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Fourth Steering Committee Meeting of the Plan of Action for a model Mediterranean Sea (PAMEx) by 2030 and its Local Investment Finance Facility (PLIFF)

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Agenda item 4: PAMEx Programme of Work for 2025

PAMEx Programme of Work for 2025

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This document presents the actions planned as part of the PAMEx initiative for the year 2025 that will be discussed during 4th Steering Committee Meeting of the Plan of Action for a model Mediterranean Sea (PAMEx) by 2030 and its Local Investment Finance Facility (PLIFF). These activities are structured around the priority areas of intervention of the PAMEx initiative and are based on discussions from previous Steering Committee meetings and suggestions from Axis leaders received in writing prior to the meeting.

a) Actions planned under Axis 1: Raise the ambition for the preservation of marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean

a.1) Contributing to the achievement of the 30x30 target in the Mediterranean

Explore how to practically support the achievement of the 30x30 target in the Mediterranean, and in particular how to support countries with MPAs covering less than 2% of territorial waters. This issue was highlighted during the 3rd PAMEx Steering Committee by several countries and partners.

→ Organise an online Workshop with the support of PAMEx Technical Secretariat to exchange successful approaches between interested countries on how to set up MPAs within territorial waters, how to enhance the level of protection in practice including through modern state-of-the-art technological surveillance systems, how to ensure patrolling and synergies with efforts/actions to promote sustainable fisheries, etc.

a.2) Support to the Bardawil Lake and Bouches de Bonifacio projects

In view of UNOC-3, BC-COP 24 and CC-COP 30, promote PLIFF projects developed to protect and restore the Bardawil Lake, located in the North Sinai region in Egypt and reinforce and enlarge the Maritime Protected Area of the “Bouches de Bonifacio” in Corsica (France), which has been labelled by SPA/RAC as an ASPIM (Area of special importance for the Mediterranean). The projects were presented by PLIFF at the 3rd PAMEx Steering Committee. A blue bond approach is being tested, which would attract innovative public and private investors. Those two projects situated in South and North ridges of the Mediterranean should serve as examples for scaling up and replication all around the Mediterranean aiming at mobilizing very substantial funds.

→ PAMEx Technical Secretariat to work with volunteer countries and PLIFF on developing further both projects and showcasing results in regional/international events, including UNOC-3.

b) Actions planned under Axis 2: Promote and develop sustainable fishing to end overfishing by 2030

PAMEx needs to resume discussions with CGPM and the EU to identify a leader for the axis and then to define priorities actions for 2025.

c) Actions planned under Axis 3: Redouble efforts to combat marine pollution, particularly so that no plastic is discharged into the Mediterranean by 2030

c.1) Promoting the exchange of information on plastic pollution management in the Mediterranean

Set up a platform for the exchange of information, experience and best practices between the PAMEx Members in achieving the goals of the International Legally Binding Instrument (ILBI) on Plastic Pollution to be established, with emphasis on aspects with a particular interest/relevance for the Mediterranean, including Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes and application of the Polluter-Pays Principle (PPP), clean-up operations, specific measures on fishing gear, etc. Further to

that, emphasis could also be given on the contribution of Mediterranean experience in the implementation of the ILBI once adopted.

Building upon the work of the Task force that was set up by the UNEP/MAP Secretariat in view of INC 2, and under the leadership of volunteer countries, follow the ongoing preparatory discussions for the forthcoming INC 5.2 Meeting (Geneva, 4-15 August 2025), and coordinate, to the extent possible, PAMEx members in promoting the Mediterranean approach regarding plastic pollution and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP).

→ PAMEx Technical Secretariat to help in setting up and operating a platform aiming at following the ongoing preparatory discussions for INC 5.2 and coordinating PAMEx members on promoting the Mediterranean paradigm during INC 5.2.

c.2) Scaling up Zero Plastic Projects on the ground over the Mediterranean

Plastic gyres are increasing in the Mediterranean Sea, pouring out most degraded plastic on different Mediterranean seashores. While ineffective practices of waste management are spread on different Mediterranean coastlines, the collection and recycling of maritime plastic, through public-private partnerships and new value chains, can lead to pro-poor jobs creation, cleaning tourist beaches and areas and provide specific recycled maritime plastic to a number of manufacturing companies as raw material, from the sport equipment industry to the luxury equipment industry.

PLIFF thanks to the successful CIHEAM/Seagull pilot project on the Kerkenah Island in Tunisia aims at replicating the project in ten other territories in Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and Lebanon.

