



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

10th Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional
Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre
for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

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Agenda Item 5

**Updating the Regional Information System (RIS) and Reporting
under the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Information System**

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document summarizes the developments made in the field of information sharing by the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) and by REMPEC in their respective field of competences.

Action to be taken: [Paragraph 64](#)

Related documents: [REMPEC/WG.28/10](#), [REMPEC/WG.30/4/1](#)

Dissemination and exchange of information: REMPEC's Website

1. In view of assisting Contracting Parties to the Protocol concerning Co-operation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea ("Prevention and Emergency Protocol") to implement its Article 7 on Dissemination and exchange of information, in December 2009, the Secretariat launched its new website to facilitate the exchange of information and to transfer a part of the Regional Information System (RIS), which was mainly based upon paper documentation, to an IT-based documentation system.

2. The website has been divided in eight (8) main parts consisting of the following menus:

- **[About REMPEC](#)**: This section provides information on the legal framework from a regional, international and global point of view; it gives also access to the Centre's mandate, the regional strategy, and descriptions of REMPEC's staff and REMPEC's Focal Points' responsibilities.
- **[News & Events](#)**: This dynamic section is updated on a regular basis to provide information on past and forthcoming events organised by REMPEC or by other external related bodies.
- **[Prevention](#)**: This menu provides extensive relevant information on prevention from marine pollution from ships in particular on effective maritime administrations, port reception facilities, illicit discharges, pleasure craft, places of refuge, and Invasive species and ballast water.
- **[Response](#)**: This section focuses on preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships and provides a comprehensive overview of the services provided by the

Centre on Contingency Planning, Capacity building, Cooperation between governments and industry and best practices from a preparedness point of view; and Regional, Remote and Onsite Assistance from a response point of view.

- **Country Profile:** This section provides updated information on the status of implementation of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol from a national and regional perspective. Further details are provided hereunder.
- **Emergency:** To ensure prompt and efficient response, this section details the Emergency Communication Procedure to be followed in case of an incident, gives access to the Standard Pollution Report, and briefly recalls the services offered by REMPEC in case of emergency.
- **Tools :** This part provides access to a set of guidelines, decision support-tools and databases developed by REMPEC, directly or through technical working groups (e.g. MTWG), to assist decision makers in considering a wide range of alternatives.
- **Information resources:** This menu gives access to the core source of information on REMPEC's activities including *inter alia*, all working documents and reports of the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC since 1998, REMPEC's activities' reports, Regional Guidelines and Manuals, REMPEC's Publications, as well as documents related to the Mediterranean Action Plan's legal framework and adopted policies.

Introduction to the Country Profiles

3. The online Country Profiles section contains detailed information on the implementation of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol.

4. According to Article 12 of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol, Contracting Parties committed themselves to use their best endeavours to render assistance to the other Parties who so request in case of emergency. This assistance may comprise, in particular, expert advice, products, equipment and nautical facilities. With a view to helping Mediterranean coastal States to fulfil their obligations, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have assigned to REMPEC the function to collect and disseminate information concerning "experts, equipment and installations in each coastal State which can be put, under certain conditions, at the disposal of the State which so requests in case of emergency (Function A(ii) of the amended Annex to Resolution 7 "Objectives and functions of the Centre").

5. The Country Profile of each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention reports information on the following subjects:

- **OPRC - Preparedness for and response to marine pollution**
 - Contact list of National Competent Authorities
 - Conventions & Protocols
 - National & regional system
 - Response strategy
 - Risk assessment
 - Expertise
 - Resources
 - Training and follow-up
- **Prevention**
 - National competent authorities contact list
 - List of ratified International Conventions
 - Implementation of International Conventions

6. The information available in the Country Profiles pages is exclusively updated by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with the exception of the status of ratification of Conventions and Protocols, which is regularly updated by REMPEC based on information of IMO. Information directly made available to REMPEC by the Contracting Parties is also updated. In order to maintain the system up to date it is paramount that Focal Points who have been provided with passwords and usernames update their respective country profile. It is also important to note that this

information could be accessed on line by whoever is interested. Therefore Contracting Parties should consider updating their Country Profile page as a priority. To date, some Parties have not provided any information whilst others have only partially completed their country profile.

