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24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Cairo, Egypt, 2-5 December 2025

Agenda Item 3: Thematic Decisions

Decision 27/1: Compliance and Reporting

Note by the Secretariat

Following the discussions during the MAP Focal Points meeting, the Activity Report of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2024-2025 (Annex II) has been enhanced. The present Rev.1 includes this more detailed Activity Report. Below is a summary of the additional details included in Annex II, which are also highlighted in yellow in the text of Annex II:

Section 1: Introduction

The following points and sub-points have been included: 1,4,5 and updated number 6

Section 2: Specific Submissions under Section V of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

The following points and sub-points have been included: 8 (a) i (1,2,3,4), ii (1,2) and (b) i (1,2,3,4,5,), ii (1,2)

Section 3: General Issues of Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

The following points and sub-points have been included: 9 (a) (1,2,3,4), (b) (1,2,3,4,5)

Section 4: Functioning of the Compliance Committee

The following points and sub-points have been included:

(a) 12, 13, 14
(b) 15 (a, b)

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2025

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Compliance Committee held two meetings in Athens, Greece, during 2024-2025: the 20th Meeting on 19-20 June 2024, and the 21st Meeting on June 4-5, 2025. Both took place at the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit.

2. At its 21st meeting, the Compliance Committee finalized its 2026-2027 Work Programme for submission to the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 24) in Cairo, Egypt (December 2-5, 2025), while the meeting agreed on the main blocks/development of the draft Decision on Compliance Committee., as follows:

(a) - Adoption of the Rules of Procedures on Compliance

(b) - Adoption of Compliance Committee Activity Report for the Biennium 2024-2025

(c) - Adoption of the Programme of Work of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2026-2027

(d) - Status of Reporting

(e) - Case of Mar Menor

(f) - Membership of the Compliance Committee:

(a) Revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee:

3. The Compliance Committee agreed on a clean text of the revised Rules of Procedure on Compliance, that were prepared in order to align them with the revised Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols adopted at COP 23 through Decision IG.26/1. The revised Rules of Procedure on Compliance were submitted to the meeting of the 96th Bureau of the Contracting Parties (Cairo, Egypt, 19-20 November 2024), which considered and adopted the amendments to the Rules of Procedure, subject to endorsement by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties. The Bureau also suggested some editorial amendments to the text of the Revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee. The revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee are included in Annex I to the present decision.

(*b*) *Activity Report of the Compliance Committee for the biennium 2024-2025*:

4. The Activity Report for 2024-2025 is included in Annex II to the present Draft Decision.

(c) The Programme of Work of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2026-2027:

5. The Programme of Work of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2026-2027 was agreed at the 21st Meeting of the Compliance Committee. The Programme of Work for 2026-2027 is included in Annex III to the present proposed Decision.

(d) Status of Reporting under Article 26 of the Barcelona Convention:

6. The section provides updated information on the status of the 2022-2023 National Implementation Reports (NIRs). An assessment report based on the submitted NIRs, that explores the specific difficulties Contracting Parties encountered during the implementation process, is set out in Annex IV to the proposed Decision. This assessment evaluates reporting based on submission, timeliness, completeness, and implementation criteria incorporating the work done by the Task Force on Reporting Implementation. The report also includes overall findings on the progress of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols' implementation, derived from an analysis of the 2022-2023 national reports.

(e) Case of Mar Menor

7. In its 21st meeting, the Compliance Committee has been actively following up on the Mar Menor case and noted with satisfaction the information received by Spain regarding the implementation of its findings and recommendations. Spain's "*Framework of Priority Actions for the Recovery of the Mar Menor*" is recognized as a comprehensive approach to this case, with responsibilities shared between national and regional authorities. The committee particularly welcomed Spain's innovative "Law on the legal personality of the Mar Menor", viewing it as a

significant breakthrough that could offer valuable lessons for future ecosystem protection initiatives. In light of this progress and the relevant articles of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols, the Committee has requested Spain to provide a timely report before its 22nd Compliance Committee meeting, detailing the legal framework adopted, programs implemented, and monitoring results on the ground.

***(f) Membership of the Compliance Committee**:*

8. A list that includes the number of Members and Alternate Members of the Compliance Committee, under each Group, to be renewed or elected by the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties is annexed to the present proposed Decision (set out in Annex V). This Annex will be finalized for adoption at COP24 once Contracting Parties proceed with the nomination of candidates.

9. The following Compliance Committee members and alternate members terms have concluded, as indicated below:

(Group I): Mr. Ezzedine Jouini-Berzine (Member) and Ms. Nancy Khoury (Alternate Member)

(Group II): Mr. Marko Starman (Alternate Member) and Mr. José Juste Ruiz (Member)

(Group III): Ms. Selma Osmanagic-Klico (Alternate Member) and Ms. Aysin Turpanci (Member)

10. Following the discussions held during the MAP Focal Points Meeting and the letter by the MAP Coordinator on the subject matter, consultations are ongoing for nomination of the new Members/Alternate members of the Compliance Committee, hopefully to be received before COP24. To this aim, Annex V of the proposed Decision may be subject to a Corrigendum.

11. The Secretariat clarified in Annex V of the proposed Decision that for Group III there are two Alternate Members to be nominated, including the Alternate Member that had to be nominated at COP 23.

12. The implementation of this Decision is linked to the Outcomes of the Foundational Programme 5 on "*Governance*" of the MTS and of the proposed Programme of Work 2026-2027, and in particular activities 5.1.1 and 5.2.4.

13. This Decision and its Annexes were submitted to the 2025 MAP Focal Points Meeting (Athens, Greece, 16-19 September 2025) that decided to transmit it to the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP24) (Cairo, Egypt, 2-5 December 2025), as amended.

[Decision IG.27/1

Compliance and Reporting

The Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols at their 24th Meeting,

Welcoming the outcome document of the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) entitled "Our ocean, our future: united for urgent action", reaffirming the strong global commitment to conserve and sustainably use the ocean, seas and marine resources and reconfirming the need to strengthen the role of regional seas conventions and action plans,

Being inspired by the high-level celebration of the anniversary of the 50 years of the UNEP/Mediterranean Action Plan and the 30 years of the Post-Rio Barcelona Convention, in UNOC-3, on 10 June 2025, as a strong sign of renewed commitment of the Contracting Parties, as reflected in their Ministerial Declaration,

Noting with appreciation Resolution 6/15 adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly on 1 March 2024, on strengthening ocean efforts to tackle climate change, marine biodiversity loss and pollution,

Recalling also the United Nations General Assembly resolution 76/296 of July 2022, entitled "Our Ocean, Our future, Our responsibility",

Having regard to the Barcelona Convention, in particular Articles 26 and 27 thereof, about reports and compliance control, respectively, and the relevant articles of its Protocols,

Recalling Decision IG.17/2 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 15, Almeria, Spain, 15-18 January 2008) on Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as amended by Decision IG.20/1 of the 17th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 17, Paris, France, 8-10 February 2012), as well as Decision IG.21/1 of the 18th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 18, Istanbul, Türkiye, 3-6 December 2013) and Decision IG.26/1 of the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 23, Portorož, Slovenia, 5-8 December 2023),

Emphasizing the Compliance Committee's unique role in facilitating and promoting compliance by the Contracting Parties with the obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols,

Reiterating that national reporting is an obligation for all Contracting Parties, and that timely submission of national implementation reports is essential to allow the assessment of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as well as of the difficulties faced by the Contracting Parties in implementing the Convention, its Protocols and the related legally binding measures,

Recognizing the challenges faced by Contracting Parties in reporting on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and acknowledging the need to provide appropriate legal and technical support to facilitate their reporting process,

Noting with appreciation the efforts made by Contracting Parties to report on their implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols using the online Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS),

Expressing its concern due to non-submission by 11 Contracting Parties of their 2022-2023 biennial reports as of 5 July 2025, and to the late submission by other Contracting Parties,

Having considered the reports of the 20th and 21st meetings of the Compliance Committee and its Activity Report for the biennium 2024-2025,

1. *Adopt* the revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee, set out in Annex I to this Decision, aiming at effectively supporting the delivery of the Compliance Committee mandate;

2. *[Adopt]* the Activity Report of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2024-2025, including its findings and recommendations, set out in Annex II to this Decision;

3. *Adopt* the Programme of Work of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2026-2027, set out in Annex III to the present Decision;

4. *Appreciate* the achievements identified in the 2022-2023 Implementation Assessment Report as set out in Annex IV to the present Decision, and *endorse* the overall findings on the progress in implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols noting the specific difficulties encountered by the Contracting Parties during the submission process;

5. *Urge* those Contracting Parties that have not yet submitted their national implementation reports for the 2018-2019, 2020-2021 and the 2022-2023 biennia to do so, as soon as possible, and to this end, *ask* them to provide on an exceptional basis a combined report that may include the measures taken in the last three biennia in one single report of the last reporting biennial cycle;

6. *Invite* the Contracting Parties to promptly submit their national implementation reports for the biennium 2024-2025 using the online Barcelona Convention Reporting System, at the latest by December 2026;

7. *Elect* the candidates nominated by the Contracting Parties listed in Annex V to the present Decision as members and alternate members of the Compliance Committee respectively;

8. *Appreciate* the actions taken by the Government of Spain to implement the findings and recommendations by the Compliance Committee for the case of Mar Menor;

9. *Acknowledge* with thanks the significant contributions of the following Compliance Committee members and alternate members, whose terms have concluded: Mr. Ezzedine Jouini-Berzine, Ms. Nancy Khoury, Mr. Marko Starman, Ms. Selma Osmanagic-Klico, Mr. José Juste Ruiz and Ms. Aysin Turpanci;

10. *Express appreciation to* the Compliance Committee for the work carried out in supporting and facilitating the Contracting Parties in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.
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Annex I

Revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee

Revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee
(following the adoption of Decision IG.26/1)

Purposes

Rule 1
Within the framework of the implementation of the procedures and mechanisms on compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, hereinafter called "compliance procedures and mechanisms", contained in the annex to decision IG.17/2 on compliance procedures and mechanisms, hereinafter called decision IG.17/2, as adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, as amended by the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties and set out in the annex to decision IG.26/1, these rules of procedure shall apply to any meeting of the Compliance Committee, hereinafter called "the Committee", under the Convention and its related Protocols.

