



IMO-OMI



UNEP-PNUE

REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY
RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)

CENTRE REGIONAL MEDITERRANEEN POUR L'INTERVENTION
D'URGENCE CONTRE LA POLLUTION MARINE ACCIDENTELLE (REMPEC)

MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN
PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA MEDITERRANEE



7th Meeting of Focal Points of the
Regional Marine Pollution Emergency
Response Centre for the Mediterranean
Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.26/4
24 February 2005

Original: English

Malta, 25-28 April 2005

Agenda Item 4

**PROGRESS REPORT ON REMPEC'S ACTIVITIES
SINCE THE 6TH MEETING OF REMPEC FOCAL POINTS**

Note by REMPEC

I INTRODUCTION

1. Since the last Meeting of REMPEC's Focal Point, held in Malta 12-15 February 2003, the Centre carried out activities agreed upon by the 12th and 13th Ordinary Meetings of the Contracting Parties respectively. In addition to continuing the implementation of traditional activities related to preparedness for and response to accidental marine pollution, during the period under observation REMPEC paid particular attention to developing a whole range of new initiatives aimed at improving the level of co-operation in the field of prevention of pollution from ships.

2. The present report is based on the information that the Centre regularly submitted to its national Focal Points in conformity with the decision taken by 4th Meeting of REMPEC's Focal Points in November 1998 (REMPEC/WG.16/4 paragraph 102), as follows:

- a) circular letter 17/2003 dated 12 September 2003, the activities carried out during the period between 1 January and 30 June 2003;
- b) circular letter 07/2004 dated 4 May 2004, the activities carried out during the period between 1 July and 31 December 2003, as well as an additional progress report covering the period November 2003 and April 2004;
- c) circular letter 13/2004 dated 11 August 2004, the activities carried out during the period between 1 January and 30 June 2004.

3. In order to present an overall picture of **all activities** completed or implemented by REMPEC since the 6th Meeting of Focal Points **and their outputs**, the present document summarizes the activities financed by the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF), as allocated to REMPEC by the 12th and 13th Ordinary Meetings of the Contracting Parties, as well as those carried out by the Centre and financed by various external sources of financing.

4. During the period under review REMPEC was implementing several externally financed projects and programmes formulated in line with the identified needs of the Mediterranean coastal States as outlined in the REMPEC project document. These included two medium term projects financed by the EC, namely MEDA project MED/B7/4100/97/0415/8 concerning port reception facilities and LIFE Third Countries project TCY99/INT/017/SYR for the development of the

comprehensive national system for preparedness for and response to accidental marine pollution in Syrian Arab Republic (LIFE Syria), as well as several activities financed by the Technical Co-operation Division (TCD) of IMO through its Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP). The latter comprised the project for the preparation of the Sub-regional Contingency Plan for the South-Western Mediterranean covering Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, additional training of the response personnel from the same three countries, and the preparation of a contingency plan for the port of Nador in Morocco. In 2003 Technical Co-operation Division of IMO also financed activities related to port reception facilities in the GSP Libyan Arab Jamahiriya that were not included in the above-mentioned MEDA project, as well as a corresponding activity in Aqaba, Jordan thus enabling the extension of the results of this project outside the Mediterranean region.

5. Combining the funds from the Centre's proper MTF budget with the EC MEDA funds and those provided by IMO through ITCP, REMPEC succeeded in including virtually all Mediterranean countries in the activities related to port reception facilities.

6. The results and outcomes of these externally financed projects contributed to the general goals of further promoting regional co-operation in prevention of pollution from ships (MEDA and ITCP projects) and of increasing the level of preparedness for responding to accidental marine pollution in the region (LIFE and ITCP projects), and contributed to satisfying identified needs of the Contracting Parties, which otherwise could not be covered under the project. The reproducibility of results of externally financed projects in those countries of the region that were not directly involved in them is considered to be particularly important.

7. It is also emphasized that implementation of a large number of activities reported herein would also not be possible without additional contributions of the Contracting Parties that complemented the costs of permanent personnel paid from the MTF budget. Such contributions are referred to in the section of the Report dealing with the Personnel.

8. The main outputs are presented under headings representing the five main groups of REMPEC activities. The titles of the main components of the Centre's workplan, as presented in the Centre's project documents ME/XM/6030-00-11 / Rev 5 (covering 2003) and ME/XM/6030-04-03 / Rev 1 (covering 2004 and 2005) respectively, are also included for reference (as shaded text in boxes).

II DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

Development of the information system and technology (e.g. website, Regional Information System, MIDSIS-TROCS, library database, publications, databases), delivery of information, education activities

9. During the period under observation REMPEC continued to carry out activities in this field, trying however to introduce as much as possible new information technology based tools that would enable dissemination of REMPEC project's outputs to as wide as possible audience in the Mediterranean region and outside it. This approach aims at facilitating the access to all relevant information on the Centre's activities and their results, and to adequate information on issues related to prevention of pollution from ships and to preparedness for and response to accidental marine pollution in the Mediterranean region, by not only competent national authorities, but also by other interested parties in civil society, industry, intergovernmental organizations and professional bodies.

10. The English version of the Centre's **website** was completely revised and restructured by the end of 2003 and its French version was prepared and launched in early 2005, together with certain modifications to its English version. It provides the Contracting Parties and third parties' users with the most updated technical, operational, legal and institutional information that might be used in the field of prevention of pollution from ships and in preparing and conducting response operations in case of marine pollution incidents. The new design and features of the website also ensure a broader visibility of REMPEC within the region and outside it, and provide visitors with a wealth of information on the Centre's activities and resulting outputs.

11. In particular, the new version of the Centre's website now features individual "**country pages**" containing information that was previously included in **Sections 1 and 2 of Part B of the Regional Information System**, and which the national Focal Points can regularly update as soon as any relevant change occurs. However, REMPEC continued revising other relevant parts of the Regional Information System, and the following updated Sections were made available to the competent national authorities since the 6th Meeting of Focal Points:

12. Part A (Basic Documents, Recommendations, Principles and Guidelines concerning Accidental Marine Pollution Preparedness, Response and Mutual Assistance, as well as Prevention of Pollution from Ships): both English and French versions of the document were completely revised in January 2004.

13. Part C, Section 2 (List of alerts and accidents causing or likely to cause pollution by oil of the Mediterranean Sea), a provisional version in English of the document was prepared and made available on the REMPEC website in March 2003, and a completely revised and updated document was produced in December 2004. The existing **databases** on alerts and accidents in the Mediterranean involving oil and other HNS, have been consolidated and updated. In particular the information contained within these databases was imported into a simple **Geographical Information System (GIS)** thus offering new possibilities for presenting data contained in the databases and analyzing them.

14. Part C, Section 3 – MIDSIS-TROCS (Mediterranean Integrated Decision Support Information System), based on the previous TROCS database was further developed and upgraded during 2003 and 2004. In particular, following an agreement between REMPEC and the Helsinki Commission, information included in HELCOM Manual on Chemical Pollution was integrated during 2004 with the information, data and decision trees already existing in the original version of MIDSIS-TROCS.

15. The inputting of data into the Centre's Library database was completed during 2004 and the database has been regularly kept up-to-date throughout the period under observation.

