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**PAP/RAC Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON) on
Coast and Hydrography**

Madrid, Spain, 3 March 2017

Report of the meeting

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2017

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Introduction

1. The PAP/RAC Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON) on Coast and Hydrography was held on 3 March 2017 in Madrid, Spain (Port Authorities premises) at the kind invitation of the Government of Spain. Its main objectives were: to present the ongoing work on the Quality Status Report (QSR) and the Assessment Fact Sheet concerning EO7 “Hydrography” and EO8 “Coastal ecosystems and landscapes” (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/Inf.1); to review and discuss the open questions regarding the Indicator Guidance Fact Sheets for all three common indicators and agree on solutions (UNEP(DEPI)/ WG.433/1); and to share and exchange information with the Contracting Parties on the current status of national monitoring programmes and monitoring activities with regard to these indicators.

Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by 24 participants from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Spain and Turkey.
3. The Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), including the Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) as organiser, and the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) were represented at the meeting.
4. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

Opening of the Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

5. The meeting was opened at 9:10 a.m. on 3 March 2017 by Ms. Laura Diaz, Spanish Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment. Ms. Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator and Mr. Marko Prem, PAP/RAC Deputy Director, welcomed the participants and introduced the background and objectives of the meeting.

Organizational Matters (Agenda item 2)

A. Rules of Procedure

6. The meeting agreed that the rules of procedure for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (UNEP/IG 43/6, annex XI), as amended by the Contracting Parties (UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.1/5 and UNEP(OCA)/MED IG.3/5), would apply *mutatis mutandis* to their deliberations.

B. Election of Officers

7. In accordance with the rule 20 of the rules of procedure, the meeting unanimously elected the following Officers:

Chair: Ms. Jelena Knezevic (Montenegro)

Vice-chairs: Ms. Laura Diaz (Spain)
Ms. Maria Rampavila (Greece)
Ms. Naoual Zoubair (Morocco)

Rapporteur: Ms. Maayan Haim (Israel)

C. Adoption of the Agenda

8. The meeting reviewed and adopted the provisional agenda and its timetable set out in UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/2 and UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/3, noting that simultaneous translation in English and French was to be provided during the Meeting. The final adopted agenda is presented in Annex II to this report.

III. Mediterranean Quality Status Report (QSR) (Agenda item 3)

9. Ms. Virginie Hart (UNEP/MAP Secretariat) presented the concept for the preparation of the QSR2017, its structure and the timeline for its elaboration. She informed that the QSR would be published on-line and constant updates would be available. The tasks for the follow up were underlined. For the coast and hydrography cluster indicators, since most parties have not yet finalised a monitoring plan, the report will include existing data.

IV. Indicators Assessment Fact Sheet (Agenda item 4)

10. The Indicators Assessment Fact Sheets (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/Inf.3) were presented by Mr. Ivan Sekovski (PAP/RAC). He stated that, due to the fact that all the three indicators were comparatively new in the framework of MAP, there was only general information available on the Mediterranean status. He urged the Contracting Parties to provide additional information, if available, and in particular to provide case studies, pilot studies or project reports related to national monitoring exercises to enrich the QSR.
11. During the discussion that followed, EIA studies were identified as good examples for the hydrography indicator. As a difficulty, the level of impact on habitats was pointed out. However, the meeting proposed that a step-by-step approach should be used and in the first stage all habitats that could be impacted should be identified. Habitat maps provided by EO1 were proposed as an assistance tool. The baseline conditions should take into account multiple impacts at a specific location where new manmade structures are planned. Also, salinity and temperature were identified as important parameters to take into account.
12. The meeting agreed to provide initial proposals (title, location and short description) related to the case studies that would illustrate QSR as examples of indicator assessments at the national level.

V. Common Indicator Guidance Fact Sheets (Agenda item 5)

13. A general introduction on the progress in the preparation of the Indicator Guidance Fact Sheets was presented by Ms. Gyorgyi Gurban (UNEP/MAP Secretariat, on behalf

of EcAp project manager). She clarified the difference between the Indicator Assessment Fact Sheet and the Indicator Guidance Fact Sheet. The objective of this session was to present and discuss the knowledge gaps and issues still open in the Guidance fact sheets, as well as to agree on the proposed solutions.

