



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.37/14/1
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Agenda Item 14

PROGRESS MADE BY THE MEDITERRANEAN TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (MTWG) SINCE THE 10TH MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINTS OF REMPEC

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document provides an update on the progress made by the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) since the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 42

Related documents: UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.3/5, UNEP(DEC)/MED IG.13/8, UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.16/13, REMPEC/WG.28/9/3, MEPC/OPRC-HNS/TG 6/5/2, REMPEC/WG.32/8/2, REMPEC/WG.32/9/1, MEPC/OPRC-HNS/TG 11/3/1, REMPEC/WG.32/5, MEPC 62/8/3, MEPC/OPRC-HNS/TG 12/INF.6, OPRC-HNS/TG 14/3/6, REMPEC/WG.37/10, REMPEC/WG.37/14/2, REMPEC/WG.37/15.

Background

1 The Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), which was held in Malta from 25 to 28 October 2000, agreed on the establishment of the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) aimed at facilitating the exchange of technical data and other scientific information on preparedness and response issues related to marine pollution emergencies, and endorsed the “*Guidelines for the Mediterranean Technical Working Group*” that lays down the method of work of the MTWG.

2 Based on a decision adopted by the Twelfth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (“the Barcelona Convention”) and its Protocols, which was convened in Monaco from 14 to 17 November 2001, the need for such a regional forum was strengthened as it was agreed that REMPEC should develop and maintain close working relationships with other Regional Activity Centres of the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP) and with the “specialised regional organisms” which play a coordinating role as set forth in the MAP, particularly with the scientific institutions within the region (UNEP(DEC)/MED IG.13/8).

3 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”), which also addresses the issue of cooperation with other organisations (UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.16/13). In particular, under Specific Objective 17 of the 2005 Regional Strategy, Contracting Parties agreed to encourage:

- .1 their respective scientific and technical institutions, as well as the industry, to actively participate in research and development (R&D) activities and programmes related to accidental marine pollution prevention, preparedness and response; and
- .2 their respective national institutions and industry to present the results of their R&D activities and programmes in international fora.

4 All in all, the activities carried out within the MTWG facilitate the implementation of the following Specific Objectives of the 2005 Regional Strategy:

- .1 **Specific Objective 17** – To encourage the participation of the regional scientific and technical institutions in research and development activities and to facilitate transfer of technology;
- .2 **Specific Objective 18** – To improve the quality, speed and effectiveness of decision-making process in case of marine pollution incidents through development and introduction of technical and decision support tools; and
- .3 **Specific Objective 20** – To revise the existing recommendations, principles and guidelines, and to develop new ones aimed at facilitating international cooperation and mutual assistance within the framework of 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”).

Programme of work of the MTWG and decisions of the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC

5 The Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, which was convened in Malta from 3 to 5 May 2011, endorsed the Secretariat’s proposal to include the following tasks in the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2012/2013:

- .1 to develop a Regional Risk Assessment Methodology on the basis of the outcome of the Regional Workshop on Oil Spill Risk Assessment in the Mediterranean Sea (“MEDEXPOL 2011”), which was held in Barcelona, Spain from 29 November to 1 December 2011;
- .2 to review the existing inventory of response means with a view to upgrading and updating it for more efficiency in an emergency situation;
- .3 to identify recommendations, principles and guidelines available through the Regional Information System (RIS) that need to be developed, revised, updated and/or amended; and
- .4 to instruct the Secretariat to take the necessary measure to update the RIS reference system and content.

6 It is recalled that, during the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, the Government of Israel submitted a proposal concerning the investigation on the use of biological-based agents as possible response technique (REMPEC/WG.32/8/2). Following this proposal, the said meeting recommended constituting a correspondence group in charge of producing an overview of the current knowledge and use of biological agents. This work was aimed at better informing the Contracting Parties on the state of the art on biological agents and at enabling the next Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC to decide whether further developments via the MTWG would be required or not. Israel and France volunteered to lead this correspondence group, whilst the representative of IPIECA – The global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues proposed to associate the oil industry in this initiative. The Secretariat agreed to provide a web-based platform for information exchange to facilitate the implementation of this task.

