



**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention

26 May 2025
Original: English

The 26th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)

Corinth, Greece, 23 June 2025

Agenda Item 5: Specific issues

Note by the Secretariat

The present document provides an overview on the following specific issues the 26th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the MCSD is invited to comment, while detailed information is provided in the Annexes:

- a) Updated MSSD for 2026-2035 period and new flagship initiatives
- b) Partially renewed MCSD Membership for the Biennium 2027-2028 and proposal for extension of the Membership
- c) Sustainability Considerations in UNEP/MAP Programme of Work 2026-2027
- d) Inputs for the 21st MCSD Meeting to COP24

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Report on Specific Issues

I. MSSD 2026-2035 and new flagship initiatives

MSSD 2026-2035

1. Responding to the mandate of the 23rd meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP23), the updated MSSD has been prepared through an inclusive consultation process under the leadership and guidance of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and of its Steering Committee.
2. To this aim the 25th MCSD Steering Committee (SC) Meeting (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2024) and five meetings of the Extended MCSD SC took place, respectively on 30 October 2023 online, 3 December 2023 in Portorož, Slovenia, 21 February 2024 online, 12 November, 20 December 2024 online. The Thematic Ad Hoc MCSD Meeting 12-13 February 2025 in Istanbul, Türkiye reviewed the first draft of the updated MSSD.
3. Substantive work was undertaken by the MAP Components while in July 2024 three Thematic MSSD update Working Groups (WGs) were set up with experts designated by the Contracting Parties, specifically on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), Circular Economy and Ocean Economy/Sustainable Finance. Nine meetings of these WGs took place, both online and in person, in the period October 2024 – March 2025.
4. The MSSD updates consist of:
 - i. **MSSD vision** is confirmed, emphasizing the need to **ensure climate resilience**, and further reinforcing the importance of **biological diverse, productive, conserved, restored and wisely used ecosystems**
 - ii. Reference to the **most recent relevant global and regional policy frameworks**
 - iii. Sections on **status and challenges of the marine and coastal environment and the socio-economic landscape** with updated information
 - iv. The **six MSSD objectives, Strategic Directions and Actions** remain relevant with a number of adjustments, as follows:

Objective 1 on sustainable development of marine and coastal areas is revised to address a broader relevance to Marine Special Planning, complemented by the actions aligned with the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAPBIO).

Objective 1 includes **two new flagship initiatives** on the Mediterranean Coast Day and the Promotion of the protection and conservation of Seagrass/Posidonia Meadows as crucial ecosystem. The Flagship initiative MedFund has evolved into the flagship initiative Achieving 30 by 30 MPAs/OECMs Targets.

Objective 2, on resource management, food production and food security, updates tackle an improved forests management, water desalinization and natural resources reuse approaches. Objective 2 includes **two new flagship initiatives** on Mediterranean Forest Initiative and on the Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE Nexus) in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum.

Objective 3, on sustainable Mediterranean cities updates refer to actions tackling sustainable consumption patterns among citizens with reference to waste management and to the need to redesigning transportation offers in order to improve urban air quality. A new action is added

on the need to ensure green transitions for cities based on Nature based solutions (NBS) and improve energy efficiency of infrastructures. Objective 3 includes one new **flagship initiative** on Mediterranean Network of Zero Net Cities.

Objective 4 includes **one new flagship initiative on** delivering 1 Terawatt (TW) of renewable energy capacity in the Mediterranean by 2030.

Objective 5, on transition towards a green and blue economy, presents one of the main novelties of the proposed updates of the MSSD: the inclusion of Strategic Directions and Actions specifically tackling sustainable finance and Mediterranean Green Taxonomy. In complement, further attention has been given to sustainable business models, to carbon pricing, sustainability assessments for public investments. Objective 5 includes **one new flagship initiative on** Suitable blue tourism.

Objective 6, on Governance, better focuses on multi-level institutional capacities on sustainable development and the full involvement of all stakeholders, in particular local authorities, youth and women, financial institutions and private sector.

The support to informed policy making and policy foresight evidence based has been equally reinforced. Objective 6 includes **three new flagship initiatives**: Women leadership for SDGs, Youth involvement in MSSD decision process and implementation and the Mediterranean Green Week.

5. All the above changes were proposed to and or agreed in principle during the Thematic Ad Hoc MCSD Meeting of 12-13 February 2025 in Istanbul, Türkiye.
6. After this Meeting the Secretariat further worked on the section on Targets and Indicators, as well as on some Actions to reflect the comments of the Thematic Ad Hoc MCSD Meeting.
7. In addition to the changes indicated above, it was agreed to change the order of the Objectives with the Climate Change being the first Objective of the MSSD 2026-2035 with two new Strategic Directions that focus on energy transition and deployment of renewable energies and on national/local capacities in the application of nature-based solution for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
8. MSSD Targets are aggregated at Objective level and linked to MSSD dashboard indicators and SDGs. They give due consideration to the most recent relevant global and regional commitments.
9. The current MSSD targets on reduction of waste generation and on the accession to the Aarhus Convention have been maintained, while the target on green or sustainable public procurement is integrated in the broader one on taxonomy for sustainable investments into national finance regulations. The new targets address renewable energies, impact of climate change, GES, water, air quality, sustainable business models, taxonomy for sustainable development, subsidiarity and synergies between policies at different levels of decision- making across sectors.
10. Some actions under the Objective 5 on Transition towards a green and blue economy and sustainable finance have been merged, refining and reinforcing the aspects linked to sustainable business models and circular economy models, climate change principles and criteria embedded into decision-making on public and private investment. A number of new actions have been added to better tackle environmental tax reform, extended Producer Responsibility and integration of the polluter-pays principle, extended producer responsibility and payments for ecosystem services into national finance policies.
11. The revised MSSD document was disseminated to the MCSD Members for consultation. Comments and suggestions were received by Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain, Tunisia, Eco Union, Medcities, MedPan, Mohammed VI Foundation, PAM:
 - i. New Actions are proposed to consider Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
 - ii. A **new flagship initiative** is proposed **under Objective 1 on Climate Change** and related to educational initiatives (**Mediterranean ESD Network: Platform** for collaboration among

schools, universities, and civil societies. **Mediterranean Green Skills Program:** Training for youth and women in sustainable business practices)

- iii. In addition to a general comment to shorten the description of some targets, some refinements are proposed:

Target 2 on renewable energies to embed reference to food systems transformation and building sectors.

Target 3 on impact of climate change to make reference also to **investments on climate-resilient infrastructures**

Target 9 on recycled municipal solid waste to make reference to biowaste, packaging waste and on the most environmentally damaging SUP products as a priority, while promoting waste hierarchy with emphasis on waste prevention including food waste.

- iv. Energy security is proposed to be integrated to the title of **Objective 1 on Climate Change**
- v. Reference to **United Nations' Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030** has been added to the background section as well as with Objective 6 Actions.

12. **Objective 5** may require further discussion, in particular on the Strategic Direction 5.5: Lay the groundwork for a Mediterranean Taxonomy of Green and Sustainable Activities.

13. More generic comments indicate considering potential merging options for some Actions, as well as the title of some Strategic Direction

14. Based on the updated MSSD text, the Secretariat included in the document the **Executive Summary**. As it is being presented for the first time, proposed changes are **highlighted in yellow** in this document. The proposed text to be deleted is shown in strikethrough modality.

15. For easy of reference, **in the MSSD text:**

- i. Parts **highlighted in yellow** address the **changes proposed prior to the Ad Hoc Thematic MCSD meeting of February 2025**
- ii. Parts **highlighted in Green** address the changes and comments agreed **during and after the Ad Hoc Thematic MCSD meeting of February 2025**, and as per MSSD advance version shared for the consultation on 24 April 2025
- iii. Changes **highlighted in Blue** address the **outcome of the consultation**.

16. As per agreement of the Thematic Ad Hoc MCSD Meeting the final version of the updated text of the MSSD will include, as Annex, the concept notes of the new MSSD flagship initiatives.

Flagship initiatives

17. The proposed new MSSD Flagship Initiatives were submitted to the Thematic Ad Hoc MCSD meeting (Istanbul, Türkiye, 12-13 February 2025), which indicated to simplify their presentation by preparing a shorter document focusing on key objectives, key actions, partners and linkages with MSSD Objectives, targets and links to Barcelona Convention Protocols, when relevant.

18. The Meeting also indicated to add the presentation as Annex to the updated MSSD, while integrating current and new flagship initiatives with a coherent approach.

19. The 10 proposed new MSSD Flagship Initiatives are listed hereby and are presented as Annex I:

- i. Protection and restoration of Seagrass/Posidonia Meadows as crucial ecosystems
- ii. Towards a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Blue Tourism in the Mediterranean
- iii. Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE Nexus) in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum

- iv. Mediterranean Forest Initiative
- v. Youth involvement in the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development implementation
- vi. Mediterranean Network of Zero Net Cities
- vii. Women leadership for Environment and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean
- viii. Med Coast Day: Inspiring action to safeguard our coasts
- ix. Mediterranean Green Week
- x. Delivering 1TW of renewable energy capacity in the Mediterranean by 2030 (TERAMED)

20. The current MSSD includes 11 flagship initiatives which are being successfully developed at a different pace or have been finalized, while the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, even if not initially foreseen as one of the 2016-2025 MSSD flagship initiatives, has been progressively reported as such to the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and to its Steering Committee (SC), given its relevance for the MSSD Strategic Direction 6.4-Promote education and research for sustainable development.

21. Only the flagship initiative ‘Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels’ has not been launched yet.

22. In the framework of the updated MSSD the flagship initiatives should be better linked to the MSSD targets. The current flagship initiatives that have been finalized should evolve, considering also merging opinions in order to provide a broader and consistent framework of objectives and actions that can more easily catalyze partners, stakeholders and potential funds. The current flagship initiative not yet launched might be discontinued.

23. To this end the following could be considered:

- The ‘**MedFund**’ flagship initiative is proposed to evolve towards the initiative tackling the 30 by 30 MPAs/ OECMs Targets, as already proposed in the updated MSSD.
- The flagship initiative ‘**Undertake regional assessments to achieve waste reduction**’ might be merged with the initiative ‘**MedUrbanTools**’ under the Objective 4 on sustainable and resilient Mediterranean cities, specifically under on Strategic Direction 4.2: Encourage inclusive urbanization and strengthen capacities for participatory and integrated human settlement planning and management. Respective objectives and actions are in fact complementary. This approach would allow the two leading institutions to join forces also in terms of opportunities to finance actions and identification of new regional/sub-regional projects.
- The flagship initiative ‘**Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels**’ is proposed to be discontinued until a MCSD member or stakeholders present a sound proposal for its development.
- The flagship initiative ‘**Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Action Plan towards 2030**’ is included under objective 6 of the updated MSSD, *as de facto* MSSD flagship initiative.

24. Based on the discussion during the Thematic Ad Hoc MCSD meeting of 12-13 February 2025, the flagship initiative ‘Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE Nexus)’, the COP24 endorsement should include the mandate to prepare the related Action Plan.

25. The following table summarizes the proposed approach, integrating current and new flagship initiative of the updated MSSD.

MSSD OBJ	Strategic Directions	Flagship Initiative	Leading partner	MSSD Dashboard Indicators	MSSD Targets	SDGs
OBJ 1 Climate Change	SD 1.1: Increase scientific knowledge, education, raise awareness	Regional science-policy interface mechanism to prepare consolidated regional scientific assessments on climate change trends, impacts and adaptation and mitigation options (MedEcc)	MedEcc Supported by UNEP/MAP, Plan Bleu/RAC, UfM	Indicator 21 , Green House Gas emissions per capita (related to GDP) Core indicator 5 , Carbon dioxide emissions per capita	Target 1: by 2030 All Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention should develop and submit their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to contribute to limiting global warming to 1.5°C, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 43% and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050	13
	SD 1.5: economy decarbonization energy transition and renewable energies	NEW: Delivering 1TW of renewable energy capacity in the Mediterranean by 2030 (TERAMED)	Presented by ECOUNION. Promoted by diverse stakeholders in the region	Indicator 22b , Renewable energy share in the total energy consumption	Target 2: By 2030, all Mediterranean countries will reach a minimum of 20% of renewable energy in their energy mix, by increasing the renewable energy share derived from renewable resources in total final consumption, thus encouraging shifting towards energy transition	7
OBJ 2 Health, productivity, restoration and resilience	SD 2.1: implementation, compliance and monitoring with regional requirements of regulatory and policy frameworks of BC for coastal and marine management	Achieving 30 by 30 MPAs/ OECMs Targets (Update of MEDFUND Flagship Initiative)	SPA/RAC	Indicator 7: Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine territorial waters Indicator 10: Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems Core indicator 10: Evolution of Mediterranean protected areas and their associated surfaces NEW indicator: % of MPAs with effective management plans	Target 6: By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, and sustainably managed by applying ecosystem-based approaches including biodiversity and climate change-informed marine spatial planning, and by conducting environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments	14
		NEW: Mediterranean Coast Day	PAP/RAC			13, 14, 15, 16, 17
	SD 2.3: Promote well connected ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures nature-based solutions at national, transboundary and Mediterranean level and enhance stakeholder awareness on the value of ecosystem services and the implications of biodiversity loss	Promote the IUCN Green list to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of parks managing bodies	IUCN-Green List	Indicator 9a: Number of protected areas participating in the Green List initiative	Target 6: By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, and sustainably managed by applying ecosystem-based approaches including biodiversity and climate change-informed marine spatial planning, and by conducting environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments	15
		NEW: Promote the protection and conservation of Seagrass/Posidonia Meadows as crucial ecosystem	SPA/RAC	Indicator 7: Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine territorial waters	Target 6: By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, and sustainably managed by applying ecosystem-based approaches including biodiversity and climate change-informed marine spatial planning, and by conducting environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments	14
	SD 3.1: circular/regenerative use, management and conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Natural Resources	NEW: Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE Nexus) in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum (WEFE NEXUS)	MEDProgramme; UfM; DG NEAR	Indicator 12 – Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources (SDG Indicator 6.4.2)	Target 6: By 2030, all the Mediterranean countries will have at least 50% of their population using safely managed drinking water services, secure access to surface and groundwater, in quantity (to guarantee food security and nutrition) and quality (public health issue via sanitation) in a multi-level context of water stress, competing demands and growing shortages, particularly for vulnerable populations and women	6
		NEW: Mediterranean Forest Initiative	UNEP	Indicator 10: Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems		15

MSSD OBJ	Strategic Directions	Flagship Initiative	Leading partner	MSSD Dashboard Indicators	MSSD Targets	SDGs
OBJ 4 Sustainable and resilient Mediterranean cities	SD 4.1: Apply holistic and integrated spatial planning processes and other related instruments, as well as improved compliance with respective rules and regulations, to increase economic, social and territorial cohesion and reduce pressures on the environment	Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award	UNEP/MAP MedCities	Indicator 20 Waste generated and treated by type of waste and treatment type	Target 9: By 2030, Mediterranean countries have achieved at least a 50% reduction in municipal waste generation per capita, and have ensured that at least 60% of municipal solid waste is sustainably recycled, composted or managed, including separate collection and material recovery	11, 12
		NEW: Mediterranean Network of Zero Net Cities	UNEP/MAP MedCities			
	SD 4.2: Encourage inclusive urbanization and strengthen capacities for participatory and integrated human settlement planning and management	Sustainable urban toolbox for the Mediterranean Flagship initiative 'Undertake regional assessments, knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, to achieve waste reduction' to be merged	MedCities (MIO-ECSDE)			
OBJ 5 Sustainable, green, blue and circular economy, sustainable finance	SD 5.3: Encourage innovation and sustainable business solutions to advance towards the objectives of a just low-carbon, circular, green and blue economy	WeMedBusiness Award	SCP/RAC	NEW Indicator Option 1: Number of companies publishing sustainability reports NEW Indicator Option 2: Number of Mediterranean countries that have implemented the SCP Action Plan	Target 11: By 2030, 50% of Mediterranean Countries have in place effective regulatory and policy frameworks, including economic incentives, aimed at facilitating the development of sustainable business models that integrate circularity and eco-innovation principles in the green and blue economies, while contributing to the development of non-pollutant and socially inclusive economies, in line with the Sustainable Consumption and Production Regional Action Plan for the Mediterranean	12
		NEW: Sustainable blue tourism	ECO-UNION IDDRI			
		Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels	Not launched yet			
OBJ 6 Improve governance at all levels, cooperation and partnerships in support of resilience and sustainable development	SD 6.3: Promote the engagement of civil society, scientists, youth and women, financial institutions, private sector, local communities and other stakeholders in the governance process at all levels, in order to secure inclusive whole of society processes and integrity in decision-making	Encourage the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention	MIO-ECSDE COMSUD MEPIELAN	Indicator 27: Public participation and public access to environmental information	Target 15: By 2030, most of the Mediterranean countries have acceded to the Aarhus Convention	16
		NEW: Women leadership for SDGs	UNEP/MAP with women representatives of MCSD members		Target 13: By 2030, 70% of Mediterranean Countries have mechanisms in place to ensure subsidiarity and synergies between policies at different levels of decision- making across sectors in the long-term and across border thus enhancing policy coherence on sustainable development (PCSD), including involvement of stakeholders	4, 5, 17
		NEW: Youth involvement in MSSD decision process and implementation	Mediterranean Youth Group			
		NEW: MED Green Week	UNEP/MAP UFM			
	SD 6.4: Promote the implementation, and monitoring of the SD Strategies at all levels of government, considering synergies and tradeoffs between different policies and sectors, including intersectional management (WEFE NEXUS) through policy coherence for sustainable development based on whole of government approach, inter-ministerial coordination and multi-level government	Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligation	MEPIELAN		Target 14:By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development	4
	6.5: Promote education and research for sustainable development	Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development	MIO-ECSDE	Indicator 28: Education for Sustainable Development Core indicator 3, Average years of schooling		
	6.6: Strengthen regional capabilities for information management and enhance the promotion of evidence-informed policymaking and foresight	Establish a publicly-accessible Mediterranean integrated information system through a triumvirate of national governments, international institutions and private sector to collate and transparently display information on the state (MSSD Dashboard and Mediterranean Observatory on Environment and Sustainable Development)	Plan Bleu	MSSD Dashboard Indicators and core indicators		

II. Updated Membership of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development

26. Based on the COP19 Decision IG.22/17 on the Reform of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents¹, the Contracting Parties, MCSD Members and the Secretariat (in consultation with UNEP/MAP Components, as appropriate) may nominate members of the Commission, other than those representing the Contracting Parties, based on written expressions of interest, criteria and modalities provided for in Decision IG.19/6 on “MAP/Civil society cooperation and partnership”. The Decision equally defines the general selection criteria that will apply.

