can replace the HCA for RACs. The Coordinator replied that this process has been developed by UNEP to enable transfer of funds and is meant to be complementary to the HCA. Furthermore, he noted that the aim of the discussions is to find a flexible way forward, acceptable by all, to cover issues not covered by the PCA such as privileges and immunities. This is the reason why the templates of legal agreements used by other UN bodies are looked into.

33. The Bureau members noted that the immunity of premises and the consideration of possible application of privileges and immunities to personnel of RACs should be addressed within the minimum common provisions. Furthermore, it was noted that provisions should ensure transparency of the core budget of RACs.

34. It was agreed that a revised text of these minimum provisions would be developed by the Secretariat, reflecting the inputs and comments made by the Bureau. The draft provisions, with potential financial implications, will be shared with all the Contracting Parties, as per the Financial Regulations and Rules and Procedures of the Barcelona Convention.

35. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the minimum common provisions, as presented in Annex I of the Report on Specific Issues and requests the Secretariat to revise them in accordance with the comments received during the meeting and circulate the revised version to the Bureau members for consideration and guidance;

(b) As a following step, the Bureau requests the Secretariat to consult with Host Governments of RACs on the revised minimum common provisions and to report to the 88th meeting of the Bureau.

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

36. The Coordinator updated the Bureau on the preparations of the meeting of the thematic focal points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity (SPA/BD) for the biennium 2018–2019, in accordance with Decision IG.23/3 on *Governance*.

37. The Bureau discussed the issue and advised accordingly. In relation to the number of other focal points/experts to be invited at the meeting, it was noted by a member of the Bureau that any recommendation that might create additional cost should be accompanied by estimates. Reference was also made to the relevant discussions at COP 20, where this was considered as a trial exercise and as a prototype to better understand the implications of holding thematic focal point meetings, including in relation to the financial implications. It was recalled that Decision IG. 21/13 on Governance, adopted at COP 18, agreed on Thematic Focal Points in order to promote an integrated and coherent approach

in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and the Programme of Work, as well as to optimize the costs.

38. The Coordinator stressed that the Secretariat would need to have clear indications from the Bureau on the focal points/experts to be invited before being able to provide an estimate of the relevant costs, especially since this is the first time that such a meeting takes place. He also noted that the directors of all MAP components are expected to participate in the meeting and that the main issue to be addressed in this respect is the integration at the national level.

39. The possibility to hold back-to-back meetings of MAP components was also addressed by the Bureau members as a means to increase integration and, possibly, to reduce costs. Finally, on the agenda of the SPA/BD thematic focal points meeting, it was noted that this can be adjusted depending on the time available for discussion at the meeting.

40. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau takes note of the proposed additional items of the provisional agenda of the meeting of the Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity (SPA/BD). Based on these items the Bureau recommends that the Contracting Parties be represented at the meeting by their SPA/BD Focal Point and their MAP Focal Point or another delegated focal point;

(b) The Bureau asks the Secretariat to explore the possibility of holding the meeting back-to-back with the PAP/RAC Focal Points Meeting, given its relevance, and recommends identifying a venue, if not already booked, that is preferably the seat of a RAC;

(c) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to prepare a Concept Note on the meeting of the Thematic Focal Points for SPA/BD, including preliminary agenda, participation, financial information, and other relevant information, before the end of 2018 and to inform the Bureau for guidance.

- D. Compliance and Reporting

41. The Secretariat provided an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.23/1 on *Revised Reporting Format for the Implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols*, and of Decision IG.23/2 on *Compliance Committee: biennium 2016-2017*.

42. The Coordinator highlighted that the 14th meeting of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 20-21 June 2018) had been very productive. It mainly discussed the most effective ways to review the information included in the National Implementation Reports submitted by the Contracting Parties. He also informed the Bureau on the results of the resumed session of the 14th Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Teleconference, 30 October 2018) which was held for the election of the Committee officers for the current biennium.

43. On the issue of the nomination of an Alternate Member of the Compliance Committee by Monaco, the Coordinator noted that the official letter of nomination was still pending, adding that the Secretariat had received the information from the country that the process is at its final stages.

44. On reporting, the Coordinator highlighted that the new online Barcelona Convention reporting System was launched in a timely manner for Contracting Parties to submit their national implementation reports for the biennium 2016-2017. He reminded the Bureau that the submission of the reports is an important obligation of the Contracting Parties that enables the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system to have a clear understanding of the general advances made in the region as well as of the implementation gaps that need to be addressed.

45. A member of the Bureau recalled that the core mandate of the Compliance Committee is to assess compliance with the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Since several Contracting Parties have not submitted their national implementation reports for more than two biennia, the Compliance Committee should address this as an issue of non-compliance.

46. The Bureau members expressed appreciation of the work of the Compliance Committee and of the election of its members during the resumed session of its 14th meeting.

47. **Conclusions:**

(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 recommends that the Compliance Committee develops a mechanism under which the non-submission of national implementation reports under Article 26 of the Barcelona Convention for more than two consecutive biennia will be construed as a situation of non-compliance, leading to the consideration by the Compliance Committee of the measures laid down in Section VII of the Procedures and Mechanisms of Compliance;

(c) The Bureau welcomes the new online Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS) as the collective effort of the UNEP/MAP system to facilitate the national reporting process, thereby increasing the submission rate of national implementation reports and their quality;

(d) The Bureau strongly encourages Contracting Parties to use the new online BCRS to timely submit their national implementation reports for the biennium 2016-2017 by December 2018. This will enable the Secretariat to prepare a report on the general advances made in the region, including at the legal and institutional levels, in implementing the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols along with proposals for further measures, as necessary, as agreed by COP 20 Decision IG.23/1;

(e) The Bureau urges Contracting Parties to expedite in future biennia the process of nomination of the Compliance Committee Members and Alternate Members, so that the membership of the Compliance Committee is elected in full at the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, in accordance with the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

- E. Cooperation and Partners

48. The Coordinator updated the Bureau on the progress in relation to the preparation of the Draft Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity, following Decision IG.23/3 on *Governance*. He noted that the Secretariat believes that the issue now transcends the nature of an operational agreement such as the Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats, deserving therefore to be discussed in the appropriate fora of the Contracting Parties, and asked for the advice of the Bureau in this regard.