16. In 2003 the Centre published a booklet containing the English and French texts of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, the Final Act of the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries which adopted it, as well as the Objectives and Functions of REMPEC. The publication was distributed to the Focal Points of all Contracting Parties and to other partners of the Centre.

17. Finally, REMPEC distributed to its national Focal Points several documents that were issued by other organizations or institutions and that were considered to be of interest for competent national authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States. These documents were disseminated with a view to assisting national authorities in updating their national systems for preparedness and response and in improving the measures aimed at prevention of pollution from ships.

III CAPACITY BUILDING INCLUDING TRAINING

Organization of national and regional training courses, seminars and workshops on preparedness for and response to marine pollution from the sea based sources

Organization of national and regional training courses, seminars and workshops on prevention of pollution from sea based sources.

Preparation of a comprehensive training programme on prevention of pollution from sea based sources

18. In the field of capacity building the main focus was on organizing regional, sub-regional and national training activities aimed at increasing the level of preparedness for response to marine pollution accidents, and, on the other hand, on organizing seminars and workshops addressing issues related to prevention and control of pollution from ships.

19. As in the previous reporting period the results of these activities, including training courses, exercises, seminars and workshops were remarkable. The number of participants from the Contracting Parties who attended and actively participated in courses and other events organized by REMPEC was more than 520, which compares with the total of 509 participants during the period 2000-2002. Besides its obvious role in increasing the capacities of the national administrations of the Contracting Parties, the contribution of this component to planning future actions in the fields of prevention of, preparedness for and response to pollution from ships in the Mediterranean region, and indirectly in preparing the Regional Strategy of REMPEC, was particularly significant.

Training courses

20. Since the 6th Meeting of Focal Points 241 trainees from all Mediterranean coastal States attended various training courses organized by REMPEC: 37 participants attended MEDIPOL 2003 regional training course, 48 participants attended 2 sub-regional training courses and 156 participants attended 7 national training courses. In that period the Centre organized the following courses:

Regional

21. MEDIPOL 2003 combined participation in the European Workshop on Satellite Imagery and Illicit Oil Spills in Europe and in the Mediterranean, held in Toulon, France, between 1 and 4 October 2003, with several related field activities organized in Rognac near Marseille during the same period (37 participants).

Sub-regional

22. Sub-regional Seminar on preparedness for and response to major marine pollution incidents for senior managers and government administrators from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia was organized on 1 and 2 July 2003 in Casablanca, Morocco (27 participants). The activity was financed by the **TCD/IMO project PG 616**.

23. Training Course on Annex I to MARPOL 73/78 for ship inspectors from Cyprus and Israel, was held between 2 and 4 July 2003 in Larnaca, Cyprus (21 participants).

National

24. During the second half of 2003 REMPEC organized in Syria four (4) national training courses, which were all financed by the EC project **LIFE TCY99/INT/017/SYR**:

- National Training Course on spill response techniques for response personnel, Baniyas, Syria 21- 24 July 2003 (30 participants);
- National Training Course on coastal sensitivity mapping, Damascus, Syria 17-18 August 2003 (15 participants);
- National Training Course on emergency management, Lattakia, Syria 16-19 November 2003 (19 participants), and
- National training session on MEDSLIK oil spill forecasting model, Damascus, Syria 18-19 November 2003 (4 participants).

25. National Seminar on preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution for Government administrators and senior managers was organized in Durres, Albania, between 24 and 26 November 2003 (27 participants).

26. National Training Course on the use of simplified methodology for risk assessment and on emergency response in cases of HNS accidents in port areas of Mersin and Iskenderun, was held in Mersin , Turkey, between 7 and 10 June 2004 (39 participants).

27. National Training Course on Annex I to MARPOL 73/78 for ship inspectors was organized between 28 September – 1 October 2004 in Istanbul, Turkey (22 participants).

Exercises

28. Since February 2003 REMPEC organized three communication and alert exercises aimed at testing the regional preparedness and response system. Two communication exercises (Sophisticated Tests), prepared within the framework of European Chemical Industry's Responsible Care Programme ICE, were held in May 2003 and May 2004 respectively. The first one was organized jointly with the Italian Federation of Chemical Industry (FEDERCHIMICA) and the second one with the Spanish ICE Centre, Civil Protection Unit, Madrid.

29. A Regional Alert Exercise MEDIPOLEX 2004 was organized in close collaboration with the competent national authorities of Cyprus, which acted as the lead country, in December 2004. All Contracting Parties were involved in the exercise and more than half of them took an active part in it, together with the two national meteorological services designated by WMO as Area Meteorological Co-ordinators.

30. Within the framework of the EC financed LIFE Third Countries project **LIFE TCY99/INT/017/SYR** REMPEC organized in Baniyas, Syria, a full-scale National Oil Spill Response Exercise SYREX 2003. More than 60 officers from various parts of national administration and services, as well as more than 50 direct oil spill responders, took part in the exercise which was held between 30 November and 3 December 2003, and which involved all national authorities and industry included in the national oil spill preparedness and response system.

31. With a view to strengthening the co-operation between Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia within the framework of the Sub-regional Contingency Plan for the South-Western Mediterranean, which is currently being finalized, REMPEC financed the participation of two Tunisian representatives in the SIMULEX 2004 exercise organized by the Moroccan authorities in June 2004.

32. In the last two years REMPEC took part in a number of alert and communication exercises that were organized by the competent national authorities of the Mediterranean coastal States (France 2003, Israel 2003, Algeria 2004, Morocco 2004, Israel 2004). However, due to the lack of funds, the Centre also had to decline invitations to attend several full scale spill response exercises organized by the coastal States during the same period (Egypt 2003, Spain 2003, Morocco 2004, Italy/RAMOGE 2004).

Workshops and seminars

33. **Regional Workshop on the implementation of Annex I to MARPOL 73/78** was held in Malta between 11 and 13 December 2003. REMPEC organized the Workshop, which was attended by 37 representatives of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with the funds allocated for organizing a Regional Conference on the implementation in the Mediterranean region of MARPOL 73/78 and of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol. The Conference, which had to be organized by the Greek authorities and supported by REMPEC, was cancelled due to certain difficulties encountered by the Greek authorities. The conclusions of the Workshop provided valuable inputs for planning future REMPEC activities in the field of prevention of pollution from ships and for the Regional Strategy.

34. **Regional Workshop on prevention and control of operational pollution in the Mediterranean region**, was organized by REMPEC with financial and logistic support of Italian regional and local authorities, between 3 and 5 November 2004 in Ancona, Italy. The main objectives of the Workshop were to increase the awareness of the Mediterranean countries of the problem of operational pollution from ships, to inform them on the ongoing activities in other regional seas and within the EU, to provide inputs for the completion of REMPEC's CLEANMED project proposal, and to start enforcing specific recommendations of the Contracting Parties, as well as of the relevant provisions of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol 2002 and of the Catania Declaration.

35. More than 90 participants from all Contracting Parties attended the Workshop and actively participated in the deliberations of its three Working Groups. The proposals of Working Groups provided important inputs for the completion and improvement of the CLEANMED project on prosecuting illegal discharges from ships in the Mediterranean Sea.

