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**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention

10 June 2025
Original: English

Meeting of the MED POL Focal Points

Athens, Greece, 17 – 19 June 2025

Agenda item 3: Updated National Action Plans /Programmes of Measures 2025-2035

Progress on National Baseline Budget update and preliminary findings of the 5th cycle

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2025



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UNEP/MED WG.576/03



**UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

04 December 2023
Original: English

Meeting for developing the preliminary elements for new National Action Plans (NAPs) and sharing Best Practices for application of the Guidelines for estimating pollutants loads from agriculture and aquaculture sectors.

Athens, Greece 24-25 October 2023

Report of the Meeting

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2023

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Introduction

1. In accordance with the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), Programme of Work 2022-2023 adopted by the 22nd Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Antalya, Türkiye, 7-10 December 2021), the UNEP/MAP Secretariat (MED POL Programme), with the kind support from and in close collaboration with the EU-funded project on “Water and Environment Support (WES) in the Southern Neighborhood Region”, organized the Meeting for developing the preliminary elements for new National Action Plans (NAPs) and sharing Best Practices for application of the Guidelines for estimating pollutants loads from agriculture and aquaculture sectors. The Meeting was held in Athens, Greece from 24 to 25 October 2023.
2. The main objectives of the Meeting were to:
 - a. Review the progress achieved in implementing the NAPs (2015-2025);
 - b. Define possible new elements for updating the National Action Plans in order to meet the obligations stemming from the recent regional binding measures and timetables for different sectors approved by the Meetings of the Contracting Parties in 2013, 2021, and hopefully in 2023.
 - c. Train towards better applying the guidelines on estimating pollution loads from Agriculture and Aquaculture.

Participation

3. The Meeting was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Italy, Israel (online), Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Libya, Tunisia and Türkiye.
4. The following Non-Governmental Organizations and other institutions were also represented as observers: The Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA); General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM); International Federation for Sustainable Development and the Fight Against Poverty in Mediterranean and Black Sea, (FISMED); (UNIVERDE FONDAZIONE); and Water and Environment Support Project in the Southern Neighborhood Region (WES Project).
5. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), including the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention Secretariat (UNEP/MAP) was represented by the Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean (MED POL). The following MAP Component also participated in the Meeting: The Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC).
6. The full list of participants is attached as Annex I to the present report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

7. The Meeting was opened at 9:30 AM on Tuesday 24 October 2023 by MED POL Programme Management Officer, Mrs. Olfat Hamdan, and by the WES Project Team Leader, Professor Michael Scoullou.
8. In her opening speech, Mrs. Hamdan, on behalf of the Secretariat, welcomed the participants and informed them that this Meeting was the initiation phase for the development of the National Action Plans new cycle which will take place in 2024-2025, in line with the obligations set in Article 5 of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources (LBS Protocol) where the Contracting Parties shall elaborate and implement, individually or jointly, as appropriate, national and regional action plans and programs, containing measures and timetables for their

implementation. In addition, the reporting of the 5th Cycle of the National Baseline Budget (NBB) is foreseen for the next biennium 2024-2025, as planned.

9. Professor Michael Scoullos welcomed the participants and underlined the importance of the preparation of the National Action Plans as a critical step towards fulfilling commitments in the implementation of the legally binding obligations under the Barcelona Convention at a national level. He stressed the importance of designing NAPs with the intention of immediate implementation at the national level; therefore, NAPs should be designed for implementation. He further emphasized the need for foreseeing tangible outcomes while preparing the NAPs and aiming to achieve those outcomes. In addition, Professor Michael Scoullos recognized that the target of the NAPs might be different for each Contracting Party.

Agenda item 2: Organizational matters

a) Rules of Procedure for the Meeting

10. The Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols was applied mutatis mutandis to the present Meeting (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI.)

b) Election of Officers

11. Subject to Rule 20 of the rules of procedure mentioned in para. 2(a) for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties, the Meeting elected one (1) President, two (2) Vice Presidents, and one (1) Rapporteur from among the participants, as follows:

President:	Ms. Sameh Ayoub, Egypt
Vice-President:	Ms. Selma Genzić, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Vice-President:	Mr. Mohamad Kabriti, Morocco
Rapporteur:	Mr. Fatih Kargin, Türkiye,

c) Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

12. Subject to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure mentioned in para. 2(a), the proposed agenda appearing in document UNEP/MED WG.576/1 and annotated in the UNEP/MED WG.576/2 document was reviewed and accepted. The President has proposed to shift the presentation of MAP partner (UNIVERDE) to present a demonstration on sustainable desalination in small islands under Agenda item 8 (Any Other Business), to the second session of the first day; and to start the second day of the Meeting with Agenda Item 6 instead of Agenda Item 5. The Annotated Agenda was adopted with the proposed changes by the Meeting as appended in Annex II to the present document.

d) Organization of Work

13. The discussions were held in two plenary sessions, convened over two days, from 9:30 to 12:30 and 14:30 to 17:30.

14. Simultaneous interpretation in English and French was available for all sessions, while Italian interpretation was exclusively available for Agenda Item 8.