Rule 2
The Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols shall apply mutatis mutandis to any meeting of the Committee unless otherwise stipulated in the rules set out herein and in decision IG 17/2, and provided that rules 18 and 19 on representation and credentials of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties do not apply.

Definitions

Rule 3
For the purposes of these rules:
1. "Convention and its related Protocols" means the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) adopted in 1976 and amended in 1995 and its related Protocols: Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency (Emergency Protocol), Barcelona, 1976; Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (Prevention and Emergency Protocol), Malta, 2002; Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution in the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (Dumping Protocol), Barcelona, 1976; amendments to the Dumping Protocol, recorded as Protocol for the Prevention and Elimination of Pollution in the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft or Incineration at Sea, Barcelona, 1995; Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land- Based Sources (LBS Protocol), Athens, 1980; amendments to the LBS Protocol, recorded as Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities, Syracuse, 1996; Protocol concerning Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas (SPA Protocol), Geneva, 1982; Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA and Biodiversity Protocol), Barcelona, 1995; 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 (Offshore Protocol), Madrid, 1994; Protocol on the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Hazardous Wastes Protocol), Izmir, 1996; Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol), Madrid, 2008.

2. "Compliance procedures and mechanisms" means the procedures and mechanisms on compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties and set out in the annex to decision IG.17/2, as amended by the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties and set out in the annex to decision IG.26/1.

3. “Contracting Parties” means Contracting Parties to the Convention and its related Protocols, including the amended versions, if any, for which the Convention and the related Protocols and their respective amendments are in force.

4. “Party concerned” means a Party in respect of which a question of compliance is raised as set out in section V of the compliance procedures and mechanisms.

5. “Committee” means the Compliance Committee established by section II, paragraph 4, of the compliance procedures and mechanisms and by decision IG 17/2 of the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

6. “Member” means a member of the Committee elected under section II, paragraph 5, of the compliance procedures and mechanisms.

7. “Alternate member” means an alternate member of the Committee elected under section II, paragraph 5, of the compliance procedures and mechanisms.

8. “Chairperson” means the Chairperson of the Committee elected in accordance with rule 7 of the present rules of procedure, recalling section II paragraph 12 of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance.

9. “Vice-Chairpersons” means the Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee elected in accordance with rule 7 of the present rules of procedure, recalling section II paragraph 12 of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance.

10. “Secretariat” means the Coordinating Unit that is designated by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as responsible for the administration of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), referred to in paragraph 42 of the compliance procedures and mechanisms.

11. “Representative” means a person designated by the Party concerned to represent it during the consideration of a question of non- compliance.

12. “The public” means one or more natural or legal persons and, in accordance with national legislation or practice, their associations, organizations or groups.

13. “Bureau” means the Bureau of the Contracting Parties referred to in article 19 of the Convention.

14. “Observers” means the organizations referred to in article 20 of the Convention and those included in the list of MAP partners as approved by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties and members of the civil society which have been granted the status of observers by the Compliance Committee on a case-by-case basis as per the compliance procedures and mechanisms.

Membership of the Committee

Rule 4

1. Each member of the Committee is elected and shall serve in her or his individual capacity and shall act objectively in the interest of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal area avoiding any conflicts of interest. A Committee member is not entitled to designate a substitute.

2. The term of office of a member shall commence at the end of an ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties immediately following her or his election and run until the end of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties four years thereafter, as applicable.

3. Every member serving the Committee shall, before taking up her or his duties, make a solemn declaration in a meeting of the Committee that she or he will perform her or his functions objectively as provided in Rule 12 of the present rules of procedure.

4. When a member of the Committee resigns or is otherwise unable to complete the assigned term of office, the Committee shall immediately request the Secretariat to start the replacement procedures. Therefore, the Bureau shall appoint a new member from the list of candidates nominated by the Contracting Parties or, subsidiary, shall request the Party which nominated that member to nominate a replacement to serve for the remainder of the term.

5. When a member is absent for two consecutive meetings without providing any reasonable grounds, the term of office of the member concerned expires and new election proceeds, according to the provisions of Rule 4 of the present rules of procedure.

Place, dates and notice of meetings

Rule 5

1. The Committee shall normally meet twice per biennium preferably once a year. It may recommend the Secretariat to hold additional meetings subject to workload requirements arising from submissions by concerned Contracting Parties, referrals by the Secretariat and referrals by the Committee on its own initiative, subject to availability of funds.

2. Unless it decides otherwise, the Committee shall meet at the seat of the Secretariat. Any additional costs that may rise by changing of the place of the meeting shall be met by the host country.

3. At each meeting, the Committee shall decide in consultation with the Secretariat on the place, dates and duration of its next meeting.

Rule 6

Notice of Committee meetings shall be sent by the Secretariat to the members and alternate members and any representative, as the case may be, with a copy to the MAP Focal Points of all Contracting Parties, at least three months before the opening of the meeting.

Officers

Rule 7

The Committee shall elect a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons for a term of two years.
No officers shall serve for more than two consecutive terms.

Rule 8

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him or her elsewhere in these rules, the Chairperson shall: (a) Preside over the meeting;

(b) Declare the opening and closure of the meeting;

(c) Ensure the observance of these rules;

(d) Accord the right to speak;

(e) Put questions to the vote and announce decisions;

(f) Rule on any points of order;

(g) Subject to these rules, have complete control over the proceedings and maintain order.

2. The Chairperson may also propose: (a) The closure of the list of speakers;
(b) A limitation on the time to be allowed to speakers and on the number of interventions on an issue;
(c) The adjournment or closure of debate on an issue;
(d) The suspension or adjournment of the meeting.

Agenda

Rule 9

1. In agreement with the Chairperson, the Secretariat shall draft the provisional agenda for each meeting of the Committee. The agenda of the Committee shall include items arising from its functions as specified in section IV of the compliance procedures and mechanisms and other matters related thereto.

2. The Committee, when adopting its agenda, may decide to add urgent and important items and to delete, defer or amend items.

Rule 10

The provisional agenda and the annotated agenda for each meeting, the draft report of the previous meeting and other working and supporting documents shall be circulated by the Secretariat to members and alternate members at least six weeks before the opening of the Committee's meeting.

Conflict of Interest

Rule 11

1. Each member of the Committee shall, with respect to any matter that is under consideration by the Committee, avoid direct or indirect conflicts of interest. Any matter that may constitute a conflict of interest shall be brought as soon as possible to the attention of the Secretariat, which shall forthwith notify the members of the Committee. The concerned member shall not participate in the elaboration and adoption of findings, measures and recommendations of the Committee in relation to such a matter.

2. If the Committee considers that a material violation of the requirements of objectivity expected of a member or alternate member of the Committee has occurred, it may decide to recommend, through the Secretariat to the Bureau of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, to revoke the membership of any member or alternate member concerned, after having given the member or alternate member the opportunity to be heard.

3. All decisions of the Committee taken under this rule shall be noted in the annual report of the Committee to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Oath/Solemn Declaration

Rule 12

Each member and alternate member of the Committee shall take the following written oath:
"I solemnly declare that I shall perform my duties as a member of the Committee objectively, and act in the interest of the Barcelona Convention avoiding any conflict of interest, I shall not disclose any confidential information coming to my knowledge by reason of my duties in the Committee, and I shall disclose to the Committee any personal interest in any matter submitted to the Committee for consideration which may constitute a conflict of interest."

Distribution and consideration of information

Rule 13

1. The information received in accordance with paragraphs 21-22 section V on "Procedure" of the procedures and mechanisms on compliance shall be distributed by the Secretariat to the members and alternate members of the Committee.

2. Any submission received in accordance with paragraph 21(a) of section V "Procedure" of the procedures and mechanisms on compliance shall be transmitted by the Secretariat to the members of the Committee and their alternates as soon as possible but no later than thirty days of receipt of the submission.

3. A submission received in accordance with paragraphs 21(b) and 27 of the procedures and mechanisms on compliance and any issues raised by the Secretariat as provided for in paragraph 26 of the procedures and mechanisms on compliance shall be transmitted by the Secretariat to the members of the Committee and their alternates as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after the six-month time frames provided for in the above-mentioned paragraphs have expired.

4. Any information to be considered by the Committee shall, as soon as possible but no later than two weeks after receipt, be made available to the Party concerned.