7 The Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC also addressed the issue of the drafting of the operational guidelines on sunken and submerged oil assessment and removal techniques by the Technical Group of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC) / Preparedness, Response and Cooperation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (OPRC-HNS), hereinafter referred to as the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group, with the support of the MTWG, which was originally integrated in the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2008/2009 and was subsequently included in the programme of work of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group following the approval of the Fifty-sixth session of the MEPC. The Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC agreed to continue supporting this international initiative through the MTWG.

8 In accordance with the amended 2007 version of the Guidelines for the MTWG, reproduced in **Annex I** to the present document, the Contracting Parties designated appropriate national entities and/or officials as contact points for the three activities of the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2012/2013, as follows:

- .1 twenty-five (25) nominations from seventeen (17) Mediterranean coastal States and six (6) nominations from other stakeholders for the development of a Regional Risk Assessment Methodology;
- .2 twenty-four (24) nominations from seventeen (17) Mediterranean coastal States and six (6) nominations from other stakeholders for the revision of the existing inventory of response means with a view to upgrading and updating it for more efficiency in an emergency situation; and
- .3 twenty (20) nominations from seventeen (17) Mediterranean coastal States for the update of the RIS reference system and content.

9 It is further recalled that the previous programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2010/2011 included the revision of the Guidelines for the Use of Dispersants for Combating Oil Pollution at Sea in the Mediterranean Region adopted by the Eighth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols, which was convened in Antalya, Turkey from 12 to 15 October 1993 (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.3/5) as well as the initialisation of the revision of the Mediterranean Integrated Decision Support Information System (MIDSIS-TROCS) Version 2.0. The progress made by the MTWG since the Ninth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, which was held in Malta from 21 to 24 April 2009, as well as the completion of the development of the Mediterranean Oil Spill Waste Management Decision Support Tool, which was still pending from the previous programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2008/2009 were presented to the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (REMPEC/WG.32/9/1). The said meeting endorsed the May 2011 Edition of the Guidelines for the Use of Dispersants for Combating Oil Pollution at Sea in the Mediterranean Region, and the online Mediterranean Oil Spill Waste Management Decision Support Tool.

10 The Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC acknowledged the work carried out by the MTWG on the MIDSIS-TROCS and encouraged the MTWG to provide comments on the first version of MIDSIS-TROCS Version 3.0, renamed "*Maritime Integrated Decision Support Information System on Transport of Chemical Substances*", for its finalisation. The said meeting also invited the OPRC Focal Points to assist the Secretariat in maintaining updated MIDSIS-TROCS' information on Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) incidents by providing reports on HNS response following incidents to the Secretariat. The meeting also tasked the Secretariat to liaise with the relevant national and international bodies to continue maintaining the database on HNS incidents.

Cooperation between the regional forum (MTWG) and the international forum (IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group)

- **Oil Spill Waste Management Decision Support Tool**

11 The Tenth session of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group agreed to adapt the Mediterranean Oil Spill Waste Management Decision Support Tool developed by the MTWG as an international reference document. In this regard, REMPEC offered to take the work forward.

12 At its Eleventh session, having considered document MEPC/OPRC-HNS/TG 11/3/1 submitted by REMPEC, containing Draft Guidelines on Oil Spill Waste Management and noting that it incorporated all the comments provided at its Tenth session, as well as those provided intersessionally, the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group agreed on the final draft text and referred it to the Sixty-second session of the MEPC for approval.

13 Document MEPC 62/8/3 invited MEPC to approve the finalised draft text of the Oil spill waste management decision support tool, as agreed by the Eleventh session of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group. However, its consideration was postponed to the Sixty-third session of the MEPC, which approved the finalised draft text and instructed the IMO Secretariat to carry out any final editing and to prepare the document for publishing through the IMO Publishing Service.

