
**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.37/14/2
Date: 18 May 2015

Malta, 15-17 June 2015

Original: English

Agenda Item 14

**PROPOSAL RELATED TO FUTURE POSSIBLE WORK OF
THE MEDITERRANEAN TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (MTWG)**

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document proposes future activities to be integrated to the programme of work of the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) for the biennium 2016-2017.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 15

Related documents: REMPEC/WG.37/11/1, REMPEC/WG.37/12, REMPEC/WG.37/14/1,
REMPEC/WG.37/15.

Introduction

1 Taking into consideration the progress made on the programme of work of the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) and, according to the request of the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC, which was held in Malta from 3 to 5 May 2011, the MTWG contact points in charge of reviewing the Regional Information System (RIS) were requested¹ to identify recommendations, principles and guidelines available through the RIS that needed to be developed, revised, updated and/or amended.

2 The following proposals were suggested by the MTWG:

- .1 to review the Principles and Guidelines on "*Cooperation and mutual assistance*";
- .2 to update the Guidelines on "*Risk of gaseous releases resulting from marine incidents*", 1996;
- .3 to prepare a technical document concerning the latest developments in the field of response to chemical spills;
- .4 to review the RIS structure with a view to reflecting existing documentation and guidelines related to prevention of marine pollution from ships (e.g. ballast water management), which are available in other sections of the REMPEC's website.

3 Moreover, according to Specific Objective 21 – To revise the existing recommendations, principles and guidelines, and to develop new ones aimed at facilitating international co-operation and mutual assistance within the framework of the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing

¹ Circular Letter No. 06/2013 dated 11th March 2013.

Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (“the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol”) – of the Revised Draft Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), presented in Appendix 1 of document REMPEC/WG.37/11/1, to be adopted by the Nineteenth 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 is tentatively scheduled in February 2016, the Contracting Parties agree *inter alia*:

- .1 to review, with *high priority* if appropriate action has not been already taken, the existing recommendations, principles and guidelines concerning accidental marine pollution preparedness, response and mutual assistance, as well as prevention of pollution from ships, that have been adopted since 1987, paying particular attention to those that aim at removing possible obstacles which might hinder mutual assistance;
- .2 to identify, with *high priority* if appropriate action has not been already taken, all such recommendations, principles and guidelines that need to be revised, updated and/or amended; and
- .3 to indicate, with *high priority* if appropriate action has not been already taken, which additional recommendations, principles and guidelines should be adopted at the regional level with a view to facilitating the implementation of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol in the field of international co-operation and mutual assistance.

Review of the Principles and Guidelines on “Cooperation and mutual assistance”

4 The Centre has developed a series of Principles and Guidelines on various aspects related to cooperation during an oil spill incident since 1987. These Principles and Guidelines are listed hereunder:

- .1 “*Guidelines for Co-Operation in Combating Marine Oil Pollution in the Mediterranean*” adopted by the Fifth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution (“the Barcelona Convention of 1976”) and its related Protocols, which was held in Athens, Greece from 7 to 11 September 1987;
- .2 “*Principles and guidelines concerning cooperation and mutual assistance*” adopted by the Seventh Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention of 1976 and its related Protocols, which was convened in Cairo, Egypt from 8 to 11 October 1991, and which contained the following Principles, Guidelines and Checklist:
 - “*Principles and Guidelines concerning the role and responsibilities of experts sent on mission by the Centre, following the request of a State in case of emergency, and duties and obligations of States towards them*”;
 - “*Principles and Guidelines concerning the sending, receiving and returning of equipment in case of international assistance operation*”;
 - “*Principles and Guidelines concerning arrangements and operational procedures which could be applied in case of a joint operation*”;
 - “*Checklist of procedures to be followed and persons to be contacted in case of emergency*”; and
 - “*Checklist of principal institutional provisions aimed at facilitating mutual assistance in case of a major marine pollution accident which should be included in national contingency plans*”.
- .3 “*Guidelines concerning the Exchange of Liaison Officers between the Contracting Parties in case of Response Operations involving Several States*” and “*Guidelines concerning Arrangements which might be made with a view to ensuring, in case of an accident, liaison between the Governmental Authorities and other Interested Parties*” adopted by the Ninth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona

Convention of 1976 and its Protocols, which was held in Barcelona, Spain from 5 to 8 June 1995.

