



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

11th Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional
Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre
for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.37/13

Date: 13 May 2015

Malta, 15-17 June 2015

Original: English

Agenda Item 13

REMPEC'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document provides a brief history of the Centre, its achievements and milestones undertaken within the framework of its mandate as well as information on the proposed activities to celebrate REMPEC's 40th Anniversary in 2016.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 41

Related documents: UNEP/CONF.1/Final Act, UNEP/IG.14/9, UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.4/4, UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.5/16, UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.11/10, UNEP(DEC)/MED IG. 13/8, UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.14 Final Act, UNEP(DEC)/MED IG.16/13, UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG 20/8.

Historical background

1 After the creation of the Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1974, the Mediterranean became the first region to adopt an Action Plan, namely the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of 1975.

2 The Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the Coastal States of the Mediterranean Region for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea, was convened in Barcelona, Spain, from 2 to 16 February 1976 and adopted the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution ("the Barcelona Convention of 1976"), which aims at protecting the marine environment and coastal zones through prevention and reduction of pollution and, as far as possible, elimination of pollution, whether land- or sea-based. The Barcelona Convention of 1976 was adopted together with two specific Protocols, including the Protocol Concerning Co-operation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency ("the 1976 Emergency Protocol") (UNEP/CONF.1/Final Act). The three instruments entered into force on 12 February 1978.

3 The 1976 Emergency Protocol makes reference to the "Regional Centre", the meaning of which is clarified in Resolution 7 of the said Diplomatic Conference, which relates to the establishment of a Regional Oil-Combating Centre for the Mediterranean in Malta.

4 On the basis of the mandate provided by the said Resolution, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), then known as the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), signed a Project Document related to the establishment and operation of the Centre on 2 September 1976. The Regional Oil Combating Centre (ROCC) was officially established on 11 December 1976.

5 As requested in paragraph 4 of Resolution 7 mentioned above, the Intergovernmental Review Meeting of Mediterranean Coastal States and the First Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention of 1976 and its related Protocols, which was held in Geneva, Switzerland from 5 to 10 February 1979, reviewed the institutional and financial arrangements as well as agreed on the establishment of a Mediterranean Regional Trust Fund for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution (MTF) and a budget for the Centre, which provided for the payment of operating costs as well as activities (UNEP/IG.14/9).

6 The mandate of the Centre was to strengthen the capacities of coastal States in the Mediterranean region and to facilitate co-operation among them, particularly by developing national capacities, with a view to combatting massive marine pollution by oil and by establishing a regional information system to deal with marine pollution emergencies.

7 ROCC's mandate was extended over the years in conformity with the decisions of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention of 1976 with a view to addressing relevant emerging issues and the respective global developments with a particular focus on preventive measures against pollution from ships.

8 In 1989, the name of the Centre was eventually changed to "Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea" (REMPEC).

9 The Ninth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention of 1976 and its Protocols, which was convened in Barcelona, Spain, from 5 to 8 June 1995, decided to promote regional cooperation for the implementation of the relevant international Conventions related to the protection of the marine environment from pollution by ships (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.5/16). Back-to-back with this meeting, the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its Protocols, held from 9 to 10 June 1995, adopted the Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development of the Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean (MAP Phase II), as part of the revision process of MAP of 1975 in line with the provisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which was convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 3 to 14 June 1992, and in particular with its Agenda 21. At the same time, the Barcelona Convention of 1976 was modified by amendments adopted on 10 June 1995 by the said Conference of Plenipotentiaries. The amended Convention, recorded as the "Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean" ("the Barcelona Convention"), entered into force on 9 July 2004.

10 This decision was followed by the adoption of the Resolution on the "Regional Strategy on prevention of pollution of the marine environment by ships" by the Tenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, which was held in Tunis, Tunisia, from 18 to 21 November 1997 (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.11/10). This new decision opened the way for amending the 1976 Emergency Protocol.

11 The revision of the 1976 Emergency Protocol aimed at addressing the prevention of marine pollution, as indicated in the above-mentioned Resolution, but also at updating its text. The revision process effectively started in 1998, and comprised *inter alia* three Meetings of National Legal and Technical Experts as well as an *Ad hoc* Open-ended Meeting of Experts. The Twelfth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, which was convened in Monaco from 14 to 17 November 2001, decided that, instead of amending the 1976 Emergency Protocol, a new Protocol should be adopted. The same Meeting approved the new objectives and functions of REMPEC, in order to reflect the modifications made in the text of the Protocol (UNEP(DEC)/MED IG. 13/8).

