
**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.57/4.1
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**Agenda Item 3: Data Sharing - Towards a Country Profile Integrated Platform on Prevention,
Preparedness and Response**

**Restructuring of the Country Profile to facilitate data collection, categorisation, update and consequent
actions.**

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Note by the Secretariat

The present document aims to contribute to the implementation of a common approach on data sharing and to facilitate Contracting Parties role in their data submission and consultation. To do so, a proposal to review and adjust the structure of the Country Profile, with the ultimate aim to facilitate the collection and utilization of datasets for statistical analysis and studies at regional level could be developed. The proposal could consider the feedback received to the Questionnaire on Data Sharing, Monitoring, and Reporting, distributed by REMPEC to the Contracting Parties in July 2024.

Background

1. Reporting and monitoring obligations under 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”) and 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”) are facilitated, among other factors, by the availability of updated and easily accessible national data and information. This data and information are specified by the articles of both Protocols and are collected in various forms and templates to facilitate the implementation of the anticipated activities under these Protocols, as outlined in the working documents REMPEC/WG.57/2.1 and REMPEC/WG.5/7.3. The primary sources of information and data are the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (CPs) themselves, in accordance with the requirements of both Protocols and relevant international and EU instruments, followed by information made available to the public through official national publications and other official channels.

2. As detailed in paragraph 12 of the document [REMPEC/WG.45/8](#), REMPEC has developed, over the years, a set of tools, with a view to assisting the CPs, in the process of implementing Article 7 to the Prevention and Emergency Protocol on ‘Dissemination and Exchange of Information’ and Article 25 to the Offshore Protocol on ‘Mutual Information’. These tools are (i) the Country Profile available on REMPEC Website and (ii) the Mediterranean Integrated Geographical Information System on Marine Pollution Risk Assessment and Response (MEDGIS-MAR).

3. The 15th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, June 2023) recognized, as in previous meetings, a continuing lack in submission of reports, revisions, and updates on MEDGIS-MAR and the Country Profile. The meeting underscored the essential role of the CPs in maintaining and updating these tools. Consistently with previous meetings, the 15th Meeting recommended some additional measures on Data Sharing, as detailed in the report of the Meeting [REMPEC WG.56/8, Annex V](#), relevant for provision of national data on offshore activities, incidents and spills.

4. In addition to the meeting of obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, the fulfilment of reporting and monitoring commitments by CPs would contribute to the availability of aggregated datasets to enable statistical analysis on accidents and spills, as well as of insights on pressures and impact on the marine environment derived by maritime traffic and offshore activities, at a regional level. All these could contribute towards the preparation of the periodic Med Quality Status Reports and other reports such as the “Study on Trends and Outlook of marine pollution from ships and activities and of maritime traffic and offshore activities in the Mediterranean”, hereinafter referred to as the [Study](#), and support goal-based policy decisions at Mediterranean level.

5. In this context, the present document aims to contribute to facilitate implementation of the common approach on data sharing towards a standardized format for monitoring and reporting on marine oil and chemical pollution.

6. To inform the discussion, REMPEC has distributed a questionnaire, to collect feedback from the Correspondence Group on Data Sharing, Monitoring, and Reporting (within the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG)), as tasked by the 15th Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points.

Continuous improvements of tools to support and incentivize Data Sharing

7. The Country Profile, in its present structure, was considered by the 11th Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points (May 2017), as detailed in paragraph 6 of the document [REMPEC/WG.37/10](#). The Country Profile of each CP contains detailed information on measures in place at national level for the implementation of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol, specifically on the following subjects:

.1 General information

.2 OPRC – Preparedness for and response to marine pollution:

- Contact list of National Competent Authorities;
- Conventions and Protocols;
- National and regional system;
- Response strategy;
- Risk assessment;
- Expertise;
- Resources; and
- Training and follow-up

.3 Prevention:

- Contact list of National Competent Authorities;
- List of ratified international Conventions; and
- Implementation of international Conventions.

