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Teleconference, 3-4 June 2021

Agenda item 5. Progress on the implementation of Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan

Progress on the Implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan

Corrigendum

1. Paragraph 13

After This Plan insert covering the time horizon period of 2022-2024

2. Paragraph 15

Delete paragraph

Draft

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2021



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Athens, 2021

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan in the framework of the 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, hereinafter referred to as the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, was adopted by the Contracting Parties in their 19th Ordinary Meeting (COP 19, Athens, Greece, February 2016, Decision IG.22/3), with the overall objective of “*defining measures which, if applied at regional level and by each Contracting Party within their jurisdiction will ensure the safety of offshore activities and reduce their potential impact on the marine environment and its ecosystem*”.
2. The Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan provides for the achievement of 10 specific objectives, structured around four main components, namely (i) Governance Framework; (ii) Regional Offshore Standards and Guidelines; (iii) Monitoring and (iv) Reporting. The timeline of its implementation is 2016 to 2024.
3. The present document is composed of three sections: a) a short introductory overview of the key trends in oil and gas activities in the Mediterranean Sea providing the background context for the subsequent two sections; b) update on the status of implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan; and c) proposal for a way forward for the further implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan.
4. The analysis in section b) provides an update of the information on the status of implementation, taking stock of the progress achieved in the last two years since the 2nd OFOG meeting that was held in 2019. This update was based on information available at the Secretariat and on the National Implementation Reports submitted by the Contracting Parties through the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS) for the last two biennia (2016-2017; 2018-2019). The systematic assessment of each specific objective clearly highlights the achievements as well as challenges faced in the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan.
5. The present document makes reference to the Comprehensive Plan of Actions, including a resource mobilization strategy (EP/MED WG.498/6). This second working document provides more details on possible ways forward to achieve a more sustainable process for the implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan and addresses the identified challenges and needs for supporting the Contracting Parties.

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List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

BAT	Best Available Techniques
BEP	Best Environmental Practices
BCRS	Barcelona Convention Reporting System
COP	Meeting of the Contracting Parties
CP	Contracting Party
CRF	Common Regional Framework
CU	Coordinating Unit
EcAp	Ecosystem Approach
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
HSE	Health, Safety and Environment
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
IMAP	Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme
IMO	International Maritime Organization
Info/RAC	Information and Communication Regional Activity Centre
IOGP	International Association of Oil and Gas Producers
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MEDPOL	Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean
MTF	Mediterranean Trust Fund
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OPEP	Oil Pollution Prevention Emergency Plan
OPRC	International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation
OSCP	Oil Spills Contingency Plan
OFOG	Barcelona Convention Offshore Oil and Gas Group
PAP/RAC	Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity Centre
PoW	Programme of Work
PPR	Pollution Prevention and Response
R&D	Research and Development
REMPEC	Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPA	Specially Protected Area
SPA/RAC	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

1. Introduction

1. The Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan provides for the achievement of 10 specific objectives, structured around four main components, namely (i) Governance Framework; (ii) Regional Offshore Standards and Guidelines; (iii) Monitoring and (iv) Reporting. The timeline of its implementation is 2016 to 2024.

2. The present document is composed of three parts: a) a short introductory overview of the key trends in oil and gas activities in the Mediterranean Sea providing the background context for the subsequent two sections; b) update on the status of implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan; and c) proposal for a way forward for the further implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan.

2. Overview of the oil and gas activities in the Mediterranean Sea

3. A recent study commissioned by REMPEC (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.4) provides a comprehensive analysis of the trends and outlook of marine pollution from ships and activities, and of maritime traffic and offshore activities in the Mediterranean, including offshore oil and gas activities.

4. Oil and gas production in the Mediterranean basin currently takes place in four major areas: (i) the Southern Levantine Sea where Egyptian and Israeli offshore production occurs (mainly gas), (ii) the Channel of Sicily (Italian and Tunisian activities), (iii) the Gulf of Gabes (Tunisia) and the neighbouring Libyan marine area, and (iv) the northern Adriatic, where most of the Italian offshore gas activities are concentrated and where Croatian gas production is located. Other areas include Greek offshore oil and gas activities in the marine area facing Kavala in the northern Aegean, and Spanish offshore oil production in the fields offshore of Tarragona. Concession contracts have been signed for drilling in the waters of Montenegro in 2016 with drilling which began in March 2021¹ scheduled to begin in February 2021. A total of 323 oil and gas fields are found in the Mediterranean Sea. An overview of the number of oil and gas fields per country is presented in Annex I.

5. Since the 1990s, an overall decreasing trend has been observed in oil production in the Mediterranean including marked variability after 2001, as compared to the substantially stable global trend since 2001. Today, the main offshore oil producers in the Mediterranean are Egypt and Libya, whereas Italy, Tunisia, Greece and Spain are characterized by a decreasing trend in oil production.

6. Compared to the offshore oil production, the Mediterranean Sea plays a more significant role in gas production at the global level, with the trend in offshore gas production showing a clear and marked increase since the 1980s. Egypt is the main offshore gas producer in the Mediterranean (majority of fields located in front of the Northern coast of the country), historically followed by Italy. In recent years, the Italian production of offshore natural gas decreased significantly, while the production of Israel has greatly increased, in particular owing to the discovery of, and production in the rich Leviathan gas field. In the coming years, other Eastern Mediterranean countries are expected to enter the offshore gas market as producers. More information on the trends in the Mediterranean offshore oil and gas production can be found in Annex I.

3. Status of implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan

7. The update of the status of implementation of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan is based on information available at the Secretariat and on the National Implementation Reports submitted by the Contracting Parties through the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS) for the last two biennia (2016-2017; 2018-2019) shown in Table 1.