12 The text was finalised and the revision process was eventually completed when the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea, which was held in Malta from 24 to 25 January 2002, adopted the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea ("the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol") (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.14 Final Act).

13 The 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, which entered into force on 17 March 2004, covers prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from sea-based sources. Its text was also updated with a view to harmonizing it with the texts of other relevant international legal

instruments developed since the adoption of the 1976 Emergency Protocol, and in particular with the text of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 (OPRC), taking also into account the contribution of the European Union, then known as European Community, to the implementation of international standards related to maritime safety and prevention of pollution from ships. From the date of its entry into force, the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol replaced the 1976 Emergency Protocol in the relations between the Parties to both instruments.

14 All twenty-two Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, except one¹, are Parties to the 1976 Emergency Protocol. Sixteen of the twenty-two Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention signed the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, and as of May 2015, fourteen are Parties thereto (Croatia, Cyprus, European Union, France, Greece, Israel, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey).

15 In parallel to this and, bearing in mind the increase in the activities concerning exploration and exploitation of the Mediterranean seabed and its subsoil, and recognizing that the pollution which may result therefrom represents a serious danger to the environment and to human beings, the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its Protocols, which was convened in Madrid, Spain from 13 to 14 October 1994, adopted the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil ("the Offshore Protocol") (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.4/4).

16 Whilst the Offshore Protocol specifically requests Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to implement *mutatis mutandis* the provisions of the 1976 Emergency Protocol, in cases of emergency, it also details the role of REMPEC in this matter.

17 The Offshore Protocol and its implementation remained dormant for many years. However, the "Deepwater Horizon" oil spill of 20 April 2010 brought back the Offshore Protocol on the agenda of the Mediterranean, European and international community, and led to its entry into force on 24 March 2011 following the ratification by the Syrian Arab Republic on 22 February 2011. As of May 2015, seven Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are Parties to the Offshore Protocol (Albania, Cyprus, European Union, Libya, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia).

18 Subsequently, the Seventeenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, which was held in Paris, France from 8 to 10 February 2012, decided to embark on the development of an Action Plan with a view to facilitating the effective implementation of the Offshore Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG 20/8; Decision IG.20/12).

19 Based on Decision IG.20/12, the MAP Secretariat included a number of activities aimed at supporting the drafting of the Action Plan in the programme of work of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) for the management of human activities that may affect the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment, which is funded by the European Union.

20 Consequently, the MAP Secretariat established an *ad hoc* working group coordinated by REMPEC, composed of representatives of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and observers from representatives of the concerned industries, relevant international organizations and MAP partners. The said *ad hoc* working group met on three occasions between 2013 and 2014. During this period, an in-depth assessment and stock-taking analysis of the existing practical measures in place in the Mediterranean countries with regard to offshore activities were conducted and a draft Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan in the framework of the Offshore Protocol was produced.

21 The draft Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan was submitted for review to the Fourth Meeting of the EcAp Coordination Group, which was convened in Athens, Greece from 9 to 10 October 2014, and will be submitted, as information document, to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points to be held from 19 to 21 May 2015 and, as a working document, to the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points scheduled in October 2015 prior to its submission for adoption by the Nineteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, to be tentatively held in February 2016 in Greece. The role of REMPEC with regard to its implementation will then be clearly defined.

¹ Montenegro, which gained its independence in 2006, ratified the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, and therefore did not sign or ratify the 1976 Emergency Protocol.

REMPEC's achievements and milestones undertaken within the framework of its mandate

22 A new and important milestone will be achieved in the year 2016 when REMPEC celebrates its 40th Anniversary, which will coincidentally mark the beginning of the implementation period of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021) and the MAP's Integrated Six-Year Programme of Work for the period 2016 to 2021.

23 After forty years of existence, it is worth mentioning the following non-exhaustive achievements and milestones undertaken by REMPEC within the framework of its mandate since its inception on 11 December 1976, which highlight the contribution of the Centre to the Mediterranean region:

- **Assistance provided to countries in drafting, reviewing and adopting their National Marine Pollution Contingency Plans**

24 According to the requirements of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, the Parties thereto shall endeavour to maintain and promote, either individually or through bilateral or multilateral cooperation, contingency plans and other means of preventing and combating pollution incidents. Since its establishment, REMPEC has provided its assistance for the preparation of national systems for preparedness for and response to marine pollution, to the competent national authorities of fifteen Mediterranean coastal States (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey). At present, seventeen Mediterranean coastal States (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey) have in place a national preparedness and response system, including operational national contingency plans.