36. Two side events organized as part of the Workshop by the Italian regional and local authorities who financially and logistically supported for the Workshop, addressed specifically issues related to the sustainable development of the Adriatic region in a wider Mediterranean context.

37. **Regional Seminar on port reception facilities for collecting ship-generated garbage, bilge waters and oily wastes in the Mediterranean** was organized in Malta between 24 and 26 November 2004. The Seminar was the final activity of the EC MEDA financed project on port reception facilities, which REMPEC implemented in the last three years, and of two complementary projects financed respectively from REMPEC MTF budget and from the funds made available by the Technical Co-operation Division of IMO. A total of 45 participants from the 18 Mediterranean coastal states and Jordan attended the Workshop. After having discussed the issue of port reception facilities, the Workshop endorsed the results of the MEDA Project and of complementary REMPEC's projects and outlined further actions for their implementation at the national, bilateral, multilateral and regional levels.

Other capacity building and training related activities

38. Besides delivering lectures and providing speakers in all above-outlined activities, the Director and professional staff of the Centre also contributed lectures and/or presentations to numerous courses, seminars and workshops organized by other national or international organizations and institutions.

39. As it became a regular practice over the last decade, REMPEC continued to provide lectures to the visiting post-graduate students of the World Maritime University (WMU) from Malmö, Sweden (Malta, 24 February 2004 and 22 February 2005), and to post-graduate students of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) (Malta, 25 March 2003, 13 April 2004 and 05 April 2005).

40. In the spring of 2003 REMPEC prepared the first draft programme for training on Annex I to MARPOL 73/78, as the first step in the preparation of a comprehensive training programme on prevention of pollution from sea based sources. The Sub-regional Training Course mentioned in paragraph 23 was organized on the basis of this new programme, although the limited budget restricted the duration of the course. When evaluating the course the participants pointed out the need for longer courses including more practical sessions. This notwithstanding, the feedback received was positive and the suggestions made by participants assisted REMPEC in planning similar training activities for which there is a great need. REMPEC subsequently finalized the programme and, taking into consideration the recommendations of the training course held in Cyprus, extended its duration by a day. The programme was implemented at the seminar referred to in paragraph 27.

41. As part of the EC financed LIFE Third Countries project **LIFE TCY99/INT/017/SYR** REMPEC prepared in December 2003 a comprehensive national training programme for inclusion in the Syrian National Contingency Plan. The programme could be adapted as necessary to other coastal States having similar training requirements.

42. In fact, a number of other outcomes of several LIFE Third Countries projects implemented so far by REMPEC (Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, Syria) also significantly contributed to capacity building at both national and sub-regional levels, not only in the countries directly benefiting from these projects but also in other parts of the Mediterranean region having similar needs.

43. Following an agreement reached in spring 2004 with the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT), preparatory activities started for organizing by the end of 2004 a sub-regional seminar on accidental marine pollution preparedness and response in Alexandria, Egypt. The funds for this course, aimed at trainees from the Mediterranean Arabic speaking countries have been provided by **TCD/IMO project PG 213**. However since REMPEC already convened two major regional events at the end of 2004, the planned course was postponed to the first half of 2005.

44. In December 2004 REMPEC starting negotiating the organization of a regional seminar MEDEXPOL 2005 around a complex national oil spill exercise planned by Croatian national authorities for the first half of 2005. In addition to inviting all Mediterranean coastal States, it has been planned to invite to MEDEXPOL 2005 also a group of participants from the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention, utilizing voluntary contribution of the Government of Monaco.

IV ASSISTANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL SYSTEMS FOR PREPAREDNESS FOR AND RESPONSE TO MARINE POLLUTION FROM SHIPS

Assistance to Mediterranean coastal States in development of new national and sub-regional systems for preparedness and response

Assistance to Mediterranean coastal States in development, maintaining and improving existing national and sub-regional systems for preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships

Assistance to individual countries in development of port emergency response systems and plans (including in particular those for accidents involving HNS)

Development of operational sensitivity maps in the Mediterranean (including those within the framework of CAMP activities)

45. In the field of capacity building REMPEC paid particular attention to providing assistance to the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties in the development of national preparedness and response systems, and to the preparation and adoption of sub-regional contingency plans and of agreements for their implementation.

46. The Contracting Parties that benefited from assistance of the Centre in the field of contingency planning since the 6th Meeting of Focal Points were Albania, Algeria, Morocco, Slovenia and Syria **at the national level** and Algeria, Croatia, Italy, Morocco, Slovenia and Tunisia **at the sub-regional level**. The key activities carried out by REMPEC in the field of assistance in the development of national and sub-regional systems for preparedness and response are outlined below.

Albania

47. In accordance with the suggestion of the relevant services of the EC, in 2003 REMPEC divided into several smaller projects a complex project proposal for the development of national capacities of the Republic of Albania for prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from sea based sources, which was originally presented to the EC LIFE Third Countries mechanism for financing a year before. At the time of the National Seminar held in Durres in November 2003 (cf. paragraph 25) REMPEC discussed with the competent national authorities and agreed upon the new approach.

Algeria

48. Following a request by the Algerian national Focal Point REMPEC prepared and organized a mission of an external consultant, aimed at auditing the Algerian national TELBAHR system for preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution. The mission was carried out in December 2004 and the consultant also took part in the national seminar organized by the Algerian authorities to coincide with the mission. Report of the consultant, including detailed recommendations for completion and improvement of the national system, was submitted to the Algerian national Focal Point in the beginning of 2005.

Morocco

49. In June 2003 REMPEC presented to the competent Moroccan national authorities the contingency plan for the port of Nador, which was prepared during 2002/2003 by a REMPEC consultant. The preparation of the plan was financed by the Technical Co-operation Division of IMO under **project PG 616**, but also involved resources made available under the REMPEC project.

Slovenia

50. Slovenian authorities submitted to REMPEC an updated version of the NCP for which REMPEC provided additional support through the preparation in 2003 of sensitivity maps. This activity was envisaged within CAMP for Slovenia and was completed at the end of 2003.

Syria

51. The EC financed LIFE Third Countries project **LIFE TCY99/INT/017/SYR** for the development of the Syrian national preparedness and response system was completed in December 2003. Although the project was financed by the external sources it also included significant involvement of the resources provided by the REMPEC MTF project. Since the last Meeting of Focal points the draft Syrian NCP was revised and related area and local contingency plans were prepared and translated into Arabic in 2003, subsequently revised again and are awaiting an official approval. MEDSLIK oil spill forecasting model was acquired, adapted for use in Syria and delivered to the Syrian authorities in 2003. Environmental sensitivity maps of the Syrian coasts and adjacent waters were also prepared and produced in 2003 and are currently being upgraded. The Syrian authorities were provided with computers for running these decision support tools. Finally, the National Marine Pollution Response Centre was set up in Baniyas in 2004 and the acquisition of the national stockpile of spill response equipment started. Training activities and the exercise mentioned in paragraphs 24 and 30 complemented the development of the Syrian national preparedness and response system.