7. As further detailed in document [REMPEC/WG.30/5](#), REMPEC collaborates with the [Sea Alarm Foundation](#) for response to oil wildlife incidents, which developed [Country Wildlife Response Profiles \(CWRPs\)](#). Their country profiles provide crucial information on the level of a country's preparedness to deal with an oil spill incident that involves marine wildlife.

8. The CWRPs are available directly from the relevant section of the REMPEC Country Profiles (OPRC/Response Strategy/Fauna Protection). Terms & Conditions and other information on the CRWPs are available on the [Sea Alarm Foundation website](#).

9. The International Tanker Owner Pollution Federation ([ITOPF](#)) is a not-for-profit organisation established on behalf of the world's ship-owners to promote an effective response to marine spills of oil, chemicals and other hazardous substances. Its [series of Country Profiles](#) provides a summary of the oil spill response arrangements and clean-up resources.

10. Recently, the Secretariat has developed a section providing a "Regional synthesis" which compiles automatically in maps, tables and pie-charts information from the Country Profile pages and provides a regional overview on the following aspects:

- [Directory of Competent National Authorities](#) (Governmental, Prevention, OPRC, 24 hour, Mutual Assistance Focal Points), downloadable in pdf format;
- [Status of ratification of relevant conventions and protocols](#);
- Contingency Planning ([National plans](#) and [sub-regional agreements](#));
- [List of companies offering services in the Mediterranean Sea](#), downloadable in pdf format.

The Regional Information System (RIS)

11. Regional co-operation in case of an emergency situation cannot be really effective unless the necessary information to initiate operations of mutual assistance and the knowledge on the nature of the problems, methods, techniques and means of coping, have been widely distributed to the Parties of the regional agreement, and unless this information is regularly brought up-to-date.

12. The Regional Information System (RIS), which the Centre is developing and keeping up-to-date, is in line with its functions (Annex to Resolution 7 - UNEP (OCA)/MED.IG.1/5, Appendix 2) as well as in keeping with decisions made by the Contracting Parties (UNEP (OCA) / MED.IG.1/5, Annex V), and its objective is to respond to these necessities and needs.

13. This system developed by the Centre was made-up of four parts:

- **Part A:** Basic Documents, Recommendations, Principles and Guidelines Concerning Accidental Marine Pollution Preparedness, Response and Mutual Assistance.
- **Part B:** Lists and Inventories.
- **Part C:** Databanks, Forecasting Models and Decision Support Systems.
- **Part D:** Operational Guides and Technical Documents.

PART A: BASIC DOCUMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES CONCERNING ACCIDENTAL MARINE POLLUTION PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE.

14. The basic documents, recommendations, principles and guidelines concerning accidental marine pollution preparedness, response and mutual assistance can now be downloaded individually or as a consolidated document which has been updated in December 2009 with the integration of the Mandate of the Components of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) including the Mandate of REMPEC.

PART B: LISTS AND INVENTORIES

15. Lists and inventories are generally dynamic documents which can quickly become obsolete if they are not updated regularly. In order to avoid this difficulty and in view of making available an efficient system, the Secretariat has developed the above mentioned Country Profile database updated by the competent authorities in each individual Mediterranean coastal State. The list and inventories extract the information directly from the data base as detailed hereunder.

SECTION 1 Directory of competent national authorities in charge of accidental marine pollution preparedness, response and mutual assistance (RIS B1).

16. RIS B1 is a dynamic document generated automatically by the system which extracts the contact details of the REMPEC Focal Points (Governmental Focal Point, Prevention Focal Point, OPRC Focal Point, 24 hour Focal Point and Mutual assistance Focal Point) and consolidates the information in a single permanently up-to-date document. The information available in this document can also be consulted online :

- From a national perspective in the [Country Profile of each country](#), or
- From a regional point of view by type of Focal Points in the "[Regional synthesis section](#)".