- **MIDSIS-TROCS**

14 The Twelfth session of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group noted the information contained on MIDSIS-TROCS Version 3.0 in document MEPC/OPRC-HNS/TG 12/INF.6 submitted by REMPEC, which introduced the project revision for the redesign of MIDSIS-TROCS. Having considered a demonstration of the application, the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group noted that it had been redeveloped as a web-based application for universal access and would also, once finalised, be available for distribution as a stand-alone application. Having also noted REMPEC's desire to include more case studies on HNS incidents in the database, the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group invited delegations to continue submitting information and case studies on HNS incidents of interest to it with a view to sharing these with REMPEC for inclusion in MIDSIS-TROCS.

- **Operational guidelines on sunken and submerged oil assessment and removal techniques**

15 It is recalled that, following consideration of document REMPEC/WG.28/9/3, which highlighted in particular that guidelines on sunken oil assessment and removal techniques were inexistent and that the development of technical guidelines on the subject, including any practical related matter such as safety measures, would be of interest both at the international level and also at regional level, the Eighth Meeting of the Focal Points REMPEC, which was convened in Malta from 7 to 11 May 2007, agreed on the development of such guidelines.

16 Subsequently, REMPEC submitted document MEPC/OPRC-HNS/TG 6/5/2 at the Sixth session of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group, inviting it to consider, *inter alia*, the possible development of a technical guideline on sunken oil assessment and removal techniques. Further to agreeing on the initiation of the development of such a technical guideline, the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group established a correspondence group, under the coordination of Italy, to conduct a literature review and to submit it for consideration at its Seventh session.

17 Between the Sixth and the Fourteenth sessions of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group, the representatives of the MTWG were consulted and contributed to the work carried out at international level.

18 The Fourteenth session of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group considered document OPRC-HNS/TG 14/3/6 setting out the final draft text of the operational guidelines on sunken and submerged oil assessment and removal techniques, agreed on its content, as amended, and referred the document for approval at the Sixty-fifth session of the MEPC. The latter approved the final draft text of the guidelines in particular, as set out in document OPRC-HNS/TG 14/3/6, and instructed the IMO Secretariat to carry out any final editing and to prepare the document for publishing through the IMO Publishing Service.

Maritime Integrated Decision Support Information System on Transport of Chemical Substances (MIDSIS-TROCS)

19 It is recalled that, in view of the implementation of the revision of MIDSIS-TROCS, a Steering Committee, composed of representatives from IMO, the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds), the Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (Cedre), the Canadian Transport Emergency Centre operated by the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Directorate of Transport Canada (CANUTEC), the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF), and REMPEC, as Secretariat and project manager, was

established to oversee the revision of the tool. The First meeting of the Steering Committee for the revision of MIDSIS-TROCS Version 2.0, organised at the IMO Headquarters from 16 to 18 March 2010, agreed on a set of actions for the implementation of the revision of the tool. The Second meeting of the Steering Committee took place at IMO Headquarters on 6 July 2011 in the margins of the Twelfth session of the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group with a view to discussing ongoing developments.

20 Following the request of the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, the Centre requested¹ the MTWG to review the tool and provide comments as well as any relevant report on HNS incidents in order to finalise the tool and enable the Centre to publish the tool on REMPEC's website.

21 Subsequently, REMPEC informed² the OPRC Focal Points and the MTWG that MIDSIS-TROCS had been completed and launched on REMPEC's website through the following link: <http://midsis.rempec.org>. A tutorial video was produced by REMPEC and uploaded on its website.

22 It should be noted that no additional case studies on HNS incidents were communicated to REMPEC since the launch of the tool. Furthermore, following its online publication, the Centre received several worldwide instruction requests to download the stand-alone version of MIDSIS-TROCS. Whilst the system is operational and can be downloaded for field operations, it is recognised that the installation process of the stand-alone version is tedious whilst the display could be improved to facilitate access to the information contained in the database of the tool. It is further acknowledged that, by fine-tuning the system, in particular by resolving the above-mentioned issues, MIDSIS-TROCS would gain in efficiency and visibility and would better satisfy the concerns of worldwide users, including Mediterranean coastal States.