15. The Meeting addressed all agenda items during the two-day meeting. The Meeting closed on 25 October 2023 at 17.30 pm after the adoption of the Conclusions and Recommendations as appended in Annex III to this present document.

Agenda item 3: Implementation of NAPs (2015-2025)

16. Under this agenda item, Mr. Erol Cavus, Pollution Officer (MED POL) presented the findings of the Midterm Evaluation completed in 2020. This evaluation was prepared based on NAP indicators populated with the data from the 4th Cycle of NBB (2018-2019) and data from the SEIS II (Shared Environment Information System) project. During the presentation, MED POL underlined the issues regarding the outlook of the NAPs, emphasizing that while legal frameworks, such as the adoption of Emission limit value (ELVs), were largely in place, their enforcement was not consistently implemented. MED POL also pointed out the areas where data was lacking for a comprehensive evaluation in 2020, particularly in the implementation of measures related to agriculture, aquaculture, and marine litter. Moreover, it was mentioned that the application of Best Available Techniques (BAT) and implementation of Best Environmental Practices (BEPs) in industrial sectors were still falling behind and need attention.

17. The Representative of Croatia, Mr. Mario Šiljeg, shared Croatia's experience in implementing the Programme of Measures (PoMs), focusing on the legal framework established to support its implementation. He outlined the three main pillars of the current PoMs: enhancing the national framework, strengthening capacity for implementing the measures, and improving the instruments to achieve the Good Environmental Status (GES). During this presentation, one Contracting Party asked for further details about the challenges encountered during the implementation of the PoMs. In response, Mr. Šiljeg highlighted a couple of main challenges, specifically the implementation of nature-based solution and the implementation of smart special planning especially in the coastal areas, as well as the planning for climate change adaptations in those coastal areas.

18. The Representative of Morocco, Mr. Mohamad Kabriti, presented the progress achieved by Morocco in implementing their NAP. He highlighted the significant quantitative improvements made from 2008 to 2020, specifically underlining the progress in the areas of waste management, and wastewater treatment. The achievements included, *inter alia*, a substantial increase in waste collection coverage from 44% to 96% and a rise in the wastewater collection rate from 70% to 83%. Furthermore, Mr. Kabriti outlined the national legislation ratified in between 2008 and 2022, including the laws on plastic pollution, the reuse of treated wastewater, as well as the law on climate change, in line with the NAP.

19. The Representative of Türkiye, Mr. Fatih Kargin, presented the monitoring programme, relying on actual data collected from 278 sea stations across all Turkish coastal and marine water. He indicated that Türkiye has currently an assessment of the ecological status of its monitored waters. Additionally, he mentioned that the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change had developed and implemented a national plan for aquaculture, with its implementation being overseen through the monitoring programme. Emphasizing the new law on dredging material, Mr. Kargin stressed the prioritization of beneficial use over dumping, as mandated by the new law. He also conveyed that Türkiye has initiated the preparation of the NAP (2025-2030) and expressed willingness to collaborate with interested Contracting Parties in the planning and developing of their respective NAPs.

20. Mr. Christos Ioakimidis, Marine Litter Officer (MED POL) presented the current and upcoming projects related to sea-based plastic pollution to support the implementation of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter. Further details were provided regarding the involvement of several Contracting Parties in these initiatives, which preliminary focus on waste management in marinas, as part of addressing sea-based plastic pollution.

21. Regarding the collective efforts to safeguard the Mediterranean, Professor Michael Scoullos informed the participants about the ongoing activities under WES, emphasizing collaborative efforts with UNEP/MAP on capacity building. He further announced the extension of the current activities under WES for an additional four years, incorporating elements focused on climate action and biodiversity conservation.

22. The chair of the meeting, on behalf of Egypt, provided information on an ongoing project in Egypt designed to collect wastewater and redirect it to a treatment plan located in the desert. He mentioned that the aim of the project was, among others, to use the treated wastewater for growing trees in the desert contributing to the efforts to combat climate change.

23. The Representative of Slovenia, Ms. Natasa Bratina, provided an overview of the progress made in recent years, focusing on advancements in waste management. She highlighted a study revealing that nearly 70% of the marine litter originated from waterways entering the sea. Additionally, she informed the meeting about Slovenia's preparation of the Marine Spatial Planning Strategy document, aiming to offer guidance for all environmental planning initiatives. She also referred to the Marine Environment Management Plan that will address the issue of climate change. Finally, she once again extended the invitation of Slovenia for Contracting Parties' participation in the upcoming COP23.

