

UNITED
NATIONS



UNEP

EP

UNEP/MED WG.550/16



**United Nations
Environment Programme
Mediterranean Action Plan**

Distr.: Limited
28 June 2023
Original: English

Integrated Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups (CORMONs)

Athens, Greece 27-28 June 2023

Report of the Meeting

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2023

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Introduction

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 organized the Meeting of the Integrated Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups (CORMONs). The Meeting was held in Athens, Greece from 27 to 28 June 2023.

1. The main objective of the Meeting was to review the draft contents of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (2023 MED QSR) for its submission to the 10th EcAp Coordination Group Meeting held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 11 September 2023.
2. The Meeting, in particular, reviewed the respective chapters associated with the Biodiversity and Fisheries, Coast and Hydrography, and Pollution and Marine Litter Clusters of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme for the Mediterranean Sea and Coast (IMAP), as well as the overall structure and content of the integrated 2023 MED QSR Report.

Participation

3. The Meeting was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, and Türkiye.
4. The following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, secretariats, and intergovernmental organizations were represented as observers: The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS), General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-MED).
5. The following non-governmental organizations and other institutions were also represented as observers: The European Topic Centre on Spatial Analysis and Synthesis (ETC-UMA), Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), and Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles (MEDASSET).
6. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was represented by the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention (UNEP/MAP). The following MAP Components also participated in the Meeting: The Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL); The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC); The Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (PB/RAC); The Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC); The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC); and The Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC).
7. The full list of participants is attached as Annex I to the present report.

Agenda Item 1.A.i-iii: Opening of the Meeting

8. The Meeting started with individual sessions' openings in line with the agenda as annotated in UNEP/MED WG.550/2/Rev.1.
9. The Biodiversity and Fisheries Session was opened at 9:30 AM on 27 June 2023 by Mr. Khalil Attia, SPA/RAC Director, and Ms. Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Coordinator. Mr. Attia welcomed the participants and summarized the context and background of the development of the MED QSR during 2023, particularly referring to the MED QSR 2023 Roadmap. He took the opportunity to thank all the

Contracting Parties, the RACs, partner organizations and the experts, who have participated in this collective work, for their promptness and excellent contributions to the development of the 2023 MED QSR chapters. He also thanked the Secretariat of GFCM for their valuable contribution and the submission of the 2023 Med QSR Fisheries assessment. He also encouraged an active participation in the Meeting in which will take forward the delivery and finalization of the 2023 MED QSR chapters related to biodiversity and non-indigenous species.

10. UNEP/MAP Coordinator Ms. Tatjana Hema welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of the integrated CORMON in the process of the elaboration of the 2023 MED QSR. She brought to the attention of the Meeting the necessity to finalize and endorse the thematic assessments reports to be used for the finalization of the 2023 MED QSR, and the submission by the Secretariat of GFCM of the assessment report of EO3. She expressed her satisfaction concerning the work already undertaken, which signifies an important step forward, as for the first time we are moving towards quantification assessment, in particular for the part on biodiversity, compared to the 2017 MED QSR. She closed her welcome remarks by informing all participants, that proposals will be made in order to revise and enhance the IMAP implementation and the delivery of the next MED QSR considering the experiences of what is accomplished within the framework of the marine strategy, the relevant regional seas surrounding Europe and at UNEP level.

11. The Pollution Session was opened at 9:30 AM on 27 June 2023 by Mr. Mohamad Kayyal, Programme Manager and the Head of MED POL. In his opening remarks, he explained that the objective of the Pollution session is to adopt the 2023 MED QSR Pollution Chapters further to their finalization, undertaken in line with the Conclusions of the Meeting of CORMON Pollution held from 1-2 March 2023, in Athens, Greece. He elaborated on the scope of Agenda item 1.C.ii: Pollution CORMON, expressing his expectation that the Meeting will finalize the review of the Meeting working document UNEP/MAP WG.550/10 which in turn is expected to be brought to the attention of the Meeting participants during the plenary session on the second day of the Meeting.

12. The Coast and Hydrography Session was opened at 14:30 PM on 27 June 2023 by Mr. Marko Prem, PAP/RAC Deputy Director. Mr. Prem presented the main objectives of the Meeting; to present and discuss the content of the chapters for the 2023 Quality Status Report (QSR) related to the IMAP Ecological Objectives (EOs) 7 and 8. The objective is to validate the content of the chapters by participants in order to integrate it into the overall 2023 MED QSR document, which was discussed at the Integrated CORMONs Meeting the flowing day.

13. The Marine Litter Session was opened at 14:30 PM on 27 June 2023 by Ms. Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Coordinator. Ms. Hema welcomed the session's participants and stressed the importance to achieve a unanimous agreement on the proposed assessment criteria (i.e., Baseline and Threshold Values) for IMAP Common Indicator 23 (i.e., seafloor macro-litter and floating microplastics), and their application for the development of the marine litter chapter of the 2023 MED QSR. Moreover, she welcomed the thorough review of the marine litter chapter of the 2023 MED QSR for its integration into the integrated 2023 MED QSR report, as well as the under-finalization guidelines for monitoring riverine input of marine litter.

Agenda Item 1.B.i-iii: Organizational Matters

a) Rules and Procedures for the Meeting

14. 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

15. Subject to Rule 20 of the rules of procedure mentioned at para. 2(a), the Meeting unanimously elected the following officers among the representatives of the Contracting Parties.

16. During the first day of the Meeting (Tuesday, 27 June 2023) four different bureaux were unanimously elected for the respective thematic sessions (i.e., Biodiversity, Pollution, Coast and Hydrography and Marine Litter), and subsequently a selection from the above bureau was used for the second day of the Meeting, 28 June 2023). The respective bureaux are presented hereunder:

Bureau Biodiversity Session:

Chairperson: Mr. Moustafa Fouda (Egypt)
Vice-chairpersons: Ms. Luke Tabone (Malta)
Ms. Mayada Saad (Syria)
Rapporteur: Mr. Leonardo Tunesi (Italy)

Bureau Pollution Session:

Chairperson: Ms. Erika Magaletti (Italy)
Rapporteur: Mr. Dror Zurel (Israel)

Bureau Coast and Hydrography Session:

Chairperson: Ms Alexia Attard (Malta)
Vice-chairpersons: Ms Mounia Hamdaoui (Morocco)
Rapporteur: Mr. Mr. Emrah Soylemez (Türkiye)

Bureau Marine Litter Session:

Chairperson: Mr. Bassam Sabbah (Lebanon)
Vice-chairpersons: Mr. Sameh Ayoub (Egypt)
Rapporteur: Mr. Marko Mattidi (Italy)

Bureau of the Plenary Session:

Chairperson: Ms. Erika Magaletti (Italy)
Vice-chairpersons: Mr. Bassam Sabbah (Lebanon)
Mr. Mohamad Abaas (Egypt)
Rapporteur: Ms. Alexia Attard (Malta)

c) Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

17. Subject to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure mentioned at para. 2(a), the proposed agenda appearing in document UNEP/MED WG.550/1 and annotated in the UNEP/MED WG.550/2/Rev.1 document was reviewed and accepted, as proposed by the respective Chairs.

d) Organization of Work

18. The discussions were proposed to be held in four thematic sessions the first day of the Meeting (Tuesday, 27 June 2023), and a plenary session during the second day (Wednesday, 28 June 2023), from 9:30 to 12:30 and 14:30 to 17:30.

