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and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

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Agenda Item 3: Progress Report for January - March 2018

Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Activities Carried Out for the Period January-March 2018

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I. Introduction

1. This report covers the activities and outputs carried out mainly in the period between January and March 2018. Reference is also made to few activities that took place in the latest part of 2017 that were not reported on elsewhere.

2. The progress report highlights progress achieved and processes undertaken under the seven themes of the Programme of Work 2016-2017: Governance, Land and Sea Based Pollution, Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Land and Sea Interaction and Processes, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), Climate Change Adaptation.

3. The Reports by the Secretariat on Specific Issues and on Financial and Administrative Issues are prepared as separate documents, namely UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6 and UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/5 respectively. These documents address in a more detailed manner a number of specific issues to be brought to the attention of the Bureau. Furthermore, the complementing “Progress Report by the Secretariat on the Implementation of COP 20 Decisions”, is presented as document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/4.

II. Main Activities/Outputs per PoW theme linked to specific outcome

II.1 Overarching Theme: GOVERNANCE

Strategic Outcome 1.1: Contracting Parties supported in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols, Regional Strategies and Action Plans

Ratification of Barcelona Convention and its Protocols by all Contracting Parties supported

4. Since the last meeting of the Bureau, the Depositary has communicated to the Secretariat the deposit of the following instruments of ratification or accession: (a) the instrument of ratification of the ICZM Protocol by Lebanon, dated 1 August 2017; the Protocol entered into force for Lebanon on 31 August 2017, (b) the instrument of accession to the Prevention and Emergency Protocol by Lebanon, dated 3 November 2017; the Protocol entered into force for Lebanon on 3 December 2017, (c) the instrument of ratification of the Offshore Protocol by Croatia, dated 8 February 2018; the Protocol entered into force for Croatia on 10 March 2018. More information on the status of ratification of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols is provided in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6 “Report by the Secretariat on specific issues”.

5. The Secretariat has continued contacts with representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the ratification of the Barcelona Convention, and other Contracting Parties to support their ratification of Protocols.

Governance meetings

6. In the beginning of 2018, the 34th meeting of the Executive Coordination Panel (ECP) took place in Sophia-Antipolis, France (5-7 February 2018) to discuss the main assignments of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system and the strategic priorities for the biennium 2018-2019 and to guide the implementation of COP 20 decisions, including the Programme of Work and Budget, in a timely manner.

Resource mobilization, project proposals recently approved or submitted

7. A significant number of activities of the PoW and Budget 2018-2019, adopted by COP 20 (Tirana, Albania, December 2017), will be supported through the voluntary contribution of Italy, provided in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNEP and the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS). In this regard, the third Steering Committee meeting under the MoU was held in Sophia-Antipolis, France, on 7-8 February 2018. The meeting was held back-to-back with the 34th ECP Meeting, thus enabling MAP Components to contribute to the Steering Committee meeting discussions. The details of implementation of the MoU Work Plan 2018-2019 were discussed and the main elements of related activity fiches were approved. In line with the meeting conclusions, the Secretariat requested the appropriation and disbursement of the agreed budget, of a total amount of 2,015,000 EUR, to ensure the timely initiation of the PoW activities supported through this Cooperation Agreement.

8. The GEF one step Medium Sized Project “Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning” approved by the GEF CEO on 14 October 2016, has been endorsed by Montenegro and Albania and is implemented, with PAP/RAC and SPA/RAC as executing partners. The meeting with Albania and Montenegro to kickstart the project was held in Tivat, Montenegro, on 27 September 2017. The delegations of the two countries approved the main guidelines of the inception report and agreed on the identification of nominated Project Focal Points and National Coordinators for the two countries. Upon receiving official communication on the nominations of the countries representatives, following GEF requirements and UN rules and regulations, the Inception and First Project Steering Committee Meetings will be summoned in 2018.

9. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the MAP components UNESCO, IUCN, WWF, EIB, EBRD and GWP-Med progressed with the project preparation of the “Mediterranean Programme (MedProgramme): enhancing Environmental Security” in view of the submission of the final Project Documents to the GEF CEO. Significant progress has been made in terms of selection of sites and interventions for previously defined national activities, as well as the identification of new activities for potential investments. These activities have included informal dialogues, formal consultations and bilateral contacts with Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco, to identify potential interventions and sites for PCBs and Mercury disposal/remediation. The EIB in coordination with the Coordinating Unit has consulted with countries to identify seven potential investment project opportunities in the International Waters and in the Chemicals and Waste focal areas, of which five are part of the NAPs prepared by countries in 2015 under the LBS Protocol. Moreover, consultations for Child Project 2.1 were undertaken with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro in September 2017, and with the remaining countries in December 2017. The preparation of the document for submission to the GEF CEO is well advanced for several Child Projects and moving forward for the remaining. This information was presented to the nine countries that endorsed the MedProgramme in Athens, Greece, on 7-8 March 2018, during the First Regional Consultation of the MedProgramme, which aimed to discuss the progress made, next steps and timelines for submission to the GEF.

10. Substantial progress in the preparation of the GEF Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) project “Enhancing regional climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas” was made. Informal and formal consultations with the countries that endorsed the project (Albania, Algeria, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia) were held. A meeting with the countries’ delegations was organized in Rabat, Morocco, in December 2017, where the countries agreed on the regional activities to support the entire region as well as on the national activities to be executed in Montenegro and Morocco. A preliminary submission of a draft version of the project document was made in November 2017 to seek guidance from the GEF Secretariat. National Consultations were held in Montenegro and Morocco on 8-9 and 12-13 February 2018 respectively. The outcomes of these meetings allowed for the final design of the national interventions in the two countries and for the finalization of the documents to be submitted to the GEF CEO by mid-2018.

11. Progress was made with the execution of the EC Project “Towards an ecologically representative and efficiently managed network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas”, which received the second financing installment from the EC on January 2018, for the execution of the activities planned by SPA/RAC, WWF and MedPAN in 2018. In January 2018, the project was reviewed by the EC through the execution of a Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) exercise, which was concluded on 23 February 2018. The conclusions of the exercise are positive indicating that the creation and effective management of MPAs remains highly relevant, given the fact that the five countries concerned are fully committed to implementing the 2020 Road Map for the SPA/BD Protocol, endorsed by the Contracting Parties at COP 19 and reiterated in the Tangier Declaration in December 2016. The ROM also highlighted that several actions should be planned to increase the impacts of the projects. The most important is a full review of the Result Logical Framework, with the co-implementing partners and National Focal Points aiming to integrate risk management into planning and to develop an internal results-based monitoring system that can be continued after the project.