27. While the 22 Contracting Parties are permanent MCSD Members, based on paragraph 9. II. of the Composition of the MCSD of Decision IG.22/17 the mandate of the Members representing six groups of stakeholders, namely Local Authorities, Socio-economic Stakeholders, Non-Governmental Organizations, Scientific Community Group, Intergovernmental Organizations and Parliamentarians covers two biennia and is renewable for one additional term.

28. Eleven MCSD Members will have completed three consecutive mandates by COP 24 (Cairo, Egypt, 2-5 December 2025), therefore they have to be considered for replacement for the MCSD composition of the Biennium 2026/2027, as presented in the following table.

The Local Authorities Group:	
AVITEM: Agence des Villes et Territoires Méditerranéens Durables	to be replaced
FAIC: Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities	to be replaced
Med Cities	
The Socio-economic Stakeholders Group:	
Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Protection de l'Environnement	
ASCAME: The Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry	to be replaced
ESCG: The Economic and Social Council of Greece	to be replaced
The Non-Governmental Organizations Group:	
ECO UNION	to be replaced
ESDF: The Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum	to be replaced
MedPAN: Mediterranean Protected Areas Network	to be replaced
The Scientific Community Group	
MedECC: Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change	
CIDCE: Centre International de Droit Comparé de l'Environnement	
Dr. Fatima Driouech (IPCC Working Group I, University Polytechnic Mohammed VI, Morocco)	
The Intergovernmental Organizations Group:	
AFED: Arab Forum on the Environment and Development	to be replaced
GWP-Med: Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean	to be replaced
IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature	
Parliamentarians:	
Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians on Sustainable Development (COMPSUD)	to be replaced
Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)	to be replaced
PA OSCE: Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe	

¹ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/6079/16ig22_28_22_17_eng.pdf

29. The 96th meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols of 19-20 November 2024 (Cairo, Egypt) recommended that the process of updating the MCSD membership supports the active participation of MAP Partners and equally promotes the outreach towards new partners that can substantially contribute to the objectives and activities of the MSSD.

30. In line with this recommendation, in February 2025 the Secretariat sent a letter to (a) MAP Partners that are not current MCSD Members, to submit their Expression of Interest to become MCSD Members, under the five groups of stakeholders under renewal, as well as (b) to the MCSD Members, kindly requesting indications and support in mobilizing new stakeholders at regional and national level from own networks and areas of work, that could join the MCSD as new Members.

31. In the period February-May 2025 the Secretariat has received 22 Expressions of Interest (EoIs). Out of 22 EoI, 15 are from MAP Partners/Former MAP Partners and 7 are from new stakeholders, as summarised by the following table that lists the received EoIs by applicants' name in alphabetical order, while Annex II provides a short presentation of each stakeholder.

To be replaced	Received EoIs	
	Local Authorities	
2	MAP Partners	New Stakeholders
		Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) Inter-Mediterranean Commission, Based in Barcelona, Spain
	Socio-economic Stakeholders	
2	MAP Partners	New Stakeholders
	Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) , Based in Cairo, Egypt	Network of Universities for Sustainable Development (RUS) , Based in Turin, Italy
	EnerGeo Alliance , Based in Houston, USA	Sumus Italia S.r.l. , Based in Milan and Padua, Italy
	Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) , Based in Barcelona, Spain	
	UniVerde Foundation , Based in Rome, Italy	
	Non-Governmental Organizations	
	MAP Partners	New Stakeholders
3	Association of Continuity of Generations (ACG) , Based in Sfax, Tunisia	Cultural Center Saint Martin, Apulia Region , Based in Lecce, Italy
	Association de Recherche Environnement et Bio Innovation (AREBI) , Based in Sfax, Tunisia	Lady Lawyer Foundation , Based in Bologna, Italy
	Fispmed Network, Sustainable development and the fight against poverty in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (FISPMED) , Based in Venice, Italy	Oceanographic Institute Monaco , Based in Monaco
	Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMIPA) , Based in Athens, Greece	Traverso Project , Based in Italy
	Human Environmental Association for Development (HEAD) , Based in Beirut, Lebanon	
	Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles (MEDASSET) , Based in Athens, Greece	

	Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) , Based in Athens, Greece	
	Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV) , Based in Istanbul, Türkiye	
	Worldwide Fund for Nature Mediterranean (WWF MED) , Based in Rome, Italy	
	Youth Love Egypt Foundation (YLE) , Based in Cairo, Egypt	
Intergovernmental Organizations		
2	MAP Partners	New Stakeholders
	Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) , Based in Cairo, Egypt (former MAP Partner)	
Parliamentarians		
2	MAP Partners	New Stakeholders
	None	None

32. Based on the general selection criteria of MAP Partners as per COP 19 Decision IG.22/17 on the Reform of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents ², COP 23 Decision IG.26/2 on Governance³, summarized in Annex III, as well as the recommendations of the 96th Bureau Meeting, the proposal by the Secretariat regarding the partially renewed MCSD membership for the biennium 2026-2027, is to identify the new MCSD Members based on the following priority criteria:

- a) MAP Partners
- b) Former MAP Partners
- c) New stakeholders that will be presented as new MAP Partners to the 97th Bureau Meeting
- d) New stakeholders, and after finalization of the eligibility process

33. With reference to the group of Parliamentarians, based on the COP22 Decision IG.25/3 that decided to “Endorse the MCSD’s recommendation to adjust paragraph 9.II. of the MCSD Composition in the MCSD Constitutive Documents (Decision IG.22/17), so that the mandate of the MCSD Members under the group of parliamentarians may be renewable for more than one additional term taking into consideration the need for rotation and for geographical balance to the extent possible, and request the Secretariat to reflect this amendment in the MCSD Constitutive Documents (Decision IG.22/17)”, it is proposed that the mandate of Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians on Sustainable Development (COMPSUD) and Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) is extended also to the biennium 2026/2027.

² [16ig22_28_22_17_eng.pdf](#)

³ [23ig26_22_2602_eng.pdf](#)

34. The Members of the MCSD Steering Committee are invited to provide their comments and guidance to the Secretariat in view of the discussion of the 21st MCSD Meeting and subsequent submission of the partially renewed MCSD membership to the MAP Focal Points meeting and for endorsement by the COP24.

35. As foreseen by paragraph B.8 of the MCSD Composition (Decision IG.22/17), the Secretariat will develop a roster with the organizations that have submitted the EoI to become MCSD members and that will not be finally selected, and to be used for future nominations as Members of the MCSD.

36. Considering the importance of Gender Parity, the important role of Women and Youth involvement in the region, the Secretariat would like to highlight considerations for the attention of the 21st MCSD Meeting on the possibility to further breakdown the non-Parties membership categories to the MCSD composition to Women and Youth organizations or increase the MCSD non Party members number accordingly.

III. Sustainability Considerations in UNEP/MAP Programme of Work 2026-2027

37. The Sustainability Considerations in UNEP/MAP Programme of Work 2026-2027 aims at supporting the 21st MCSD Meeting in elaborating its contribution to the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget (PoW) for the Biennium 2026/2027, by integrating relevant sustainability considerations and towards the finalization and submission of the 2026/2027 PoW to the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP 24), 2-5 December, Cairo, Egypt.

38. In line with Decision IG.26/14 – ‘Programme of Work and Budget for 2024–2025’, which was adopted by the COP 23 (Portoroz, Slovenia, 5-8 December), the proposed PoW 2026/2027 has been designed to ensure the effective and coherent finalization of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), its strategic outcomes and related targets.

39. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 is built around 27 Outcomes to be delivered through the implementation of 106 main activities, distributed over the MTS Programmes.

Its preparation has taken into consideration and integrated to the extent possible the updated framework of Objectives, Strategic Directions, Actions and Flagship Initiatives of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), as well as the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs.

40. After a brief presentation of the rationale and the main envisaged activities of each of the seven Programmes of the proposed PoW 2026/2027, the present document elaborates on the:

- Alignment with the proposed updated MSSD
- Alignment with SDGs

41. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 reflects the implementation of the 2022-2027 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), in particular it has been designed to ensure the effective and coherent finalization of the 2022-2027 MTS, its strategic outcomes and related targets, since this is the last biennium of the current MTS.

Thematic Programme 1: Towards a Pollution and Litter-Free Mediterranean Sea and Coast-Embracing Circular Economy

42. This Programme fully aligns with Objective 2 in the updated MSSD “Improve the health, productivity, restoration and resilience of the marine and coastal ecosystems” that substantially contributes to the healthy coastal and marine ecosystems and GES achievement that sits firmly and historically in the basin approach taken by the MAP and the Barcelona Convention, in particular with the Strategic Directions 2.1 ‘Strengthen implementation, compliance and monitoring with regional requirements of regulatory and policy frameworks of the Protocols of the Barcelona Convention for coastal and marine management’.

43. One of the main issues to be addressed under the updated MSSD Objective 2 is the continued environmental degradation and increased risks from marine pollution and marine noise including from plastic pollution. This is soundly addressed through the proposed PoW 2026/2027 with the provision of a concrete set of activities to reduce and prevent marine and coastal pollution and marine litter, including the assessment of pollution loads from land-based sources and activities, in line with article 15 of the LBS Protocol, as well as the development of a robust policy framework to reduce and prevent plastic use and engage businesses to prevent plastic use and reduce plastic leakage.

44. This last action of the proposed PoW 2026/2027 that promotes activities on pollution prevention through SCP and circular approaches, sustainable business development and eco-innovation, equally contributes to the updated MSSD Objective 5 ‘Transition towards sustainable, green, blue and circular economy and sustainable finance’, in particular its Strategic Direction 5.2: ‘Promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, to support the shift towards circular economy approaches and sustainable business models’ and Strategic Direction 5.3: Encourage innovation and sustainable business solutions to advance towards the objectives of a just low-carbon, circular, green and blue economy.

45. Under the updated MSSD Objective 3 ‘Promote sustainable resource management, and food security through sustainable forms of rural development and food systems’ one of the issues addressed include the increased untreated urban wastewater. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 aligns with the planned activity through the development of new regulatory measures in line with article 15 of the LBS Protocol for priority sectors, including national, regional actions and enabling investments, to implement the adopted Regional Plans on Urban Wastewater Treatment and Sewage Sludge Management. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 also promotes sustainable desalination sector in the Mediterranean, in line with dedicated actions of the updated MSSD Objective 3 Strategic direction 3.1: Promote the circular/regenerative use, management and conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Natural Resources and ecosystems in the Mediterranean Region and Action related to strengthen regional plans on reuse and desalination.

46. One of the issues addressed by the updated MSSD Objective 5 ‘Transition towards sustainable, green, blue and circular economy and sustainable finance’ is the lack of criteria that take due consideration of environmental, climate and in general sustainability objectives in the selection of public and private investments (green taxonomy). In fact, the MSSD Objective 5 introduces the specific activity 5.5 ‘Lay the groundwork for a Mediterranean Taxonomy of Green and Sustainable Activities to ensure communities and infrastructures adjust to environmental risks, by first setting a common regional framework for classifying public and private financial flows’. The proposed 2026/2027 PoW under MTS Programme 1 is aligned to this priority through the planned enhancement and scale up of the Sustainable Finance MED Observatory.

Alignment with SDGs

47. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 under MTS Programme 1 is aligned with targets under a number of relevant SDGs, especially the SDG 6 (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all), SDG 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns), and SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development). Its proposed activities can contribute in particular to targets 6.a, 6.3, 12.4, 12.5 and 14.1. In addition, gender considerations are integrated into the proposed PoW 2026/2027 activities under Programme 1 thus contributing also to SDG 5 on gender equality.

Thematic Programme 2: Towards Healthy Mediterranean Ecosystems and Enhanced Biodiversity

48. As for PoW 2026/2027 Programme 1, also Programme 2 fully aligns with Objective 2 in the updated MSSD “Improve the health, productivity, restoration and resilience of the marine and coastal ecosystems”, in particular with the Strategic Directions 2.1 ‘Strengthen implementation, compliance and monitoring with regional requirements of regulatory and policy frameworks of the Protocols of the Barcelona Convention for coastal and marine management’.

49. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 also aligns with the updated MSSD and its Objective 2 priorities related to developing Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) approach and framework, recognizing it as an essential component of integrated coastal zone management. In the last decade the Barcelona Convention has actively worked on developing Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) approach and framework, recognizing it as an essential component of integrated coastal zone management and sustainable development of the region. This is well integrated and upscaled in the framework of the updated MSSD and its Objective 2, specifically under the Strategic Direction 2.2. 'Promote balanced and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources' that will support the implementation of the COP 23 MSP Decision IG.26/10.

50. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 is in line also with the Objective 3 of the updated MSSD "Promote sustainable resource management, and food security through sustainable forms of rural development and food systems", Strategic direction 3.1 'Promote the circular/regenerative use, management and conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Natural Resources and ecosystems in the Mediterranean Region', including the flagship initiatives Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE Nexus) in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum and Mediterranean Forest Initiative.

Alignment with SDGs

51. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 under MTS Programme 2 is aligned with most of the targets under SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), in namely targets 14.1, 14.2, 14.4, and 14.5, while there are also links with SDG 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss), especially its target 15.1 for activities related to coastal protected areas. SDG 5 on gender equality is also addressed through gender considerations streamlined into this Programme activities.

Thematic Programme 3: Towards a Climate-Resilient Mediterranean

52. The proposed 2026/2027 PoW is fully and perfectly aligned with the updated MSSD Objective 1, and in particular with the following Strategic Directions: 1.1: Increase scientific knowledge, education, raise awareness, and develop technical capacities to deal with climate change and ensure informed decision-making at all levels, recognizing and protecting the climate adaptation and mitigation services of natural ecosystems; 1.2: Accelerate the uptake of climate smart and climate resilient responses; 1.3: Leverage existing and emerging climate finance mechanisms, including international and domestic instruments, and enhance the engagement of the private and finance sectors; 1.4: Encourage institutional, policy and legal reforms for the effective mainstreaming of climate change responses into national and local development frameworks, all sectors; 1.6 Strengthen national and local capacities on the application of nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

53. The proposed 2026/2027 PoW is aligned with the key MSSD flagship initiative 'Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC) that will prepare the Summary for policy makers Second Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR2).

54. In addition, the activities on mainstream adaptation to climate change into local ICZM plans included in the proposed 2026/2027 PoW is aligned with the updated MSSD Objective 2 'Improve the health, productivity, restoration and resilience of the marine and coastal ecosystems', specifically with the Strategic Direction 2.2 'Promote balanced and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources' and related actions tackling the development of national guidelines for auditing and planning of green and blue infrastructure, with reference to natural and human-induced risks, including climate change. The support the coexistence in using marine space, as promoted by COP 23 MSP Decision IG.26/10, the promotion of MSP implementation, including capacity building and sharing of best practices at regional and sub-regional level and the setup of coastal resilience platform, including regional compendium of adaptation measures for coastal and marine sectors.