19. Simultaneous interpretation in English and French was available for all sessions. All documentation was available in English and French. Participants were encouraged to download the

documentation onto their computers in advance of the session. The Meeting was recorded for future reference.

20. The Meeting addressed all Agenda items during the two-day Meeting which closed on June 2023 after adopting its Conclusions and Recommendations appended to this present document.

Agenda Item 1.C.i-iii:

i. Review of the 2023 MED QSR Biodiversity & Fisheries Assessments

21. The following Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention were represented at the Biodiversity and Fisheries Session; Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Spain, Syria and Tunisia.

22. The Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) and General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) were represented in the Meeting.

23. The following organizations were also represented as observers; The European Topic Centre, University of Malaga (ETC-UMA), the Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles (MEDASSET).

24. The Coordinating Unit for the Mediterranean Action Plan - Barcelona Convention Secretariat (UNEP/MAP) and the Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC) were represented at the Meeting.

25. SPA/RAC presented the six thematic assessment reports for benthic habitats, cetaceans, the Mediterranean monk seal, seabirds, marine turtles, and non-indigenous species. A seventh assessment report on Harvest of Commercially Exploited Fish and Shellfish (EO3) has been prepared and presented during the Meeting by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

Benthic Habitats (EO1) Assessment

26. Mr. Yassine Ramzi Sghiaer, UNEP/MAP- RAC-SPA Ecosystem Approach Projects Officer, presented the working document UNEP/MED WG.555/03 Rev.1 “2023 MED QSR: Benthic Habitats (EO1) assessment” and explained the methodological approach with the aim to provide to the extent possible a more data-driven assessment based on the available datasets. The assessment provides information on the analysis of pressures to the benthic habitats and in this context, it points out the pilot assessment of benthic habitats in the Adriatic Sea, which is the approach that could be replicated for other parts of the Mediterranean. Special emphasis was given to the need to refine the resolution of the pressure data, and larger amount of data on impact indicators to allow a more precise assessment.

27. Several representatives took the opportunity to acknowledge the improvements in the quality of the document. A representative of a Contracting Party stressed the importance to continue establishing links with initiatives carried out on comparable scales, particularly at European level and informed the Meeting about the organisation of the Meeting Technical Group on Seabed in October 2023. Representative of another Contracting Party confirmed the need to separate the assessment of EO1 from EO6. It was also stressed that EO1 deals with broad habitats and doesn't get into details of additional habitat types that are sensitive to climate change or used to identify Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), for example the Cold seeps.

28. The representative of Montenegro, who participated online, informed the Meeting that her country does not support the results of the pilot assessment as shown in table 6, classifying MNE in

MAD 3 under high pressured area; therefore, the representative of Montenegro proposed to add the following disclaimer “Montenegro does not support results of pilot assessment shown in Table 6 and paragraphs 143&144 which classify Montenegro in MAD 3, as high pressured area, given the absence of national data and project results use for the present assessment”.

29. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to integrate the Benthic Habitats (EO1) Assessment into the 2023 MED QSR report.

Cetaceans (EO1) Assessment:

30. A representative of SPA/RAC presented the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/04 Rev.1 “2023 MED QSR: Cetaceans (EO1) assessment” and pointed out that the methodological approach for the assessment of GES was carried out in accordance with the agreed assessment elements (UNEP/MED WG.514/Inf.11) related to the monitoring and assessment scales, assessment criteria, thresholds and reference values for IMAP Common Indicators 3, 4 and 5 related to marine mammals. The representative also highlighted the importance of the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative project (ASI), as the first endeavor to collect in a systematic way relevant data on cetaceans’ distribution, abundance and pressures at the Mediterranean Sea level. It was further noted that as recommended in the aforementioned 2021 guiding document, the results of the ASI present baseline/reference values for CI3 and CI4, and accordingly, the Cetaceans Chapter for 2023 MED QSR includes for the first time these values. However, it was not possible yet to assess GES, due to lack of long-term data series and threshold value. On the other hand, CI5 could not be assessed due to significant knowledge gap and lack of methodological guidance for the assessment (baseline/reference and threshold values). The only assessment of the state of cetaceans could be made based on the two IUCN Red List assessments on cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area. The results of these assessments show that cetaceans in the Mediterranean are mostly not in any good state, apart from two widely distributed dolphin species. For the future, it has been recommended to address certain methodological gaps in GES assessment, notably for CI5 and mortality rate measurement. There is also a continuous need for improvement of knowledge about cetaceans through more intensive research and monitoring, particularly in the southern part of the Mediterranean. Continuation/repeating of ASI is crucial, with better coverage of southern Mediterranean.

31. One representative of a Contracting Party highlighted the need to moderate the use of the acronym ‘GES’ and the consistency of the use of functional groups, such as the shallow diving Cetaceans. The representative recommended the involvement of the online working groups including experts from ACCOBAMS.

32. A representative of another Contracting Party recommended to further involve ACCOBAMS Secretariat and ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee in the elaboration of the assessment chapter on Cetaceans for the next cycle of IMAP. A representative of another Contracting Party recommended including data related to recurring stranding.

33. A representative of ACCOBAMS Secretariat expressed the satisfaction for the results of the ASI project representing the crucial set of information for the cetaceans GES assessment and informed about the future basin wide survey planned for 2024-2026 (next ASI), which is the component of the Long-term monitoring programme, adopted at the ACCOBAMS MOP 8 (December 2022). She recalled that the Secretariat is working on the development of a project concept to be shared with the ACCOBAMS Parties and on the fund raising which would provide updates to the next CORMON Meetings on the progress made. She reminded the Meeting that the implementation will be undertaken in closer collaboration with UNEP/MAP through SPA/RAC.

34. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to integrate the Cetaceans (EO1) Assessment into the 2023 MED QSR report.

Mediterranean Monk Seal (EO1) Assessment:

35. Representatives from SPA/RAC presented the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/05 “2023 MED QSR: Mediterranean monk Seal (EO1) assessment” and informed the Meeting that the aforementioned document is an amended version of the monk seal assessment report presented at the last CORMON Meeting on March 2023. It includes data received after 17 March 2023, and stressed the issue of lack of data, which was the main obstacle for carrying out the GES assessment. She further explained the process of data collection which was based on a specific questionnaire covering several aspects of the assessment published scientific literature.

36. Several representatives acknowledged the improvements of the quality of the document and expressed their appreciation of the contribution in terms of data provided by the Contracting Parties, partners, and experts.

37. In response to a comment raised by a representative of a Contracting Party, the SPA/RAC representative informed the Meeting that SPA/RAC will align the 2023 MED QSR assessment for the Mediterranean monk seal (EO1) with the recent information on the monk seal from the Mid-term evaluation of the Mediterranean strategy for the conservation of the monk seal.