A. Common Indicator 15: Location and extent of the habitats impacted directly by hydrographic alterations (EO7)

14. The common indicator 15 of the EO7 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/3; UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/Inf.2) was presented by Mr. Olivier Brivois (PAP/RAC consultant). The knowledge gaps and open questions regarding the implementation of the monitoring of the indicator were presented, and proposals of solutions were discussed by the meeting. The knowledge gaps presented were related to the type and dimension of new structures to take into account; which hydrographic alterations to consider and how to define them; gaps related to the base-line conditions; the spatial and temporal scales of assessment; and links to EO1 indicator.
15. In the ensuing discussion the participants were of the opinion that this was a complex indicator that required a more robust approach in its initial stages of implementation. Therefore, the definition of alterations should not go into the details that would require the application of thresholds, or define the sensitivity of habitats that could be altered by changes in the hydrographic conditions. This approach is also adopted by the revision of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which requires only mapping of the altered habitats due to changes of the hydrographic conditions. The scale of the country and the length of the coastline are also elements to be considered when deciding on the type and dimension of new structures to be taken into account. For example, in Italy only those structures are considered that require national EIA.

B. Common Indicator 16: Length of coastline subject to physical disturbance due to the influence of manmade structures (EO8)

16. The common indicator 16 of the EO8 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/3; UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/Inf.2) was presented by Mr. Giordano Giorgi (PAP/RAC consultant). The meeting discussed the knowledge gaps and proposals of solutions regarding the Guidance Fact Sheet. Among the knowledge gaps and open issues identified were the definition of the reference coastline and the optimal resolution; calculation of manmade structures; minimum distance between the structures and the spatial scale of structures to be considered; and the presentation and reporting of the assessment results including the geographic reference system and formats.
17. The participants noted the differences among the countries as far as the use of the geographic systems and shape formats, and confirmed the need to harmonise the approach. Also, the coastal processes, such as erosion, are currently not the objective of the indicator. The approach adopted by the MAP is trying to be simple and cost effective. However, if some countries have a more detailed and ambitious monitoring practices they are encouraged to continue with such practice.

C. Candidate Common Indicator 25: Land-use change (EO8)

18. The candidate common indicator 25 of the EO8 (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/3; UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/Inf.2) was presented by Mr. Jaume Fons-Esteve (PAP/RAC consultant). He introduced the objective of the indicator and importance of land-use changes for the ecosystem approach as this is, together with the Indicator 16, a specific indicator related to the terrestrial part of the coastal zone which is not the case for the EU Directive. The gaps and open questions regarding the implementation of the monitoring of the indicator were presented and proposals of solutions discussed by the meeting. These included the definition of GES; the spatial scale and analytical units for the assessment; and the availability of data.
19. In the discussion following the presentation the participants welcomed the inclusion of this indicator on the list of candidate indicators as it seemed very relevant and innovative. What matters are changes in land use over time. This indicator is also very much linked with the previous indicator, and together they make a starting point for the monitoring of changes in the terrestrial part of the coastal zone. They agreed that the definition of GES was difficult to quantify and that it should be mainly qualitative.
20. The meeting suggested inserting the agreed improvements to the guidance fact sheets for the indicators. By end March 2017 these will be integrated in the updated versions of the Guidance fact sheets and shared with the Contracting Parties. The meeting also proposed to further consider the inclusion of the Land-use change indicator on the list of common indicators.

VI. National Monitoring Programmes (Agenda item 6)

21. A number of Contracting Parties presented the current status of the updating of their national monitoring programmes and the implementation or testing of agreed IMAP indicators, with particular focus on the “Coast” and “Hydrography” indicators. The examples presented were very diverse. On one hand they were related to testing of some indicators (e.g. Italy, Spain on Indicator 15 and 16), practices related to national procedures, in particular with regard to the Indicator 15 and the requirements for EIA (e.g. Israel), national legal requirements (e.g. Croatia), and examples from the projects like CAMP and testing of the indicators for the Marine spatial planning (e.g. Montenegro). On the other hand, there was experience with the preparation of national IMAPs (e.g. Morocco, Algeria, Spain).
22. The participants were informed of the Informal Online Working Group (Coast Working Group) established at the CORMON meeting in March 2015. It is chaired by France (Mr. O. Brivois) and co-chaired by Italy (Mr. G. Giorgi). They were invited to reconfirm their nominated experts and/or nominate experts into this Working Group.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations (Agenda item 7)