Sub-regional operational agreement for the South-Western Mediterranean

52. The preparation of the Sub-regional system for preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution in the South-Western Mediterranean, comprising Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia was also finalized, with only the signing of the trilateral agreement for its implementation pending at the time of preparing the present report. The financial support for this complex activity was provided by the Technical Co-operation Division of IMO, however it was complemented by engagement of REMPEC own resources. In particular, the Sub-regional Contingency Plan for the South-Western Mediterranean involving Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and the text of the trilateral Agreement for its implementation had been reviewed by national authorities, discussed and agreed upon at the Meeting of competent national authorities held in Casablanca, Morocco on 3-4 July 2003. After consolidating the texts of the Plan and of the Agreement in the French language, REMPEC provided, in September 2003, the three parties with the Arabic translations of both texts. Algeria accepted to act as depositary of the Agreement, and agreed to coordinate the editing of the Arabic texts. These were consolidated in the beginning of 2004 and distributed to all three parties for final verification. During 2004 REMPEC held several *ad hoc* meetings with the representatives of the three countries and, after receiving their comments, made, in the beginning of 2005, a final proposal for amending the text that would reflect the last remaining concerns. Should the agreement on these amendments be reached as expected at the time of the present meeting, the signing of the trilateral agreement should be possible before the summer 2005.

Sub-regional operational agreement for the Adriatic

53. The development of the Sub-regional Contingency Plan for the Adriatic Sea, involving Croatia, Italy and Slovenia and of the agreement for its implementation was also practically completed in 2004, with only a single issue pending an agreement. This major activity was entirely financed by funds from the REMPEC project. The preparation of the sub-regional system for preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution in the (northern) Adriatic started immediately after the 6th Meeting of Focal Points, with the meeting of competent national authorities of Croatia, Italy and Slovenia, that was convened at REMPEC premises in Malta on 27-28 February 2003 (REMPEC/CIS/WG.1/3). The three delegations agreed on the scope and the contents of the future Plan and on the timetable for its preparation. The first draft Plan was presented to the representatives of the three countries at the meeting of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII) in Portoroz, Slovenia in October 2003, and an agreement was reached to include in it also provisions related to prevention of marine pollution incidents. By the end of 2003, the consultant prepared and REMPEC revised the second draft sub-regional contingency plan and a corresponding trilateral agreement for its implementation. After revision by REMPEC, the documents were distributed to the three countries concerned in February 2004. At the AII Meeting held under the Slovenian presidency in Portoroz on 29-30 March 2003 (REMPEC/CIS/WG.2/1), the three national delegations revised the texts and agreed upon them, with the exception of a definition of the area of responsibility. As requested by the Portoroz Meeting, in April 2004 REMPEC prepared, with the assistance of the Consultant, and distributed to the parties consolidated final versions of both texts. The agreement on the last pending issue is expected to be reached shortly after the present meeting, which should permit the signing of the agreement in 2005.

54. In 2004 the representatives of Serbia and Montenegro in the Meetings of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, as well as Albania, indicated to REMPEC that they would also like to join the Sub-regional system. Following a proposal prepared by REMPEC it was agreed that as soon as these two countries have developed their national preparedness and response systems, the preparation of a similar sub-regional system for the southern part of the Adriatic, with the possible participation of Albania, Croatia, Greece, Italy and Serbia and Montenegro, will be considered.

Sensitivity mapping in the Mediterranean region

55. Following an initiative of the Government of Monaco within the framework of the RAMOGE Agreement, concerning the use of electronic navigational charts in spill response operations, and taking into consideration the experience and positive results of REMPEC activities related to sensitivity mapping in Slovenia and Syria, the Centre convened on 8 and 9 March 2004 a Meeting of an *ad hoc* Working Group of Experts on sensitivity mapping. The overall goal of the Meeting was to examine the use of electronic navigational charts (ENC) and cartographic aids in general, as tools for planning, directing and controlling marine pollution response operations. Its specific objective was to draft a proposal concerning the standard procedures for mapping the sensitive coastal areas in the context of prevention of, preparedness for and response to accidental marine pollution in the Mediterranean region.

56. After having thoroughly discussed the state-of-the-art in the fields of hydrography, use of GIS, development of nautical charts and in particular sensitivity mapping, the Meeting formulated a proposal concerning sensitivity mapping in the Mediterranean region. The Minutes of the Meeting, containing the proposal (REMPEC/WG.22/1) were disseminated to REMPEC national Focal Points for consideration and endorsement. Although REMPEC received replies and comments from only few countries in the region, these were all affirmative.

Other related activities

57. In 2003 REMPEC prepared and submitted for approval to the Technical Co-operation Division of IMO four proposals for financing (under **project PG 2301**) activities related to both prevention of pollution from ships and to preparedness and response to accidental marine pollution. Two activities that were related to assistance in development of national capacities in the field of preparedness and response concerned the organization of a sub-regional training course for Arab speaking Mediterranean coastal States (cf. paragraph 43) and the preparation of a draft national contingency plan for GSP Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. IMO approved both activities and their implementation is envisaged in 2005.

V CO-OPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Assistance to countries in case of emergency and management of the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU)

58. During the period between February 2003 and the end of February 2005 several marine pollution accidents occurred in the Mediterranean region which called for response at local or national levels. However none of these necessitated the activation of the regional system for mutual assistance in case of emergency. On the other hand the competent national authorities of coastal States affected by such accidents consulted REMPEC regarding response options or requested advice and other information required for organizing and conducting spill response operations.

59. On several occasions REMPEC transmitted to its national Focal Points relevant information concerning pollution events that were affecting or were likely to affect more than a single country. When so requested, the Centre also facilitated exchange of information between the competent national authorities of various countries in cases when direct communication was not possible.

60. Communication and alert exercises outlined in paragraphs 28 and 29 served in particular for testing and improving the communications network that could be used in case of activation of the regional arrangements for international cooperation and mutual assistance in case of emergency.

61. There were no requests for the activation of the Mediterranean Assistance Unit since the 6th Meeting of Focal Points, however, the Centre continued to extend the range of expertise available through the services of MAU. In June 2004 REMPEC and the Italian National Federation of Chemical Industry (FEDERCHIMICA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the participation in MAU of experts from nine companies forming part of the Federation. By the inclusion of FEDERCHIMICA members the MAU is now in position to offer expert advice in case of accidents involving a much wider range of hazardous and noxious substances.

62. The validity of the Memorandum of Understanding for the participation of CEDRE in the MAU was extended in October 2004 for another period of two years.

VI ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM SHIPS

Assistance to the Mediterranean Coastal States in the implementation process of marine pollution prevention policies, including short term advisory services to individual coastal States as well as bilateral and sub-regional co-operation agreement between States

Extension of activities related to port reception facilities to non MEDA countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Libya, Serbia & Montenegro and Slovenia)

Assistance to countries in addressing specific issues related to the protection of the marine environment (e.g. anti-fouling systems, ballast water, Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas, places of refuge, emergency towing)

Port reception facilities

63. Since 2002 REMPEC was implementing in the Mediterranean coastal States participating in the Euro-Med Partnership, namely Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey, the EC financed MEDA **project MED.B7.4100.97.0415.8** for Port Reception Facilities for collecting ship-generated garbage, garbage, bilge waters and oily wastes. With a view to extending the participation in the activities analogous to those included in the MEDA project to the coastal States that are not Euro-Med partners, REMPEC engaged certain funds from its own MTF budget and succeeded in obtaining additional funds from the Technical Co-operation Division of IMO. This allowed the Centre to carry out the same type of activities in Albania, Croatia, GSP Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Slovenia. In addition, IMO provided funds for including Jordan in the MEDA project related activities (cf. paragraph 4). France, Greece, Italy and Spain were the European partners in the MEDA project and had no need for the activities envisaged under the project.