12. The Secretariat with PAP/RAC and INFO/RAC are participating in two projects on MSP approved by DG MARE (Supporting Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning, in Call for Proposals EASME/EMFF/2015/1.2.1.3), related to the Eastern and Western Mediterranean: Supporting Maritime

Spatial Planning in the Eastern Mediterranean (SUPrEME) and Supporting Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning in the Western Mediterranean region (SIMWESTMED). The activities of the projects focus on supporting implementation of the MSP process in the EU Members States, and developing transboundary collaboration to manage MSP initiatives.

13. SPA/RAC obtained external EC funding for a four and half year's project to develop an interoperable observatory platform, integrating networks of marine environment and maritime activity observing and forecasting systems across the Mediterranean basin, addressing both the open sea and the coastal zone. Four country-level training workshops of practitioners, including one-two trainings onboard boats equipped for oceanographic research are planned and related exchanges to achieve those boats availability are ongoing. Also, two coordination meetings of technical country representatives to operate them in North Africa countries are ensured this way, with the aim to cover Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia. Training material will be prepared along 2018 and training on spot will start in 2019.

14. The MAVA foundation approved a project for the improvement of the status and management of three wetlands identified in the Mediterranean, i.e. Oristano (Italy), Buna Protected Landscape and Ulcinj saltpan (Albania and Montenegro), and Ghar El Melh (Tunisia) in which PAP/RAC is involved together with several other Mediterranean partners. Besides the overarching issue, namely Governance for which PAP/RAC is the lead partner, the Centre will contribute to the organization of the national Coast Day events and assist partners in Tunisia to prepare the integrated resources management plan for the Gahr el Mehl area. The projects will be completed by 2021.

15. The Joint Secretariat of the Interreg Med programme confirmed that the PlasticBusters MPAs project (Plastic Busters: preserving biodiversity from plastics in Mediterranean MPAs) successfully passed the selection process. The Steering Committee of the programme requested some adjustments in the budget before its start. This project will support the implementation of the UfM-labelled Plastic Busters project and SCP/RAC is one of the implementing partners. The total budget of this 48 months project is 5 million EUR. The overall objective of the PlasticBusters MPAs project is to contribute to maintaining biodiversity and preserving natural ecosystems in pelagic and coastal MPAs, by defining and implementing a harmonized approach against Marine Litter. The project entails actions that address the whole management cycle of Marine Litter, from monitoring and assessment to prevention and mitigation, as well as actions to strengthen networking between and among pelagic and coastal MPAs located in, Albania, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy and Spain.

16. Further to the agreement by France to coordinate the consortium composed of Western Mediterranean countries (Algeria, France, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Tunisia, and Spain) and REMPEC Partners, a revised version of the Marine Oil & HNS Pollution Cooperation in the Western Mediterranean Region Project proposal (West MOPoCo Project) is being prepared for its submission in the 2018 DG ECHO Call for proposals for prevention and preparedness projects in the field of civil protection and marine pollution.

17. In January 2018 the Interreg ADRION funding was approved for the PORTODIMARE project in which PAP/RAC is partner in a consortium of Adriatic institutions and authorities. In full compliance with the ICZM and MSP principles and supporting the implementation of the EUSAIR Action Plan, PORTODIMARE project aims at creating a common platform (Geoportal) for data, information and decision support tools focused on coastal and marine areas of the Adriatic-Ionian Region. The Geoportal integrates and further develops existing databases, portals and tools developed within previous EU projects by local and national administrations and by other initiatives. The Geoportal will use, feed and support transnational cooperation networks in all the phases of its creation, from the design to the development and its testing phase, enabling public authorities and stakeholders to apply a coordinated, integrated and transboundary approach. It aims at becoming a daily working tool for decision-makers, public and private managers, practitioners, marine scientists and stakeholders in general, thus promoting and boosting sustainable blue growth in the Adriatic-Ionian Region. The project will officially start with the kick-off meeting planned for March 2018 in Bologna, Italy, to be concluded in January 2020.

18. PAP/RAC is partner in another Interreg Med project that has been recently approved, dealing with the Blue Economy and Marine Conservation (PHAROS4MPAs) in which SPA/RAC and REMPEC are associated partners. The project sees MSP as a transnational challenge for regulating maritime sectors

near MPAs. By capitalizing on the results of previous projects, PHAROS4MPAs will deliver an integrated framework for recommendations on the necessary collaboration between Mediterranean MPAs and maritime sectors identified as the project's targets. Approach and outputs include delivering common capitalization baselines, recommendations and policy tools intended for MSP Authorities, the EC, Barcelona Convention, MedPAN network, and various maritime sectors. Institutions and authorities from seven Mediterranean countries participate in this project, expected to start in March 2018 for a duration of 18 months.

19. SPA/RAC participated as a main executing partner in the elaboration of a EU ENPI project proposal, aimed to support Parties in the testing of priority indicators of climate change impact in MPAs, with preference for SPAMIs. The possible preselection of the proposal, already submitted to the EU selection panel is expected along summer 2018.

20. Following the publication in 2017 by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) of a Junior Professional Officers (JPO) position at REMPEC, in the framework of its JPO Programme, a candidate from the People's Republic of China was selected and is expected to join the Centre as of 3 April 2018.

Strategic Outcome 1.2: Contracting Parties supported in compliance with the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols, Regional Strategies and Action Plans

21. The progress under this Strategic Outcome specifically related to ratification, compliance and reporting is reported in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6 "Report by the Secretariat on Specific Issues".

Strategic Outcome 1.3: Strengthened participation, engagement, synergies and complementarities among global and regional institutions

22. Following bilateral meetings at COP 20 and deepened exchanges with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the President of the MCSD, the Secretariat works on organizing a Mediterranean side event during the Ministerial segment of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) to be held in New York, from 16-18 July 2018. Such a side event would highlight the importance of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in facilitating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and relevant SDGs in the Mediterranean region.

23. At the occasion of the UNECE regional workshop (Geneva, Switzerland, 28 February 2018) aiming to facilitate the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to be presented at the 2018 HLPF, the Secretariat contacted the Contracting Parties which are also UNECE Members States, to facilitate showcasing the Mediterranean regional dimension and the contribution of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system to Agenda 2030, following up to the relevant decisions and discussions at COP 20.

24. In collaboration with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), a successful Non-Indigenous Species (NIS)/Fisheries Sub-Regional Meeting was held in Chania, Greece, on 5 March 2018, with all countries of the sub-region present. Participants highlighted the importance to work towards a sub-regional monitoring plan for NIS in line with the objectives of the Joint GFCM-MAP Sub-regional Pilot Study for the Eastern Mediterranean for NIS and the respective Mid-Term Strategies of both GFCM and MAP.

25. The European Environmental Agency (EEA) and the Secretariat held a joint seminar on regional assessments in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 26-28 February 2018. Further information on this seminar and the collaboration with EEA is presented under Core Theme I: Land and Sea Based Pollution and in the "Report on Specific Issues" (document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6).