23. The meeting participants adopted a list of Conclusions and Recommendations as presented below.

24. Final Conclusions and Recommendations

The PAP/RAC Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON) on Coast and Hydrography was held on 3 March 2017 at the premises kindly offered by the Ministry of Agriculture, fisheries, food and environment of Spain, organised by PAP/RAC with the support of UNEP/MAP Secretariat.

Following the review and discussions of the agenda items, the meeting agreed on the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. The Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide, as appropriate, to PAP/RAC by 24 March 2017 their initial proposals (title, location and short description) related to case studies.
2. The meeting appreciated and welcomed the proposals made regarding the gaps identified in the guidance fact sheets (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.433/Inf.2) for the three discussed indicators as an important tool to guide countries in the implementation of IMAP at national and regional levels.
3. The agreed improvements to the guidance factsheets for the common indicators 15 (Location and extent of the habitats impacted directly by hydrographic alterations) and 16 (Length of coastline subject to physical disturbance due to the influence of manmade structures) will be integrated in the updated versions of the fact sheets by end March 2017. Updated versions of the Guidance fact sheets will be shared with and sent for comments to the Contracting Parties.
4. With regard to the candidate common indicator 25 (Land use change) the meeting agreed that the definition of GES can only be qualitative as it depends on local specificities (such as geomorphology, socio-economic, cultural, historical elements) and can be linked with sustainable measures to mitigate negative impacts of land use change required by the ICZM Protocol or other policy documents.
5. The meeting agreed that the targets and measures proposed in the Indicator Guidance Fact Sheet are general recommendations. They should be adapted to regional/local specificities taking the local knowledge by the Contracting Parties into account.
6. The meeting agreed that the reporting units are the coastal zone as defined by the Contracting Party, and the following analytical units: 0-300 m, and depending on national regulations and considerations also the following ones: 300 m-1 km, 1-10 km and > 10 km.
7. The meeting agreed to include the improvements to the guidance factsheets, and recommended to further consider the inclusion of this candidate common indicator to the list of common indicators.
8. The meeting requested the UNEP/MAP Secretariat to examine the possibility of providing satellite images from Copernicus (Sentinel satellites with the best resolution that can be obtained) for the whole Mediterranean within the MOU with the European Environment Agency (EEA) signed at CoP 19, or with other relevant institutions.
9. Also, the meeting requested the UNEP/MAP Secretariat to explore possibilities of developing a land-use map for the whole Mediterranean region by a relevant MAP

Component (such as PAP/RAC) with the aim of providing draft monitoring results to the countries for verification. These will ensure continuity and reliability of data, as well as cost effectiveness.

10. The meeting acknowledged and appreciated the ongoing work of several Contracting Parties which presented the current status of their national monitoring programmes for EO7 (Hydrography) and EO8 (Coastal Ecosystems and Landscapes), and testing of these indicators. The meeting encouraged all Contracting Parties to continue the work on streamlining the IMAP Decision taken at CoP 19 (IG.22/7) into the updating and upgrading of their monitoring programmes as appropriate, as well as invited the Contracting Parties to share their best practices on national monitoring programmes.

11. In accordance with the recommendation of the Meeting of the Integrated Monitoring Correspondence Group held in Athens in March 2015, the Contracting Parties are encouraged to reconfirm their nominated experts and/or nominate experts into the Coast and Hydrography Informal Online Working Group (Coast Working Group) by 24 March, with the aim of further discussing the outstanding monitoring and assessment technical issues with respect to the Coast and Hydrography indicators.

VIII. Any Other Business (Agenda item 8)

22. The meeting expressed gratitude and appreciation to the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment for hosting the meeting.