38. Several participants pointed out that assessing non-GES for their respective countries is not adequate since the examined species rarely occur in their waters and recommended that the optimal scale for assessment is at sub-regional and regional levels.

39. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to integrate the Mediterranean Monk Seal (EO1) assessment into the 2023 MED QSR report.

Marine Turtles (EO1) Assessment:

40. SPA/RAC presented the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/06 Rev.1 “2023 MED QSR: Marine Turtles (EO1) assessment”, after highlighting the fact that the data used in the report comes from multiple sources (e.g., the MAVA funded Marine Turtles and ASI Projects). SPA/RAC emphasized that the present document focuses on two marine turtle species that complete their life cycle in the Mediterranean, i.e., the loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) and the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*).

41. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to integrate the Marine Turtles (EO1) assessment into the 2023 MED QSR.

Marine Birds (EO1) Assessment:

42. Representative from SPA/RAC presented working document UNEP/MED WG.550/7 “2023 MED QSR: Marine Birds (EO1) assessment” and the methodological approach, taking into account the outcomes of the consultations made within the framework of the online working experts’ group on birds and especially related to acquiring and interpreting the data. It was stressed that GES has been reach for many marine birds’ populations, however, this conclusion is mostly based on qualitative assessments. Namely, available data quality still prevents a truly quantitative assessment.

43. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to integrate the Marine Birds (EO1) assessment into the 2023 MED QSR.

Non-indigenous Species (EO2) Assessment:

44. SPA/RAC presented the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/08 Rev.1 “2023 MED QSR: Non-Indigenous Species (EO2) assessment”. The SPA/RAC representative pointed out that the

document presented the first baseline values for NIS in the Mediterranean. This document includes an analysis on the temporal trends of new NIS occurrences, an analysis of spatial distribution trends of selected high-impact species at the subregional level and an elaboration of interrelated links of status, pressures, and impacts for the CI6 with a visualization of this interrelation using a qualitative approach the GRID/Table. The analysis of trends showed that introduction of new NIS varies in different subregions, however, no reduction in new NIS introductions has been observed so far. Clear interpretation of trends is challenging, due to lack of long-term standardized monitoring. Due to this fact, it was not possible to assess trends in abundance. It should be noted that the thresholds values have not been determined yet for CI6, so a complete quantitative assessment of GES was not possible for this reporting cycle, but rather GES is based on directional trends namely the reduction or minimisation of the introduction and spread of NIS linked to human activities. Furthermore, assessing impacts remains an issue due to weak evidence base.

45. The representative of a Contracting Party emphasized the importance for including the following elements in the assessment; (i) an important message emphasizing the increasing trend on NIS introduction; and (ii) add more focus on the efforts to reduce and control the NIS introduction in the section's findings and recommendations.

46. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to integrate the Non-Indigenous Species (EO2) assessment into the 2023 MED QSR

Fisheries (EO3) Assessment:

47. The representative of GFCM presented the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/08 Rev.1 "2023 Med QSR Harvest of Commercially Exploited Fish and Shellfish (EO3) assessment" and explained the process for the analysis provided. He reiterated that GFCM is committed in preparing the State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries (SoMFi) Report on a biannual basis. He clarified that the analysis in the SoMFi Report focuses solely on three indicators: fishing mortality, biomass, and landings. These indicators have received approval from the SAC.

48. One representative of a Contracting Party asked to add more focus on bycatch and socioeconomic issues, as well as to integrate the artisanal fishers in the preservation of stocks through education and capacity building.

49. Since this assessment chapter was presented for the first time, the Meeting agreed to extend the deadline for receiving comments from the Contracting Parties until the 4th of July 2023, aiming mainly to handle only editorial comments and to transmit the assessment chapter as it is, whereas any substantive comment should be addressed directly to GFCM Secretariat to follow-up and address them as appropriate and in line with the GFCM governing bodies.

50. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments, as well as invited SPA/RAC to integrate the Fisheries (EO3) assessment into the 2023 MED QSR.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

51. The session participants were invited to review the draft of the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Meeting, which were approved as amended by the Meeting and contained in **Annex III** to the present report.

ii. Review of the 2023 MED QSR: the proposal of the IMAP Pollution Cluster Chapters

52. The Pollution Session was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, and Türkiye.

53. Ms. Jelena Knezevic, UNEP/MAP Monitoring and Assessment Officer, presented the results of the work undertaken by MED POL to revise the Proposal of the 2023 MED QSR Pollution Chapters as provided in the Meeting document UNEP/MAP 550/10, in line with Conclusions of the CORMON meeting on Pollution Monitoring (1-2 March 2023). She elaborated on the following aspects:

- a. Preparation of Chapter 1 by building on section 3.1.4. of UNEP/MED WG.556/3, as requested by the Meeting of CORMON on Pollution Monitoring;
- b. Fine-tuning included in Chapters 2 and 3 related to the overall process, methodologies applied and DPSIR analysis;
- c. Fine-tuning of the assessment findings as provided for i) IMAP Common Indicators 13&14 in the Adriatic Sea Sub-region, ii) IMAP Common Indicator 17 in the Aegean-Levantine Sub-region; the Adriatic Sea Sub-region; and the Western Mediterranean Sea Sub-region; iii) IMAP Common Indicators 18, 20, 21 and iv) IMAP Candidate Common Indicators 26 & 27;
- d. The new assessment findings for IMAP Common Indicator 14 as prepared for the Aegean – Levantine Sea; the Central Mediterranean and the Western Mediterranean Sea Sub-regions for consideration of the present Meeting following up on a review provided for the assessment findings initially prepared for the Adriatic Sea Sub-regions and the Alboran and the Levantine Seas Sub-divisions by the Meeting of CORMON Pollution held from 1-2 March 2023;
- e. The proposal of the Measures related to IMAP Common Indicators of Ecological Objectives 5 and 9, as approved by the Meeting of MED POL Focal Points, as well as the new measures related to Ecological Objective 11 as provided by ACCOBAMS.

54. The above aspects were addressed with the scientific support of MED POL expert team members; i.e., Dr. Nurit Kress, Dr. Christina Zeri, Dr. Robert Precali, and Dr. Dimitris Poursanidis, which were provided on a periodical basis in the context of the preparation of the present Proposal of the 2023 MED QSR Pollution Chapters further to the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Meetings of CORMON on Pollution Monitoring (1-2 March 2023, 2-3 April 2019, 1-3 December 2020, 26-28 April 2021, 27 and 30 May 2022); Meeting Online of Working Groups on Eutrophication and Contaminants (June 2021); Meeting of the Focal Points (May 2019, May, July and September 2021); and Meetings of the EcAp Coordination Group (September 2019, September 2021, and July 2022) related to the technical documents on the assessment criteria, rules for integration and aggregation, the assessment methodologies and their testing in different areas of the Mediterranean Sea.

55. Under this Agenda item, Ms. Martina Bocci, member of REMPECs expert team, also introduced the revision of the assessment findings for IMAP CI 19 further to addressing requests provided by several participants of the Meeting of CORMON Pollution (1-2 March 2023).

