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Thessaloniki, Greece, 30 November-1 December 2022

Agenda Item 5: Specific Issues

Proposal to Strengthen the Institutional Setup of UNEP/MAP on Climate Change

Note by the Secretariat

This document contains a proposal submitted by the government of Türkiye for the establishment of a Regional Activity Center for Climate Change of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, to be hosted in Ankara, Türkiye.

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T.C.
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, URBANISATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE
General Directorate of Environmental Management

21 October 2022

Dear Ms. Tatjana HEMA,
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention

On behalf of the Government of Türkiye, I am pleased to transmit the attached Proposal on the Establishment of the Regional Activity Center for Climate Change of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention. I kindly request the UNEP/MAP Secretariat to submit the Proposal for consideration by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and decision at their 23rd Meeting (COP 23) to be held in Slovenia in December 2023. As discussed at the 92nd Meeting of the Bureau, the Proposal should also be presented to 93rd Meeting of the Bureau to be held in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 30 November- 1 December 2022.

Türkiye sincerely appreciates and shares the political declarations and commitments, decisions, programmes, projects, activities and reports of the UNEP/MAP system reflecting the urgency of the climate change problem. Türkiye wishes to support a new complementary effort in the context of the MAP-Barcelona Convention in response to the impact of climate change in the Mediterranean region through the establishment of a new Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change. This will undoubtedly strengthen collaboration in the Mediterranean region and meaningfully contribute to national, regional, and global responses and Nature-Based solutions to climate change impacts, as well as to the resilience of the region. Our proposal would positively impact the geographical balance of the location and hosting of MAP Components around the Mediterranean basin.

For this purpose, Türkiye is willing to mobilize and invest the necessary resources to host the proposed Regional Activity Center for Climate Change and to contribute to the efforts of the existing MAP Components in line with the relevant Governance decisions of the Contracting Parties and the commitments taken at the regional and global levels.

The attached document describes the ambitious proposal of the new RAC that builds on national and regional efforts already underway. We remain at the disposal of the Contracting Parties and of the Secretariat for clarifications and additional details that may be needed during the review of the Proposal.

I count on the support of the Secretariat in submitting the Proposal as indicated above and I thank you for your kind consideration.

Yours sincerely,


Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emin BİRPINAR
On the Behalf of Minister
Deputy Minister

20/10/2022

**Establishment of
the Regional Activity Center for Climate
Change
of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention
Proposal by the Government of Türkiye**

**Ankara, Türkiye
20 October 2022**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Since the adoption of the Barcelona Convention, seven Components (MED POL and six Regional Activity Centers-RACs) have been established to achieve the objectives of the MAP system and support the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat in the implementation of the system's mandate, as it transpires from the Convention, its Protocols and the decisions of the Contracting Parties.
2. Contracting Parties have repeatedly acknowledged that the MAP Components "have provided and continue to provide very valuable services in the form of technical outputs and assistance in their respective areas of expertise to the Contracting Parties"¹. The MAP Components have proved essential to the success of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in responding adequately to urgent and emerging needs of the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean. Enhanced regional cooperation based on a corporate and integrated approach with regional and global initiatives has greatly benefited from their work.
3. The Mediterranean basin has been experiencing climate change at rates that exceed global averages. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) considers the Mediterranean Region to be "highly vulnerable to climate change" due to the influence of multiple stressors and the projected associated "systemic failures" through the exacerbation of pre-existing fragilities, including high coastal urbanization and the limited adaptive capacity of coastal countries. Climate change is expected to continue having significant impacts on the terrestrial, coastal and marine environment of the Mediterranean region. Adaptation to the effects of climate change is a crucial priority for the Mediterranean region and its sustainable development.
4. UNEP/MAP has been implementing actions to assess climate change impacts in the Mediterranean marine and coastal zone dating back to the early 1990s. Responses to climate change have taken an increasingly urgent character in the strategies and programmes of the MAP system. Most recently, the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy² (MTS), adopted by COP 22 in Antalya, Türkiye (December 2021), defines action around an ambitious Vision, which includes a clear reference to "Progress towards a [...] climate resilient Mediterranean Sea and Coast".
5. While the urgency of adequately responding to the impact of climate change is clearly expressed through a number of political declarations and commitments, decisions, programmes, projects, activities and reports of the UNEP/MAP system, it is also equally clear that additional harmonized and amplified efforts are needed, so that the MAP system may be best equipped to face that urgency. Considering the potential of the MAP/Barcelona Convention system, Türkiye believes that, in recent years, insufficient and only sporadic progress has been made in addressing climate change adaptation issues through the implementation of the previous at Medium-Term Strategy (MTS); the implementation of activities related to climate change adaptation and other emerging issues should accelerate and deepen. This clearly transpires from the findings of reviews of the work of the MAP system.
6. In light of the rapidly deteriorating situation in the Mediterranean, the institutional strengthening of the MAP system through the establishment of a central point for Climate Change as part of its structure seems imperative. Türkiye believes that establishing a RAC to work on the impacts of climate change by strengthening

¹ Decision IG.19/5 "Mandates of the Components of MAP"

² Decision IG.25/1 "UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027"

collaborative efforts in the Mediterranean is the most effective method to accelerate efforts and leverage resources.