- **Assistance to group of countries to draft and adopt sub-regional agreements on preparedness and response to spills**

25 In addition to assisting individual Mediterranean coastal States in developing their national systems, and in conformity with its mandate to assist those, which so request, in the preparation and development of bilateral and multilateral operational agreements between neighbouring countries, REMPEC has also been involved, since 1992, in the development of sub-regional systems for preparedness and response to major marine pollution incidents. Such sub-regional arrangements for mutual assistance in case of marine pollution emergencies significantly extend the spill response capacities of individual countries by providing a mechanism for pooling resources and jointly conducting response operations. The Centre assisted in the mid-90s in the conclusion of a sub-regional agreement between Cyprus, Israel and Egypt, in the mid-2000s in a similar one between Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, which entered into force in May 2011 as well as one between Croatia, Italy and Slovenia, which has not yet entered into force.

- **Assistance to countries in emergency situations**

26 The Centre put into place a 24/7 system to be reachable at any time, which, in view of the small staff complement of the Centre, is commendable. The Centre established a team of experts pooled under the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU), which, on request, can assist any Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention in case of an emergency, not only in the field of marine pollution response techniques through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the Centre de documentation, de recherche et d'expérimentations sur les pollutions accidentelles des eaux (Cedre), the Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale (ISPRA) and the Federazione Nazionale dell'Industria Chimica (FEDERCHIMICA), but also in the field of wildlife restoration through an MoU with the Sea Alarm Foundation, or assist in the forecast of a pollution drift through an MoU with the Mediterranean Operational Network for the Global Ocean Observing System (MONGOOS). Some of these partners provided their services through REMPEC during the oil spill in Lebanon in 2006 and on several other occasions through, *inter alia*, training and exercises. The Centre also provides direct on site or remote technical advice. Furthermore, REMPEC acts as a regional Focal point in case of regional and international assistance. It coordinated, at regional level, the assistance provided to Lebanon after the 2006 Eastern Mediterranean oil spill and was involved in 2010 during the "Deepwater Horizon" oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, acting as the regional entity to gather information on available response means that could be used in the response operation.

- **Dissemination of information and decision support systems**

27 The Centre also assists the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention by disseminating information on response techniques and decision support tools. All this information was recorded in paper documentation, namely the “Regional Information System” and, since 2009, has been transferred to the Centre’s website: www.rempec.org. In recent years, the Centre published the Mediterranean Guidelines on Oiled Shoreline Assessment, the Mediterranean Oil Spill Waste Management Guidelines and the revised version of the Guidelines for the use of dispersants for combating oil pollution at sea in the Mediterranean region. These guidelines were elaborated with the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention through the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG), which was set up for this purpose in 2007. The waste management and the dispersant guidelines were used by the IMO as a basis to draft the international version of the related guidelines. Several guidelines were translated into French, Spanish and Arabic. The Centre develops and keeps up-to-date decision support systems such as the Maritime Integrated Decision Support Information System (MIDSIS) created with the assistance of international partners, the Waste Management Decision Support Tool based on the guidelines and aimed at facilitating the drafting of a national oily waste management plan and, more recently, the Mediterranean Integrated Geographical Information System on Marine Pollution Risk Assessment and Response (MEDGIS-MAR). The Centre has also kept records, since 1977, of all known casualties that occurred in the Mediterranean Sea and which resulted or could have resulted in a spill.

- **Capacity building and exercises**

28 REMPEC initiated its first training programme in the early 1980s. Since then, at different levels, approximately 3,500 government officials and volunteers have participated in such activities. In addition to the delivery of the IMO Model Courses, specialised training in the specific fields of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships, have been organised by REMPEC, with the support of international experts, at national, sub-regional and regional levels. The Centre participates in and supports national exercises or sub-regional ones, either during the preparation phase or during the exercises themselves, on site or from its premises. It also conducts regular alert exercises involving Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and members of the MAU.

- **Port reception facilities**

29 REMPEC compiled an inventory of port reception facilities in Mediterranean coastal States that are not Member States of the European Union and provided recommendations for the implementation of technical solutions. In 2004, the total investment needed to upgrade the region was estimated at approximately 22 million Euros. Based on the results of the above-mentioned inventory relating to port reception facilities for garbage from ships, the Mediterranean coastal States, with the support of the Centre, were able to promote the entry into force of the special status of the Mediterranean Sea under Annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) in May 2009, thus resulting in stricter rules for the disposal of garbage at sea in accordance with this Convention.