23 In this context, the Secretariat proposes to take the necessary measures to review MIDSIS-TROCS version 3.0 and, in particular, to enable easy access to the stand-alone application as well as to liaise with the relevant national and international bodies to continue maintaining the database on HNS incidents. The Secretariat also proposes that Contracting Parties assist the Centre in maintaining updated information on HNS incidents by providing reports on HNS response following incidents.

Development of a Regional Risk Assessment Methodology

24 As detailed in document REMPEC/WG.37/10 on data sharing, monitoring and reporting, the Centre implemented the Mediterranean Decision Support System for Marine Safety Project (MEDESS-4MS) – <http://www.medess4ms.eu/> – with the support of all Mediterranean coastal States through the MTWG which provided data for the Project.

25 The three-year Project, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), initiated in February 2012 and concluded on 31 March 2015, was dedicated to the prevention of maritime risks and the strengthening of maritime safety related to oil spill pollution in the Mediterranean. The Project, coordinated by the Department of Merchant Shipping of Cyprus (DMS), aimed at delivering a sustainable integrated operational multi-model oil spill prediction service in the Mediterranean Sea connected to existing monitoring platforms, using well established oil spill models, data from the Marine Core Services, and national oceanographic forecasting systems. The integrated multi-model oil spill prediction service is accessible through an interactive web portal: http://medess-dss.bo.ingv.it/joomla_medess/index.php/en/.

26 The main target of Work Package 4 (WP4) of the Project was to improve the evaluation and monitoring of risks through the development of a full set of relevant data to be used into a Geographic Information System (GIS) with a view to conducting oil spill risk assessments in the Mediterranean region.

27 WP4 was composed of the following two sub-tasks:

- .1 WP 4.1: Gathering within the Project interconnected network of data and updating data for risk assessment of the Mediterranean basin; and

¹ Circular Letter No. 20/2011 dated 21 July 2011.

² Circular Letter No. 06/2012 dated 22 February 2012.

- .2 WP 4.2: Data analysis and oil spill risk assessment in the Mediterranean region. This task was aimed at improving the evaluation and monitoring of risks through the analysis of the databases setup in sub-task WP 4.1.

28 Under sub-task WP 4.1 coordinated by REMPEC in consultation with the corresponding established MTWG correspondence group, a set of data was collected. The data included maritime traffic, oil transport, marine incidents, offshore installations, coastal oil handling facilities and oil spill response equipment, as well as socio-economic and environmental sensitivity maps. The data and maps collected during the implementation of the Project, as detailed above, were integrated in the “*Mediterranean Integrated Geographical Information System on Marine Pollution Risk Assessment and Response*” (MEDGIS-MAR), and developed by REMPEC within the framework of the Project. The platform is now accessible from <http://medgismar.rempec.org/>.

29 Under sub-task WP 4.2 coordinated by DMS, an oil transport data analysis and an Automatic Identification System (AIS) report were completed, including a set of maps on traffic density per type of vessel, which were subsequently integrated in MEDGIS-MAR. Besides, two reports were produced by the Port of Heraklion and the Decentralised Administration of Crete based on the need to provide up-to-date and comprehensive quantitative data with a view to mapping and analysing the socio-economic components and potential impacts on the Mediterranean region. As part of the impact assessment report, DMS conducted three studies in which offshore installations were integrated in the overall risk assessment methodologies for oil spills. In the first study on “*Risk Assessment on Offshore Structures*”, the various hazards related to the deployment of offshore installations, in terms of operation, were investigated and assessed. The results of the above-mentioned study were used in a second study on “*Integration of Offshore Installations in the Risk Assessment for Oil Spills*”, which integrated the risks associated with offshore installations into the overall risk assessment methodology for oil spills. DMS also conducted a study on “*Assessment & Re-distribution of oil spill response equipment in Cyprus*” providing an overall assessment of the existing oil spill response equipment in Cyprus in relation to oil spill risks. All reports are available on the MEDESS-4MS’ website.