7. The technical competence of the proposed RAC will help Contracting Parties, MAP Components and other regional institutions to design and deliver Nature-Based Solutions and measures on climate change. The new RAC for Climate Change would not duplicate or compete with the activities on climate change that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system has already in place. Under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, it would rather provide a focal point to complement and support those activities, to amplify them through the additional availability of expertise and resources, and to fill existing gaps for the full execution of the new MTS and its climate change-related programmes. This would enhance the coherence, structure, visibility and impact of the MAP-Barcelona Convention responses to climate change, as it has been demonstrated in other priority areas mandated by the Convention and its Protocols, thanks to the work of the existing MAP components.
8. The proposed RAC will also augment the synergies and complementarity of work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system with the on-going activities of other regional institutions, also strengthening collaboration and joint efforts with those initiatives.
9. The establishment of the RAC would have important and positive implications for the balance of the geographical location and hosting of MAP Components around the Mediterranean basin.
10. The present Proposal offers Contracting Parties a significant opportunity to address some of the management and enforcement gaps identified in several reports. Increasing the response to climate change impacts and the resilience to the effects of climate change is crucial to the sustainable development of the region. The mandate, policies, strategies and programmes of activities of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change will be significantly enhanced by an efficient RAC, as it has been demonstrated in other fields during the history of the system and its Components.
11. Furthermore, the work of the proposed RAC will facilitate the harmonization of the Barcelona Convention with other international frameworks addressing the issue of climate change and its central role in the protection of the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean, as a contribution to the sustainable development of the region.
12. Türkiye is profoundly aware of such urgent necessity and is ready to devote resources additional to its regular contributions to the Barcelona Convention to respond to it. Türkiye is ready to host and support this new MAP Component in line with the relevant Governance decisions of the Contracting Parties, offering adequate commitment and resources that will ultimately support, as it has steadfastly done for the past decades, the entire MAP system.
13. The proposed Regional Activity Center for Climate Change would be hosted by the Ankara University Research Center of the Sea and Maritime Law (DEHUKAM). In particular, the proposed RAC would be an evolution of the Mediterranean Climate Change Research Center (Akdeniz İklim Değişikliği Araştırma Merkezi – AİDAM), located inside DEHUKAM. DEHUKAM is a highly respected and distinguished institution nationally and internationally and enjoys a leading role in the community of the sea, environment and maritime law. With many cooperation protocols, DEHUKAM has a large network in the field. DEHUKAM is also the leading institution to research

the environmental and marine issues of the Eastern Mediterranean including the overarching climate change.

14. Contributing in a meaningful way to the response to the climate change crisis at the regional and global levels is a priority for Türkiye. The present proposal is, therefore, formally submitted for consideration by the Contracting Parties. Türkiye requests that it is presented to the 93rd Meeting of the Bureau (Thessaloniki, Greece, 30 November-1 December 2022) to initiate the process of consideration and decision that should be concluded at the 23rd Conference of the Contracting Parties - COP 23 (Slovenia, December 2023).
15. As the host Country of the 22nd Conference of the Parties (Antalya, Türkiye, December 2021) and current President of the Bureau of the Barcelona Convention, Türkiye is committed to the ambitious responsibility of hosting a Regional Activity Centre for Climate Change, and offers its leadership, expertise and resources to the full implementation of the Convention and its Protocols in the Mediterranean region. In this endeavor, Türkiye counts on the support of all Contracting Parties, of the Secretariat and of the other MAP Components.

JUSTIFICATION FOR ESTABLISHING A RAC FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate Change and the Mediterranean Region: Findings and Urgency of Responses

16. At the opening of the 2022 session of the UN General Assembly, Secretary-General António Guterres said: “We have a rendezvous with climate disaster”. Several recent and less recent reports have highlighted climate change as a major threat to the Mediterranean region. The 2020 report “State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean” (SOED) reads as follows:

Climate change is exacerbating existing environmental fragilities and degradations in the Mediterranean basin. The region is considered a hotspot for climate change due in particular to more rapid warming in both the air and the sea than the global average and by changes in water regimes in a region where water scarcity is already a reality. CO₂-induced acidification is further threatening its marine ecosystems. The region is also vulnerable to the impacts of sea level rise with dense human settlements, infrastructure and heritage sites situated close to the shore and often limited adaptive capacity. Mediterranean countries are engaging in a multitude of commitments and efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, at the international, regional, national and local levels. These efforts need to be enforced and their ambition further increased in a multi-stakeholder context, by, for example, minimizing and adapting to the “multiple stresses and systemic failures” related to climate change forecast for the Mediterranean.

17. We are more aware than ever that climate and the seas are two sides of the same coin, since the catastrophic consequences of climate change on the seas have been acknowledged, and that safeguarding the seas is one strategy to combat climate change³.
18. The gravity of the situation and of the impacts that climate change is having on all facets of the Mediterranean marine, coastal and terrestrial ecosystem and on the region’s societies, as well as on human development, health, and security is detailed in the MedECC (2020) “Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin – Current Situation and Risks for the Future. First Mediterranean Assessment Report” (MAR-1). It also highlights the importance of integrated programming in order to meet the requirements of the region and realize long term climate and environmental actions.
19. The reports mentioned above show that the average sea level in the Mediterranean has increased by 6 cm in the last 20 years due to climate change. According to IPCC, the Mediterranean is one of the most vulnerable areas for climate change, and the SoED, MAR-1 and IPCC Reports clearly indicate the threats that the region is about to face. The observed and expected increase in water temperatures by cause of climate change will lead to changes in species composition and abundance. Due to the rise in invasive species caused by global warming, the Mediterranean ecosystem, which sustains 18% of the world's marine species, suffers losses in its local ecosystem. Additionally, MAR-1 report highlights the importance of integrated programming in order to meet the requirements of the region and realize long term climate and environmental actions.
20. At the global level, the 2019 IPCC “Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate” finds that strongly reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting and restoring ecosystems, and carefully managing the use of natural resources would

³ UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.421/Inf.19 “Background document to the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework”

make it possible to preserve the ocean and cryosphere as a source of opportunities that support adaptation to future changes, limit risks to livelihoods and offer multiple additional societal benefits. The latest 2022 IPCC “Sixth Assessment Report” (AR6) emphasizes how, since AR5, the knowledge base on observed and projected impacts and risks generated by climate hazards, exposure and vulnerability has increased with impacts attributed to climate change and key risks.

