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

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Fifth Meeting of the Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil  
and Gas Group (OFOG) Sub-Group on Environmental  
Impact )

REMPEC/WG.60/5  
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**Agenda Item 5: Data Sharing, Monitoring Programme, and Reporting**

**Findings of the Regional Workshop on Reporting, Monitoring, and Data Sharing (MEDEXPOL 2024) related to  
Offshore Activities**

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document will not be printed and is made available in electronic format only. Delegates are encouraged to consult the document in its electronic format and limit printing.

### **Note by the Secretariat**

The present document provides an overview of the findings of the Regional Workshop on Reporting, Monitoring, and Data Sharing (MEDEXPOL 2024), held in Lija, Malta, on 25-26 September 2024. It focuses primarily on the Workshop conclusions and recommendations that are related to offshore activities.

## Introduction

1 REMPEC organized the **Regional Workshop on Reporting, Monitoring and Data Sharing (MEDEXPOL 2024)**, in Lija, Malta 25-26 September 2024, hereinafter referred to as the Workshop, to assist the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (CPs) in fulfilling their obligations under the ‘‘2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol’’ and the ‘‘1994 Offshore Protocol’’, specifically on reporting, monitoring, and data sharing, and to raise awareness and visibility about the tools available for the reporting, monitoring, and data sharing needs.

2 Beyond raising awareness on the effective implementation of the instruments, the Workshop considered more closely the added value and benefits at national and regional level of reporting on and implementation of these instruments. It also recognized that reporting and monitoring are closely linked to the availability of accurate and up-to-date information, and that disaggregation of information sources at national level could hinder access to such information and data. The Workshop concurred to foster CPs ownership of REMPEC’s platforms as their primary interface for activities related to the implementation of the legal instruments.

3 The present document provides findings of MEDEXPOL 2024 on Data Sharing, Monitoring, and Reporting in relation to offshore activities. The report on the Workshop is provided in REMPEC/WG.60/INF.4.

## Data Sharing

4 On Data Sharing, an illustration of findings of paragraph 2 could be Table 3 contained in Annex I to document REMPEC/WG.60/2 presenting the ‘‘Number of offshore oil and gas fields for each Contracting Party (CP) to the Barcelona Convention’’ derived from the previous report of the Fourth Meeting of the OFOG, Sub-Group on Environmental Impact (Malta, May 2023) with the mention *Data source: Clarksons Research Offshore Intelligent Network, data retrieved on 08.06.2020. Figures retrieved from EP/MED WG.498/Inf.4.*

5 Efforts to produce an updated version of this Table, using national data reported under the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), Figure No1 below, of the UNEP/MAP or the MEGIS-MAR’ Layer ‘Oil and gas offshore installations’ of REMPEC, and lack of feedback to REMPEC correspondence dated 27 November 2024, revealed the difficulties to ensure availability of expected data at a relevant regional level of accuracy. This was also concluded particularly while developing the updated Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan (MOAP) for the 2026–2035 period.

*Figure 1 Template of the BCRS Inventory table (COP 20 – Decision IG.23/1)*

### **PART III INVENTORY OF OFFSHORE INSTALLATIONS**

**TABLE III - INVENTORY OF OFFSHORE INSTALLATIONS INCLUDING DISUSED INSTALLATIONS**

Operator	Production Start	Current status (closed down, decommissioned, derogation, operational)	Primary Production (Condensate, Gas, Oil and Gas, Oil)	Category (Fixed steel, Floating concrete, Floating Steel, Gravity based concrete, Subsea Steel, Others)	Weight Substructure (tonnes)	Weight Topside (tonnes)	Remarks (E.g. measures taken to not affect other legitimate uses of the sea: navigation, fishing and the protection of the marine environment)

6 The Meeting will be invited to discuss this matter and agree on a process for updating the table in preparation for the future Meetings of the OFOG and the reporting on the implementation of the Offshore Protocol under the BCRS.

### **Monitoring**

7 The Fourth Meeting of the OFOG endorsed five core Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) Common Indicators (CIs 1, 2, 15, 17, 18) for the monitoring of operational pollution of offshore oil and gas activities. The Fifteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC (Malta, June 2023) considered the IMAP CI 19, which covers both maritime transport and offshore activities accidental pollution.

8 In this context, MEDEXPOL 2024 noted the lengthy process since 2017 to implement the monitoring under IMAP CI 19. It also recognized the lack of knowledge and expertise among CPs regarding the implementation of the monitoring and assessment of the marine environment using IMAP CIs. To overcome this gap, the Workshop ‘approved’ two documents, titled “To-do-lists”, set out in Document REMPEC /WG.57/3, which provide a summary of monitoring obligations and practical support on the use of the CIs and respective accompanying documents (the Guidance Fact sheets, the Data Dictionaries and Data Standards spreadsheets (DDs and DSs)):

- .1 the “To-do-list” set-out at **Annex 1** provides basic support and guidance to the competent authorities of the CPs, which must ensure regular monitoring of operational pollution of offshore activities of by the Operators of Offshore installations.
- .2 the “To-do-list” set-out at **Annex 2** aims to provide a draft basic support on this topic, offering some indication to easier consultation and application of the standards available for CI19 under IMAP.