¹ <https://www.offshore-energy.biz/eni-and-novatek-kicking-off-drilling-ops-off-montenegro/>

Table 1 Overview of the national reporting on the Offshore Protocol

Contracting Party	Reporting on Offshore Protocol on BCRS		
	2016-2017	2018-2019	Status 2018-2019 Draft/Complete (as per 27 March)
Albania* [#]	Y		
Algeria	No envelope		
Bosnia Herzegovina	Y	Y	C
Croatia* [#]	Y	Y	D (redeliver or finish)
Cyprus* [#]	Y	Y	C
Egypt [#]	Empty envelope		
European Community*	Y	Y	C
France	Empty envelope		
Greece [#]	Y	Y	D
Israel [#]	Y	Y	C
Italy [#]	Y	Y	C
Lebanon [#]	Empty envelope	(Y)	D (empty)
Libya* [#]	No envelope		
Malta	Empty envelope		
Monaco	Empty envelope		
Montenegro	Y	Y	C
Morocco*	Y	Y	D (Tasks waiting to be assigned)
Slovenia	Empty envelope		
Spain [#]	Y		
Syria*	Empty envelope		
Tunisia* [#]	No envelope		
Turkey	Incomplete		

* Contracting Parties that have ratified the Offshore Protocol

Contracting Parties exerting oil and gas activities in the Mediterranean Sea (see Annex I)

Source: <https://idc.info-rac.org/>

8. A detailed analysis of the status of implementation at Specific Objectives and Outputs level based on available information is presented in Annex II. This analysis is an update of the information on the status of implementation presented in UNEP/MED WG.476/6 during the 2nd OFOG meeting in 2019.

9. It should be noted that the assessment of the implementation of the Offshore Action Plan at national level is based on available information provided and might not reflect the exact situation in the whole region. Annex II will be further completed with additional information by the Contracting Parties during and after the 3rd OFOG meeting to be held on 3-4 June 2021.

10. On the basis of the information provided in Annex II, it can be concluded that while most of the outputs' implementation has started, limited progress has been achieved since the last status update, in particular on objectives related to the ratification of the Offshore Protocol, the provision of technical support and capacity building and the regional transfer of technology. A summary of the status of implementation per Specific Objective of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan is provided below in Table 2.

11. Another challenge relates to the limited reporting by CPs (Table 1), which implies that the progress on the status of implementation cannot be fully assessed. In order to achieve a comprehensive overview of the progress, the Meeting is prompted to comply with the reporting obligations, in particular for offshore activities.

12. Despite efforts made by the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat, limited financial and human resources are amongst the main challenges that hinder progress in the implementation. The proposed actions to address these challenges are discussed in more detail in the Comprehensive Plan of Actions, including resource mobilization strategy (EP/MED WG.498/6).

Table 2. Summary of the status of implementation per Specific Objective of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan

	Specific Objective overall on track
	Specific Objective ongoing but need for further work and support
	Specific Objective not on track and/or lack of information

Specific Objectives	Overall Implementation Status
1. To ratify the Offshore Protocol	Not on track and/or lack of information To date, 8 Contracting Parties have ratified the Offshore protocol. No new ratifications have taken place since 2018.
2. To designate Contracting Parties' Representatives to participate in the regional governing bodies	Ongoing – on track A call for updating the List of Offshore Protocol Focal Points was launched in February 2021. More regular update of the list is envisaged in the coming years.
3. To establish a technical cooperation and capacity building programme	Ongoing Discussions taking place with industrial partners, regional organizations etc. on designing and delivering the technical cooperation and capacity building programme. The proposed (re)design of the technical cooperation and capacity building programme can be found in the Comprehensive Plan of Actions, including resource mobilization strategy.
4. To mobilise resources for the implementation of the Action Plan	Ongoing Allocation of MTF funds for the implementation of the PoW Activities relevant to Offshore Protocol implementation. Negotiations are ongoing for additional support for activities to be implemented in 2022-2023, especially regarding securing a fixed staff position at the Secretariat to ensure continuity in the implementation of the Offshore Action Plan. As part of achieving this specific objective, the Comprehensive Plan of Actions, including resource mobilization strategy has been prepared. Potential resources and operation modalities identified in the Comprehensive Plan of Actions and the resource mobilization strategy need to be mobilized and secured.
5. To promote access to information and public participation in decision-making	Ongoing MEDGIS-MAR platform upgraded and maintained

	Relevant information compiled and published in the recent study commissioned by REMPEC (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.4) Regional inventory of installations to be updated based on reported information. Regional system for reporting on discharges and emissions to be developed
6. To enhance the regional transfer of technology	Not on track and/or lack of information Implementation has not yet started and there is lack of sufficient information. Additional efforts are required for the implementation of this Specific Objective. However, the ways and means to enhance regional transfer of technology are proposed in the Comprehensive Plan of Actions.
7. To develop and adopt regional offshore standards	Ongoing – on track Regional offshore standards and guidelines on the disposal of oil and oily mixtures and use and disposal of drilling fluids and cuttings, and the establishment of special restrictions or conditions for SPAs adopted by COP 21 (Decision IG.24/9).
8. To develop and adopt regional offshore guidelines	Standards and guidelines on the conduct of EIA (EP/MED WG.498/3) are in development, in consultation with the Contacting Parties and partners. The development of other standards and guidelines (i.e. on the removal of installations and related financial aspects) envisaged in the PoW 2022-2023.
9. To establish regional offshore monitoring procedures and programme	Ongoing Progress has been achieved under this Specific Objective, through the further consolidation of the set of 19 Quality Indicators presented at 1st OFOG meeting in 2017 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.434/6) to 8 common indicators directly relevant to the potential impact and effects of oil and gas operations (REMPEC/WG.45/INF/16). Further work planned in biennium 2022-2023.
10. To report on the implementation of the Action Plan	Ongoing The implementation of this Specific Objective is ensured through the submission of National Implementation Reports for the Offshore Protocol under the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS) – see Table 1 and Annex III.

4. Proposed way forward for the further implementation of the Offshore Action Plan

13. Recognizing the limitations in the implementation experienced to date, a Comprehensive Plan of Actions, including a resource mobilization strategy was developed (EP/MED WG.498/6). This plan proposes alternative perspectives to the funding, operation and execution of the Offshore Action Plan and cost-effective ways for advancing on its implementation.