24. The meeting welcomed the presentations provided by the Contracting Parties and MED POL regarding the implementation of the current NAPs. Furthermore, it encouraged the Contracting Parties to assess the progress in implementing the NAPs, emphasizing the crucial role of this assessment in evaluating the overall NAP implementation.

25. The WES Consultant, Lihie Iuclea, presented the initial findings of the questionnaire. She detailed the rationale behind creating the questionnaire, highlighting its aim to gather information crucial for the development of the new NAPs. The preliminary outcomes of the questionnaire, collected from responses from 12 Contracting Parties, suggested that new elements such as climate change, sustainable nutrient management, plastic pollution, and the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem (WEFE) NEXUS should be integrated into the new NAPs. Additionally, she shared preliminary results from 9 Contracting Parties, confirming the inclusion of the specific measures outlined in the regional plan on wastewater and sludge, as well as in the regional plan on marine litter.

26. Two Contracting Parties expressed their willingness to respond to the questionnaire and requested additional time to complete it. They also recommended to the Secretariat that online questionnaires with a downloadable word version should be distributed, enabling the contracting parties to internally distribute it and collect answers from various stakeholders.

27. Following general discussion, the Meeting highlighted several challenges, including collection of data and the necessity for financial support, particularly in specific industrial sectors for some Contracting Parties. One Contracting Party emphasized the importance of aligning the NAPs/PoMs with frameworks and activities at the European Union level, particularly for the Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States.

Agenda item 4: Regulatory and policy framework on marine pollution, prevention and reduction from land-based sources and activities

28. UNEP/MAP Coordinator, Ms. Tatjana Hema, emphasized the importance of preparing the Programme of Measures and NAPs as an important activity, aligning with the Midterm Strategy (2022-2027) of the Barcelona Convention, with the intent of endorsing the NAPs in the next biennium (2024-2025). The Coordinator underlined the importance of learning from past experiences while embracing new approaches and methodologies, such as the Source to Sea (S2S) and WEFE NEXUS. She invited the meeting to discuss openly and express their opinions to guide MED POL when completing the preliminary analyses during the preparation phase. In response to a query from a Contracting Party, the Coordinator referred to the previous modality in which EU Member States could submit revised versions of the PoM under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), or if preferred, could submit a specific NAP as some of the Contracting Parties did in the previous cycle. However, she highlighted that the PoMs should not be confined solely to marine pollution only, but should also consider land-based sources, as outlined in the NAP methodology.

29. Mr. Mahesh Pradhan, (COBSEA Coordinator) presented the critical importance of managing nutrient resources in a more sustainable manner, aligning with UNEA-4 Resolution 14. He highlighted the subsequent UNEA-5 Resolution 2, which urges the Contracting Parties to develop National Action Plans focused on nitrogen management. Mr. Pradhan pointed out the opportunities for developing these NAPs on nutrient management, including initiatives like GEF-7 and the Nitrogen Working Groups under the UNEA resolution, that facilitate the sharing of best practices for capacity building. Moreover, he mentioned the forthcoming publication of the International Assessment Report, scheduled for the next year, which will provide nutrient assessment methodologies for the use of the Contracting Parties.

30. Ms. Olfat Hamdan, Project Management Officer (MED POL) presented the six new regional plans, three of which were endorsed during COP 22 in Antalya, namely, the Regional Plan of Urban Waste Water Treatment (UWWT), the Regional Plan on Sludge Management and the Regional Plan on Marine Litter. She presented a timetable detailing the measures outlined in these plans, along with their agreed implementation dates. Ms. Hamdan emphasized the importance of adhering to the timelines of those regional plans when preparing the NAPs, placing a particular focus on prioritizing the Regional Plan of UWWT, the Regional Plan on Sludge Management, and the Regional Plan on Marine Litter, given their approaching implementation deadlines.

31. MED POL, provided a summary of the provisions within the updated Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean, elaborating on the ongoing national activities supported by the EU-funded Marine Litter MED II Project and through the Cooperation Agreement with the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security. Additionally, MED POL directed attention to the connection between these initiatives and the preparation of the updated National Action Plans, stressing the importance of aligning them with global developments, particularly those under the INC process for developing a global treaty on plastic pollution.

32. The meeting welcomed the presentations and requested to consider also nutrient management in their action plans. It emphasizes the necessity for enhanced collaboration with other regional seas engaged in implementing UNEA 4 and 5. The meeting also stressed the importance of building the capacity of the Contracting Parties in estimating techniques for diffuse sources that could be provided by the MED POL. Furthermore, the Meeting recommended that the new NAPs should consider incorporating requirements of other resolutions, specifically those addressing plastic pollution and sustainable management, where appropriate.