Public access to documents and information

Rule 14

The provisional agenda reports of meetings and any official documents subject to rule 13 above and paragraph 34 of section V of the compliance procedures and mechanisms, and any other non-confidential information documents shall be made available to the public.

Participation in proceedings of the Committee

Rule 15

1. Unless the Committee or the Party whose compliance is in question decides otherwise, the meetings of the Committee will be open to other Contracting Parties and to observers.

2. Observers shall be entitled to receive copies of publicly distributed documents, submit written comments and make oral statements at meetings. The Committee reserves the right to give the floor to the attending public, upon request, if it deems it useful.

3. In accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 21, 31 and 33 of the compliance procedures and mechanisms, the Party concerned is entitled to participate in the Committee's proceedings and make comments thereon. It may furthermore, in accordance with the criteria adopted by the Committee and at the request of the latter, take part in the preparation of its findings, measures and recommendations. The Party concerned shall be given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings, measures and recommendations of the Committee. Any such comments shall be forwarded with the report of the Committee to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

4. The Committee may invite experts to provide expert advice through the Secretariat. In that case it shall:

(a) Define the question on which expert opinion is sought;

(b) Identify the expert(s) to be consulted, on the basis of a roster of experts prepared and regularly updated by the Secretariat;

(c) Lay down the procedures to be followed.

5. Experts may also be invited by the Committee to be present during the formulation of its findings, measures or recommendations.

6. Secretariat officials may be also invited by the Committee to attend the Committee’s deliberations in order to assist in the drafting of its findings, measures or recommendations.

Conduct of business

Rule 16

Seven members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. For the purpose of the quorum, the replacement of members by alternates shall take into consideration equitable geographical representation, consistently with the composition of the Committee as set out in the third paragraph of decision IG 17/2 as amended by decision IG.26/1.

Rule 17

1. With respect to a notification or document sent by the Secretariat to a Contracting Party, the date of receipt shall be deemed to be the date indicated in a written confirmation from the Party or the date indicated in a written confirmation of receipt by the expedited delivery courier, whichever comes first.

2. With respect to a submission, request or other document intended for the Committee, the date of receipt by the Committee shall be deemed to be the first business day after receipt by the Secretariat.

Rule 18
1. Electronic means of communication may be used by the members of the Committee for the purpose of conducting informal consultations on issues under consideration and decision-making on matters of procedure. Electronic means of communication shall not be used for making decisions on matters of substance related in particular to the preparation of findings, measures and recommendations by the Committee.

2. The Committee may use electronic means of communication for the transmission, dissemination and storage of documentation, without prejudice to normal means of circulation of the documentation, as the case may be.

Voting

Rule 19
Each member of the Committee shall have one vote.

Rule 20
1. The Committee shall make every effort to reach agreement by consensus on its findings, measures and recommendations. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted, the Committee shall as a last resort adopt its findings, measures and recommendations by at least six members present and voting.

2. For the purpose of these rules, “members present and voting” means members present at the session at which voting takes place and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members who abstain from voting shall be considered as not voting.

Secretariat

Rule 21
1. The Secretariat shall make all necessary arrangements for meetings of the Committee and provide it with services as required.

2. In addition, and subject to availability of technical and financial means, the Secretariat shall perform any other function assigned to it by the Committee with respect to the work of the Committee.

Languages

Rule 22
English and French shall be the working languages of the Committee. However, the Committee will accept communications or submissions, as well as corroborating information in any of the four official languages of the meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties.

Rule 23
1. The submissions from the Party concerned, the response and the information referred to in section V of the compliance procedures and mechanisms shall be provided in one of the four official languages of the Meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention and its related Protocols. The Secretariat shall make arrangements to translate them into English and/or French if they are submitted in the other official languages of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention and its related Protocols.

2. Any representative taking part in the Committee proceedings and/or meetings may speak in a language other than the working languages of the Committee if the Party provides for interpretation.

3. Final findings, measures and recommendations shall be made available in all official languages of the Meetings of the Contracting Parties to the Convention and its related Protocols.

General procedures for submissions

Rule 24
The time frame for submissions is as follows:
1. For cases concerning a submission by a Contracting Party in respect of its own actual or potential situation of non-compliance: at the latest six (6) weeks before the opening of the ordinary meeting of the Committee.

2. For cases concerning a submission by a Contracting Party in respect of another Party's situation of non-compliance: at the latest four (4) months before the opening of the ordinary meeting of the Committee allowing the Contracting Party whose compliance is in question at least three months to consider and prepare its response.

3. The time frames for cases concerning a submission by a Contracting Party in respect of another Contracting Party's situation of non-compliance also apply to issues raised by the Secretariat.

4. All the above time frames are indicative and may be extended according to the necessities warranted by the circumstances of the matter at hand and in accordance with the Committee's rules of procedure and due process. In this respect, Contracting Parties may submit additional documentation, comments and written observations to be considered by the Committee.

Rule 25
1. A submission by any Contracting Party raising a question of non-compliance with respect to itself shall set out: (a) The name of the Contracting Party making the submission;

(b) A statement identifying the question of non-compliance, supported by substantiating information setting out the matter of concern relating to the question of non-compliance;

(c) Its legal basis and the relevant provisions of the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols and decision IG. 17/2 and as subsequently amended that form the basis for raising the question of non-compliance;

(d) Any provisions of the decisions of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties and the reports of the Secretariat that are applicable to the question of non-compliance.

2. The submission shall also include the list of all documents annexed to the submission.

Rule 26
1. A submission by any Contracting Party raising a question of non-compliance with respect to another Party shall set out:

(a) The name of the Contracting Party making the submission;
(b) A statement identifying the question of non-compliance, supported by substantiating information setting out the matter of concern relating to the question of non- compliance;
(c) The name of the Party concerned;
(d) Its legal basis and the relevant provisions of the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols and decision IG. 17/2 and as subsequently amended that form the basis for raising the question of non-compliance;

(e) Any provisions of the decisions of the meetings of the Contracting Parties and the reports of the Secretariat that are applicable to the question of non-compliance.

2. The submission should also include the list of all documents annexed to the submission.

Rule 27
The Secretariat shall make the submission and any supporting information, submitted under rule 14 above, including any expertise reports, available to the representative designated by the concerned Party.

Rule 28
Within the framework of general procedures for submissions as provided for under rule 25 above, comments and written observations by the Party concerned in accordance with the provisions of section V of the compliance procedures and mechanisms on the Committee's preliminary and final findings, measures and recommendations shall include:
(a) A statement of the position of the Party concerned on the information, findings, measures and recommendations or question of non-compliance under consideration;
(b) An identification of any information provided by the Party that it requests should not be made available to the public in accordance with paragraph 34 of section V of the compliance procedures and mechanisms;
(c) A list of all documents annexed to the submission or comment.

Rule 29
1. Any submission, comment and/or written observations under rules 13 and 28 above shall be signed by the MAP Focal Point or the representative of the Contracting Party and be delivered to the Secretariat in hard copy and by electronic means of communication.

2. Any relevant documents in support of the submission, comment or written observations shall be annexed to it.

Rule 30
1. Findings, measures or recommendations shall contain, mutatis mutandis:

(a) The name of the Party concerned;
(b) A statement identifying the question of non-compliance addressed;
(c) The legal basis and the relevant provisions of the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols and decision IG. 17/2 as subsequently amended and other relevant decisions of the Meetings of the Contracting Parties that form the basis of the preliminary findings, measures and recommendations and their final versions;
(d) A description of the information considered in the deliberations and confirmation that gives the Party concerned an opportunity to comment in writing on all information considered;
(e) A summary of the proceedings, including an indication of whether its preliminary finding or any part of it as specified is confirmed;
(f) The substantive decision on the question of non-compliance, including the consequences applied, if any;
(g) The background, conclusions and reasons for the findings, measures and recommendations;
(h) The place and date of the findings, measures and recommendations;
(i) The names of the members who participated in the consideration of the question of non-compliance and in the elaboration and adoption of the findings, measures and recommendations.

2. Written comments on the findings, measures and recommendations submitted within 45 days of their receipt by the Party concerned shall be circulated by the Secretariat to the members and alternate members of Committee and shall be included in the Committee's biennial report to the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Admissibility and Communication procedures

Rule 31

A. Admissibility criteria under paragraph "V. Procedure" of the procedures and mechanisms

1. Communications addressed to the Committee under paragraph V. Procedure of the procedures and mechanisms shall be in writing or in electronic form through the Secretariat. The communications shall be supported by substantiating documentation.

2. When determining admissibility, the Compliance Committee shall consider whether the communication is:
(a) anonymous;
(b) de minimis;
(c) manifestly ill founded;
(d) incompatible with the provisions of this compliance procedure or with the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

3. The Committee should, at all relevant stages, take into account any available domestic remedy unless the application of the remedy is unreasonable prolonged or obviously does not provide an effective and sufficient means of redress.

4. With respect to communications by any member of the public and observers submitted to the Compliance Committee, the following procedures shall apply.

B. Handling and circulation of Communications

1. Communications shall be in writing or in electronic form through the Secretariat and as concise and concrete as possible. It is preferable that the communication shall not be more than twelve pages in total. Visual means are also welcomed.