IX. Closure of the Meeting (Agenda item 9)

23. The Chairperson closed the Meeting at 17.30 hours on 3 March 2017.

Annex I

List of Participants

ALBANIA / ALBANIA	<p>Mr Edvin Bica Head of sector for waste management, and liquid discharges in the state inspectorate, Ministry of environment E-mail: Edvin.Bica@ishmp.gov.al</p> <p>Ms Ilda Shahu Expert of EIA, SEA and Industrial Pollution, Ministry of environment E-mail: ilda.shahu@moe.gov.al</p>
ALGERIA / ALGÉRIE	<p>Mr Reda Behlouli Ingénieur d'Etat en Environnement, Ministère des Ressources en Eau et de l'Environnement, Tel./fax: +213 21 43 11 44 E-mail: r.behlouli@hotmail.fr</p> <p>Mr Mokhtar Guerfi Professeur, cartographie, télédétection et SIG. Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Sciences de la Mer et de l'Aménagement du Littoral, Tel: +213 551 51 35 41 E-mail: sguerfi@yahoo.fr</p>
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE ET HERZÉGOVINE	<p>Ms Senida Džajić-Rghei Researcher/ Designer, Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo Tel/fax: +387 33 207 949 +387 33 212 466 E-mail: senida.dzajic-rghei@heis.ba</p>
CROATIA / CROATIE	<p>Mr. Igor Čižmek Assistant Minister, Directorate for Physical Planning, Legal Affairs and European Union Programmes of the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning of the Republic of Croatia Tel: +385(0)13782143, Fax: +385(0)13772822 E-mail: Igor.Cizmek@mgipu.hr</p> <p>Ms. Gordana Kovačević Head of Service, Directorate for Physical Planning, Legal Affairs and European Union Programmes of the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning of the Republic of Croatia Tel: +385(0)13782457, Fax: +385(0)13772822 e-mail: gordana.kovacevic@mgipu.hr</p>

	<p>Mr. Branko Petričević Deputy Director, Hydrographic Institute of the Republic of Croatia (HHI) Tel: +385(0)21308814, Fax: +385(0)21347242 E-mail: branko.petricevic@hhi.hr</p>
GREECE / GRÈCE	<p>Ms Mary Rampavila Eng. in Spatial – Urban Planning and Regional Development MA in International & European Studies (<i>spec. EU, Environment</i>), Tel. +30 213 1515332, Fax. +30 210 6458690, E-mail : m.rampavila@prv.ypeka.gr</p> <p>Ms Evangelia Stamouli Ministry of Environment & Energy. Tel. +30 2106969807 E-mail: e.stamouli@prv.ypeka.gr</p>
ISRAEL / ISRAEL	<p>Ms Maayan Haim Coastal Environment Engineer Marine Environment Protection Division Israel Ministry of Environmental Protection Tel.: +972-4-8633513, Fax: +972-4-8633520 E-mail: maayanh@sviva.gov.il</p> <p>Mr Dov Zviely Coastal and Marine Processes consultant Ministry of Environment Protection Tel: 972-52-5805758 E-mail: zviely@netvision.net.il</p>
ITALY / ITALIE	<p>Mr Matteo Braidà Unità Assistenza Tecnica Sogesid S.p.A. Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea E-mail: braidà.matteo@minambiente.it</p> <p>Mr Giordano Giorgi Researcher, Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea Tel: +39065722 E-mail: giordano.giorgi@minambiente.it</p>
LEBANON / LIBAN	<p>Mr Adel Yaacoub Head of Department of Natural Resources Protection Ministry of Environment, E-mail: A.Yacoub@moe.gov.lb</p> <p>Mr Bilal Ismail, Geologist Department of Natural Resources Protection Ministry of Environment Tel: +961 (0)1 976555 ext. 579 Fax: +961 (0)1 976530. E-mail: b.issmail@moe.gov.lb</p>