21. These findings, and those of many other reports, clearly apply also to the Mediterranean region and constitute yet another call for urgent and efficient action by all stakeholders, on the basis of assessments and scientific knowledge that provides a grim picture for the future of the region.
22. It is undoubtable that, if the fight against climate change is not handled regionally and resolutely in the Mediterranean dimension, it will pose a serious risk for economic growth and jeopardize the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in most Mediterranean countries. Also in light of COP 26 of the UNFCCC and UNEA5.2, the need for all nations to collaborate on combating climate change is clear and pressing. This cooperation is all the more crucial at this time of multiple crisis.
23. There is no need to summarize here further the findings of the wealth of reports and studies, the political commitments and declarations, and the calls for action by civil society, in support of more significant action to minimize the impacts and risks of climate change. It is important, however, to recall that climate change has a central place among the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 13), and that it is one of the focuses of the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025.
24. In recent years, especially with the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on October 2021 and 2053 net zero target, Türkiye’s efforts to combat climate change have gained momentum. With the recent Presidential Decree, the name of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization has been changed to the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. The Climate Change Office affiliated to the Ministry has been established. In addition, with the same Decree, CBCCAM (Coordination Board on Climate Change and Air Management) was replaced by the Coordination Board on Climate Change and Adaptation (CBCCA), number of its members was increased for full inclusivity, and it was stated that climate change negotiations would be conducted by a Chief Negotiator.
25. Türkiye has taken an increasing active role on international negotiations including UNFCCC and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In this context, Türkiye has initiated a project to update both the strategy and its action plan as well as the existing Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Besides, Türkiye is aimed to promulgate a Climate Change Law that includes policies, targets and regulations for climate change and Emission Trading System (ETS), to determine the institutional framework and to carry out actions in a holistic manner, unlike the existing Environment Law and other legislative regulations.

The MAP/Barcelona Convention Role and Responsibility in Responding to Climate Change

26. Climate change and its impacts are placing Mediterranean stakeholders in a position that requires maximum coordination, harmonization, and integration of different sectoral policies on mitigation and adaptation.

27. Türkiye shares the widely held position that coordination within and among international, regional and national institutions especially on climate change adaptation in the coastal and marine areas (which is closest to the MAP-Barcelona Convention mandate) is a necessary prerequisite to create an enabling environment for the formulation and implementation of efficient solutions to such a complex and cross-cutting challenges.
28. This is consistent with Article 4.1 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which commits all Parties to “formulate, implement, publish and regularly update national and, where appropriate, regional programmes containing...measures to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change,” and to “cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change.” Clearly, stronger coordination of policy agendas and the effective implementation of responsive action serves well the strengthening of the resilience potential of the Mediterranean region.
29. As emphasized in COP26 of UNFCCC which called upon the research community to further the understanding of global, regional and local impacts of climate change, response options and adaptation needs it is needed to acknowledge the important role of a broad range of stakeholders at the local, national and regional level, in averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. Regional collaboration centers would assist particularly developing country Parties intending to participate in cooperative approaches to implement climate commitments.
30. Decisions taken by the Contracting Parties of UNFCCC in COP20 and COP25 also expressed the intentions of Parties to cooperate and engage through multilateral, bilateral and regional complementary initiatives that aim to raise awareness and enhance education on climate change and its impacts, opportunities, and co-benefits. Most recently, the “Ocean and climate change dialogue 2022” mandated by the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC at its 26th session and held on 15 June 2022, has concluded calling for increased institutional support for ocean-climate action.
31. Decision makers have called for the integration of the oceans into the regional and global climate agendas at COP22 of the Barcelona Convention, COP26 of the UNFCCC and COP15 of the Convention of the Biological Diversity, to name just few. In today’s global context, Türkiye is a strong supporter of the idea that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, with its unique legally binding nature, mandate, history of achievements, and prominent role in defense of the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean as essential for sustainable development, must strengthen its own capacity to respond to what former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon characterized as the “defining challenge of our era” already in 2008.
32. Even if adaptation challenges are local and specific, solutions are often widely transferable and applicable on a regional, national or transnational scale⁴. The MAP-Barcelona Convention system, throughout its history, has been instrumental in linking these various dimensions, and must strengthen this role especially in relation to climate change.
33. In fact, UNEP/MAP has been implementing actions to assess climate change impacts in the Mediterranean marine and coastal zone dating back to the early 1990s. Responses to climate change have taken an increasingly urgent character in the strategies and

⁴ European Commission - the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change

programmes of the MAP system, culminating with the 2017 “Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas”⁵ and with the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy⁶ (MTS).

34. The current MTS Vision includes a clear reference to “Progress towards a [...] climate resilient Mediterranean Sea and Coast”, and Programme 3 has the following objectives: “(i) To strengthen the resilience of the Mediterranean natural and socioeconomic systems to climate change by promoting integrated adaptation approaches and better understanding of impacts; and (ii) To reduce anthropogenic pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems to maintain their contribution to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.”
35. Boosting capacity building and involvement of a range of actors – particularly the scientific community, private sector and civil society – in designing and implementing adaptation strategies and mobilizing funding resources was the commitment expressed by Contracting Parties in the Naples Ministerial Declaration at COP 21.
36. The need for a more ambitious efforts for mitigating and adapting to climate change was also confirmed in the Antalya Ministerial Declaration of COP 22 by recognizing the knowledge gaps, including projections, of the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation and the urgent need to strengthen efforts to bridge those gaps through building upon and reinforcing existing mechanisms. Thereby the Parties were called for more ambitious commitments to work with all involved international and regional partners and stakeholders to increase climate ambition, build resilience and lower emissions through strong collective actions⁷.
37. The Mediterranean Strategy of Sustainable Development (MSSD 2016-2025) indicates that scientific knowledge, data and information from research and monitoring systems remain insufficiently developed and shared. When such information resources have been developed, they are often not easily utilizable in decision-making processes. Moreover, even when information is utilizable, it is often not used. Awareness of the co-benefits of climate change policies for economic development is low, which hampers their implementation. Regional cooperation efforts are scattered and would benefit from better coordination⁸.
38. It is apparent that, given the global and regional character of climate change's effects, long-term and persuasive attempts under the UNEP-MAP system, which have been conducted by existing RACs, need more attention and support. Mitigating the adverse outcomes and providing new complementary approaches related to adaptation and mitigation efforts are clear priorities for the Contracting Parties.
39. Currently, all the existing MAP Components either directly or indirectly share common objectives regarding mitigation and adaptation of climate change at regional level. Collaboration to advance these common goals and objectives within their respective mandates and governance regulations is pivotal and can only be achieved through a stronger structure devoted to climate change within the MAP-Barcelona Convention system.
40. In preparation for the 2013 Functional Review of the UNEP/MAP system, Contracting Parties were asked about the areas that were currently not (sufficiently) covered and