2. The minimum requirements to be included in any such communication are:
(a) Name and contact details of the communicant, whether this is a natural or legal person, it will however respect any request of confidentiality by the communicant;
(b) Clear identification of the Party or Parties concerned;
(c) One to two-page summary with the main facts of the case;
(d) A document presenting the facts of the alleged non-compliance, and clearly stating how the facts presented constitute a case of non-compliance with the Barcelona Convention and/or its Protocols;
(e) Indication of whether steps have been taken to use the remedies available at the national and/or international level.

3. Communications shall be addressed to the Compliance Committee through the Secretariat. Upon receipt of a communication the Secretariat shall register it, send an acknowledgement of the receipt, and transmit the communication to the Party concerned and to the Compliance Committee within two weeks from the receipt clarifying that, at the present stage, it has not been deemed admissible by the Compliance Committee. Communications forwarded by the Secretariat will be considered by the Committee at its next meeting for the Committee to take a decision whether to enter into their preliminary admissibility.

C. Preliminary Determination of Admissibility

1. Upon circulation of a communication, the Compliance Committee shall consider the preliminary admissibility of communications addressed to it. To that end the Chair of the Compliance Committee in consultation with the Members of the Compliance Committee shall appoint from among its

members a Rapporteur for each communication. The Rapporteur shall not be a national of the Party concerned.

2. If translation of substantiating material is required, the Committee shall decide on the extent to which more material, other than that which is already available in English, should be translated, taking into account both the costs of translation and the delay involved. The Committee may also request the communicant to provide an English translation of certain materials.

3. If the Compliance Committee determines that the communication is inadmissible, it shall inform the Party concerned and the communicant accordingly, through the Secretariat, and close the file. Such determination shall be final.

4. If the Compliance Committee determines that the communication is admissible on a preliminary basis, it opens a file, and shall notify the Party concerned and the communicant accordingly, through the Secretariat. The Committee should in principle consider preliminary determination of a communication not later than at its second meeting following the receipt of the communication.

5. The Compliance Committee may, after making a positive decision on admissibility, present the questions raised with the Party concerned, if any, when forwarding the communication. Such questions will be transmitted to the Party concerned by letter from the Secretariat, together with the confirmation of preliminary admissibility.

6. The Compliance Committee may also address any questions to the communicant it might find necessary to clarify the facts of the communication. Such questions will be transmitted to the communicant by letter from the Secretariat, together with the confirmation of preliminary admissibility.

7. The Party concerned should, as soon as possible but no later than two months from the date of the Secretariat's letter, submit written explanations or statements on the matter.

8. When forwarding a communication to the Party concerned on behalf of the Committee, the Secretariat will prepare a cover letter with: (a) a request to the Party concerned to acknowledge receipt of the communication; (b) a reminder of its obligation under paragraph 12 of the Barcelona Convention to submit as soon as possible, but not later than two months after the communication has been brought to its attention, written explanations or statements clarifying the matter and describing any response that it may have made; (c) a reference to the determination of preliminary admissibility with the request to inform the Committee as soon as possible if it intends to comment on admissibility issues; (d) specific points of discussion and questions to be addressed in the response, as identified by the Committee.

9. If the Party concerned consents to the admissibility of the communication, the Compliance Committee will consider this, and the communicant will be given an opportunity to comment and/or provide additional information.

10. If the Compliance Committee confirms the admissibility of the communication, it will proceed to the examination of the substance of it. Otherwise, the Compliance Committee will reverse its preliminary decision. The non-admissibility of the communication by the Committee is final. The Compliance Committee will inform the Party concerned and the communicant through the Secretariat.

11. The Compliance Committee should start the formal discussion on all particular communications at the first meeting that takes place following either the receipt of a response to the communication from the Party concerned or if no response has been received within the deadline of two months.

12. When the Compliance Committee discusses the substance of any communication at a particular meeting, the Secretariat will notify the Party concerned and the communicant that the communication

will be discussed following mutatis mutandis the procedures established in paragraphs 28 to 34 of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance.

Amendments to the rules of procedure

Rule 32

Any amendment to these rules of procedure is adopted by consensus by the Committee and submitted for consideration and adoption by the Bureau, subject to endorsement by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

Overriding authority of the Convention and its related protocols and decision IG. 17/2 as subsequently amended

Rule 33

In the event of a conflict between any provision in these rules and any provision in the Convention and its related Protocols or decision IG.17/2 as subsequently amended, the provisions of the Convention and its Protocols, shall prevail.

[Annex II

Activity Report of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2024-2025

Activity Report of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2024-2025

Section 1: Introduction

1. The role and functioning of the Compliance Committee is governed by Decision IG.17/2 on Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as amended by Decisions IG. 20/1, IG. 21/1 and IG.26/1; also, by Decision IG. 19/1 on the Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee, as amended by Decision IG. 21/1.

2. This section will summarize the outcome of the Meetings of the Compliance Committee during the biennium 2024-2025.

3. The Compliance Committee met two times during the biennium 2024-2025. The 20th Meeting of the Compliance Committee was held on 19-20 June 2024 in Athens, Greece and the 21st Meeting of the Compliance Committee was held on 4-5 June 2025 in Athens, Greece.

4. At its 20th Meeting, the Compliance Committee discussed several matters including its Programme of Work for the biennium 2024-2025 adopted by the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP 23, Portorož, Slovenia, 5-8 December 2023).

5. At its 21st Meeting, the Compliance Committee also, discussed several matters including its Programme of Work for the biennium 2026-2027 for submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting and to the COP24.

6. The key outcomes of the work of the Compliance Committee are presented in this report in accordance with paragraph 35 of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance, based on the conclusions and recommendations of the meetings. Further information is provided in the full reports of the 20th and 21st Meetings of the Compliance Committee, submitted as information document to both the 2025 MAP Focal Points meeting and COP 24.

Section 2: Specific Submissions under Section V of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

Communication to the Compliance Committee under paragraph 26 of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance

7. This section will summarize the discussions held at the 20th and 21st meetings of the Compliance Committee on the communication submitted by the Ecologistas en Accion de la Region Murciana (Spain) to the Committee and a new potential non-compliance case under section V of its Procedures and Mechanisms and conclusions reached based on discussions.

8. The following items are included in this section:

(A) At the 20th meeting of the Compliance Committee (19-20 June 2024):

(i) Discussions took place regarding the Committee's need for further progress report and information from the Party concerned regarding the Mar Menor case, and the Committee agreed on the following:

1) *The Committee notes with satisfaction the receipt of reports from the Party Concerned in response to its Conclusions and recommendations concerning the communication on this Case.*

2) *The Committee welcomes the progress reflected in the reports. At the same time, the Committee requests further information and some clarifications regarding the following points:*

- *An assessment to be provided regarding the conformity of the existing and evolving regulatory framework with the Recommendations of the 19th Meeting of the Compliance Committee and with regards to the specific provisions of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (the SPA/BD Protocol, the ICZM Protocol, the LBS Protocol, and the Dumping Protocol). In this context, concrete implementation measures should be specified, including on the follow up of the implementation of law 19/2022 of September 30th, recognizing legal personality to the Mar Menor.*
- *With regards to future annual progress reports to be submitted, the Compliance Committee would request a consolidated single report by the Party concerned (not exceeding 10 pages).*
- *With reference to paragraph 7 on "Measures, Rule 36 letter b of Procedures and Mechanisms", the Committee requests Spain to develop an action plan to achieve compliance within a proposed timeframe to be agreed upon, between the Committee and the Party concerned.*

3) *The Committee appoints Compliance Committee members Mr. Marko STARMAN and Mr. Philippe WECKEL to become the Rapporteurs, for the Mar Menor case, with the legal support of Ms. Daniela ADDIS and Mr. Evangelos RAFTOPOULOS, and share with the Committee members an assessment report on the Spanish response, preferably six weeks before the next meeting of the Compliance Committee.*

4) *The Committee agreed to develop a template to be shared with the Parties concerned, based on similar templates prepared by other compliance committees, with a view to facilitate adequate information on compliance, based on the work done under point 3.*

(ii) Discussions took place regarding the Camargue Case, and the Compliance Committee agreed as follows:

1) *The Committee accepts the Case as per the admissibility criteria.*

2) The Committee appoints Compliance Committee members Ms. Selma OSMANAGIC-KLICO and Mr. Ezzedine JOUINI-BERZINE to become the Rapporteurs for this case and member Mr. Philippe WECKEL to support them, to share with the Committee members an assessment report on the new case of Compliance, preferably six weeks before the next meeting of the Compliance Committee.

(iii) **No other submissions** were received under Section V of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols at the 20th Compliance Committee meeting.

(B) At its 21st meeting on June 4-5, 2025:

The Compliance Committee received a report from rapporteurs detailing discussions and next steps for the Mar Menor and a report by the rapporteurs on the new potential non-compliance case. The reports also summarized the meeting's discussions on the substantive and procedural aspects of compliance procedures (paragraphs 21-26).

(i) Based on the discussion on the Mar Menor case, the Compliance Committee agreed as follows:

1) *The Committee notes with satisfaction the receipt of information from the Party Concerned in response to its findings and recommendations concerning the communication on the case of Mar Menor.*

2) *The Framework of Priority Actions for the Recovery of the Mar Menor, adopted by Spain provides a comprehensive framework to address this multifaceted, organizationally,*

financially, and politically demanding undertaking, with responsibilities distributed between national and regional authorities.

