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

Regional Workshop on Data Sharing, Monitoring and
Reporting (MEDEXPOL 2024)

REMPEC/WG.57/2/2
23 August 2024

Lija, Malta, 25-26 September 2024

Original: English

Agenda Item 2: Reporting - Correlation Between Reporting Commitment, Benefits, and Incentives for Effective Reporting

Reporting in case of Emergency (Joint Document REMPEC DGECHO)

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Note by REMPEC and DGECHO

The present document provides information on the consultation process conducted by REMPEC with the European Commission European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) to implement the outcomes of the 14th meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (May 2021) and the proposed steps forward for the establishing a Common Emergency Communication System in the Mediterranean, in parallel with the commencement of the new CECIS MP development, planned for late autumn 2024.

Background

1. The Thirteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) (Malta, 11-13 June 2019) requested the Secretariat to explore the use of the Emergency Communication and Information System for Marine Pollution (CECIS MP), in order to enhance coordination of requests and offers of international assistance in the Mediterranean region. This task was undertaken within the two-year EU-funded, Western Mediterranean Region Marine Oil & HNS Pollution Cooperation (West MOPoCo) Project.

2. It is recalled that in the Mediterranean region, communication in Cases of Emergency is addressed through two disconnected channels:

- .1 the Mediterranean emergency communication procedures and systems set up in the framework of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol, now referred to as the “Regional Information System (RIS)”.
- .2 two obligatory systems for the EU Member States: the Emergency Communication and Information System for Marine Pollution (CECIS MP) for requesting and offering assistance, and the Union Maritime Information and Exchange System (SafeSeaNet) for reporting maritime incidents.

3. Due to the simultaneous use of these two disconnected communication channels the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention have stressed, on various occasions, the difficulties encountered during incidents and exercises when communicating with other countries and REMPEC in terms of notification, exchange of information and request for assistance. They concurred with the need to establish a common and unique system applicable to all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

4. In this context, REMPEC provided the 14th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (2021) with the considerations for the establishment of a Common Emergency Communication System in the Mediterranean, as laid down in document [REMPEC/WG.51/9/2](#)

5. The Common Emergency Communication System for the Mediterranean (Common System) could be implemented on the basis of the above-mentioned considerations, and through the following adaptations/interconnections to be made, where relevant, on CECIS MP functionalities:

- User rights and contact updates
- Access to the application
- Notification
- Assistance
- Country Policies / Country Profile
- Resources-Policy Information / MEDGIS-MAR

6. Following the presentation of the document [REMPEC/WG.51/9/2](#), several delegations welcomed the proposal by the Secretariat and stressed the importance of the establishment of a Common System to facilitate the exchange of information and to coordinate the regional assistance through a unique platform.

7. Further to the discussion on the Common System, and as detailed in its report [REMPEC/WG.51/13](#), the 14th meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC:

- .1 agreed on the use of the Common Emergency Communication and Information System for Marine Pollution (CECIS MP) by all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, as a

- Common Emergency Communication System for the Mediterranean, for the request of assistance.
- .2 encouraged Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, upon receipt of REMPEC annual “Circular No.2 - Directory of Competent National Authorities in charge of Accidental Marine Pollution, Preparedness and Response and Mutual Assistance and other Relevant Information”, to update the list of REMPEC Focal Points and CECIS MP simultaneously.
 - .3 concurred with the proposal to facilitate access to CECIS MP by REMPEC Focal Points by:
 - .1 creating on REMPEC’s emergency page, a link to CECIS MP authentication screen; and
 - .2 exploring the possibility of access to both systems, i.e. REMPEC’s Regional Information System databases and CECIS MP, with the same credentials.
 - .4 agreed to establish a common notification procedure by:
 - .1 first encouraging third countries to exchange through CECIS MP the whole POLREP from the alert phase to the request for assistance; and
 - .2 secondly, further exploring the harmonisation of the notification procedures via SafeSeaNet for all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, notably by:
 - .1 exploring through the High-level Steering Group, the authorisation of REMPEC’s access to SafeSeaNet to allow compliance with Article 9 of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol; and
 - .2 identifying necessary adaptation of the existing reporting procedures established within the Barcelona Convention and its 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol.
 - .5 further agreed with the proposed adaptation of CECIS MP, with a view to facilitating the use of the Standard forms for the Request of Assistance by:
 - .1 creating a direct link or providing access to the approved Standard Form for request of experts from the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU) and the Standard Forms for request of equipment, products, and specialised personnel, to be completed by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and attached to the POLFAC for dissemination to Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and REMPEC, as applicable; and
 - .2 granting the necessary user access to allow REMPEC to process requests of assistance on behalf of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in accordance with Article 12.1 and 12.2 of the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol.
 - .6 concurred with the proposed creation of a link on CECIS MP enabling access to REMPEC’s Country Profile.
 - .7 agreed upon the proposed interconnection between the equipment database of the CECIS MP and MEDGIS-MAR.
 - .8 requested the Secretariat to liaise with the European Commission European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) to implement the above agreed adaptations and to continue exploring, in consultation with Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, communication streamlining processes.