⁵ Decision IG.22/6 “Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas”

⁶ Decision IG.25/1 “UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027”

⁷ Antalya Declaration, COP 22, 2021.

⁸ MSSD, p. 49.

should be developing into priority areas. The results of the questionnaire suggested climate change as a priority area not sufficiently covered. Responses also touched upon the impossibility of implementation of new areas due to the limited budget and heavy workload⁹.

41. Eight years later, the 2021 “Evaluation of the Implementation of the UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2016-2021” indicated that, critically, moderate to low progress has been made in addressing climate change adaptation issues through the implementation of that Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), and that the implementation of activities related to climate change adaptation and other emerging issues should be speeded up.
42. Looking at the future, the current MTS includes the following objective: “Legal, policy and institutional framework strengthened at the regional and national level to efficiently address climate change related challenges”.
43. The establishment of a Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change responds to the commitments and gaps exemplified in the previous paragraphs and goes exactly in the direction of a stronger legal, policy and institutional framework within the MAP-Barcelona Convention system. It is also important in order to better identify the obstacles to common climate policies’ implementation so far, such as financial, technology, information, institutional and legal constraints. These obstacles can then be addressed in shared plans and action as a first step in a long-term adaptation strategy.
44. The establishment of the RAC would have important and positive implications for the balance of the geographical location and hosting of MAP Components around the Mediterranean basin.
45. Due to the uncertainties that climate change will bring, the governance and management system must be rapidly adaptable and able to cope with possible changes in the entire Mediterranean basin. Adaptation does not seem possible without integrated planning studies and optimized/harmonized action; existing plans may focus on specific adaptation measures for a city or region, but centralized and coherent adaptation work for the Mediterranean Basin is indispensable in order to cope with the complex nature and effects of climate change. In this context, the establishment of the proposed Regional Activity Center would be a truly effective way to bring together time, effort, and resources to respond to climate change and its impacts.
46. At the regional level, strengthening the capacity and means of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system through the set-up of the proposed RAC will serve for the improvement of developing coastal countries’ capacity to respond to marine impacts of climate change, accession to finance, capacity building in the fields of planning, education and technology transfer. The technical competence of the proposed RAC will help Contracting Parties, MAP Components and other regional institutions to design and deliver Nature-Based Solutions and measures on climate change.
47. The proposed RAC will enhance the synergies and complementarity of work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system with the on-going activities of other regional institutions, also strengthening collaboration and joint efforts with those initiatives.
48. At the global level, it will support the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in responding to the need for international cooperation for the purpose of accelerating the

⁹ Functional Review of the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) System , Annex D: Questionnaire Results, UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.376/Inf.328 March 2013.

reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions and addressing adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change¹⁰.

49. In summary, and as stated at the 92nd Meeting of the Bureau (Istanbul, Türkiye, 24-25 March 2022), Türkiye is responding to the need for the establishment of a Regional activity center for climate Change in order to enhance collaborative actions to bring up climate sustainability in the Mediterranean. Such RAC would complement, strengthen and support the efforts of existing MAP Components, while responding in a more structured and coherent way to both the commitments taken at global and regional level and the urgent needs of the Mediterranean region.
50. At the 2022 General Assembly opening, Secretary-General António Guterres addressed the world community also with a clear call for action: “Lift your climate ambition. Listen to your people’s calls for change. Invest in solutions that lead to sustainable economic growth.” Türkiye believes that this call is significant for all actors in environmental governance, including the MAP-Barcelona Convention system. The establishment of the proposed RAC for Climate Change exemplifies the collective commitment of Contracting Parties to lift our climate ambitions, listen to the Mediterranean people’s call for action, and invest in solutions that lead to sustainable economic growth.

¹⁰ UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para.31

GOVERNANCE ISSUES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW RAC

51. In preparing this Proposal, Türkiye has considered and strictly adhered to the Governance Decision (IG.17/5) taken at the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Spain. That decision stipulates the following:

“In particular, the MAP governance system should ensure two crucial aspects:

 1. Strong and cooperative relationships among MAP Components and key actors, and
 2. A MAP organizational system that is:
 - Consistent with the intent and obligations of the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and strategies;
 - Responsive to contemporary needs and priorities;
 - Efficient and effective (in terms of good governance principles and measures) to meet future goals;
 - Structured to optimize the use of resources.”
52. It is important to emphasize here that the establishment of a Regional Activity Centre for Climate Change responds to the aspects listed above, as decided by the Contracting Parties, and in particular to the need for responsiveness “to contemporary needs and priorities”.
53. The same decision also stipulates the following:

“The mandate for each RAC should at a minimum include the following:

 - Long-term and horizontal goals and objectives, clearly identifying its role and the contribution to the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and Strategies;
 - Scope of work including governing principles by which the RAC will operate with clear reference to cooperation with other RAC’s, coordination by the MAP Coordinating Unit and the roles of the Focal Points’ meetings, the MCSD and the Meetings of the Contracting Parties;
 - Clear rules and procedures and related requirements/mechanisms to implement the principles.”
54. Finally, the decision clearly describes the “Coordination and Coherence Mechanisms” that, under the leadership of the UNEP/MAP Coordinator and the Coordinating Unit, govern the relationship among the Components of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system, and to which the proposed RAC for Climate Change will fully adhere.
55. Decision 20/13, taken by the 17th Meeting of the Contracting Parties in France in 2012, and also entitled “Governance” provides guidance and a template for the Host Country Agreements that need to be stipulated for hosting RACs.
56. Finally, Decision IG.25/3 “Governance”, taken by the 22nd of the Contracting Parties in Antalya in 2021, identifies the Common Operational Principles for MAP Components.
57. In submitting and eventually executing this Proposal, Türkiye is committed to respect fully the governance values and directions that the Contracting Parties have mandated, in particular through the above-mentioned Decisions.

THE PROPOSED RAC FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Mandate and Role

58. The following paragraphs on the mandate of the proposed RAC for Climate Change provide initial suggestions to be further developed in consultation with the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties. In accordance with Decision IG.17/5 "Governance", the mandate for the proposed RAC for Climate Change will ultimately include the following: (i) Long-term and horizontal goals and objectives, clearly identifying its role and the contribution to the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and Strategies; (ii) Scope of work including governing principles by which the proposed RAC will operate with clear reference to cooperation with other RAC's, coordination by the MAP Coordinating Unit and the roles of the Focal Points' meetings, the MCSD and the Meetings of the Contracting Parties; and (iii) Clear rules and procedures and related requirements/mechanisms to implement the principles.
59. The vision of the proposed RAC will take shape in compliance with the vision, mandate, strategies, and programmes of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. This vision will express the achievement of increased effectiveness of the work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change, based on values such as participation, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision.
60. The mission of the proposed RAC is to contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change in the context of the governance set-up of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system by providing assistance to the Contracting Parties in meeting their obligations under the Convention and Protocols, and in implementing the Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work, as well as the MSSD.
61. The proposed RAC's strategic directions and objectives will include (but will not be limited to) the strategic objectives set out by the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas. These are: appropriate institutional and policy frameworks, increased awareness and stakeholder engagement, and enhanced capacity building and cooperation; development of best practices (including low regret measures) for effective and sustainable adaptation to climate change impacts; access to existing and emerging finance mechanisms relevant to climate change adaptation, including international and domestic instruments; better informed decision-making through research and scientific cooperation and availability and use of reliable data, information and tools.
62. The above elements will be defined in a participative manner, in consultation with MAP Components, under the guidance of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit, and ultimately with the leadership of the Contracting Parties. Objectives, outcomes, main activities and targets of the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027 and of the current Programme of Work respectively, and the Ecological Objectives of relevance to climate change will compose the framework for the activities of the proposed RAC.
63. The proposed RAC will complement and enhance the on-going work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change, providing the needed focal point where such work gets structured, harmonized and amplified under the guidance of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit, and in coordination with the other Components.
64. The new RAC for Climate Change would not duplicate or compete with the activities on climate change that the MAP-Barcelona Convention system has already in place. Under the guidance of the Coordinating Unit, it would rather provide a focal point to

complement and support those activities, to amplify them through the additional availability of expertise and resources, and to fill existing gaps for the full execution of the new MTS and its climate change-related programmes and for the design and delivery of Nature-Based solutions to the impact of climate change. This would enhance the coherence, structure, visibility and impact of the MAP-Barcelona Convention responses to climate change, as it has been demonstrated in other priority areas mandated by the Convention and its Protocols, thanks to the work of the existing MAP components.

65. Progressively, the proposed RAC will be involved in defining and executing the strategies and programmes of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change, leveraging financial resources through projects consistent to the Programme of Work, strengthening the research, information and communication, monitoring and assessment functions in the field of climate change.
66. A preliminary set of Terms of Reference of the proposed RAC is detailed hereafter:
 - to provide focal point's functions to the MAP-Barcelona Convention system on climate change issues and work;
 - to contribute from an expert position to the definition of strategies, policies, programmes and activities, as well as Nature-Based solutions and measures of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in the field of climate change, including through cooperation with relevant institutions and organizations;
 - to review and evaluate global and regional processes of relevance to the MAP-Barcelona Convention system's work of climate change, and ensure consistency with global commitments and strategies;
 - to support strong and cooperative relationships with UNEP/MAP Components and with key actors in the field of climate change;
 - to incorporate the ecosystem approach adequately in the response to climate change;
 - to supervise and coordinate the implementation of climate change related projects consistent with the mandate of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and support technical activities on climate change, including those executed by other MAP Components;
 - to promote and support coordinated action at the national, regional, and global levels for the implementation of climate change obligations;
 - to support Contracting Parties and Partners in developing and executing such action and strengthening commitments on climate change;
 - to develop a strategic approach to climate adaptation research in the region involving academic, industry and government bodies and their partnership;
 - to enhance the knowledge regarding effects of climate change on the Mediterranean Sea and its coasts;
 - to provide a forum for the exchange of information on operational, technical, scientific, legal, and financial matters and support a platform to enhance sharing of knowledge, technical expertise and experiences on climate among Contracting Parties;
 - to liaise with NGOs, the academic and scientific community and socioeconomic actors concerned with climate change related issues;
 - to train experts;
 - to conduct fundraising activities from the public and private sectors to support the activities, projects and programmes to be developed or carried out in the context of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system;

- to bring to the attention of the Coordinating Unit and MAP Components relevant contacts, programmes, networks, innovations, etc., that could assist the system in its activities and mandate;
- to support the efficient work of the proposed RAC/Thematic Focal Points.