8. The last update of MEDGIS-MAR was considered by the 13th Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points (June 2019), as detailed in sub-paragraph 12.4 of Document [REMPEC/WG.45/8](#), namely:

- .1 its content: national data (response equipment, accidents, oil and gas installations, and oil handling facilities) updated by and restricted to each Mediterranean coastal State, provided with personalised credentials;
- .2 its content: public data including shoreline type layers, environmental layers, socio-economic layers as well as maritime traffic layers gathered from various sources;
- .3 its functionality allowing the display of customized vulnerability maps, to support the definition of strategies to respond to oil and HNS incidents; and
- .4 its upgrade, in 2018, with fifteen (15) new features, including a layer related to illicit discharges, a responsive interface with additional filters. and a tool to run oil distribution simulations in case of spill.

9. In this context, the 15th Meeting of REMPEC Focal points agreed on the continuation of the process of improvement of the Data Sharing, as detailed in Annex V of the report of the Meeting ([REMPEC WG.56/8](#)). The measures identified, as listed below, are designed to provide a more practical and appealing approach to Data Sharing, aiming to encourage greater involvement from the CPs. Implementation during the present biennium and considered within the work of the present workshop:

.1 *Measures relevant for MEDGIS-MAR:*

To develop a new layer on MEDGIS-MAR related to spills in the Mediterranean to be evaluated during MEDEXPOL 2024;

.2 *Measures relevant for Country Profile in relation with the Mediterranean Oil Spill Waste Management Decision Support Tool ([Waste Management](#)):*

- i. feasibility of allowing users other than REMPEC OPRC Focal Points to input national information in the appropriate sections of the Oil Spill Waste Management Plan (OSWMP);
- ii. agree on the proposal to upload the latest version of the final OSWMP, the Manual on national mechanisms in their Country Profiles.

.3 Measures relevant for both Country Profiles and MEDGIS-MAR:

- i. adopt an approach of periodic updating through online surveys, as addressed in the document WG.57/3 of the present workshop, facilitating the CPs to inform on their last update on both tools;
- ii. recommend the use of the template of the Manual on national mechanism for the mobilisation of personnel and response equipment in case of emergency, provided as Appendix to the document [REMPEC/WG.51/9/3](#), with relevant information; update the information directly on MEDGIS-MAR and Country Profiles, or by updating the latest pre-filed forms.

.4 Measures relevant for both Country Profiles and Monitoring:

To provide data using the revised Data Standards and Data Dictionaries for IMAP Common Indicator 19, according to the established criteria for oil and HNS spills, as set out in Annex 2 to document REMPEC/WG.56/3/4/Rev.1.

Conclusions

10. Country Profiles currently provide only narrative information: no data on incidents and spills are shown which are supposed to be included under MEDGIS-MAR. There is an opportunity for restructuring the Country Profile and allow the insertion of more relevant and operative information on accidents and spills, to integrate and easier the process of Data Sharing, as well as including supporting documents, as appropriate.

11. CPs are invited to discuss on the tools available for Data Sharing (Country Profile and MEDGIS-MAR), and to reflect whether they recognize on them any benefit and added value. Without a sense of ownership, incentives and encouragement alone may not be sufficient to sustain the CP full involvement in the Data Sharing process.

Results from the Questionnaire

12. In July 2024, REMPEC distributed to CPs a Questionnaire on Reporting, Monitoring and Data Sharing, to understand eventual difficulties, capacity gaps and way to facilitate response to reporting and monitoring obligations. Five CPs have responded to the questionnaire. Answers have been integrated and some synthetic elements of the response provided are presented here below.

13. Regarding Reporting on Implementation of Activities, it is worth noting that the respondent Countries are aware of reporting obligations under the different systems (IMO, Barcelona Convention, European Union) and of the frequency of reporting. Directory of Competent Authority is indicated as duplicated information requested. The due reports are prepared mainly on the basis of already available information. Correspondence among different departments at national level is necessary in some CPs, previous reports are used as basis by some CPs, and updated. The use of facilities provided by REMPEC seems to be limited by the lack of update and difficulties in accessing to such facilities and operate with them. All respondents agree on the proposal of uploading national deliverables developed within the POW for REMPEC in the respective Country Profile page. This could be done with some support from REMPEC but at the end Focal Points expect to be able to proceed on their own means.