SECTION 2 Inventory of Centres of Expertise and Centres of Resources, which can be put, under certain conditions, at the disposal of a State, which so requests, in cases of emergency (RIS B2).

17. The information which was available in this document has been updated and can be consulted for each country that provided information to the Centre in the section "Country Profile". So far the Centre has not produced a dynamic document for RIS B2 but would eventually consider it in the framework of the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) as detailed in document REMPEC/WG.32/9/2.

SECTION 3 Directory of companies offering services in the Mediterranean in case of emergency (RIS B3).

18. Experience of various countries from all over the world clearly indicates that efficient response to a major marine pollution incident is a task which inevitably surpasses the capabilities of any single country. Therefore, regional and/or international co-operation is called for to supplement national capacities and very often there is also a need for intervention of professional companies which may provide pollution control services. With a view to increasing the level of preparedness to face an accidental spillage and to providing in advance Mediterranean coastal States with a list of potential choice of private means available in the region in case of emergency, a directory of companies which may provide response services was established. The companies listed in this directory have been exclusively identified by their respective national authorities.

19. As RIS B1, this document is generated automatically by the system which extracts the data from the Country Profile databases fed by the national authorities.

PART C: DATABANKS, FORECASTING MODELS AND DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS.

SECTION 1 Description of the Centre's databank on hazardous substances and information services provided by the Centre (RIS C1).

20. This document, published in July 1992, presents the services that could be provided by the Centre in the collection of relevant information in case of an accident involving the spillage of dangerous substances at sea. It is divided into three chapters: the first one outlines the type of information that should be gathered during an emergency situation, the second one presents the information services including documentation of an operational character available at the Centre, and the third one outlines the principal features of a computerized database developed by the Centre.

21. The core of the document is a scanned version of the original hard copy. The content of the document is still valid, however, it is proposed to review the format of the document to harmonize it to the most recent document published by REMPEC.

SECTION 2 [List of alerts and accidents in the Mediterranean \(RIS C2\).](#)

22. The database on alerts and accidents in the Mediterranean Sea, the associated Geographical Information System (GIS) and the Statistical Analysis are updated on an annual basis. The information on each event recorded in the database includes information on the date and place of the spill or accident, the ship(s) or installation(s) involved, the source of information, the type and quantity of pollutant, a brief description of the accident and, when available, of actions taken and consequences of the accident.

SECTION 3 **Database on the Transport of Chemical Substances – TROCS (RIS C3).**

23. The document was a description of the second version of the Centre's database entitled "Transport of Chemical Substances – TROCS". TROCS database has been upgraded several times since the publication of this document. As described in document REMPEC/WG.32/9/1, the Mediterranean Technical Working Group is currently revising MIDSIS TROCS Version 2.0.

24. In view of the fact that this document is now obsolete, it is proposed to remove it from the RIS.

PART D: **OPERATIONAL GUIDES AND TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS.**

SECTION 1 [Guide for combating accidental marine pollution in the Mediterranean \(2000\) \(RIS/D/1\).](#)

25. The Guide contains practical information on various aspects of response to oil spills, including contingency planning, communications and reporting, observation of oil spills, various oil spill response techniques, storage, transportation and disposal of collected oiled material, storage and maintenance of equipment and products, and basic information on compensation for oil pollution damage.

26. It is proposed to review the format of the document to harmonize it to the most recent documents published by REMPEC.

SECTION 2 **Guidelines for the use of dispersants for combating oil pollution at sea in the Mediterranean region (1998) (RIS/D/2).**

27. As described in document REMPEC/WG.32/9/1, the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) has revised the Guidelines which are submitted for the endorsement of this Meeting.

28. The Secretariat will follow the instructions of the Meeting following the discussions under Agenda Item 9.

SECTION 3 [Concise dictionary of marine antipollution terms \(2003\) \(RIS/D/3\).](#)

29. The Dictionary is an English-French and French-English lexicon of terminology used in the field of accidental marine pollution preparedness and response. Far from being comprehensive, it aims at responding to the needs of those persons, who working in this domain, are in need of quick translation of technical terms. It also includes several bilingual annexes, containing a certain number of explanatory diagrams.