64. The first phase of the project included the assessment of capacities for collection and treatment of solid and liquid wastes from ships (garbage, bilge waters, oily wastes, oily ballast waters). Fact finding missions to the ten Mediterranean partners were completed in May 2003 and consultants submitted their final reports in November 2003. Similar activities in Albania, Croatia and Slovenia were carried out during the second half of 2003 and the relevant report was finalized in February 2004. A mission for the assessment of needs regarding port reception facilities in the port of Aqaba, Jordan, took place in November 2003 and the final report was submitted to the Jordanian authorities in March 2004. Finally, the report concerning the capacities and needs of certain ports in GSP Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was submitted in August 2004.

65. The second phase of MEDA project comprised the preparation by consultants of a study on the optimum solutions for the collection, treatment and disposal of relevant types of solid and liquid ship-generated wastes. The study concerning the ten MEDA countries was completed in April 2004, and the equivalent one concerning Albania, Croatia and Slovenia in May 2004.

66. The third phase of MEDA project involved the preparation of a study concerning standard designs for (a) oily wastes reception, treatment, storage and dewatering facilities and (b) garbage collection, treatment and disposal facilities. The relevant studies were finalized and submitted to the national authorities of all Mediterranean coastal States in November 2004.

67. The final activity of the MEDA project was the Regional Seminar on Port Reception Facilities for Collecting Ship-generated Garbage, Bilge Waters and Oily Wastes in the Mediterranean, which was held in Malta, 24-26 November 2004. MEDA project funds were utilized to cover the expenses of participation of the Mediterranean partner countries and main speakers, while REMPEC covered from its MTF budget the costs of participation of another external speaker. The costs of participation of representatives from non-MEDA countries, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, GSP Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Serbia and Montenegro and Slovenia, as well as Jordan, were covered by funds provided by the Technical Co-operation Division of IMO.

68. As part of the MEDA project REMPEC also convened two Meetings of its Steering Committee: the second Meeting was held in Malta on 30-31 October 2003, and the third one on 23 November 2004.

Prosecution of illegal oil discharges - CLEANMED project proposal

69. With a view to addressing the problem of operational oil pollution, or rather illicit discharges of oil and oily residues from ships into the Mediterranean Sea, REMPEC formulated in 2003, and further developed in 2004, a project which aims at improving the implementation and enforcement of the provisions of MARPOL 73/78 Convention and of the new International Convention for the Control and Management of Ship's Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM 2004). The project, which was named CLEANMED, is a comprehensive project on prosecution of illegal oil discharges in the Mediterranean region. Taking into consideration gaps identified in the fields of detection of operational oil pollution and of prosecution of offenders in the Mediterranean, the project focuses on three main issues, namely on the improvement of the legislative framework, on the reinforcement of human resources and on aerial surveillance and remote sensing in the Mediterranean.

70. CLEANMED project was formulated within the legal framework of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, it addresses the commitments agreed upon by the Contracting Parties in the "Catania Declaration", and is compatible with the Regional Strategy for prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships that is currently being developed. One of the objectives of the Regional Workshop on prevention and control of operational pollution in the Mediterranean region, organized in Ancona in November 2004 (cf. paragraphs 34-36) was to provide additional inputs for the completion of CLEANMED project proposal.

71. The final expected result of the Project is the establishment in the Mediterranean of an operational regional network and dedicated database together with bilateral and/or sub-regional agreements for cooperation in the field of prevention of operational pollution through surveillance of illicit discharges, sharing of evidence and prosecution of offenders.

72. Being aware of the complexity of the proposed project and its related costs, several financing mechanisms have been envisaged and explored for funding its various components and activities. These include GEF, certain EC financial instruments as well as possible partnerships between REMPEC and individual countries and/or organizations. Several of these already expressed their intention to participate as partners in the project, while other coastal States supported it.

Other activities related to prevention of pollution from ships

73. Following the extension of the mandate of the Centre after the adoption of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, the 6th Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points proposed to include in the list of official contacts of REMPEC also national authorities responsible for maritime affairs (REMPEC/WG.21/12, paragraph 107). The Thirteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention held in Catania, Italy, 11-14 November 2003 *inter alia* decided "to extend the network of REMPEC correspondents to national authorities responsible for maritime affairs". In accordance with this decision the Centre invited the Contracting Parties to nominate their Prevention Focal Points and these new Focal Points were added to the REMPEC network of contacts in the first half of 2004.

74. During the period under observation REMPEC started developing training activities in the field of prevention of pollution from ships. The progress of these actions has been outlined in paragraphs 21, 23, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 and 40 of the present report.

75. As already reported in paragraph 57, in 2003 REMPEC prepared and submitted for approval to the Technical Co-operation Division of IMO four proposals for financing specific activities. Two of these were related to prevention of pollution from ships, namely to the drawing up of a comprehensive training programme on prevention of pollution from ships, and to a regional seminar on port reception facilities. IMO approved both activities and the funds allocated to the latter one were already utilized for the organization of the Regional Seminar referred to in paragraph 37, while the other one is planned for completion in 2005.

VII OTHER ACTIVITIES

Preparation of a Regional Strategy on prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships

Implementation of the Catania Declaration 2003

Implementation of marine pollution prevention policies

Project Proposal on oil and chemicals in bulk transported in the Mediterranean

Development and application of Earth Observation (EO) techniques in the field of marine pollution from sea based sources

Geographically limited pilot project on the surveillance and detection of illicit pollution of the marine environment

Providing short term advisory services to individual coastal States which so request

Development of guidelines and recommendations aimed at facilitating co-operation and mutual assistance in case of emergency, and/or consolidation of the adopted ones

Supporting and facilitating joint activities within existing sub-regional agreements (Cyprus, Egypt, Israel)

Organizing a regional workshop on implications and lessons learnt from recent accidents

Organizing a sub-regional course on training of trainers

7th Meeting of REMPEC's Focal Points

76. In addition to the activities already mentioned in the present report, the relevant REMPEC project documents ME/XM/6030-00-11 / Rev 5 (covering 2003) and ME/XM/6030-04-03 / Rev. 1 (covering 2004 and 2005) also include activities and tasks presented in the box above.

Preparation of a Regional Strategy on prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships / implementation of the Catania Declaration 2003

77. The preparation of a Regional Strategy for the prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships, which should be proposed for adoption to the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties, has been one of the main activities of the Centre in the last two years. In March 2003 REMPEC distributed to the Contracting Parties for their consideration and comments the First Draft Regional Strategy that was originally presented to the 6th Meeting of Focal Points.