55. The proposed 2026/2027 PoW is also aligned with the updated MSSD Objective 4 ‘Plan and manage sustainable and resilient Mediterranean cities’ and its Strategic direction 4.7 ‘Enhance urban resilience in order to reduce vulnerability to risks from natural and human-induced hazards including climate change’ and related actions on the utilization of spatial planning systems and land management instruments for sustainable urban/coastal planning and balanced development in urban areas that incorporate measures for infrastructure provision, relevant for climate change adaptation.

56. Finally, the proposed 2026/2027 PoW actions related to circular economy business models to support climate change adaptation and mitigation innovative solutions is well aligned both with the updated MSSD Objective 1 ‘Address climate change with emphasis to adaptation to its impacts and promote Energy Transition as a priority’ and the Strategic Direction 1.5 ‘Promote economy decarbonization energy transition and deployment of renewable energies’ as well as with the updated MSSD Objective 5 ‘Transition towards sustainable, green, blue and circular economy and sustainable finance’ and Strategic Directions 5.2 ‘Promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, to support the shift towards circular economy approaches and sustainable business models’; 5.3 ‘Encourage innovation and sustainable business solutions to advance towards the objectives of a just low-carbon, circular, green and blue economy’ and 5.4 ‘Promote the integration of sustainability, circularity and climate change principles and criteria into decision-making on public and private investment’.

Alignment with SDGs

57. The proposed 2026/2027 PoW under MTS Programme 3 is aligned with most of the targets under SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), especially targets 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, as well as targets under SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), especially targets 14.1, 14.2, 14.4, 14.6. Also, SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) is addressed, especially targets 12.3. Gender considerations are also mainstreamed into this Programme thus aligning with relevant targets under SDG 5 on gender equality.

Thematic Programme 4: Towards the Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Resources Including Circular and Blue Economy

58. Under this programme, relevant MAP Components, mainly PAP/RAC MedWaves, Plan Blue/RAC, and REMPEC will join efforts under the coordination of the CU to ensure the use of Sustainable Blue and Green Economy tools and approaches in the context of Sustainable Development and MSSD implementation and synergetic implementation of planning and management approaches, including the adequate consideration of Land-Sea Interactions (LSI) including innovative environmental management and economic instruments and application of defined measures within the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, and facilitating the science-policy dialogue.

59. The proposed 2026/2027 PoW under MTS Programme 4 is directly aiming at supporting sustainable use of resources and promoting sustainable blue economy, including through the effective use of economic instruments and other tools for nature conservation and sustainable development. It is therefore fully aligned with the updated MSSD, in particular its Objective 5 which focuses on the transition towards a green and blue economy, based on the principle that socio-economic development needs to be harmonized with the environment and protection of natural resources to achieve the vision of the MSSD.

60. The proposed 2026-2027 PoW under Programme 4 complements the Programme 1 and the planned enhancement and scale up the Sustainable Finance MED Observatory, and with reference to the contribution to the updated MSSD Objective 5, specifically on the activities related to Strategic Directions 5.5 that aims at laying the groundwork for a Mediterranean Taxonomy of Green and Sustainable Activities. Main actions will address the development of a national Framework for Green and Sustainable Investments integrating diverse financial instruments; national green and sustainable finance networks bringing together financial institutions, governments, private sector, academia, and NGOs; a regional Framework for Green and Sustainable Investments that incorporates Mediterranean-

specific challenges; and regional guidelines for green and sustainable budgeting practices to integrate environmental and climate objectives.

61. The proposed PoW 2026/2027 Programme 4 also complements the Programme 2 and 3 on the updated MSSD priorities related to developing Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and ICZM, in particular the Strategic Direction 2.2 ‘Promote balanced and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources’, including the implementation of COP 23 MSP Decision IG.26/10 on the MSP and the development of the MSP regional work group initially set up in July 2024 in the framework of the MSSD update. Main actions of Programme 4 include implementation of CAMP projects, support to CPs in preparing National ICZM Strategies and coastal plans, support to CPs in implementing MSP, update of the methodological guidance for ICZM / MSP/ CCA in the Mediterranean, Strengthening of the MSP governance in the Mediterranean.

Alignment with SDGs:

62. Due to the cross-cutting nature of the proposed PoW activities relating to sustainable blue and green economy, these are aligned with a number of SDG targets, in particular those under SDG 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), SDG 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns), SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts) and SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development).

Foundational Programme 5: Governance

63. The proposed 2026-2027 PoW under Programme 5, especially through its activities on the delivery of MCSD and its Steering Committee meetings as well as resource mobilization activities, is also aligned with the MSSD Strategic Directions relating to the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD, in particular the Strategic Direction 7.1 on the establishment and strengthening of structures for sustainable development implementation at national and regional scale and the Strategic Direction 7.2 on the establishment of regional processes for the implementation and monitoring of the MSSD.

64. With reference to the Strategic Direction 7.3. on the MSSD financing the proposed 2026-2027 PoW will contribute by promoting outreach and regional synergies, funding opportunities and enhanced partnership of MSSD flagship initiatives through 2 online regional workshops to maximize funding opportunities, as well as targeted actions under MSSD Flagship initiatives implemented in collaboration with the leading partners.

Alignment with SDGs

65. The proposed 2026/2027 under Programme 5 is aligned with a number of SDGs across the board, in particular targets under the SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) and SDG 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development) especially its targets 17.1, 17.14, 17.16 and 17.17. Promotion of gender mainstreaming into UNEP/MAP operations and activities is among the main objectives of the proposed PoW under this Programme and it is therefore also aligned with relevant targets under SDG 5 on gender equality.

Enabling Programme 6: Towards Monitoring, Assessment, Knowledge and Vision of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast for Informed Decision-Making

66. Under this programme, key activities will be implemented to strengthen the science-policy interface and decision-making by implementing science-based IMAP, foresight and other assessment

tools and thematic indicators, including data-driven national IMAP-based monitoring programmes and building the national and institutional capacity for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and forecasting.

Alignment with SDGs

67. Considering that the Programme 6 is an enabling and therefore cross-cutting Programme of the MAP MTS 2022-2027, the respective activities of the proposed 2026-2027 PoW are also horizontally aligned with SDGs and targets across the board, but they are especially aligned with targets under the SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) and SDG 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

Enabling Programme 7: For Informed and Consistent Advocacy, Awareness, Education and Communication

68. The proposed 2026-2027 PoW will continue to be a key tool to promote and ensure the implementation of the flagship initiatives WeMed Sustainability Award and the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, supporting respectively circular economy of businesses under Objective 5 and best practices towards sustainable cities under Objective 4.

Alignment with SDGs

69. Similarly to the previous Programme 6, considering that the Programme 7 is also an enabling cross-cutting Programme of the MAP MTS 2022-2027, the respective activities are also horizontally aligned with SDGs and targets across the board, especially with targets under SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) but also with SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) for thematic communication and awareness raising activities, in particular its targets 12.4, 12.5 and 12.8.

IV. Inputs for the 21st MCSD Meeting to COP 24

70. The Inputs for the 21st MCSD Meeting to COP 24 presents a proposal for undertaking a consultation for the preparation of the draft Ministerial Declaration of the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP 24) (Cairo, Egypt, 2-5 December 2025), and include sustainable development considerations.

71. In addition, COP 24, as customary in the MAP system, will have its Ministerial-level discussions which will lead to the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration.

72. Discussions are ongoing on the selection of the main theme of COP 24 and on the format of its high-level segment. A relevant proposal will be submitted to the 97th Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Greece, 1-2 July 2025) which is expected to provide advice on the way forward.

73. The 26th MCSD Steering Committee Meeting is expected to bring issues of relevance for the 21st MCSD Meeting and for the attention of COP 24 and its Ministerial Session and Declaration, including the way forward in terms of possible commitments and outreach.

74. Initial elements for reflection could tackle the importance to highlighting in the COP24 theme of the Ministerial Session also the pivotal role of sustainable circular economy in providing solutions for a climate resilient and healthy plastic free Mediterranean, thus reflecting one of the key aspects of the updated MSSD.

75. Further to this initial feedback, is also important to comment on a consultation process to be agreed by the 21st MCSD Meeting and in order to provide further input during the preparation of the Ministerial Declaration.

76. For example, the 21st MCSD could mandate the MCSD Steering Committee to coordinate the process of providing the inputs by MCSD to the Ministerial Declaration, based also on the inputs provided during the 21st MCSD meeting. As for the COP 23, a second option could be to agree to establish an extended committee, with participation of the MCSD Steering Committee members and some further members of the MCSD in a voluntary basis, which will work together to draft a number of elements that would be presented to the MAP Focal Points meeting by the chair of the MCSD, for consideration and possible inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration.

Annex I
Concept Notes of the new MSSD Flagship Initiatives

Mediterranean Coast Day: Inspiring action to safeguard our coasts

Concept note

Policy message:

Rising sea levels and the escalating risk of coastal flooding worldwide, combined with their significant geopolitical implications, demand urgent and unified action. With 150 million people living directly at sea level, Mediterranean coastal communities - together with policymakers and decision-makers - must accelerate the implementation of mitigation and adaptation to ensure a sustainable future for as many people as possible. This requires building and sharing knowledge more effectively and efficiently, across the widest possible networks, to identify what can be done to preserve our coasts and livelihoods and how best to do it.

The involvement of leading parties and bodies in the annual celebration of Coast Day will provide a vital platform for sharing insights, fostering collaboration, and accelerating actions to address these pressing challenges.

MSSD Objective	SDGs	Barcelona Convention Protocols
Objective 2 Improve the health, productivity, restoration and resilience of the marine and coastal ecosystems	SDG 14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development SDG 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact SDG 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss SDG 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol Land-Based Sources Protocol

1. Background

This flagship initiative aims to advocate for sustainable coastal management practices and engage stakeholders across all levels of society - from local communities to regional and national institutions, and international organizations. A key component of this initiative is the transformation of Mediterranean Coast Day into a UN International Observance Day to amplify its impact.

Celebrated annually on September 25, Mediterranean [Coast Day](#) highlights the value of Mediterranean coastal areas and promotes their active preservation. Established to mark Slovenia's ratification of the ICZM Protocol, the event is led by PAP/RAC in collaboration with UNEP/MAP and its regional offices, serving two primary objectives:

- Raise awareness of the importance of coasts and inspire commitment to their protection.
- Promote sustainable coastal management, emphasizing the principles of the Mediterranean Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).

Each year, the main celebration is hosted by a different Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention, with additional activities organized by governments, NGOs, MAP partners, and civil society organizations across the Mediterranean. Previous themes, such as coastal resilience, urbanization trends, coastal aquifers and sustainable tourism, have sparked meaningful discussions and driven regional action.

To ensure visibility and advocacy, prominent figures are appointed as Ambassadors for the Coast. These ambassadors - writers, actors, athletes, innovators, and policymakers - use their influence to raise awareness, advocate for policy support, and participate in key events.

2. Overall aim and Objectives

The overall aim of this initiative is to elevate Mediterranean Coast Day into a prominent regional observance that unite leaders and communities across the Mediterranean in taking collective responsibility to safeguard coastal areas for future generations.

Specific Objectives:

- **Raise awareness and inspire action for Mediterranean coastal resilience**
Foster a deeper understanding of coastal challenges and opportunities among policymakers, educators, local communities, and the general public
- **Foster and strengthen institutional commitment to Mediterranean coastal and marine protection**
Encourage tangible commitments and collaborative efforts toward sustainable coastal management and climate adaptation
- **Inspire new generations for long-term coastal protection**
Empower new generations with tools and knowledge to lead sustainable coastal initiatives and foster climate resilience

3. Key actions and deliverables

To effectively drive awareness and action for coastal sustainability in the Mediterranean, a series of coordinated, high-impact initiatives will be carried out, empowering communities to take concrete steps in preserving the Mediterranean's invaluable coastal ecosystems. Activities will focus the following the following key actions:

Raise awareness and inspire action for coastal resilience

Launch annual targeted public awareness campaigns across the Mediterranean region, focusing on coastal resilience, and sustainable practices. These campaigns will use accessible communication channels, including social media, educational materials, and community outreach, with a focus on clear, actionable messages. **Deliverables include** Success story mapping, Awareness materials and Public campaigns.

Foster and strengthen institutional commitment to coastal and marine protection

Engage key institutional stakeholders (government agencies, regional organizations, and policy leaders) to advocate for the adoption and implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol. Utilize the main regional celebration to build a coalition of supporters for coastal protection policies and focus on practical actions. **Deliverables include** Regional event, Policy dialogues and Commitment statements.

Inspire new generations for long-term coastal protection

Collaborate with partners to engage youth and local communities in coastal sustainability projects, such as art and education activities, clean-ups, restoration projects, and community-based monitoring of marine ecosystems, aiming to strengthen the recognition of Coast Day beyond the Mediterranean

region. If possible, collaborate with an influencer who supports environmental causes to amplify the reach and impact of these initiatives at no cost. **Deliverables include** Youth engagement programs and Volunteer networks

4. Potential Leadership and Partners

Leadership

PAP/RAC

Partnership

- Secretariat of UNEP/MAP and Regional Activity Centres under the Barcelona Convention System
- Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention
- UNEP Regional Seas Programme & Regional Seas
- UNESCO
- UNEP/MAP– Barcelona Convention system Partners (IGOs and NGOs)
- Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
- Ocean & Climate Platform
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- WWF-Mediterranean
- Mediterranean Information Office for the Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MiO-ESCEDE)
- MedWet Initiative
- MED SEA Foundation
- ARTPORT_making waves

Delivering 1 terawatt of renewable energy capacity in the Mediterranean by 2030
(TERAMED)
Concept note

Policy message: TeraMed is a multi-stakeholders initiative aimed at achieving 1 terawatt (TW) of renewable energy capacity installed in the Mediterranean region by 2030. This bold target seeks to address the urgent need for clean and just energy transition, fostering regional energy security, socio economic development, and climate resilience. By integrating the region's vast renewable energy potential, TeraMed will contribute to global sustainability goals through the decarbonization of Mediterranean countries in the framework of the MSSD, the Barcelona Convention and the Paris Agreement.

MSSD Objective	MSSD Targets	MSSD Indicators	SDGs
Objective 1: Address climate change with emphasis to adaptation to its impacts and promote Energy Transition as a priority	Target 2: By 2030, all Mediterranean countries will reach a minimum of 20% of renewable energy in their energy mix, by increasing the renewable energy share derived from renewable resources in total final consumption, thus encouraging shifting towards energy transition	Indicator 22b Renewable energy share in the total energy consumption	SDG7, Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

1. Background

At the crossroads of three continents, Europe, Africa, and Asia, the Mediterranean region is both a space of unity and division. As starkly emerged in the past few years, the region maintains significant strategic importance for global security, geopolitics and economy. In addition to the current geopolitical instability, recent extreme weather events, such as the floods in Libya, Italy and more recently in Spain, have also demonstrated the tragic effects of global warming on people and communities. According to the IPCC, the region is a climate change hotspot where climate is changing faster than the global average. Increasing mean temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, rise in the intensity and frequency of heatwaves, droughts and extreme events have direct impacts on the ecosystem and cascading effects on security, economic activity and human mobility. Climate change has been widely recognized as a threat multiplier: cascading climate impacts affect the wellbeing of communities and the social stability of countries, both exacerbating already existing social and geopolitical tensions, such as competition over natural resources, and creating new challenges. In the Mediterranean region, cascading climate impacts are bound to complicate the already fragile and complex security landscape in the long term.

The region is still today not perceived as a region in itself, but as a space of division between three continents. Failing to grasp the continuity of the Mediterranean as one broad region, especially in the climate diplomacy space, translates into a lack of coordinated actions necessary to respond to interdependent challenges, among which climate change figures prominently. Lack of coordinated effects are hindering the development of long-term regional Energy and Climate policy frameworks that can ensure an effective response to existential challenges, with uneven levels of vulnerability specifically across the North-South shore divide.

The Mediterranean region, historically dependent on fossil fuels, faces those critical challenges due to climate change, geopolitical instability, and socioeconomic inequalities. Despite its vast solar and wind potential, renewable energy deployment remains uneven between the northern and southern shores. TeraMed seeks to address these disparities by fostering collaboration and integrating renewable energy systems across the region, transforming it into a global hub for clean energy innovation.

