



**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention

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Meeting of the MAP Focal Points

Athens, Greece, 16-19 September 2025

Agenda Item 6: Preparation of the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP24)

**Elements of the Provisional Agenda of the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties and Preliminary Note
on the Theme of the Ministerial Session**

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Elements of the Provisional Agenda of the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties

Provisional Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting

2. Organizational Matters

- 2.1. Rules of Procedure
- 2.2. Election of Officers
- 2.3. Adoption of the Agenda
- 2.4. Organization of Work
- 2.5. Verification of Credentials

3. Thematic Decisions

- 3.1. Compliance and Reporting
- 3.2. MAP Governance
- 3.3. Mandate of the Climate Change Regional Activity Centre: Mandate and Terms of Reference of its Focal Points
- 3.4. Barcelona Convention Reporting System Format: Update of the LBS Protocol Section
- 3.5. Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2026-2035
- 3.6. Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas 2026-2035
- 3.7. MAP Ecosystem Approach Policy and RoadMap 2026-2035
- 3.8. Amendments to the “Common Criteria for proposing amendments to Annexes II and III of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean” and Amendment of Annexes II and III of the SPA/BD Protocol
- 3.9. Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SAPMIs), Strategies and Action Plans under the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, including the Post-2020 SAPBIO
- 3.10. Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the MedECC Special Report interlinking climate change with the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus in the Mediterranean Basin (MedECC Special WEFE Report)
- 3.11. Marine Pollution from Ships
- 3.12. Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan 2026-2035
- 3.13. Implementation of National Action Plans/Programmes of Measures in accordance with Articles 5 and 15 of the LBS Protocol and EcAp Policy and COP Decisions on Regional Plans

4. Decision on Programme of Work and Budget for 2026 – 2027

5. Ministerial Session

- 5.1. Opening of the Session
- 5.2. Report on Activities carried out in the framework of UNEP/MAP since the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP23)
- 5.3. Interactive Ministerial Policy Review Session

5.4. Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award 2024-2025

5.5. Cairo Ministerial Declaration

6. Dates and Place of the 25th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP25)

7. Any Other Business

8. Adoption of the Report

9. Closure of the Meeting

Preliminary Note on the Theme of the Ministerial Session

Initial Considerations on the Format of the Ministerial Session

1. The 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP24) (Cairo, Egypt, 2-5 December 2025), as customary in the MAP system, will have its Ministerial-level discussions. The Ministerial session would benefit from an interactive format, in the form of a panel, as was the case in COP23 (Portorož, Slovenia, 5-8 December 2023). The interactive Ministerial Session is envisaged following the opening session and the report on activities carried out since COP23. The Theme of the Ministerial-level discussions will be “*Sustainable Blue Economy for a resilient and healthy Mediterranean*”, as agreed at the 97th Meeting of the Bureau (Evia, Greece, 1-2 July 2025).
2. The ministerial discussion will be triggered by a keynote speaker. A panel is envisaged that would consist of 4-5 speakers/resource persons coming from different strands of work and expertise relevant to the work of the MAP-Barcelona Convention and the theme of the COP, representing categories of relevant stakeholders. Resource persons are expected to make a short introduction on the theme from their perspective and the discussion that will follow would involve the Ministers/Heads of Delegations and stakeholders/MAP Partners.
3. An event on Women Leaders is planned to be led by the Host Country. Importance will be also placed on Youth and Education, including possibly through panel participation and/or a dedicated youth event. The Ministerial Session is also expected to include the short interventions by Ministers and Heads of Delegations that are expected to focus on the theme of the COP, the ceremony for awarding the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award 2024-2025, and the adoption of the Cairo Ministerial Declaration.
4. Finally, a series of parallel/side events organized around specific activities/achievements of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system and partners in the main thematic areas of the COP with regional and sub-regional scope and other formats of outreach would be arranged throughout the COP, culminating during the Ministerial Session. These would include:
 - a) Signing of bilateral agreements;
 - b) Side events, including with stakeholders;
 - c) Photo exhibitions;
 - d) Media events;
 - e) Other.

Introduction to the Theme of Ministerial Session

5. The present proposal takes into account the policy messages contained in the Antalya and Portorož Declarations as well as the latest developments on the global and regional environmental governance scene.
6. Following a proposal by the Secretariat, in consultation with Egypt, Host Country of COP24, the 97th Bureau Meeting agreed on the “*Sustainable Blue Economy for a resilient and healthy Mediterranean*” as main theme of the COP, to trigger discussions on the way forward and on the commitments that will be included in the future Cairo Ministerial Declaration.
7. The discussions will be in line with the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) that will take place from 8 to 12 December 2025 at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, on the theme “*Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet*”.
8. The Ministerial discussions at COP24 and the Cairo Ministerial Declaration will take into consideration the outcome of the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3), held in Nice, France; they will also built upon the discussions of the high-level event held on 10 June 2025 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of UNEP/MAP and the 30th anniversary of the Post-Rio Barcelona Convention during UNOC-3, and the respective Declaration of the Ministers of Environment of the Mediterranean.
9. The theme of the Ministerial Session of COP24 and the Cairo Ministerial Declaration will also provide guidance for the new UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy to be developed during the next

biennium. Marking the 30th anniversary of the revised UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, this is the time for bold, coordinated action.

The Theme: Sustainable Blue Economy for a resilient and healthy Mediterranean¹

10. Sustainable Blue Economy sectors, both traditional and emerging ones, serve as crucial drivers for economic growth and job creation in the Mediterranean and have the potential to play a pivotal role in contributing to a smart transition towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon and circular economy, in alignment with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, and especially Goal14.

11. Fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, coastal and maritime tourism, offshore renewable energy, blue biotechnology, desalinization, and ports and maritime transport are some of the most dynamic economic sectors in the Mediterranean region. These sectors require the implementation of sound Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning approaches at national and regional level in order to enhance the potentialities while protecting the marine environment. In parallel, important investments are required to innovate and digitalize Blue Economy sectors, thus promoting sustainable and circular business models, while creating the requirements for new blue skills and job opportunities, that can equally support inclusive policies towards youth and women.

12. At the same time, despite the 2015 Paris Agreement and its target to limit global warming to 1.5°C and decline to 43% the greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, climate change represent more than ever threats to nature, people, economies and public budgets, equally impacting on global and regional migration flows and related socioeconomic adaptations. Future projections on climate change extreme events and consequences present a worrisome picture. Nature-based solutions have been increasingly recognized as a key component in addressing these threats, offering multiple benefits for both climate change adaptation and mitigation by enhancing ecosystem resilience, preserving biodiversity, and delivering sustainable, cost-effective protection against climate risks. In complement, renewable energies play a major role in the energy transition to mitigate climate change by leveraging on a diverse range of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar energy, an abundant asset of the Mediterranean.

13. This year, that marks the 50th Anniversary of UNEP/MAP and the 30th Anniversary of the Post-Rio Barcelona Convention, taking into account the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992, provides a unique opportunity to highlight the region's pioneering role in ocean protection, but also to see the challenges that persist over these years and the new ones that emerge, and to discuss and define ways to best address these challenges. In parallel, the adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2026-2035 will provide an updated, robust, framework to support the implementation of a Sustainable Blue Economy for a resilient and healthy Mediterranean.

¹ Initial draft from preliminary discussions held at the 97th Bureau meeting, to be updated in consultation with the Host Country