Agenda item 5: Main elements for the preparation of the new NAPs (2025-2035)

33. The WES Consultant presented the main elements for preparing the new NAPs. The main aim of the updated guidelines was to guide Contracting Parties in developing their National Action Plans (NAP) in harmonized manner, considering the international, regional and national developments. In this context, she underlined the main elements to be considered as (i) implementing six new regional plans; (ii) prioritizing measures not implemented in the current NAPs; (iii) streamlining the national and international obligations; (vi) assessing hotspots and sensitive areas; and (v) developing targeted implementation plans. Furthermore, the consultant introduced key proposed changes in the current guidelines. These changes involve, among other, the development of implementation plans with quantifiable objectives and operational targets, as well as key performance indicators. Additionally, the proposal includes establishing a monitoring programme that links IMAP indicators and NAP indicators with the NAP monitoring programs. Another significant aspect is the application of the Source to Sea (S2S) approach when prioritizing measures.

34. Erol Cavus, (MED POL) presented a new concept for updating the hotspot criteria. He briefly outlined the former criteria, which relied on a methodology primarily based on more qualitative criteria. This was because by 2015, neither IMAP nor NAP indicators had been fully developed or undergone comprehensive testing. Therefore, the new approach recommended segregating environmental pressures

and status into different criteria. These criteria themes were already built on agreed indicators, that have been tested in data calls for the QSR 2023 and NAP Midterm Evaluation (2020). Additionally, the introduction of climate change as a new criterion in the Hot Spot methodology was proposed. Furthermore, the new methodology suggested using primarily Quality Status Report (QSR) assessments for status scoring where assessments are available in QSR 2023. While not explicitly advised, any Contracting Party could also use other reliable and tested methodologies to assess the status of their seas and use it for hotspot scoring. On the land side, MED POL underlined that the proposed methodology requires the use of NAP indicators designed to show the trends of loads for specific pollutants and the work regarding the scoring would be soon completed.

35. The meeting welcomed the main elements and the new hotspot methodology, which aimed to introduce more quantitative assessment criteria and scoring for evaluating potential hotspot areas. One Contracting Party proposed keeping “NAP Indicator 3.1 Share of total, urban and rural population with access to an improved sanitation system” under the theme of “Public Health” instead of categorizing it under “Pressures”, a suggestion agreed by the Meeting. Moreover, the Contracting Party inquired about why the assessment units under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) in coastal waters had not been considered. MED POL explained that the WFD assessment in coastal waters was already considered under the MSFD assessment. Thus, WFD assessments were duly considered during the QSR assessments.

36. A representative of FISP MED (International Federation for Sustainable Development and the Fight Against Poverty in Mediterranean and Black Sea), a MAP Partner, presented the work of the FISP MED and its network underlining the potential linkages and areas of collaboration in the field of sustainable aquaculture and agriculture. FISP MED expressed its interest to further collaborate in the implementation of the relevant decisions regarding Aquaculture and Agriculture.

37. The meeting requested the MED POL to continue working on the scoring criteria, particularly focusing on pressure trends. Concerning the scoring for the state indicators, it was recommended to align them with QSR classes that had already been approved and tested, ensuring reliable and validated results. In addition, the meeting urged the MED POL to prepare definitive scoring classes for each indicator and present these for review and approval at the upcoming meeting planned for the second quarter of 2024.

Agenda item 6: Best Practices and Techniques for Estimating Pollution Loads from Aquaculture and Agriculture Sectors

38. Under this agenda item, the representative of Info/RAC, Ms. Francesca Catini, presented an update on the recent developments concerning the NBB Infosystem, where the Contracting Parties would upload the 5th Cycle of NBB. She briefly introduced the new elements of the NBB Infosystem and explained the step-by-step process for national-level data submission. The presentation covered the new web form of the NBB Infosystem, where the reporting was based on pollutant info (year to which the pollutant release refers, sector, subsector, process, facility). Also, Info/RAC emphasized the methods for determining pollution, focusing on estimating and calculating pollutants in cases where measured data was not available. Additionally, she underlined the principle of NBB, explaining that additional reporting would not be necessary, if the data had been reported at the (e-)PRTR level.

39. MED POL presented the findings of the application of the “Guideline on estimation techniques and applied methodologies for non-point source releases from agriculture” (UNEP/MED WG.509/35) and “Guideline on estimation techniques and applied methodologies for point source releases from aquaculture” (UNEP/MED WG.509/36) in two volunteered Contracting Parties, namely Israel and Morocco. This exercise was supported by MED POL National Consultants.