30 The Project also delivered a number of training courses and organised several field exercises to test MEDESS-4MS services. In this regard, REMPEC co-organised the Sub-Regional End User Meeting for the Western Mediterranean and the Tyrrhenian Sea, which was held in La Seyne-sur-Mer, France on 8 July 2014, and the “Serious Game 2” (SG 2): Test of MEDESS-4MS Services carried out on Elba Island, Italy from 16 to 17 September 2014, during the annual pollution exercise carried out within the framework of the “Saint Raphaël Monaco GENes POLLution” (RAMOGEPOL) plan. The test carried out during the SG 2 showed that the trajectory of the buoys corroborated with the predictions of the forecasting models.

31 Taking into account the work carried out within the framework of the Project, the task of the MTWG related to the development of a Regional Risk Assessment Methodology on the basis of the outcome of “MEDEXPOL 2011”, can be considered as completed. However, it should be noted that the Partners of the Project are currently considering a follow-up capitalisation project to ensure the continuity of MEDESS-4MS services.

32 In this context, the Secretariat proposes to encourage OPRC Focal Points to use the MEDESS-4MS and MEDGIS-MAR User Interface as well as to update MEDGIS-MAR with relevant national data in view of the development or improvement of their respective risk assessments.

Revision of the existing inventory of response means

33 This task was considered as part of the MEDESS-4MS Project, as detailed in document REMPEC/WG.37/10.

34 In this context, the Secretariat proposes to encourage OPRC Focal Points to use MEDGIS-MAR and keep updated the national inventory of response means.

Update of the RIS reference system and content

35 According to the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, MTWG contact points in charge of reviewing the RIS, were requested³ to contribute to the reformatting of RIS documents, as proposed in the Annex to document REMPEC/WG.32/5, add more visibility to the RIS, instruct the Secretariat to take the necessary measure to update the RIS reference system and content, as well as identify recommendations, principles and guidelines available through the RIS that needed to be developed, revised, updated and/or amended.

36 Consequently, the following actions were undertaken by the Secretariat to respond to the above-mentioned requests:

- .1 a new section dedicated to the RIS was created on REMPEC's website to increase the visibility of RIS documents; and
- .2 with the assistance of the MTWG contact points who provided REMPEC with pictures for the cover pages of RIS documents, the documents were reformatted without amendment of their content.

37 Since RIS documents were originally distributed in a paper format, a reference number was given to each document produced under the RIS (e.g. Regional Information System; Part D, Operational Guides and Technical Document, Section 3, Concise Dictionary of Marine Anti-pollution Terms, REMPEC, April 2003). Taking into account that several previous documents referenced under the RIS had been deleted as they were considered obsolete and that RIS documents can now be accessed directly in the relevant sections of REMPEC's website, distinctions between the different "Parts" (A, B, C and D) of the RIS and their "Sections" were no longer required. Further to confirmation by the MTWG contact points, the RIS reference system was discontinued.

38 The identification and prioritisation of recommendations, principles and guidelines available through the RIS that need to be developed, revised, updated and/or amended, are considered under document REMPEC/WG.37/14/2 under this agenda item.

Revision of the Guidelines for the Mediterranean Technical Working Group

39 According to Article 4 of the amended 2007 version of the Guidelines for the MTWG, reproduced in **Annex I** to the present document, revised by the Secretariat following the request of the Eighth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, which was held in Malta from 7 to 11 May 2007, the "*Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points should periodically examine and review these guidelines and make recommendations as appropriate to facilitate the work of the MTWG*".

40 Taking into account the outcome of the discussions of the Meeting under Agenda item 12, in particular on the proposal of the Secretariat to strengthen cooperation between the MTWG and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)'s Consultative Technical Group for Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response (CTG MPPR), and considering that the IMO's OPRC-HNS Technical Group has been replaced by the IMO Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR), the Secretariat reviewed and revised the amended 2007 version of the Guidelines for the MTWG.