30. It is proposed to review the format of the document to harmonize it to the most recent documents published by REMPEC.

SECTION 4 [The significance of a material safety data sheet \(2001\) \(RIS/D/4\).](#)

31. The document provides an explanation of the basic terminology and definitions contained in Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). MSDS is an important source of information on physical and chemical properties of a chemical that might be released during an accident, and it is essential that these are clearly understood by the personnel handling chemicals. MSDS regularly contain

information on the biological and hazardous properties presented by the chemical in question and the preventive measures to be taken when the chemical is spilled.

32. Data sheets on a specific substance are prepared by various international and national organizations, as well as by chemical manufacturers, and the document aims at describing basic information found in most Data Sheets. Annex I provides examples of data sheets from different information sources. Annex II provides the phonetic alphabet to be used when communicating. Annex III presents the United Nations Classification and Definition of Classes for the transport of dangerous goods. Annex IV is an English-French vocabulary of some common terms found in a data sheet.

33. It is proposed to review the format of the document to harmonize it to the most recent documents published by REMPEC.

SECTION 5 Personal protective equipment and monitoring devices for maritime chemical emergencies (2003) (RIS/D/5).

34. The document gives background information on various aspects to consider in the acquisition of personal protection equipment and provides those in charge of response operations with the necessary information for the selection of the appropriate equipment in relation to the conditions and hazards encountered in a hazardous material spill.. .

35. The document, having been published in 2003, and taking into consideration the development of the Operational guide on the use of sorbent by the International Maritime Organization's Technical Group which will be submitted to the 62th Session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) for endorsement, may require a future revision taking into account the international manual.

36. It is proposed to review the format of the document to harmonize it to the most recent documents published by REMPEC.

SECTION 6 The TROCS database and its use in response to lost packages washed ashore (RIS/D/6).

37. "Transport of Chemical Substances – TROCS" has been upgraded to MIDSIS TROCS as mentioned in [paragraph 23](#).

38. It is proposed therefore to remove this document from the list.

SECTION 7 Theory and practice of foams in chemical spill response (1992) (RIS/D/7).

39. The main body of the document is a synopsis of the subject matter and aims at providing those involved in response operations with background information on the various technical issues associated with the use of foam as a response method. It contains four main sections: (i) the fundamentals of a foam, (ii) foam concentrates, (iii) the production of a finished foam, and (iv) application of finished foam, and various Annexes, one of which (Annex III) lists common terminology associated with foam use.

40. It is proposed to review the format of the document to harmonize it to the most recent documents published by REMPEC.

SECTION 8 Standardized classification systems for chemicals accidentally spilled at sea (1991) (RIS/D/8).

41. Several changes in the nomenclature of chemical products and in the definition of their hazard profiles are not reflected in the document which has been removed from the RIS to avoid any confusion.

42. It is proposed therefore to remove this document from the list.

SECTION 9 **Risks of gaseous releases resulting from maritime incidents (1996) (RIS/D/9).**

43. The document provides emergency-planning personnel with informative background on the issues related to releases of gases, and it is intended for the response personnel, in particular decision-makers, who have a basic maritime and technical background. The document deals with the following topics: aspects of the chemistry of gases pertaining to their carriage at sea, container systems for packaged gases, layouts of gas carriers, international regulations governing the transportation of gases by sea, hazardous properties of gases, behaviour of airborne gas releases, and response measures for gas releases.

44. It is proposed to review the format of the document to update it with the missing figures and to harmonize it to the most recent documents published by REMPEC.