40. MED POL National Consultant involved in the ongoing work in Morocco, presented briefly the process used to estimate the total nitrogen and total phosphorus released from an aquaculture farm in Morocco. In this estimation, the consultant utilized coefficients obtained from the feed supplier to calculate the total releases per annum, in line with the UNEP/MED WG.509/36 document. He listed

the challenges associated with data collection from the aquaculture industry, particularly the reluctance of the industry to provide capacity information such as details about fish type, cage capacity, feeding regime, and other essential data for applying the estimation techniques with confidence. However, he stressed that, if the data is collected from the aquaculture industry or from statistical bureaus, the estimation could lead to sound results that effectively show the loads from this sector. MED POL

41. MEDPOL National Consultant, involved in the ongoing work in Israel, presented a brief overview of the releases from the agriculture sector, with a focus on animal husbandry and poultry subsectors, as well as on the application of treated sludge and reuse of wastewater for soil conditioning and irrigation respectively. He elaborated on the utilization coefficients derived from international literature and the estimation methods as outlined in the UNEP/MED WG.509/35 document. Subsequently, he presented the total annual loads for total nitrogen, total phosphorus, potassium, sodium, and chlorine in Israel. The consultant introduced the sources of information and data, predominantly from the Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Agriculture report, and reports from farmer conglomerates where statistical data and livestock records were maintained and publicly available. He underlined the challenge of obtaining statistical data in the country and the need for final confirmation or validation by the relevant authority. However, the consultant stressed that while this remained a challenge, the application of estimation techniques was possible and could yield robust results. These results could not only assist in the effective management of the pollution loads but also could serve as valuable inputs for reporting under NBB on a national level and policy-making level.

42. The meeting requested the MED POL to extend support to the Contracting Parties, offering both capacity building and financial assistance for the 5th Cycle of NBB. Additionally, the Meeting urged the MED POL to provide further guidance on the estimation techniques in line with the UNEP/MAP – MED POL guidelines that were approved by MEDPOL FPs in May 2021

Agenda item 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

43. The Meeting reviewed, commented on, and approved the draft Conclusions and Recommendations as amended and attached to the present report as Annex III as revised as appropriate by the meeting.

Agenda item 8: Any Other Business ¹

44. Under this agenda item, Mr. Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio, President of UNIVERDE, UNEP/MAP Partner, emphasized the necessity for sustainable desalination technologies, particularly focusing on their relevance for small islands. The solutions needed to consider the challenges posed by fluctuating summer populations, especially for Contracting Parties where islands host significant seasonal populations.

45. The Minister of Environment of Italy, His Excellency Mr. Gilberto Pichetto Fratin, participated via video conference, expressing Italy's dedicated efforts in addressing the challenges related to desalination and its environmental implications. He highlighted the consideration of alternative sustainable methods, particularly emphasizing the potential of mobile marine desalination units in coping, where applicable, with contingent and structural difficulties. His Excellency Mr. Fratin, thanked the Secretariat of UNEP/MAP for their collaboration and reiterated Italy's responsibility and unwavering commitment to protect the beautiful and enormous heritage presented by the smaller islands in the Mediterranean.

46. The experts from UNIVERDE, presented the technical solution implemented in Italy for desalination. This solution was designed for locations with limited space for the installation of desalination plants, and where the water demand is high during the summer and low during the winter. The experts explained also that the primary use of this technology is not only to provide high-quality drinking water but also to produce minimal waste and reduce the release of contaminants (brine).

¹ This Agenda Item was presented during the first day of the meeting (24 October) as approved under Agenda item 2: Organizational matters.

47. The UNEP/MAP Coordinator thanked the His Excellency the Minister and UNIVERDE for their insightful presentations. She highlighted the significant importance of the desalination sector, particularly its rapid development and expansion in the Mediterranean, especially in light of climate change and water scarcity. Furthermore, the Coordinator highlighted the Secretariat's efforts to promote and establish regional standards for sustainable desalination, which were already included in the Land Based Sources and Activities Protocol of the Barcelona Convention. The emphasis was on the necessity of sharing best practices and introducing new technologies to prevent marine pollution and protect biodiversity and ecosystems while securing considerable energy and water savings. This approach was deemed crucial to promote sustainable desalination, in particular in areas of high demand, including small islands.

48. The meeting appreciated the presentations delivered by UNIVERDE, and welcomed their commitment for sustainable desalination, as well as advised the Secretariat to consider similar meetings on this topic focusing on best practices.