14. It calls for a shift in the operational modality, one that relies on the leadership, engagement and proactive contribution of the Contracting Parties, with the dedicated support of the Secretariat, international organizations and industrial parties. Taking into consideration that some of the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan Outputs have not started, its effective and successful implementation will not be possible without substantial changes in the implementation modalities.

15. The time horizon period of the comprehensive plan of actions is 2022-2025. It is assumed that the implementation period of the current Offshore Action Plan (2016-2024) will be extended by one year to 2025, to coincide with the implementation period of the next two biennia (2022-2023; 2024-2025). The development of an updated/new Offshore Action Plan will take place in 2024-2025 to be presented at COP 24. The new Offshore Action Plan will consider a change in orientation and extension of the scope of work to include other pertinent issues, such as the transition to a low carbon economy through renewable energy sources, maritime spatial planning etc. More information on the post-2025 directions are provided in EP/MED WG.498/6.

ANNEX I

Supplementary information on oil and gas activities in the Mediterranean Sea

Table A.1 Number of oil and gas offshore fields for each Mediterranean country

Country	Marine area*	Gas fields	Oil Fields	Oil and Gas Fields	Total
Albania	Adriatic Sea	1	0	0	1
Croatia	Adriatic Sea	9	0	0	9
Cyprus	Eastern Mediterranean	4	0	0	4
Egypt	Gulf of Suez	0	66	12	78
Egypt	Eastern Mediterranean	90	3	3	96
France	Atlantic coast	0	4	0	4
Greece	Aegean Sea	2	6	0	8
Greece	Ionian Sea	0	0	1	1
Israel	Eastern Mediterranean	14	0	1	15
Italy	Adriatic Sea	92	7	4	103
Italy	Ionian Sea	4	0	0	4
Italy	Central Mediterranean	3	6	1	10
Lebanon	Eastern Mediterranean	1	0	0	1
Libya	Central Mediterranean	15	7	3	25
Morocco	Atlantic coast	1	3	0	4
Spain	Atlantic coast	2	0	0	2
Spain	Western Mediterranean	1	12	0	13
Tunisia	Central Mediterranean	7	19	5	31
Turkey	Black Sea	10	0	0	10
Turkey	Marmara Sea	1	0	0	1
Turkey	Eastern Mediterranean	0	2	0	2
Total in the Mediterranean Sea		243	62	18	323
Total		257	135	30	422

*Mediterranean locations highlighted in orange

Note that some of the countries' own fields which are located outside the Mediterranean; related numbers are provided for completeness of the information. The total number of Mediterranean fields consider those located within the basin (marine areas highlighted in orange).

Data source: Clarksons Research Offshore Intelligent Network, data retrieved on 08.06.2020. Figures retrieved from EP/MED WG.498/Inf.4.