78. On the basis of comments received from the Contracting Parties and the priority issues identified in the Catania Declaration, and also taking into consideration new developments at the global and regional levels, as well as within the European Union, the Centre prepared the Revised Second Draft Regional Strategy, which was disseminated in May 2004 to its Focal Points, IMO, UNEP/MAP and other partners.

79. With a view to preparing the Third Draft Regional Strategy and in accordance with the decision of the 13th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, REMPEC convened in Castelgandolfo (Rome), Italy, between 8 and 10 July 2004, the First Meeting of National Experts on the Regional Strategy for prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships. The representatives of 20 Contracting Parties, MEDU and IMO attended the Meeting.

80. After a thorough discussion in the Working Groups, the Meeting adopted the Third Draft Regional Strategy on prevention of and response to marine pollution from ships, which addressed twenty one specific objectives to be achieved by the year 2015.

81. The Report containing the consolidated text of the Third Draft Regional Strategy was finalized by REMPEC and distributed, in October 2004, to the Contracting Parties and to other relevant international governmental and non-governmental organizations for consideration and further comments.

82. In February 2005 REMPEC consolidated the comments received from the Contracting Parties and circulated these to all parties concerned for consideration at the 2nd Meeting of National Experts.

83. In addition, pursuant to the request of the First Meeting of National Experts, in the beginning of 2005 REMPEC engaged a consultant to carry out an assessment of the cost of implementation of the proposed Regional Strategy. The appointment of the consultant was made possible thanks to the additional funds provided specifically for this purpose by UNEP.

84. Finally, with a view to preparing the final Draft Regional Strategy, REMPEC convened the Second Meeting of National Experts between 21 and 23 April 2005.

85. The text agreed by the Second Meeting of National Experts, will be submitted for examination and approval to the present Meeting, and subsequently to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points, prior to being presented, in November 2005, to the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties for adoption.

Preparation of the regional Protocol on Prevention of Pollution from Pleasure Craft

86. In collaboration with the other interested parties, REMPEC was actively involved in preliminary work related to the preparation of a draft regional legal instrument on prevention of pollution from pleasure craft activities in the Mediterranean Sea. In particular, contacts were established with the Government of Monaco, which kindly offered to host a Meeting of National Experts on the feasibility of a legal regional instrument on prevention of pollution from pleasure craft activities in the Mediterranean.

87. The Meeting, which was fully sponsored by the Monegasque Government, was held as planned in Monaco between 8 and 10 December 2004. The experts from 18 coastal States and the EC agreed on a draft resolution to be proposed for adoption to the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties. The proposed resolution provides a set of principles for the development of specific "guidelines on prevention of pollution from pleasure craft activities". More details on the outcome of the Meeting are given in document REMPEC/WG.26/8.

Implementation of marine pollution prevention policies / Assessment of the maritime traffic in the Mediterranean and related risks

88. Several activities that REMPEC has been expected to carry out during the 2004-2005 biennium were included in a major project proposal for Euro Med Co-operation on Maritime Safety and Prevention of Pollution from Ships, named SAFEMED, which was submitted for approval and financing to the DG Transport in October 2004. Once approved by the EC the project is expected to be implemented by REMPEC in the years 2005-2008. The SAFEMED project proposal, including the "Technical Annex" and the budget, was prepared by a consultant, in close collaboration with REMPEC staff and IMO, between July and October 2004, and subsequently amended in conformity with the comments of the relevant services of the EC and IMO.

89. When the SAFEMED project proposal was prepared particular attention was paid to its compatibility with the Regional Strategy for prevention of and response to pollution from ships in the Mediterranean.

90. The SAFEMED project proposal includes a number of activities related to protection of marine environment, as well as to safety and security of navigation. These address primarily the assessment of the situation regarding the implementation in the Mediterranean region of IMO Conventions, Protocols and specific Codes, assistance in adoption of these by the Mediterranean coastal States, and improving the capacities of the national maritime administrations and authorities for their implementation. The proposal includes *inter alia* long and short term training of personnel, regional seminars and workshops on specific issues, the assessment of the maritime traffic in the Mediterranean and related risks, and also deals with specific issues such as places of refuge, Vessel Traffic Services, anti-fouling systems, ballast water management practices.

91. At the time of writing the present report the final approval of the project and signing of an agreement for its implementation between the EC and IMO, on behalf of REMPEC, was still pending.

Development and application of Earth Observation (EO) techniques in the field of marine pollution from sea based sources

92. Between February and September 2003 REMPEC was involved in the validation and evaluation phase of the EC funded **VASCO** project, related to oil spill monitoring by means of remote sensing satellites. In order to carry out this activity the Centre established a contractual partnership with ESA (European Space Agency) and ICRAM (Central Institute for Applied Marine Research) which seconded to REMPEC one of its researchers.

93. The objective of Vasco, as a follow-up of the RAMSES project, was to evaluate in a pre commercial situation a service that aimed at offering the user's community the possibility to monitor a given marine area in order to quickly detect oil spills and other pollution events. In other words, the project aimed at studying the service angle of RAMSES, corresponding to the real needs of the end-users.

94. REMPEC, acting as the users' coordinator, had access to all the relevant pollution information that was sent to the registered users and was responsible for collecting the users' feedback in order to make it available to the service provider.

95. Since the beginning of 2004 REMPEC was involved in the implementation of the EC financed **CLEOPATRA** project whose objective was to achieve an integrated chain, covering research on input data, modelling and output interface, able to feed an advanced service, to support prevention, mitigation and assessment of oil pollution (with possible extension to other pollutants). The project featured an innovative methodology, with a modelling approach focused on an optimised coupling of atmospheric, wave, hydrodynamic, and oil spill models, as well as on system integration through the coupling of previous RAMSES project results with OSIS (Oil Spill Information System). The system comprised multiple entities or sites including satellite receiving stations, the central server, providers of oceanographic and meteorological data, a notification server and "Value Adder" stations

96. The main goal of the project was providing operational and scientific users with oil slick monitoring services. The products contained geographical, morphologic and radiometric parameters of the detected oil slicks. Meteorological information derived from a high resolution numerical model was also appended to support oil trajectory reconstitution and forecast activities. The Service portfolio included detection of slicks, forecasting their propagation, assessment of coastal and marine environment impacts and access to archive for study purpose (statistics...) on priority geographic areas.

97. The participation of REMPEC in the CLEOPATRA project was made possible through a contract signed between the project managers and the Italian Central Institute for Applied Marine Research (ICRAM), which seconded under the contract one of its researchers to REMPEC.

Geographically limited project on the surveillance and detection of illicit pollution of the marine environment

98. With a view to starting activities in the field of surveillance and detection of illicit pollution of the sea by ships in the Mediterranean region REMPEC prepared in the beginning of 2005 a project proposal named AESOP (Aerial and Satellite surveillance of Operational Pollution in the Mediterranean Sea: a comparative analysis). The proposal has been developed bearing in mind the comprehensive CLEANMED project proposal (cf. paragraphs 69-72 of the present report, as well as specific objective 4.6 of the currently discussed Regional Strategy (cf. paragraphs 77-85). The project proposal also took into consideration the previous experience related to satellite monitoring in the Mediterranean region gained through different European projects in which REMPEC had been involved such as RAMSES, GAIANET, VASCO and CLEOPATRA, as well as through the studies performed by the EC DG-JRC in the field.