26. SPA/RAC, together with the Coordinating Unit, is actively following CBD preparatory work for the November 2018 COP 14 in Egypt, including involvement in CBD Working Groups preparation and review of future SBSTTA documents (EBSAs follow up, MPAs and OECMs, etc). CBD COP 14 will consider ways to mainstream biodiversity into other sectors and will lay out plans for the post-2020 biodiversity agenda, considering experiences and lessons learned in efforts to achieve the Aichi Targets. As such, the GFCM-UNEP/MAP cooperation experience could be also presented at the CBD COP 14.

27. REMPEC participated in the fifth session of the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR 5) of the International Maritime Organization (London, United Kingdom, 5-9 February

2018) and the Fourteenth Inter-Secretariat Meeting between the Regional Agreements Secretariats, DG ECHO and EMSA (Copenhagen, Denmark, 21 February 2018).

28. The Secretariat is exploring possible ways to enhance cooperation with the London Convention and its Protocol, including on issues related to governance and compliance. Discussions are under way for possible participation of London Convention representatives in meetings of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, to present their work.

Strategic Outcome 1.4: Knowledge and understanding of the state of the Mediterranean Sea and coast enhanced through mandated assessments for informed policy-making

29. The 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (QSR) became publicly available at <https://www.medqsr.org> and at the MAP website, <https://unepmap.org>, while its graphical design, including also design of the Executive Summary, was launched by MED POL with the support of INFO/RAC. The 2017 Mediterranean QSR is an important achievement, the result of joint and integrated efforts of the Contracting Parties, MAP Partners and the Secretariat. It provides a unique basis for assessing the status of the Mediterranean ecosystems and the progress towards the achievement of its GES. It is also an important milestone for the MAP-Barcelona Convention system 40-years long experience in monitoring and assessing the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean.

30. Plan Bleu is leading the preparation of the 2019 report on the State of the Environment and Development (SoED 2019). A first table of content, based on the MSSD structure, and a concept note, including the governance structure, were presented at the 34th ECP meeting held in Sophia-Antipolis, France, on 5-7 February 2018. They were also presented to the EEA - UNEP/MAP joint meeting held in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 26-28 February 2018. Furthermore, following Decision IG.23/4 adopted at COP 20, the MED2050 detailed roadmap was presented by Plan Bleu to the 34th ECP meeting. The MED2050 elaboration process, has started with the identification of partners and collaboration with scientists and NGOs.

31. A MoU in relation to the secretariat of the Mediterranean Expert Network on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC), which will be hosted by Plan Bleu, was signed between UfM and Plan Bleu in November 2017.

32. In coordination with HELCOM (Project lead Partner), REMPEC supports the preparation of the Third OpenRisk Inter-Regional Workshop on Risk Assessment Methods for Pollution Prevention and Response (REMPEC, Valletta, 24-25 April 2018).

Strategic Outcome 1.5: MAP knowledge and MAP information system enhanced and accessible for policy-making, increased awareness and understanding

33. Within the development of the Mediterranean clearing-house mechanism on marine and coastal biodiversity, SPA/RAC has launched within the framework of the Medkeyhabitats project the establishment of a Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) for its georeferenced data which will be called the Mediterranean Biodiversity Platform (MBP). SPA/RAC has launched the redesign of the Standard Data-Entry Form web application in order to be integrated with the MBP.

34. The Mediterranean Integrated Geographical Information System on Marine Pollution Risk Assessment and Response (MEDGIS-MAR) is being upgraded and updated (completion expected April 2018). An electronic version of the Mediterranean Guide on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Responding to Marine Pollution Incident is being developed (completion expected April 2018).

35. In cooperation with the UNEP Science Division, the Secretariat undertakes the mapping of the MAP-Barcelona Convention policies and instruments against the relevant SDGs targets and indicators, notably for the SDG 14. The outputs of this mapping exercise will feed the SDGs Synergies Portal (<https://environmentlive.unep.org/portal>), an interactive user-friendly tool which demonstrates the potential for creating synergies between the global and regional Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and the relevant SDGs. In addition of showcasing the relevance of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system for implementing the 2030 Agenda at the regional level, the online tool will offer a visualized demonstration of synergies between the MAP policies and the SDGs, illustrating also the potential for avoiding double reporting. This runs in parallel and in synergy with work under InforMEA,

which is the United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Agreements.

Strategic Outcome 1.6: Raised awareness and outreach

36. INFO/RAC, in consultation with the Coordinating Unit, has already started to work in implementing Decision IG.23/3 on Governance in relation to information and communication issues. To this end, and following relevant discussions at the 34th meeting of the ECP (Sophia-Antipolis, France, 5-7 February 2018), INFO/RAC has prepared a draft concept note on a communication plan for the current biennium, presenting objectives, processes, timeline and evaluation criteria. More focused activities for the preparation of the revised Communication Strategy will take place in the second quarter of 2018.

37. The Coordinating Unit and MAP Components participated in a number of outreach events during this period, as highlighted in Section H of document UNEP(DEPI)/MED BUR.85/6. Furthermore, the Coordinating Unit and the MAP Components provide regular updates regarding their activities on their respective websites, including the publication of newsletters and relevant documents and studies.

38. A cartoon on marine biodiversity is being finalized, and will be disseminated at the occasion of the 2018 International Day of Biological Diversity (22 May 2018), to be screened at schools. SPA/RAC graphic charter has been finalized and a contract has been signed in January 2018 to develop the new website of SPA/RAC.

II. 2 Core Theme I: LAND AND SEA-BASED POLLUTION

Strategic Outcome 2.1: Strengthening regional implementation of the obligations under the Barcelona Convention and four pollution-related Protocols, and of programmes of measures in existing relevant Regional Strategies and Action Plans

39. MED POL prepared a road map to lead the process towards revision of the existing Regional Plans (mercury, BOD, ML) and to propose the elements for preparation of 6 new Regional Plans (Municipal WWTP; Sewage Sludge Management; Agriculture Nutrients Management; Aquaculture Nutrients Management; Urban Storm Water Management and Marine Litter (revision)). The ToRs for providing the Consultancies for the assessment of the implementation of the existing Regional Plans and development of the key elements of 6 new Regional Plans are under preparation.

40. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU) Members are in force for MONGOOS, FEDERCHIMICA, Sea Alarm Foundation and Cedre. The renewal of the MoU with ISPRA is under progress. Following the sinking of the oil tanker “AGIA ZONI II” off Piraeus, Greece, on 10 September 2017, upon request of the Hellenic Coast Guard, through CECIS, REMPEC mobilized two MAU experts from 8 to 14 October 2017. A claim to the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC funds) is being prepared by REMPEC to recover the cost of mobilization of the MAU.