→ PAMEx Technical Secretariat with volunteer countries to provide assistance to the duplication of the CIHEAM/Seagull project in other countries targeting the collection and recycling of maritime plastics.

d) Actions planned under Axis 4: Promote maritime transport practices which protect the marine environment and combat climate change

d.1) Promote maritime transport practices which protect the marine environment and combat climate change

Support to countries with a view of the ratification and effective implementation and enforcement of **MARPOL Annex VI**

- To contribute to REMPEC efforts to enhance the effective implementation and enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI;
- Support is provided to ensure further ratification of MARPOL Annex VI by all Contracting Parties;
- Support provided to those Contracting Parties that require the effective implementation and enforcement of MARPOL Annex VI;
- Support provided to Contracting Parties on the possible designation of the Mediterranean Sea as a Nitrogen Oxides Emission Control Area.

Mobilise and implement innovative solutions **to reduce GHG emissions from ships in selected ports**, including through energy efficiency and decarbonisation.

- Improve the institutional capacity of CPs to implement and enforce IMO's energy efficiency measure from ships and in ports;
- Capacity building activities on low carbon shipping and clean ports;
- Support activities to encourage technology cooperation, innovation, exchange of best practices;
- Encourage partnerships and synergies with MAP Partners and stakeholders

→ PAMEx Technical Secretariat, within available resources, to support volunteer countries to participate to REMPEC efforts to enhance the implementation of Annex 6 of MARPOL Convention and assist countries to reduce GHG emissions from ships in selected ports.

d.2) Assisting PLIFF in developing its portfolio on Sustainable Green Ports

The PLIFF portfolio on Sustainable Green Ports, which has been identified over the last two years all around the Mediterranean, is covering both the South and North shoreline. This portfolio aims at equipping ports with electric plugs thus permitting boats getting into ports to switch off their engines, enabling a dramatic fall down of ports pollution. In parallel, renewable energy off grid will be installed, within ports, allowing fueling green power to boats.

→ PAMEx Technical Secretariat with the support of volunteer countries to support the implementation of the PLIFF portfolio on Sustainable Ports.

e) Cross-cutting activities

e.1) Promoting the experience of the Barcelona Convention in a wider context

In 2024, under the G7 Italian Presidency, a workshop on the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans was organized which involved G7 Countries, Regional Seas Programmes to which G7 Countries are party and a number of stakeholders from intergovernmental mechanisms, civil society, and industry.

The objective is to build on the results of the G7 workshop to highlight the unique experience of the Mediterranean in this respect and to advocate for stronger role of Regional Sea Programmes to address ocean sustainability at UNOC-3 and other international and regional arenas.

→ PAMEx Technical Secretariat to help countries willing to promote Regional Seas Programme as an efficient policy tool to ensure ocean sustainability.

e.2) Developing capacity building activities on blue finance in the Mediterranean

Developing capacity-building activities for local actors enabling them to identify projects and making sure they are both impactful and bankable with better access to the variety of financing available, including green and blue bonds for the Mediterranean.

Currently, PAMEx is helping PLIFF to raise between 1,5 to 2,5 M euros for feasibility studies for the PLIFF portfolio of projects worthy around 200 MUSD in order to permit unleashing investors willing to invest in impact bankable projects.

→ As part of the PLIFF Road Map 2025, to organize a workshop on Blue Finance and Blue Bonds in the Mediterranean. PAMEx Technical Secretariat to help PLIFF in organizing the event with the support of voluntary countries.

e.3) Providing continuing support to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development process

The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025 provides an integrative policy framework for all stakeholders, including MAP partners, to translate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the regional, sub-regional, national and local levels in the Mediterranean region. As a strategic document, the MSSD serves to:

- adapt international commitments to regional conditions;
- guide national strategies and stimulate regional cooperation in the achievement of sustainable development objectives.

The revision process of the 2016-2025 Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) is foreseen by its Action 7.2.5 “Review the 2016-2025 MSSD issuing a new Strategy for the period 2026-2035”.

The 20th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) of 14-16 June 2023 (Marseille, France) welcomed the proposal to launch, in the biennium 2024-2025, an update of the 2016-2025 MSSD that would lead to its alignment with relevant and recent global and regional agendas and commitments, rather than to extensive changes, thus confirming the consistency of the current MSSD six Objectives, while further supporting the delivery of the SDGs in the Region.