MONTENEGRO / MONTÉNEGRO	Mr Luka Čalić Institute of hydrometeorology and seismology of Montenegro Tel/faks: +382 20 655 183 E-mail: luka.calic@meteo.co.me Ms Jelena Knezevic Adviser to the Minister for the Environment, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism Tel: + 382 20 446225, Fax: + 382 20-446215 E-mail: jelena.knezevic@mrt.gov.me
MOROCCO / MAROC	Ms Naoual Zoubair Chef du Service Littoral Ministère Délégué chargé de l'Environnement Tél : 212 5 37 57 06 01, Fax : 212 5 37 57 66 45 E-mail: n_zoubair@yahoo.fr Mr Mohammed El Bouch Chef du Laboratoire National des Etudes et de surveillance de la Pollution Ministère Délégué chargé de l'Environnement E-mail: elbouch21@yahoo.fr
SPAIN / ESPAGNE	Ms Rosa Balbín-Chamorro Instituto Español de Oceanografía, Centro Oceanográfico de Baleares Tel: +34 971 40 15 61 E-mail: rosa.balbin@ba.ieo.es Ms Laura Diaz Division for the protection of the Sea Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment E-mail: ldiaz@magrama.es
TURKEY / TURQUIE	Ms Tutku Gökalp City Planner Turkey Ministry of Environment and Urbanization Tel: +90 312 410 23 98 E-mail: tutku.gokalp@csb.gov.tr

**SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION
AND COMPONENTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN
SECRETARIAT DE LA CONVENTION DE BARCELONE ET COMPOSANTES DU PLAN
D'ACTION POUR LA MEDITERRANEE**

<p>UN Environment/MAP ONU Environnement/PAM</p>	<p>Ms Tatiana Hema Deputy Coordinator Tel.:+30 210 7273115 E-mail: tatiana.hema@unepmap.gr</p> <p>Ms Gyorgyi Gruban Ecosystem Approach Project Manager Tel.: + 302107273105 E-mail : gyorgyi.gurban@unep.org</p> <p>Ms Virginie Hart Programme Officer, Monitoring and Assessment Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL) Tel.: +30 210 7273122 E-mail: virgine.hart@unepmap.gr</p>
<p>REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTER FOR THE PRIORITY ACTIONS PROGRAMME (PAP/RAC) / CENTRE D'ACTIVITES REGIONALES DU PROGRAMME D'ACTION PRIORITAIRES (CAR/PAP)</p>	<p>Mr Marko Prem Deputy Director Tel.:+385 21 340475 E-mail:marko.prem@paprac.org</p> <p>Mr Ivan Sekovski Project Officer Tel.:+38521340480 E-mail: ivan.sekovski@paprac.org</p> <p>Mr Jaume Fons-Esteve Senior Researcher Autonomous University of Barcelona Department of Geography Tel.: + 34 680808342 E-mail: jaume.fons@uab.es</p> <p>Mr Olivier Brivois BRGM (French geological survey) E-mail: o.brivois@brgm.fr</p> <p>Ms Vesna Tunguz CAMP expert University of East Sarajevo E-mail: vesna.tunguz@gmail.com</p>

REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTER FOR SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS (SPA/RAC) CENTRE D'ACTIVITES REGIONALES POUR LES AIRES SPECIALEMENT PROTEGEES (CAR/ASP)	Mr. Mehdi Aissi Project Officer Tel.:+216 71 206 649 E-mail: mehdi.aissi@rac-spa.org
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Annex II

Agenda

Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Monitoring (CORMON) on Coast and Hydrography

Venue: Puertos del Estado, Sala plurifuncional, 1st floor Avda. del Partenón, 10
28042 Madrid, Spain

Friday, 3 March (09:00 – 17:30)

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| Agenda item 1: | Opening of the meeting |
| Agenda item 2: | Organizational matters

a) Election of officers
b) Adoption of the Provisional Agenda
c) Organization of work |
| Agenda item 3: | Mediterranean Quality Status Report (QSR) |
| Agenda item 4: | Assessment Fact Sheet for the indicators |
| Agenda item 5: | Common Indicator Guidance Fact Sheets

a) Common Indicator: Location and extent of the habitats impacted directly by hydrographic alterations (EO7)

b) Length of coastline subject to physical disturbance due to the influence of manmade structures (EO8)

c) Land use change (EO8) |
| Agenda item 6: | National Monitoring Programmes |
| Agenda item 7: | Conclusions and recommendations |
| Agenda item 8: | Any Other Business |
| Agenda item 9: | Closure of the Meeting |