SECTION 11 **Practical guide for marine chemical spills (2000) (RIS/D/11).**

45. The guide is a compilation of information originating from different sources that the Centre has assembled to reflect the state-of-the-art for responding to marine chemical emergencies. The guide is designed as a reference for use in the field or office, and aims at assisting response personnel to select plausible response measures in case of spills of hazardous and noxious substances at sea. Its scope is to provide a decision-maker with options for response to marine chemical emergencies and to present them in a structured format that can facilitate the decision given the amount of information available at the start of the event.

46. Response options are presented in a decision-tree format, reinforced by tables, matrices and diagrams. The decision-trees are based on the behaviour classification system for chemicals spilled at sea. It also includes information on the behaviour of commonly transported chemicals, the compatibility of chemicals, the resistance of equipment material to chemicals, and safety precautions when entering spill sites.

47. In the framework of the revision of MIDSIS TROCS version 2.0, the decisions-trees which are reported in this document will be updated. Moreover, all the information available in this document will be incorporated in the new version of MIDSIS TROCS.

48. In this context, it is proposed to remove this document from the RIS list.

SECTION 13 **Mediterranean Oiled Shoreline Assessment Guidelines (2009) (RIS/D/13).**

49. The Guidelines are aimed at harmonising shoreline assessment in the region and at facilitating exchange of information. The common regional shoreline assessment procedure should fasten the communication in time of crisis and should enable any regional or international expert to understand and subsequently analyse the shoreline assessment form and provide consistent recommendations on appropriate response strategy.

Revision of the Regional Information System reference system and content

50. Taking into account the recent development of the Centre's information system as described above, it is proposed to review RIS's reference system and consider either updating or removing obsolete documents as summarized in Annex.

Newsletter

51. Currently, the news are only available through REMPEC's website. No notification mailing list informing about new releases was put in place by the Secretariat to avoid overloading the email boxes of the Centre's correspondents with REMPEC's new notifications.

52. Alternatively, and in view of increasing the visibility of the Centre, the Secretariat proposes to produce and disseminate, on a quarterly basis, a newsletter summarizing the news of the period concerned with direct links to the corresponding news posted on the website.

Reporting System for the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

53. It is recalled that Article 26 of the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, adopted and signed in Barcelona on 10 June 1995 as a revision to the original 1976 Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution, stipulates that the Contracting Parties shall transmit to the Organization responsible for Secretariat functions, reports on:

- (a) the legal, administrative or other measures taken by them for the implementation of the Convention, the Protocols, and the recommendations adopted by their meetings;
- (b) the effectiveness of the measures referred to in (a) above, and problems encountered in the implementation of the instruments in question.

54. So far, six Protocols have been adopted within the framework of the Convention. All Protocols contain reporting obligations, which can be considered as falling within two categories: (a) legal and administrative implementation and assessment of effectiveness, within the general framework of Article 26 of the Convention, and (b) various aspects of technical implementation, under the terms of a number of specific articles in each individual Protocol. The second category also includes information that, although not specifically stipulated by the terms of the Protocol, is nevertheless required by the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Coordinating Unit or by the appropriate Regional Centre or Regional Activity Centre, either for monitoring purposes, or in order to compile and update country profiles.

55. In compliance with the Decision of the 14th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, Mediterranean coastal States agreed to inform MAP, every two years, by providing national reports on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

56. [The Barcelona Convention Reporting System](#) has been established to support reporting activities under article 26 of the amended Barcelona Convention and several articles of different Protocols. The main target of the system is to facilitate collection, storage, management and processing of the above mentioned reports.

57. The system provides a number of functionalities and tools to manage the process of reporting both from the Contracting Parties and the MAP Coordinating Unit, through the use of internet.

58. At the 9th Meeting of Focal Points of REMPEC, the Meeting was informed of the work carried out by the MAP Secretariat through a Working Group on Effectiveness. As a complementary tool to the Reporting Format, the Contracting Parties had requested the Secretariat to develop and propose to their next Ordinary Meeting, a set of effectiveness indicators to assess the level of implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. The proposed set of indicators for the Prevention and Emergency as agreed by the Meeting were reproduced in document [REMPEC/WG.30/4/2/Rev.2](#).