49. The Bureau members thanked the Secretariat for the progress in relation to the Joint Cooperation Strategy and the information provided in Annex II of the Report on Specific Issues. One Bureau member noted that he believes that there is no need for a robust, fully implementing mechanism, but for a lighter mechanism to enable the Secretariats to collaborate efficiently. Furthermore, he noted that following this lighter mechanism/strategy, that would involve only international organizations, an action plan could be created to operationally implement the strategy, with reference also to the other actors to be involved.

50. The Coordinator noted that this is a long-standing issue and that guidance from the Bureau is necessary to define the way forward and to enable the Secretariat to effectively communicate with the other involved partners on the next steps. To this end, the members of the Bureau confirmed that they are convinced on the need to strengthen coordination between these secretariats/organizations on area-based management and advised accordingly.

51. With reference to Decision IG.19/6 on *MAP/Civil society cooperation and partnership*, the Coordinator updated the Bureau members on the applications received by civil society organizations for accreditation as MAP Partners, as well as on the applications received for renewal of accreditation

by existing MAP Partners. He also introduced the evaluation by the Secretariat of the new applications, as in Annex III of the Report on Specific Issues.

52. The Bureau endorsed the seven applications of organizations to become new MAP Partners, while the member of the Bureau from Italy informed the meeting of its abstention with regards to the endorsement of The International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP) as MAP Partner. Furthermore, all seven applications for renewal of accreditation of existing MAP Partners were endorsed by the Bureau.

53. The Coordinator informed the meeting on the process of development and subscription of MOUs (and other legal instruments) signed by the Secretariat as well as by MAP components, and stressed that a range of legal agreements is available and not only MOUs.

54. The Bureau members thanked the Secretariat for the information provided in Annex V of the Report on Specific Issues and noted that they trust the Coordinating Unit to proceed in the renewal and update of existing agreements. Following further discussion on the issue, the Bureau advised accordingly.

55. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Secretariat on mobilizing expression of interest from non-governmental organizations to be accredited as MAP Partners and on initiating the process of renewal of accreditation of existing MAP Partners;

(b) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new applications submitted by “INNODEV”, “BirdLife Malta”, “Eco-Union”, “CEDRE”, “MED SOS”, “French Water Academy” and “IOGP” for accreditation as MAP Partners and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement;

(c) The Bureau endorses the proposal by the Secretariat to renew the accreditation as MAP Partners of “MEDPAN”, “MIO-ECSDE”, “SEPS”, “TUDAV”, “WWF MedPO”, “GFN” and “HELMPEA” following the applications submitted by these organizations, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement;

(d) In relation to the Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats, the Bureau takes note of the progress and of the explanatory note prepared by the Secretariat, and requests that a revised version of the draft Strategy be prepared to reflect the comments received through the consultations with the Thematic Focal Points for SPA/BD and during the 87th Bureau Meeting. The revised version will be circulated to the MAP Focal Points and the Thematic Focal Points for SPA/BD for additional comments and the resulting version will be presented to the Bureau at its 88th Meeting;

(e) The Bureau takes note of the legal advice prepared by the Secretariat on the process of development and subscription of MOUs and other legal instruments. The Bureau asks the Secretariat to work with the MAP components in order to:

- i. Reinforce the flow of information among RACs-Coordinating Unit-Bureau;**
- ii. Set up a process, whereby the Coordinating Unit would be consulted on any MOUs or other legal instruments proposed by RACs;**
- iii. Strengthen the role of the Coordinating Unit in ensuring that MOUs or other legal instruments between RACs and other entities are within RACs mandate as set forth in COP 16 Decision IG.19/5 and linked to the MTS and/or corresponding output of the Programme of Work;**
- iv. Ensure the timely involvement of, and the regular sharing of information with the relevant thematic Focal Points on MOUs and other legal instruments, including their content.**

- F. Preparation of Assessment Reports

56. The Coordinator introduced the draft Roadmap and Needs Assessment for the 2023 MED QSR, as in Annex IV of the Report on Specific Issues.

57. The Bureau members thanked the Secretariat for the document and welcomed the emphasis on science – policy interface, also noting the importance of national and cross-border implementation of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP).

58. The Coordinator also updated the Bureau on the progress in the preparation of the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report (SoED 2019).

59. One member of the Bureau, referring to the position of a Contracting Party, noted that the structure of the SoED 2019 should be in line with the UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021, and that the process should ensure that the report is finalized in a timely manner through the appropriate fora and with the timely involvement of the national experts. It was noted that the substance of the SoED 2019 is to be discussed within the dedicated Steering Committee that should meet timely, and preferably face-to-face, for the effective preparation of the report.

60. The Bureau members also noted that the report should provide a link between pressures and the state of the environment as well as links with the Quality Status Report.

61. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work for the elaboration of the 2023 MED QSR Roadmap and Needs Assessment, and expresses support to the process and timeline for the preparation of the report, as described in Annex IV to the Report on Specific Issues;

(b) The Bureau invites the Secretariat to pay full attention and participate in relevant regional environmental monitoring and assessment processes in order to strengthen synergies and ensure complementarities among them in view of developing the 2023 MED QSR;

(c) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to present the draft 2023 MED QSR Roadmap and Needs Assessment to the members of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) Coordination Group for written consultation, and encourages the EcAp Coordination Group members to contribute to this process, with the view to conclude it as soon as possible;

(d) The Bureau welcomes the progress made for the elaboration of the 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report and re-iterates its request for the timely preparation and review process, with the full involvement and consideration of the comments of the Thematic Focal Points.

- G. Outreach, Information and Communication

62. The Coordinator presented a brief update on the information and communication activities and plans for the biennium in this area. Special reference was made to the process for the preparation of the operational Communication Strategy of UNEP/MAP.

63. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat and highlighted the important, horizontal, role of INFO/RAC in relation to information and communication activities, noting that these activities should be strengthened with the involvement of the entire MAP system.

64. The Coordinator informed the meeting of the very generous contribution of Italy, in the framework of the Cooperation Agreement between UNEP and IMELS, that enhances the capabilities of the Secretariat to deal with information and communications issues.

65. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses appreciation for the efforts and results of the information and communication work and requests the Secretariat to strengthen such progress with the involvement of the entire MAP system;

(b) The Bureau welcomes the work done and agrees with the proposals of the Secretariat for the preparation of the Operational Communication Strategy, including on the 2-year duration of the Strategy.