Host Country

67. Republic of Türkiye
68. As stipulated in Decision IG.25/3 “Governance”, Annex VI “Common Operational Principles for MAP Components”, a Host Country Agreement (HCA) will be entered into between UNEP and the designated representative of the Host Country Türkiye, covering the terms and conditions under which the proposed RAC will deliver its regional mandate, the regional role for the proposed RAC, provisions establishing the separate management and accounting of Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) transfers, details on the requested reporting and audit requirements, and a description of the sources of funding including the contribution of the Host Country Government, details of the latter (financial and in-kind), including specification whether the RAC premises are provided at no cost.

Host Institution

69. Ankara University Research Center of the Sea and Maritime Law (DEHUKAM). The proposed RAC will be an evolution of the Mediterranean Climate Change Research Center (Akdeniz İklim Değişikliği Araştırma Merkezi – AİDAM), located inside DEHUKAM.
70. DEHUKAM has gained its legal entity status under Code 6550 (Araştırma Altyapılarının Desteklenmesine Dair Kanun) (3) and has become a national center according to the Decision of the Research Infrastructures Commission of 7 October 2020.
71. DEHUKAM is the first and the only national institution in Türkiye to specifically focus on the sea, environment and maritime law. DEHUKAM is a highly respected and distinguished institution nationally and internationally. DEHUKAM has signed many protocols and memorandums of understanding with familiar and relevant respected institutions all around the World. These institutions with whom DEHUKAM has signed a protocol or a memorandum of understanding include but not limited to: IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI), Rhodes Academy of Ocean Law and Policy, Virginia University Center for Oceans Law and Policy (COLP), Western Sydney University International Centre for Ocean Governance (ICOG), Instituto Marítimo Español (IME), The University for Peace (UPEACE), Brazilian Institute for The Law of the Sea (BILOS), La Universidad Marítima Internacional de Panamá (UMIP), and Ministry Of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador.
72. DEHUKAM is in a leading role in the community of the sea, environment and maritime law. With many cooperation protocols, DEHUKAM has a large network in the field. DEHUKAM is also the leading institution to research and focus on the environmental and marine issues of the Eastern Mediterranean. DEHUKAM organizes symposiums, conferences and workshops in the fields of environmental crisis, climate change, marine biodiversity, maritime delimitation, marine shipping, fisheries and refugee trafficking in the Mediterranean. In this context, DEHUKAM is the leading organization where the current legal and environmental issues of the Mediterranean sea

are researched and studied. DEHUKAM is also maintaining research and education in the subject of blue economy.

73. DEHUKAM is located in the capital city of Türkiye: Ankara. Ankara is geographically located approximately in the middle of Türkiye. In that sense, DEHUKAM is in a reaching distance to all four seas of Türkiye: The Mediterranean Sea, The Aegean Sea, The Marmara Sea and the Black Sea. DEHUKAM's activities are much required by the companies, government bodies or NGOs in these seas. DEHUKAM provides valuable legal consultancy to relevant parties working in these seas.
74. DEHUKAM can build and maintain important relations with many high-level governmental bodies, other academic institutions and also critical companies by taking into account its location. All of the ministries and the Presidency of Türkiye is located in Ankara, within 5 kilometers from DEHUKAM. This geographic immediacy helps DEHUKAM as it has many ongoing relations with important governmental bodies. Thanks to this vicinity, DEHUKAM has established and maintained a valuable relation with the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. The critical cooperation between DEHUKAM and the Ministry is still ongoing as both parties started a new project.
75. Ankara recently has become a center for many companies maintaining international production and shipping. These companies require legal consultancy in the sea and maritime law as they are engaged in shipping goods and producing equipment for sea vehicles. Since DEHUKAM is in the vicinity of these companies, it is generally very easy to establish and maintain relations between DEHUKAM and companies.
76. Ankara is also a center for academicians and distinguished students. In Ankara, there are 24 universities, more than 10.000 academicians, more than 200.000 university students and 11 faculties of law. DEHUKAM, being in Ankara, which is located in the center of Türkiye, can reach many academic institutions, academicians and students. This large pool of academicians and students help DEHUKAM to work with distinguished talented individuals. Ankara is also a center for many various international symposiums.
77. DEHUKAM can reach most of the academicians and institutions around Europe, North Africa and Asia minor. Indeed, DEHUKAM has established strong connections with competent maritime institutions and individuals from Italy, Malta, United Kingdom, Greece, Tunisia, Israel, Palestine, The Balkans, Bangladesh. DEHUKAM's influence is not limited to these regions. DEHUKAM has also established valuable relations with institutions from Panama, Jamaica, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Argentina, China, Japan and Australia.
78. Since AIDAM is established within DEHUKAM, it is also located in Ankara, the Capital of Türkiye. AIDAM utilizes this geographical capacity to its near maximum as currently AIDAM has established very valuable connections with Environment Agency, Presidency of Climate Change and the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. Every single critical governmental institution related to climate change and environmental protection is located in Ankara. Thanks to the adjacency to these important institutions, AIDAM is in a very important position where it is possible to provide consultancy and legal assistance to important policy makers. AIDAM holds the power to influence policy makers of Türkiye thanks to its expertise and geographical adjacency. Currently, the Parliament of Türkiye (TBMM) is in preparations for a Climate Change Law and AIDAM is one of the most influential

institutions in this process as AIDAM is also providing consultancy to several critical public bodies like ministries and agencies.

79. AIDAM has taken a leading role in many works including but not limited to Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Barcelona Convention. AIDAM Currently leads a consortium consisting of high-level public servants from various ministries of Türkiye as a center for coordination between related public bodies on the issue of BBNJ.