Progress on the establishment of the Common system using CECIS MP Platform

8. During the renewal and upgrade of CECIS MP by DG ECHO (2022-2024), REMPEC undertook the following actions to enhance the contribution of the CPs in this process. These actions were in

accordance with the conclusions and recommendation of the 15th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, June 2023):

- .1 scheduling the present regional Workshop on Reporting, Monitoring, and Data Sharing (MEDEXPOL 2024), to be held in Malta from 25 to 26 September 2024. Agenda item two of the workshop will address the capacities and limitations of the Common System, which findings will be submitted for review at the 16th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, May 2025).
- .2 tasking the two Correspondence Groups under the the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) to continue assisting REMPEC in cooperation with the European Commission during the different phases of the development of the Common Emergency Communication System and in testing it once developed and to contribute to the preparation of MEDEXPOL 2024, to assist CPs in fulfilling their commitments inter alia in data sharing reporting on oil and HNS Spills
- .3 developed a questionnaire circulated on 4 July 2024 to the the members of the Correspondence groups focusing inter alia on the three elements 7.2, 7.6 and 7.7, referred in paragraph 7 above.

The new CECIS MP

9. The start of the development of the new CECIS MP is planned for late autumn 2024. It will be based on the same structure of another system, which is currently being finalized. This will enable quicker and more efficient development of the CECIS MP baseline, to which specific features and functionalities for a marine pollution incident communication will be added.

10. The new user management will enable a more flexible and dynamic attribution of roles and full or restricted access to specific information, e.g., contact details, incident info, resources, etc.

11. CECIS MP will be used in all European Sea basins. Therefore, consultations on the specific features have started with the relevant Regional Agreements to evaluate and agree on a common approach. It is suggested that REMPEC Secretariat continues to represent REMPEC Focal Points in this work.

12. So far, consultations and discussions between REMPEC Secretariat and DG ECHO have been initiated on several matters listed in point 7 above:

(7.2) Update the list of REMPEC Focal Points and CECIS MP simultaneously:

- Pending results from the questionnaire referred to in paragraph 9.
- Each user country will need to have a CECIS MP administrator who will manage national accounts. Contacts/data of those accounts can be shared with or hidden from other users. Note that depending on a national system, those contacts may be the same or different from the REMPEC Focal Points Directory.

(7.3) Access to CECIS MP by REMPEC Focal Points:

- Creating a link to CECIS MP authentication screen on REMPEC's emergency page is possible.
- Access to CECIS MP will require creation of the EU login. CECIS MP links with REMPEC's Regional Information System databases, more precisely MEDGIS-MAR and Country Profile pages on REMPEC Website, have been assessed but still need to be decided please see points (7.6) and (7.7) below.

(7.4) A common notification procedure:

- Countries that are not SafeSeaNet (SSN) users will be encouraged to exchange the

whole POLREP from the alert phase to the request for assistance through CECIS MP.

- Authorisation of REMPEC's access to parts of the SSN data and a better link between SSN and CECIS MP remain to be addressed in the SSN High Level Steering Group.

(7.5) Use of the Standard forms for the Request for Assistance:

- Standard Form for request of experts from the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU) and the Standard Forms for request of equipment, products and specialised personnel could be integrated into a request and offer part of the CECIS MP. Exact details will be addressed during the development stage.
- When operational, CECIS MP will provide a platform for each country to share incident information and requests/offers of assistance without the need for REMPEC to coordinate this exchange.
- REMPEC will have its own user rights to receive and share information and to make offers within the framework of the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU). The goal is to ensure that all requests and offers of assistance within the MAU are made exclusively through CECIS MP.

(7.6) Link on CECIS MP enabling access to the REMPEC's Country Profile:

- Pending results from the questionnaire.
- Note that Country Profile information is not required for the CECIS MP purposes.

(7.7) Interconnection between the equipment database of the CECIS MP and MEDGIS-MAR:

- Pending results from the questionnaire.
- However, the preliminary assessment has shown that the two systems are not compatible, and it would require a significant development to link and synchronize them. The added value of this link is questionable because (1) the use of MEDGIS-MAR is very limited among the Contracting Parties and (2) two systems would remain running in parallel and duplicating each other.
- Therefore, investment in the additional development does not seem to be justified and it is advised that Contracting Parties would make a switch from MEDGIS-MAR to CECIS MP when the latter becomes operational.
- An assessment still needs to be made which (if any) functionalities of MEDGIS-MAR apart of the resources database should be considered in the CECIS MP.

Actions requested by the Workshop

13. The Workshop is invited to:

- .1 **take note** of the decisions regarding the Common Emergency Communication System for the Mediterranean at the 13th and 14th Meetings of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea;
 - .2 **take note** of the progress of the consultative discussions between REMPEC Secretariat and DG ECHO of the European Commission;
 - .3 **examine and comment** on the proposals put forward in paragraph 12 points (7.2), (7.6) and (7.7), to be submitted to the 16th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC.
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