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5th Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Coordination Group

Rome, Italy, 14-15 September 2015

**Report of the Correspondence Group on Monitoring, Coast and Hydrography**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### REPORT

**Annex I** Final Recommendations

**Annex II** Agenda

**Annex III** List of Participants

## Introduction

The Correspondence Group on Coast and Hydrography was held in Athens, Greece on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, as a follow-up to the Ecosystem Approach (**EcAp**) Roadmap agreed at the last Conference of the Parties (COP 18, Decision IG21/3) and the last meeting of the Integrated Correspondence Group under EcAp. The aim of the CORMON Coast and Hydrography meeting was to: a) discuss the options laid out in the Secretariat Monitoring Guidances, in order to find the best cost-effective and scientifically mature way of monitoring the common indicators of the coast and hydrography cluster; b) follow-up on the recommendations of the Integrated Correspondence Group on GES and Targets (**Integrated CorGest**) on monitoring, targeting specifically coast and hydrography; c) give specific, more detailed monitoring related recommendations on the common indicators of the coast and hydrography cluster; d) give recommendations, regarding EOs/indicators, which are not mature enough yet, but on which scientific developments would suggest to include them already in early discussions.

## Participation

1 The meeting was attended by 22 Participants from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, State of Libya, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey.

2 The Secretariat of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), including its components, MED POL Programme (MEDPOL), the Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) was also attending the meeting.

3 The list of participants is attached as Annex III to this report.

### Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

4 The meeting was opened at 9.00 a.m. on 28 May 2014 by Mr. Habib N. El Habr on behalf of the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention-UNEP/MAP. He recalled, based on the Decision IG 21/3, the need for a quantitative assessment of the marine environment in the Mediterranean following the recommendations of the last CORGEST meeting. He also recalled as a basis of work the last CORGEST meeting agreed list of common indicators and discussions there on the possible inclusion of a new common indicator on the change of land use. He specifically asked the participants to give guidance on this issue.

### Agenda Item 2-3: Scope and purpose of the meeting and election of officers and adoption of the agenda

5 The Secretariat reminded the participants that the overall scope and purpose of the meeting was to discuss and agree on the parameters of the common indicators related to coast and hydrography, next to the specific issue of discussing the possibility of including the change of land use in the list of common indicators.

6 Following the short introduction, the meeting elected its officers as follows:

Chairperson:	Monika Peterlin (Slovenia)
Vice-Chairpersons:	Mr Almokhtar Saied (the State of Lybia) and Mr Giordano Giorgi (Italy)
Rapporteurs:	Mr Mohamed Abdelrhman (Egypt)

7 The meeting adopted the agenda set out in UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG 395/2.

**Agenda Item 4: General introduction of the Monitoring guidance and process ahead on EcAp monitoring, with a specific focus on coast and hydrography**

8 The Secretariat briefly reviewed the progress achieved since the COP 17 held in Paris in 2012, highlighting the achievements of COP18 (December 2013, Istanbul) considered as a milestone for the EcAp process, the EcAp Roadmap agreed there, with the aim of achieving an Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme by COP19, which, for the first time, in the Mediterranean will result in a quantitative monitoring and assessment for the whole basin. The Secretariat also specified that these common indicators have been selected as the most mature ones in order to start initial monitoring from 2016 on. In addition, the Secretariat recalled the uniqueness of coast and hydrography monitoring, which is built on the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean. Both indicators are therefore a new field to be monitored under the Barcelona Convention.

9 After the general presentation, the Secretariat introduced in more details the Monitoring Guidance document UNEP(DEPI)/MED 395/3, specifying that it lays down the principles, key concepts of the whole EcAp monitoring programme.

10. The presentation provided a good basis for discussion which resulted in specific recommendations regarding the general monitoring approach under EcAp (See Recommendation of the Meeting in Annex I).