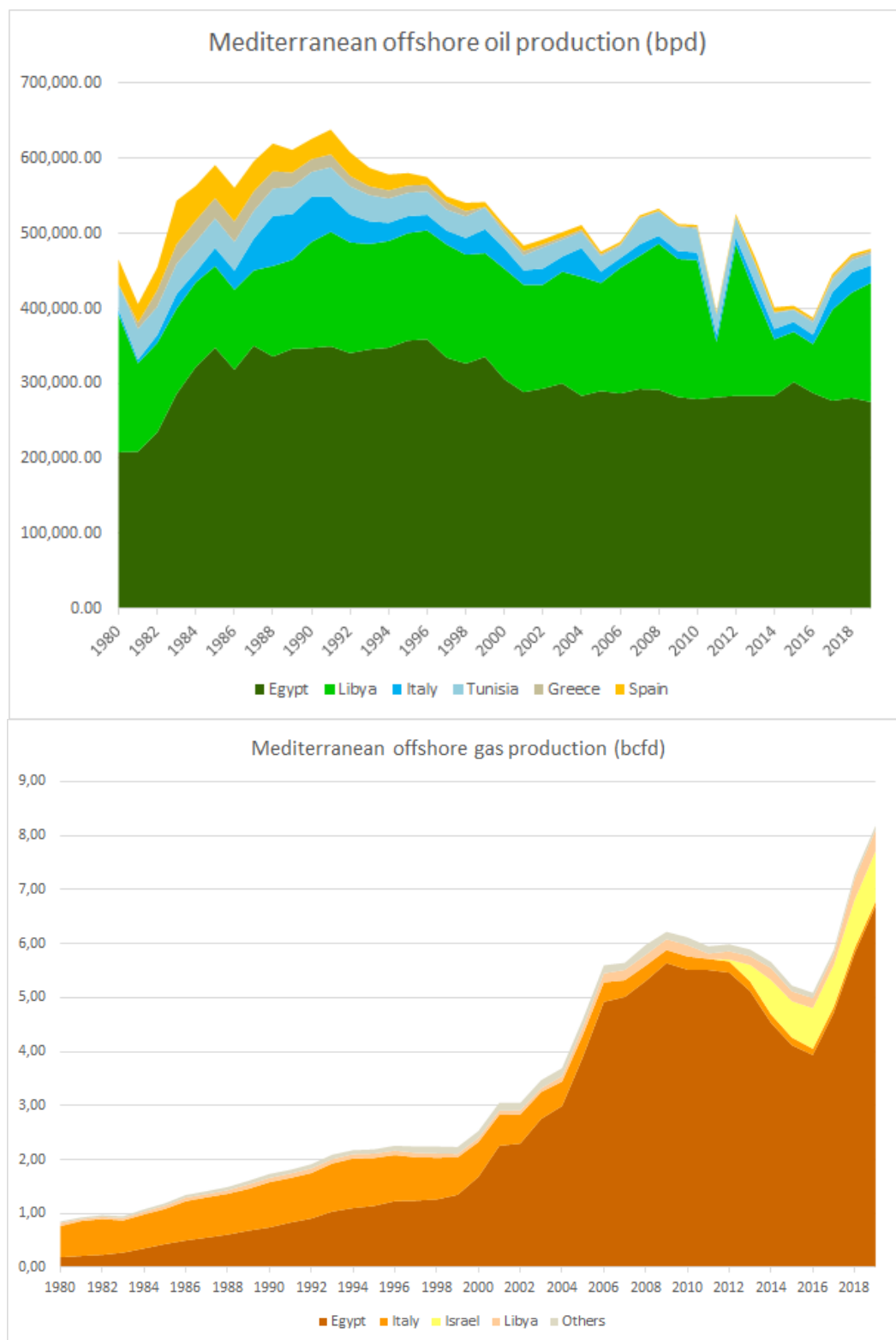


Figure A.1 Top: Trend of offshore oil production in the Mediterranean Sea (bpd = barrels per day) (Data retrieved on 29.06.2020); **Bottom: Trend of offshore gas production in the Mediterranean Sea (bcfd = billion cubic feet per day)**. Data source: Clarksons Research Offshore Intelligent Network (Data retrieved on 04.06.2020). Figures retrieved from EP/MED WG.498/Inf.4.

ANNEX II
Status of implementation of Outputs

Table A.2 Status of implementation of Outputs relating to the Contracting Parties

Specific Objective	Outputs	Link to the Protocol	Means required	Status of Implementation to Date
1. To ratify the Offshore Protocol	a) Ratification by all Contracting Parties of the Offshore Protocol, transposition of the Offshore Protocol into national law, and cooperation through the Secretariat to ensure compliance with its provisions	Art. 32	Contracting Parties time	Ongoing. 8 CPs ratified ² No new ratifications since 2018
	b) Review of the effectiveness of the Offshore Protocol	Art. 30	Contracting Parties time	Ongoing Through the biennial assessment of National Reports on the implementation of the Offshore Protocol (in BCRS) and present overview
2. To designate Contracting Parties' Representatives to participate to the regional governing bodies	a) Nomination of the National Offshore Focal Point designated by all MAP Focal Points to coordinate at national level activities carried out in the framework of the Action Plan and actively participate in the OFOG Group	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Contracting Parties time	Ongoing Call to update the list of National Offshore Focal Points launched in early 2021
	b) Designation, upon request by the Secretariat, through their National Offshore Focal Point, of the appropriate national entities and/or officials as contact points for each OFOG Sub- Group	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Nomination	Ongoing 10 CPs participated in the 1 st OFOG meeting in April 2017; 13 CPs participated in the 2 nd OFOG meeting in June 2019; Higher participation expected in the 3 rd OFOG meeting in June 2021
	c) Leadership, on a voluntary basis, of the established Sub-Groups to coordinate with the support of the Secretariat the work assigned to the Sub-Groups	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Volunteering	Not started Proposed as a key operational modality in the Comprehensive Plan of Action (EP/MED WG.498/6)

² Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, EU, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia

3. To establish a technical cooperation and capacity building programme	a) Technical cooperation and capacity building programme endorsed as set in Appendix 2 of the Offshore Action Plan	Art. 24		Started See Comprehensive Plan of Actions (EP/MED WG.498/6)
	Technical Cooperation for the Development of Standards and Guidelines:			
	Monitoring		Consultancy funds	Ongoing The set of 19 Quality Indicators presented at 1 st OFOG meeting in 2017 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.434/6) was reduced to 8 common indicators directly relevant to the potential impact and effects of oil and gas operations (REMPEC/WG.45/INF/16) Further elaboration planned in biennium 2022-2023
	Use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material		Consultancy funds	Preparatory work underway through the postponed amendments to the Annexes I - III of Offshore Protocol (EP/MED WG.498/4) Tentatively in biennium 2024-2025
	Disposal of oil and oily mixtures and on the use and disposal drilling fluids and cutting		Consultancy funds	Completed Adoption of Decision IG.24/9 (Annex I) by COP 21
	Offshore platform Preparedness and Response & Contingency Plan Assessment		Participation of Contracting Parties to the IMO PPR meetings	Ongoing Addressed through REMPEC work in the framework of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol
	Removal of installations and the related financial aspects		Consultancy funds	Planned in PoW 2022-2023 (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.5)

• Safety measures including health and safety requirements and fire fighting		Consultancy funds	Not started
• Minimum standards of qualification for professionals and crews		Consultancy funds	Not started
• Granting of authorisations		Consultancy funds	Not started
• Inspection/sanctions (Installation/Discharge/Competent manning)		Consultancy funds	Not started
Training:			
• Monitoring		Training funds	Not started Design and planning of a training and capacity building programme presented in the Comprehensive Plan of Actions
• Use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material		Training funds	
• Disposal of oil and oily mixtures and on the use and disposal drilling fluids and cutting		Training funds	
• Offshore platform Preparedness and Response & Contingency Plan Assessment		Training funds	
• Removal of installations		Training funds	
• Safety measures including health and safety requirements and fire fighting		Training funds	
• Minimum standards of qualification for professionals and crews		Training funds	
• Granting of authorisations		Training funds	
• Inspection/sanctions (Installation/Discharge/Competent manning)		Training funds	

4. To mobilise resources for the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Financial and human resources mobilised to support the implementation of the Action Plan, in particular its provisions related to the OFOG Group, technical cooperation, capacity building and monitoring activities	Art. 31	Contracting Parties time and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Ongoing Discussions ongoing with external entities for securing future resources (financial and in-kind) in line with Resource Mobilization Plan
5. To promote access to information and public participation in decision-making	a) Template for public information in line with national and regional rules on access to information	Art. 23, 25 & 26	Contracting Parties time and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Some CPs publish public information on relevant ministry websites Planned (at the regional level)
	b) Report to the Secretariat every two years relevant information on the offshore installations within their jurisdiction including, when appropriate, information on their disposal for inclusion in the inventory to be maintained by the Secretariat	Art. 6 & Art. 17	Contracting Parties time	4 CPs reported on the inventory of offshore installations through Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS) Harmonization of reporting with MEDGIS-MAR platform Information compiled and published in the recent study commissioned by REMPEC (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.4).
	c) Report to the Secretariat every two years discharges, spills and emissions from offshore oil and gas installations data in accordance with the monitoring programme to be defined by the relevant OFOG Sub-Group	Art. 17	Contracting Parties time	0 CPs reported spills through MEDGIS-MAR Regional system for reporting on discharges and emissions to be developed
6. To enhance the regional transfer of technology	a) Active participation of the respective scientific and technical institutions, as well as the industry, in R&D activities and programmes related to prevention, response and monitoring of pollution from offshore activities	Art. 22	Contracting Parties time	Not started
	b) Presentation of the results of R&D activities and programmes by their respective national institutions and industry in international fora	Art. 22	Contracting Parties time	Not started

