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

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

REMPEC/WG.61/6/7
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Agenda Item 6: Illegal and accidental oil and HNS pollution from ships

Preparedness and Response Contingency Planning

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Note by the Secretariat

This document outlines the outcomes and proposed way forward for the Subregional Contingency Plans (SCPs), aiming at strengthening subregional cooperation and interactions among countries member of these SCPs, in the field of responding to major marine pollution incidents.

Background

1 In accordance with Article 17 “Subregional Agreements” 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) to the Barcelona Convention, a series of Sub-regional Contingency Plans (SCPs) have been developed and adopted through bilateral and multilateral agreements in different subregions of the Mediterranean.

2 The purpose of the SCPs, is to establish a well-defined mechanism for mutual assistance, under which the competent national authorities of two or more countries will co-operate in order to co-ordinate and integrate their response to marine pollution incidents either affecting or likely to affect the territorial sea, coasts and related interests of one or more of these countries, or to incidents surpassing the available response capacity of each of these countries alone. In general, such plans are meant to be activated primarily in case of a massive oil spill and not in cases of minor pollution incidents and following activation of the National Contingency Plan (NCP).

3 Multilateral agreement on SCPs, have been developed within the framework of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol. In accordance with Article 17, and upon request of various coastal States, REMPEC provided assistance in developing the below listed SCPs, with the exception of RAMOGEPOL and Lion Plan which the countries concerned prepared and adopted without the assistance of the Centre.

- RAMOGEPOL Plan (France, Italy and Monaco; 1993, last version 2016)
- LION PLAN/PLAN LEON (France and Spain; 2001)
- Sub-regional Contingency Plan for Preparedness and Response to Major Marine Pollution Incidents in the Mediterranean (Cyprus, Egypt and Israel, 1995)
- Sub-regional Contingency Plan for Preparedness for and Response to Accidental Marine Pollution in the south-western area of the Mediterranean (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, 2005)
- Sub-regional Contingency Plan for Prevention of, Preparedness for and Response to Major Marine Pollution Incidents in the Adriatic Sea (Croatia, Italy and Slovenia, 2005)
- Sub-regional Marine Oil Pollution Contingency Plan (Cyprus, Greece and Israel, 2018)

4 The period under review was characterized by the development, with the assistance of REMPEC, of two new SCPs, and related Multilateral Agreement for their adoption and Programme of Activities for their implementation:

.1 The Adriatic Marine Pollution Incident Contingency Plan between Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, and Slovenia (Adriatic CP), initiated in 2022, pursuant the initiative by the six CPs, and two preparatory meetings one in Albania (October 2022), and another in Croatia (May 2023), was endorsed by the third meeting of the competent national Authorities of the six CPs (Rome, October 2023). It was tested during a Tabletop Exercise (AdriEx 2024), held in Montenegro in March 2024 that enabled the approval of the final text of the Adriatic CP, and the related Multilateral Agreement and Programme of Activities, in view of its adoption by the respective countries.

.2 The SCP between Cyprus, Egypt, and Greece was reactivated in October 2024, building on the draft Agreement developed by the meeting of the authorities of the three countries (Cyprus, November 2019). REMPEC’s support will continue, in assisting with the development of the Annexes to the SCP, which will facilitate the adoption of the Agreement.

5 The period under review also was characterized by the implementation of activities as defined in SCPs’ programme of activities, and agreed by the periodic meetings of the National Operational Authorities (NOA) in charge of respective SCP:

.1 The preparation of the Joint Spill Response Exercise within the SCP between Cyprus, Greece, and Israel, (CypEx 2024), began in November 2023, for delivery in Cyprus in November 2024.

Considering the thorough and year-long preparation process - from concept to delivery - a Guidance Document on the development Joint Spill Response Exercises (JSRE), provided in documents REMPEC/WG.61/6/7/1, was prepared to support future JSRE under the SCPs. It is noted that, due to exceptional circumstances, CypEx 2024 has been postponed to a later date.

.2 The implementation of activities resulting from the conclusion and recommendations of the Workshop and exercise organised within the SCP between Cyprus Greece and Israel in October 2021 and September 2022 respectively, and approval by the 15th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC:

- i update Part II *Basic Information on Dispersants and their Application* of the Guidelines for the use of dispersants for combating oil pollution at sea in the Mediterranean region (REMPEC, 2011) to align with the specific Mediterranean specific characteristics and to incorporate development related to dispersants since 2011, as set out in document REMPEC/WG.61/6/4/1 of the present Meeting; and
- ii development of an electronic version of the Oiled Shoreline Assessment Form of the Mediterranean Guidelines on Oiled Shoreline Assessment (2009), as referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 of document REMPEC/WG.61/6/4 of the present Meeting.

.3 The AdriEx 2024 and CypEx 2024 exercises also contributed to addressing the issue of the duality of the emergency communication systems in case of emergency the Mediterranean. They provided an opportunity to experience the challenges that may arise during notification and request-for-assistance scenarios. These exercises further supported the progress toward establishing a common communication system, as agreed by the 13th Meeting of the REMPEC Focal Points and outlined in document REMPEC/WG.61/6/3 of the present Meeting.

Way Forward

6 The Subregional Multilateral Agreements on the SCP indeed provide an additional legal framework, complementing those established at the regional level by the Barcelona Convention and its 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol. These Agreements as concretized by the above-mentioned achievements and their outputs, which benefit not only the Subregion region but also extend beyond it.

7 In light of the above, the Secretariat proposes to the Meeting to :

.1 request the Secretariat in coordination with the NOA of the SCPs, in force, to review and update the Study on Synergy between the three sub-regional agreements and contingency plans of the Western Mediterranean, referred to in document REMPEC/WG.51/INF.4, extending it to cover all SCPs;

.2 encourage, particularly CPs that are not yet members of SCPs, to develop new bilateral or sub-regional agreements on SCPs in order to benefit from the support mentioned above, and of REMPEC assistance for their development.

Actions requested by the Meeting

8 **The Meeting is invited to:**

- .1 **take note** of the information provided in the present document; and
 - .2 **comment** as deemed appropriate.
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