56. During the morning session, the Meeting participants were invited to provide feedback regarding the review of the assessment findings related to IMAP Common Indicators 17, 18, 20 & 21, as well as for IMAP Common Indicator 19, and remarks for IMAP Candidate Common Indicators 26 and 27, as introduced by the Secretariat.

57. Several CORMON Pollution members took the floor and expressed their satisfaction with the excellent work undertaken by the Secretariat in addressing the requests of the Meeting of CORMON Pollution in a short period of time. This in turn, resulted in short deadlines, which should preferably not be repeated in future assessment endeavours.

58. The CORMON Pollution members welcomed and approved the final proposal of the assessment findings related to IMAP Common Indicators 17, 18, 20 and 21, along with IMAP Common Indicator 19, and remarks for Candidate Common Indicators 26 and 27 after proposing the following fine-tuning elements in order to conclude the 2023 MED QSR Pollution Chapters for consideration of the Meetings of the 10th EcAp Coordination Group and MAP Focal Points:

- a. Details provided in paragraph 3 regarding the DPSIR analysis versus assessment findings related to the waters of Türkiye need to be summarized as requested at the Pollution Session, including a written proposal shared with the Secretariat during this session. In this regard, paragraph 602 needs to be also revised by deleting the following finding “...while in the transplanted mussels PAHs were higher than the concentrations in the EU regulation in certain occasions. The results suggest that mussels were unsafe for human consumption during the time of the experiment”, and correcting related footnote, given this area is forbidden for consumption of seafood.
- b. In paragraph 15, the sector of tourism needs to be deleted from the list of drivers identified as responsible for the moderate status of several monitoring stations in Cyprus regarding TM in sediments.
- c. In paragraph 56, the sector of aquaculture needs to be deleted given related activities are not present along the coast of Corsica. In addition, this paragraph needs to be amended by adding the following finding elaborated in the assessment findings: “*The present regional assessment using satellite derived Chl a classified in non-good status one subSAU EC03B close to Golfe de Porto Vecchio, located along the northern part of Corsica coast. The very low number of pixels integrated into the assessment based on satellite-derived products and the complexity of water properties related to sediment resuspension may be associated with the high uncertainty in the mean computation of Chlorophyll-a values, thus explaining non-good. Additionally, the enclosed feature of the Gulf of Porto Vecchio with very low water renewal are probably the main factors contributing to relatively high values observed in the area. (Reference cited: Giret O., Mayot H., Porcheray C., Salou K., Le Bourhis K. (2023). Bilan des schémas régionaux de développement de l'aquaculture marine. Cerema – DIRM Méditerranée. 38 p.)*”.
- d. Paragraph 466, along with paragraph 755, Tables 4.3.2.4.a and 4.3.2.4.b., and Figures ADR 5.2.3.C and ADR 5.2.4.C need to be amended in line with the proposal elaborated during the session, along with the written proposal shared with the Secretariat, by adding the following disclaimer related to the assessment findings in subSAU MNE-1-C: “*The status of subSAU MNE-1-C needs to be adjusted from moderate to good i.e., to change color from yellow to light green, given this subSAU matches the territory of the marine protected area Katic. This is requested further to accepting justification provided by the Secretariat regarding the anomalies of the assessment methodology cause by non-harmonized data reporting and impossibility to optimally harmonize size of the assessment units among the countries*”.
- e. Table 4.6.3 needs to be amended by adding the two columns on references used and impacted study areas found in the present analysis in line with findings provided in the narrative part of the assessment. This adjustment needs to include further refinement of the explanatory notes provided below the table.

59. The Meeting approved the revised assessment findings for IMAP CI 19 further to addressing requests provided by several participants of the Meeting of CORMON Pollution (1-2 March 2023).

60. In the afternoon session, the Meeting participants were invited to provide feedback regarding the review and the new assessment findings provided for IMAP Common Indicators 13 and 14, as introduced by the Secretariat.

61. The CORMON Pollution members welcomed and endorsed the final proposal of the assessment findings related to IMAP Common Indicators 13 and 14, including the new assessment findings provided for IMAP Common Indicator 14, after proposing the following slight fine-tuning elements in order to conclude the 2023 MED QSR Pollution Chapters for consideration of the Meetings of EcAp Coordination Group and MAP Focal Points:

- a. Paragraph 134 needs to be amended by adding other sources of satellite derived Chl_a data which were used along the COPERNICUS for the assessment of CI 14 i.e., by adding a reference to the ARGANS and SMED algorithms.
- b. Details provided in paragraphs 277-281 regarding a review of the existing pressures related to the assessment of eutrophication needs to be summarized in line with the request of one

CORMON Pollution member expressed at the Pollution Session, including written proposal shared with the Secretariat during this session.

- c. In Table 4.2.4.1., the elaboration of data reported by Italy by applying the EQR assessment methodology needs to be updated i.e., the following sentence needs to be deleted “Without building of a dedicated quality assured database, it is impossible to analyse the data availability and ensure their use for the assessment”.
- d. Figure WMS 5.1.1. E needs to be corrected given location of the subSAU ECO3B, found in non-good status, was not correctly positioned on the map.

62. Regarding the use of satellite-derived data for assessment of eutrophication, the Secretariat clarified that they cannot replace *in situ* measurements. Instead, a compatible use of the data from the two sources was recommended. The present IMAP water typology determination in coastal waters, fully built on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) approach, includes the use of salinity. However, this parameter needs to be also monitored in open waters in order to support the determination of water types in these areas.

63. The representative of the ACCOBAMS and two Meeting participants asked for an explanation of reason why the measures related to noise were not included in the document UNEP/MED WG.550/10. In response, the Secretariat explained that the measures were not timely proposed for submission to the Meeting of MED POL focal Points, noting that due to their policy implications, they cannot be included in the present proposal of 2023 MED QSR Pollution assessments without having an approval of the Meeting of MED POL focal points. Accordingly, a proposal was made by the UNEP/MAP Coordinator to integrate in the Meeting document UNEP/MED WG the measure related to "improvement of underwater noise data quality and availability" given that the provision of such a recommendation falls under the mandate of the CORMON Meeting; however, only if this recommendation will be confirmed with the non-objection of the Contracting Parties within 7 days after closure of the present meeting. Regarding measures related to the implementation of "international and regional management measures to reduce underwater noise and application of the Best Available Technologies and Best Environmental Practices", the Coordinator indicated that they can only be brought to the attention of the 10th Meeting of EcAp Coordination Group in the Note of the Secretariat of the meeting document which will introduce the 2023 MED QSR of the consideration of that Meeting. The integration of these measures in the Meeting document UNEP/MAP WG.550/10 may be undertaken if the related document will be made by the 10th Meeting of the EcAp CG.

64. Further to the above discussions, the Meeting recommended the integration of the revised assessment findings for IMAP Common Indicators 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26 and 27 in the 2023 MED QSR further to fine-tuning provided by the present Meeting, as well as an approval of the new assessment findings related to IMAP Common Indicator 14 in the three Mediterranean sub-regions. These assessment findings need to be integrated into the final integrated 2023 MED QSR along with the key messages and measures (as will be provided in the revised Chapters 1 and 6 of the meeting document UNEP/MED WG.550/10) with a view to their submission for approval of the 10th Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points Meeting which will be held in September 2023.

