

Decision IG.19/11

“Regional strategy on ships’ ballast water management in the Mediterranean”

The 16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties,

Desirous of preventing, minimizing and ultimately eliminating in the Mediterranean region the risks to the environment, human health, property and resources arising from the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens through the control and management of ships’ ballast water and sediments,

Recalling the objectives of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships’ Ballast Water Management and Sediments, 2004 and particularly its Article 13 whereby, to achieve these objectives, “*the Parties bordering enclosed and semi-enclosed seas, shall endeavor, taking into account characteristic regional features, to enhance regional co-operation, including through the conclusion of regional agreements*”,

Noting that the Mediterranean region is one of the six high priority regions included in the GEF/UNDP/IMO Project entitled “*Building Partnerships to Assist Developing Countries to Reduce the Transfer of Harmful Aquatic Organisms in Ships’ Ballast Water*” (“*GloBallast Partnerships*” Project),

Further noting that the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) was designated as the Regional Coordination Organization for the implementation of the GloBallast Partnerships Project in the Mediterranean in collaboration with the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA),

Acknowledging the advanced status of implementation of the GloBallast Partnerships Project in the Mediterranean, and particularly the work undertaken by the Mediterranean GloBallast Regional Task Force, with the support of REMPEC, towards the development of a regional strategy on ships’ ballast water management and invasive species in the Mediterranean,

Considering that the 9th Meeting of the Focal Points of REMPEC recommended to present the initiative to the Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention,

Agrees on the necessity of developing a regional strategy on ships’ ballast water to address the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens in the Mediterranean;

Decides to develop a regional strategy on ships’ ballast water management in the Mediterranean within the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP);

Encourages the Mediterranean GloBallast Regional Task Force to endeavor to finalise such regional strategy as soon as possible, for possible adoption by the 17th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention;

Recommends establishing and maintaining a dialogue with other regional seas agreements, particularly with the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution and with the Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment, in order to ensure efficient handling of the issue of ships’ ballast water management.