2. Overall aim and objectives

TeraMed's overarching goal is to achieve 1 TW of renewable energy capacity in the Mediterranean by 2030. Key objectives include:

- Establishing ambitious renewable energy targets to be reflected in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- Enhancing regional cooperation on energy and climate.
- Unlocking financing mechanisms for renewable energy deployment, modernization of grid infrastructures, cross-border interconnection, storage solutions.
- Promoting green industrialization and socioeconomic development.
- Empowering local stakeholders and ensuring inclusivity in the energy transition process.

3. Key actions and deliverables

Action 1: Renewable Energy Targets and Policy Frameworks

Description: Support Mediterranean governments in committing to a collective, regional target of 1 TW for the Mediterranean region at COP30 of UNFCCC in Belém, Brazil, and establishing and integrating ambitious renewable energy targets into their NDCs, aligning with the global target of 11 TW by 2030.

Deliverables:

- National renewable energy targets aligned with 1 TW goal by 2030
- Policies and regulations for streamlined renewable energy deployment.

Action 2: Regional Energy Infrastructure Development

Description: Expand and modernize grid infrastructure, including cross-border interconnections and decentralized systems.

Deliverables:

- Increased interconnection capacity.
- Enhanced grid reliability and integration of diverse energy sources.

Action 3: Financing and Investment Mobilization

Description: Unlock public and private investments through a clear and cohesive financial strategy for the region, involving National and Regional Development Banks, Multilateral Development Banks, Export Credit Agencies, combining innovative financial mechanisms, public-private partnerships, green bonds, concession loans, equity, guarantees mechanisms, reduction of investments risks, lower costs of capital.

Deliverables:

- \$700 billion investment mobilized.
- Financial frameworks supporting renewable energy deployment.

Action 4: Capacity Building and Stakeholder Engagement

Description: Empower local communities, businesses, and governments to take active part in climate initiatives, through training programs, public awareness campaigns, and stakeholder consultations.

Deliverables:

- Regional capacity-building programs.
- Increased participation of civil society and private sector in renewable energy projects.

4. Leadership and Partners

- **Promoters:** The initiative is promoted by a diverse array of stakeholders in the region: ECCO (Italy/EU-Med), eco-union (Spain/EU-Med), Ember (EU), European Climate Foundation (EU-Med), E3G (EU), Global Solar Council, Greening the Islands Foundation, Global Wind Energy Council, Imal Initiative for Climate and Development (Morocco/Med), MEDSEC - Mediterranean Dialogue on Sustainable Energy and Climate, Natura Resource Governance Institute, Pooled fund on International Energy, Power Shift Africa, RAED - Arab Network for Environment and Development (Egypt/Med), RCREEE - Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, ReNew2030, Sefia, Zero (Portugal/Med).
- **Partners:** Regional governments, international organizations, private sector stakeholders, and civil society groups
- **Official supporters:** IRENA, Global Renewable Alliance, Union for the Mediterranean

5. Budget/Funds

- **Estimated Budget:** \$700 billion.
- **Funds Secured:** Initial backing from international development banks, private sector investments, and regional governments.

More information: <https://teramedinitiative.com/>

Mediterranean Network of Zero Net Cities (MED Zero Net Cities)

Concept note

Policy message

By 2050 the urban population in the Mediterranean coastal regions is expected to nearly double. This is a challenge, but it also is an opportunity for the cities to substantially contribute towards UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the EU Green Deal target of climate neutrality by 2050, confirming their key role in the process.
2050 is not that far and Mediterranean cities must swiftly and jointly reply to the call to act.

MSSD Objective	MSSD Target	MSSD Indicators	SDGs
Objective 4 Plan and manage sustainable and resilient Mediterranean cities	Target 9: By 2030, Mediterranean countries have achieved at least a 50% reduction in municipal waste generation per capita, and have ensured that at least 60% of municipal solid waste is sustainably recycled, composted or managed, including separate collection and material recovery	Indicator 20 Waste generated and treated by type of waste and treatment type	SDG 11 , Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable SDG 12 , Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

1. Background

As the Mediterranean is affected by the highest raise of the temperature globally, the region is a hot spot for the climate change: a priority challenge that requires multi-level stakeholders engagement and mobilization, policy, programmatic and financial investments as well as long term vision and commitment.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation is **heavily dependent on urban action** and Mediterranean cities have a key role to play as 'local sentinels' to support decarbonization efforts therefore contributing to the development and implementation of climate change measures, also by broadly engaging with the stakeholders and civil society and promoting climate change resilience at local level. To this end, local authorities (local councils, metropolitan authorities and networks/unions of municipalities) are the actors that - whatever their competences may be - are always keen to implement with a deep knowledge of their human and territorial realities. In fact, around 60% of the Sustainable Development Goals rely on the action of said authorities. Besides, cities and towns are responsible for more than 50% of Green House effect gas emissions.

The MSSD Flagship initiative Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (IEFCA) was established in 2016 by COP 19 Decision IG.22/19 and funded by the kind voluntary contribution of the Government of Türkiye, with the aim of recognizing and supporting the efforts of local authorities in promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean coastal cities.

Based on the experience of the past four editions of the IEFCA and in the framework of the update of the 2016-2025 MSSD, the Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development of 18-19 April 2024, concluded that the initiative should be **strengthened and upscaled as broader flagship initiative** by increasing its visibility and encouraging more interest in applications, so that this initiative further promotes and supports local authorities and exchange of best practices among Mediterranean Cities, policy dialogue among Mayors on sustainable development challenges

and institutional capacity building activities, while promoting networking with similar projects and initiatives.

2. Overall aim and Objectives

The overall aim of the flagship initiative is to **upscale and capitalise the best practices identified by the five editions of the IEFCA** (thus including the one to be implemented in the biennium 2024/2025), by promoting the set up and development of a **Mediterranean cities zero net network**, building on and developing streamlined synergies the EU Mission for 100 climate-neutral and smart cities and some of the Mediterranean cities that are part of the mission.

The initiative will further promote the participation of **South Mediterranean and Western Balkan cities** and will **focus on specific issues, common challenges and assets of Mediterranean cities and capacitate its local authorities** to support them to contribute reducing the greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030 and reach climate neutral by 2050, in line with the UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the SDG 13 – Climate Action.

Accordingly, the **objectives** of the flagship initiative are:

- Support municipalities integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into local policies, strategies and planning, and in line with national plans therefore reinforcing multi-level governance
- Support capacity building and trainings at local and regional level
- Promote public/private investments to support zero net decarbonization paths
- IEFCA implementation and exchange of related best practices at local and regional level
- Support cities in accelerating their digital transformation as key asset towards decarbonization
- Education towards cities zero net
- Promote Citizen and stakeholders' engagement
- Ensure sound synergies with the *EU Mission for 100 climate-neutral and smart cities*, promoting a potential co-partnership between UNEP/MAP, MedCities (as co-leader of the initiative), EU

3. Key actions and deliverables

The flagship initiative foresees the following **main activities**:

- **Activity 1: Building the Mediterranean Network of Zero Net Cities:**
 - Develop a collaborative vision of the Network in alignment with the EU Mission Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities
 - Identify and seek for engagement in the network of cities including those winners of IEFCA award and those Mediterranean members (specially MedCities members if required) of the 112 NetZero cities as front runners and identifying potential takers from South Mediterranean and Western Balkans; identification and engagement of other key actors
 - Identify the good practices to share by frontrunners and assess the needs and challenges of the takers to match potential collaborative learning opportunities
 - Launch the network at a related event
 - Sustain the network and its growth in the long term
- **Activity 2: Capacity building and peer to peer learning**
 - Based on Activity 1, preliminary assessment of practices and needs, develop a collaborative learning programme, including webinars, study visits, and mentoring process between selected frontrunners and takers. This programme will facilitate the exchange of best practices and knowledge, and assist local authorities in the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into local policies, strategies and planning. The programme will assure linkages with the MSDD and its goals and dashboard.
 - Provide specific trainings on overall issues such as access to finance, citizen engagement and others
 - Produce and distribute factsheets and transfer and replicate reports with successful cases,

providing analysis of the process and the success factors

- Explore twinning processes from the peer to peer experiences to establish long term collaborations.
- **Activity 3:** Communicating the network, raising awareness, engaging citizens
 - Communication activities at different levels and audiences
 - Recognition to network members, especially engaged front runners with e.g. a **UNEP/MAP IEFCA Label**
 - Citizen engagement programme supporting network members with guidelines and materials for citizen engagement activities
- **Activity 4: Coordination and synergies**
 - Coordination of network members and partners and coordination with other related initiatives and programmes, especially the EU Mission Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities and the NetZeroCities project. Organisation of one yearly regional event.

4. Leadership and Partners

- **Leadership**
 - UNEP/MAP and MedCities
- **Partnership**
 - Countries/states: Contracting parties of the Barcelona Convention, starting for example from those that their cities won the previous 4 IEFCA, Greece, Cyprus and Albania
 - Winner cities of previous 4 IEFCA: Izmir, Genoa, Malaga, Ashdod
 - Interested Mediterranean Cities from the 112 NetZeroCities, starting by MedCities members, such as Barcelona, València, Marseille, Rome, Limassol and Izmir
 - Other interested cities: Athens, Tirana, as e.g. Signatories of the Covenant of Mayors
 - PAP/RAC, Plan Bleu/RAC and SCP/RAC
 - INTERREG EURO-MED, INTERREG NEXT-MED, INTERREG ADRION

5. Finance

To be determined (1,5 to 2 million €)

Mediterranean Forest Initiative (MFI)

Concept note

Policy message

The Mediterranean Basin is a hotspot for highly interconnected climate risks, due to its combination of multiple strong climate hazards and high vulnerability.

The value of regional approaches to climate action and ecosystems protection has been recognized by political leaders and scientists across the Mediterranean Basin.

The Mediterranean Forest Initiative sets out a clear, common direction for different actors and sectors relevant to forests, biodiversity, climate action, environment, and disaster risk reduction, towards a future in which protected and restored Mediterranean forests deliver ecosystems services, host biodiversity, and enhance Mediterranean societies' resilience to climate change. In the new era of risk, multi-level stakeholders engagement, intersectoral dialogue, coordinated action and policy support must be enhanced and strengthened including via reinforcing linkages between environmental science, forestry and civil protection sectors; deeply integrating considerations linked to climate change, biodiversity loss, and desertification; and leveraging public and private sector partnerships to scale up investment in forests.

MSSD Objective	SDGs	Barcelona Protocols
Objective 3: Promote sustainable resource management, and food security through sustainable forms of rural development and food systems	– SDG15, Life on land	– Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol – Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol

1. Background

In the [Declaration for the role of forest and ecosystem restoration for future Mediterranean Generations](#) (March 2022), participants in the High-Level Segment of Mediterranean Forest Week noted the “importance of forest and ecosystem restoration for the **achievement of global commitments made by Mediterranean countries within the framework of the Rio Conventions**, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests” and called for “management of Mediterranean forests and landscapes **towards a vision where social, environmental, economic and cultural benefits are equally integrated.**”

In their [Antalya Ministerial Declaration](#) (2021), Mediterranean Ministers of Environment pledged to promote “regional responses to our shared environmental challenges in order to amplify their impact across and beyond the basin, and contributing to **coordinated action across sectors and levels of government through the implementation of integrated approaches**”. This approach was reinforced in the COP23 [Portorož Ministerial Declaration](#) calling for urgent action “to **bolster resilience to the unfolding impacts of climate change**”.

The proposed Mediterranean Forest Initiative (MFI) is expected to support Mediterranean states to meet their commitments under the UN Climate, Biodiversity, Desertification Conventions and Barcelona Convention.

Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols have committed to apply an ecosystem approach to the management of human activities that may affect the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment. Healthy and well-managed forests are crucial to achieving this ecological vision. In September 2023, at the meeting of UNEP/MAP Focal Points in Istanbul, UNEP informed Mediterranean states about the proposed **Mediterranean Forest Initiative**. The Barcelona Convention COP in December 2023 then integrated the MFI into its PoW covering sectors of biodiversity, climate change, ICZM and the MSSD. The MFI was presented at a side event at the Barcelona Convention COP23 in Slovenia, December 2023. SilvaMed, as a statutory body of FAO, has been a foundational partner from the very beginning of this initiative and is expected to play a key role in taking it forward, together with UNEP/MAP and UNDRR regional networks. In 2024, UNEP, FAO and

UNDRR shared a draft Road Map for the Mediterranean Forest Initiative with Mediterranean countries and other partners for comments and in 2025 the work is expected to progress. The MFI Road Map has been launched at the **Silva Med Mediterranean Forest Week** and at the **Europe and Central Asia Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction** in Montenegro (both in November 2024).

2. Overall aim and Objectives

To reverse the current cycle of forest loss and die-back in the Mediterranean, we need to scale up integrated, science-informed and dynamic approaches to forest protection and management.

The Mediterranean Forest Initiative builds on longstanding environmental and scientific institutions and networks in Mediterranean, particularly the Barcelona Convention UNEP [Mediterranean Action Plan](#) including the MSSD; and FAO and its Statutory Body, [Silva Mediterranea](#). The initiative will draw on UNEP and partners' experience of ecosystems restoration, climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation in the region – including work on [Integrated Coastal Zone Management](#) in the Mediterranean and UNEP's portfolio in the [Western Balkans](#). UNEP's partnership with the EU on [climate, environment, peace and security](#) (which is now in its second phase) provides a solid basis for advancing **environmental peacebuilding** in the region.

The **Mediterranean Forest Initiative** has been further designed considering the following objectives:

- **Ensure the protection of forest ecosystems provides numerous economic, social and environmental benefits.** Forests provide critical [ecosystems services](#), including groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment control, carbon capture and reduce the pressures that harm economies and drive migration.
- **Promote and reinforce the critical role of forest ecosystems in climate mitigation and adaptation**, as recognized in the Paris Agreement and in the [Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use](#);
- **Tackle the threats posed to Mediterranean forests by climate change and land use change**, as described in UNEP's [Spreading Like Wildfire](#) report and other analyses of [climate-related fire risks](#);
- **Identify opportunities to protect the environment and deliver sustainable development objectives** in the Mediterranean through [transboundary adaptation](#) collaboration and sharing of regional best practices, including traditional knowledge and advanced technologies. (ref. to importance of a regional approach in [Climate change and weather extremes in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East](#));
- **Identify opportunities for trust-building in the Mediterranean region** strengthening regional cooperation towards the protection of shared resources, sharing knowledge, and managing climate-related stresses that would otherwise drive displacement and increase conflict risks.

The MFI's comprises four phases with an overall timeline which is foreseen until 2035.

After a first phase of co-generation, the second phase of 'co-design' is being finalized.

The third phase will then concentrate on the scale up of potential on the ground interventions and the fourth phase the implementation.

3. Key actions and deliverables

The following **main activities** are envisaged for the next 2 years as part of the 2nd phase of co-design:

Actions	Deliverables
Forests and forest-related ecosystem services assessment	1.1 Mapping and consultations: Building on the updated report <i>State of Mediterranean Forests</i>, forthcoming 2024, UNEP, FAO and UNDRR work with stakeholders to: 1.1.1 Map ongoing activities and identify gaps in support of forest protection, -management and related issues (e.g. conservation, restoration, biodiversity, planning, tourism, fires, etc.). 1.1.2 Consult member states and other key stakeholders on options to promote a more ambitious, intersectoral approach to protecting and restoring Mediterranean forests – potentially including one extraordinary meeting of the MCSD focused on the MFI to be held in 2025

		1.2 Additional research: UNEP and partners will commission additional research where knowledge gaps exist, including: 1.2.1. Socio-economic analysis of the values of forest ecosystems services 1.2.2. Identification of priorities, best case examples, resource mobilization roadmap <i>Budget for 2025-26: USD 600,000</i>
Identification and co-design of Forest solutions		2.1 Support transformational cross-sectoral national policy design for Mediterranean forests, including working with regional scientific and technical partners to support local, national and (where relevant) international implementing entities to design and tailor impactful and climate-informed cross-cutting (linking to climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity protection, delivery of ecosystems services, rural livelihoods and development, civil protection and disaster risk reduction); forest solutions. 2.1.1 Science-policy dialogues on forests hosted in 4 Mediterranean countries; 2.1.2 Support to Inter-ministerial Committees in 2-3 Mediterranean countries affected by disasters or conflicts. <i>Budget for 2025-26: USD 600,000</i>
Implementation of Forest solutions	of	3.1 Building on the Restoring Mediterranean Forests Restoration flagship which recognised work by Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Türkiye in restoring fire-affected Mediterranean forests, as part of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration: 3.1.1 Enhance the scientific basis of work via incorporating monitoring processes drawing on the work of the European Topic Centre on Spatial Analysis and Synthesis, and further modelling of grey/green adaptation options to maximise the protection of forest ecosystems and water resources; 3.1.2 Scale up ongoing work in specific locations, e.g to enhance restoration work already underway under the Restoring Mediterranean Forests Restoration flagship. 3.2 Joint mobilization of international funding streams. <i>Budget for 2025-26: USD 1,000,000</i>
Enhancement of Forest solutions	of	4.1 Identify lessons learnt through systematic analysis of innovative and traditional practices, the MFI will <i>enhance the quality and quantity of integrated forest interventions</i> in the Mediterranean Basin. MFI lessons-learned and communicated will provide a basis for strong, evidence-based and ambitious programme design. The confidence of potential public and private-sector investors is expected to grow. <i>Budget for 2025-26: USD 150,000</i>
Sharing Forest solutions	Forest	MFI will work collaboratively on capturing, convening, curating, connecting, managing, and disseminating knowledge on how to protect and restore Mediterranean forest ecosystems. Knowledge management and communication in Mediterranean languages of emerging and longstanding good practices by the MFI will support evidence-based decision-making by governments and practitioners, providing a basis for evidence-based advocacy, prescriptive/predictive analysis thus enhancing prospects for greater results-based forest finance. 5.1 Capacity on how to protect and restore Mediterranean forests is strengthened and transferred, including through strengthening of existing partnerships to enhance inter-sectoral dialogue, including youth partnerships 5.2 Knowledge on how to protect and restore Mediterranean forests is captured, managed and disseminated to accelerate climate and biodiversity action: development of new knowledge products for dissemination to non-technical audiences, including in rural areas, peri-urban areas and cities. <i>Budget for 2025-26: 300,000</i>

4. Leadership and Partners

The proposed MFI will be developed collaboratively with Mediterranean states and communities, aiming to build on existing initiatives and knowledge networks while leveraging new opportunities for joint action and financing.