3) *The Committee encourages innovative approaches to ecosystem protection through the Law on the legal personality of the Mar Menor (Law 19/2022).*

4) *The Committee believes that Spain achieved a significant breakthrough, which could provide valuable lessons, for the advancement of future innovative approaches to ecosystem protection*

5) *Considering the Barcelona Convention: articles 4, para 1 and 2, article 10, SPA/BD Protocol articles 2, 3.1(b), 3.4, 6 (b) and (h), article 7.2 (a, b, c and e) and, article 11.1 and 2 and (section D annex I), and ICZM Protocol article 7.*

In line with recognition stated above the committee asks Spain, to report timely before the 22nd Compliance Committee meeting on:

- *The legal framework that has been adopted for the implementation of its obligations.*
- *Programs that have been implemented in practice.*
- *The monitoring results of the situation on the ground.*

(ii) A follow-up was made on progress on the implementation of the Compliance Committee Findings, Measures and Recommendations regarding the Camargue case. Based on the discussion, the Compliance Committee agreed as follows:

1) *To further evaluate if this specific case covers an actual or potential non-compliance situation by the Government of France with the provisions of the Convention and its Protocols, the Compliance Committee invites the communicant to provide elements of evidence and further information on the status of the project, particularly on its phases and the participatory process, considering the characteristics of the MAB as a fragile complex ecosystem and as an international and Mediterranean natural heritage.*

2) *The Committee invites the Government of France to confirm that they are taking into account in all the phases of this project the whole elements that characterize the fragility and uniqueness of the Camargue MAB in order to be in compliance with the Barcelona Convention System, particularly with articles 4 and 10 of the Barcelona Convention, articles 10, 11, 19 of the ICZM Protocol and articles 6 ,(11.2) and (11.5) of the SPA/BD Protocol.*

(iii) **No other submissions** were received under Section V of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols neither at the 21st Compliance Committee meeting.

Section 3: General Issues of Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

Status of submission and criteria for the assessment of national implementation reports under Article 26 of the Barcelona Convention

9. This section summarizes the discussions from the 20th and 21st Compliance Committee meetings. These meetings focused on the status of submission of national implementation reports and the evaluation of these reports which were submitted by Contracting Parties for the Biennium 2020-2021 and the biennium 2022-2023. The evaluation specifically assessed compliance with submission criteria, timelines, completeness, and implementation.

(A) **The 20th Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 19-20 June 2024),** agreed as follows:

1) *The Committee agreed to send a letter, through the Secretariat, signed by the Chairperson of the Committee, to the Contracting Parties who have not submitted their National Implementation Reports, to inquire about any difficulties and challenges they encountered.*

2) *The Committee welcomed the initiation of the Reporting Implementation Task Force and agreed to strengthen the interaction with the MAP Components and Contracting Parties. The Committee recommends the participation of the representatives of MAP Components to its meetings and confirms its availability to participate to their meetings, depending on availability of resources. The Committee also suggests holding back to back meetings whenever possible.*

3) *The Committee requests the Secretariat to prepare an assessment report on the submitted National Implementation Reports. This report should be based on the approved criteria, including submission format, timeliness, and completeness. The report should be presented at the Compliance Committee Meetings.*

4) *The Committee requests the Secretariat to organize a side event for the Compliance Committee at the next Conference of the Parties.*

(B) **The 21st Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 4-5 June 2025)**, agreed as follows:

1) *The Committee expressed satisfaction for the submission of reports by 11 Contracting Parties. The Committee expressed deep concern for the low rate of submission of implementation reports as indicated by the Secretariat including recurring non submission of reports from a number of Contracting Parties.*

2) *The Committee agreed to send a letter, through the Secretariat, signed by the Chairperson of the Committee, to the Contracting Parties who have not submitted their National Implementation Reports, to highlight the importance of reporting and to inquire about any difficulties and challenges they encountered.*

3) *The Committee agreed that the draft decision to COP 24 should contain a strong call to those Contracting Parties who have not yet submitted their national implementation reports for the biennium 2020-2021 and the biennium 2022-2023 to do so, as soon as possible and by November 2025 the latest.*

4) *It was also agreed that there is a need to enhance country capacities for the preparation and submission of national reports considering the complex obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols; to this end, the Committee asks the Secretariat to take the relevant actions during the next biennium.*

5) *The Committee requests the Secretariat to organize a side event for the Compliance Committee at the next Conference of the Parties.*

Section 4: Functioning of the Compliance Committee

The following items are included in this section:

A) Election of the officers of the Compliance Committee for the biennium 2024-2025 and the Biennium 2026-2027

10. This section summarizes the discussions held at **the 20th Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 19-20 June 2024):**

11.The Compliance Committee elected for the biennium 2024-2025 the following officers: Ms. Aysin TURPANCI (Group III) as Chairperson of the Compliance Committee; Mr. Ezzedine JOUINI-

BERZINE (Group I) as Vice-Chairperson of the Compliance Committee; and Ms. Daniela ADDIS (Group II) as Vice-Chairperson of the Compliance Committee.

12. Also, it summarizes the discussion held at **the 21st Meeting of the Compliance Committee (Athens, Greece, 4-5 June 2025)** regarding the Membership of the Compliance Committee for the Biennium 2026-2027:

13. A list that includes the number of Members and Alternate Members of the Compliance Committee, under each Group, to be renewed or elected by the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties will be annexed to the Compliance and Reporting Decision IG.27/1. This list will be finalized for adoption at COP24 once Contracting Parties proceed with the nomination of candidates.

14. The following Compliance Committee members and alternate members terms have concluded their term, as indicated below:

(Group I): Mr. Ezzedine Jouini-Berzine (Member) and Ms. Nancy Khoury (Alternate Member)

(Group II): Mr. Marko Starman (Alternate Member) and Mr. José Juste Ruiz (Member)

(Group III): Ms. Selma Osmanagic-Klico (Alternate Member) and Ms. Aysin Turpanci (Member)

B) Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance and Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee

15. This section summarizes the discussions from the 20th and 21st Compliance Committee meetings regarding its effective functioning, focusing on the following elements:

(a) **The 20th Meeting of the Compliance Committee (19-20 June 2024):** Following relevant discussions the Committee agreed, , to present, at the next Compliance Committee meeting, a proposal of corrections to the text of Procedures and Mechanisms adopted by COP 23 to be included in the recommendations of the Compliance Committee to COP 24.

(b) **The 21st Meeting of the Compliance Committee (4-5 June 2025):** The Compliance Committee agreed on a clean text of the revised Rules of Procedure on Compliance, that were prepared in order to align them with the revised Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols adopted at COP 23 through Decision IG.26/1. The revised Rules of Procedure on Compliance were submitted to the meeting of the 96th Bureau of the Contracting Parties (Cairo, Egypt, 19-20 November 2024), which considered and adopted the amendments to the Rules of Procedure, subject to endorsement by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties. The Bureau also suggested some editorial amendments to the text of the Revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee. The revised Rules of Procedure of the Compliance Committee are included in the COP 24 Compliance and reporting Decision IG.27/1

Section 5: Cooperation with other Compliance Procedures and Mechanisms of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

16. This section summarizes the discussions from the 20th and 21st Compliance Committee meetings and outlines efforts to enhance cooperation with compliance mechanisms under other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

17.Such cooperation includes the Coordinating Unit's participation in the Rabat workshop (December 16-19, 2024) on the BBNJ Agreement for Atlantic and Mediterranean African States. Additionally, MAP has worked with the Espoo Convention Secretariat on possible participation in each other's Compliance Committee meetings, while the two Secretariats co-organized the 2nd Sub-regional Meeting on Environmental Assessments in a Transboundary Context in the Mediterranean Sea

(Portorož, Slovenia, 28 - 30 May 2025) which also addressed legal issues. Furthermore, technical legal support has been provided to the Cartagena Convention Secretariat regarding the potential establishment of its Compliance Committee.]

Annex III

Programme of Work of the Compliance Committee for the biennium 2026-2027

Programme of Work of the Compliance Committee for the biennium 2026-2027		
Activity	**Lead/Who**	**Timetable/When**
Specific submissions under Section V of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocol		
1. To consider any submissions and/or referrals in accordance with Section V of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance	Compliance Committee	22nd and 23rd Compliance Committee Meetings
General issues of compliance under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols		
2. To consider specific situations of actual or potential non-compliance by individual Parties in accordance with Section IV of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance	Compliance Committee	22nd and 23rd Compliance Committee Meetings
3. At the request of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties, to consider general compliance issues in accordance with Section IV of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance	Compliance Committee	22nd and 23rd Compliance Committee Meetings
4. To consider any other issues as requested by the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in accordance with Section IV of the Procedures and Mechanisms on Compliance	Compliance Committee	22nd and 23rd Compliance Committee Meetings
Enhanced effectiveness of the compliance mechanism		
5. To facilitate assistance, in coordination with MAP components, to address non-compliance situations	Coordinating Unit, MAP Components, Compliance Committee	22nd and 23rd Compliance Committee Meetings
6. To support the process of upgrading the reporting format of the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), as necessary	Coordinating Unit, MAP Components, Compliance Committee	22nd and 23rd Compliance Committee Meetings
7. To continue to build and strengthen synergies, with other Compliance Committee's Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including holding joint sessions	Compliance Committee	22nd and 23rd Compliance Committee Meetings