- **H. Preparations for COP 21**

66. The Coordinator introduced this agenda item, with reference to organizational matters, to the preliminary list of subjects of COP 21 Decisions and to the possible general themes of COP 21. In relation to the latter, he highlighted the fact that COP 21 would give the mandate to develop the next UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy, and therefore the discussion should focus on main strategic issues for that purpose. In addition, COP 15 of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in 2020 will decide on the post-2020 biodiversity strategy and targets, making it desirable for the MAP system to develop a Mediterranean input to the preparation. He also recalled the theme of UNEA-4 (Nairobi, Kenya, 11-15 March 2019), which will be “*Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production*”. These elements should be central to the work and outcome of COP 21. In relation to the list of possible COP decisions, he noted that the main subjects of the decisions are provided in the Report on Specific Issues, while the full list of COP decisions will be developed and presented to the last Bureau meeting of this biennium, as per practice.

67. The Bureau member from Italy, host country of COP 21, provided information on organizational matters, while in relation to the theme of the COP he highlighted the importance of COP 21 for providing guidance in the preparation of the next UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy and the links with the relevant global processes. Furthermore, he noted the relevance of the *Man and Biosphere* process under UNESCO for the work of UNEP/MAP and the possibility to develop a formal agreement with UNESCO for cooperation on this subject.

68. Following the discussion, the Coordinator stressed the need for the support of the Bureau in mobilizing interest for COP 21, especially to secure high level of participation and identify and attract appropriate resource persons/speakers.

69. In relation to the development of provisional budget scenarios, the Observer recalled the request by the Contracting Parties provided in Decision IG. 23/14 (paragraph 14) and the clarifications on the alternatives (paragraph 15), highlighting the importance of taking into account relevant historic decisions of the Barcelona Convention, as the ones quoted in Decision IG. 23/14, paragraph 14 (provisions of the ‘Governance Paper’ and Decision IG. 19/5 of COP 16).

70. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the work of the Host Country Italy and the Secretariat for the preparation of COP 21;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the possible themes of COP 21 as presented in the “*Report on Specific Issues*”, and suggests to focus on the strategic guidance for the preparation of the next UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy, considering the global context of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the CBD post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the relevant UNEA resolutions. This theme will also be the basis for the Ministerial Declaration;

(c) The Bureau welcomes the proposal by Italy to develop for COP 21, a MOU between UNEP/MAP and UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme on the establishment of a strong cooperation among Mediterranean marine and coastal protected areas and the network of Man and Biosphere reserves, in order to contribute to the achievement of the Aichi Target 11 and the

SDG 14. The Bureau asks the Secretariat to liaise with the UNESCO Secretariat in order to prepare a possible draft for consideration at its 88th Bureau meeting;

(d) The Bureau agrees with the proposal of the Secretariat to focus on a limited number of forward-looking Decisions, guided by the UNEP/MAP Mid Term Strategy 2016-2021 and relevant COP decisions. The Bureau asks the Secretariat to further work on this issue and prepare, taking into account the comments made by the Bureau members, the list of draft COP 21 Decisions for its 88th Meeting;

(e) The Bureau also asks the Secretariat, in line with the relevant Decision IG.23/14, to develop provisional budget scenarios that consider the financial effects of the application of the “*Minimum Common Provisions of HCA of RACs*”. Such scenarios will also consider the attribution to each RAC of an equal core share of financial support from the MTF to ensure the implementation of their mandate to be integrated by additional MTF resources to implement their Programme of Work of the biennium, for consideration and guidance of the Bureau at its 88th meeting. The Bureau is ready to provide a strengthened support to the Secretariat, in the intersessional period between this meeting and the 88th meeting, with further contributions on the budget and governance issues.

VI. Agenda item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 88th Meeting of the Bureau

71. The Bureau agreed that its 88th Meeting will be held on 21-22 May 2019, and that the venue will be Rome, Italy, pending final confirmation from the host country.

VII. Agenda item 7: Any Other Matters

72. No other matters were raised by the Bureau members.

VIII. Agenda item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

73. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions as set in this report.

IX. Agenda item 9: Closure of the Meeting

74. The meeting was closed by the President of the Bureau at 17:00 on Wednesday, 7 November 2018.

Annex I
List of participants

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Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda item 1** **Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2** **Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3** **Progress Report for April - September 2018**
- Agenda item 4** **Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5** **Specific Issues:**
- a) Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols**
 - b) Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs**
 - c) Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity**
 - d) Compliance and Reporting**
 - e) Cooperation and Partners**
 - f) Preparation of Assessment Reports**
 - g) Outreach, Information and Communication**
 - h) Preparations for COP 21**
- Agenda item 6** **Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 88th Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 7** **Any Other Matters**
- Agenda item 8** **Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 9** **Closure of the Meeting**



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UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

28 June 2019
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88th 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

Rome, Italy, 21-22 May 2019

Report: Conclusions and Recommendations

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2019

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Introduction

1. At the invitation of the Government of Italy and in consultation with the President and members of the Bureau, the 88th 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 (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols was held in Rome, Italy, on 21-22 May 2019.

Participation

2. The President of the Bureau, Ms. Klodiana Marika (Albania), the Vice-Presidents: Ms. Marina Argyrou (Cyprus); Ms. Heba Sharawy (Egypt); Mr. Oliviero Montanaro, together with Ms. Maria Carmela Giarratano and Ms. Silvia Sartori (Italy); Mr. Mohamed Sghaier Ben Jeddou (Tunisia) and the Rapporteur, Ms. Ivana Stojanovic (Montenegro) attended the Bureau meeting. Ms. Marijana Mance (European Union) attended the meeting as an observer. The Secretariat was represented by the Coordinating Unit (Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, Programme Officer, Expert). The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

I. Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

3. The meeting was opened at 09:30 on 21 May 2019 by Ms. Klodiana Marika, President of the Bureau. She welcomed the Bureau members and other participants to their last meeting of the 2018-2019 biennium.

4. The Coordinator also made a statement of welcome to the participants, especially welcoming the new Member of the Bureau from Cyprus, Ms. Marina Argyrou.

II. Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work

5. The Bureau reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda as contained in document UNEP/MED BUR.88/1. No additional issues were added to agenda item 7 “*Any Other Matters*”. The Agenda is presented in Annex II of the present document.

III. Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for October 2018–April 2019

6. The Coordinator introduced the document “*Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period October 2018 - April 2019*” (UNEP/MED BUR.88/3). He presented highlights from the report, noting that efforts were made to produce a focused and concise document. He also introduced the “*Progress report by the Secretariat on the implementation of COP 20 Decisions*” (UNEP/MED BUR.88/4) and made reference to the “*Reports of the 37th and 38th Meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel*” and the “*Compilation of Project Fiches*”, presented in documents UNEP/MED BUR.88/Inf.4 and Inf.5 respectively, for the information of the Bureau.

7. In his presentation, the Coordinator highlighted that work on the implementation of the Programme of Work (PoW) and other COP 20 decisions has been very intense during the reporting period, achieving tangible results. Special reference was made to the meetings of the Executive Coordination Panel, which had at the core of their agenda the preparation of the Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-2021, as well as to the MAP Components/Thematic Focal Points meetings taking place in the period between April and June 2019. He highlighted the importance of these meetings in preparation of the MAP Focal Points meeting and COP 21.

8. Further highlights included the recent ratification of the ICZM Protocol by Malta, the progress in relation to resource mobilization, including the finalization of the preparations of the GEF MedProgramme Child Projects, the conclusion of the negotiations with the European Commission to

support the 3rd phase of the Marine Protected Areas project under the GreenMedIII Strategy, the approval of the 2nd phase of the SwitchMed Project, the approval of project proposals submitted by the MAP Components to the European Commission, and the implementation of the Cooperation Agreement with the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS). Details on implementation of projects supporting the execution of the PoW were also provided.

9. Furthermore, the Coordinator informed the Bureau of the work of the Secretariat towards strengthening partnerships and synergies in the global and regional levels, including the MOU signed with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions Secretariat (Geneva, Switzerland, on 7 December 2018), the contributions by MAP to UN processes and events, such as the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference (Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 November 2018); UNEA-4 (Nairobi, Kenya, 11-15 March 2019), COP 14 of the CBD (Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, 17-29 November 2018); the 2019 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region (Geneva, Switzerland, 21-22 March 2019); and the GFCM Fish Forum 2018 (Rome, Italy, 10-14 December 2018). He also informed on the Workshop on the G7 Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter in synergy with the Regional Seas Convention (Metz, France, 5-6 May 2019), as well as on the cooperation with the Benguela Current Convention and the European Environment Agency (EEA). He stressed the importance of the contribution of MAP-Barcelona Convention in future processes and events, and especially to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework under the CBD and the next UN Ocean Conference to be held in Portugal in June 2020, co-organized by the Governments of Portugal and Kenya. Finally, he updated the Bureau in relation to the implementation of the core and cross-cutting themes of the Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) and PoW.

10. The Bureau members expressed appreciation for the progress achieved in the implementation of the activities carried out and for the early start of implementation and the efforts provided. Furthermore, they welcomed the structure of the report, noting that future versions should also address challenges and constraints affecting the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and of the PoW, together with relevant suggestions, as appropriate.

11. The meeting highlighted the importance of the contribution of MAP-Barcelona Convention to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and of processes such as the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea or parts thereof as SO_x emission control area under MARPOL Annex VI.

12. One member of the Bureau referred to the need for capacity building, especially in relation to providing support to Contracting Parties to finalize their national implementation reports.

13. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses appreciation for the work done in the period October 2018–April 2019 as presented by the Secretariat, and for the efforts and results achieved so far.

(b) The Bureau recommends that in the future the Progress Report be prepared strictly in line with the elements of the programme of work, informing on the status of activities, and where relevant, on challenges and delays in the specific outcome implementation.

IV. Agenda Item 4: Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues

14. The Coordinator informed the meeting on the progress made as presented in document UNEP/MED BUR.88/5 “*Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues*”, addressing the status of financial contributions, personnel, and administrative matters. He noted that the deficit in the CAL account has been fully repaid, that a positive MTF balance exists, and that the Working Capital Reserve (WCR) has been maintained in accordance to the decisions of the Contracting Parties.

15. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the work done by the Secretariat that resulted in the healthy financial situation as well as for the information provided. The members of the Bureau asked for further details on financial situation in the biennium 2018-2019 and noted that the existing surplus could be used to increase the budget for the biennium 2020-2021.

16. The Secretariat pointed out that the WCR is a very good measure in place, but to make use of it may be difficult; to this end, another tool used by several Multilateral Environmental Agreements is the operational reserve.

17. The Bureau members took note of the comments by the Secretariat; they advised however to make use of the WCR as a more robust mechanism.

18. Regarding long standing arrears it was noted that two out of the five countries in arrears face specific critical situations, and that if the issue persists it will need to be addressed by the COP.

19. The Bureau discussed a number of other relevant issues, including the implementation of the UN scale of assessments, the issue of programme support costs, the currency of accounting records and exchange rate issues, and advised the Secretariat accordingly.

20. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau expresses its appreciation for the Report on Financial Issues and takes note of the important surplus at 31 December 2017, as reported in the document. The Bureau asks the Secretariat to prepare an information document on the situation of the balance, including possible options for the use of any possible positive balance. It takes note of the Fund balances and the Working Capital Reserve and requests the Secretariat to continue maintaining the Working Capital Reserve at the recommended level. Furthermore, the Bureau asks the Secretariat to share the recommendation received from UNEP Headquarters on this issue on the “net cash balance” with all the Contracting Parties and to continue exploring with UNEP Headquarters the proposal to retain a “net cash balance” at the level of a maximum six-month budget. This could also be addressed by increasing the amount in the WCR in order to provide sufficient liquidity and to ensure that the timing of the payments of the contributions does not affect the implementation of the PoW, for consideration by the MAP Focal Points meeting.

(b) The Bureau notes with appreciation the high level of contributions received for the year 2018.

(c) The Bureau strongly urges the Contracting Parties whose contributions for the current year are still pending to pay them as a matter of urgency.

(d) The Bureau takes note with high concern of the unpaid arrears of more than 24 months of the amount of more than one million EUR. The Bureau urges the Secretariat to continue the discussions with these countries to agree on possible roadmap for the payment of these arrears and to report to the COP on the outcome of these discussions, for further measures. The Bureau recommends that the MAP Focal Points discuss possible further measures to be taken. The Bureau requests that the President of the Bureau and the Secretariat write a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of these Contracting Parties.

