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

First Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean Strategy
for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine
Pollution from Ships (2022-2031)

REMPEC/WG.52/WP.1
1 December 2022
Original: English

Floriana, 29 November - 1 December 2022

Agenda item 8: Adoption of the conclusions and recommendations

Draft conclusions and recommendations

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document will not be printed and is made available in electronic format only.
Delegates are encouraged to consult the document in its electronic format and limit printing.

Note by the Secretariat

This document provides the draft conclusions and recommendations of the First Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031), Floriana, 29 November - 1 December 2022.

Draft conclusions and recommendations

The First Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031), hereinafter referred to as “the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031)”, which was held at the REMPEC premises, Floriana, Malta, from Tuesday 29 November to Thursday 1 December 2022, hereinafter referred to as the “Meeting”:

1. expressed appreciation for the financial support provided through the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) and the discretionary contribution from the Italian Ministry of Environment (Ministero della Transizione Ecologica (MITE));
2. recalled the agreed **practical arrangements for the management and implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan**, in particular the terms of reference and objectives of the biennial meeting, the definition of its Secretariat and members, the terms of condition for participation and the required national network;
3. welcomed the establishment of this inaugural Meeting and expressed its satisfaction on the success of the consultation process carried out in preparation for the present meeting, through the completion of the tables reproduced in document REMPEC/WG.52/INF.3 involving Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and relevant regional and international institutions and stakeholders addressing challenges and offering expertise, resources, and funding to progress in the improvement of the prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships in the Mediterranean region;
4. acknowledged the effort and achievement of those Contracting Parties and Stakeholder who submitted responses through the consultation process;
5. emphasised the importance of the **governance, partnership and resource mobilisation**, notably the governance of the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and its Action Plan within the framework of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols,
6. acknowledged **Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention’s responsibility to achieve, as far as possible, the seven Common Strategic Objectives (CSO)** with the support of all relevant stakeholders in the region through a collaborative, coordinated, and collective effort to plan, finance, and implement at national, sub-regional and regional level actions on people and institutions, as well as action for infrastructure, information and knowledge sharing;
7. encouraged regional and international institutions to formalise their cooperation defined during the Meeting through the **establishment of sustainable partnership agreements** to provide financial and technical support to Contracting Parties for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031);
8. agreed upon the **reporting and monitoring procedure** by:
 - .1 requesting the Secretariat (REMPEC) to consult Contracting Parties and Stakeholder to obtain their formal written authorisation:
 - i) to grant access to the information contained in the reporting format to the Public, Contracting Parties and Stakeholder only, or Data owner only;
 - ii) for the use of logos;
 - .2 raising public awareness and promoting activities/projects through the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) website/social media by posting directly on the website though access granted by REMPEC and to use the relevant #MedStrategy2231;

- .3 completing the online progress report providing input on ongoing and future related actions based on the action tables of the Action Plan;
 - .4 enabling Contracting Parties and stakeholders to upload relevant information on projects, tools and initiatives into the Mediterranean Strategy's website, specifically linking the initiatives to the appropriate CSO or action.
9. encouraged the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and relevant stakeholders to complete their National Action Plan (NAP) and "Stakeholder's table", respectively, if they have not yet done so, as soon as possible, through the online platform;
 10. encouraged Contracting Parties and stakeholders who had already completed their NAPs and "Stakeholders Table", respectively, to regularly update them through the online platform;
 11. took note of the information provided in the documents REMPEC/WG.52/3, REMPEC/WG.52/INF.4 and REMPEC/WG.52/INF.5
 12. noted the need to discuss coordination for the implementation of actions, during and between the biannual meetings for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031);
 13. encouraged all Contracting Parties to actively participate in the deliberations at the 79th Session of the Marine Environment Committee (MEPC 79) on the draft amendments to MARPOL Annex VI concerning the Med SOX ECA;
 14. invited relevant Stakeholders to streamline processes for national assessments, planning of activities/projects and their implementation;
 15. took note of priority actions shared by a number of Contracting Parties and Stakeholders for the elaboration of the Programme of Work (PoW) 2024-2025 and invited relevant national, regional and international organisations, institutions and agencies, and accredited UNEP/MAP Partners, to consider these priorities when defining their respective PoW:
 16. took note of the funding opportunities to support the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) and the related processes to benefit from them, notably those offered through:
 - .1 IMO Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme and Department for Partnership and Projects;
 - .2 UNEP/MAP MTS Resource Mobilization Strategy;
 - .3 The Local Invest Finance Facility (PLIFF) of the Plan of Action for a Model Mediterranean Sea by 2030 (PAMEx)
 - .4 Draft regional fund-raising strategy to support Mediterranean coastal states in relation to the ratification and effective implementation of MARPOL Annex VI as well as the implementation of the Med SOX ECA and linked compliance measures, together with an overview of potential key finance and funding opportunities, actors, and mechanisms, as laid down in document REMPEC/WG.52/INF.6;
 - .5 Fundraising Strategy for the Post-2020 SAPBIO, including the Post-2020 Strategy for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), for the period 2022-2030 and beyond;
 - .6 the New Programme for Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters in Mediterranean Countries (PPRD Med programme), and Call for proposals;