65. The session participants were invited to review the draft of the Conclusions and Recommendations, which were approved as amended by the Meeting and contained in **Annex III** to the present report.

iii. Review of the 2023 MED QSR Coast & Hydrography Assessment

66. The Coast and Hydrography Session was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties; Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye.

67. Mr. Marko Prem (PAP/RAC) presented the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/11, i.e., 2023 MED QSR Coast and Hydrography (EOs 7 and 8) assessments PAP/RAC prepared three thematic assessment reports, namely on hydrographic alterations (CI 15) and on coastline artificialization (CI16), both at the Mediterranean scale and on land cover change (candidate CI 25) for the Adriatic sub-region. The proposal of the 2023 MED QSR chapters on Coast and Hydrography was presented for review and discussion by the Meeting with a view to its finalization and inclusion into the overall 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report (2023 MED QSR).

68. Regarding the Common Indicator 15, the contracting parties highlighted the difficulties they encountered in monitoring and hence, in data reporting.

69. A representative from a contracting party asked to fully refer to the title of the indicator as adopted, since in certain cases it is written “potentially affected” and in others “directly affected”. PAP/RAC will change this in the text immediately after the Meeting. The written comments would be provided by two of the contracting parties with all the details.

70. Regarding Common Indicator 16, it was highlighted that most countries have reported at least one set of data, while three countries have also reported a second set (Italy, Malta and Spain). Although this indicates a good baseline overall, for most countries the trends cannot be assessed yet.

71. The Meeting agreed that the Mediterranean countries should strive to be as homogeneous as possible regarding dataset development, particularly in terms of scale and baseline year. In certain cases, even when calculations are carried out with the official national coastline the calculations can be affected by the fact that coastlines can change quickly through time (erosion and accretion), and some official coastlines already include their hard structures (i.e., undulations around such structures) within the national coastline. A proposal was made to reconsider the nourishment of the beaches to be taken into account for future monitoring.

72. Greece and Cyprus notified the Meeting that their reports are ready for submission but awaits the validation by the relevant ministries.

73. The Meeting highlighted that the potential of today’s high-resolution satellites and freely available imagery (open source) should be used as much as possible so to have a harmonized approach for monitoring of the coastline. The official coastlines defer from country to country due to the detail of its presentation and the resolution available.

74. A representative from a contracting party noted that due to the resolution of the Figure 2.2. and the fact that the map displays entire Mediterranean, and that due to scale of presentation in the report such map can only be an illustration. Therefore, the map should be interpreted with care and conclusions cannot be taken by the visual interpretation of artificial vs. natural parts of the coastline as published in the report. The same representative suggested some alternative presentations; however, it is the decision of the UNEP/MAP to what detail the assessment results will be available on the maps.

75. Mr. Prem continued to showcase the QSR chapters with the Candidate Common Indicator 25 which will be represented in QSR as a case study on the level of the Adriatic sub-region. The Meeting welcomed the proposed assessment for the Adriatic sub-region as highly relevant.

76. It was noted by the Meeting that the aggregation of more detail land cover classes is important, since in this, standardized way it allows comparison between countries. However, countries can also go further in order to keep more detailed classification to observe the changes in land cover class that is of particular importance to certain county (e.g., dunes for certain countries).

77. With regard to the definition of GES that should be defined before the next assessment for the QSR, it was noted that future CORMON will need to discuss different criteria to be taken into account. In particular, on how to assess ecological characteristics and functioning within the coastal

zone, including the definition of the setback in relation to the low elevation coastal zone (LECZ) which are prone to impacts of climate change, such as flooding.

78. The Meeting welcomed the work done and endorsed the proposed contents of the 2023 MED Quality Status Report (QSR) related to the Coast and Hydrography chapter, i.e., the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/11 “2023 on Med QSR Coast and Hydrography (EOs 7 and 8) assessments”.

79. The Meeting concludes that the endorsed document UNEP/MED WG.550/11 is appropriate for the inclusion of the integrated 2023 Med QSR.

80. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments received during the session and invited PAP/RAC to integrate the Coast and Hydrography (EOs 7 and 8) assessment into the 2023 MED QSR.

81. The session participants were invited to review the draft Conclusions and Recommendations, which were approved as amended by the Meeting and contained in **Annex III** to the present report.

iv. Review of the 2023 MED QSR Marine Litter Assessment

82. The Marine Litter Session was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, and Türkiye. Moreover, the session was attended by representatives of ACCOBAMS, INFO/RAC, MIO-ECSDE and PlanBleu.

83. Mr. Christos Ioakeimidis, UNEP/MAP MED POL, presented working documents UNEP/MED WG.550/12 “2023 Med QSR: Marine Litter Ecological Objective (EO10)”, UNEP/MED WG.550/13 “Updated Baseline Values (BV) and Threshold Values (TV) for IMAP Common Indicator 23 (Seafloor macro-litter, Floating micro-plastics)”, and UNEP/MED WG.550/14 “Guidelines for Monitoring Riverine Inputs of Marine Litter”.

84. Regarding the updated Baseline Values (BV) and the proposal for establishing Threshold Values (TV) for IMAP Common Indicator 23, and in particular seafloor macro-litter and floating micro-plastics (UNEP/MED WG.550/13), MED POL presented to the session participants the introduced changes as recommended after the CORMON Marine Litter Meeting (3 March 2023), mainly reflecting an extensive proof-check and updated on the submitted data, as well as introducing the “non-deterioration” principle for the elaboration of BV and TV for seafloor macro-litter.

85. The session participants endorsed the revised data sets and appreciated MED POLs effort for incorporating them into the updated proposal for BV and TV.

86. However, a number of Contracting Parties objected the introduction of the “non-deterioration” principle for seafloor macro-litter. Moreover, the UNEP/MAP Coordinator informed the session participants on the extensive discussions that took place during the MED POL Focal Points Meeting (24-26 May 2023), mainly reflecting doubts whether the introduction of this principle gives the correct message as well as if it sets an ambitious reduction target for the Mediterranean region.

87. After extensive discussions that took place during the session as well as during a break-out group, a unanimous decision was taken, to exclude the “non-deterioration” principle from the elaboration of BV and TV for seafloor macro-litter. In this regard, the session Meeting agreed to endorse the 15th percentile (Q15) and to set the TV at the level of 38 items/km². The session also endorsed the use of this value for the needs of the 2023 MED QSR and the respective chapter on seafloor marine litter and requested MED POL to undertake the relevant update.

88. Further to the approval of BV-TV for IMAP Common Indicator 23, MED POL presented the updated version of the marine litter chapter of the 2023 MED QSR (UNEP/MED WG.550/12).

89. The Meeting reviewed and endorsed the parts for IMAP Common Indicator 22 (beach macro-litter) and the part of IMAP Common Indicator 23 linked with floating microplastics. It also endorsed in principle the part of IMAP Common Indicator 23 linked with seafloor macro-plastic and requested MED POL to update this part to reflect the updated and approved TV of 38 items/km² provided that this value is used for the 2023 MED QSR and that for the next MED QSR/assessment cycle this value will be subject to revision based on available data.