59. The Meeting expressed the wish that the effectiveness indicators related to the Prevention and Emergency Protocol be periodically reviewed and requested REMPEC to convey the wish of the REMPEC Focal Points to the MAP Secretariat.

60. As reported in document REMPEC/WG.32/4/1, the Contracting Parties decided to apply the effectiveness indicators on a voluntary basis. This decision was amended by the decision of Bureau 70 of MAP in view of the current work carried out in the context of the application of the ecosystem approach to MAP's policies and strategies.

61. At the time of writing the present document only three countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece and Italy) submitted their official report through the Barcelona Convention Reporting System. Hence, the number of submissions does not enable an analysis of the information from a regional point of view.

62. However, it should be pointed out that whilst the Barcelona Convention Reporting System should reflect the measures undertaken during the previous biennium period, for instance 2008-2009, the information provided reflects past measures (e.g. Ratification of the OPRC 90 Convention in the nineties is reported). Therefore, the reports reflect the current situation rather than providing information on progress made during the period concerned, as the system was conceived.

63. On the other hand, REMPEC's Country Profiles are aimed at reflecting the current situation as further described above. Some information reported in the Barcelona Convention Reporting System is not reproduced in REMPEC's Country Profile (e.g. Incident report for the biennium 2008-2009). It is therefore suggested identifying a communication procedure to ensure the complementarity of the Barcelona Convention Reporting System and REMPEC's Country Profiles.

64. **The Meeting of Focal Points is invited to:**

- (a) **take note** of the work carried out by the Secretariat to facilitate dissemination of information;
- (b) **provide comments** on the use of the new website and its eventual improvement, on the proposed dissemination of a quarterly newsletter and on the insertion, deletion and formatting of RIS' documents as proposed in Annex;
- (c) **Instruct the Secretariat** to take the necessary measure to update the RIS reference system and content;
- (d) **share views** on possible communication procedures to fulfil both the Barcelona Convention Reporting System and REMPEC's Country Profile requirements.

Annex

Document	Comments	Measure to be considered
Description of the Centre's databank on hazardous substances and information services provided by the Centre (RIS C1).	The core of the document is a scanned version of the original hard copy. The content of the document is still valid.	Review the format
Database on the Transport of Chemical Substances – TROCS (RIS C3).	This document being now obsolete	Remove the document from the RIS.
Guide for combating accidental marine pollution in the Mediterranean (2000) (RIS/D/1).	The content of the document is still valid.	Review the format
Guidelines for the use of dispersants for combating oil pollution at sea in the Mediterranean region (1998) (RIS/D/2).	Document submitted for its endorsement.	The Secretariat will follow the instruction of the Meeting following the discussions under Agenda Item 9.
Concise dictionary of marine antipollution terms (2003) (RIS/D/3).	The content of the document is still valid.	Review the format
The significance of a material safety data sheet (2001) (RIS/D/4).	The content of the document is still valid, however it may required a future update.	Review the format Consider its future revision
Personal protective equipment and monitoring devices for maritime chemical emergencies (2003) (RIS/D/5).	The content of the document is still valid, however it may required a future update.	Review the format Consider its future revision
The TROCS database and its use in response to lost packages washed ashore. (RIS/D/6).	TROCS has been upgraded to MIDSIS TROCS	Remove the document from the RIS.
Standardized classification systems for chemicals accidentally spilt at sea (1991) (RIS/D/8).	Several changes in the nomenclature of chemical products and in the definition of their hazard profiles are not reflected in the document.	Remove the document from the RIS.
Risks of gaseous releases resulting from maritime incidents (1996) (RIS/D/9).	Figures are missing	Review the format and add figures
Practical guide for marine chemical spills (2000) (RIS/D/11).	Moreover, all the information available in this document will be incorporated and updated in the new version of MIDSIS TROCS.	Remove the document from the RIS.
Mediterranean Oil Spill Waste Management Guidelines (RIS/D/12)	Document submitted for its endorsement.	The Secretariat will follow the instruction of the Meeting following the discussions under Agenda Item 9.