(e) The Bureau supports the proposal of the Secretariat on the methodology applied for the adaptation of MTF scale of assessments to the current UN scale of assessments. It requests the Secretariat to submit the contributions adjusted in line with the scale of assessments for the period 2019-2021 and the revised assessed ordinary contributions apportioned to the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention, to the MAP Focal Points meeting and to the Contracting Parties at their next meetings, for their consideration and approval. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to submit an analysis of the methodology of the application of the adjusted scale of assessments and submit a proposal to the next meeting of the Contracting Parties for the timely application of the scale of assessments as a standing procedure, applicable from the year 2020.

(f) The Bureau takes note of the budget consumption rates and requests the Secretariat to ensure that by the end of the biennium the consumption rate will be in line with the approved budget.

(g) The Bureau takes note of the expected increase in programme support allocation for 2019 and urges the Secretariat to make appropriate use of these resources to strengthen the operations of UNEP/MAP.

(h) The Bureau takes note of the procedure for the compensation of losses arising from exchange rate fluctuations and requests the Secretariat to compensate the RACs for such losses as provided for in the Financial Rules.

(i) The Bureau takes note of the status of recruitment at the Coordinating Unit and encourages the Contracting Parties who may be able to do so to contribute human resources to the Secretariat through available schemes.

(j) The Bureau takes note with appreciation of all efforts made by the Hellenic Republic and the Secretariat and urges the Host Government to find as soon as possible an optimal solution, in line with its commitment, that will provide the Secretariat with adequate premises to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of UN operations.

V. Agenda item 5: Specific Issues

21. The Coordinator presented the “*Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues*” (UNEP/MED BUR.88/6).

22. The meeting discussed the matters summarized in the following paragraphs.

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

23. The Coordinator reported that on 10 April 2019 the Depositary received the instrument of ratification of the ICZM Protocol by Malta and that the Protocol entered into force for Malta on 10 May 2019. He noted that the Secretariat will continue to follow-up with those Contracting Parties which have not yet ratified the Barcelona Convention and/or its Protocols. In addition, to increase the ratification rate, the Secretariat will explore the possibility to develop capacity building activities for the forthcoming biennium, and that this is also addressed in the proposed PoW for 2020-2021.

24. The Bureau discussed the issue and advised accordingly.

25. Conclusions:

(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 liaise with the Secretariat to facilitate coordination towards ratification of the relevant legal instruments;

(b) 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;

(c) The Bureau welcomes the proposals by the Secretariat to enhance efforts, including by exploring the possibility of developing capacity building activities in line with the Mid-Term Strategy, with the aim of increasing in the forthcoming biennium the ratification rate of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

- B. Compliance and Reporting

26. The Secretariat provided an update on the status of implementation of Decision IG.23/1 on *Revised Reporting Format for the Implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols*, and of Decision IG.23/2 on *Compliance Committee: biennium 2016-2017*.

27. The Deputy Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, highlighted that the Compliance Committee has now full membership, since Professor Denis Allemand, nominated by Monaco as Alternate Member of

the Compliance Committee, took over his position following the Bureau's concurrence, in line with Decision IG. 23/2. She noted that the preparations for the 15th Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 25-26 June 2019) are proceeding well and that documents were distributed. Main issues on the Agenda of the meeting include, *inter alia*, key findings and draft recommendations to COP 21 and the draft set of criteria for assessing compliance.

28. On reporting, the Secretariat provided updated information on submission of national implementation reports: as of 10 May 2019, 20 Contracting Parties have initiated their reporting tasks under the new BCRS and this has resulted in the official submission of the national implementation reports for the Barcelona Convention and/or its Protocols under Article 26 of the Convention by 12 Contracting Parties (this number includes CPs who have submitted reports only for some of the Protocols).

29. The Coordinator referred to the progress regarding the submission of outstanding national implementation reports for the biennia 2012-2013 and/or 2014-2015, as presented in the *Report on Specific Issues*. He reminded the Bureau that the submission of the reports is an important obligation of the Contracting Parties that enables the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system to have a clear understanding of the general advances made in the region as well as of the implementation gaps that need to be addressed.

30. Participants reiterated the importance of the national implementation reports, while a member of the Bureau noted that technical difficulties that were observed due to the new online reporting system were overcome through the support of the Coordinating Unit and INFO/RAC.

31. The Bureau members expressed appreciation for the work of the Compliance Committee and for the work of the Secretariat in relation to the reporting on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and advised accordingly.

32. **Conclusions:**

(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 strongly urges Contracting Parties to submit their national implementation reports for the biennium 2016-2017, using the new online BCRS without further delay and requests the Secretariat and INFO/RAC to provide technical support to the Contracting Parties that face difficulties in uploading their Reports.

- C. Main Elements of the 2020-2021 UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget

33. The Coordinator updated the Bureau on the preparations of a simplified and more strategic results-based PoW and Budget for 2020-2021, following an inclusive process and in accordance with COP 20 Decision IG. 23/14 on *Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget for 2018-2019*. He noted that the comments received from the MAP Components/Thematic Focal Points – on the PoW, since the budget has not been shared with them - demonstrated a positive reaction from the Contracting Parties and added that the draft PoW will be presented to the 18th MCSD Meeting (Budva, Montenegro, 11-13 June 2019) to “produce opinions of the overall MAP Work Programme, with the aim of integrating sustainability considerations into the MAP / Barcelona Convention system as a whole” according to the MCSD's mandate. He also noted that the PoW for 2018-2019 aims to fully implement the current MTS, since it is the last biennium of its implementation.

34. On the budget, the Deputy Coordinator explained the option that have been developed and in particular the third scenario, which includes an additional amount of 720,000 EUR compared to the 2018-2019 budget. This is to be taken from a positive balance of the MTF. On the Bureau's proposal in relation to an “equal core share of support” from the MTF to all RACs, she noted that this is also related to the minimum common provisions of Host Country Agreements for RACs, and that the Secretariat is working on clarifying the means needed for RACs to deliver these provisions, which

have not yet been finalized. She added that this issue will also depend on each individual RAC, on the external resources allocated to each RAC, as well as on the prioritization of activities.

35. The Coordinator highlighted that this issue is more relevant to the budget and capacity to deliver than to the Host Country Agreements of RACs. Through an internal exercise, the RACs provided detailed information on their current structure, operational costs and needs, and based on these the Secretariat is undertaking an analysis, including on the capacities of RACs and their needs to deliver their mandate and PoW/MTS. He stressed that the Secretariat shares the concerns of RACS and was committed to bring this issue to the attention of the Bureau, since it is crucial for the Bureau to examine the resources attributed to RACs, and to the MAP-Barcelona Convention System as a whole, to deliver their increasing mandate.