90. Representatives from a contracting party also provided during the session several minor editorial comments with a request to be incorporated into the updated version of the marine litter chapter of the 2023 MED QSR.

91. The Meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments received during the session and invited MED POL to integrate the Marine Litter (EO 10) assessment into the 2023 MED QSR.

92. The session also reviewed the Guidelines for Monitoring Riverine Inputs of Marine Litter (UNEP/MED WG.550/14). MED POL presented to the session all the changes introduced after the CORMON Marine Litter Meeting (3 March 2023). In addition, the representative from a contracting party proposed minor editorial changes with a request to be incorporated into the updated and final version. The session approved the aforementioned guidelines, endorsed their application within the framework of IMAP implementation, it requested support for a pilot implementation, and foremostly welcomed the sharing of the guidelines with HELCOM, OSPAR and BSC as well as the possibility for organizing a joint technical meeting.

93. The session participants were invited to review the draft Conclusions and Recommendations, which were approved as amended by the Meeting and contained in **Annex III** to the present report.

Agenda Item 3: Review the draft content of the common 2023 Med QSR chapters

94. Ms. Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Coordinator, introduced to the Meeting participants the context of preparation of the integrated 2023 MED QSR report, including a detailed presentation of the respective chapters and sub-sections.

95. Further to the intervention of UNEP/MAP Coordinator, a number of UNEP/MAP representatives (staff members and experts) presented the respective sections of the 2023 MED QSR:

- a) Mr. Christos Ioakeimidis, UNEP/MAP MED POL, presented the overall structure of the 2023 MED QSR report;
- b) Mr. Chedly Rais, UNEP/MAP Expert, presented the sections pertinent to the Mediterranean Sea and Characteristics and Climate Change, Regional Cooperation, Actions and Measures;
- c) Mr. Antoine Lafitte, UNEP/MAP Plan Bleu/RAC, presented the section pertinent to socio-economic characteristics of the Mediterranean;
- d) The thematic assessment chapters were presented by the respective UNEP/MAP and MAP Components representatives.
 - i. Ms. Jelena Knezevic, UNEP/MAP MED POL, presented the thematic chapters on pollution;
 - ii. Mr. Christos Ioakeimidis, UNEP/MAP MED POL, presented the thematic chapter on marine litter;
 - iii. Mr. Yassine Ramzi Sghaier, UNEP/MAP SPA/RAC, presented the thematic chapters on biodiversity and fisheries; and
 - iv. Mr. Marko Prem, UNEP/MAP PAP/RAC, presented the thematic chapters on coast and hydrography.

96. UNEP/MAP Coordinator subsequently informed the Meeting participants on the process for developing the 2023 MED QSR Executive Summary and provided key elements regarding its content.

97. A number of Contracting Parties representatives took the floor and commented on the following:

- a) There is an agreement on the overall structure of the 2023 MED QSR report;
- b) Requested for additional clarification regarding the Countries that fall under non-GES status, as well as setting ambitious targets;
- c) The need to resolve the issue with the habitat distribution maps, which requires for a thorough and extensive revision;
- d) The need to provide more time and options to review the synthetic aspects of the data used for many assessment chapters (e.g., biodiversity), as well as for the benthic habitat parts;
- e) The need to better link the respective key messages with the narrative text of the thematic assessments, as well as the thematic assessments with the integrated 2023 MED QSR report;
- f) The need to have additional information and more informative maps for coast and hydrography, including the request for adding additional maps for Montenegro, as well as expressing concerns for figures 15 (problem with the scale) and 23-28 (habitat types);
- g) For some EOs/CIs, the data used represents sporadic monitoring activities at national level, an issue which needs to be further addressed and improved for the next iterations of the 2023 MED QSR;
- h) The need to propose proper cleaning techniques and methods for the Mediterranean, and to be further reflected in the integrated 2023 MED QSR;
- i) There is a need to re-assess national monitoring strategies, networks and needs, as well as to further enhance and support the implementation of national monitoring programmes;
- j) There is an increasing trend on the drivers introduced around the Mediterranean and possibly an Environmental Impact Assessment approach should be introduced for future projects and planning;
- k) To further use the structure of the Online Working Groups (OWGs) for additional EOs/CIs as they have been proven to function very well, under the condition that OWGs do not substitute the CORMONs;
- l) To use this exercise for the development of the 2023 MED QSR to (re)assess the required human resources to effectively and timely deliver future reports;
- m) To assess and discuss with UNEP/MAP governing bodies, whether the MED QSR cycle needs to be extended/ prolonged.

98. The Meeting's final conclusions related to this agenda item are presented in **Annex III** of this report.

Agenda Item 4: Any Other Business

99. Under this Agenda Item, UNEP/MAP, presented a number of elements linked with IMAP implementation and the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR report:

- a) The EcAp Governance Flow of Work CORMONs and Focal Points;
- b) The visual structure of the 2023 MED QSR; and
- c) The next steps.

100. Ms. Maïa Fourt, UNEP/MAP Expert, presented a number of elements pertinent to:

- a) The evaluation of the EcAp Roadmap for the period 2008-2021 (UNEP/MED WG.550/Inf.09);

- b) An analysis of the regional and global initiatives of relevance to a renewed EcAp Roadmap policy (UNEP/MED WG.550/Inf.10);
- c) The Draft elements for a renewed EcAp Roadmap policy for the achievement of GES beyond 2023 and until 2030 (UNEP/MED WG.550/Inf.11);
- d) The EcAp governance flow of work CORMONs and Focal Points (UNEP/MED WG.550/Inf.12).

101. Representatives of INFO/RAC presented the visual structure of the 2023 MED QSR, including a demo presentation of the 2023 MED QSR website. The Meeting appreciated the visual structure of the on-line 2023 MED QSR website developed by INFO/RAC.

Agenda item 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

102. The Meeting reviewed, commented on, and approved the draft Conclusions and Recommendations as amended and attached to the present report as **Annex III** including its appendices as revised as appropriate by the Meeting.