- .7 SAFEMED V Project;
 - .8 European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF);
 - .9 LIFE4MEDECA Project.
17. invited Contracting Parties and main stakeholders to take the necessary actions to benefit from these funding opportunities individually or collectively by exploring operational cooperation;
 18. invited the Secretariat to share the resources mobilisation strategy to support the implementation of the Ballast Water Management Strategy for the Mediterranean Sea (2022-2027) upon its completion;
 19. agreed upon the outcome of the WG's discussions:
 1. **WG. CSO.1.1 in relation to preparedness and response:**
 - i) To explore alignment of programmes of work, sharing documents, mapping, best practice, guidance and expertise of REMPEC's support on the development of a sub-regional agreement in the Adriatic and the NAMIRS project;
 - ii) To explore the use existing data (e.g equipment inventory, sensitivity mapping) available on MEDGIS-MAR for the completion of the mapping and risk assessment within NAMIRS Project,
 - iii) To bridge IRA-MAR Project with other projects, notably by inviting beneficiaries of other relevant projects, such as NAMIR Projects, to the final conference scheduled in 2024, where IRA-MAR will share final deliverables, for their utilisation in other exercises such as RAMOGEPOL
 - iv) To invite Contracting Parties and relevant Stakeholders to contact Cedre, to contribute to and benefit from chemical spills tests to be carried out in 2023 by the French Navy, to further test prototypes, processes or equipment
 - v) To explore the possibility to expanding the results of the BE READY Project (oil and HNS modelling tools) in other geographical regions and to submitting proposals in the next DG-ECHO call for proposals (prevention, preparedness or large-scale exercise);
 - vi) To further explore synergies, and promotion of the use of IMO and EMSA e-learning tools,
 - vii) To continue the support the participation of Contracting Parties from existing sub-regional agreements¹ to exercises (communication, tabletop, full scale) organised in other Mediterranean sub-regions and other EU sea basins, and promote the establishment of synergies between these agreements, notably to benefit from the well-established RAMOGE agreement,
 - viii) To continue the regular update of the publicly available MIDSIS-TROCS with new

¹ RAMOGEPOL in the North-Western Mediterranean region (France, Italy and Monaco), South-Western Mediterranean (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), the Easter Mediterranean (Cyprus, Greece, and Israel), and upcoming Adriatic region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro and Slovenia).

data set from HNS-MS, MANIFESTS database and tools, and other HNS databases and tools, notably by creating links, as well as linking existing databases and tool such as the MAR-CIS accessible to EU Member States.

- ix) To continue looking to the results of the analysis (WG.52/3) to identify actions not already covered by the activities discussed, and identify further opportunities for collaboration/cooperation at the Mediterranean level and with other regional seas conventions.
- x) To continue working on the establishment of the Common Emergency Communication System for the Mediterranean.
- xi) To continue the established cooperation with other regional seas programme on the common indicator 19 of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast, i.e. Occurrence, origin (where possible), extent of acute pollution events (e.g. slicks from oil, oil products and hazardous substances), and their impact on biota affected by this pollution.

.2 WG. CSO.1.2. in relation to prevention of oil and chemical pollution:

- i) To continue the cooperation between REMPEC, EMSA and RAMOGE with respect to illicit ship pollution discharges, notably:
 - the availability of CSN services by EMSA offered to Contracting Parties;
 - the importance of real time surveillance through the RPAS or manned aerial means and AIS for identification of potential polluters.;
 - the ongoing work within MENELAS with respect to (i) the common detection / investigation report, (ii) the criteria for common minimum level of fines, (iii) possible establishment of a regional Blue Fund;
 - the participation of Contracting Parties in coordinated aerial surveillance operations (OSCAR-MED) and the possible further practical use of the common detection / investigation report;
 - the need for judicial cooperation, possible through the Union des Procureurs Generaux de la Mediterranee (UPGM);
 - the need for Contracting Parties to report illicit ship pollution discharges, as appropriate;
 - the necessity to follow up on the revision of the Directive 2005/35/EC on Ship-Source Pollution.

.3 WG. CSO.2/CSO.3 in relation to air emissions and climate change:

- i) To recall the urgency of ratification, transposition and effective implementation of MARPOL Annex VI, particularly in view of the Med SOx ECA expected to enter into effective application on 1 May 2025;
- ii) To provide Contracting Parties, in particular those that have not yet ratified MARPOL annex VI, with support in view of their preparedness to an effective implementation of the Med SOx ECA rules, and took note that both EMSA and REMPEC have available arrangement for legal and technical capacity building,

including through the SAFEMED V project;