9 The Meeting will be invited to examine Annexes 1 and 2, to decide on their content and format; and to agree on the approach for their finalization.

### **Reporting**

10 In relation to reporting on the implementation of legal instruments, MEDEXPOL noted that there is still lack of reporting on the Offshore Protocol under the BCRS. It further emphasized that data fragmentation among different institutions at national level is another important barrier to reporting.

11 National Implementation Reports (NIR) submitted by the CPs, through the BCRS, for the last four biennia (2016-2017; 2018-2019; 2020-2021) as shown in Table 2 of Document REMPEC/WG.60/2 confirms the lack of reporting by the CPs.

12 It is recalled that the reporting for each biennium is conducted during the second year of the subsequent biennium. Consequently, the relevant report in this case pertains to the 2020–2021 biennium. The assessment of the 2022-2023 CPs’ NIR commenced in December 2024 for completion by May 2025 (in view of the 21st Compliance Committee Meeting in June 2025).

13 Accordingly, the meeting will be invited to encourage CPs to ensure timely reporting, as this is crucial for identifying needs and challenges and for supporting the effective implementation of the Offshore Protocol.

### **Actions requested by the Meeting**

14 **The Meeting is invited to:**

- .1 **take note** of the information provided in the present document; and
- .2 **to review and provide** guidance on the implementation of the recommendations outlined in paragraphs 6, 9, and 13.

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**Annex 1**

**To-do list - Monitoring of offshore activities**



**[DRAFT]****To-do list on monitoring of offshore activities**

This To-do-list is developed by the Secretariat, revised by MEDEXPOL 2024, and approved by the 16 Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points (Malta, May 2025). In accordance with Article 19 of the Offshore Protocol.

The following indicators were identified by the 4th OFOG Meeting (Malta, May 2023).

**Step 1: Consider the following list of indicators (to be monitored by operators)**

- Common Indicator 1: Habitat distributional range, to also consider habitat extent as a relevant attribute (EO1)
- Common Indicator 2: Condition of the habitat's typical species and communities (EO1)
- Common Indicator 15: Location and extent of the habitats impacted directly by hydrographic alterations (EO7)
- Common Indicator 17: Concentration of key harmful contaminants measured in the relevant matrix (EO9, related to biota, sediment, seawater)
- Common Indicator 18: Level of pollution effects of key contaminants where a cause and effect relationship has been established (EO9).

**Step 2: Consult and provide to the operator the following Guidance Factsheets and Reference documents of relevance for monitoring the indicators under operators' responsibility**

Specifically, the following **Guidance Factsheets** are of interest:

- Common Indicators 1 and 2: IMAP Common Indicator Guidance Factsheets (Biodiversity and Fisheries) - UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.444/6/Rev.1 (2017) (available in English and French)
- Common Indicator 15: IMAP Guidance Factsheet for Common Indicator 15 "Location and extent of the habitats impacted directly by hydrographic alterations" (available in English and French)
- Common Indicator 17 and 18: IMAP Common Indicator Guidance Facts Sheets (Pollution and Marine Litter) - UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG. WG.439/12 (available in English and French).

Guidance Factsheets for monitoring are available:

- Guidance Factsheets [REMPEC/WG.55/INF.3](#) (PDF version)
- Online version from the [IMAP Info System Web page](#).

In addition, the following **Reference documents** are of interest:

- Common Indicators 1 and 2: Monitoring Protocols for IMAP Common Indicators related to Biodiversity and Non-Indigenous species - UNEP/MED WG.467/16 (2019) (available in English and French). Session F – Guidelines for monitoring marine benthic habitats in the Mediterranean (Chapter 3 is dedicated to Guidelines for monitoring dark habitats in Mediterranean and is the one of outmost interest for monitoring offshore installation).
- Common indicator 17 and 18: Monitoring Protocols for Common Indicators related to Pollution (Chapter 4.1 is dedicated to CI17 Heavy metals, trace elements and organic chemicals; Chapter 4.2 is dedicated to CI18: Common Indicator 17: Standard H1).

**Step 3: Ask the operator to prepare a specific monitoring programme for each installation (including spatial and temporal scale), responding to IMAP requirements, and revise it**

Guidance on how to develop a monitoring program is available in UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.434/4, including a list of parameters to be monitored, guidance on the number of stations and monitoring frequency. Therein the following steps are indicated that can be incorporated in the present to-do-list:

- Step 3.1: Undertake an evaluation of the baseline marine environmental conditions of the area of potential impact from the planned activities, conducted via a desktop review and

supplemented by field-based studies if required, based on lifecycle stage of the planned activity and the availability of existing information.