11. In addition, a Contracting Party requested more information on the process . In response, the Secretariat made a recap of the steps under the EcAp approach and the main expected outcome of the meeting, which is to acquire specific comments, suggestions, both on the general monitoring approach proposed by the Secretariat and on the coast and hydrography related proposals, in order to enable the Secretariat to redraft the Guidance documents on a well informed basis, for their presentation at the next EcAp Coordination Group meeting in October.

12. Furthermore, a Contracting Party requested more precision on the usage of the precautionary principle and the risk based approach, suggesting a prescreening of the major concerns (See Recommendations of the Meeting in Annex I).

13 In addition, a Contracting Party stressed the need to specify the links among the common indicators for monitoring (See Recommendations of the Meeting in Annex I)

**Agenda item 5: Monitoring Guidance discussions in relation to Coast (10:00 – 11:30)**

14 The Secretariat presented the draft Monitoring Guidance for the Ecological Objective 8 on Coast in more details, as laid out in UNEP (DEPI)/MED WG. 395/4 with an emphasis on the uniqueness and importance of the coast ecological objective.

15 After the presentation of the Secretariat, Contracting Parties gave comments, as set out in Annex I (Recommendations of the Meeting). In addition, one Contracting Party suggested to include additionally, positive indicators, such as the length of protected coast.

16 Following the comments on the draft Monitoring Guidance on the Ecological Objective 8, the representative of PAP RAC presented its analysis on the possibility of developing a common indicator on change of land use and the logic behind its adoption. Then, the Secretariat with the leadership of PAP RAC, asked for the “green light” to work further on the change of land use as a common indicator.

17 In response, Contracting Parties discussed the relevance of this indicator, noting that while it would definitely provide very useful information for the implementation of the ecosystem approach in coastal zones in line with the ICZM Protocol, it still needs further definition in relation to related GES and targets. The Contracting Parties however mandated the Secretariat to further develop a Monitoring Guidance related to it, as to a “Candidate Common Indicator”. (See Recommendations of the Meeting in Annex I).

18 The Secretariat reinvited the Contracting Parties to send their suggestions in a written format (See Recommendations of the Meeting in Annex I).

**Agenda item 6: Monitoring Guidance in relation to Hydrography (14:30 – 16:00)**

19 The Secretariat introduced the document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.395/5 on the Monitoring Guidance on Ecological Objective 7, Hydrography. The Contracting Parties shared their comments, recommendations, which can be all found in the Recommendations of the Meeting in Annex I.

**Agenda Item 7: Key recommendations of the Correspondence Group on Monitoring, Coast and Hydrography (16:30 – 17:30)**

20 After a general introduction by the Secretariat of the key recommendations, the Contracting Parties shared their additional specific comments and recommendations, which can be found in the final recommendations of the Meeting in Annex I.

21 Under this agenda item, a Contracting Party made a general comment about the need to discuss the overall governance of the EcAp monitoring which is not tackled by any process yet. The Secretariat informed the Contracting Parties that governance discussions will follow in a later stage and that capacity analysis will be carried out and a coordination group will identify progress gaps in the implementation of the roadmap and feasible solutions for the advancement of the EcAp agenda.

**Agenda item 8: Any other Business (17:30 – 18.00)**

**Agenda item 9: Closure of the meeting**

22 The Chairperson, Monika Peterlin closed the meeting at 17.45 hours on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

**Annex I**  
**Recommendations of the Meeting**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COAST AND HYDROGRAPHY CORRESPONDENCE GROUP ON MONITORING:

Regarding the ***draft General Monitoring Guidance*** the experts recommended:

1. to address also assessment links and needed assessment approaches as much as possible;
2. to be more specific on hydrography alternative methodologies and on pressures related to hydrography;
3. to specify more that the base of the usage of the precautionary principle and the risk based approach is the existing identified concern, noting different types of indicators (pressure, impact, state), links among indicators and importance of cost-efficiency of monitoring;
4. to apply adaptive monitoring frequency for the specific common indicators (and this to be considered while developing the methodology, while noting that the assessment cycle follows the agreed 6 years of the EcAp cycle);
5. to further highlight links between the coast and hydrography related common indicators and the ones related to biodiversity;
6. to look at specific links with the pollution common indicators, e.g. regarding sewage water and its re-use.