Leadership:

UNEP, FAO and UNDRR

Partnership:

UfM, EFIMed, Partner countries of the Mediterranean, Barcelona Convention, UNEP/MAP RACs, Mio-ECSDE, IUCN, CEDARE, Observatory of the Sahara and the Sahel (OSS)

5. Budget

Indicative 2.65 M USD for the period 2025/2026

**Protection and restoration of Seagrass/Posidonia Meadows as crucial ecosystems
(MED Posidonia Meadows)**

Concept note

Policy message

Preserving and maintaining healthy marine and coastal ecosystems are central to the activities and commitments of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. These ecosystems are not only vital for the sustainable development of the region, but more importantly, for the well-being of humanity.

Posidonia meadows are one such habitat, playing a key role in supporting a vast number of marine species. They also provide essential ecosystem services, such as protecting coastlines from erosion and sequestering carbon. These benefits are vital for maritime economic activities like tourism and fishing, as well as for life on Earth.

Protecting, sustaining, and restoring the Mediterranean's unique biodiversity, including 100% of its threatened Posidonia meadows, is not just necessary—it's imperative!

MSSD Objective	MSSD Targets	MSSD Indicators	SDGs	Barcelona Convention Protocols
Objective 2: Improve the health, productivity, restoration and resilience of the marine and coastal ecosystems	Target 6: By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, and sustainably managed by applying ecosystem-based approaches including biodiversity and climate change-informed marine spatial planning, and by conducting environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments	Indicator 7: Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine territorial waters	SDG 14, Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	- Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean - Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in the Mediterranean

1. Background

The Posidonia new flagship initiative was initially discussed during the 20th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) that took place in Marseille (14-16 June 2023), which suggested to present the initiative as new Flagship Initiative of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD).

An initial draft concept note was submitted to the Stetting Committee of the MCSD of 18-19 April 2024 which in principle expressed a positive opinion on the new flagship initiative and indicated the need to

prepare a developed version of the concept note for next meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee and for the 20th MCSD meeting.

The Posidonia flagship initiative would support the implementation of major international commitments such as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Protocol Specially Protected Areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean, the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post2020 SAPBIO), and the "Action Plan for the Conservation of marine vegetation in the Mediterranean" adopted within the framework of the Protocol Specially Protected Areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean.

2. Overall aim and Objectives

This flagship initiative aims to support the implementation of several critical Mediterranean frameworks and targets designed to protect and sustain the Mediterranean's unique biodiversity and natural resources.

1. Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post2020 SAPBIO)
2. The Action Plan for the preservation of marine vegetation in the Mediterranean adopted within the framework of the Protocol Specially Protected Areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean.
3. The Mediterranean Posidonia Network (MPN) roadmap as tool to implement the provision of the Mediterranean regional Action Plan.

This would be achieved by capitalizing the best practices already implemented by different countries and fostering cooperation among a wide variety of stakeholders in this flagship initiative—a critical role that will address the pressing challenges within the region. These integrated efforts shall lay the foundation for maintaining the ecological integrity of the Mediterranean, protecting its high biodiversity, and ensuring sustainable use of natural resources for future generations.

3. Key actions and deliverables

The achievement of the above objectives is to be ensured through the following activities:

- **Improve knowledge on Posidonia** focusing on its distribution, status, and the various pressures it faces. This will involve (i) Mapping the areas where Posidonia is present, especially in Mediterranean countries where data is still lacking or outdated and (ii) analyzing the specific pressures impacting Posidonia in each region, such as anchoring, illegal fishing, habitat artificialization, pollution, and invasive species. This analysis will also identify potential solutions to mitigate these pressures, assessing their feasibility in terms of costs, resources, governance, opportunities, and challenges.

Deliverables

- Continuous update of national and regional mapping of the distribution of Posidonia meadows and their status

- **Implementation of Innovative initiatives** by (a) establishing a Posidonia Fund, as a new financial mechanism that shall focus on financing conservation actions at priority sites independently of carbon compensation and (b) Developing active and passive restoration projects to reduce the pressure on key sites.

Deliverables

- Establishment of Posidonia Fund
- Number of active and passive restoration projects to reduce the pressure on key sites

- **Reinforcement of regulations** by (1) promulgation of legislation for the protection of Posidonia meadows and prohibition of anchoring in Posidonia meadows for ships over 20 meters and (2)

by establishing marine protected areas to protect the most representative seagrass meadows and those that could be considered natural monument of importance for the marine environment by applying the protection and management measures recommended by articles 6 and 7 of the SPA/BD Protocol.

Deliverables

- Guidelines to design legislation and regulations relative to the conservation of Posidonia meadows
 - Number of MPAs including Posidonia Meadows
 - Surface/Percentage of *Posidonia oceanica* habitats within Marine Protected Areas
- **Enhance the management of priority sites/**
 - **Capacity enhancement** through the development of practical toolkits for managers of marine protected areas and initiatives aimed at raising awareness among Maritime Spatial Planners in the region to facilitate the incorporation of seagrass and blue carbon ecosystem protection into their planning processes.

Deliverables

- Practical toolkits (Taxonomy, conservation biology, Monitoring Techniques)
 - Guidelines to consider Seagrasses and Blue carbon ecosystem in MSP
- **Raise awareness and engagement** by establishing local and national partnerships aimed at promoting behavioral changes and encouraging positive actions among stakeholders. Additionally, organize regional cultural events in collaboration with cultural and natural heritage institutions, NGOs, local governments, and community members. An example of this could be an annual celebration dedicated to Posidonia on the occasion of the World Seagrass Day celebrated each first of March.

Deliverables

- Local and national partnerships established
 - Annual celebration dedicated to Posidonia on World Seagrass Day (1 March each year)
- #### **4. Leadership and Partners**
- **Leadership**
 - SPA/RAC
 - **Partnership**
 - Partners: The French Biodiversity Agency (OFB), IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, WWF Mediterranean, The Mediterranean Posidonia Network⁴
 - Countries: France, Tunisia, Spain, Malta, Cyprus, Algeria, Türkiye, Italy, Greece

⁴ <https://medposidonianetwork.com/>

Towards a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Blue Tourism in the Mediterranean (MED Blue Tourism)

Concept note

Policy message:

Healthy Mediterranean Sea and coasts are the key assets for coastal and marine (blue) tourism, one of the most crucial blue economy sectors of the Mediterranean in terms of economic value, local employment and social development. As the attractiveness of the coastal and maritime tourism sector (blue tourism) is closely interlinked and dependent on a healthy environment, urgent actions are needed to mitigate severe impacts on natural ecosystems and adapt it to the increasing extreme climate events. Such actions are crucial to improve the resilience of the sector and transform it towards a more environmentally sustainable and socially responsible economic activity. It is, therefore, necessary to develop a long-term vision through regional and multi-scale cooperation among key stakeholders, by promoting a shared governance, integrated management frameworks, adequate policies and regulations, technical and political knowledge sharing, innovative pilot actions, and regenerative business models.

MSSD Objective	MSSD Targets	SDGs	Barcelona Convention Protocols
Objective 5 Transition towards sustainable, green, blue and circular economy and sustainable finance	Target 11: By 2030, 50% of Mediterranean Countries have in place effective regulatory and policy frameworks, including economic incentives, aimed at facilitating the development of sustainable business models that integrate circularity and eco-innovation principles in the green and blue economies, while contributing to the development of non-pollutant and socially inclusive economies, in line with the Sustainable Consumption and Production Regional Action Plan for the Mediterranean	SDG 12, Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	- Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol - Land-Based Sources Protocol

1. Background

This new Flagship initiative, presented during the 20th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) in Marseille (14-16 June 2023), builds on two existing initiatives: the **Blue Tourism Initiative (BTI)**⁵ and the Interreg Euro-MED **Community4Tourism (C4T)**⁶ (2023-2029). I) The Blue Tourism Initiative is a global initiative led by IDDRI and eco-union, with a Mediterranean component coordinated in collaboration with the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation and co-financed by the French Government (through the French Facility for Global Environment - FFEM), UNEP (One Planet Program), GIZ (Our Blue Future) and the World Bank (PROBLUE). Launched in 2022, the initiative aims to improve the governance of coastal and marine tourism, reduce its environmental pressures and increase its social benefits. II) The Interreg Euro-MED Community4Tourism (C4T) (2023-2029), a multi-partner project led by DIBA – Barcelona Provincial Council (Spain), with Plan Bleu/RAC serving as a key partner. This project seeks to enhance international cooperation in tourism policy governance to foster a greener, more innovative, and resilient tourism sector across the Mediterranean. The proposed Flagship Initiative is transversally linked to all six Strategic Objectives of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, while contributing to a number of 2030 Agenda SDGs and it is technically anchored to recent reports on sustainable blue tourism development: Towards

⁵ Blue Tourism Initiative: <https://bluetourisminitiative.org/n>.

⁶ Community4Tourism: <https://planbleu.org/projets/community-4-tourism/>.

Sustainable Blue Tourism: Trends, Challenges, and Policy Pathways (IDDRI & eco-union, 2023⁷), Catalogue of Best Practices on Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean (Plan Bleu, 2022)⁸ and State of Play of Tourism in the Mediterranean (Plan Bleu & eco-union, 2022)⁹ which outlines key challenges and opportunities faced by marine regions and the Mediterranean in adopting sustainable blue tourism models.

2. Overall aim and objectives

The proposed Flagship initiative promotes sustainable blue tourism policies and practices in the Mediterranean through a bottom-up approach, engaging diverse stakeholders, with special attention to local stakeholders as youth, women and local communities. It aims to enhance multi-scale and multi-sectorial cooperation, share best practices, and develop new tools and indicators for sustainable tourism governance and management in coastal areas. The main overall objective aims at advancing towards sustainable blue tourism in the Mediterranean, thus supporting the decarbonization of the sector and reducing its negative impacts on natural ecosystems and biodiversity and improving its environmental, social and economic resilience to extreme climate related events.

3. Key actions and deliverables

The proposed Flagship Initiative would be implemented through three main Actions:

Action 1 - Knowledge building and monitoring mechanisms

Regularly assess the impacts of blue tourism, conduct sectorial sustainability and policy effectiveness assessments, and enrich the body of knowledge available to blue tourism stakeholders. Action 1 will guide the activities of the flagship initiative, ensuring that blue tourism pilot actions in Action 2 are well-aligned with regional, national and local contexts.

Action and Deliverables include:

- Development of blue tourism monitoring mechanisms, indicators and toolkits to support, promote and benchmark sustainable blue tourism at destination / national / regional level.
- Continuously assessing policy effectiveness and its impact on regional blue tourism.
- Addressing socio-economic and geographical disparities in the Mediterranean
- Evaluating the effects of crises on the blue tourism sector and proposing timely mitigation strategies.
- Highlighting standout practices, challenges, and innovation opportunities within the sustainable blue tourism sector
- Outline opportunities for expanding blue tourism networks

Action 2 - Implementation of innovative blue tourism field activities to bridge the gap between destination-level action and relevant policy and governance mechanisms.

Action 2 supports field actions at pilot sites in Mediterranean countries and monitors their evolution to ensure sustainable development of blue tourism through inclusive and participatory approaches. For the time being, the identified pilot sites are: Djerba Island, (Tunisia), Al Hoceima National Park (Morocco) and Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, Palm Islands Nature Reserve and Anfeh Salt Pans (Lebanon).

Action and Deliverables include:

- Assessment of the state of play of blue tourism and tourism externalities per each pilot site.
- Development of sustainable blue tourism initiatives and support local governance mechanisms for sustainable blue tourism at each pilot sites.
- Capacity-building activities to enhance the stakeholders' capacity to support the development of new ecotourism products.
- Organisation of workshops at each pilot site to facilitate the sharing of lessons learned and promote the replication and scaling up of successful blue tourism practices.

⁷ Blue Tourism Initiative: <https://bluetourisminitiative.org/publications/>.

⁸ Catalogue of Best Practices on Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean (Plan Bleu, 2022): <https://planbleu.org/publications/catalogue-meilleures-pratiques-tourisme-durable/>.

⁹ State of Play of Tourism in the Mediterranean (Plan Bleu & eco-union, 2022): <https://planbleu.org/en/publications/state-of-play-of-tourism-in-the-mediterranean>.

Action 3: Regional cooperation for sustainable blue tourism

The aim of Action 3 is to foster regional cooperation in sustainable blue tourism and provide opportunities for inter-regional exchanges and synergies. It will ensure that sustainable BT models developed in Action 2 are leveraged through the sharing of lessons learned and their integration into governance and policy processes at the Mediterranean levels. A specific attention will be paid to raise the profile of blue tourism related issues on the environmental, social and economic policy agenda, including at UNOC 2025 and other relevant institutional frameworks.

Action and Deliverables include:

- Launch of the Flagship Initiative during the 3rd UN Ocean Conference (side event, parallel conference).
- Organisation of regular Inter-regional cooperation exchanges between target countries in the Mediterranean and with other marine regions
- Development of sectoral and thematic Roadmaps and Action Plans, programmatic documents that identify areas for strengthening cooperation on tourism issues within and across regions, including on water consumption and waste generation
- Establish a formal, multi-sectoral working group within the Mediterranean region to boost innovative policy dialogue within the sector, build on the strategic directions outlined in the roadmaps, and capitalise on the results of different regional initiatives.
- Organisation of an annual Mediterranean high-level Conference by the blue tourism working group, which will have a sub-sectoral focus on connecting sustainable blue tourism solutions with governance and policy. It will serve as a platform for blue tourism awards
- Develop sustainable blue tourism indicators to add to the MSSD dashboard, under the coordination of Plan Bleu and UNEP/MAP

4. Leadership and Partners

- Leaders

- ECO-UNION (Spain) and IDDRI (France)

- Partners

- CSOs: Plan Bleu/RAC, IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation.
- Supportive Countries: France, Spain
- Implementing countries: Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Montenegro.

**Youth involvement in the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and the
Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development implementation
(Med Youth Group - MYG)**

Concept note

Policy message

Youth involvement must be at the heart of local, national and regional policies and institutional frameworks. Young people bring fresh perspectives and energy, which are essential for achieving sustainable development across the Mediterranean. By creating opportunities for their active participation in environmental and discussions, we can foster a future where their ideas contribute to the long-term well-being of Mediterranean coasts and seas. Empowering youth should start now and today to ensure a more efficient and innovative path toward sustainability in the Mediterranean region.

MSSD Objective	MSSD Targets	SDGs
Objective 6 Improve governance at all levels, cooperation and partnerships in support of resilience and sustainable development	Target 13: By 2030, 70% of Mediterranean Countries have mechanisms in place to ensure subsidiarity and synergies between policies at different levels of decision- making across sectors in the long-term and across border thus enhancing policy coherence on sustainable development (PCSD), including involvement of stakeholders	SDG 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

1. Background

The 20th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) of June 2023, acknowledged the importance of youth and gender perspective as important aspects of sustainable development for consideration in the work of the MCSD and for inclusion in the new updated Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD).