Agenda item 9: Closure of the Meeting

49. After expressing the usual courtesies, the President declared the Meeting closed at 17:30 on Wednesday 25 May 2023.

Annex I
List of Participants

**REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES / REPRESENTANTS DES
PARTIES CONTRACTANTES**

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE ET HERZEGOVINE	Ms. Selma Cegic Executive Director Izvršna direktorica Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo HEIS Institut za hidrotehniku Sarajevo
CROATIA/CROATIE	Mr. Mario Šiljeg Director of the water institute, Josip Juraj Strossmayer Ms. Anita Golic Senior expert advisor for bilateral cooperation Ms. Marija Šikoronja Mr. Stjepko Zelić. Senior advisor of bilateral cooperation in the Ministry of economy and sustainable development of Croatia
CYPRUS/CHYPRE	Mr. Konstantino Antoniadis Department of Fisheries and Marine Research
EGYPT/EGYPTE	Mr. Ayoub Sameh Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
FRANCE/FRANCE	Ms. Lugdiwine Burtschell Chargée de mission "fonds marins et pollution" Bureau de l'évaluation et de la protection des milieux marins (ELM3) Direction de l'eau et de la biodiversité Direction Générale de l'Aménagement, du Logement et de la Nature
ISRAEL/ISRAEL	Mr. Frederic Arzoine Deputy Director Ministry of Environmental Protection Online
ITALY/ITALIE	Mr. Tommaso Petoichi ISPRA - Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research
MALTA/MALTE	Ms. Annabelle Haber Environment & Resources Authority
MONTENEGRO/MONTENEGRO	Ms. Ivana Mitrovic Environmental Protection Agency
MOROCCO/MAROC	Mr. Mohamed Kabriti Ministry of Sustainable Development

SLOVENIA/SLOVENIE	Ms. Nataša Bratina Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy Environmental Directorate, Waste Management Department
STATE OF LIBYA/ETAT DE LIBYE	Mr. Salih Diryaq Director of Sirte Branch Ministry of Environment
TUNISIA/TUNISIE	Mr. Yassine Marzougui Agence Nationale de Protection de l'environnement
TURKIYE/TURKIYE	Mr. Fatih Kargin Ministry of Environment and Urbanization of Türkiye General Directorate of Environmental Management Department of Marine and Coastal Management

**REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND
OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS / REPRESENTANTS DES
INSTITUTIONS SPECIALISEES DES NATIONS UNIES ET AUTRES
ORGANISATIONS INTERGOUVERNEMENTALES**

GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN – GFCM (GFCM SECRETARIAT) / LA COMMISSION GENERALE DES PECHES POUR LA MEDITERRANEE (CGPM)	Mr. Ibrahim Al Hawi Chairperson Mr Mohamed El Araby First Vice-Chairperson Mr Ilaria Ferraro Second Vice-Chairperson
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**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS /ORGANISATIONS NON-
GOUVERNEMENTALES**

ISPRA THE ITALIAN INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND RESEARCH L'INSTITUT ITALIEN POUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET LA RECHERCHE	Ms. Giovanna Marino Sustainable Use of Resources, Fisheries and Aquaculture Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
FISMED INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY IN MEDITERRANEAN AND BACK SEA FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT DURABLE ET LA LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETE EN MEDITERRANEE ET EN MER NOIRE	Ms. Vera Chinellato Secretary Manager, Junior Project Manager at Fispmed Onlus Mr. Marco Andreoli President III commission of the Veneto Regional Council, expert for agricultural and aquaculture issues of the Fispmed network

WES PROJECT WATER AND ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT PROJECT PROJET DE SOUTIEN A L'EAU ET A L'ENVIRONNEMENT	Mr. Michail Marios Scoullas WES Team Leader Ms. Lihie Iuclea WES Non Key Expert Ms. Evie Litou WES Project Coordinator Ms. Chara Kotsani WES Project Technical Backstopper-Water Activities Ms. Lisa Papadogeorgaki WES Project Key Expert on Communication and networking Mr. Omer Chotkowsky Consultant
UNIVERDE FOUNDATION	Mr. Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio President Dott. Giuseppe Di Duca Director Mr. Fabio Valenziano Mr. Anselmo Pellizzi Mr. Angelo Lascalea Ms. Carmen Di Penta Pariso Mr. Enrico Maria Ievoli Mr. Domenico Maria Ievoli Mr. Giuseppe Taverna Mr. Francesco Aliberti

**UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME - COORDINATING UNIT AND
COMPONENTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT - UNITÉ DE
COORDINATION ET COMPOSANTES DU PLAN D'ACTION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE**

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REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION (INFO/RAC) / CENTRE D'ACTIVITÉS RÉGIONALES POUR L'INFORMATION ET LA COMMUNICATION (CAR/INFO)	Ms. Francesca Catini IMAP & NBB Officer

Annex II
Agenda of the Meeting

Agenda item 1:	Opening of the Meeting
Agenda items 2:	Organizational Matters
Agenda item 3:	Implementation of current NAPs (2015-2025)
Agenda item 4:	Regulatory and policy framework on marine pollution, prevention and reduction from land-based sources and activities
Agenda item 5:	Main elements for the preparation of the new NAPs (2025-2035)
Agenda item 6:	Best Practices and Techniques for Estimating Pollution Loads from Aquaculture and Agriculture Sectors
Agenda item 7:	Conclusions and Recommendations
Agenda item 8:	Any Other Business
Agenda item 9:	Closure of the Meeting

Annex III
Conclusions and Recommendations English and French

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Meeting for developing the preliminary elements for new National Action Plans (NAPs) and sharing Best Practices for the application of the Guidelines for estimating pollutants loads from the agriculture and aquaculture sectors

The Meeting for developing the preliminary elements for new National Action Plans (NAPs) and sharing Best Practices for the application of the Guidelines for estimating pollutants loads from agriculture and aquaculture sectors was held on 24-25 October 2023 in Athens, Greece.