The 23rd meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP23) of 5- 8 December 2023, Portoroz, Slovenia, mandated the Secretariat to update the 2016-2025 Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) in order to effectively implement the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development and its SDGs at the regional level, seeking to amend current unsustainable trajectories and place the region on alternative pathways to sustainability and resilience, thus accelerating the progress towards achieving Good Environmental Status.

The process has been led by the MCSD Steering Committee (SC) with the support from the UNEP/MAP Secretariat and MAP Components.

Since its re-establishment (December 2024), the PAMEx Technical Secretariat has provided its support to the revision process of the MSSD, notably by participating in two meetings (the Meeting of the Extended Steering Committee of the MCSD on 20 December 2024 and the Thematic Ad-Hoc Meeting of the MCSD in Istanbul on 12-13 February 2025).

→ PAMEx through its Technical Secretariat to continue supporting the elaboration and finalization of the revised MSSD 2026-2035 until its endorsement by the MCSD in June 2025.

f) Contribution to the preparations for the forthcoming UNOC-3 (Nice, 9-13.6.2025)

The Third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) will be convened in Nice, France, from Monday 9 June to Friday 13 June, 2025. The Governments of France and Costa Rica will co-chair the Conference, which aims to generate transformative action and provide solutions the ocean needs, supported by ocean science and funding for SDG 14 (life below water). <https://unocnice2025.org/en/>
The PAMEx Technical Secretariat has been associated with the preparation of the Mediterranean Day (June 10, 2025), where 4 sessions are currently programmed:

- Segment 1: Asserting the role of local authorities in preserving the ocean;
- Segment 2: Finance and Innovation as accelerator for Sustainable Blue Economy;
- Segment 3: Envisioning the Mediterranean of the Future;
- Segment 4: Ministerial Panel on the Barcelona Convention 50th Anniversary (UNEP/MAP Panels).

UNEP/MAP for its part will celebrate the 50 years of Mediterranean Action Plan and the 30 years of the Barcelona Convention during the Mediterranean Day and it is expected to organise a Ministerial Round Table (1h30 to 2 hours), preferably in the Blue zone (reserved to governments and accredited organizations) with potentially the participation of UNEP Executive Director) and a final declaration including ambitious commitments as appropriate.

In addition, the Green Zone, called La Baleine (the Whale), an open exhibition space welcoming civil society, academia, research institutions, artists, and businesses, will be installed in Nice's Palexpo. The plan is that The Whale includes a number of pavilions by different organizations, auditoria, and other spaces for agora and other meetings and consultations, as well as thematic and institutional spaces such as the Day of the Mediterranean on 10 June.

There are good opportunities to propose side events to showcase the experience of the Mediterranean as a successful regional sea programme and examples of fruitful cooperation between riparian countries and other regional partners as well as concrete achievements on the field.

Applications for side event proposals are open (<https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/ocean2025/side-events>) and the instructions can be found as follows:

- To apply for an in-person side event inside the Conference Venue (Blue Zone):
<https://bit.ly/UNOC3BlueZoneSideEventForm>
Deadline: 14 March 2025.
- To apply for an off-site side event at alternative locations in Nice:
<https://bit.ly/UNOC3OffSiteSideEventForm>
Deadline: 21 April 2025.
- To apply for a virtual side event: <https://bit.ly/UNOC3VirtualSideEventForm>
Deadline: 21 April 2025.

As requested by the 3rd PAMEx Steering Committee Meeting, the Technical Secretariat of PAMEx will coordinate under the leadership of countries and partners the work of preparing a side event or a concept note in line with the envisioned outcomes of the Mediterranean Day, for this major international event.

g) PAMEx Communication activities

The goals of the proposed communication activities are to foster cooperation among partner countries and regional organizations for PAMEx timely implementation and to maximize the visibility of the PAMEx initiative at the global and regional levels, while positioning the Mediterranean as a model regional sea worldwide.

In that respect, several international and regional events have been identified which are of interest for PAMEx members and where communication activities, either side events, position papers or other communication initiatives, could be proposed under the leadership of countries and partners and the support of the Technical Secretariat of PAMEx. These include:

- The Third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC-3), Nice, 9 - 13 June 2025 (see above).
- The meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), June 2025 (venue to be confirmed).
- The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New-York, 14-23 July 2025.
- The second part of the fifth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC 5.2) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, Geneva, 4-15 August 2025.
- The UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 30), Belém, 10-21 November 2025.
- The Conference of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention, Egypt, December 2025.

Other international and regional events such as the Blue Economy and Finance Forum (BEFF) (Monaco, 7-8 June 2025) could provide additional opportunity for the PAMEx members to develop targeted and timely communication activities.