- iii) To note the offer by the EU to seek potential funding for translation into national language, in coordination with IMO and REMPEC;
- iv) To stress that the effectiveness of any capacity building effort depends on suitable national legislation being available, and took note that support is also available from EMSA for Contracting Parties that have ratified MARPOL Annex VI, but have not yet transposed relevant provisions into national legislation.
- v) To take note of the EU's offer to investigate the possibility to provide smart technologies in Mediterranean congested areas, while recalling the importance of monitoring ship emissions in the region to support enforcement. ;
- vi) To high light that the cost of implementing the Med SO_x ECA is quite limited as it only requires use of low sulphur fossil fuels without significant modifications of ships and the adaptation of onboard fuel management procedures, noting that an important implementation element will be making compliant fuel available throughout the Mediterranean basin.
- vii) i) to stress the importance of moving forward with the work on the Med NO_x ECA, welcoming REMPEC's plan to establish the NO_x ECA Technical Committee of Experts in 2023, so that Terms of Reference for a NO_x ECA feasibility study are developed, in line with the COP 22 decision.
- viii) To acknowledge the general need to reduce air emission from ships in light of longer-term climate targets, (e.g. related reduction of GHG emissions from ships) as well as air emissions other than SO_x (e.g. NO_x) which will involve non-fossil alternative fuels as well as technologies to decarbonise the shipping and port sectors that are being developed and not yet fully tested.
- ix) To welcome the "Elements of a joint workplan for implementation of CSO 3" prepared by the Secretariat, which should be seen as a living document to be used and update as appropriate (see Annex X).

.4 WG. CSO.5 in relation to non-indigenous species:

- i) To take note of the availability of various guidance documents (e.g. best practices for sampling) from several organisations (e.g. SPA/RAC, EMSA) that should be shared with the Contracting Parties;
- ii) To take note of the continued provision of technical assistance and capacity building by REMPEC, through IMO's ITCP, by UNEP/MAP on the collection of data under the IMAP of the EcAp, and by EMSA on sampling.
- iii) to continue the work on the harmonization of regional procedures for the uniform implementation of the BWM Convention in the Mediterranean, led by REMPEC;
- iv) to stress the need for the development of a resource mobilization strategy for the implementation of the Mediterranean BWM Strategy (2022-2027), and to identify the means to address the need expressed by Contracting parties in terms of the necessary legal assistance offered through IMO, REMPEC and EMSA;
- v) to encourage Contracting Parties that have not yet ratified the BWM Convention to

do so soon as possible;

vi) to note the upcoming work on biofouling offered by REMPEC;

.5 WG. CSO.4 in relation to marine litter from ships:

- i) to note the ongoing work carried out within the framework of the EU funded Marine Litter Med II Project, on the enhanced management of marine litter from sea based sources in ports and marinas, as well as within the IMO-FAO-Norway Glo-Litter Partnerships Project;
- ii) to note the ongoing discussions within IMO on the implementation of the Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships;
- iii) to ensure synergies with the work carried out by various organisation on the issue of marine litter from ships (UNEP, FAO, IMO);
- iv) to use the opportunity of the inter secretariat meeting to share information on the work carried out by the various European Regional Sea Conventions;
- v) to acknowledge the need to provide further technical and legal assistance to Contracting Parties on this topic.

.6 WG. CSO.7 in relation to underwater noise from ships:

- i) to note the need to increase the level of knowledge and raise awareness on this topic among Contracting Parties and stakeholders;
- ii) to note the ongoing revision of the IMO guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life, and the recent launch of the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloNoise Partnerships Project;
- iii) to note the recently approved underwater noise thresholds adopted by the EU;
- iv) to take note of the recommendations in the EMSA study on underwater noise from shipping.

20. acknowledged that the full and timely implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy will require commitments from the Contracting Parties and Partners, through the provision of the necessary human and financial resources;

21. agreed to establish a joint Intersessional Working Group for CSO 2 / CSO 3, and separate Intersessional Working Groups for CSO 1 (on OPRC), CSO 1 (on Prevention), CSO 4, CSO 5, CSO 6 and CSO 7 (on underwater noise);

22. agreed that the Intersessional Working Groups would be led as follows:

1. CSO 1 (on OPRC): xxxx
2. CSO 1 (on Prevention) : xxxx
3. CSO 2 / CSO 3: xxxx
4. CSO 4: xxxx
5. CSO 5: xxxx
6. CSO 6: xxxx
7. CSO 7 (on underwater noise) : xxxx

23. Requested the Secretariat to prepare tables similar to that in Annex X, and liaise with the leads for their dissemination and further completion and regular update by each Intersessional Working Group, and to explore the possibility of making them accessible through the Mediterranean Strategy dedicated webpages;
24. Requested the leads for each Intersessional Working Group to report on their work to the second Mediterranean Strategy Coordination Meeting in 2024;
25. asked Contracting Parties and stakeholders to inform the Secretariat (REMPEC) about the status of implementation of agreed activities and appropriate timely reporting for consideration at the next coordination meeting to be held in 2024;
26. requested the Secretariat (REMPEC) to secure funding for the organisation of this biannual meeting in 2024; and
27. thanked the Chairperson of the Meeting, all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and the regional and international organizations, as well as the Secretariat (REMPEC) for their contribution for the elaboration of an effective joint action plan to achieve by 2031 *“a clean and healthy Mediterranean marine and coastal environment with a sustainable and pollution free maritime sector, supported by a rigorous enforcement system and strengthened multi-sectoral cooperation, for the benefit of present and future generations”*.