	c) Information on ongoing R&D activities and research needs provided to the Secretariat	Art. 22	Contracting Parties time	Not started.
7. To develop and adopt regional offshore standards	a) Environmental impact assessment regional standards developed based on existing EIA regional standards taking into consideration requirements referred in Annex IV and other best practices	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8 & 23 Annex IV	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Contribution of CPs to the further development of Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (EP/MED WG.498/3)
	b) Common standards on the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material, in line with relevant international standards and conventions defining inter alia limits and prohibitions at regional level formulated and adopted	Art.5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14 & 23 Annexes I, II & III	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started.
	c) Identification of the required modifications of Annex I, II and III and definition of which chemicals should be covered and not covered by such standards and under which conditions	Art.5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 23 Annexes I, II & III	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Amendments of the Annexes to the Mediterranean Offshore Protocol proposed in EP/MED WG.498/3
	d) Common standards on the disposal of oil and oily mixtures and on the use and disposal of drilling fluids and cutting formulated and adopted, and revision of the limits set in Article 10 and the prescriptions referred in Annex V of the Protocol	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14 & 23 Annex V Appendix	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Completed Adoption of Decision IG.24/9 (Annex I) by COP 21
	e) The method to be used to analyse the oil content is commonly agreed and adopted	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 & 23	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started
	f) Procedures for contingency planning, notification of accidental spills and transboundary pollution established in accordance with the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 26 & 23 Annex VII	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Addressed through REMPEC work in the framework of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol

	g) Special restrictions or conditions for SPAs defined and adopted	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 21 & 23	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Completed Adoption of Decision IG.24/9 (Annex I) by COP 21
	h) Common criteria, rules and procedures for the removal of installations and the related financial aspects adopted	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 20 & 23	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Planned in PoW 2022-2023 (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.5)
	i) Common criteria, rules and procedures for safety measures including health and safety requirements adopted	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 15 & 23 Annex VI	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started
	j) Common minimum standards of qualification for professionals and crews adopted	Art.5, 6, 7, 8, 15 & 23 Annex VI	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started
8. To develop and adopt regional offshore guidelines	a) Regional Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8 & 23 Annex IV	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Contribution of CPs in the further development of Guidelines for the Conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (EP/MED WG.498/3)
	b) Regional Guidelines on the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and material	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14 & 23 Annexes I, II & III	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started
	c) Regional Guidelines on the disposal of oil and oily mixtures and the use and disposal drilling fluids and cutting and analytical measurement	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14 & 23 Annex V	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Completed Adoption of Decision IG.24/9 (Annex I) by COP 21
	d) Regional Guidelines on removal of installations and the related financial aspects	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 20 & 23	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Planned in PoW 2022-2023 (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.5)
	e) Regional Guidelines on installation safety measures including health and safety requirements	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 15 & 23 Annex VI	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started

	f) Regional Guidelines on minimum standards of qualification for professionals and crews	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 15 & 23 Annex VI	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started
	g) Regional Guidelines on authorisation requirements based on the above-mentioned Standards	Art. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14 & 23	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Not started
	h) A report assessing national, regional and international, rules, procedures and practices regarding liability and compensation for loss and damage resulting from the activities dealt with in the Offshore Protocol	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 23 & 27	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	No progress since submission of Study on International Best Practices (REMPEC/WG.35/INF.3) at the 3 rd Offshore Protocol Working Group Meeting in 2014
	i) Contribution through their OPRC Focal Points to the revision of the Section II of the Manual on Oil Pollution – Contingency Planning by the IMO Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) which will include new information related to contingency planning for offshore units, seaports and oil handling facilities	Art. 5, 6, 7, 8, 16 & 23	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Completed Publication of the Manual on Oil Pollution: Section II – Contingency Planning (2018 Edition)
9. To establish regional offshore monitoring procedures and programme	a) A regional monitoring programme for offshore activities building, inter alia, on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme	Art. 5 & 10	Contracting Parties time, technical support as set in specific objective 3 and participation to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	The set of 19 Quality Indicators presented at 1st OFOG meeting in 2017 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.434/6) was reduced to 8 common indicators directly relevant to the potential impact and effects of oil and gas operations (REMPEC/WG.45/INF/16) Further elaboration planned in biennium 2022-2023

	b) Results of the national offshore monitoring programme and the related agreed data are reported to the Secretariat every two years	Art. 5 & 19	Contracting Parties time	Planned Subject to finalization of offshore monitoring programme
10. To report on the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Report on the implementation of this Action Plan, in particular on the effectiveness of the measures defined in this Action Plan and difficulties encountered every two years	Art. 25 & 30	Contracting Parties time	Ongoing 2018-2019: 9 CPs 2016-17: 11 CPs No report submitted for biennium 2018-2019 by 13 CPs, out of which 5 Parties to the Protocol No report submitted for biennium 2018-2019 by 5 of the 8 Parties to the Protocol See Table 1 and Annex III in the present document
	b) Biennial review of the status of implementation of the Action Plan on the basis of the regional report prepared by the Secretariat	Art. 25 & 30	Contracting Parties time	Ongoing Through the present document

Table A.3 Status of implementation of Outputs relating to the Secretariat and its Components