Agenda item 6: Closure of the Meeting

103. After expressing the usual courtesies, the Chair declared the Meeting closed at 17:30 on Wednesday 28 June 2023.

Annex I
List of Participant

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

ALBANIA/ALBANIE	<p>Ms. Borana Antoni Ministry of Tourism and Environment</p> <p>Ms. Shpresa Mezini Domi Ministry of Tourism and Environment</p> <p>Ms. Eva Kica Specialist Ministry of Tourism and Environment</p>
ALGERIA/ALGÉRIE	<p>Ms. Taous Moulai (online)</p> <p>Ms. Hafidha Lamech (online)</p>
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA/ BOSNIE ET HERZÉGOVINE	<p>Ms. Admir Aladžuz Biologist/Ecologist Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo</p> <p>Ms. Senida Dzajic – Rghei Researcher/Design engineer Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo</p> <p>Ms. Sanela Krdzalic Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo</p>
CROATIA/CROATIE	<p>Ms. Žana Čagalj Bjelkanović Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure</p> <p>Ms. Sunčana Habrun Head of Sector Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets</p> <p>Ms. Jelena Lusic Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (IOR)</p> <p>Ms. Martina Maric Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development</p> <p>Ms. Slavica Matijević Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (IOR)</p> <p>Mr. Pero Tutman Senior Scientific Researcher Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (IOR)</p>
CYPRUS/ CHYPRE	<p>Mr. Konstantinos Antoniadis Department of Fisheries and Marine Research, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment</p>

	<p>Mr. Andreas Athanasiades Department of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment</p> <p>Ms. Katerina Georgiou (online)</p> <p>Ms. Melina Marcou (online)</p> <p>Mr. Lavrentios Vasiliades Department of Fisheries and Marine Research, Ministry of Agriculture Rural Development and Environment</p> <p>Mr. Stelios Zervos Public Works Department, Head of Coastal Section - Senior Ex. Engineer</p>
EGYPT/ EGYPTE	<p>Mr. Sameh Ayoub Water Pollution Expert, MEDPOL National Focal Point Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)</p> <p>Mr. Moustafa Fouda Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Mr. Mohamed Abbas Tahoan Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) Director of lakes administration in EEAA</p> <p>Mr. Mohamed Said Abdelwarith Attea Environmental Researcher - SPA/BD National focal point Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency</p>
EUROPEAN COMMISSION	<p>Mr. Pierre-Jean Clause EU Climate Pact Ambassador</p>
EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY	<p>Ms. Cécile Roddier-Quefelec Ocean Governance, Mediterranean Regional Cooperation</p>
FRANCE/FRANCE	<p>Mr. Lavrentios Vasiliades Department of Fisheries and Marine Research, Ministry of Agriculture Rural Development and Environment</p> <p>Mr. Stelios Zervos Public Works Department, Head of Coastal Section - Senior Ex. Engineer</p> <p>Ms. Lugdiwine Burtschell Ministère de la transition écologique et de la cohésion des territoires</p> <p>Mme. Camille Lacroix Head of the Aquatic Litter Department Cedre</p> <p>Mr. Laurent Guérin Office Français Biodiversité</p>

	<p>Mme. Audrey Prat French Ministry of Environment</p>
GREECE / GRECE	<p>Mr. Christos Mathioudakis Ministry of Environment & Energy</p> <p>Mr. Kapsimalis Vasilios Research Director Department of Marine Geology and Geophysics Institute of Oceanography Hellenic Centre for Marine Research</p>
ISRAEL/ ISRAEL	<p>Mr. Frederic Arzoine Ministry of Environmental Protection Deputy Director at the Marine Environmental Protection Division</p> <p>Mr. Simon Nemtsov Israel Nature and Parks Authority</p> <p>Mr. Dror Zurel Ministry of Environmental Protection</p>
ITALY / ITALIE	<p>Mr. Giordano Giorgi Researcher Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)</p> <p>Ms. Erika Magaletti Researcher Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)</p> <p>Mr. Marco Matiddi Researcher Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)</p> <p>Mr. Leonardo Tunesi Researcher Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)</p>
LEBANON / LIBAN	<p>Mr. Milad Fakri National council for Scientific Research</p> <p>Mr. Jeff Gerges Environmental Specialist Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Mr. Sabbagh Bassam</p>

	<p>Mr. Samer Al Hachem Environmental Specialist Department of Natural Resources Protection General Directorate of Environment-Ministry of Environment-Lebanon</p>
LIBYA / LIBYE	<p>Mr. Omar Boukerwata Director of Climate Change and Sustainable Development Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Mr. El Maki Ayad El Agil (online)</p>
MALTA / MALTE	<p>Ms. Alexia Attard Planning Officer Planning Authority</p> <p>Ms. Angela Bartolo ERA</p> <p>Ms. Marta Curmi Environment Protection Officer Environment & Resources Authority</p> <p>Mr. Luke Tabone Environment and Resources Authority</p>
MONTENEGRO / MONTENEGRO	<p>Ms. Milena Bataković (online) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p> <p>Ms. Željka Čurović Department for Spatial Planning, Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Development and Urbanism, Podgorica, Montenegro</p> <p>Ms. Milica Mandić Institute of Marine Biology, University of Montenegro</p> <p>Ms. Ivana Mitrović Environmental Protection Agency</p> <p>Ms. Sanja Scepanović Advisor Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism</p> <p>Ms. Dina Skarep Radonjić Advisor Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism</p>

MOROCCO / MAROC	<p>Mme. Mounia Hamdaoui Service du Littoral Ministère de la Transition Energétique et du Développement Durable Engineer</p> <p>Mr. Moulay Lahcen Ouahidi Chef de Service Laboratoire des études et de la surveillance de la pollution Ministre de la Transition Energétique et de Développement Durable</p> <p>Mme. Khadija Rhayour Département de l'Environnement (Développement Durable)</p>
SLOVENIA/ SLOVÉNIE	<p>Ms. Mateja Poje Slovene Environment Agency</p> <p>Mr. Uros Robic Institute for Water of the Republic of Slovenia (IWRS)</p> <p>Mr. Sašo Šantl Institute for Water of the Republic of Slovenia</p>
SPAIN / ESPAGNE	<p>Sr. Pablo Abaunza (online) Head of Fisheries Department Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO CSIC)</p> <p>Sra. Salud Deudero IEO-CSIC MITECO</p> <p>Ms. Candela García Gómez Instituto Español de Oceanografía</p> <p>Mr. Safo Piñeiro Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO, CSIC)</p> <p>Mr. Juan Santos Echeandia Senior Researcher Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO, CSIC)</p> <p>Ms. Nerea Valcarcel-Perez Spanish Institute of Oceanography</p>
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC / RÉPUBLIQUE ARABE SYRIENNE	<p>Mr. Daie Bashar</p> <p>Mr. Batol Alrstom</p> <p>Ms. Rula Jabbour Water Safety Department- Environmental Safety Directorate Ministry of Local Administration and Environment</p> <p>Ms. Maiada Sad National focal point RAC/SPA Ministry of Local Administration and Environment</p>

TUNISIA/ TUNISIE	Mr. Mohamed Ali Ben Temessek (online)
TÜRKIYE/ TURQUIE	Ms. Sevil Oksuz Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Ms. Hacer Selamoğlu Çağlayan Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mr. Emrah Soylemez Ministry of Environment Urbanisation and Climate Change Directorate General of Spatial Planning Department of Spatial Strategies and Environmental Plans

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

<p>AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS OF THE BLACK SEA, MEDITERRANEAN SEA AND CONTIGUOUS ATLANTIC AREA (ACCOBAMS) / L'ACCORD SUR LA CONSERVATION DES CÉTACÉS DE LA MER NOIRE, DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE ET DE LA ZONE ATLANTIQUE ADJACENTE (ACCOBAMS)</p>	<p>M. Alessio Maglio</p> <p>Ms. Celia Le Ravallec</p> <p>Ms. Mailys Salivas</p>
<p>GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN (GFCM) / COMMISION GÉNÉRAL DES PÊCHES DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE (CGPM)</p>	<p>Mr. Miguel Bernal (online)</p> <p>Mr. Pablo Carpentieri (online)</p> <p>Ms. Aurora Natasi (online)</p>
<p>INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN) / UNION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA CONSERVATION DE LA NATURE (UICN)</p> <p>IUCN CENTER FOR MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION (IUCN-MED) / CENTRE DE COOPÉRATION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE DE L'UICN (UICN- MED)</p>	<p>Ms. Catherine Numa (online)</p> <p>Ms. Mercedes Munoz Canas (online)</p>