36. The members of the Bureau discussed the issue and provided their comments and advice on the points raised by the Secretariat and in the *Report of Specific Issues*. On the issue of the equal core share of the MTF to all RACs one Member suggested to consider only the minimum activities that each MAP Component should pursue and the Secretariat to develop a reference cost as a basis; the rest of the budget allocated to each RAC will be depending on the mandate of each RAC, the PoW requirements, external funds, etc. It was also noted that it is important to follow Decision IG. 23/14 and to consider the implications of the different scenarios on the activities.

37. The Deputy Coordinator explained that the Secretariat included in all scenarios the necessary budget for the posts of Information and Communication Officer and Quality Status Report Officer, and that to minimize effects on the operation of RACs, MEDPOL was charged 52% of the resulting increase, while the remaining 48% was charged proportionally to all RACs. There was an effort to avoid affecting RACs, and especially INFO/RAC and SCP/RAC who receive a smaller contribution from the MTF.

38. The Coordinator stressed that the RACs face very clear difficulties due to the reduced resources and the increased mandate and ambition to deliver. He added that the new MTS 2022-2027 needs to solidify the role of MAP and that the structure and resources are not adequate in this respect. External resources are and will be secured, but there is a need for core staff to support these, and that a strategic discussion is required by the Contracting Parties on this issue. The increasing delivery cannot be continued without increasing the human resources of the Secretariat.

39. The members of the Bureau agreed that this is a very important issue that needs careful consideration and strategic discussion to increase efficiency. It was noted that it is important to proceed with an analysis of the current structure and needs, for a possible strengthening of the Secretariat, especially in view of developing and delivering the new MTS. Further discussion on this matter was held under agenda item G. (see below).

40. The Bureau discussed possible ways to reduce expenses, i.e. by selecting venues that will reduce the costs, by organizing back-to-back meetings, by minimizing technical meetings, by securing early nominations of meeting participants, by examining the possibility to renounce the reimbursement of travel costs in the case of some Contracting Parties, etc.

41. On the issue of the budget scenarios it was noted that the final decision is to be taken by the Contracting Parties based on the further, more detailed, information to be provided by the Secretariat in view of the MAP Focal Points Meeting and COP 21.

42. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the proposal by the Secretariat on the principles and main elements for the PoW 2020-2021 and encourages the Secretariat to finalize the work along these lines for submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting, taking into account comments received following the consultation with the Focal Points;

(b) The Bureau takes note of the proposal of the Secretariat on the approach and recommendations in relation to the preparation of three options for the budget and requests the Secretariat to submit them to the MAP Focal Points meeting, with the following clarification on

the third option: The Bureau concludes that an additional amount of 720,000 EUR compared to the 2018-2019 budget could be taken from a positive balance of the MTF to cover (a) the additional mandates as explained in the Report on Specific Issues, (b) the in-cash counterpart contribution to the MedProgramme, and (c) the 2% increase of the operational costs of RACs. This will be based on additional information on the indicative balance of the MTF of the 2018-19 biennium and details and justifications for the current state and proposed increase of the operational costs of the RACs;

(c) The Bureau appreciates the information provided by the Secretariat on increased efficiency and cost-saving measures taken for the organization of MAP meetings and requests the Secretariat to bring to the attention of the MAP Focal Points meeting the need for timely nomination of Contracting Parties representatives to avoid increase of travel costs, and explore other modalities to reduce travel costs.

- D. Roadmap for the Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and the Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy

43. The Secretariat presented the roadmap for the evaluation of the current MTS and the preparation of the next MTS, taking into account the relevant evaluation and assessment processes, which was prepared following the request of the Bureau at its 85th Meeting. It was noted that this task requires adequate resources, including for the preparation of a dedicated MAP Focal Points meeting and the involvement of other actors.

44. A member of the Bureau expressed the readiness of his country (Italy) to support the process if more funds than those available in the MTS are required. He stressed that regarding the evaluation of the current MTS a comparison between adopted and achieved deliverables should be provided. The evaluation of whether the structure and outputs of the MTS are still adequate is also necessary to describe the needs of the MAP-Barcelona Convention System. He added that this evaluation should be linked to a review of ongoing processes at the global level, and that the strategic part of the assessment should be done by a pool of experts with different skills and expertise.

45. The Secretariat took note of the comments, noting that it is a serious and complex process that needs to be guided by the Contracting Parties and the Bureau.

46. Conclusions:

(a) The Bureau took note of the proposed roadmap for the evaluation of the current MTS and the preparation of the next MTS, as presented in Annex I of the Report on Specific Issues, and requests the Secretariat to finalize the document following the comments received during the 88th Bureau meeting, especially on the modalities of the preparation of the new MTS and the diverse expertise required, for transmission to the MAP Focal Points meeting and to COP 21;

(b) The Bureau recommended that the process for elaboration of the new MTS should be based on an evaluation of the current MTS and should be in line with the relevant global developments. The Bureau also recommended that the development of the new MTS is accompanied by an in-depth assessment of the current structure and needs for enabling the Secretariat to deliver the new MTS, and especially the Coordinating Unit, including MED POL, and other MAP Components.

- E. Preparations for COP 21: Theme of Ministerial Session, Draft Decisions and Main Documents, Main Elements of the Ministerial Declaration, Organization and Host Country Preparations

47. The Bureau member of Italy updated the meeting on the progress in relation to the preparation of COP 21, noting that the venue has been identified as Castel dell' Ovo, an iconic landmark of Naples, and that an official logistical visit is being organized to finetune details of compliance with COP 21 requirements. He added that the Host Country Agreement is being finalized for signature in

June 2019. On the Ministerial Declaration, he noted that an inclusive, co-operational process is being developed, including the possible organization of two workshops with stakeholders, one regional and one national in Italy, and a forum for youth.

48. The Coordinator expressed gratitude to the Government of Italy for securing this venue. He noted that COP 21 is expected to provide the political guidance for the preparation of the new MTS. He also referred to the list of draft COP 21 decisions presented in the same report, noting that the PAP/RAC Focal Points meeting decided not to move forward with the decision on the “Adoption of Guidelines for environmental assessment in a transboundary context”. He stressed the importance of Contracting Parties’ efforts in mobilizing interest within the different groups of countries for an active and high-level participation at COP 21. Bureau members should be represented at COP 21 at Ministerial level. Finally, he noted that the very successful experience of having the Bureau members as officials of the MAP Focal Points meeting should be repeated at the current biennium.