Annex IV

Assessment Report of the 2022-2023 National Implementation Reports

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1976 Barcelona Convention on the 2022-2023 biennium: 22
- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1995 Barcelona Convention on the 2022-2023 biennium: 22
- Number of reporting Contracting Parties for the 2022-2023 biennium: 11

Main overall findings

- The precautionary principle and the polluter pay principle have been incorporated into domestic legislation in all reporting Contracting Parties. This has been achieved through core legal instruments for environmental protection as well as sectoral legislation regulating specific issues of environmental protection.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and/or Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) laws and associated regulations are in place in all reporting Contracting Parties for activities or projects which are likely to cause a significant adverse impact on the marine environment.
- All reporting Contracting Parties indicated having put in place the legal and regulatory framework for the use of Best Available Technology (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP), which has mainly translated into the adoption of industrial sectoral regulations.
- National IMAP-based monitoring programmes for the Mediterranean Sea and coast have been established in all reporting Contracting Parties. In establishing such programmes, through general and/or sector-oriented acts, reporting Contracting Parties refer to national capacities to comply with the methodologies and guidelines related to the pollution and marine litter cluster of IMAP, prepared under the coordination of MED POL to harmonize national monitoring and assessment efforts across the Mediterranean. IMAP implementation to achieve the Good Environmental Status (GES) has been ongoing in synergy and coordination with the relevant European Union (EU) Directives, including the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).
- Public access to environmental information is ensured in all reporting Contracting Parties through a variety of legal instruments raging from laws on free access to information, to environmental framework laws or codes, to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) laws. This adds to the legislation transposing the Aarhus Convention, on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and relevant EU Directives, such as the Directive on Open Data and the Re-use of Public Sector Information (2019/1024/EU).

- Public participation and consultation in environmental legislation decision-making processes is ensured in all reporting Contracting Parties. This has been achieved through general laws protecting the environment, public participation and access to information laws, and/or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) laws: In many reporting Contracting Parties public participation and consultation has been in practice through for instance the establishment of public consultative mechanisms in the framework of the implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol.
- Cooperation mechanisms of notification, exchange of information and consultation among the concerned states in cases of transboundary EIA are in place in nearly all reporting Contracting Parties. This has been mainly taken forward within the framework of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) laws and regulations, in addition to the action taken under the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo EIA Convention).
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) principles have been integrated into domestic legal and policy frameworks in all reporting Contracting Parties through a variety of instruments encompassing, laws ratifying the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol and national strategies and plans on marine and coastal management, as well as on marine spatial planning; and laws on the development, protection and conservation of the coast, including laws on protected areas, such as Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs).
- The promotion of the research on, access to and transfer of environmental sound technology, including clean production technologies needs to be further reinforced, as only half reporting Contracting Parties have indicated action in this field, which mainly focus on preparedness and response to accidental pollution through cooperation agreements, climate change adaptation, or R&D Projects for the promotion of blue growth.
- Most reporting Contracting Parties have answered affirmatively to the question on the implementation of the Guidelines for the Determination of Liability and Compensation for Damage resulting from Pollution of the Marine Environment in the Mediterranean Sea Area.
- Difficulties most frequent reported in implementing the Barcelona Convention are limited financial resources, administrative management and technical guidance capabilities.

Protocol for the Prevention and Elimination of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft or Incineration at Sea

(Dumping Protocol)

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1976 Dumping Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 21
- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1995 Dumping Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 15
- Number of reporting Contracting Parties on the 2022-2023 biennium: 9

Main overall findings

- In most reporting Contracting Parties, the prohibition of dumping of wastes or other matter with the exception of those listed in Article 4.2 of the Dumping Protocol, as well as the establishment of the required permitting system has been mainly articulated through their laws ratifying the Dumping Protocol, in addition to their domestic laws and regulations protecting the environment, managing wastes, marine protected areas or aquaculture activities, regulating ports and/or maritime codes. This adds to the laws ratifying the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972 (London Convention) and its 1996 Protocol.
- It appears that there is a need to enhance the institutional structure to implement the Dumping Protocol, as only half of reporting Contracting Parties have responded positively to the question whether they have designated a competent national authority responsible for keeping records of the nature, quantities of the waste or other matter, dumping location and method.
- In most reporting Contracting Parties incineration is prohibited as per the Dumping Protocol.
- It seems that critical and force majeure dumping at sea as per the conditions set out in the Dumping Protocol are areas where further action is needed, as only a limited number of reporting Contracting Party has responded positively to the questions whether critical and force majeure dumping is conducted as required by the Dumping Protocol.
- Difficulties most frequent reported in implementing the Dumping Protocol are the regulatory and policy framework, technical guidance capabilities and limited financial resources.

Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea
(Prevention and Emergency Protocol)

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1976 Emergency Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 21
- Number of Contracting Parties to the 2002 Prevention and Emergency Protocol on 2022-2023 biennium: 17
- Number of reporting Contracting Parties on the 2022-2023 biennium: 9

Main overall findings

- Contingency plans and other means of preventing and combating oil and hazardous Noxious substances (HNS) have been adopted in all reporting Contracting Parties. Contingency plans range from national, to regional to local. The majority of the Contingency plans cover oil and HNS spill response. The national level of response equipment varies from country to country[1], and at regional level a key actor is the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) with its Network of Stand-by-Oil Spill Response Vessels. Regular training of both national operating level personnel and supervisory level personnel has been conducted mainly through national oil spill exercises. Training has taken place mainly at national level, and at subregional level, within the framework of the subregional contingency plans although international training has been also conducted under the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)[2]; the European Union (EU) Civil Protection Mechanism and EMSA;

- Monitoring and surveillance programmes to detect accidental or operational pollution are in place in most reporting Contracting Parties. This includes the aerial and satellite surveillance under the EMSA detection service CleanSeaNet, as well as at national level the surveillance carried out by the Coast Guard. In addition, maritime traffic control systems are also used;

- Reporting procedures to ensure that those required (e.g. ships, aircrafts, offshore installations, and Port Facility Authorities) report on actual or potential oil and hazardous Noxious substances (HNS) pollution incidents to the designated national authority or authorities. Reporting to the nearest Coastal State are made by the designated national authority or authorities in all Contracting Parties. This has been mainly achieved through relevant domestic legislation (e.g. maritime codes) and national contingency plans' requirements;

- Communication to REMPEC and those Contracting Parties likely to be affected of information on actual or potential oil and hazardous Noxious substances (HNS) pollution incidents is carried out by most reporting Contracting Parties. This has been mainly articulated through the national contingency plans or the POLREP system. On the POLREP system, there is room for further encourage its use, as part of the Mediterranean Emergency Communication Procedure. To address the low level of pollution reports by Contracting Parties, the establishment of a Common Emergency Communication System for the Mediterranean, which is under review during the current reporting period, will be further addressed in the next biennium, however Contracting Parties should be further encouraged to meet their reporting obligations;

[1] REMPEC developed a Template for the development of Manuals on national mechanisms for the mobilization of response equipment and experts, in case of emergency. The developed Manuals gather information and procedures for the mobilization of response equipment and experts either individually or through cooperation frameworks. The information collected is also used to update the Country Profile and the Response equipment data base on MEDGIS-MAR and also to produce the report related to implementation of the E&R Protocol under the BCRS.
[2] REMPEC extended the use of the Readiness Evaluation Tool for Oils Spills to the Central and Eastern Mediterranean that enable the countries of the region to develop their respective self-assessment of the level of their preparation to respond to oil spills. The ultimate objective is that each country will have the capacity to identify, periodically, gaps of respective national system of preparedness for and response to oil marine pollution and to take measures to clear identified gaps and improve their level of preparedness.

- Conducting oil and HNS pollution incident assessments and taking every practical measure to prevent, reduce and, to the fullest possible extent, eliminate the effects of the pollution incident is part of the national contingency plans' requirements in many reporting Contracting Parties;

- In most reporting Contracting Parties, the legal and regulatory framework[3] is in place to ensure that those required (e.g. ships, sea ports, and offshore installations) have contingency plans on board. This has been articulated trough domestic legislation (e.g. maritime codes) as well as laws ratifying the MARPOL Convention and the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC);

- Port reception facilities are available in ports and terminals meeting the needs of ships, including pleasure crafts, in nearly all reporting Contracting Parties. The EU-funded Marine Litter Med Project has been one of the avenues to improve Port Reception Facilities in the region;

- Many reporting Contracting Parties have assessed the environmental risks of the recognized routes used in maritime traffic using a variety of tools including Vessels Traffic Systems (VTS);

- Measures aimed at reducing the risks accidents have been taken by most reporting Contracting Parties. This has been articulated in different ways, including Vessels Traffic Systems (VTS), and the designation and management of Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs),with the endorsement of the IMAP common Indicator 19 on acute pollution, the process to facilitate the monitoring and the assessment of the impact of accidental marine pollution on the marine environment has been initiated during this biennium .