Further to its deliberations, the Meeting reached the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. The Meeting appreciated the kind support of the EU-funded project on “Water and Environment Support (WES) in the Southern Neighborhood Region” and stressed the importance of maintaining an ongoing partnership with UNEP/MAP Secretariat.

I. Status of implementation of the current NAPs (2015-2025)

2. The Meeting reviewed the progress achieved in the implementation of the current NAPs and took note of the challenges faced at the national level, in particular the attainment of measures, targets, and timetables.
3. The Meeting urged the Contracting Parties to increase their efforts in implementing the current NAPs (2015-2025), with the aim of achieving full implementation.
4. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to extend the deadline of the questionnaire until the end of November 2023 and invited the Contracting Parties to fill-in the questionnaire within the set deadline.

II. Regulatory and policy framework on marine pollution, prevention and reduction from land-based sources and activities

5. The Meeting took note of the new legally binding measures and related timetables within the framework of the six new Regional Plans that should be fully considered for NAP/Programmes of Measures (PoMs) preparation.

III. Demonstration on the sustainable desalination for small islands

6. The Meeting appreciated the informative presentations and discussions organized by the UNIVERDE Foundation and Marevivo Foundation, under the auspices of the Italian Embassy in Athens, during the session on "illustrating sustainable desalination practices in small islands." The meeting thanked the Italian Minister of Environment and Energy Security Prof. Gilberto PICHETTO FRATIN and appreciated his video statement addressed to all meeting participants.
7. The Meeting highlighted the importance of sharing in the region Sustainable Desalination Best Practices and new Technologies to prevent marine pollution, protect biodiversity and ecosystems, considerably saving energy and water particularly in areas of high demand for water including small islands.

IV. Main elements for the preparation of the new NAPs (2025-2035)

8. Following the discussions on the new elements and hotspot criteria for NAP preparation, the Meeting agreed on the following:
 - a) NAPs should address Programmes of Measures (PoMs) for hotspots and non-GES areas or areas subject to increasing pressures;
 - b) Hotspot methodology should include new criteria related to IMAP and 2018 NAP Indicators (i.e., the groups of criteria on climate change, environmental status, and pressures).
 - c) Assessments deriving from the 2023 MED QSR to be considered as a primary source together with other relevant assessments related to TDA, MSFD, WFD, national reports of relevance to the scope of application of the LBS protocol, in addition to other emerging pollutants as per countries' specificities.
 - d) It was agreed that the Secretariat will further work on the scoring system for pressure indicators, while for the status and health-related categories the IMAP indicators (i.e., the assessment criteria and classification) will be used.
 - e) The new NAPs content should include assessments, obligations, measures, targets, cost-benefit analysis, monitoring and reporting plans, as well as 3 to 4 project fiches.
 - f) With regards to the identification of measures, the existing methodologies will apply, including up-to-date tools and approaches such as Ecosystem Approach, Source-to-Sea Approach, NEXUS Approach, One Health Approach, in order to promote, to the extent possible, the linkages between status and pressures/sources, as well as cost-effective solutions.
 - g) After COP23, the Secretariat will inform the Contracting Parties on the timeline for NAP preparation and support, including sources of funding.

V. Best Practices and Techniques for Estimating Pollution Loads from Aquaculture and Agriculture Sectors

9. The Meeting took note of the information provided for estimating pollution loads from the agriculture and aquaculture sectors from the two volunteering Contracting Parties.
10. The Meeting requested the Contracting Parties to initiate preparations for the 5th cycle of the NBB/PRTR update and asked MED POL and Info/RAC to provide guidance on the estimation and reporting procedures for this update.

Conclusions et recommandations de la réunion pour le développement des éléments préliminaires des nouveaux plans d'action nationaux (PAN) et le partage des meilleures pratiques pour l'application des lignes directrices pour l'estimation des charges polluantes des secteurs de l'agriculture et de l'aquaculture

La Réunion pour l'élaboration des éléments préliminaires des nouveaux Plans d'Action Nationaux (PAN) et le partage des Meilleures Pratiques pour l'application des Directives pour l'estimation des charges polluantes des secteurs de l'agriculture et de l'aquaculture s'est tenue les 24 et 25 octobre 2023 à Athènes, en Grèce.