- Step 3.2: Prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP), Oil Spill Contingency Plan (OSCP), and other documentation required to be submitted to relevant regulatory authority for environmental approvals/permits (such as chemical use, drilling mud use, allowable discharges, etc.) as required per the proposed activity and addressing requirements per relevant sections of the Offshore Protocol.
- Step 3.3: Submit the above documentation to the relevant Competent Authority(s) for appropriate Authorisation(s) and overall Environmental License prior to commencing the activity, addressing the requirements per relevant sections of the Offshore Protocol.
- Step 3.4: Design, undertake and assess the performance of an Operator Environmental Monitoring Program throughout the lifecycle of the project activity per requirements of the Environmental License, which is to include a structured approach for the assessment and reporting of the Operator's environmental performance in meeting the monitoring requirements. These requirements will be determined based on location-specific and activity-specific information as submitted by the operator to the Competent Authority

With regard to CIs 1, 2, 15, 17 and 18, it is further advised to limit monitoring parameters to be monitored by oil and gas operators to seabed sediment data (grain size, color and texture; potential metal/organic contaminants; biota numbers and species for community structure analysis). The monitoring must cover sufficient sampling locations over the full area of potential zone of impact in order to provide a statistical representation of the baseline conditions in the area, as well as from sampling locations further afield for use as points of regional reference (4th OFOG Meeting, 2023). Further guidance on monitoring surveys can be found in Chapter 5 of Output 3: Common offshore standards and guidelines on the disposal of oil and oily mixtures, the use and disposal of drilling fluids and cuttings and analytical measurements (REMPEC/WG55.2 – Annex).

**Step 4: Ask the operator to compile the information acquired through monitoring in the Standard documents (Data Dictionary - DD and Data Standard - DS)**

Standard documents are available:

- Data Standards/Data Dictionaries (DS/DD) [REMPEC/WG.55/INF.4](#) (PDF version)
- Online version from the [IMAP Info System Web page](#).

Specifically, the following **DD/DS** are of interest:

- Common Indicators 1 and 2: Standard B1
- Common Indicator 15: Standard H1
- Common Indicator 17: Standard H1
- Common Indicator 18: Standard PMO1.

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**Annex 2**

**To-do list - Monitoring of spills**



## **DRAFT To-do list on monitoring of spills**

This To-do-list is developed by the Secretariat, revised by MEDEXPOL 2024, and approved by the 16 Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points (Malta, May 2025).

### **Step 1: Consider the following indicator**

- Common Indicator 19: Occurrence, origin (where possible), and extent of acute pollution events (e.g., slicks from oil, oil products and hazardous substances) and their impact on biota affected by this pollution (EO9).

### **Step 2: Consult Guidance Factsheet for CI19**

Guidance Factsheets for monitoring CI19 is available from [REMPEC web site](#).

- Common Indicators 19: Revised Guidance Fact Sheets for IMAP Common Indicators 6 and 19 - UNEP/MED WG. 482/21 (2020)

### **Step 3: Report on spills**

When the spill exceeds 50 tonnes reporting is obligatory but you can also opt to report on spillages of lower amount (recommended):

- **report to REMPEC using POLREP** (POLWARN, POLINF, POLFAC) (ref. Art. 9 P&E Protocol)
- **report to BCRS using MED-GIS MAR**

### **Step 4: Monitor spills**

Compile the revised DSs/DDs for CI19 ([available on REMPEC web site](#)) and provide it to IMAP.

The Sheets have the following meaning:

- DD\_Stations: provides general information on the occurrence of the spill
- DD\_OnBoardOil: to be compiled based on information collected during a survey at sea, or directly onboard of the ship causing the spillage and regarding oil spills
- DD\_OnBoardHNS: to be compiled based on information collected during a survey at sea, or directly onboard of the ship causing the spillage and regarding HNS spills
- DD\_OnShoreOil: to be compiled based on information collected on land, in the area affected by the spillage
- DD\_Impact: to be compiled is monitoring of impacts is undertaken (see next step).

### **Step 5: Monitor the impact of spills**

So far, no threshold has been defined to define whether monitoring of impacts should be undertaken. This is based on the Country decision.

A **monitoring plan** should be prepared including spatial and temporal features: number and location of sampling stations, number of samples to be collected (replicates, sampling depths, etc.), expected duration of the monitoring programs for the different environmental matrices. No guidance documents are available so far on these aspects.

The revised Data Standard / Data Dictionary for CI19 (Sheet DD\_Impact) provides indication on **parameters to be monitored**, namely on the environmental matrix (water, sediment, biota), on the contaminants to be assessed<sup>1</sup> (Sheet List of Contaminants)

### **Step 6: Share the results from monitoring of the impact**

The revised Data Standard / Data Dictionary for CI19 should be used to share with IMAP the results of monitoring of impacts.

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