5 More recently, the Meeting of National Experts on the Revision of the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships, which was convened in Malta from 11 to 12 March 2015, agreed upon the need to review the Mediterranean Principles and Guidelines in view of the latest international and European developments (i.e. the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Guidelines on International Offers of Assistance for Oil Pollution Incidents and the host nation support under the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism).

6 The said Meeting further specified that, in the context of this review, clear procedures, conditions and synergies should be established and agreed upon to ensure an effective coordination between, on the one hand, the Mediterranean response and assistance mechanism (i.e. Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU): Centre de documentation, de recherche et d'expérimentations sur les pollutions accidentelles des eaux (Cedre), Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale (ISPRA), Federazione Nazionale dell'Industria Chimica (Federchimica), Sea Alarm Foundation, Mediterranean Operational Network for the Global Ocean Observing System (MONGOOS), regional assistance, IMO support, etc.) and, on the other hand, the European response and assistance mechanism (i.e. Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)'s pollution response services and Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS)).

7 In this context, the Secretariat proposes to include a complete review of the above-mentioned Principles and Guidelines on cooperation and mutual assistance in the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2016-2017.

Update of the Guidelines on “Risk of gaseous releases resulting from marine incidents”, 1996

8 The Guidelines on Risk of gaseous releases resulting from marine incidents, published by REMPEC in 1996, provides emergency-planning personnel with informative background on the issues related to releases of gases, and is intended for the response personnel, in particular decision-makers, who have a basic maritime and technical background. The document deals with 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.

9 Considering the request made by the MTWG and developments which have occurred since their publication in 1996, the Secretariat proposes to include the update of the Guidelines on Risk of gaseous releases resulting from marine incidents, in the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2016-2017.

Preparation of a technical document concerning the latest developments in the field of response to chemical spills

10 Considering the wide scope of the request for the preparation of a technical document concerning the latest developments in the field of response to chemical spills, the Secretariat proposes to specify the Terms of References of the work to be accomplished under this task and thereafter to include such defined task in the programme of work of the MTWG for the biennium 2016-2017.

Review of the RIS structure with a view to reflecting existing documentation and guidelines related to prevention of marine pollution from ships (e.g. ballast water management), which are available in other sections of the REMPEC's website

11 The revision of the RIS structure to reflect existing documentation and guidelines related to prevention of marine pollution from ships (e.g. ballast water management), which are available in other sections of the REMPEC's website, does not require the establishment of a Correspondence Group and can be easily implemented by the Secretariat.

12 In this context, the Secretariat proposes to carry out the required changes directly on the RIS section of the REMPEC's website.

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

13 As detailed in document REMPEC/WG.37/14/1, whilst the revision of the Mediterranean Integrated Decision Support Information System (MIDSIS-TROCS) Version 2.0, renamed Maritime Integrated Decision Support Information System on Transport of Chemical Substances, was completed and published online (<http://midsis.rempec.org>), further improvements are required in particular so as to facilitate the installation process of the stand-alone version and the enhancement of the information display.

14 With a view to improving the efficiency of and increasing the visibility of MIDSIS-TROCS, as well as to addressing the concerns of Mediterranean and worldwide users, including Mediterranean coastal States, the Secretariat proposes to upgrade MIDSIS-TROCS without modifying its content.

Actions requested by the Meeting

15 **The Meeting is invited to:**

- .1 **take note** of the information provided by the Secretariat in the present document;
- .2 **consider** the proposals put forward by the Secretariat, as laid down in paragraphs 7, 9, 10, 12 and 14 of the present document.