99. AESOP was conceived as a short term pilot project to be carried out in the Adriatic Sea, which was selected as the study area on the basis of its oceanographic and ecological characteristics and its relatively high density of maritime traffic. Another factor that influenced the selection of this particular study area was the existence of different forms of cooperation already in place within the basin, such as the Sub-regional Contingency Plan between Italy, Croatia and Slovenia, the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative and the DAMAC project (Marche region – County of Zadar), which might facilitate the project implementation.

100. The pilot project intends to define the possibility of introducing within the Mediterranean region a service aimed at both detecting oil pollution and monitoring the main shipping routes by means of remote sensing from satellites, complemented by aircraft surveillance. The principal objectives of the project are the assessment of the actual reliability of the system and its capacity to provide a near-real-time (NRT) service. In order to achieve these objectives the project proposal envisages simultaneous detection activities performed by satellites and dedicated aircraft over the same areas, and, if the reliability of satellite detection systems has been proven, a NRT campaign for detection of offenders.

101. AESOP project proposal is currently being discussed with the envisaged partners, namely ERS/RAC, the Italian Ministry of Environment, the Italian Coast Guard and DG-JRC of the EC.

Supporting and facilitating joint activities within existing sub-regional agreements (Cyprus, Egypt, Israel)

102. The political situation in the Middle East and the escalation of the crisis in the area during the period under observation did not allow REMPEC to organize since the last Meeting of Focal Points the planned meetings of National Operational Authorities of Cyprus, Egypt and Israel, envisaged within the framework of the Sub-regional Contingency plan for the South-Eastern Mediterranean. However communication exercises comprising the three countries concerned were held both in 2003 and 2004 (cf. paragraph 32) and, in case of the only serious incident that occurred in the area covered by the Sub-regional Contingency Plan in February 2005, regular communications were established and maintained among their respective National Operational Authorities, as well as with REMPEC. It is hoped that the recent improvement of the situation in the area will permit the organization of the envisaged meetings in the near future.

Other planned activities

103. The remaining activities envisaged under the present REMPEC project document ME/XM/6030-04-03 / Rev. 1 are planned to be carried out within the current budgetary period, in conformity with the requests of the Contracting Parties (short term advisory services to individual coastal States which so request) and their needs (development of guidelines and recommendations aimed at facilitating co-operation and mutual assistance in case of emergency, and/or consolidation of the adopted ones). The possibility of combining the Croatian national oil spill response exercise with the envisaged regional workshop on implications and lessons learnt from recent accidents into a regional MEDEXPOL 2005 seminar is currently being discussed with the Croatian authorities (cf. paragraph 44). Finally, the organization of a sub-regional course on training of trainers will depend on the availability of financial and human resources, and on the status of the ongoing priority actions.

Co-operation with other organizations

104. Since the 6th Meeting of Focal Points, REMPEC continued regular and fruitful co-operation with a number of specialized national and international, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Besides IMO and UNEP, these included in particular BIMCO, CEDRE, CEFIC, ESA, FEDERCHIMICA, HELMEPA, ICE, ICRAM, INTERTANKO, IPIECA, ITOPIF, MOIG, OECD and WMO. Regular contacts and exchange of information continued with the Secretariats of REMPEC's counterparts in other regional sea areas, namely with the Bonn Agreement, the Helsinki Commission and NOWPAP, as well as with their technical bodies.

105. During the same period the Centre also established working relations with several new partners. The most important among these were the newly established European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia (INGV), Laboratorio di Meteorologia e Modelistica Ambientale (LaMMA). In addition, an excellent and productive co-operation that was established with the Italian Marche Region, resulted in a substantial support for the Workshop on Operational Pollution mentioned in paragraphs 34-36, but also in further collaboration on certain projects in the Adriatic basin (e.g. DAMAC).

106. Within the framework of this co-operation, the following agreements have been concluded:

- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in June 2004 with FEDERCHIMICA, for utilizing, within the framework of the Mediterranean Assistance Unit, its expertise in the field of response to emergencies caused by releases of HNS (cf. paragraph 61);
- Under an agreement concluded with ICRAM, a Junior Programme Officer was seconded to REMPEC to follow VASCO/GAIANET project on satellite monitoring of oil pollution in the Mediterranean;
- Taking into consideration the positive experience of VASCO/GAIANET project, another agreement was reached with ICRAM for the secondment to REMPEC of the same Junior Programme Officer within the framework of the EC financed project "CLEOPATRA" dealing with satellite monitoring of oil pollution in the Mediterranean (cf. paragraphs 92-94);. The Junior Programme Officer worked at REMPEC between June 2004 and April 2005.

107. Particularly strong relations were established with the EC Directorate General Joint Research Centre (JRC). A Memorandum of Understanding between REMPEC and JRC is currently being negotiated with a view to setting up a mechanism for co-operation in the field of monitoring and assessment of marine pollution from sea-based sources. The co-operation should include joint projects, staff exchange programmes, exchange of research results, and jointly conducting seminars, workshops and training programs.

108. Besides the MoU with JRC, at the time of writing the present report, REMPEC was also preparing Memoranda of Understanding with CNR and INGV.

109. The co-operation with the oil industry permitted the Centre to benefit from the secondment of two Junior Programme Officers during the period between the two Meetings of Focal Points. The Italian oil industry represented by UPI (Unione Petrolifera Italiana) continued to second a civil engineer until November 2003, while the French national oil company TOTAL seconded a chemical engineer to REMPEC for a period of 18 months (November 2003 - April 2005).

110. The interaction with these organizations throughout the period under review resulted on one hand in the sharing of experience and transfer of technology, and on the other hand in a significant improvement of the Centre's capacities and in the increased quality of its work.

VIII PERSONNEL

111. Since the 6th Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points a number of changes took place in the personnel of the Centre.

112. Cdr. **Elias Sampatakakis**, Programme Officer (HNS) left the Centre at the end of February 2005 to reassume his position with the Hellenic Coast Guard. IMO issued the Vacancy Note for the position of the Programme Officer in the beginning of March 2005, and it is expected that the recruitment procedure will be completed in May 2005.

113. Ms. **Michaela Tabone** resigned from her position as the Assistant to the Director in October 2004, and was subsequently replaced, between December 2004 and February 2005, by Mrs. **Jacqueline England**. The post of the Assistant to the Director is at present vacant.

114. Ms. **Emilie Dorgeville**, a Junior Programme Officer seconded to REMPEC by the French oil company TOTAL in 2001, completed her assignment at the end of March 2003.

115. The assignment of Mr. **Francesco Strangis**, the Junior Programme Officer seconded to REMPEC since March 2002 by the Italian Oil Industry Union (UPI), terminated in November 2003.

116. In November 2003 TOTAL seconded to REMPEC a new Junior Programme Officer, Mr. **François Leotoing**, a chemical engineer specialized in environmental sciences. The assignment of Mr. Leotoing, who was seconded to REMPEC under the French mechanism *Volontariat International Scientifique*, extends until the end of April 2005.