Regarding the ***draft Monitoring Guidance on Ecological Objective 8: Coastal ecosystems and landscapes*** the experts recommended:

1. to be more focused on main impacts of coastal dynamics and , not to confuse with ICZM Protocol articles and address also assessment links as much as possible;
2. to clarify better man-made structure categories, with ensuring inclusivity of the definition of the latter;
3. to specify/reformulate more exact meaning of impervious surfaces and their relevance for the management of marine and coastal environment;
4. to add as new description parameter *length of coastline influenced by manmade structures* and reflect this change also in the Guidance document;
5. to note the importance of additional information and remediation needs related to sediment by-passing (in relation to future measures); to assess the possibility of having an “additional” positive parameter, such as the “length of coast protected”.

Regarding the ***proposal to address as a common indicator under Ecological Objective 8 land-use change*** the experts recommended:

1. to have land use change related proposed indicator as a candidate common indicator, noting that it will not form part yet of the Secretariat’s gap analysis on measures;
2. and that monitoring will be done related to the land use change indicator (as a proxy of the pressure) with the ecosystem approach objectives and not so much with the ICZM Protocol requirements on regional level;
3. to note that land use change cannot be the only criteria for measures (and that it is not necessarily negative in every case), other information, such as modeling, vulnerability analysis, etc is also needed;
4. to look specifically at the link of this candidate common indicator and data collected with other common indicators;
5. to re-visit GES and targets related to this candidate common indicator in the planned EcAp Coordination Group Meeting in October 2014.

Regarding ***the draft Monitoring Guidance on Ecological Objective 7, alteration of hydrographical conditions***, the experts recommended:



1. to make more clear that the common indicator aims to monitor only alteration of hydrographical conditions effecting the coast and marine ecosystems and further define hydrographical conditions;
2. to note that wave effects are only significant in shallower depths where the sea bottom is affected;
3. to specify more the definition of large scale constructions that affect hydrographical conditions in light of the above;
4. to follow-up on an objective to establish a baseline of hydrographical conditions, taking into account sensitive areas such as marine protected areas, fish spawning grounds, river mouths, deltas, estuaries etc
5. to precise more what we refer to in the guidance text under so called small scale activities;
6. to note the use of information gathered from carrying capacity analysis (feasibility studies) for different types of planned coastal infrastructures.

**The Secretariat was mandated to:**

- clarify further the Draft Monitoring Guidance in light of the above recommendations;
- further develop the candidate common indicator monitoring guidelines related to land use change and specify more added value of data collected under this common indicator also in relation to rest of common indicators.

**The Contracting Parties were encouraged to:**

- send written comments to the Secretariat on the Draft Monitoring Guidance **by 20 June**.

**Annex II  
Agenda**

## **Agenda**

### **28 May**

- Agenda item 1:** Opening of the Meeting (09.00-09.15)
- Agenda item 2-3:** Election of officers and adoption of the agenda (09:15-09.30)
- Agenda item 4:** General introduction of the Monitoring Guidance of the UNEP/MAP Secretariat and process ahead on EcAp monitoring, with a specific focus on coast and hydrography
- Agenda item 5:** Monitoring Guidance discussions in relation to Coasts(10.00-13.00)
- Agenda item 6:** Monitoring Guidance in relation to Hydrography (14.30-17.30)
- Agenda item 7:** Key recommendations of the Correspondence Group on Monitoring, Coast and Hydrography (09:00-13:00)
- Agenda item 8:** Any Other Business (17:30-18:00)
- Agenda item 9:** Closure of the meeting (18:00)

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**SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION  
AND COMPONENTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN  
SECRETARIAT DE LA CONVENTION DE BARCELONE ET COMPOSANTES DU PLAN  
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