Financial Management of the Proposed RAC

80. The proposed RAC will have the necessary functional and financial autonomy in meeting its regional mandate.
81. The proposed RAC, whose establishment is based on the ambitious but necessary and realistic vision of a climate-resilient Mediterranean, needs appropriate and differentiated financial management mechanisms to achieve its objectives and to manage different sources of funding, including contributions from the Host Country Government, transfers from the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) as agreed by the Meetings of the Contracting Parties, voluntary contributions from Contracting Parties and project funding from donors.
82. Türkiye understands that the share of MTF transfers to RACs is a decision which rests with the COP.
83. The proposed RAC will submit financial and progress reports to UNEP/MAP following the UNEP/MAP formats for this purpose under the relevant legal instruments signed between UNEP and the RACs for the transfer of financial resources.
84. The proposed RAC may report to UNEP/MAP on the contributions received from the Host Country Government and will be responsible for reporting to donors with whom projects are in place under the relevant legal agreements and for informing UNEP/MAP accordingly.
85. The Host Country Türkiye will make appropriate provisions for operating and recurrent costs of the RACs (financial and in-kind). Türkiye is ready to fund the proposed RAC for such purposes after its establishment.
86. Türkiye's contributions to the proposed RAC will be paid directly by the Turkish Government to the RAC. The amount of such resources (cash and in-kind) will be pledged at the Meetings of the Contracting Parties.
87. The Host Country will provide premises at no cost to the MAP system, with the possible exception of a nominal fee. Property, funds and assets transferred to the RACs via the relevant legal instruments signed between UNEP and the proposed RAC will be subject to the requirements established by these legal instruments.
88. The proposed RAC will have an important role on fundraising for climate change in the MAP system. The proposed RAC will increase the financial capacity to combat climate change.
89. Within the scope of its applicable regulations, rules and standard business practices, the Turkish Government and UNEP, individually or jointly, will seek additional funding or other support for the RAC from sources other than the Mediterranean Trust Fund, in the framework of a MAP Joint Resource Mobilization Plan and for the purpose of

increasing the capacity of the RAC in the implementation of its programme of work as adopted by the Meetings of the Contracting Parties.

90. The Host Institution DEHUKAM is funded generously by the Presidency of Türkiye, miscellaneous projects, legal consultancies, and other small financial supports. DEHUKAM manages a very large amount of financial wealth. Since DEHUKAM provides a service in a very rare-found area of expertise, its services are highly valued. DEHUKAM increases its budget every year via re-evaluation of activities of DEHUKAM, new projects and consultancies. Due to DEHUKAM's protocol with Ankara University, DEHUKAM can utilize and receive support from Ankara University funds within certain limits and conditions.
91. Every project, consultancy and lecture is a financial resource for DEHUKAM. DEHUKAM maintains a significant amount of financial capacity thanks to the activities. DEHUKAM has served many private and public institutions in exchange for great sums of financial support. DEHUKAM still continues to generate a large amount of wealth beside its annual fund from the Presidency of Türkiye.
92. Since AIDAM, which will evolve into the proposed RAC for Climate Change once agreed by the Contracting Parties, is established directly within DEHUKAM, AIDAM can utilize the financial capacity of DEHUKAM. DEHUKAM is committed to supporting AIDAM in every way possible, including the financial support. Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change is specifically committed to financially support AIDAM exclusively. Currently AIDAM is in a great position where it is possible to use the financial capacity of both DEHUKAM and the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. In this context, AIDAM is very advantaged state financially.
93. The proposed RAC will submit an annual audit report to the MAP Coordinating Unit and the Bureau of the Contracting Parties. Furthermore, it will ensure that such audit is performed by an independent and reputable audit firm.

Organizational Structure of the proposed RAC

94. The proposed RAC will have an organizational structure appropriate for the fulfilment of its regional mandate.
95. The personnel of the proposed RAC, including the Director, will have a category different from UN Officials as defined by the General Assembly, in Resolution 76(I) of 7 December 1946. RAC personnel will be selected and hired by the RAC Director/entity hosting the RAC in accordance with the applicable national rules and procedures and based on approved Terms of Reference (ToRs) elaborated nationally with the involvement of the Coordinating Unit, as appropriate. The RAC Director will be appointed by the Host Country Government or any other competent authority, with the UNEP/MAP Secretariat being involved in this process, as appropriate.
96. Currently, the Host Institution DEHUKAM is administrated by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is the highest level authorized and responsible decision-making body of DEHUKAM and has all kinds of administrative and financial responsibility and authority. The Board of Directors has established the Board of Advisors with the aim of having more diverse opinions and alternative suggestions on the main activities of DEHUKAM. Below the Board of Directors and the Board of Advisors, there is a CEO to carry out the decisions of the Board of Directors. DEHUKAM also has a Board

of Maritime Experts consisting of many important and respected academicians and experts working on the sea, environment, and maritime law. In total DEHUKAM has more than 20 active personnel. This personnel ranges from administrative assistants to senior researchers.

97. Currently AIDAM carries out many activities, programmes and projects directed to the environment and climate issues utilizing most of DEHUKAM's personnel. AIDAM can request and task any DEHUKAM personnel with any AIDAM work. Most of the personnel from DEHUKAM are working on the issues of climate change and biodiversity within AIDAM.
98. In accordance to the 6550 Numbered Code Article 6/a, DEHUKAM has the authority to establish research infrastructures within itself. DEHUKAM puts a great importance and effort into climate and environment issues so AIDAM has been established by DEHUKAM in order to further intensify and develop the studies done on climate change, protection of the seas and environment law. AIDAM has the rights to utilize every necessary facility of DEHUKAM. AIDAM works in parallel to DEHUKAM and carries out its works with the help from DEHUKAM.
99. Being located within DEHUKAM, AIDAM, which will evolve into the proposed RAC once agreed by the COP, can rely on the organizational structure which consists of the following:
 - Board of Directors (Chief of Board and 7 Board Members),
 - CEO,
 - 18 Senior Researchers,
 - 5 Project Researchers,
 - 3 Voluntary Researchers, and
 - 2 Administrative Personnel
100. The above structure will be adapted as necessary to best be able to implement the mandate and role of the proposed RAC.
101. The employment policy for the proposed RAC will be shaped under the national legislation and rules, within the legal framework for the proposed RAC. In this sense, including experts from different fields to contribute to mission of the proposed RAC will be encouraged. Efforts will be made to assure the participation of representatives from both technical and social sciences related areas of the climate change. Locally and internationally recruited non-UN personnel whose positions are funded by the Government will be appointed by the Director of the proposed RAC in accordance with the personnel policies of the proposed RAC¹¹. The selection and appointment of UN employees assigned to the proposed RAC will conform to UN norms and procedures.
102. As it is the case for other MAP Components, a system of RAC/Thematic Focal Points will be put in place to guide the work of the proposed RAC, in accordance with governance decisions of the Contracting Parties and under the leadership of the Coordinating Unit.