49. The Bureau member from Egypt expressed the initial interest of her country to host COP 22, noting that final confirmation is needed by her country’s authorities. Bureau members welcomed this announcement; the Bureau member from Italy offered the support of his country capitalizing on the experience of Italy as host country of COP 21.

50. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomed the work of the Secretariat and the Host Country for the preparation of COP 21 and the proposal regarding the theme/s of the Ministerial Session and the preparation of the Ministerial Declaration, and asks the Secretariat, in consultation with the Host Country, to prepare the final Concept Note on the proposed theme/s and the first main elements of the Ministerial Declaration for submission to the meeting of the MAP Focal Points, where the theme/s will be agreed and the main elements of the Ministerial declaration subsequently discussed;

(b) The Bureau took note of the proposed list of draft Decisions for consideration by the MAP Focal Points and requested the Secretariat to finalize their preparation, taking into account the outcome of the MAP Component Focal Points meetings.

- F. Preparations for upcoming MAP Meetings: Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity, 18th MCSD Meeting

51. The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the preparations for upcoming MAP Meetings and especially the Meeting of the Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biological Diversity (SPA/BD) and the 18th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD).

52. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the information provided, noting that the calendar of meetings and events leading to COP 21 is very heavy and efforts should be made to avoid overlaps.

53. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the progress made in the preparations for upcoming MAP Meetings.

- G. Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs

54. The Coordinator presented a brief update on the progress in relation to the preparation of the minimum common provisions to ensure effective operation of the Host Country Agreements of RACs. He noted that only three Host Country Governments have provided inputs and that, based on these inputs, the Secretariat has prepared a revised version of the minimum common provisions, together with a short explanatory note for the consideration of the Bureau (presented in Annex VII of the *Report on Specific Issues*).

55. One Bureau member noted that there is a need to be pragmatic since it is not possible to have a text that suits all needs, but only a text with the minimum conditions. He noted that his country strongly prefers RACs to be hosted by public, not private, entities, and added that the Director of a

RAC should be a UN staff member; this would ensure transparency, predictability and cost-effectiveness. He noted that a possible option is to include in the draft decision for COP 21 on Governance the possibility to develop further targeted proposals with host countries of RACs, based on the minimum common provisions, referring also to the reshaping of financial support.

56. Another member of the Bureau stressed the need for RACs to have a regional and global technical presence, and that to enable this they should have an intergovernmental character. Such a special status would enable RACs carry out their regional activities, and is related to the type of bank accounts, efficiency of action, and availability of means.

57. The Coordinator noted that the Secretariat will continue following up with those host countries of RACs that have not yet provided inputs on the minimum common provisions; he added that the Secretariat will refine the explanatory note by providing further insight on the comments received and the discrepancies existing between these comments.

58. With the opportunity of this strategic discussion, the Coordinator also referred to the difficulties faced by the Coordinating Unit, including MEDPOL, in delivering the mandate due to the staff downsizing that took place in recent years and the increase in activities. He noted that the Contracting Parties have made an important review of the capacity of the Secretariat at times of crisis; now that the situation has changed, there is a need to reflect again. He added that it is important to look at the consequences of past decisions and to try to remediate these when the crisis lies behind. Such a remediating process could be put in motion in preparing for the new MTS.

59. The members of the Bureau expressed appreciation for the work of the Secretariat and of the challenges mentioned. They stressed that it is very relevant and important for the Secretariat to have adequate staff to take forward its mandate and to take the necessary actions. They noted the need for an analysis of the financial implications of the proposal to enhance the Secretariat in conjunction with the preparation of the new MTS, for further discussion by the Contracting Parties in the near future.

60. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the progress in the preparation of the minimum common provisions for the development of Host Country Agreements for RACs, as presented in Annex VII of the Report on Specific Issues, and requests the Secretariat to finalize these provisions taking into account the comments received during the 88th Bureau meeting, as described in the Report of the Meeting, and to transmit them to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21, for consideration;

(b) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to follow-up with the remaining Host Countries of RACs in order for them to provide their inputs in time for the preparation of the draft Decision on Governance to be submitted to the MAP Focal Points meeting.

- H. Cooperation and Partners: MoUs/Agreements, MAP Partners, Joint Cooperation Strategy

61. The Coordinator updated the Bureau on the progress in relation to the preparation of a possible MoU with the UNESCO/Man and Biosphere Secretariat, following the request of the Bureau at its 87th meeting. The UNESCO Secretariat was contacted and provided a positive first response on the possibility of cooperation with UNEP/MAP and on developing and signing such an MoU. A robust proposal was prepared by MAP and shared with UNESCO and is currently under review by the UNESCO/Man and Biosphere Secretariat.

62. The member of the Bureau from Italy noted that Italy is a strong advocate of this Agreement, which could focus on three main streams of activities related to the environment, namely biodiversity (Post-2020 global biodiversity framework under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity), implementation of the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals, and implementation of climate change agreements under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto Protocol

and Paris Agreement). Means of implementation should also be addressed in such an MoU/Agreement, the preparation of which can be supported by Italy.

63. The Coordinator updated the Bureau on the progress in relation to the preparation of the Draft Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity, noting that the Secretariat prepared a revised version of the Strategy, together with explanatory notes requested during the latest consultation MAP Focal Points and the Thematic Focal Points for SPA/BD, which is annexed to the *Report on Specific Issues*.

64. The Bureau members thanked the Secretariat for the progress in relation to the Joint Cooperation Strategy and provided their comments on the document, focusing on the text in brackets. They advised to include only Conventions/Agreements in the text and that non-governmental partners, such as MEDPAN, can be involved in the implementation of the Strategy but not included in the Strategy's text. They also noted that it is better to avoid new structures, such as a Coordination Committee, and that the existing governance structures of the main partners should be used instead. Finally, they noted that it is preferable not to single out specific MAP Components, since the whole MAP system will be involved in the Strategy.

65. The Coordinator thanked the Bureau Members for their inputs and noted that following this discussion the Strategy will be finalized for submission to the MAP Focal Points, and for consideration by the respective bodies of the other main partners of the Strategy.