Specific Objective	Outputs	Link to the Protocol	Means required	Status of Implementation to Date
1. To ratify the Offshore Protocol	a) Provision of advice and technical assistance to Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, which so request	Art. 32	Technical Support and Secretariat staff time	Ongoing
	b) Assistance in reviewing the effectiveness of the Offshore Protocol	Art. 30	Secretariat staff time, Consultancy funds	Ongoing
2. To designate Contracting Parties representatives to participate in the regional governing bodies	a) Participation of the industry and their representatives as observers to the OFOG Sub-Groups	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Secretariat staff time and travels	Ongoing IOGP and industry representatives attend regularly OFOG sub-group meetings IOGP accredited as new MAP partner in COP 21 (Decision IG.24/2)
	b) Enhancement of public awareness through the contribution of IGOs and NGOs with a relevant mandate to the topics discussed in the various OFOG Sub-Groups, through their participation as observers, ensuring an open and transparent process through public consultations	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Secretariat staff time	Ongoing. Participation of IGO and NGOs at OFOG sub-group meetings Contribution of IGOs and NGOs to the drafting of standards and guidelines Section in the guidance on EIA addressing public consultation
	c) Establishment of institutional cooperation with various relevant regional and global institutions, initiatives and agreements and, at an operational level, identification and use of possible synergies with ongoing activities of bodies such as the European Maritime Safety Agency	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Secretariat staff time and travels	Ongoing Participation of REMPEC in OSPAR OIC meeting (March 2021) ³ Participation of REMPEC in Joint session of the London Convention/Protocol Scientific Groups (LC/SG 44 & LP/SG 15) Science Day (April 2021) ⁴ Addressed in the Comprehensive plan of

³ Link to summary record: <https://www.ospar.org/meetings/archive/offshore-industries-committee-1>

⁴ Joint session of the London Convention/Protocol Scientific Groups (LC/SG 44 & LP/SG 15) Science Day 2021: "Experience with comparative risk assessment for decommissioning of platforms and the disposal of vessels". Link to presentations: <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Environment/Pages/ScienceDay-default.aspx>

			actions, including the resource mobilization strategy (EP/MED WG.498/6)
	d) Publication and update of the composition of the OFOG Group and Sub-Groups on a dedicated website	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Website developer Planned for late 2021
	e) Updated list of the National Offshore Focal Points and OFOG Sub-Group Focal Points	Decision IG.21/8	Secretariat staff time Call to update list launched in early 2021
	f) Definition, in consultation with MAP Focal Points, of the roles and responsibilities of UNEP/MAP Components to facilitate the implementation of the Action Plan	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Secretariat staff time Ongoing CU for overall governance and coordination; REMPEC on implementation of Offshore Action Plan; Info/RAC for reporting under IMAP; MEDPOL for pollution-related ecological objectives and discharges; PAP/RAC on CRF incl. MSP, SEA etc.; SPA/RAC on biodiversity.
	g) Identification of the required means including human resources to ensure the implementation of the Action Plan and the support of the relevant UNEP/MAP Components	Art. 28 Decision IG.21/8	Secretariat staff time Ongoing Included in the Comprehensive plan of actions, including the resource mobilization strategy
3. To establish a technical cooperation and capacity building programme	a) Integration of the technical cooperation and capacity building programme in the six-year programme of activities of UNEP/MAP and its relevant Components and in their biennium programme of work	Art. 24	Secretariat staff time Ongoing Integration within the current draft MTS 2022-2027
	b) Preparation of the corresponding budget for consideration by the Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	Art. 24	Secretariat staff time Planning foreseen in the PoW 2022-2023 (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.5)

	c) Identification of donors to secure funds required for the implementation of the technical cooperation and capacity building programme	Art. 24	Secretariat staff time	Ongoing. Discussion initiated with relevant partners in 2021 Included in the Comprehensive plan of actions, including the resource mobilization strategy (EP/MED WG.498/6)
4. To mobilise resources for the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Identification of additional donors to secure funds for the implementation of the Action Plan	Art. 31	Secretariat staff time	Ongoing Allocation of MTF funds for the implementation of the PoW Activities relevant to Offshore Protocol implementation Preparation of Resource Mobilization Plan (EP/MED WG.498/6)
5. To promote access to information, public participation in decision-making	a) Support the preparation of the template for public information in line with existing Decisions of the Contracting Parties addressing public access to information and with UNEP's Access to Information Policy	Art. 23, 25 & 26	Consultancy funds	Planned Links to national websites that provide public access to information to be compiled in late 2021 Template for public information at the regional level planned
	b) Development of an online regional system and to be maintained for the purpose of public information sharing	Art. 23, 25 & 26	Online regional system	
	c) Publication every two years on a dedicated website of the inventory of installations as well as the discharges, spills and emissions from offshore oil and gas installations data submitted by the Contracting Parties	Art. 6 & Art. 17	Secretariat staff time	MEDGIS-MAR upgraded and maintained Harmonization of reporting on the inventory of installations in BCRS with MEDGIS-MAR platform in late 2021
	d) Consolidated report every two years on the discharges, spills and emissions from offshore oil and gas installations data submitted by the Contracting Parties.	Art. 17	Secretariat staff time	MEDGIS-MAR upgraded and maintained Regional system for reporting on discharges and emissions to be developed
6. To enhance the participation of the regional transfer of technology	a) Support in the identification of fields of research in which there is a need for enhancement of the	Art. 22	Secretariat staff time	Not started