- **Illicit discharges from ships**

30 Although the Mediterranean Sea is a special area under MARPOL Annex I, which means that discharges from ships at sea are strictly regulated when not prohibited, it is a fact that illicit discharges are taking place on a daily basis. In order to address this issue, REMPEC assists the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in strengthening their legislative framework in order to have dedicated laws for the enforcement of MARPOL. In 2013, the Mediterranean Network of Law Enforcement Officials relating to MARPOL within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS) was established. The MENELAS Information System is being developed in cooperation with Plan Bleu. Two coordinated aerial surveillance operations were organised under the initiative of REMPEC in 2009 and 2013.

- **Ballast water management**

31 Invasion of alien species by ships’ ballast water is a threat to biodiversity, human health and local economies as they could deplete and replace local stocks by imported ones of lesser or of no economic value. Since 2007, REMPEC, through the implementation of the GloBallast Partnerships Project in the Mediterranean region, has spearheaded a capacity building programme on the

management of ships' ballast water management in the region. It also led the way for the adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy on Ships' Ballast Water Management, including its Action Plan and Timetable as well as the "*General Guidance on the Voluntary Application of the D1 Ballast Water Exchange Standard by Vessels Operating between the Mediterranean Sea and the North-East Atlantic and/or the Baltic Sea*", by the Seventeenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, which was held in Paris, France, from 8 to 10 February 2012, with a view to addressing this threat and to minimise the risk of introducing new species in 2012 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.20/8). The Mediterranean Strategy includes interim arrangements for ships sailing in the Mediterranean to exchange their ballast water in accordance with the requirements of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004 (BWM Convention). These arrangements are of a voluntary interim nature as they became applicable on a voluntary basis as from 1 January 2012 until the BWM Convention enters into force. As this is a matter of concern not only within the Mediterranean Sea but also in the neighbouring seas, REMPEC, for the Barcelona Convention, and the Commission of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Commission) and the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission or HELCOM) developed the General Guidance, which entered into force on 1 October 2012, to be applied by shipmasters on a voluntary basis, until the BWM Convention enters into force.

- **Prevention of pollution from pleasure crafts activities**

32 The Mediterranean Sea is highly frequented by pleasure crafts. Depending on their characteristics, some of these crafts are subject to specific requirements of MARPOL. The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention agreed to develop guidelines in order to address the various nuisances that such activities could have on the environment. The guidelines, adopted in 2008, list best practices for skippers, managers of marinas and shipyards in order to minimise the impact of pleasure craft activities on the Mediterranean environment.

- **Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships**

33 The adoption of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol triggered the development of a Strategy for its effective implementation. The Fourteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, which was held in Portorož, Slovenia, from 8 to 11 November 2005, adopted the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2005-2015) ("the 2005 Regional Strategy") (UNEP(DEC)/MED IG.16/13). The assessment of the implementation of the 2005 Regional Strategy was carried out in 2015 with a view to evaluating its impact and enabling the drafting of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), to be adopted by the Nineteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, to be tentatively held in February 2016 in Greece.

- **Activities implemented under the framework of European Union funded Projects**

34 REMPEC has implemented a number of EU-funded projects since its establishment including, *inter alia*, the EU-funded MEDA Regional Project "*Euromed Cooperation on Maritime Safety and Prevention of Pollution from Ships – SAFEMED*" – <http://safemedproject.rempec.org/> – between 2006 and 2009 (SAFEMED I – MED 2005/109-573) and between 2010 and 2013 (SAFEMED II – MED 2007/147-568), an initiative of the European Commission developed in close cooperation with the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum (EUROMED). Through SAFEMED I and SAFEMED II, major activities were launched between 2006 and 2013 to implement some of the objectives of the 2005 Regional Strategy, which were aimed at strengthening the Mediterranean maritime administrations (specialised training courses including scholarships to the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) and the World Maritime University (WMU), as well as introductory courses related to the IMO Member State Audit Scheme) and the Mediterranean MoU on Port State Control. The beneficiary countries of the Project were: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey. In April 2010, through additional Instrument of Pre-Accession funds, some SAFEMED II tasks were also extended to the following Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) South East European States: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro.

35 The EU-funded Project for Preparedness for Oil-polluted Shoreline clean-up and Oiled Wildlife interventions (POSOW) – <http://www.posow.org/> – implemented by REMPPEC and co-financed by EU under the European Commission (EC) Civil Protection Financial Instrument between 2012 and

2013 (POSOW I), benefited European Mediterranean coastal States, namely Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Slovenia and Spain. Between 2015 and 2016 (POSOW II), the Project was extended to Mediterranean coastal States that are part of the European Neighbourhood Policy as well as Enlargement countries, namely: Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. The Project is aimed at supporting the establishment of a regional cooperation synergy in the field of marine pollution through the enhancement of knowledge and capacities of professional and volunteer operators working in civil protection services, in municipalities and in Non-Governmental Organisations.