Premises and Equipment of the Host Institution

103. Address of the Host Institution: Emek Mahallesi 19. Sokak No:84 Çankaya/ANKARA

¹¹ Decision IG.20/13 on Governance, p.231.

104. Currently DEHUKAM owns a 4-storey building and a single-storey 10-room center. Within these buildings, there are designated rooms, desks, and technical equipment for every employee. DEHUKAM also has a Maritime Expertise Library specifically built for the sea, environment and maritime law resources. The DEHUKAM Maritime Expertise Library has 2000 books and 850 articles ready to be read. DEHUKAM also has two meeting rooms and conference halls. These meeting rooms can be used as a classroom for the LLM and PhD students too. Furthermore, DEHUKAM can also utilize the technical capacity of Ankara University. Ankara University, being the highest-funded university of Türkiye, has many buildings, technical equipment and goods which we can't possibly extensively write down. AIDAM being a research infrastructure within DEHUKAM, can use every item of physical resource of DEHUKAM. DEHUKAM is committed to providing technical and physical assistance to AIDAM.
105. AIDAM currently utilizes most of DEHUKAM's physical resources effectively and efficiently without any limits, and currently owns its own physical resources focused on its research activity. The main needs of AIDAM generally consist of typical office equipment and goods. The office equipment includes but is not limited to: computers, printers, monitors, scanners, audio devices, computer peripherals, desk, chairs, AC units, and projectors.

Intellectual Property Rights

106. If the proposed RAC anticipates the formation of intellectual property that can be protected in relation to a specific activity, project, or program, the proposed RAC will own the intellectual property and grant the other UNEP/MAP Components a non-exclusive, non-assignable worldwide license to use the intellectual property or any portion thereof for official purposes. For certain activities, initiatives, or programs, intellectual property rights can be shared between the proposed RAC and other UNEP/MAP Components¹².

Publication Policy

107. The proposed RAC will contribute to UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention System with its publications related to climate change. In this regard, the proposed RAC will cooperate with other MAP Components to harmonize the publication process by improving the information sharing mechanism. The publication policy of the proposed RAC will strengthen the knowledge base for science and environmental policy making for climate change in the Mediterranean region. Finally, the proposed RAC will contribute to enhancing the impact and visibility of MAP across the region, with its publication policy.

Data Security And Policies

108. The proposed RAC will ensure protecting, in accordance with the decisions of the Contracting Parties, the confidentiality of information transmitted to the RAC, in the framework of its mandate, regional role and tasks with its own personnel and capacity.

¹² Decision IG.25/3, Governance, p. 218

Meetings of the Proposed RAC

109. Meetings and Conferences convened by the proposed RAC will be in accordance with the relevant national rules and procedures of the entity hosting the RAC, with the exception of the MAP Components/Thematic Focal Points Meetings that will be organized in line with applicable UNEP/MAP practices, procedures and working methods.

Cooperation with Other Institutions and Actors

110. The proposed RAC is expected, like the other MAP Components, to develop and maintain collaboration with other institutions and entities, within the Mediterranean region and beyond. Development of legal instruments such as MOUs on such collaboration should be done, in line with existing UNEP/MAP rules and policies, and/or with the existing rules and policies of the Host Country Government and in a transparent and collaborative manner.
111. As indicated above, DEHUKAM has signed many protocols and memorandums of understanding with many respected institutions all around the world. This will facilitate the establishment of a network also for the proposed RAC, within the parameters and under the coordination of the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit.

CONCLUSIONS AND TIMELINE FOR THE POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF A COP DECISION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RAC

112. Türkiye is ready to host and support this new MAP Component in line with the relevant Governance decisions of the Contracting Parties, offering adequate commitment and resources that will ultimately support, as it has steadfastly done for the past decades, the entire MAP system.
113. Contributing in a meaningful way to the response to the climate change crisis at the regional and global levels is a priority for Türkiye. The present proposal is, therefore, formally submitted for consideration by the Contracting Parties. Türkiye requests that it is presented to the 93rd Meeting of the Bureau (Thessaloniki, Greece, 30 November- 1 December 2022) to initiate the process of consideration and decision that should be concluded at the 23rd Conference of the Contracting Parties - COP 23 (Slovenia, December 2023).
114. As the host Country of the 22nd Conference of the Parties (Antalya, December 2021) and current President of the Bureau of the Barcelona Convention, Türkiye is committed to the ambitious responsibility of hosting a Regional Activity Centre for Climate Change, and offers its leadership, expertise and resources to the full implementation of the Convention and its Protocols in the Mediterranean region.
115. In this endeavor, Türkiye counts on the support of all Contracting Parties, of the Secretariat and of the other MAP Components. Following a positive review by the Bureau, it is expected that this proposal will be revised and finalized as necessary for submission to the Meeting of National Focal Points in September 2022.

116. After final negotiations and revisions, the decision on the establishment of the RAC for Climate Change should be taken by the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties planned in (Slovenia, December 2023).