	state-of-the-art of offshore pollution prevention, response and monitoring technologies and techniques			
	b) Dissemination and exchange of results of national R&D activities and programmes within and outside the Mediterranean region	Art. 22	Secretariat staff time	Not started
	c) Participation of national and regional research institutions and industry in the relevant international fora facilitated with a view to making better known the results of R&D activities undertaken in the Mediterranean region	Art. 22	Travels	Not started
7. To develop and adopt regional offshore standards	a) Support the specific OFOG Sub-Groups for the development of the above common standards	Art. 23	Secretariat staff time	Ongoing E.g. working documents EP/MED WG.498/3, and standards adopted by COP 21 (Decision IG.24/9)
8. To develop and adopt regional offshore guidelines	a) Support the specific OFOG Sub-Groups for the development of the above common guidelines	Art. 23	Secretariat staff time	Ongoing E.g. working documents EP/MED WG.498/3, and guidelines adopted by COP 21 (Decision IG.24/9)
9. To establish regional offshore monitoring procedures and programme	a) The development/adoption of Mediterranean Monitoring Procedures and Programmes for the above, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, building on the relevant work undertaken in the Monitoring Correspondence Groups in the EcAp process in line with Decision 21/3	Art. 19	Secretariat staff time	The set of 19 Quality Indicators presented at 1 st OFOG meeting in 2017 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.434/6) was reduced to 8 common indicators directly relevant to the potential impact and effects of oil and gas operations (REMPEC/WG.45/INF/16) Further elaboration planned in biennium 2022-2023

	b) Development of the Mediterranean Offshore Reporting and Monitoring System (e.g. Regional Data Bank on Offshore activities through the Barcelona Convention Reporting System or other systems defined by the Contracting Parties)	Art.19	Mediterranean Offshore Reporting and Monitoring System	Ongoing. Subject to completion of 9 a)
	c) Production, dissemination and publication every two years of a report on Discharges, Spills and Emissions from Offshore Oil and Gas Installations, based on data submitted by countries which should be used as a base for the State of Environment Report regarding the impacts of the offshore oil and gas industry	Art.17 & 19	Secretariat staff time, publication and dissemination	Ongoing Publication of Study on Trends and Outlook on Marine Pollution, Maritime Traffic and Offshore Activities in the Mediterranean (EP/MED WG.498/Inf.4) Subject to development of regional system for reporting of discharges and emissions, and regular update by CPs
10. To report on the implementation of the Action Plan	a) Guidelines on the structure and content of the national report on the implementation of this Action Plan considering existing reporting procedures (e.g. Reporting under the Compliance Committee) to avoid duplication of reporting procedures, as well as a set of indicators	Art. 25 & 30	Secretariat staff time	Present Table A.2 is completed by the Secretariat based on information reported in BCRS and information available at the Secretariat
	b) Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol	Art. 30	Travel/DSA	Ongoing. Two OFOG meetings organised (Loutraki, Greece, April 2017 and Athens, Greece, June 2019) Present third OFOG meeting organized remotely (June 2021)
	c) Consolidated report on the implementation of the Action Plan every two years for its submission to the Meetings of the Parties to the Offshore Protocol and the Meetings of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	Art.30	Secretariat staff time	Ongoing Through the present document

ANNEX III

**Synthesis analysis of the information provided in the national implementation reports submitted
by Contracting Parties on the Offshore Protocol for the biennium 2018-2019**

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)

Introduction

Part I: Legal and Regulatory Measures. Part I seeks to determine whether Contracting Parties have established the appropriate legal framework to regulate offshore oil and gas activities, so that offshore activities are subject to prior authorization issued by the national competent authority in accordance with the requirements of the Protocol for the use and discharge of harmful or noxious substances and materials, oil and oily mixtures and drilling fluids and cuttings, sewage and garbage (plastics, such as synthetic ropes, synthetic fishing nets, plastic garbage etc.).

Part II: Permits and quantities. Part II seeks to collect information on the number of new permits issued and quantity of permitted and actual waste dumped at sea under different types of permits (special, general, force majeure and permits intended to minimize pollution). Contracting Parties are also invited to provide information on dumping at sea operations regulated by other means.

Part III: Inventory of offshore installations: Part III seeks to compile an inventory of offshore installations, including disused installations, including information on operator, production start, current status, primary production, category, weight substructure and topside.

Part IV: Enforcement: Part IV seeks to obtain an overview of the enforcement measures, in terms of number of inspections with respect to the Protocol obligations and national legislation/regulations implementing the Protocol. Information on the number of non-compliance cases, fines, suspensions of authorization or permits, operation shutdowns, authorizations or permits, illegal disposal and safety measures is requested.

Progress on Implementation

a) Legal and Regulatory Measures

Nine reporting Contracting Parties have provided information about the legal and regulatory measures taken to implement Articles 4, 5 and 6 Annex IV (Authorization system), 8 (Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP) to minimize the risk of offshore pollution), 9 (Harmful and noxious substances and materials), 10 (Oil and oily mixtures and drilling fluids and cuttings), 11 (Sewage discharge), 12 (Garbage disposal), 13 (Reception facilities), 15 (Safety measures), 16 (Contingency planning), 19 (Monitoring), 20 (Removal of installations) and 21 (Specially protected areas) of the Offshore Protocol, as shown below.

All reporting Contracting Parties (9 out of 9) indicated that they have the appropriate legal and regulatory measures in place for granting the construction and operation of installations. One Contracting Party referred to a moratorium on the prospecting, research and cultivation of hydrocarbons on its national territory in place since 2019. This law, with the aim of enhancing the environmental and socio-economic sustainability, canceling the impacts derived from upstream activities and to accompany the decarbonization process, does not provide for any suspension of existing hydrocarbon production activities.

All eight reporting Contracting Parties (EU not included) have adopted legislation on the use of BAT and BEP by operators in order to minimize the risk of offshore pollution, through environmental protection laws, as part of the EIA or by meeting operators contract requirements. One reporting Contracting Parties indicated that the common standards and guidelines developed under the framework on the Offshore Protocol (Decision IG.24/9) is taken into account in the Offshore Protocol permit issued by the Competent Authority.

As for the disposal of harmful and noxious substance and materials, the Offshore Protocol distinguishes between three categories of substances: (i). prohibition of disposal of substances listed in Annex I to the Protocol, (ii). disposal of substances in Annex II to the Protocol subject to prior special permit and (iii). disposal of other substances not included in Annexes I and II, subject to a prior general permit. Five of the eight reporting Contracting Parties (EU not included) indicated that legal provisions are in place for all three categories of substances. One reporting Contracting Party indicated that no legal provisions are adopted for category (iii); another reporting Contracting Parties informed that all substances that may cause pollution are prohibited from being disposed of, and disposal of any substance is subject to permission provided that it causes no risk of pollution. One reporting Contracting Parties indicated that the prohibition of disposal of substances listed in Annex I is not applicable. A number of difficulties were 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.