41 In this context, the Secretariat proposes to endorse the amended 2015 version of the Guidelines for the MTWG, reproduced in **Annex II** to the present document.

Actions requested by the Meeting

42 **The Meeting is 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 23, 32, 34 and 41 of the present document.

³ Circular Letter No. 06/2013 dated 11 March 2013.

ANNEX I

Amended 2007 version

Guidelines for the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG)

Purpose

1. The purpose of establishing the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) is to facilitate the consideration of an issue or specific item by the Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points on the basis of a consolidated report prepared by the Secretariat of the MTWG through consultation by correspondence with interested delegations, international organizations and appropriate entities.
2. The MTWG is also a regional forum through which the Contracting Parties can contribute to the relevant work carried out at a global level (e.g. IMO OPRC-HNS Technical Group);

Prerequisites

3. The MTWG should operate under the instructions of and report to the Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points. The Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points should decide on the item(s) to be considered by the MTWG and establish a list of priorities of the Group. The MTWG will consider one or more items of work at a time. When allocating an item of work, the Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points should take into consideration that it would be desirable that the MTWG complete the work in time by the next meeting of REMPEC's Focal Points (i.e. within a two-year period).
4. The Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points should periodically examine and review these guidelines and make recommendations as appropriate to facilitate the work of the MTWG.

Participation

5. After a Meeting of REMPEC's Focal Points has agreed on the issue to be considered by the MTWG, the profile of expertise of the Group should be considered. Participation is open to all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, international organizations and appropriate entities which can provide the necessary expertise on a timely basis or which have a particular interest in the issued under consideration. Any Contracting Party, international organization or appropriate entity can join in the work of the MTWG and any contribution should be accepted at any stage of the work of the Group.
6. With a view to facilitating the work carried out by the MTWG, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention through their national OPRC focal point shall designate the appropriate national entities and/or officials as contact points for each issue dealt by the MTWG.
7. The views expressed by the person/entity nominated by their respective government, during the preparation phase of the work carried out by MTWG, do not prejudice the position of their respective government when reaching the stage of the final decision at the Contracting Parties level.

Method of work

8. REMPEC should act as Secretariat of the MTWG and co-ordinate the work of the Group.
9. The MTWG shall be maintained as a correspondence group.
10. The working language is preferably English. Correspondence and documents would also be accepted in French, however translation made by the Secretariat will only concerns the progress report for the Focal Point Meetings.
11. Responsibilities of the Secretariat should include:
 - a) preparation, maintenance and circulation of the list of participants;

- b) establishment of deadlines for the preparation of draft texts and receipt of comments and proposals thereon from the participants;
- c) preparation and circulation of the draft texts and comments thereon;
- d) preparation of the progress report on the work carried out by the MTWG for the Meeting of REMPEC's Focal Points;
- e) translation of the report of the work of the MTWG;
- f) dissemination of the report of the work in both languages to the Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points;
- g) introduction of the above-mentioned report to the Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points for its consideration and decision as appropriate.

12. Responsibilities of the Contracting Parties should include:

- a) designation of a person/entity with the corresponding expertise for each issue dealt within the MTWG's programme of activities;
- b) active participation in the work of the MTWG;
- c) compliance with the deadline established by the Secretariat;
- d) relaying to other MTWG members copies of comments, proposals, etc. submitted to the Secretariat.

13. Responsibilities of any third party participating in the MTWG activities should include:

- a) active participation in the work of the MTWG;
- b) compliance with the deadline established by the Secretariat;
- c) relaying to other MTWG members copies of comments, proposals, etc. submitted to the Secretariat.