À la suite de ses délibérations, la réunion a abouti aux conclusions et recommandations suivantes :

1. La Réunion a apprécié l'aimable soutien du projet financé par l'UE sur " l'eau et l'environnement dans la région du voisinage méridional " et a souligné l'importance de maintenir un partenariat continu avec le Secrétariat du PAM/PNUE.

I. État de la mise en œuvre des PAN actuels (2015-2025)

2. La Réunion a examiné les progrès réalisés dans la mise en œuvre des PAN actuels et a pris note des défis rencontrés au niveau national, en particulier la réalisation des mesures, des objectifs et des calendriers.
3. La Réunion a exhorté les Parties Contractantes à redoubler d'efforts dans la mise en œuvre des PAN actuels (2015-2025), dans le but de parvenir à une mise en œuvre complète)
4. La Réunion a demandé au Secrétariat de prolonger le délai du questionnaire jusqu'à la fin du mois de novembre 2023 et a invité les Parties Contractantes à remplir le questionnaire dans le délai imparti.

II. Cadre réglementaire et politique sur la pollution marine, la prévention et la réduction de la pollution telluriques.

5. La Réunion a pris note des nouvelles mesures juridiquement contraignantes et des calendriers correspondants dans le cadre des six nouveaux plans régionaux qui devraient être pleinement pris en compte pour la préparation des PAN/Programmes de mesures (PoMs)

III. Démonstration sur le dessalement durable pour les petites îles

6. La réunion a apprécié les présentations informatives et les discussions organisées par la Fondation UNIVERDE et la Fondation Marevivo, sous les auspices de l'Ambassade d'Italie à Athènes, au cours de la session sur "l'illustration des pratiques de dessalement durable dans les petites îles". La réunion a remercié le ministre Italien de l'environnement et de la sécurité énergétique, le

professeur Gilberto PICHETTO FRATIN, et a apprécié sa vidéo déclaration adressée à tous les participants à la réunion.

7. La réunion a souligné l'importance de partager les meilleures pratiques de dessalement durable et les nouvelles technologies pour prévenir la pollution marine, protéger la biodiversité et les écosystèmes, économiser considérablement l'énergie et l'eau, en particulier dans les zones à forte demande d'eau, y compris les petites îles.

IV. Principaux éléments pour la préparation des nouveaux PAN (2025-2035)

8. À la suite des discussions sur les nouveaux éléments et les critères des hotspots pour la préparation des PAN, la réunion a convenu de ce qui suit :
 - a) Les PAN doivent prévoir des programmes de mesures (PoM) pour les hotspots et les zones non-GES ou les zones soumises à des pressions croissantes.
 - b) La méthodologie des hotspots devrait inclure de nouveaux critères liés à l'IMAP et aux indicateurs des PAN 2018 (c'est-à-dire les groupes de critères sur le changement climatique, l'état de l'environnement et les pressions).
 - c) Les évaluations dérivant du QSR MED 2023 doivent être considérées comme une source primaire avec d'autres évaluations pertinentes liées au TDA, MSFD, WFD, les rapports nationaux pertinents pour le champ d'application du protocole LBS, en plus d'autres polluants émergents selon les spécificités des pays.
 - d) Il a été convenu que le Secrétariat poursuivra ses travaux sur le système de notation des indicateurs de pression, tandis que pour les catégories relatives à l'état et à la santé, les indicateurs IMAP (c'est-à-dire les critères d'évaluation et la classification) seront utilisés.
 - e) Le contenu des nouveaux PAN devrait comprendre des évaluations, des obligations, des mesures, des objectifs, une analyse coûts-avantages, des plans de suivi et de compte rendu, ainsi que 3 ou 4 fiches de projet.
 - f) En ce qui concerne l'identification des mesures, les méthodologies existantes seront appliquées, y compris les outils et les approches les plus récents tels que l'approche écosystémique, l'approche "de la source à la mer", l'approche NEXUS, l'approche "une seule santé", afin de promouvoir, dans la mesure du possible, les liens entre l'état et les pressions/sources, ainsi que les solutions rentables.
 - g) Après la COP23, le Secrétariat informera les Parties Contractantes du calendrier de préparation et de soutien des PAN, y compris des sources de financement.

V. Meilleures pratiques et techniques pour l'estimation des charges de pollution provenant des secteurs de l'aquaculture et de l'agriculture

9. La Réunion a pris note des informations fournies par les deux Parties Contractantes volontaires pour l'estimation des charges de pollution provenant des secteurs de l'agriculture et de l'aquaculture.
10. La Réunion a demandé aux Parties Contractantes d'initier les préparations pour le 5ème cycle de la mise à jour du NBB/PRTR et a demandé au MED POL et à Info/RAC de fournir des conseils sur les procédures d'estimation et de rapport pour cette mise à jour.