- In most reporting Contracting Parties measures dealing with places of refuge for ships in distress have been adopted. However, some Contracting Parties have reported difficulties in financial Resources, technical guidance and capabilities difficulties, as well as administrative management and regional framework difficulties;

- The dissemination and exchange of information as per the requirements of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol has been mainly achieved through the official websites of the relevant Ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Transport and Infrastructure or the Ministry of Environment), as well as the REMPEC Country Profiles[4]. The use and update of REMPEC Country Profiles should be further promoted among Contracting Parties;

- Responses strategies for marine pollution incidents, including policies for the use of dispersants, are in place in most reporting Contracting Parties;

- National contingency plans cover both oil and hazardous Noxious substances (HNS) in the majority of the reporting Contracting Parties.

- Difficulties most frequent reported in implementing the Prevention and Emergency Protocol are the regulatory and policy framework, administrative management and limited financial resources.

[3] Setting up a common emergency communication system for the Mediterranean, enclosing also link to the competent authorities will encourage and assist countries to meet this requirement of the E&P

[4] Idem foot note No.3

Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities

(LBS Protocol)

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1980 LBS Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 22
- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1996 LBS Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 17
- Number of reporting Contracting Parties on the 2022-2023 biennium: 8

Main overall findings

- Legal and regulatory measures to eliminate Land-based Sources (LBS) pollution are reported to be in place in nearly all the reporting Contracting Parties. This has been mainly articulated through broad domestic legislation (e.g. on environmental protection, water or coast), as well as specific legislation (e.g. on industrial emissions, sea bathing water quality, (urban) waste management and. This adds to the domestic legislation transposing the relevant European Union (EU) Directives, including the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (2008/56/EC).
- In nearly all reporting Contracting Parties, discharges and pollutant releases are subject to the required authorization or regulation issued by the competent national authority. In general, legal instruments listed, mainly on water, on coast, and on environmental protection, establish a system which enables the competent national authority or authorities to issue a permit (e.g. water right permit, environmental permit) for any discharge or release into the sea or surface waters, provided that *inter alia* some specific limit values are met.
- Measures to reduce to a minimum the risk of accidental pollution are reported to be in place in all reporting Contracting Parties. This has been mainly achieved through national contingency plans, in addition to the transposition into domestic legislation of the relevant EU Directives, including the SEVESO III EU Directive (2012/18/EU) and REACH Regulations.
- All reporting Contracting Parties indicated having in place a system of inspection to assess compliance with authorizations and regulations and to impose sanctions in the event of non-compliance. Such system rests on different authorities from country to country, ranging from Environmental Inspectors, to Judicial or Environmental Police, to Harbor Master's Inspectors and accredited Agencies and Networks; and cover sanctions such as fines, indictments, imprisonment, temporary suspension of work or activities.
- Environmental monitoring programmes are reported to be in place in most of the reporting Contracting Parties. This has been mainly articulated within the framework of the Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean (MED POL), in consistency with the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) Policy implementation and the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) for the Mediterranean Sea and Coast, and in synergy with the relevant European Union (EU) Directives, including the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). Monitoring programmes in place vary in scope from country to country, encompassing marine ecosystems, marine and coastal waters, bathing waters, land- based sources, marine litter, or industrial emissions. In addition, national institutions and networks for observation and monitoring underpin these programmes through the regular collection and assessment of data.

- Monitoring programmes to evaluate the effectiveness of action plans, programmes and measures under the LBS Protocol are reported to be in place in most reporting Contracting Parties, yet proper monitoring of the implementation of such measures needs further enhancement.
- The limited amount of data received by reporting Contracting Parties shows the need to further refine the UN Mediterranean knowledge platform (INFO/MAP) system to facilitate the submission of data, as well as to articulate practical ways and means to support Contracting Parties through capacity building activities, subject to available resources.
- Technical assistance and capacity building activities should be strengthened in synergy with relevant MEAs and other stakeholders, to further advance in the implementation of the regional action plans.
- Difficulties most frequent reported in implementing the Land-based Sources Protocol are the regulatory framework, administrative management and limited financial resources.

Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol)

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1982 SPA Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 21
- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1995 SPA/BD Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 17
- Number of reporting Contracting Parties on the 2022-2023 biennium: 13.

Main overall findings

- Regional Action Plan on Coralligenous and other Calcareous Bio-concretions: Actions taken by reporting Contracting Parties signal are a positive signal progress in implementation. To further enhance implementation, it seems that focus should be put on the promotion of research programs on coralligenous assemblages and maerl beds and on designing an integrated monitoring and assessment program for the assessment of the state coralligenous/maerl assemblages.
- Most reporting Contracting Parties have designated Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) and provided legal or regulatory frameworks for their protection and management. A few Parties are still in the process of developing or updating their national systems for SPA designation and management, indicating a dynamic and evolving implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol.
- Many Contracting Parties reported having developed Management Plans for their SPAs. Some Parties clarified that, although formal plans are not always in place for each SPA, protective and management measures have been adopted through other legal instruments or frameworks. Further efforts appear necessary to ensure the effective implementation and operationalization of these plans.
- Most Contracting Parties have established regulations governing activities such as scientific research, species collection, fishing, maritime traffic, and waste disposal in SPAs and/or SPAMIs. These measures are often articulated within site-specific management plans or through national environmental legislation.
- Appropriate training initiatives for SPA staff, managers, and technical personnel were reported by many Contracting Parties, often implemented through national programmes, international cooperation, or support from regional organizations like SPA/RAC.
- Monitoring programmes and observation efforts for ecological changes in Protocol areas are in place in most reporting Parties, with a majority stating that human impacts are systematically taken into account. Many Parties have also emphasized efforts to engage local communities in the management and stewardship of SPAs
- Most reporting Parties referred to the use of diverse financing mechanisms, including national funding schemes, international cooperation, and income-generating activities compatible with conservation, to support the management and promotion of SPAs.

- Implementation of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) appears to require continued efforts, particularly regarding Ecological Objectives EO1 (Biodiversity), EO2 (Non-indigenous species) and EO6 (Seafloor integrity), where several Parties reported either partial or ongoing implementation.
- As of 2022–2023, the number of SPAMIs remains unchanged at 39 sites. A few Contracting Parties reported efforts underway to nominate new SPAMIs or to strengthen the management of existing ones.
- Regulatory measures for the protection of endangered or threatened species are reported to be in place in most Contracting Parties, with references to national species lists, protected areas, and restrictions on harmful activities.
- Many Contracting Parties reported having developed or updated inventories of biodiversity, with a focus on marine species and habitats. These efforts are often aligned with the SPA/BD Protocol and relevant EU Directives (e.g., Habitats Directive).
- Several Parties reported listing endangered or threatened species at national level and identifying their distribution. However, the update and harmonization of these lists remain in progress in some countries.
- Measures on ex-situ conservation, such as the reproduction or reintroduction of protected species, have been reported in most Parties, particularly in relation to key species like the monk seal, marine turtles, or certain plant species.
- The majority of Contracting Parties reported having taken steps to control or prevent the introduction of non-indigenous or genetically modified species, although full implementation of Article 13 remains a challenge in some areas.
- Cartilaginous Fishes: The level of implementation of this Plan remains limited. Several Contracting Parties reported a lack of data synchronization, delays in submitting catch statistics, and the absence of national action plans. Further efforts are required to fulfill reporting obligations and implement national Shark Action Plans.
- Invasive Species: Progress remains insufficient overall. While a few Parties have integrated invasive species control into national strategies, the mechanism to coordinate actions (paragraph 22 of the RAP) and updates to the MAMIAS database are still not fully operational in most countries.
- Bird Species: Significant efforts have been noted, especially in terms of legal protection and monitoring. However, further action is needed on the establishment and implementation of National Action Plans for endangered and threatened bird species, as only a few Parties reported progress in this regard.
- Cetaceans: Most Contracting Parties have ratified the ACCOBAMS Agreement and undertaken action for cetacean conservation, such as surveys and mitigation measures. However, acoustic mapping and the development of a Mediterranean-wide noise monitoring strategy remain underdeveloped and require further support.
- Marine Vegetation: While some progress has been made, notably on the creation of MPAs for marine vegetation, national inventories, monitoring networks, and action plans remain under development in many Parties. The integration of new Annex II species in legal frameworks is also pending in several cases.

- Monk Seal: Implementation varies depending on species presence. Parties with breeding populations reported having taken conservation measures, created SPAs, and conducted awareness programmes. However, many countries with no monk seal presence marked several questions as not applicable.

- Marine Turtles: Most Parties reported legal protection and enforcement, but gaps remain in habitat protection, tagging and genetic studies, and the establishment of rescue centers or training programmes. Enhanced efforts are needed to ensure a comprehensive implementation of the RAP.

- Dark Habitats: Implementation is still limited, though a few Contracting Parties reported progress in awareness-raising and national legislation. Areas requiring further work include habitat mapping, revision of endangered species lists, and the integration of dark habitats into MPAs and impact assessments.

- Coralligenous and Other Calcareous Bio-concretions: Many Parties reported legislative measures and scientific programmes underway. However, promotion of dedicated research and the coordination of an integrated monitoring framework remain in early stages in several countries.

- The most frequently reported challenges in implementing the SPA/BD Protocol remain: Limited financial resources, lack of technical and human capacities, administrative constraints and coordination gaps across institutions

- Addressing these limitations, through increased regional support, resource mobilization, and technical training, will be essential to ensure full and effective implementation of the Protocol and its associated Action Plans.