Existence of the MTWG

14. The Meetings of REMPEC's Focal Points should periodically review the necessity for the continued existence of the MTWG and make recommendations accordingly to the Meetings of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

ANNEX II

Amended 2015 version

Guidelines for the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG)

Objective

1. The objective of the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) is to provide at the Mediterranean level, a platform between Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean ("the Barcelona Convention"), contributing to the improvement in preparedness for and response to accidental and deliberate pollution from ships, and to implement biennial programmes of work to be endorsed by the Meetings of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) on the basis of a consolidated report prepared by the Secretariat of the MTWG, through consultation by correspondence with interested delegations, international organizations and appropriate entities.

2. The MTWG is also a regional forum through which the Contracting Parties can contribute to or benefit from the relevant work carried out at a global and European level (e.g. International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) and European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)'s Consultative Technical Group for Marine Pollution Preparedness and Response (CTG MPPR)).

Prerequisites

3. The MTWG should operate under the instructions of the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC and report to the said Meetings. The Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC should decide on the tasks to be considered by the MTWG, establish a list of priorities for the Group and agree upon a biennial programme of work. The MTWG will consider one or more tasks at a time. When allocating a task, the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC should take into consideration that it would be desirable that the MTWG completes the work in time by the next meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (i.e. within a two-year period).

4. The Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC should periodically examine and review these guidelines and make recommendations as appropriate to facilitate the work of the MTWG.

Participation

5. After a Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC has agreed on the task to be considered by the MTWG, the profile of expertise of the Group should be considered. Participation is open to all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, international organizations and appropriate entities, which are in a position to provide the necessary expertise on a timely basis or which have a particular interest in the task under consideration. Any Contracting Party, international organization or appropriate entity can join in the work of the MTWG and any contribution should be accepted at any stage of the work of the Group.

6. With a view to facilitating the work carried out by the MTWG, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention through their respective national OPRC Focal Points shall designate the appropriate national entities and/or officials as contact points for each task to be dealt by the MTWG.

7. The views expressed by the persons/entities nominated by their respective governments, during the preparation phase of the work carried out by the MTWG, do not prejudice the position of their respective governments when reaching the stage of the final decision at the Contracting Parties level.

Method of work

8. REMPEC should act as Secretariat of the MTWG and co-ordinate the work of the Group.

9. The MTWG shall be maintained as a correspondence group.
10. The working language is preferably English. Correspondence and documents would also be accepted in French. However translation made by the Secretariat will only be related to the progress report prepared for submission to the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC.
11. Responsibilities of the Secretariat should include:
 - a) requesting Contracting Parties to nominate a person/entity with the corresponding expertise for each task dealt within the programme of work of the MTWG;
 - b) preparing, maintaining and circulating the list of participants;
 - c) establishing deadlines for the preparation of draft texts and receipt of comments and proposals thereon from the participants;
 - d) preparing and circulating draft texts and comments thereon;
 - e) preparing the progress report on the work carried out by the MTWG for the Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC;
 - f) translating the report of the work of the MTWG;
 - g) disseminating the report of the work in both languages to the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC;
 - h) introducing the above-mentioned report to the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC for its consideration and decision as appropriate; and
 - i) informing the Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC of developments within the PPR and the CTG MPPR and update the PPR and the CTG MPPR respectively on developments within the MTWG.
12. Responsibilities of the Contracting Parties should include:
 - a) designating a person/entity with the corresponding expertise for each task dealt within the programme of work of the MTWG;
 - b) participating actively in the work of the MTWG;
 - c) complying with the deadlines established by the Secretariat; and
 - d) relaying to other members of the MTWG copies of comments, proposals, etc. submitted to the Secretariat.
13. Responsibilities of any third party participating in the work of the MTWG should include:
 - a) participating actively in the work of the MTWG;
 - b) complying with the deadlines established by the Secretariat; and
 - c) relaying to other members of the MTWG copies of comments, proposals, etc. submitted to the Secretariat.

Existence of the MTWG

14. The Meetings of the Focal Points of REMPEC should periodically review the necessity for the continued existence of the MTWG and make recommendations accordingly to the Ordinary Meetings of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.