41. The Second Meeting of the Mediterranean Network of Law Enforcement Officials relating to MARPOL within the framework of the Barcelona Convention (MENELAS), was held in Valletta, Malta, on 28-29 November 2017. A report on the Activities of MENELAS, as requested by Decision IG.21/9, was submitted to COP 20 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.23/Inf.9). The MENELAS Working Group will be established and operational by end of March 2018. The Third Meeting of MENELAS is tentatively planned to be held on 7-8 February 2019 at REMPEC offices in Malta.

Strategic Outcome 2.2: Development or update of new/existing action plans, programmes and measures, common standards and criteria, guidelines

42. MEDPOL developed the concept to support three Contracting Parties from the Balkans to implement Adopt-a-Beach pilots, to improve national regulatory framework for the banning of single-use plastic bags; to support the actions at national level to reduce the amounts of plastic PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles ending up as marine litter, and to promote their recycling. Further efforts were made to start collection of data from the implementation of the Adopt-a-Beach and Fishing-for-Litter pilots in the Eastern Mediterranean. Initial elements of the risk assessment tool are prepared, including the review study and inventory to be used for the preparation of the maps.

43. Work on the development of the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR), in line with the PoW and Budget 2018-2019, is undertaken in the framework of the ENI SEIS II South Project. A Regional Expert has been contracted for development of the updated PRTR Guidelines and draft legislation in all SEIS countries, as well as for implementation of the PRTR pilots in five partner countries, which will be followed by regional training.

44. In order to support ENI SEIS II South Project activities implementation in Israel, a thematic workshop was organized in Jerusalem on 7-8 March 2018, with the aim to contribute to data collection for the purpose of NAP indicators development and population (in relation to industrial emissions, waste and water), showcasing also the possibilities to contribute to the development of new assessment products.

Strategic Outcome 2.3: Strengthening and implementation of marine pollution prevention and control legislation and policies at national level, including through enforcement and integration into sectorial processes

45. MED POL defined the road map towards National Baseline Budget (NBB) update, NAPs mid-term evaluation and preparation of the Joint EEA/MAP report on the progress of the H2020 Initiative. Further actions will include collection of data for population of NAP indicators; development of NAP indicators fact sheets and population of NAP indicators. In line with NBB and PRTR Guidelines, preparation for development of the specific national guidelines to strengthen national capacities to collect and report quality assured data through the PRTR/NBB system are on the way. The Emission Limit Values-Emission Quality Standards / Good Environmental Status (ELV& EQS/GES) and inspection/permitting streamlining into national regulation and setting the common standards and GES for different contaminants/pollutants is in process. The legal instruments for realization of these activities for 10 Contracting Parties are under preparation.

46. In the framework of the SWIM H2020 Supporting Mechanisms project, SCP/RAC is preparing two technical studies that will aim at screening the best practices, circular economy measures and technologies for the target countries of SWIM-H2020 Support Mechanism. The selected sectors are olive oil and cement, with focus on the best practices for waste minimization, water and energy consumption and valorization of the sub-products of the olive oil production, and on the best practices for the “waste to energy” process in order to avoid or minimize environmental issues.

47. In the framework of the SWIM-H2020 Support Mechanism, SCP/RAC is preparing two technical support to Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia for the development of SCP/circular economy/pollution abatement measures. ToRs for the specific activities to be developed in each country have been prepared with the Focal Points of the project. In February 2018, SCP/RAC revised the legal decree for the banning of single-use plastic bags in Tunisia and provided recommendations.

48. In the framework of the Marine Litter MED project, SCP/RAC is currently providing technical support to Morocco and Tunisia to improve their legislation to reduce marine litter. In the case of Morocco, since the regulatory framework is already developed, plastic bags are tackled through a feasibility study on extended producer responsibility for beverage containers. In the case of Tunisia, close collaboration with the competent authority is in place to review the draft decree to ban single-use plastic bags, as well as reviewing the technical study which will aim at industrial adaptation. In the case of Algeria, Egypt, and Lebanon, SCP/RAC will provide technical assistance to the governments to explore the feasibility of reaching a voluntary agreement with large retailers and/or drafting legislation to ban free distribution of plastic bags. In Egypt, the possibility is explored to provide technical assistance to the Egyptian Organization for Standards and Quality in developing standards for “new plastics”, namely adopting the international standard EN 13432 for industrial composting and anaerobic digestion.

Strategic Outcome 2.4: Marine Pollution Monitoring and Assessment

49. Work is ongoing to provide support to Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Tunisia to establish updated national monitoring programmes in line with the IMAP (Pollution and Marine Litter Cluster). Drafting of related legal agreements has been launched.

50. Capacity building workshops to support the update of the national monitoring programmes in line with IMAP (Pollution and Marine Litter Cluster) in Egypt, Morocco and Libya were organized. The workshops were focused on two components of IMAP, namely Eutrophication (Ecological Objective 5) and Marine Litter (Ecological Objective 10). They also addressed the implementation of the “Adopt-a-beach” and “Fishing-for-Litter” pilot projects envisaged in the Regional Plan on Marine Litter and supported by the EU-funded Marine Litter MED project. Brief information on the Shared Environment Information Systems (SEIS) was also presented. The workshop findings highlighted the need for further harmonization of the approaches and the applied methodologies to support regular reporting to IMAP Info System based on IMAP indicators.

51. A bilateral meeting between MED POL and INFO/RAC with the aim to finalize data standards and dictionaries for Common Indicators 13, 14, 17, 22 and 23 was held. The common approach towards integration of MAP Info system with existing MED POL Info System was defined.

52. The 2017 Quality Assurance Programme for trace elements in sediment sample and chlorinated pesticides, PCBs and petroleum hydrocarbons in biota; the Quality Assurance of data regarding eutrophication parameters; the Biological effects studies and organization of an Inter-calibration exercise were successfully finalized. Preparation of new Memorandum of Understanding between MED POL and IAEA for 2018-2019 is launched.

53. MED POL is assigned to regularly update and assess the inventories of pollutant loads (NBB, PRTR from land based sources and from offshore and shipping). MED POL is working under SEIS II Project to develop H2020/NAP indicators and related factsheets on three thematic areas namely waster, industrial emissions and waste management including marine litter. First drafts of the factsheets for the H2020 indicators have been prepared and will be shared with the Contracting Parties.

54. With the aim to strengthen capacities towards the delivery of the next assessment products, exchange of experience with EEA was provided through organization of the Joint EEA-UNEP/MAP seminar of regional assessments on 26-28 February in Copenhagen, Denmark. This seminar, organized with the support of the EU ENI SEISII South Project, provided an excellent opportunity for the exchange of knowledge on the planned regional assessment products of the two organizations, as well as to identify synergies and opportunities for potential cooperation. The Joint Workshop agreed on the key elements of a Joint MAP-EEA Roadmap on assessments, which should ensure coordinated action, where synergies exist. This roadmap will focus on the successful delivery of the planned key regional assessment products, such as the SoED 2019, MED2050, the 2023 Mediterranean QSR, the EEA State of the Environment Report and the Horizon 2020 Report, showcasing potential options of cooperation, in line with respective mandates and with the timelines of the planned assessment products. Following the Workshop, the MAP Coordinator addressed all EEA staff and presented the MAP-Barcelona Convention system and its key achievements, including the 2017 Mediterranean QSR, and the ongoing cooperation activities with EEA. He also had a bilateral meeting with the Executive Director of EEA, Mr. Hans Bruyninckx, to follow-up on the key outcomes of the Seminar and review implementation of the agreement between the organizations.