36 The EU-Funded Mediterranean Decision Support System for Marine Safety Project (MEDESS-4MS) – <http://www.medess4ms.eu/> – co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), was implemented by REMPEC, between 2012 and 2015. The beneficiary countries were European Mediterranean coastal States, namely Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Montenegro and Spain. However, all Mediterranean coastal States were involved in the implementation and have access to the products delivered by the Project that led, *inter alia*, to the development of MEDGIS-MAR, a unique portable providing access to multi-oil forecasting models.

REMPEC's 40th Anniversary Celebrations

37 The Secretariat proposes to celebrate REMPEC's 40th Anniversary on the theme "*Cooperation in the Mediterranean to prevent and combat marine pollution*". The present meeting paves the way for the celebrations since cooperation is its cross-cutting theme. Indeed the possible support of IPIECA – The global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues towards strengthening the cooperation between IPIECA, IMO and REMPEC in the Mediterranean region, the cooperation on illicit discharges from ships in the framework of MENELAS, the cooperative approach presented in the project proposals on preparedness for and response to accidental marine pollution (oil and HNS), the cooperation between REMPEC and the European Commission as well as the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) will all be discussed, amongst others, during the said meeting.

38 REMPEC's 40th Anniversary will follow the 40th Anniversary of MAP, which will be celebrated in 2015-2016 by the organisation of several activities that will highlight MAP's achievements and shed light on key environmental pressures in the Mediterranean. The official celebrations of the 40th Anniversary of MAP will be launched during the Meeting of the MAP Focal Points to be held in Athens, Greece from 19 to 21 May 2015. Building on 40 years of work and achievements, a number of activities are expected to be featuring the 40th Anniversary of MAP. This will include the participation to the EU Maritime Day 2015, which will take place from 28 to 29 May 2015 in Athens, Greece, with a booth and workshop entitled "*Greening the Blue: forty years together for a sustainable Mediterranean*", as well as the participation to the Twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to UNFCCC (COP 21 / CMP 11), which will be convened in Paris, France from 30 November 2015 to 11 December 2015. The closure of the celebrations of the 40th Anniversary of MAP is expected to take place during the Nineteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, to be tentatively held in February 2016 in Greece.

39 The Secretariat proposes to consider 11 December 2016, as the starting date for the commemoration of REMPEC's 40th Anniversary celebrations. In this regard, the Secretariat proposes to initiate the work in early 2016 and to mark this occasion throughout the year 2017 up until the closing of the Twentieth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in order to enhance REMPEC's visibility, build new partnerships and mobilise resources.

40 In preparation for REMPEC's 40th Anniversary, the Secretariat proposes:

- .1 to mobilise voluntary contributions and resources from Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, including, but not limited to, the European Union, as well as IMO, UNEP, the industry sector and other relevant partners to finance the activities mentioned below;
- .2 to revamp the REMPEC's website, the creation of which dates back to 2007. This activity is seen as being of high priority given the high number of hacking attempts and attacks in the previous months, which led to considerable expenses with a view to solving subsequent technical issues. The design of a new website using new

technologies would enhance its security, preventing the problems faced lately. Besides, the website would be designed as a more responsive interface, being mobile phones and tablets friendly. The latter is an important point, as the versatile information and tools found on the website need to be accessed from within or outside the office. Furthermore, the new website would permit the smooth preparation of meetings, enabling REMPEC to upload information, reference and working documents in advance and not delay the process as was the case for the preparation of the present meeting, where documentation was pending for upload due to the website being non-functional;

- .3 to create a specific logo and tagline for REMPEC's 40th Anniversary, which would be reflected in all visual items. As proposed above, the main topics suggested for the tagline would revolve around cooperation in the Mediterranean region to prevent and combat marine pollution;
- .4 to encourage all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and partners to take part in commemorating REMPEC's 40th Anniversary by organizing events at their national level;
- .5 to create, edit and disseminate brochures, posters, visual material, based on the above-mentioned achievements and milestones of REMPEC with a view to increasing the visibility of the work carried out by the Centre during national and regional events; and
- .6 to organise opening and closing events, preferably combining them with other regional events scheduled in MAP's Programme of Work.

Actions requested by the Meeting

41 **The Meeting will be invited to:**

- .1 **take note** of the information provided in the present document; and
- .2 **consider** the proposals put forward by the Secretariat, as laid down in paragraphs 37, 39 and 40 of the present document.