



Mediterranean
Action Plan
Barcelona
Convention



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

Second Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean
Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response
to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031)

REMPEC/WG.58/2
18 October 2024
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Lija, Malta, 21 November 2024

Agenda item 2: Work of the Intersessional Working Groups

Summary of initial reports from the Intersessional Working Groups of the Mediterranean Strategy 2022-2031

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 Mediterranean Strategy 2022-2031 was adopted in December 2021. The First Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) (Malta, 29 November-1 December 2022), hereinafter referred to as the First Coordination meeting, *inter alia*, agreed to establish seven (7) Intersessional Working Groups (IWGs) with the aim to discuss the progress and coordination of implementation of actions, during and between the biennial coordination meetings on the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031).

This document seeks to provide a brief summary of the work undertaken by the IWGs between 2022 – 2024.

WORK OF THE INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUPS

Introduction

1 The Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031), hereinafter the “Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031)”, was adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, in 2021 ([Decision IG.25/16](#)).

2 The Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) sets seven Common Strategic Objectives (CSOs), which apply to the Mediterranean region as a whole, and Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, alongside the various organisations and institutions of the Mediterranean, each have a role to play in achieving these objectives.

3 The Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) is supported by an Action Plan for the Implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031), which sets out the specific actions required under each CSO. The actions are grouped by ‘areas of influence’ (People, Institutions, Infrastructure; and Information and Knowledge Sharing) and are guided by supporting objectives for each area of influence.

4 The First Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) (Malta, 29 November-1 December 2022), hereinafter referred to as the First Coordination meeting, *inter alia*, agreed to establish seven (7) Intersessional Working Groups (IWGs) with the aim to discuss the progress and coordination of implementation of actions, during and between the biennial coordination meetings on the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) ([REMPEC/WG.52/8](#)).

5 Terms of References specific to each IWG were drafted by the REMPEC Secretariat, and are provided to the meeting in document REMPEC/WG.58/INF.2. Each IWG was tasked to provide a report to the Second Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention of, Preparedness, and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031), alongside a joint workplan.

6 It was not possible for all seven IWGs to operationalize in the time available. The IWG on CSO 4 (IWG-LITTER) and the IWG on CSO 5 (IWG-NIS) were not able to mobilize in time for the meeting. Therefore, a total of four IWG reports (with joint workplans annexed) are presented in document REMPEC/WG.58/INF.2 and have been summarized in this document.

IWG-PREVENT

- 7 A detailed and extensive report from the IWG is presented in REMPEC/WG.58/INF.2, however, the following general observations can be made about the status of implementation of prevention actions under CSO 1:
- .1 In comparison to other areas of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031), there are a lot of activities underway or planned on this topic for the next biennium, however there is still a need for additional efforts to improve prevention of oil and chemical pollution in the Mediterranean Sea;
 - .2 There are a number of resources of guidelines and standards developed and available, both at a national and regional level;
 - .3 There are a number of offerings for capacity-building and training opportunities currently being delivered or being offered on a rolling basis; and
 - .4 There is duplication in the activities being offered.

IWG-RESPOND

- 8 A detailed and extensive report from the IWG is presented in REMPEC/WG.58/ INF.2, however, the following general observations can be made about the status of implementation of preparedness and response actions under CSO 1:
- .5 In comparison to other areas of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031), there are a lot of activities underway or planned on this topic for the next biennium, however there is a still a need for additional efforts to increase preparedness and response to oil and chemical pollution in the Mediterranean Sea;
 - .6 There are a number of resources of guidelines and standards developed and available, both at a national and regional level;
 - .7 There are a number of offerings for capacity-building and training opportunities currently being delivered or being offered on a rolling basis;
 - .8 There are a some opportunities for additional support available (as provided by relevant stakeholders) that have not been taken up (i.e. no direct requests have been made by Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention);
 - .9 The geographical spread of implementation progress is not balanced. For some Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention , there is an indication that work is yet to commence on some of the actions of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031); and
 - .10 There is limited progress on the actions related to ratification / transposition.

IWG-CCAS

- 9 A detailed and extensive report from the IWG is presented in REMPEC/WG.58/ INF.2, however, the following general observations can be made about the status of implementation of actions under CSO 2 and CSO 3:
- .11 There has been considerable progress under this CSO, namely through the joint and coordinated proposal for the designation of the Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter (Med SO_x ECA), and the associated establishment of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) Nitrogen Oxides Emission Control Area (NO_x ECA) Technical Committee of Experts;
 - .12 In addition, there have been advancements in relevant EU Directives and Regulations on the use of renewable and alternative fuels, and their transportation into national laws by Mediterranean Coastal States has supported progress towards CSO 2 and CSO 3;
 - .13 There are a number of activities being offered to Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention to deliver the priority actions under CSO 2 and CSO 3, many of which are newly developed / available; and
 - .14 There are still a number of priority actions where there are no activities being offered to support Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention in delivering CSO 2 and CSO 3, namely those relating to monitoring, reporting and enforcement.

IWG-MSP

- 10 A detailed and extensive report from the IWG is presented in REMPEC/WG.58/ INF.2, however, the following general observations can be made about the status of implementation of actions under CSO 6:
- .15 There has been some notable progress under CSO 6, namely the production of a Guidance Document for the identification and designation of Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) in relation to Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs), as well as the designation of the Med SOx ECA;
 - .16 In addition, there has been progress with the establishment of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), NOx ECA Technical Committee of Experts (NECA TCE), which will consider the possible designation of a Mediterranean Sea NOx ECA under MARPOL Annex VI in due course; and
 - .17 Furthermore, the North-Western Mediterranean Sea was designated as a PSSA at MEPC 80 (London, United Kingdom, 3-7 July 2023),

IWG-Noise

- 11 A detailed and extensive report from the IWG is presented in REMPEC/WG.58/ INF.2, however, the following general observations can be made about the status of action to address the issue of underwater noise from ships in the Mediterranean:
- .18 Collaborative working with a diverse range of stakeholders will be essential to tackle this issue; joining up with existing global programmes and initiatives will support this (such as the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloNoise Partnership);
 - .19 Globally, there are increasing efforts to understand the environmental impact of underwater noise from ships. How this topic is considered in the Mediterranean Region must be discussed by Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in the context of the upcoming mid-term review of the Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031);
 - .20 Currently, there are a limited number of recorded activities in the Mediterranean that seek to address the issue of underwater noise from ships.

Action Requested

- 12 The Second Coordination Meeting is invited to note the reporting from the seven (7) Mediterranean Strategy (2022-2031) IWGs.