14. Considering Reporting in case of Emergency, all respondent CPs are familiar with POLREP (POLWARN, POLINF, POLFAC). Standard forms for the request of MAU experts are used by some of the respondent CPs, while just one CP is acquainted with the Standard form for requesting equipment, products and specialized personnel. In terms of communication means, the email address

emergency@rempec.org is known and used by all respondent CPs with no difficulties, while the use of SSN/CECIS MP seems to be more problematic: strengthening of capacity to use these communication means have been indicated, as well as the need for better coordination between different entities / institutions within the CP, to share access to such services. Regarding the possibility to make VISIBLE to other countries the information available in the directory/list of the Competent National Authorities in charge of Preparedness and Response to Marine pollution and of CECIS main contact points (considering that this choice would not apply to Administrators: DGECHO and REMPEC), all but one of the respondent CPs agree to make this information visible. All respondent CPs consider useful to create a link for an easy access to the Country Profiles in CECIS MP. All respondent CPs also agree that some features or elements from MEDGIS-MAR could be transferred/copied into CECIS MP, with the recommendation that such information should be regularly updated.

15. Regarding monitoring of the 5 IMAP 5 Common Indicators (CIs) relevant for the Offshore Protocol, all respondent CPs but one, report no knowledge on how to apply them to offshore activities. The same is reported regarding the experience with MEDPOL and the CORMONs. In some cases the national institutions in charge to collect data on these CIs are different from the Focal Point for the Offshore Protocol and the P&E Protocol. Similarly, lack of knowledge on the Guidance Factsheet, Data Dictionary (DD) and Data Standard (DS) for CI 19, or need for capacity strengthening, is reported. Application of CI19 after the 11th and the 15th Meeting of CPs of REMPEC is limited to one of the respondent CPs. Limited knowledge of Descriptor 8 of the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is also reported. In some cases, the national institutions in charge to collect data on CI19 are different from the Focal Point for the Offshore Protocol and the P&E Protocol.

16. Considering Data Sharing, the lack of regular update is the reason why the Country Profile page on REMPEC Website is used only by two of the respondent CPs to collect information and data for reporting or monitoring needs. All respondent CPs would welcome the Country Profile to become the CPs primary interface for activities related to the implementation of both the Protocols, including a repository for previous national deliverables. A prerequisite for this would be the Country Profile page to be regularly updated. All respondent CPs agree to restructure the Country Profile page to adapt to the needs of gathering all data, structuring them for reporting and monitoring needs, and also to be capitalized as database for any use in relation to P&R to marine pollution. Again, a prerequisite for this would be the Country Profile page to be regularly updated. One CP highlighted the need for restricted access to such content. Finally, all respondent CPs agree to interconnect the Excel sheet of MEDGIS-MAR to a dedicated section of the Country Profile page.

Conclusions

17. A limited number of CPs answered to the Questionnaire distributed by REMPEC. Nevertheless, based on the response received, the majority have expressed willingness to restructure the Country Profile page, in a way to make it more useful to:

- support reporting obligations, providing easy access to reporting formats and guidance documents;
- serve as a repository for previous reports, to facilitate their update for the preparation of new reports; and
- function as an easy data collection point to enter data requested also under MEDGIS-MAR.

18. The respondent CPs have underlined the need for continuous update of the data entered in the restructured Country Profile page.

Actions requested by the workshop

19. The Workshop is invited:

- .1 **to approve in principle**, the restructuring of the Country Profile;
- .2 **to invite** REMPEC to carry a detailed assessment of the technical feasibility to upgrade the Country Profile and make a proposal at the next Focal point Meeting to be held in 2025;
- .3 **to discuss** the added value of the data tools available, as provided in paragraph 11 to the present document and decide; accordingly, and
- .4 **to discuss and agree** on possible contents for a new section of the Country Profile page, including the possibility to include links to national reports, namely to the reports on the implementation of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol and Offshore Protocols, as well as reports of national workshops on oil spill response planning and readiness assessment.