55. The EcAp-MEDII Project Steering Committee took place on 16 January 2018 in Brussels, Belgium at the EC Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) premises. The Steering Committee reviewed the implementation of the project and welcomed the progress on the implementation of IMAP in the Southern Mediterranean countries. At the same time the Committee acknowledged the additional integration needs between the different work-streams at the national level and the importance to deliver the IMAP compatible pilot information and data sharing system. The Project Steering Committee agreed to the no-cost extension of the project, until 30 June 2019. The MAP Coordinator, Mr. Gaetano Leone had two bilateral meetings on the side lines of the EcAp-MEDII Project Steering Committee, to follow-up on the outcomes of COP 20, with Director General Calleja and with the Head of the Marine Environment and Water Industry Unit, Mr. Matjaz Malgaj.

56. The Secretariat analyzed the Roadmap for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach vis-à-vis the adoption of the 2017 GES Decision under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the amendments of Annex III of the MSFD, taking into account the first six-year cycle in the implementation of the EU Directive.

Strategic Outcome 2.5: Enhanced capacity at regional, sub-regional and national levels including assistance and capacity building

57. MED POL has started the process to develop the CP1.1 “Reducing Pollution from Harmful Chemicals and Wastes in Mediterranean Hot Spots and Measuring Progress to Impacts” of the MedProgramme. MED POL carried out the baseline inventory and organized technical missions to Algeria, Lebanon and Tunisia with the aim to assess the PCB and mercury stocks for disposal. Further steps were done to develop new 2018 Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses.

58. In October/November 2017, representatives of MED POL participated in the Regional Workshop on “Improved and Harmonized POPs Inventories and Action Plan” organized by the Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for North Africa in Rabat, Morocco and established bilateral contacts in relation to potential activities of CP1.1 of MedProgramme, for Algeria, Egypt and Morocco, especially with respect to POPs /PCBs (Persistent Organic Pollutants/PolyChlorinated Biphenyls). SCP/RAC, in coordination with MED POL, is currently preparing the report on baseline scenario, baseline projects and alternative scenario on PCBs/POPs and mercury. International and national consultants have been hired to undertake inventories of PCBs/POPs in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia. In December 2017, a technical mission to Lebanon was undertaken by representatives of the Secretariat (MED POL) to discuss with Lebanese counterparts possible CP1.1 interventions and to visit potential sites for PCBs disposal/remediation. A technical mission to Algeria was organized in February 2018. A technical mission to Tunisia was organized in January 2018, where Tunisian counterparts expressed strong interest for partaking in CP1.1 activities – both national and regional ones.

59. The National Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) Response Training Course (Cairo, Egypt, 26-30 November 2017) financed by IMO Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) provided the required knowledge to facilitate the development of an HNS National Contingency Plan. The draft agenda, the draft annotated agenda and the time table of the Regional Workshop on response to spill incidents involving HNS (MEDEXPOL 2018) (Valletta, Malta, 20-21 June 2018) were prepared and disseminated to key partners for their review and were further discussed at the Inter-secretariat Meeting and the 5th session of the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response. REMPEC is progressing in the selection of consultancy services for the organization of national meetings to raise awareness on the need to better manage sea-based litter in ports and to provide ships using their ports with updated information relevant to the obligation arising from Annex V of MARPOL and from their legislation applicable in the field. The revision of the Guide for Risks of Gaseous releases resulting from Maritime Accidents in consultation with the Mediterranean Technical Working Group (MTWG) is progressing. The draft will be examined by the Regional Workshop on response to spill incidents involving HNS.

60. REMPEC is progressing in the identification of major ports and marinas for the implementation of pilots in relation to the provision of reception facilities in ports and the delivery of ship-generated wastes in marinas; of pilots to determine the application of charges at reasonable costs for the use of port reception facilities or, when applicable, application of No-Special-Fee system in major ports; and in the related procurement procedures for the selection of the relevant consultancy services.

61. In the framework of SwitchMed demonstration component, five pilot projects are being developed in areas such as tourism, agro-food, textile and organic waste. The final event of the tourism SCP pilot projects was organized at the end of 2017 in Tunisia and a publication is being prepared.

62. The SCP/RAC Publication on 25 innovative solutions to combat plastic marine litter is being widely disseminated and 2 pilot projects have been selected and initiated in Morocco, in the framework of SwitchMed: (i) Alternatives to single-use plastic bags: SCP/RAC promotes an action in Morocco to support the country in transitioning from single-use plastic bags to other environmentally friendly options. The action is based in two pillars that are implemented through two beneficiaries (Association Zero Zbel and Association du Docteur Fatiah); (ii) Collection and recycling of beverage containers: this pilot project starts with a study aiming to find out about the collection and recycling circuits of plastic bottles and aluminium cans in Morocco. The findings will serve to evaluate whether a second stage is feasible, which will consist in implementing a refund system for beverage containers using reverse vending machines in selected supermarkets.

63. The SCP/RAC Publication on 20 solutions to prevent the use of toxic chemicals is being finalized and pilot actions are under preparation. One in Morocco targeting the chemical substances DEHP and PVC in medical devices and one in Tunisia targeting lead in paint (SwitchMed Project).

Strategic Outcome 2.6: Enhanced cooperation at regional, sub-regional and national levels to prevent and control marine pollution

64. In order to strengthen cooperation between the Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions, the review of the 2005 MoU was initiated, taking into account the area of common interest that were identified during Marine Litter week held in November 2017 and communicated to the Executive Director, Mr. Erik Solheim, in December 2017.

Strategic Outcome 2.7: Identifying and tackling new and emerging issues, as appropriate

65. Following finalization of the revised Terms of Reference by the SOx ECA(s) Technical Committee of Experts, REMPEC launched a new Call for Formal Quotations for the provision of consultancy services for the preparation of a technical and feasibility study to examine the possibility of designating the Mediterranean Sea or parts thereof as SOx emission control area under MARPOL Annex VI. REMPEC is finalizing the draft generic questionnaire that will form the basis of a separate specific questionnaire for each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention. The Regional Workshop on Ratification and Effective Implementation of MARPOL Annex VI, which will be financed by the IMO's ITCP, is tentatively planned to be held in France (or Malta) from 13 to 15 November 2018.