Protocol on the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

(Hazardous Wastes Protocol)

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1996 Hazardous Wastes Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 7
- Number of reporting countries on the 2022-2023 biennium: 5

Main overall findings

- Measures aimed at reducing to a minimum or where possible eliminating the generation of hazardous wastes are at the heart of the domestic legislation on waste management adopted in all reporting Contracting Parties, as per the requirements of the Hazardous Wastes Protocol.
- All reporting Contracting Parties indicated having adopted measures to reduce to a minimum and possibly eliminate the amount of hazardous wastes including POPs/PCBs subject to transboundary movement, as required by the Hazardous Wastes Protocol, and in synergy with the Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (The Basel Convention).
- The notification procedure sets out in Article 6 of the Hazardous Wates Protocol in cases of transboundary movement of hazardous wastes is reported to be in place in all reporting Contracting Parties.
- Restrictions on the export and import of hazardous wastes either for final disposal or recovery are indicated to be in place in many reporting Contracting Parties.
- Data received by reporting Contracting Parties shows that continued enhancement of data collection is key, by both continuing refining the UN Mediterranean knowledge platform (INFO/MAP) system to avoid duplication of reporting, as well as exploring practical ways and means to support Contracting Parties in the collection and submission of data, subject to available resources.
- The reported Contracting Parties have not submitted any reports detailing difficulties in implementing the Hazardous Wastes Protocol however, It is noted that some countries are facing a challenge in disposal of hazardous waste, lacking facilities in the country that is a mere indication of accumulation of hazardous waste in the country that requires proper storage and planning for disposal. International funds like GEF etc are well positioned to answer such problems, however, countries need to explore to potential disposal mechanisms.

Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil

(Offshore Protocol)

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the 1994 Offshore Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 8
- Number of reporting countries on the 2022-2023 biennium: 4

Main overall findings

- A global trend is that no significant changes have been reported by the reporting Contracting Parties since the previous report (2020-2021). Most of the below comments were made following the previous reporting and are still valid, except those related to the Covid-19 crisis within that period.

- It is to recall that offshore activities are subject to prior authorization, appropriate legal and regulatory measures for granting the construction and operation of installations as required by the Offshore Protocol in all reporting Contracting Parties. This authorization or permitting system has been mainly articulated through laws governing the offshore exploration and exploitation of mineral resources and/or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) laws and environmental permitting laws.

- Difficulties have been indicated in relation to the disposal of harmful or noxious substances and materials, including challenges related to the regulatory framework, technical guidance capabilities and administrative management. Urging the development of related Standards and Guidelines was one of the main findings of the Workshop on Oil and oily mixtures and drilling fluids and cuttings held in Malta in November 2023.

- In some reporting Contracting Parties, the use and storage of offshore chemicals is approved by the competent national authority on the basis of the Chemical Use Plan as requested by Article 9 of the Offshore Protocol. It sems that further work is still needed in this area, in particular about the content of the chemical use plan, its assessment and its continuous monitoring as confirmed again during the above-mentioned event.

- In regard to enforcement, it is to note that two reporting Contracting Parties, that have oil and gas operations, indicated having carried out inspections. In the previous report (2020- 2021) also two reporting Contracting Parties, that have oil and gas operations, indicated having carried out inspections.

- Difficulties most frequent reported in implementing the Offshore Protocol are the policy and regulatory framework, and administrative management.

- The trend showing few changes, as well as the limited data submitted regarding authorization permits, number of offshore installations and enforcement measures, illustrates that exploring practical ways and means to support Contracting Parties in the collection and submission of data, using REMPEC's Platforms - Country Profile Page (on REMPEC Website) and MEDGIS-MAR as appropriate, would be key for the future reporting. Enhancement of data collection is paramount, and a continuous refinement of the UN Mediterranean knowledge platform (INFO/MAP) supports the process and would avoid duplication of reporting.

Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol)

Status of Reporting

- Number of Contracting Parties to the ICZM Protocol on the 2022-2023 biennium: 12
- Number of reporting countries on the 2022-2023 biennium:11

Main overall findings

Ratification and general legal transposition into national law

- The Contracting Parties (CPs) that have ratified the Protocol have transposed provisions of the Protocol into national legal acts or through strategies, plans and programmes, depending on institutional structure and competencies of the sub-national level of administration. Also, some CPs that have not yet ratified the Protocol report on transposition of most of the requirements in their national legal system including the objectives and general principles of the Protocol. They report on the value of the objectives and general principles in supporting the implementation of ICZM embedded in the ICZM Protocol. In this, CAMP projects are highlighted by CPs as the most relevant.

Information on geographical coverage

- Most of the CPs report on geographical coverage of their coastal zones to which the Protocol applies, either by various laws concerning administrative procedures or spatial planning or by similar instruments like coastal national strategies or action plans.

Institutional measures

- Competencies for coastal zone management are defined in most Contracting Parties, but there is no single department responsible across all CPs. A specific inter-ministerial body for ICZM is rarely in place; instead, ad hoc working groups or technical committees typically handle the coordination of national documents such as MSPs, strategies, or similar plans. The establishment of these bodies has largely been supported by projects like CAMP, as well as those funded by GEF and other donors. Coordination between national and sub-national administrative levels is generally reported as being in place, primarily through the preparation of planning and related documents. Many CPs highlight the significant contribution of the Protocol's provisions to better coastal area management, thanks to synergies and complementarities with other relevant sectoral policies.

Operational measures

- Legal measures for controlling urban development along the coastline are defined in all the reporting CPs. The setback zone is legally established through coastal laws or physical/spatial planning acts, however not uniquely of 100 or more meters but this width varies between the CPs according to national legislation. The definition of the setback zones is proved to be a challenge in practice (with the 100 m setback as a minimum). The non-building zones are defined in spatial plans that integrate requirements of other sectorial laws (nature protection, water, protection of cultural heritage, agriculture land protection, forestry, etc.). Freedom of access to the sea and along the shore is guaranteed for the public in all reporting CPs.

- Not all of the reporting CPs have prepared and/or adopted a national ICZM or coastal strategy. And only a minor number of national strategies have established appropriate indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of ICZM strategies, plans and programmes. With regard to biodiversity, sensitive areas, landscapes and cultural heritage most of the CPs have established regulation to ensure their protection and conservation, mainly through environmental, coastal or nature and heritage protection legislation. Protection measures in all these fields appear to be the most developed. On the contrary, only few countries have taken restoration measures to increase resilience and positive role of coastal wetlands, which are considered specific coastal ecosystems in the Protocol. CPs that have islands have adopted some kind of legislation to take into account their specificities in coastal strategies, plans and programmes.
- Mechanisms for management of coastal land in the public domain exist and are operational in the majority of the reporting Contracting Parties. Most of the coastal land is public property and the responsibility for management is either on Government or local authorities.
- Institutional and legal frameworks for coastal inventory and monitoring are in a majority of cases fragmented, as no dedicated institutions oversee coastal zone monitoring, and responsibilities are distributed among multiple entities. While most CPs report some level of activity, there appears to be limited focus on coastal zones, and a dedicated coastal observatory is lacking. Initiatives such as CAMP, other ICZM projects, and work on IMAP indicators are considered essential for monitoring and observation. Additionally, for EU Member States, monitoring obligations under the MSFD and MSP frameworks play an important role.
- The use of indicators in coastal management remains limited, especially for evaluating economic impacts on coastal zones. This is likely linked to the absence of national coastal observatories. However, in cases where a national ICZM or coastal strategy exists, some indicators are used to assess progress in implementing the ICZM Protocol.
- All reporting CPs have legislation in place for environmental assessments, with the EIA process being widely applied. The use of SEA is also regulated in nearly all reporting CPs. However, in many CPs not bound by the Espoo Convention, transboundary EIA/SEA frameworks are lacking. Still, transboundary cooperation is implemented through joint projects.
- There is significant diversity in the types and levels of implementation of land policy, economic, financial, and fiscal instruments among the reporting CPs. This presents a strong potential for exchange and training on best practices. Many CPs report the involvement of non-governmental organizations and various donors in supporting instruments for coastal protection and conservation.
- Risks and emergency situations appear to be a major concern for most of the reporting CP, many of which have established national contingency and emergency plans. A significant number also report on civil protection systems that coordinate activities in emergencies. Progress has been made in integrating climate change into coastal and marine strategies and planning schemes, with the introduction of prevention, mitigation, and adaptation measures to address its negative effects. However, there is still considerable potential to enhance the resilience of coastal areas and their capacity to adapt to changes, particularly sea level rise and flooding.
- Awareness raising, education and training are considered essential for advancing the complex approach of ICZM. The annual Mediterranean Coast Day is recognized as an important event for raising awareness. EU Directives (e.g., MSFD), Strategies (e.g., EUSAIR), and funding instruments (e.g., the INTERREG Programme), along with GEF-funded initiatives, play a key role in promoting cooperation and awareness initiatives. Some CPs report on specific education and awareness action plans that incorporate ICZM topics into curricula, TV programs, and other media.

Annex V

Membership of the Compliance Committee

[Members and Alternate Members of the Compliance Committee that need to be elected by the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties

Group I: Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia

One Member and one Alternate Member to be elected

Group II: Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Spain and the European Union

One Member to be elected or renewed

One Alternate Member to be elected

Group III: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Israel, Monaco, Montenegro and Türkiye

One Member to be elected or renewed

One Alternate Member to be elected: vacant seat since no Alternate Member was elected by COP 23

[Alternate Member Ms. Orr Karassin]

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