Three Contracting Parties (out of the seven that reported on this item) indicated the absence of provisions that allow for the approval of a chemical use plan on the use and storage of offshore chemicals by the national Competent Authority. In the case of one reporting Contracting Party, the related provisions are under development. Another reporting Contracting Party with related provisions in place commented on the need for more detailed guidance on the content of chemical use plan, its assessment and its continuous monitoring.

Annex V of the Offshore Protocol provides for the use and disposal of: A. oil and oil mixtures and B. drilling fluids and cuttings. The five Contracting Parties that reported on A. confirmed that provisions on the disposal of oil and oily mixtures are in place; in one case reported to be stipulated in discharge permits which are closely inspected and enforced. As for B., three Contracting Parties indicated the existence of provisions on the use and disposal of drilling fluids and cuttings; another three indicated their absence, whereas in the case of another two reporting Contracting Parties, this was deemed as not applicable. One reporting Contracting Party made reference to the use of the common guidelines and standards on the use and disposal oil and oil mixtures and drilling fluids and cuttings adopted in 2019 (Decision IG.24/9), under the framework of the Offshore Protocol, adopting minimum standards specified in Article 10 and stricter conditions, if required. The recommended use of water-base drilling mud, including the full prohibition of the offshore discharge of oil-base drilling fluids and cuttings in the case of one Contracting Party, was highlighted by two reporting Contracting Parties.

With respect to the disposal of sewage and garbage, all nine reporting Contracting Parties report on existing provisions, either on the complete prohibition of sewage discharge or in some cases of untreated sewage, and on the prohibition of garbage disposal in the Protocol area. One reporting Contracting Party refers to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL); another specifies that the way of regulating the disposal of sewage and garbage disposal is defined in the EIA studies which take into account provisions of the Offshore Protocol. As for the disposal of food waste, six of the eight reporting Contracting Parties report having appropriate provisions in place (some in accordance to Annex V of MARPOL Convention), whereas the other two indicate the absence of such provisions. Similarly, all eight reporting Contracting Parties except two, have provisions that ensure that operators dispose of all waste and harmful or noxious substances and materials in designated onshore reception facilities.

None of the Contracting Parties reported on difficulties/challenges related to the disposal of oil and oily mixtures and drilling fluids and cuttings, sewage, garbage and reception facilities.

Five reporting Contracting Parties confirm the existence of legal provisions of safety measures and contingency planning covered by various legislations. Safety measures are addressed through e.g. Health, Safety and Environment, (HSE) certificates in some countries, whereas contingency planning through, e.g. the Oil Pollution Prevention Emergency Plan (OPEP) as provided by the OPRC Convention 1990 and oil spills contingency plan (OSCP) under exploration licenses. One reporting Contracting Party referenced the European Directive 2013/30/EU on safety of offshore oil and gas operations, indicating the regulatory framework as a difficulty/challenge, and highlighting the overlap between the Offshore Protocol and the directive requirements.

In relation to environmental and compliance monitoring programmes and activities, four Contracting Parties confirmed their establishment, mainly through EIA requirements for projects/activities and SEA requirements for plans/programmes. One other reporting Contracting Party indicated the absence of a national monitoring system, with monitoring activities conducted on the basis of ad-hoc requests for each permit depending on the activity. Furthermore, the need for strengthened technical guidance capabilities and regulatory framework was identified.

The removal of disused offshore installations and pipelines is prescribed in relevant provisions in three reporting Contracting Parties. The procedure of removal and recovery is elaborated either in a dedicated part of the description of "mining project", as part of the EIA, or through a decommissioning plan. A fourth Contracting Party reported that relevant provisions are not applicable due to the absence of productive offshore installations. However, in the case of offshore exploration installations, a complete removal of the authorized installation and any other equipment is requested, followed by a visual inspection of the subsea area and an "end of well" report.

As regards to special measures to prevent, abate, combat and control pollution in specially protected areas (SPAs), five Contracting Parties confirmed their adoption, of which two Contracting Parties mentioned the complete prohibition of offshore activities in SPAs or in areas considered as strict reserves.

Three Contracting Parties (and EU) indicated the absence of provisions on safety measures (Article 15), contingency planning (Article 16), monitoring (Article 19), removal (Article 20) and SPA (Article 21), possibly related to the lack of offshore oil and gas exploration or exploitation activities in their respective Protocol Areas during the reporting period.

b) Permits and Quantities

None of the Contracting Parties, except for two, reported on Part II – Permits and Quantities. One reporting Contracting Party provided an overview of the number of surveys and permits in a separate supporting document, which, however, did not contain information of the quantities of waste permitted/actually dumped at sea. The second reporting Contracting Party indicated that all permits for oil and gas offshore activities are considered as special, as opposed to general, and that all pollution databases will be submitted in the national budget of pollutants in 2023. Lack of reporting under Part II results in significant data and information gaps on the number of permits and the total quantity of waste permitted/actually dumped at sea at the regional level.

c) Inventory of offshore installations

Information on Part III, the inventory of offshore installations, was provided by three reporting Contracting Parties, one of which provided an extensive overview in a separate supporting document. The reported information will be used to update the database on installations contained in MEDGIS-MAR.

d) Enforcement

In total, four Contracting Parties provided information on Part IV in terms of number of inspections that monitor the enforcement of the Protocol obligations. The reported information indicates that: three of the reporting Contracting Parties carried out inspections in relation to the Protocol obligations and national legislation and regulations implementing the Protocol (Article 3); three of the reporting Contracting Parties carried out inspections related to specific conditions attached to authorizations or permits (Article 4 and 5); none of the Contracting Parties carried out inspections related to illegal disposal (Article 9), whereas two reporting Contracting Parties carried out inspections related to safety measures (Article 15).