II.3 Core Theme II: BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS

Strategic Outcome 3.1: Strengthening regional implementation of the obligations under the Barcelona Convention, and its relevant Protocols and other instruments

66. As per the 2018-2019 Programme of Work and Budget, SPA/RAC established, in close consultation with its Focal Points, the AGEM group, formed by 16 disciplinary experts and 4 representatives of relevant partner organizations scientific groups. The first face-to-face meeting of the AGEM took place in Tunis, Tunisia, on 22-23 February 2018. The meeting led to the work inception of the group of experts and to agree on its working programme during the trial period.

67. The drafting and peer-review of the full status report in relation to the updating of the MAPAMED dataset on MPA distribution in the Mediterranean is being finalized by SPA/RAC and MedPAN. The edition and dissemination of the full report in two languages (English and French) is expected by April 2018.

68. A GIS compilation was developed including features, biota, marine areas and pressures embracing ABNJ, reaching so far over 160 georeferenced layers. They are hosted on SPA/RAC databases and ready for inclusion in online map portals. A synthesis document on legal points to be aware of for the protection of BBNJ was also prepared.

Strategic Outcome 3.2: Development of new action plans, programmes and measures, common standards and criteria, guidelines for the conservation of Coastal and Marine biodiversity and ecosystems

69. SPA/RAC is elaborating a short practical guide on gap analysis and MPA system planning adapted to the Mediterranean context to be used by Mediterranean countries' planners and decision-makers and other stakeholders involved in MPA planning processes. This guide will be ready by April 2018 and will be made available in English and French.

70. REMPEC is preparing bilateral discussions with Montenegro and Morocco on the development of their respective National Ballast Water Management Strategies, as well as with Malta (and possibly Italy) on the pilot on mutually granted exemptions under the Ballast Water Management Convention. REMPEC was informed by IMO that, due to lack of interest expressed by Mediterranean coastal States to become Lead Partnering Countries or Partnering Countries of the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloFouling Partnerships, the Mediterranean region will not be one of the regions directly benefiting from the programme. However, as experience is gained and tools developed through the project, the Mediterranean

region will be associated to some of the awareness-raising activities to be carried out at a later stage.

71. The Interreg Med ACT4LITTER project (Joint measures to preserve natural ecosystems from marine litter in Mediterranean MPAs) the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting took place at the beginning of February 2018. Measures to prevent Marine Litter in MPAs have been identified and specific action plans are being developed with 9 voluntary pilot MPAs (Kornati National Park (Croatia), Miramare MPA and the MAB-UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Miramare and coast of Trieste (Italy), MPA of Torre Guaceto (Italy), MPA Torre del Cerrano (Italy), Axios – Loudias - Aliakmonas Delta National Park (Greece), Ebro Delta Nature Park (Spain), MPA Cala Ratjada – Balearic Islands (Spain), Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park/UNESCO Global Geopark – Andalusia (Spain), Strunjan Landscape Park (Slovenia)).

Strategic Outcome 3.3: Strengthening national implementation of biodiversity conservation policies, strategies and legislation measures

72. An ecological characterization of three ecologically important sites in Lebanon: Batroun, Medfoun and Byblos, has been carried out, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon, the National Council for Scientific Research of Beirut, the University of Alicante (Spain) and IUCN-ROWA. The results of this survey have been presented, and follow-up actions have been discussed during a national workshop held in Beirut on 16 January 2018. The final report of the ecological characterization is under finalization.

73. The process for the elaboration of a management plan for the Jbel Moussa site in Morocco has started in November 2016 towards the creation of a formal MPA. The draft management plan is being finalized to be presented by the end of June 2018. Furthermore, the process for the elaboration of a management plan for the North-Eastern part of the Kerkennah Islands in Tunisia has started in May 2017. A field survey of the marine part of the Sallum MPA was undertaken by the end of November 2017 and the report of the survey is under finalization.

74. The implementation of the MAVA funded project "Understanding Mediterranean multi-taxa 'bycatch' of vulnerable species and testing mitigation - a collaborative approach" started at the end of 2017. A first face-to-face meeting of the project Steering Committee was held in the GFCM headquarters, in Rome, Italy (1 February 2018) and a common roadmap for all partner was elaborated (SPA/RAC, GFCM, BirdLife, ACCOBAMS, IUCN Med and MEDASSET). According to that roadmap a first coordination meeting was held in Tunisia in 21 February 2018 to start national implementation of the project.

75. In the framework of the CAMP Var (France) programme, SPA/RAC collaborated with the Conservatoire du littoral, PAP/RAC and other partners in the elaboration of three short films (in English and French) highlighting the good management practices acquired through the "Archipel d'excellence" initiative and implemented in the Var region. SPA/RAC contributed in early 2018 in the preparation of Arabic subtitled versions of the three films, in view of a wider dissemination of the CAMP project achievements among in the region.

Strategic Outcome 3.4: Monitoring, inventory and assessment of biodiversity with focus on endangered and threatened species, non-indigenous species and key habitats

76. SPA/RAC is supporting, within the EcAp-MEDII project, the southern Mediterranean countries to update their national monitoring programme following the IMAP recommendations. Concerned countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) elaborated their respective drafts of monitoring programme related to biodiversity and NIS. These drafts are validated through national workshops implying stakeholders and institutions involved in biodiversity monitoring in order to agree on the potential sites as well as the list of species, habitats and invasive NIS that will be considered in the short and medium terms of the IMAP implementation.

77. Within the framework of the implementation of regional action plans for the conservation of threatened and endangered species SPA/RAC has carried out the following activities:

- The monitoring of Marine turtles known nesting areas in Tunisia and Libya and exploration of new nesting areas (activities supported by MAVA foundation with the Marine turtles project);
- Elaboration of National Action Plan for the conservation of the cartilaginous fish in Turkey;

- Elaboration of the National Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles in Egypt, adopted during a national workshop held in Cairo on 12th October 2017. The implementation of the ACCOBAMS-GFCM Project on mitigating interaction between endangered marine species and fishing activities, SPA/RAC, as partner to this project, is coordinating the achievement of pilot actions on “Purse seine small pelagic fisheries in Kelibia” and “Bottom and surface longline fisheries in the Gulf of Gabès” as well as the promotion of Pesca tourism activity in Tunisia;
- Development of project proposal on the impact of the bycatch on cartilaginous fishes in the Levantine basin.

78. In early January 2018, a new joint programme has been defined between SPA/RAC and the ACCOBAMS secretariat with respect to the organization of the following events:

- Training component for the implementation of the “ACCOBAMS survey Initiative”;
- Two workshops during the 32th European Cetacean Society (6-10 April 2018);
- Regional workshops related to the definition of the national priorities for the conservation of cetaceans (7-10 May 2018);
- Workshop on the use of the relevant Mediterranean and global databases by SPA/RAC and ACCOBAMS Partners (October 2018).