66. With reference to Decision IG.19/6 on MAP/Civil society cooperation and partnership, the Secretariat updated the Bureau members on the applications received by civil society organizations for accreditation as MAP Partners, as well as for renewal of accreditation by existing MAP Partners, and introduced the evaluation by the Secretariat of the new applications, as in Annex IV of the *Report on Specific Issues*.

67. The Bureau endorsed the eight applications of organizations to become new MAP Partners as well as the ten applications for renewal of accreditation of existing MAP Partners. The Bureau members noted that, since the number of MAP Partners is increasing, it is important to develop specific guidance/code of conduct on the development of Agreements between the MAP Components and partners, that will also refer to transfer of funds.

68. The Coordinator informed the meeting on submission at the end of March 2019 of the complete set of information required by GEF rules and procedures, to mobilize and make available USD 37,7 million to execute the activities. the progress in relation to the GEF funded "Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme) Enhancing Environmental Security", and on the positive first reactions from the GEF Secretariat.

69. The Secretariat also informed the Bureau members on the progress in the cooperation with other organizations and initiatives, including the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions, the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR), the Benguela Current Convention and the G7 Environment Ministers meeting.

70. The Bureau welcomed the continuous progress in the cooperation with other organizations and initiatives, noting the very important process established with G7 since 2017 and the permanent links with the Regional Seas Programmes, highlighting the leading role of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system. The Bureau member from Italy informed the meeting that his country is willing to support MAP with further resources on issues related to cooperation on Marine Spatial Planning.

71. **Conclusions:**

(a) The Bureau welcomes the progress in the preparation of an MoU with UNESCO/Man and Biosphere and agrees with the possible areas of cooperation, as proposed. The Bureau requests the Secretariat to finalize the draft MoU, in consultation with the UNESCO Secretariat, for submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting for consideration and approval and then to COP 21 for signature;

(b) In relation to the Joint Cooperation Strategy between Secretariats, the Bureau takes note of the revised version prepared by the Secretariat, as presented in Annex V of the Report on Specific Issues, and requests the Secretariat to finalize it following the comments received during the 88th Bureau meeting and to transmit it to the MAP Focal Points meeting, so that consultations with the Partners may be finalized for signing the Strategy, if possible at COP 21;

(c) The Bureau endorses the results of the evaluation conducted by the Secretariat of the new applications submitted by “*Asociación ONDINE*”, “*Palestine Wildlife Society*”, “*Agence des Villes et Territoires méditerranéens durables / The Agency for Sustainable Mediterranean Cities and Territories (AVITEM)*”, “*International Association of Geophysical Contractors (IAGC)*”, “*Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities (FAIC)*”, “*UniVerde Foundation*”, “*Center for Energy, Environment and Resources (CENER21)*” and “*OceanCare*” for accreditation as MAP Partners, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement;

(d) The Bureau endorses the proposal by the Secretariat to renew the accreditation as MAP Partners of “*Greenpeace International*”, “*International Centre of Comparative Environmental Law (CIDCE)*”, “*The ARAVA Institute for Environmental Studies (AIES)*”, “*Oceana*”, “*Mediterranean Programme for International Environmental Law and Negotiation (MEPIELAN)*”, “*International Association for Mediterranean Forests (AIFM)*”, “*EcoPeace Middle East*”, “*Mediterranean Coastal Foundation (MEDCOAST)*”, “*Tour du Valat Foundation*” and “*Fondazione IMC-Centro Marino Internazionale ONLUS*” following the applications submitted by these organizations, and requests that the Secretariat submits them to the MAP Focal Points and to COP 21 for consideration and endorsement;

(e) The Bureau requests the Secretariat to adopt a code of conduct on the collaboration between MAP components and MAP Partners and report on a regular basis on the activities carried out by the MAP Partners, including financial information.

- I) Outreach, Information and Communication

72. The Coordinator presented a brief update on the information and communication activities and plans for the biennium in this area, emphasizing that there is an increased interest in the work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in the Mediterranean and beyond. He expressed appreciation to Italy for the support provided during the current biennium for the post of Information and Communication Officer and stressed that this covers a key capacity required in the Coordinating Unit; therefore, it is proposed in the draft PoW that this post is funded in the next biennium through the MTF.

73. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat and highlighted that human capacity on information and communication is fundamental for the efficient operation of MAP and the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and Protocols.

74. Conclusion:

(a) 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 this context, the Bureau stressed the importance of including the post of the Information and Communication Officer of the Coordinating Unit in the proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2020-2021 as a core post under the MTF.

VI. Agenda item 6: Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 89th Meeting of the Bureau

75. The Bureau agreed that its 89th Meeting, which will be the first of the next biennium, will be held in spring 2020, preferably in April, in Athens, Greece.

VII. Agenda item 7: Any Other Matters

76. No other matters were raised by the Bureau members.

VIII. Agenda item 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

77. The Bureau adopted the set of conclusions as set in this report.

IX. Agenda item 9: Closure of the Meeting

78. The meeting was closed by the President of the Bureau at 18:00 on Wednesday, 22 May 2019.

Annex I
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Annex II

Agenda

Agenda

- Agenda item 1** **Opening of the Meeting**
- Agenda item 2** **Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Organization of Work**
- Agenda item 3** **Progress Report for October 2018 – April 2019**
- Agenda item 4** **Report by the Secretariat on Financial and Administrative Issues**
- Agenda item 5** **Specific Issues:**
- a) Status of Ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols
 - b) Compliance and Reporting
 - c) Main Elements of the 2020-2021 UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget
 - d) Roadmap for the Evaluation of the 2016-2021 Medium-Term Strategy and the Preparation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy
 - e) Preparations for COP 21: Theme of Ministerial Session, Draft Decisions and Main Documents, Main Elements of the Ministerial Declaration, Organization and Host Country Preparations
 - f) Preparations for upcoming MAP Meetings: Meeting of Thematic Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas/Biodiversity, 18th MCSD Meeting
 - g) Development of Host Country Agreements for RACs
 - h) Cooperation and Partners: MoUs/Agreements, MAP Partners, Joint Cooperation Strategy
 - i) Outreach, Information and Communication
- Agenda item 6** **Calendar of Meetings and Events, including Date and Venue of the 89th Meeting of the Bureau**
- Agenda item 7** **Any Other Matters**
- Agenda item 8** **Conclusions and Recommendations**
- Agenda item 9** **Closure of the Meeting**