In December 2023 in Portoroz (Slovenia), COP23 gave a clear signal that UNEP/MAP is ready to act effectively and timely to support the region in transitioning towards nature-positive economic models which need to embed also just and inclusive processes, where dual whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach is needed. To this end, COP23 put under the spotlight also the meaningful engagement with youth and women, as key agents of change, and in line with the conclusions of the 20th Meeting of the MCSD and following up the discussion on youth involvement initiated at COP21 held in Naples in December 2019.

The COP23 Ministerial Declaration specifically invests in future generations as it is crucial to involve youth in environmental issues and decision-making processes, notably through modernizing education programs and promoting education for sustainable development, raising the level of inter-generational collaboration, involving young people in the activities of local, national, and regional institutions and environmental programs, as well as in planning and implementing measures for adaptation to climate change, biodiversity conservation, prevention and reduction of marine pollution, in particular marine litter.

2. Overall aim and Objectives

The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) is a key framework for the future of Mediterranean Youth, therefore it is important the Youth can actively contribute to the work and processes of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) as well to the implementation of the MSSD. The objective is to define the participation of the representative of the Mediterranean Youth Group (MYG) as an important aspect of sustainable development for

consideration in the work of the MCSD as well as in the revision and implementation of the updated MSSD.

3. Key actions and deliverables

The above-elaborated objectives will be achieved through several activities.

Activity 1: Consolidation of the Mediterranean Youth Group (MYG)

Consolidation of the Mediterranean Youth Group (MYG), with a representative role in the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) and the meetings of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP), possibly through inclusion as MCSD member and MAP Partner. In particular, the following activities will be implemented:

- Development of the Governance Structure
- Resource Mobilization and Sustainability
- Proposed roadmap and timeline with the activities of the MYG
- Reports informing the MCSD on the progress of the group, group activities and related outcomes, and youth perspectives on themes related to the MCSD work
- List and report of members, youth networks and organizations who are part of the MYG.
- Group charter defining MYG's mission, governance structure, and operating procedures.
- Establishment of 3 thematic sub-groups within MYG for key environmental and sustainability challenges focused on marine life, climate change, and green transition/decarbonization of economic sectors

Activity 2: Providing Inputs for the MSSD Implementation

MYG will actively contribute to the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) through the following actions:

- Organization of webinars, in-person meetings, capacity-building, and awareness sessions for young stakeholders, focusing on the socio-economic and environmental challenges the MSSD tackles
- Liaising and cooperating with the coordinators of MSSD flagship initiatives to identify opportunities for MYG to meaningfully support
- Development and dissemination of surveys targeting a representative number of young people across the Mediterranean, gathering insights on their vision, priorities, and proposals for action.
- Regular reports to the MCSD summarizing MYG's contributions and youth perspectives and their ambitions in alignment with the MCSD work, based on survey results and consultations
- Establishment of dedicated MYG sub-groups, focusing on Education and Capacity-Building and Gender
- Capacity Building & Awareness

Activity 3: Supporting MSSD Outreach and Representation

MYG will actively contribute to the outreach efforts of the MSSD by representing youth voices in both regional and international environmental events, conferences, and youth assemblies:

- Ambassadors Role, including Representation and Contributions
- Reports submitted to the MCSD and its Steering Committee on the outcomes and insights gathered from participation in these events.
- Activity reports summarizing MYG's outreach efforts, participation in international projects, and contributions to the implementation of the MSSD.

4. Leadership and Partners

• Leadership

For the initial phase, the Mediterranean Youth Group (MYG) will be led by the founding members who conceived the idea to ensure the initiative is firmly established and progresses smoothly. Once the foundational structure is solidified, two focal points (preferably one young man and one young woman to ensure gender equality) will represent the group.

- **Potential Partnership**

- IECD –J-Med
- NGOs involved in the implementation of SDGs, Med sustainable development in the Med Sea (Mediterranean SOS Network (MedSOS) – Greece; Amici della Terra Italia (Friends of the Earth Italy) – Italy; L'Association de Sauvegarde de la Nature et de l'Environnement (ASNE) – Tunisia; RAED (Arab Network for Environment and Development) – Egypt; DOTO (Diaries of the ocean) - Lebanon
- Med Countries
- INFO/RAC
- Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
- MIO-ECSDE
- Anna Lindh Foundation
- Académie des Talents Méditerranéens

**Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE Nexus)
in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum**

Concept Note

Policy message

System-thinking using the combined Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus and Source to Sea (S2S) management approach can enable sectoral and spatial integration for policy development and implementation, and management of natural resources and socio-economic activities, away from the “silo” sectoral approach, in an innovative and effective way. A regional Strategy, adopted at Ministerial level, and further equipped with action planning, financing and monitoring arrangements, would assist Mediterranean countries to improve the integration of policy and management frameworks and instruments across WEFE sectors and spatial components to minimise risks and maximise benefits related to human livelihoods and socio-economic development in the Mediterranean S2S continuum.

MSSD Objective	MSSD Targets	MSSD Indicators	SDGs	Barcelona Convention Protocols
Objective 3: Promote sustainable resource management, and food security through sustainable forms of rural development and food systems	Target 8: By 2030, all the Mediterranean countries will have at least 50% of their population using safely managed drinking water services, secure access to surface and groundwater, in quantity (to guarantee food security and nutrition) and quality (public health issue via sanitation) in a multi-level context of water stress, competing demands and growing shortages, particularly for vulnerable populations and women	Indicator 14: Proportion of population (in %) using safely managed drinking water service	SDG 6, Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Land-Based Sources Protocol

1. Background

The WEFE Nexus approach builds up on the decades of experience on the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)¹⁰ while the Source to Sea approach builds on efforts for spatial integration in the source to sea continuum such as the Integrative Methodological Framework (IMF)¹¹. Both approaches help leverage IWRM, integrated coastal management planning and marine spatial planning by enabling the engagement of multiple sectors, assessing cross-sectoral trade-offs and synergies, optimizing overall security of resources and aiming to find solutions that take integrate considerations of -if not all- more than one sector or at least avoid harming the other three sectors when developing activities in each one of them (“no harm principle”).

Given the geomorphological features in the Mediterranean region, water, sediment, biota etc. flows connect land, watersheds, aquifers, wetlands, coast and the activities based therein with the sea, providing a spatial land-sea or Source to Sea (S2S) continuum. Combined pressures of all sectors’ demands are exerted on ecosystems, including coastal wetlands and marine protected areas, and the

¹⁰ <https://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/iwrm.shtml>

¹¹ <https://iczmplatform.org/storage/documents/b1wUPA4UtQvagztjcArnXKnDBVN0YqUkg3EWpxi.pdf>

critical services they provide also affecting the economy.

There is a growing recognition that system-thinking using the combined WEFE Nexus and S2S management approach, enabling sectoral and spatial integration for policy development and implementation, and management of natural resources and socio-economic activities, assists in moving away from the "silo" sectoral approach in an innovative and effective way. This has the potential to provide multiple benefits to society, by supporting: (a) adoption of sustainable socio-economic practices, contributing in reducing environmental footprint and reversing biodiversity loss; (b) increase of resilience and enhance adaptation to climate change; (c) achievement of global policy goals, such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and goals related to green energy transition, circular economy, and healthy living; (d) regional cooperation, social cohesion, conflict prevention and peace building; and (e) economic development, by supporting job creation, enabling investments opportunities and investment risk management, while fostering regional economic integration, among others by promoting Circular and Blue Economy.

2. Overall aim

The MCSO flagship initiative on WEFE Nexus in the Mediterranean S2S continuum **aims to assist the elaboration, implementation and monitoring** of the 'Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum' towards enabling the mainstreaming of system-thinking and the application of the WEFE Nexus approach in the region's S2S continuum within improved governance structures at different levels.

3. Goals, objectives and actions

The MCSO flagship initiative on WEFE Nexus in the Mediterranean S2S continuum, will:

Phase A. Assist the drafting and approval at appropriate political level of the 'Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum'

A regional consultation process on the draft Strategy is on-going, launched in June 2023, in Rabat. The Strategy is proposed to be considered for approval at Ministerial level by the end of 2025. This may be done by the suggested 2nd UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water as well as by the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP24).

At its current draft, the Strategy includes three Goals, supported by a set of eight Objectives.

- Goal 1: Appropriate institutional arrangements, policies, and cooperation frameworks are established at country and regional levels.
 - o Objective 1.1: Develop and/or accordingly adapt appropriate governance structures at all levels to implement the Nexus approach in the S2S continuum.
 - o Objective 1.2: Mainstreaming WEFE Nexus approach in the S2S continuum into policies and strategies
- Goal 2: Efficient and effective planning, financing and implementation of management and technical solutions.
 - o Objective 2.1: (Shifting) Upscaling demonstration Nexus applications to mainstreamed implementation, through appropriate investments and market mechanisms.
 - o Objective 2.2: Increasing financing for planning and implementation of Nexus interventions.
- Goal 3: Informed decision making based on enhanced science-based knowledge, engagement of capacitated stakeholders, and increased public awareness.
 - o Objective 3.1: Promoting Science and Education on WEFE Nexus and S2S aspects.
 - o Objective 3.2: Ensuring data availability, harmonisation and sharing across sectors and borders
 - o Objective 3.3: Developing capacities of stakeholders and related tools to implement WEFE Nexus at the S2S continuum.
 - o Objective 3.4: Raising awareness and improving understanding concerning the WEFE Nexus at the S2S continuum, stimulating stakeholder's engagement and empowering

them for their implementation.

Phase B. Upon approval, assist the implementation and monitoring the 'Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum'.

Upon eventual approval, the Strategy is expected to inspire and further enable various existing and eventually new schemes, programmes and projects, good practices' sharing, development of flagship initiatives, multi-stakeholder engagement, partners' alignment, donors' mobilization, as well as assistance to countries in setting up appropriate integration mechanisms and advancing implementation of WEFE practices. Enabling the Strategy's implementation, these could be described in an Action Plan that will link possible lines of work with partnerships and related financial resources, serving as a living technical document. The MCSD flagship initiative would engage on the side of the Barcelona Convention in the Action Plan preparation.

Furthermore, the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (2016-2025) led by the MCSD as well as the UfM Water Policy Framework for Actions 2030 and its Financing Strategy, provide engaging processes of state and non-state actors to facilitate institutionalizing and implementing the Nexus approach. In that content, and based on the Action Plan, the MCSD flagship initiative would assist promoting investment mobilisation, demonstrating the Nexus business case through demos, building capacities and disseminate knowledge, etc.

Furthermore, the MCSD flagship initiative will assist the Barcelona Convention, jointly with the UfM through its WEFE Working Group, to provide a light monitoring framework of the WEFE Nexus implementation process, aiming to assess progress and strategically orient to-wards further action for achieving the set goals.

4. Leadership and Partners

Reflecting the mechanism established for the Strategy elaboration process, the following partnership will mobilise the MCSD Flagship Initiative on WEFE Nexus in the S2S continuum:

- Policy process leadership
 - o UNEP/MAP, Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention
 - o Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
 - o EC DG NEAR
- Technical process leadership
 - o Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med)
 - o Water and Environment Support mechanism (WES) Project
 - o PRIMA Partnership for Research & Innovation in the Mediterranean area
- Flagship action partnership
 - o MCSD Members
- Beneficiary Countries
 - o All Mediterranean Countries

5. Finance

Various financial sources, in cash and in kind, would be mobilised. Phase A would be supported by: the GEF UNEP/MAP MedProgramme Child Project 2.2 on WEFE Nexus; EU WES BCA Project; PRIMA WEFE4Med Project; on-going MCSD arrangements (e.g. regular and ad hoc meetings and technical services); contributions by the MCSD members (e.g. for commenting on drafts); etc. Phase B support will be considered based on developments.

**Women leadership for Environment and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean
(Med Women leadership 4 SDGs)**

Concept Note

Policy message

Gender equality must be a priority of national policies, budgets, and institutions.
Women that lead the way on Environment and Sustainable Development can jointly make the difference for a more inclusive sustainable development of the Mediterranean coasts and sea.

MSSD Objective	MSSD Targets	SDGs
Objective 6 Improve governance at all levels, cooperation and partnerships in support of resilience and sustainable development	Target 13: By 2030, 70% of Mediterranean Countries have mechanisms in place to ensure subsidiarity and synergies between policies at different levels of decision- making across sectors in the long-term and across border thus enhancing policy coherence on sustainable development (PCSD), including involvement of stakeholders	SDG 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

1. Background

The COP 23 gave a clear signal that UNEP/MAP is ready to act effectively and timely to support the region in transitioning towards nature-positive economic models which need to embed also just and inclusive processes, where dual whole-of-government, whole- of-society approach is needed.

To this end, COP23 and its Ministerial Declaration put under the spotlight also the meaningful **engagement with youth and women, as key agents of change**, and in line with conclusions of the 20th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, of June 2023.

During COP 23 H.E. Maša Kociper, Slovenian State Secretary, hosted a gathering of women Heads of Delegations and representatives of international organizations, building on the relevant successful initiative launched by the First Lady of the Republic of Türkiye, gathering women leaders of the participating countries that took place during the COP22 Antalya (Turkey), 7-10 December 2021.

The gathering highlighted the importance of achieving women's full, equal and meaningful participation as an enabler of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was highlighted.

Most recently, the Mediterranean Coast Day on 25 September 2024 spotlighted the pivotal role of women in sustainable coastal management.

At global level specific initiatives, such as the respective gender action plan of each one of the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, CBD & UNCCD) as well as the Generation Equality Forum represent key reference frameworks.

2. Overall aim and Objectives

The **overall aim** of the flagship initiative is to engage with women leaders in the Barcelona Convention Contracting Parties and representing different socio-professional sectors, public authorities as well as policy leaders, private sector, financial - public and private - institutions and banks/donors, academia, civil society, NGOs, etc., to spotlight and keep high in the political agendas the pivotal role of women as active actors in facing the triple planetary crises of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss and in supporting the implementation of the SDGs in the Mediterranean.

Accordingly, the **objectives** of the flagship initiative are:

- Promote and streamline opportunities of women leaders to share their experience in the framework of high-level events/meetings across the Mediterranean and at international level
- Showcase actions, achievements, challenges and insights of women leaders
- Share best practices and key regional projects, inspiring new perspectives and replication

- Foster joint collaborative efforts among policymakers, international organisations, civil society organizations, academics, local communities and concerned networks and promote shared policy advocacy and initiatives, strengthening the multi-level and multi stakeholders' commitment to progress towards '*switching the Mediterranean to green*'
- Support multi-level awareness raising on the role played by women in main economic sectors the Mediterranean coasts and seas rely on
- Further promote women's leadership role in planning and decision-making roles related to environment and sustainable development issues
- Inspire and promote concrete opportunities for young women to become the future leaders
- Streamline contribution on women role to other MSSD flagship initiatives, i.e. on youth and research and education, sustainable blue tourism, etc.

3. Key actions and deliverables

The following **main activities** are envisaged:

- **Activity 1:** Support a **partnership among key high-level events/initiatives in the Mediterranean** tackling the leadership role of women for environment and sustainable development in order to ensure information sharing and capitalisation.

This activity will support the cooperation and linkages/continuation among the outcomes of the **UNEP/MAP COPs initiatives dedicated to women leaders**, the sessions of the **PAM Women Parliamentary Forum** and its Expanded Advisory Board and the **High-Level Conference on Women for the Mediterranean and the Regional Dialogue Platform on Women Empowerment of the Union for the Mediterranean**.

Deliverables:

- Joint policy papers
 - Streamlined contribution to respective processes on women leadership for environment and sustainable development
 - Expansion of the partnership
 - Set up of a working group of *Med Women leadership 4 SDGs*
- **Activity 2:** Promote **the opportunities for women leaders to share their experience and** promote mutual learning, showcase actions, achievements, challenges, insights, best practices and key regional projects across the Mediterranean, with multi-level and multi-sector stakeholders, inspiring new perspectives and replication opportunities, involving also local authorities, academia, private sector, civil society, academia, NGOs, etc.