79. SPA/RAC is assisting Egypt to develop its NAPs for the conservation of marine vegetation and the species introduction and invasive species. Support was also offered to Cyprus, Lebanon and Libya for the elaboration of their NAPs concerning species introduction and invasive species. Discussions are under way to support Israel to develop its NAP concerning species introduction and invasive species.

80. SPA/RAC is contributing in the organization of the first workshop addressing marine invasive species management in Mediterranean MPAs with IUCN-Med in collaboration with ENALIA Physis Environmental Research Centre. This meeting will take place in Cyprus, close to Cape Greco MPA, on 23-27 April 2018.

81. In the framework of the MedKeyHabitats project, SPA/RAC continued the implementation of the activities planned for the Project objective 1, concerning the inventory and mapping of marine key habitats in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Montenegro. The report of the activities can be found on the website of SPA/RAC at <http://rac-spa.org/publications#enmedkey>. The maps produced have been uploaded to the MBP and can be found at <http://data.medchm.net>.

82. SPA/RAC, OCEANA and IUCN have prepared a draft report “Deep-sea Lebanon Expedition: Exploring Submarine Canyons” within the implementation of the Deep-Sea Lebanon Project “Towards Deep-Sea Conservation in Lebanon”. In total, 619 species were recorded within six broad habitat types and various associated communities. The process for the elaboration of a management plan for marine sites suitable to be declared as deep-sea marine protected areas (MPA) in Lebanon is expected to start in April 2018.

83. Within the framework of the implementation of the Kuriat project, SPA/RAC is carrying out the following activities:

- The monitoring of Marine turtles during the nesting periods in Kuriat Island;
- The monitoring of bird species listed in SPA/BD Protocol Annex II in Kuriat Island;
- The monitoring of fishing activities in Kuriat Island.

Strategic Outcome 3.5: Technical assistance and capacity building at regional, sub-regional and national levels to strengthen policy implementation and compliance with biodiversity -related national legislation

84. SPA/RAC has supported the organization of a sub-regional training on the water bird census (19-30 January 2018). Furthermore, SPA/RAC is collaborating with INSTM (National Institute for Marine Sciences and Technologies, Tunisia) and the NGO ASCO-Syrtis, for the organization of sub-regional training session on the identification of the main cartilaginous fishes, impacted by fishing activities. For that purpose, a training manual will be prepared.

85. SPA/RAC is carrying out a long-term evaluation of its training programmes provided to MPA

practitioners and marine conservationists since 2010. The detailed recommendations that will result from this review will be considered to improve SPA/RAC capacity-building planning and delivery approach and techniques and increase its effectiveness. The report of this assessment will be available in March 2018.

86. SPA/RAC launched the organization of the Marine Key Habitats (marine vegetation, coralligenous and calcareous bio-concretions and dark habitats) and Non-Indigenous Species symposia in the Mediterranean. It will be organized in Antalya, Turkey, from 14-18 January 2019, with the support of the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urbanization. Several relevant Regional organizations are contacted to join the organization committee of this important event such as GFCM and IUCN-Med. The first announcement is planned to be disseminated by the beginning of March 2018.

Strategic Outcome 3.6: Enhanced cooperation at regional, sub-regional and national levels to protect and conserve biodiversity and ecosystems

87. SPA/RAC is discussing with relevant Partners, GFCM, ACCOBAMs and IUCN, joint action opportunities fully in line with their existing mandates, leading the preparation and launching of a project, funded by MAVA Foundation, focused on the transversal issue biodiversity conservation –ecosystem approach to fisheries in the following areas: Alboran Sea, Sicily channel-Tunisian Plateau and South Aegean-Northeast Levantine Sea. The project includes three beneficiary countries for pilot field and training activities; i.e. Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. The project will focus on interactions among fisheries and vulnerable species, listed in Annex II, in those areas. It is aimed to identify possible bycatch mitigation measures to be taken there.

88. The Secretariat (Coordinating Unit with SPA/RAC and other MAP Components) are contributing to the preparatory work for the Fish Forum 2018, organized by GFCM (Rome, Italy, 10-14 December 2018).

89. SPA/RAC is actively contributing to CBD preparatory work for the November 2018 COP 14 in Egypt, including involvement in CBD Working Groups preparation and review of future SBSTTA documents (EBSAs follow up, MPAs and OECMs).

Strategic Outcome 3.7: Identifying and tackling with new and emerging issues, as appropriate

90. CBD Secretariat, GFCM and UNEP/MAP are following and contributing to the process for the development of the international legally binding instrument on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), which is expected to improve coherence to better support conservation and sustainable use of BBNJ, by establishing standards for environmental impact assessments, MPAs and marine technology transfer, while preserving the rights and obligation guaranteed by the UNCLOS.

II.4 Core Theme III: LAND AND SEA INTERACTIONS AND PROCESSES

Strategic Outcome 4.1: Strengthening regional implementation of the obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocol, and of programmes of measures in the existing Regional Strategies and Action Plans

91. PAP/RAC continued providing assistance to the Contracting Parties with regards to the ratification and implementation of the ICZM Protocol. Following the visit of the parliamentarians and representatives of national authorities from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, many clarifications, explanations and documents were provided to speed-up the ratification process in Tunisia led by the Ministry of Environment with the support of UNDP office in that country.

Strategic Outcome 4.2: Development of new action plans, programmes of measures, common standards and criteria, guidelines

92. The SIMWESTMED project partners met in Marseille, France, on 13-14 February 2018, to review the progress of project activities. The discussions helped the French, Spanish, Italian and Maltese country representatives to step forward on different major topics. The key steps were agreed to allow for the final drafting of the key reports, with PAP/RAC in a leading role on “MSP within the Barcelona Convention”, “ICZM and MSP integration”, “Land-sea interactions”, stakeholders engagement, etc. The

debate helped also to finetune the role of each partner in the implementation of actions at the level of pilot projects. PAP/RAC is leading two cases: the Var County and the Tyrrhenian case.

Strategic Outcome 4.3: Strengthening national implementation

93. A Draft Feasibility Study for a CAMP project in Bosnia and Herzegovina was prepared by a consultant contracted by PAP/RAC and submitted to national authorities for consideration. A working meeting with the national and local authorities was organized in Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 13 February 2018. In addition to presentation of the Feasibility Study, the meeting participants discussed the proposed CAMP activities which would help the country in the implementation, at the national level, of decisions and obligations from the Barcelona Convention (i.e. IMAp, EcAp indicators to achieve the GES of the area), as well as the ICZM priorities, at the local level. The Feasibility Study will be finalized in March 2018 when the second meeting is going to be organized to confirm the list of CAMP activities, as well as to ensure preconditions for the signature of the MoU for the CAMP implementation between UNEP/MAP and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Strategic Outcome 4.4: Monitoring and assessment

94. Validation of the methodology and data of the coastal risk index for the whole areas of the Mediterranean riparian countries allowed to identify hotspots in which further studies will be implemented, in particular in the area of the RAMOGE agreement (MoU signed in late 2017)

95. In the framework of preparation of the chapter on the marine and coastal issues of SoED 2019, Plan Bleu organized a workshop "Which major marine and coastal issues in the Mediterranean region? Data and trends" in Marseille, France, on 12-13 December 2017.