117. Ms. **Cristina Farchi** was seconded to REMPEC by the Italian Central Institute for Applied Marine Research (ICRAM), under an agreement between the Institute and the project managers. Ms. Farchi, who is a biologist, held a position of a Junior Programme Officer responsible for following VASCO/GAIANET and CLEOPATRA projects on satellite monitoring of oil pollution from ships respectively. Her first assignment at REMPEC, related to VASCO/GAIANET project was between February and September 2003, and the second one, related to CLEOPATRA project, between June 2004 and April 2005.

118. Ms. **Lilia Khodjet El Khil** worked at REMPEC between March 2002 and December 2004 as a Technical Officer within the framework of the EC-MEDA project on port reception facilities. At present Ms. Khodjet El Khil is employed by REMPEC as Temporary Technical Officer under a short term contract for the follow-up of the activities related to port reception facilities.

119. The voluntary contribution of the Italian Government, announced by the Italian delegation at the 6th Meeting of Focal Points, enabled the Centre to employ in September 2003 Ms. **Ruth Mizzi** as the Bilingual Secretary and Mr. **Andre Sammut** as the Administrative Assistant. The present commitment of the Italian Government regarding the voluntary contribution terminates at the end of December 2005.

120. Mr. **Firas Asfour** was employed at REMPEC between September and December 2003, as a Temporary Assistant for the implementation of the EC financed LIFE Third Countries project for the development of a national system for preparedness and response in the Syrian Arab Republic. Mr. Asfour, a civil engineer of Syrian nationality, was engaged under the above-mentioned LIFE Third Countries project.

121. Between May and July 2003, Ms. **Anne-Caroline Rioux-Leruste** did her internship at REMPEC, during which she prepared a study of relevant agreements on port State control in the Mediterranean. The internship programme continued with Ms. **Stephanie Guegan** who prepared, during her stay at the Centre between September and December 2003, a study of regimes for liability and compensation for pollution damage within the Mediterranean context.

122. During the period under observation, the following general staff was employed by REMPEC on a temporary basis, in relation to specific, externally financed, projects: Ms. **Ruth Mizzi** (July - September 2003, as Technical Secretary under LIFE Third Countries project for Syria), Ms. **Brigid Galea** (May 2003 – June 2004, as Clerk / Secretary, under MEDA project on port reception facilities) and Ms. **Maria Woodward** (August – December 2004, as Clerk / Secretary, under MEDA project on port reception facilities).

123. Additional professional and general service staff that were either seconded to REMPEC or paid by voluntary contributions or from external sources of financing, contributed a great deal to the implementation of activities that the Centre carried out between the two Meetings of Focal Points.

This contribution greatly assisted the permanent REMPEC staff to achieve the results that could otherwise not be accomplished under the Project.

124. As at 15 March 2005, the staff component structure of the Centre is as follows:

TITLE	NAME	GRADE
Permanent Staff		
Director	R. Admiral Roberto Patruno	D1
Senior Programme Officer (OPRC)	Mr. Darko Domovic	P5
Programme Officer (Marine Environment Protection)	<i>vacant</i>	P4
Programme Officer (Prevention)	Mr. Jonathan Pace	P4
Information Assistant	Ms. Doreen Stellini	G6
Administrative / Financial Assistant	Mr. Christopher Sacco	G7
Secretary to the Head of Office	<i>vacant</i>	G5
Secretary	Ms. Amanda Bonavia	G4
Secretary	Ms. Francesca Borg	G4
Technical Assistant (logistics)	Mr. Anthony Zerafa	G3
Temporary Staff		
Temporary Technical Officer	Ms. Lilia Khodjet El Khil	P3
Junior Programme Officer	Mr. François Leotoing	P2
Junior Programme Officer	Ms. Cristina Farchi	P2
Secretary (bilingual)	Ms. Ruth Mizzi	G6
Administrative Assistant	Mr. Andre Sammut	G5

IX PREMISES OF REMPEC

125. The relocation of REMPEC from its present premises on Manoel Island became necessary following the agreement concerning the development of Manoel Island, which was concluded between the Government of Malta and a private consortium. In February 2001, the Ministry for the Environment informed REMPEC that its offices will be relocated to the new Malta Maritime Authority (MMA) one-stop-shop building, which was originally expected to be completed by the end of 2004. In 2003 the MMA approached REMPEC to enquire whether it would be acceptable for the Centre to relocate to the "Maritime House", which at present accommodates the offices of the MMA's Merchant Shipping Directorate, instead of to the new MMA one-stop-shop building. After carefully considering the new proposal, REMPEC was of the opinion that, besides fully meeting the future needs of the Centre, the suggested site would significantly improve its working conditions. After consulting IMO and MEDU, the Centre informed the MMA of its agreement with the proposed solution.

126. Following extensive discussions concerning the relocation of REMPEC, which involved the Government of Malta, REMPEC and IMO, on 6 August 2004 the Maltese Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially informed the Centre and IMO that the Government of Malta approved the relocation of REMPEC offices to the "Maritime House", currently occupied by the Merchant Shipping Directorate of the MMA.

127. The date of relocation has not yet been established since this will take place once the Merchant Shipping Directorate moves to a new MMA one-stop-shop building, which is currently under construction.

128. Pending the relocation to the new premises and with a view to improving the working conditions of REMPEC's staff, certain works were carried out at the present building of the Centre.

These included in particular certification and addition of new computer cabling and upgrading of the ladies' bathrooms. The cost of the latter work has been entirely covered by the Government of Malta.

129. The security of the Centre's premises that used to be a matter of concern in the past, significantly improved since the private consortium that is responsible for the development of Manoel Island installed fences and a gate, which is permanently manned by the security personnel.

X IMO - MALTA HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENT ON REMPEC

130. The IMO - Malta Host Country Agreement on REMPEC has been effective since 1990 and, in view of the experience gained since its signing, it was felt that it was opportune to open negotiations to review this agreement with a view to updating and clarifying some of its provisions. A meeting was held in Malta on the 5 March 2004 between an IMO delegation led by Mr R.G. Jones, Director of Administration and Finance and a Maltese delegation led by Mr Charles Inguanez, Director, Consular, Protocol and Information Matters, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two parties agreed to open negotiations to review the agreement and IMO undertook to submit the proposed amendments to the Government of Malta through diplomatic channels. In his letter dated 9 September 2004 the Secretary-General of IMO *inter alia* informed the Maltese Minister for Competitiveness and Communications that a draft revised Agreement between the Government of Malta and IMO was being prepared by IMO in consultation with REMPEC. The revision currently being finalized has been based on the provisions of similar host country agreements and in particular on the agreement between Greece and the United Nations regarding the Headquarters of the Co-ordinating Unit of the Mediterranean Action Plan.

XI IMO STANDING ARRANGEMENTS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF REMPEC

131. With a view to recording and streamlining management procedures related to the administration of the Centre, the Marine Environment Division of IMO, in close liaison with REMPEC, prepared in early 2004 a set of "Standing arrangements for the management of REMPEC – Malta". In May 2004 the "Standing arrangements" were agreed upon and became effective. The new arrangements greatly facilitate the day-to-day contacts between REMPEC and IMO and the administration of REMPEC in general.

The Meeting of Focal Points is invited to take note and express its views on the Report.