Deliverables:

- Regularity include a specific session dedicated to *Med Women leadership 4 SDGs* in key annual/biannual events such as: UNEP/MAP COPs side events, Mediterranean Coast Day, MEDPROGRAMME events, events organised by MSSD flagship initiatives, etc
 - Regularity liaise with WestMED, EUSAIR Macro regional strategy, INTERREG Euro-Med, INTERREG Next South and INTERREG Adrion, PRIMA Programme, in order to capitalize on regional and sub-regional projects outputs gender related
 - Capitalise at policy level the main deliverables and good practices of relevant projects led by women at regional level
- **Activity 3:** Ensure **reinforced policy advocacy and outreach**, also based on the deliverables of Activity 1 and 2, at international level, and with the support of a dedicated task force appointed to review and promote gender mainstreaming across all the MSSD strategic framework

Deliverables:

- Participation, contribution and policy papers for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and other high-level relevant forums
 - Participation, contribution and policy papers for the EU policy instances, as the European Committee of the Regions, the Commission for Economic Policy (ECON) and Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy (ENVE)

- Cooperation and advocacy with The Women/Gender Caucus under the three Rio Conventions: UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD; [Generation Equality Forum](#)
- **Activity 4:** Promotion of **young women** as future leaders for SDGs in the Mediterranean.
Deliverables:
 - Leadership programmes in schools and universities focused on sustainable development, and ensure they are accessible to girls and young women, and in liaison with the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development
 - Centralized online database of capacity building and training actions and opportunities for young women to develop leadership skills on sustainable development
 - Online training in conjunction with MEDECC and MIO-ECSDE
 - UNEP/MAP contest and Award *Med young Women leadership 4 SDGs* in the framework of the COP biannual meetings
- **Activity 5:** Mapping of existing data and potentially integrate the analysis on the **gender gap** regarding the participation and access of Mediterranean women to leadership roles related to environment and sustainable development, both in public institutions and private sector, in particular of young women, and **monitor the progress**.
Deliverables:
 - Analysis on the gender gap and related reasons regarding the participation and access of women to leadership roles related to environment and sustainable development
 - Specific indicators on the progress of women in leadership position on environment and sustainable development.

4. Potential Leadership and Partners

- **Leadership**
 - Two female representatives of the MCSD members; Secretariat of UNEP/MAP
- **Partnership**
 - PAM (Women Parliamentary Forum)
 - Countries: France, Slovenia (Current Bureau Chair), Egypt (Next Bureau Chair), Algeria (hosting of 2024 Mediterranean Coast Day), etc
 - UFM
 - Plan Bleu/RAC, PAP/RAC and INFO/RAC
 - Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED)
 - ASCAME
 - EPLO
 - CPMR-InterMediterranean Commission
 - OECD – Istanbul Centre

5. Finance

40,000 USD voluntary contribution for the Activity 5 on Mapping of existing data and potentially integrate the analysis on the gender gap regarding the participation and access of Mediterranean women to leadership role.

Annex II

Partially renewed MCSD Membership for the Biennium 2027/2028

Presentation of the received Stakeholders' EoIs by applicants' name and alphabetical order

Local Authorities			
MAP Partners	New Stakeholders		
	Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) Inter-Mediterranean Commission https://cpmr-intermed.org Based in Barcelona, Spain	Overall Presentation The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) brings together more than 150 regional authorities from 24 countries across the European Union and beyond, representing around 200 million people. Since its creation in 1973. Organised into geographical commissions, the CPMR operates as both a think tank and a lobby, promoting a more balanced territorial development. It focuses on key areas such as cohesion policy, maritime affairs and blue growth, transport and accessibility, energy and climate change, migration, neighborhood and development. The CPMR produces policy positions based on input from its members and supports its advocacy with studies, analyses, and technical papers and implements projects. The Atlantic Arc, the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, the Intermediterranean, the Balkan and Black Sea and the Islands are the six Geographical Commissions of the CPMR. Each Geographical Commission has its own organisational structure, so that it can promote its specific identity and cooperate on subjects of common interest.	Relevance to Sustainable Development The CPMR Intermediterranean Commission work focuses on the development of the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and territorial cooperation, concentrating its efforts on Transport and Integrated Maritime Policy, Green and Blue Economy, Economic and Social Cohesion, Water and Energy. CPMR Intermediterranean Commission has a long track list of regional/sub-regional projects implemented in the region, and cooperates in a number of regional initiatives led by UfM and European Commission and covering the cooperation with North, South, East shores.

Socio-economic Stakeholders			
MAP Partners	New Stakeholders		
Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) https://raednetwork.org/en/home/ Based in Cairo, Egypt <u>RAED is a MAP Partner since COP19 and has been renewed by COP 22</u>		Overall Presentation RAED is an Arab network, registered in Egypt as an international non-governmental organization (68/2007), with more than 300 NGOs members from Arab Countries, in North Africa and West Asia. It was established in 1990 during the preparations for the Earth Summit of Rio de Janeiro, and since then has been following up on the progress of the three UN Conventions; UNCCC, UNCCD and UNCBD. RAED is also accredited in all three conventions. Throughout the years, RAED has partnered with national entities such as line ministries, local authorities, academia and research centers, media, CSOs, among other stakeholders. As well as, with many regional and international organizations and entities, such as EU, UNEP, UNEP/MAP, UFM, LAS, GNDR, GIZ, UNDP, UNESCO, UNESCWA, UNESCO, UNDRR, IUCN/MED, IUCN/ROWA, Global Water Partnership, Mediterranean Water Partnership, GEF/Small Grants Programme, European Climate Foundation, among many others..	Relevance to Sustainable Development RAED's main mandate is to enhance the role of Arab Civil Society Organizations to become key partners among all relevant stakeholders. RAED leads effective networking among member NGOs to ensure their active involvement in national, regional and global events and activities. RAED is active in the fields of climate change, biodiversity conservation, integrated water management, disaster risk reduction, education for sustainable development, circular economy, combating and desertification. Throughout its programs, projects and activities, RAED follows a participatory and inclusive approach, taking gender, youth and people with disabilities into full consideration. RAED is also contributing to the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Education on Sustainable Development, through partnering with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports in Cyprus in transferring the Cypriot experience on Green Schools, and currently working on more than 30 schools in Greater Cairo in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Education.

EnerGeo Alliance (Previously named IAGC) https://energeoalliance.org Based in Houston, USA <u>EnerGeo Alliance is a MAP Partner since COP21</u>		Overall Presentation Founded in 1971, EnerGeo Alliance is a global trade association for the energy geoscience industry. The Alliance represents the geoscience companies, innovators, and energy developers that use earth science to discover, develop, and deliver energy. Member companies unify to open the gateway to the safe discovery, development, and delivery of energy solutions. Representing members including extensive operations within the Mediterranean, the Alliance strives to support responsible operations at sea, complying with or exceeding all relevant requirements related to minimising the potential impact of operations on the environment. The Alliance has been engaging in setting best practice, participating in research and raising standards across industry.	Relevance to Sustainable Development EnerGeo Alliance has established sustainability initiatives related to marine debris removal (Sustainable Seas Initiative), recently launched a dedicated research program related to the potential impacts of underwater sound (Sound, Environment and Aquatic Species, or ‘SEAS’ Research Program) and developed best practice emissions reporting guidance related specifically to geophysical survey operations. Since 2023 EnerGeo Alliance engaged in Cyprus, Egypt and Lebanon.
Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) https://www.euromed-economists.org Based in Barcelona, Spain <u>EMEA is a MAP Partner since COP23</u>		Overall Presentation Founded in 2012, EMEA is a leading regional innovative think and act tank, that aims at contributing to the changing realities in the Euro-Mediterranean and Africa, EMEA brings together leading economists and high-level international and local experts to think for the future of the Euro-Mediterranean and Africa in a multi-polar world. It serves as a leading independent and innovative research institution and forum for debate on the political and socio-economic reforms in the Mediterranean and Africa with the aim of promoting sustainability, inclusiveness, and regional economic integration and prosperity. It strives to	Relevance to Sustainable Development EMEA’s mission is to bridge science, policy, and action, promoting evidence-based solutions for sustainable development across the Mediterranean. EMEA actively advances environmental sustainability, economic resilience, and inclusive growth. To this end EMEA also promotes innovative initiatives in the fields of economics, management and finance for the Euro- Mediterranean and Africa and to take stock of best international practices; promotes activities and actions for a transparent, responsible, inclusive and sustainable economic development and provides targeted expertise on areas relevant to the sustainable development of the Mediterranean.

		contribute to the rethinking of the Euro-Mediterranean and African partnerships in view of the changing dynamics in an emerging multi-polar world.	
	Network of Universities for Sustainable Development (RUS) https://reterus.it Based in Turin, Italy Suggested by Italy	Overall Presentation Promoted by the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI) since July 2016, the Italian Network of Universities for Sustainable Development (RUS) mark the first experience of information sharing and coordination among all Italian Universities committed to the topic of environmental sustainability and social responsibility. The main goal of RUS is to spread the culture of sustainability, both within and outside Universities, by sharing skills and experiences. The aim is to increase the positive impact in terms of environmental, ethical, social and economic actions, which are currently implemented by each university, in order to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs and to strengthen the value of the Italian experience on an International level. RUS's Goals include creating a community able to develop, transfer/adapt national and International best practices, with particular attention to sustainability and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal; Promoting projects within the network, which have already been successfully tested;	Relevance to Sustainable Development The RUS working group on climate change raises awareness and supports climate action within academic institutions, while the resource working group management promote research and disseminate best practices for the sustainable use and preservation of marine and coastal resources. Through its "Food" working group, RUS leads initiatives to position universities as models of sustainable food systems, addressing aspects such as responsible sourcing, consumption practices, food education, waste management, and partnerships with local actors. RUS fosters sustainable urban practices through its regional subnetworks and active collaboration with local authorities. RUS encourages the shift toward sustainable economic models through collaboration with public and private stakeholders, contributing to green and blue economic transitions. As a national coordination platform, RUS engages multiple stakeholders and supports the development of sustainable policies through participatory and inclusive approaches.

		developing joint initiatives in areas such as knowledge and skills transmission and with a focus on learning and on a multi-stakeholders; developing a multidisciplinary approach in university programs; Training and updating the staff of Italian universities on the topics of sustainable development.	
	Sumus Italia S.r.l. https://sumusitalia.it/en/ Based in Milan and Padua, Italy Suggested by Italy	Overall Presentation Sumus Italia Srl is a private company founded in 2013, designs and manufactures paper bags for separate waste collection, using 100% recycled paper and natural inks and glues. The patented solutions for biowaste management promote aerobic degradation, reduce odors, and support efficient, hygienic in-home waste practices. The paper biowaste bags ensure weight reduction, high-quality resistance properties and improve biogas production. The paperbags from 7 to 20 liters for organic are covered by world patent. Sumus Italia Srl, has developed and recently patented worldwide the first sheet of recycled paper for active mulching.	Relevance to Sustainable Development Sumus Italia Srl, promotes sustainable waste management in coastal areas, fostering circular practices and reducing environmental pressure and improve natural resource management. It promotes high-quality separate collection of organic waste to maximize biogas and biomethane production from the organic fraction of municipal solid waste. Sumus Italia Srl has collaborates with Mediterranean municipalities to enhance separate waste collection and community composting and has been actively involved in the "60 years of circular economy" conference, discussing recycling and sustainable resource management. Sumus Italia Srl presence at COP28 reinforced its role in promoting circular solutions such as composting and biowaste valorization to reduce environmental impacts. Sumus Srl actively collaborates with the relevant Ministry in the development of Green Public Procurement criteria, supporting transparent and responsible governance.
UniVerde Foundation https://www.fondazioneuniverde.it		Overall Presentation UniVerde is a non-profit Foundation founded in 2008 that promotes the dissemination of ecological knowledge and culture for a change	Relevance to Sustainable Development The UniVerde Foundation produces and supports publications, web, TV and radio information, training courses also for administrators, managers, public and

Based in Rome, Italy <u>UniVerde Foundation is a MAP Partner since COP21</u>		in lifestyles in harmony with the natural environment and a sustainable future. It organizes and supports meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops, competitions, publications, exhibitions, opinion polls, awareness and information campaigns and any other initiative useful for the dissemination of ecological thought and practice, also in collaboration with institutions, associations, bodies, universities, businesses and civil society.	private officials; projects and any other initiatives related to the ecological transition of society and the economy, in collaboration with relevant associations, universities and institutions. UniVerde supports the development of ecologically-oriented schools/universities, international cooperation and solidarity initiatives; environment laws, regulations and any other measures relevant at local, national and international level.
Non-Governmental Organizations			
MAP Partners	New Stakeholders		
Association of Continuity of Generations (ACG) https://acg-generations.org Based in Sfax, Tunisia <u>ACG is a MAP Partner since COP21 and renewed COP 22</u>		Overall Presentation Founded in 2009, the ACG was born out of the desire of young people, women and the local community of Sfax to develop their region. ACG works to promote sustainable development goals, preserve the environment, empower women and young people, and raise awareness among young people of the importance of good citizenship. The missions include protecting the environment, exchanging knowledge between generations, building the capacities of vulnerable young people and women, and promoting human rights and social peace.	Relevance to Sustainable Development ACG actions focus on preserving biodiversity, combating climate change, managing waste and reducing plastic pollution. ACG also works on ecotourism and sustainable tourism, promoting responsible management of natural resources while supporting local development. ACG is also involved in the co-management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and campaigns for integrated and sustainable coastal zone management, contributing to the preservation of marine ecosystems and the livelihoods of coastal communities through nature-based solutions. ACG has a sound experience in managing sustainable development projects carried out in close collaboration with national and international partners (government, public institutions, professional organisations and donors such as the Med Fund, FAO, GEF, UNDP, EU, WB, etc.). ACG is also a member of several networks and committees, including UNEP MAP since 2020,

			GPML, GEF, and MED PAN, ECOSOC, RONACED as network president, route culinaire de la tunisie as network president, FTED, Island innovation as ambassador. The ACG was awarded in 2023 by the Ministry of the Environment as part of the 'Clean up year' programme and in 2024 as champion of plastic pollution prevention in the Mediterranean.
Association de Recherche Environnement et Bio Innovation (AREBI) www.arebi.tn Based in Sfax, Tunisa <u>AREBI is a MAP Partner since COP 22</u>		Overall Presentation The activities of AREB and its experts brings together the research activities undertaken in various fields relating to the SDGs. activities within the association and at academic level encompass 8 Sustainable Development Goals.	Relevance to Sustainable Development AREBI implements projects focusing the following SGDs: - 2, Zero Hunger - 3, Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages - 4, Inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all - 5, Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls - 6, E availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all - 8, Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all - 9, Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation - 14, Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
	Cultural Center Saint Martin, Apulia Region https://www.sanmartinopuglia.com Based in Lecce, Italy	Overall Presentation Cultural Center Saint Martin promotes sustainable development as a member of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), thanks to the consultative status obtained in 2023.	Relevance to Sustainable Development Cultural Center Saint Martin is promoting sustainable development as a member of the National Forum for Sustainable Development. Towards a new Open Government model for the national strategy for sustainable development.

	Suggested by Italy	Cultural Center Saint Martin is member of Italian network of Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and member of Anna Lindh Foundation, the European Federation of Saint Martin cultural itinerary, recognized by the European Council; the Open government; ICESP Italian Circular Economy stakeholder platform.	
Fispmmed Network, Sustainable development and the fight against poverty in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (FISPMED) https://www.fispmmed.org Based in Venice, Italy <u>FISPMED is a MAP Partner since COP 20 and it has been renewed at COP23</u>		Overall Presentation FISPMED was established in 2004, building on the positive experience gained through the SEAM project, supported by the European Commission (DG Enlargement and DG Regional Policies) and the Italian Minister of the Environment. This led to the creation of a network consisting of 188 partners from 38 different countries, including cultural institutions, NGOs, non-governmental agencies, study centres, research institutes, and universities. In 2008, the Veneto Region became a founding member. Today, the association has 239 partners in 39 different countries across the Euro-Mediterranean and Black Sea area, representing over 1.8 million citizens. The coordination office is staffed by four full-time employees. FISPMED prioritizes environmental issues and sustainable development in accordance with numerous international documents	Relevance to Sustainable Development FISPMED works to strengthen the contribution of the civil society it represents, giving it the opportunity to express its views on community and international policies in which it is directly involved. FISPMED focuses on actions aimed at: - Improving water management and related demand - Promoting rational energy use, increasing the use of renewable energy resources, and additionally, mitigating climate changes and initiating adaptation processes - Supporting sustainable mobility through appropriate transport management; Ensuring sustainable tourism as a leading economic sector - Ensuring sustainable agricultural and rural development; Promoting sustainable urban development - Fostering the sustainable development of the sea, coastal areas, and marine resources.

Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA) https://www.helmepa.gr/en Based in Athens, Greece <u>HELMEPA is a MAP Partner since COP18 and it has been renewed at COP21</u>		Overall Presentation HELMEPA is an Association of Greek seafarers and ship owners to safeguard the seas from ship-generated pollution funded in 1982. HELMEPA encourage Greek ship companies, operators, managers and agents wherever located, as well as masters, deck and engineer officers and seafarer members of the Panhellenic Seamen's Federation to enlist in the Association as Members; Cooperates with and assist the government of Greece on issues related to international laws and regulations designed for the protection of the marine environment and life at sea; Promotes nurture a high level of environmental consciousness within the ranks of the Greek maritime community with the means of education, information, motivation and publicity.	Relevance to Sustainable Development HELMEPA implements activities related to the protection of the marine environment. Key activities are the "Network of Volunteer Teachers for the Marine Environment" with seminars on "Sea and Man: Ensuring a Sustainable Future"; extensive information campaigns 'No Garbage, No plastic in Seas and Beaches'; Since 1991, HELMEPA coordinates in Greece the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) campaign, which takes place during the third weekend of every September. In cooperation with the MED POL Program of UNEP/MAP, HELMEPA together with the NGOs MIO-ECSDE and CLEANUP GREECE are implementing a Public Awareness Campaign on Marine Litter in the Mediterranean. HELMEPA coordinates in Greece the digital recording of litter collected by volunteers during beach cleanups using EEA's <i>MarineLitterWatch</i>. Since 2014, following an invitation by the European Environment Agency (EEA), HELMEPA participates in the annual meetings of European experts on the monitoring of marine litter in European seas.
Human Environmental Association for Development (HEAD) https://www.headngo.org Based in Beirut, Lebanon <u>HEAD is a MAP Partner since COP21</u>		Overall Presentation HEAD is a non-governmental organization officially registered under the Ministerial Decree of 2009. HEAD is committed to the protection and preservation of the environment, focusing on safeguarding the essential elements of life: earth, air, water, and biodiversity. The mission is to promote sustainable solutions that ensure the health and well-being. To this end the main	Relevance to Sustainable Development On Marine Conservation and Biodiversity Protection HEAD has implemented several projects aimed at preserving marine biodiversity and combating the degradation of marine ecosystems. On Beach and Coastal Cleanups HEAD has organized numerous beach and coastal cleanup activities in

		actions concern environmental awareness, enhance technical skills, and foster environmental citizenship within communities, with a particular focus on women, children, and youth.	Lebanon, engaging local communities, schools, and volunteers. On Plastic Pollution Reduction HEAD has been involved in initiatives focused on minimizing plastic waste. On Sustainable Fisheries and Ecosystem Management HEAD works closely with local fishermen and communities to promote sustainable fishing practices that preserve marine ecosystems while providing sustainable livelihoods. On Research and Monitoring of Marine Ecosystems HEAD collaborates with universities, research institutions, and other environmental organizations to monitor the health of Lebanon's marine and coastal ecosystems. On Climate Change and Ocean Health HEAD also addresses the intersection of climate change and marine ecosystems, advocating for policies that protect vulnerable coastal areas from the effects of sea-level rise
	Lady Lawyer Foundation https://ladylawyervillageposts.wordpress.com Based in Bologna, Italy Suggested by Italy	Overall Presentation Lady Lawyer Foundation (LLF) is a non-governmental organization established in 2014 with the aim to put human rights standards at the heart of global governance and policy-making and to ensure that the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable are addressed on the global stage; to provide a trusted, impartial space for dialogue and independent analysis to deepen understanding of human rights challenges; to raise corporate standards and strengthen public policy to ensure that the activities of companies do not contribute to human rights abuses, and in fact lead to positive.	Relevance to Sustainable Development Participation to the Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development Partnership, the Investor Alliance for the Human Rights, the Forum for sustainable Developed of the Italian Ministry for energy Security, the climate heritage network, the business collation for a Global Plastic Treaty.

Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles (MEDASSET) https://medasset.org Based in Athens, Greece <u>MEDASSET is a MAP Partner since COP19 and it has been renewed at COP22</u>		Overall Presentation MEDASSET is an international environmental NGO working to protect sea turtles in their natural habitats throughout the Mediterranean Sea. MEDASSET was founded in 1988 in England and in 1993 in Greece. The mission of MEDASSET is to win a place for sea turtles in the hearts of the public and to establish them as a flagship species for the conservation needs of marine and coastal habitats throughout the Mediterranean region. To ensure these needs are central to national and international policy and to support the creation of future measures for the protection and conservation of sea turtles, their habitats and the marine environment in general.	Relevance to Sustainable Development MEDASSET's work is supported by key international intergovernmental organisations. MEDASSET is an official partner status for the implementation of UNEP/MAP Mediterranean Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Turtles. MEDASSET is also a Permanent Observer-Member to the Bern Convention (Council of Europe). MEDASSET regularly attend the annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation, in order to exchange information and experiences with the international community. MEDASSET works under the main themes of: Sea turtles, coastal & marine habitats, Marine Protected Areas, Fisheries interaction, Sustainable and responsible tourism, Litter & pollution, Sustainable coastal & offshore development, Climate change and Maritime traffic impact mitigation. MEDASSET has completed 68 programmes and campaigns, 121 publications and articles, 143 technical & research reports and contributed to 84 international meetings.
Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) https://mio-ecsde.org Based in Athens, Greece <u>MIO-ECSDE is a MAP Partner since COP18 and it has been renewed at COP21</u>		Overall Presentation MIO-ECSDE is a non-profit Federation of 136 Mediterranean NGOs for Environment and Sustainable Development. MIO-ECSDE mission is to protect the Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage and promote Sustainable Development in a peaceful Mediterranean, in co-operation with governments, international organisations, other socio-economic partners and networks.	Relevance to Sustainable Development MIO-ECSDE implements a number of MSSD flagship initiatives: 1. The Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development; 2. Encourage the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters; 3. Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions. Since June 2024, MIO-ECSDE has been contributing to the Working Group on Circular Economy (WGCE) for

		MIO-ECSDE acts as technical and political platform for the intervention of NGOs in the Euro-Mediterranean scene on resources and waste, nature, biodiversity, cultural diversity, climate change, health and environment as well as on horizontal and cross-cutting issues. <u>MIO-ECSDE has been a MCSD in the biennium 2018-2019.</u>	the MSSD update 2026-2035 period. In terms of the new proposed Flagships, MIO-ECSDE is an active partner in the following the Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE Nexus); Mediterranean Forest Initiative; Youth involvement in the MSSD.
	Oceanographic Institute Monaco https://www.oceano.org/en/ Based in Monaco	Overall Presentation The Oceanographic Institute was founded in 1906 and it implements a wide range of outreach activities: the Oceanographic Institute has been actively involved for over a century in the protection of the Mediterranean Sea, through its mission to promote ocean knowledge, conservation, and sustainable governance. The Mediterranean programme positions the Institute as a science-based platform for dialogue and action, mobilising scientists, policymakers, civil society, and the private sector around a shared ambition: to make the Mediterranean a model of sustainable ocean management.	Relevance to Sustainable Development Organization of yearly appointment on Monaco blue initiative, supporting the development of sustainable blue economy and supporting Mediterranean stakeholders' engagement. The Monaco Ocean Week Initiative supports a week of meetings, debates and actions dedicated to the Ocean and Sea specifically focusing on the analysis of the major issues of marine conservation and mobilise to preserve the oceans. The Monaco Ocean Protection Challenge is an international competition aimed at students and young entrepreneurs which aims to provide concrete support for the creation and development of start-ups capable of demonstrating a positive impact on ocean preservation in the short to medium term. The Med Visioning Initiative, in collaboration with civil society, academia and the private sector, aims to develop a collective action-oriented foresight on the future of the Mediterranean marine environment, looking beyond 2030. This participatory process will provide a bottom-up contribution from non-state actors to UNOC3 (Nice 2025).

			The exhibition Méditerranée 2050, launched in March 2025 raises public awareness on Mediterranean futures, inviting millions of visitors to reflect on scientific foresight, regional challenges, and the urgent need for coordinated action.
	Traverso Project https://www.instagram.com/traverso_project/ Based in Italy Suggested by Italy	Overall Presentation The Traverso Project is a civil society initiative dedicated to fostering regenerative port systems and sustainable coastal development in the Mediterranean, grounded in the principles of UNESCO's Ocean Literacy Framework and fully aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Traverso actively promotes a transformative vision of ports as hubs of ecological innovation, social equity, and cultural revitalization, emphasizing inclusive dialogue between maritime stakeholders, institutions, youth, and local communities.	Relevance to Sustainable Development In 2024, Traverso launched a 10-point Position Paper outlining key priorities for transitioning toward regenerative ports, which include: decarbonization, circular economies in port areas, community engagement, nature-based solutions, and digital transparency for coastal monitoring. This document, co-drafted with a network of civil society actors, is now being promoted as a common platform among Mediterranean NGOs and port communities.
Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV) https://tudav.org/en/ Based in Istanbul, Türkiye <u>TUDAV is a MAP Partner since COP18 and it has been renewed at COP21</u>		Overall Presentation TUDAV was established in 1997 by a group of scientists, seafarers, and nature experts and is dedicated to marine biodiversity conservation, sustainable fisheries, and marine policy development in Türkiye and the broader Mediterranean region. Through scientific research, capacity-building initiatives, and stakeholder engagement, TUDAV actively contributes to the sustainable management of marine and coastal resources. TUDAV supports various studies, especially studies on	Relevance to Sustainable Development TUDAV has extensive experience in EU-funded projects that align with the MSSD, as - SHORE Project (2023 – ongoing): Funded by the EU Horizon program, the project aims to enhance ocean literacy by engaging students, teachers, and schools - Climate Change Adaptation in the Seas and Coasts of Antalya/Mediterranean Sea (2017/2019) - Ölüdeniz Conservation Action Plan / LIFE Project (2003-2004): conservation action plan for the

		biodiversity, creates a data bank for the purpose of information exchange, develops research studies, organizes seminars and conservation guidelines, especially for fishermen and other members of society. TUDAV invests efforts also on the establishment of Special Protected Areas, thus researches and practices are conducted.	Ölüdeniz Lagoon on the Mediterranean coast of Türkiye, which face significant tourism pressure - MARLISCO FP7 Project (2012-2015): Aimed at reducing marine litter in European seas by fostering social awareness and co-responsibility. - Gökçeada Marine Park Underwater Trail - EU Project (2016-2017) on Civil Society Dialogue.
Worldwide Fund for Nature Mediterranean (WWF MED) https://www.wwfmmi.org Based in Rome, Italy <u>WWF MED is a MAP Partner since COP18 and it has been renewed at COP21</u>		Overall Presentation WWF Mediterranean's strategy is the regional translation of WWF International's global strategy, which embeds targets and goals from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.	Relevance to Sustainable Development WWF Mediterranean coordinates Mediterranean offices and is at the helm of projects that range from transforming the fisheries sector to address its environmental, social and economic sustainability (SDGs 1, 2, 12, 14) to the conservation and management of Posidonia oceanica and its contribution to carbon sequestration (SDGs 13 and 14), to achieving plastic smart (plastic free) cities (SDGs 11, 14, 15), to developing the capacity of MPA Managers to address pressures and impacts from blue economy sectors. In implementing its strategy and projects, WWF Mediterranean involves a vast array of stakeholders, including the solar and wind power industry, the shipping industry, the fishing sector (both small and large scale) and local communities (SDGs 9, 17). Other crucial activities in which WWF Mediterranean engages include fundraising for specific regional priorities such as data collection and capacity building and providing policy makers with science-based recommendations and tools to improve Mediterranean ecosystems' status.
Youth Love Egypt Foundation (YLE)		Overall Presentation The Youth Loves Egypt Foundation is a civil organization registered in 2012 and works in	Relevance to Sustainable Development The YLE has a key role in providing insights and expertise in the following SDGs areas:

https://yle-foundation.com/en/ Based in Cairo, Egypt <u>WWF MED is a MAP Partner since COP18 and it has been renewed at COP21</u>		the field of protecting the environment, youth and sustainable development and in order to achieve sustainable development goals. Youth Love Egypt Foundation has an extensive experience in sustainable development, both at the national and regional levels. Its commitment to advancing environmental and socio-economic sustainability is evident through its leadership role within YLE, where it successfully led projects addressing climate change, youth engagement, and environmental justice in the Mediterranean region.	- Quality Education: YLE works on raising the awareness and empower youth to join climate action through offering quality education - Clean Water and Sanitation: YLE Foundation leads clean-up efforts to protect water bodies, reduce pollution, and promote sustainable sanitation practices. - Climate Action: YLE works on raising awareness and empower youth to join climate action through offering quality education we work to implement projects to adapt or mitigate the climate change in vulnerable communities - Reduce Inequalities: YLE is dedicated to empowering youth, women, and vulnerable communities to actively participate in environmental, educational, and socio-economic development. - Our focus is going towards the preservation of Nile River, Mediterranean Sea and Red sea, we implement so many cleanup activities on it.
Intergovernmental Organizations			
MAP Partners	New Stakeholders		
Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), Based in Cairo, Egypt (former MAP Partner) https://new.cedare.org/new.cedare.org/ Based in Cairo, Egypt		Overall Presentation CEDARE was established in 1992 as an international inter-governmental Organization with diplomatic status. This was in response to the convention adopted by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible For the Environment in 1991, and upon the initiative of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Arab fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD).	Relevance to Sustainable Development CEDARE's Sustainable Growth Programme (SGP) addresses new and emerging concepts related to environment and development for human well-being, with a focus on issues related to Sustainable Consumption and Production, Green economy, and Green ICT. The Programme collaborates with global, regional and national efforts, addressing poverty alleviation, health, waste reduction (e-waste), green jobs, green ICT, pollution reduction, greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable consumption and production,

CEDARE experience has been varied covering several initiatives, projects and activities in the various branches of natural resources, whether water, land, or coastal and marine; environmental management in urban areas, with a special emphasis on solid waste management; and the utilization of environmental information systems, especially in integrated environmental assessment; in addition to several activities related to the socioeconomic aspects of development, training, media, and public awareness.

and energy security. Together with its wide partner base from the international, regional and national community, the SGP implements projects, conducts research and studies, and provides training and knowledge dissemination.

In addition CEDARE focuses on:

- Striving for the implementation of the principle of Integrated Management of Water Resources, as one of the pillars of achieving the SDG's
- Preserving scarce land resources in danger of deterioration and rehabilitating and developing them
- Supporting environmental decision making by analyzing and disseminating environmental information
- Participating in the maximization of the principle of self-compliance, and strengthening social responsibility at business enterprises for the improvement of environmental performance.

Parliamentarians			
MAP Partners	New Stakeholders		
None	None		

Annex III

Summary of the general selection criteria of MAP Partners as per COP 19 Decision IG.22/17 on the Reform of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents and COP 23 Decision IG.26/2 on Governance

COP 19 Decision IG.22/17 on the Reform of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and Updated MCSD Constitutive Documents

Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development Composition, Section B 7

The following general selection criteria will apply

- I. The criteria established in Decision 19/6 on “MAP/ Civil society cooperation and partnership” shall be used as a reference text for selection of members representing NGOs
- II. Priority for selection shall be given to Mediterranean local authorities, NGOs, socio-economic stakeholders, the scientific community, and intergovernmental organizations that are concerned with environmental and sustainable development issues in the Mediterranean.
- III. The principle of equitable geographical distribution should be respected (north/south and east/west).
- IV. Fragile and island ecosystems will be given due consideration
- V. With reference to the six specific categories, the following are the selection criteria, giving priority to the groups or networks concerned:
 - (i) Local Authorities Local authorities to be selected should be concerned with environmental and sustainable development issues
 - (ii) Socio-economic Actors Selection within this group should take into consideration the major problems and decisive factors in the Mediterranean as well as the following factors:
 - north/south representation
 - developed/developing countries
 - rural/urban
 - past and current activities at the Mediterranean levelPriority of selection shall be given to socio-economic networks active in the Mediterranean.
 - (iii) NGOs

The members representing NGOs should be selected from the list of MAP/NGO partners.

The members should be selected from among three NGO categories, with priority being afforded in the following order:

 - NGOs with regional or sub-regional Mediterranean scope
 - NGOs with global scope
 - NGOs with national or local scope

The NGOs to be selected should have a concrete and action-oriented approach towards the Mediterranean
 - (iv) IGOs

The members representing IGOs should be selected from organizations with global and/or regional scope, with mandates and activities of direct relevance to the work of the MCSD and the implementation of the MSSD.

(v) Scientific Community

The members representing the scientific community should be selected from among academic/research institutions and individuals with a proven track of relevant work and interest in fields of environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean

(vi) Parliamentarians

The members representing Parliamentary Associations should have a Mediterranean regional or sub-regional scope and include individuals with experience in the field of sustainable development.

COP 23 Decision IG.26/2 on Governance, Annex V, B, II

Criteria for MAP Partners Accreditation

- to have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more of MAP's areas of activity and to the scope of the Convention and its Protocols
- to have existed for at least four years
- to submit financial and activity reports from the last two years
- to operate democratically
- to have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country and/or to have activities in the Mediterranean and actively contribute to the objectives of UNEP/MAP
- to demonstrate proof of general or specialised, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of MAP, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols
- to demonstrate what contributions the MAP Partner could make to MAP and the Convention and Protocols