Strategic Outcome 4.5: Enhanced capacity at regional, sub-regional and national levels including technical assistance and capacity building

96. During a two-day meeting of the Sub-regional expert group on Coast and Hydrography of the EcAp Med II project, held in Zagreb, Croatia, on 6-7 December 2017, representatives from the partner countries, national experts, the PAP/RAC team and consultants, discussed the way towards the future implementation of the national monitoring programmes developed within the EcAp Med II project. Other synergies with the BC system and EU initiatives have been discussed, to support the implementation of the Coast and Hydrography indicators, especially in the framework of the upcoming MedProgramme.

II.5 Cross-cutting Theme I: INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT (ICZM)

Strategic Outcome 5.1: Strengthening regional implementation of the obligations under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and of programmes of measures in existing Regional Strategies and Action Plans

97. Following the adoption of Decision IG.23/7 adopted by COP 20, the process is ongoing in establishing the Open-ended Working Group of Experts with the mandate to finalize the Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Strategic Outcome 5.5: Enhanced capacity at regional, sub-regional and national levels including technical assistance and capacity building

98. The English and French versions of the MedOpen on-line training course were updated with new material. Preparatory activities were undertaken for launching the run of MedOpen Advanced in French intended for the students of the Algerian High School of the Science of Sea and Coast, which will start mid-March 2018 for a duration of four months. A MoU was drafted to include MedOpen Advanced in the academic curriculum, to be signed between PAP/RAC and the Algerian High School.

Strategic Outcome 5.6: Enhanced cooperation at regional, sub-regional and national levels

99. The ICZM Platform was designed as a major tool to support the implementation of ICZM in the Mediterranean, with the objective to: facilitate dialogue and networking; provide forum for knowledge and capacity development in the field of ICZM; enhance awareness on coastal issues. It will be included in the re-designed PAP/RAC web site to be launched by the end of March 2018.

100. PAP/RAC has provided support to the CPs with the creation and functioning of national and sub-national coordination mechanisms for the implementation of ICZM, such as: the Inter-sectoral Committee for ICZM of the Šibenik-Knin County of Croatia, established with the adoption of the ICZM Plan by the County Council in 2016; the Montenegrin National Council for sustainable development, climate change and ICZM, chaired by the President of Montenegro; the Interministerial Commission established for the preparation and implementation of the Croatian “Marine and coastal strategy”, responding to the requirements of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the ICZM Protocol. Consultations were also held with the Egypt and Lebanon, who are interested in establishing such bodies, possibly with the support of the GEF MedProgramme.

II.6 Cross-cutting Theme II: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (SCP)

Strategic Outcome 6.3: Enhanced capacity at regional, sub-regional and national levels including technical assistance and capacity building

101. “Green Start-ups Meet Investors ” Events have been organized in order to connect Green Entrepreneurs with Local Investors in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia. Furthermore, an Access to Finance Guide for Green Entrepreneurs is being developed.

102. Regarding the National Synergy workshops for the promotion of Green Entrepreneurship and Grassroots Eco-innovation in eight countries, the final versions of the White Papers from the National Workshops are available for Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan and Tunisia. The Synergy Workshop in Algeria has been organized in December 2017, gathering 150 stakeholders and has counted on the presence of the Minister of the Environment and Renewable Energies. The Synergy Workshop in Israel has been also organized in December 2017 with more than 100 stakeholders. The preparation of the Synergy Workshops in Palestine and Egypt is ongoing.

Strategic Outcome 6.4: Enhanced cooperation at regional, sub-regional and national levels to prevent and control marine pollution

103. Actions and studies for scaling-up tools for green industries and green entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean have been launched. An initial analysis i.e. a benchmarking exercise was done reviewing the services of 19 entrepreneurship support programmes.

104. SCP/RAC developed the Switchers Fund (<http://www.theswitchersfund.eu/en/>) in partnership with the European Federation of Ethical and Alternative Banks and Financiers (FEBEA) to support the growth of innovative green businesses in the Mediterranean. The Switchers Fund wants to bring seed finance directly to green entrepreneurs, through a mix of grants, loans and equity participations, as a way of strengthening their start-up projects and a stepping-stone towards raising additional funds in their countries. As the first activity of the Fund, a call for grants for the young Green Entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean was released. This grant is considered as a flagship project of the Italian Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The 6 winners, out of 240 applications, will be announced in March 2018.

105. As the Mediterranean SCP Hub, the SwitchMed website is being managed and systematically updated with relevant news and information on SCP actions (SwitchMed web-platform at average 2,700 visits/month and 153,296 annual page views).

106. The identification and selection of new Switchers has continued. To date, a total of circa 300 Switchers have been selected and more than 200 have already been uploaded on The Switchers, the web platform showcasing stories from Mediterranean champions offering eco- and social innovative solutions (www.theswitchers.eu).

107. With the aim of harvesting lessons learned for replicating demos, contributing to long-term sustainability of SwitchMed activities and making programme impact visible, the following results were achieved:

- Key leverage points, interventions, partnerships, sources of financing being identified and initiated for long-term sustainability and replication of the demo components’ actions;

- Resource Efficiency in Manufacturing SMEs Scaling Up Studies (Scaling Up Framework Published, Israel, Lebanon, Tunisia and Palestine roadmaps finalised, other 4 countries final draft);
- The Green Entrepreneurship Programme Scaling Up Study (Benchmarking Study done reviewing the services of 50+ entrepreneurship support programmes);
- SwitchMed Green Entrepreneurship impact/results based monitoring framework developed;
- SwitchMed impact communications framework and strategy developed, while impact briefs and videos in development.

II.7 Cross-cutting Theme III: CLIMATE CHANGE

Strategic Outcome 7.1: Strengthening the regional implementation of the obligations under the BC and its Protocols, and of programmes of measures in existing Regional Strategies and Action Plans

108. Back to back with the 2nd Consultation Meeting of the GEF MedProgramme, an Information meeting for the project “Enhancing regional climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean marine and coastal areas”, was held in Rabat, Morocco, on 13-14 December 2017. The GEF Operational National Focal Points from 6 project countries were invited to attend the meeting. The partners presented the methodologies for the activities proposed for implementation in the framework of the project, as well as the results of similar activities implemented in the framework of the ClimVar & ICZM Project. Countries provided valuable feedback, confirming the appropriateness of the methodologies presented and a strong and high-quality collaboration with the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components.