**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
ORGANISATIONS NON-GOUVERNEMENTALES**

<p>EUROPEAN TOPIC CENTRE ON SPATIAL ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS – UNIVERSITY OF MALAGA (ETC-UMA) / CENTRE THÉMATIQUE EUROPÉEN POUR L'ANALYSE ET LA SYNTHÈSE SPATIALES - UNIVERSITÉ DE MALAGA</p>	<p>M. Dania Abdul Malak ETC-UMA Director</p>
<p>MEDITERRANEAN ASSOCIATION TO SAVE THE SEA TURTLES (MEDASSET)</p>	<p>Ms. Konstantina Andreanidou Ms. Amerssa Tsirigoti Mr. Georgios Sampson (online) Ms. Nadia Andreanidou (online)</p>
<p>MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION OFFICE FOR ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND SUSTANIABLE DEVELOPMENT (MIO-ECSDE)</p>	<p>Ms. Thomais Vlachogianni Senior Policy & Programme Officer</p>

**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**

<p>UNEP/MAP COORDINATING UNIT PNUE/PAM UNITÉ DE COORDINATION</p>	<p>Ms. Tatjana Hema Coordinator/ Coordonnatrice Email: tatjana.hema@un.org</p> <p>Ms. Patrizia Busolini Programme Management Officer/ Agent de Gestion de Programme E-mail: patrizia.busolini@un.org</p> <p>Ms. Elisabeth Chouraki PAMEX Technical Secretariat/ Secrétariat Technique du PAMEX E-mail: elisabeth.chouraki@un.org</p> <p>Mr. Christos Ioakeimidis Associate Programme Management Officer/ (Marine Litter) / Chargé de Gestion de Programme Associé (Déchets Marins) E-mail: christos.ioakeimidis@un.org</p> <p>Mr. Mohamad Kayyal Programme Management Officer/ Agent de Gestion de Programme E-mail: mohamad.kayyal@un.org</p> <p>Ms. Jelena Knezevic Monitoring and Assessment Officer - Monitoring and Assessment/ Agent de Gestion de Programme- Suivi et d'Evaluation E-mail: jelena.knezevic@un.org</p> <p>Ms. Ellen Svensson Associate Programme Officer/ Chargé de Gestion de Programme Associé Email: ellen.svensson@un.org</p> <p>Mr. Philippe Théou Project Manager/ Chef de projet E-mail: philippe.theou@un.org</p> <p><u>Experts/consultants</u></p> <p>Ms. Maia Fourt Independent Expert E-mail: maiafourt@gmail.com</p> <p>Mr. Robert Precali E-mail: rprecali@gmail.com</p> <p>Mr. Chedly Rais Consultant Okianos E-mail: chedly.rais@okianos.org</p>
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PAP/RAC	<p>Mr. Marko Prem Deputy Director</p> <p>Mr. Ivan Sekovski Programme Officer</p>
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SPA/RAC	<p>M. Khalil Attia SPA/RAC Director</p> <p>Mr. Atef Ouerghi Programme Officer - Ecosystem Conservation</p> <p>Ms. Lobna Ben Nakhla Programme Officer - Species Conservation</p> <p>Mr. Yassine Ramzi Sghaier Projects Officer</p> <p>Mme. Samar Kilani EcAp MED III Associate Project Officer</p> <p>Ms. Asma Kheriji Associate Project Officer - IMAP-MPA</p> <p>Ms. Naziha Ben Moussa Administrative Assistant</p> <p>Ms. Imtinen Kefi Financial Officer</p>

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Consultant

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Annex II
Agenda of the Meeting

Agenda

Agenda Item 1.A.iv: Marine Litter Opening of the meeting

Agenda Item 1.B.iv: Marine Litter Organizational Matters

Agenda Item 1.C.i, ii, iv:

- i. Review of the 2023 Med QSR Biodiversity & Fisheries assessments (continued)
- ii. Review of the 2023 Med QSR: the proposal of the IMAP Pollution Cluster Chapters (continued)
- iv. Review of the 2023 Med QSR Marine Litter E10 assessment; Updated Baseline Values and Threshold Values for CI12; Guidelines for monitoring riverine inputs

Agenda Item 1.D.i, ii, iv: Conclusions and recommendations

- i. Review of the 2023 Med QSR Biodiversity & Fisheries assessments
- ii. Review of the 2023 Med QSR: the proposal of the IMAP Pollution Cluster Chapters
- iv. Review of the 2023 Med QSR Marine Litter E10 assessment; Updated Baseline Values and Threshold Values for CI12; Guidelines for monitoring riverine inputs

Agenda Item 2: Organizational Matters

Agenda Item 3: Review of the 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status Report

- a) Chapter 0: Introduction
- b) Chapter 1.1: Mediterranean Sea characteristics and climate change
- c) Chapter 1.2: Socio-economic characteristics
- d) Chapter 1.3: Regional cooperation
- e) Chapter 2: Assessments per Cluster
- f) Chapter 3: UNEP/MAP Actions and Measures
- g) Executive summary

Agenda Item 4: Any Other Business

- a) Future IMAP prospects
- b) EcAp governance flow of work CORMONs and Focal Points
- c) 2023 Med QSR visualisation structure
- d) Next steps

Agenda Item 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Agenda Item 6: Closure of the meeting

Annex III
Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and Recommendations

On 27-28 June 2023, the integrated Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups (CORMONs) was held in Athens, Greece. The Meeting was organized by UNEP/MAP Secretariat and MAP Components (MED POL, SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC and PlanBleu).

Following the review and discussion of Working Documents UNEP/MED WG.550/3 to UNEP/MED WG.550/15, the Meeting reached the following conclusions:

Agenda Item 1.C.i: Biodiversity and Fisheries CORMON (*Adopted Conclusions*)

1. The Secretariat presented the working documents containing the proposals of the IMAP Biodiversity Cluster assessment Chapters of the 2023 MED QSR. Following the review and discussion of the presented Working Documents the Meeting reached the following conclusions and recommendations:

General conclusions and recommendations:

2. The meeting recognised the improvements of the quality of the documents shared for the meeting and the efforts made by the Secretariat and the regional Experts to complete the chapters considering the inputs of the Contracting Parties received after the CORMON Meeting held in March 2023 despite the tight timeline.
3. Participants emphasised the role of the online working groups of biodiversity and fisheries cluster and recommended to more rely on their work and to convene their meetings more frequently. This process and concrete frequencies for the next steps should be discussed and concluded at next relevant meetings.
4. For a better consideration of these comments, the Secretariat asked the Contracting Parties to submit all inputs and comments in a written form, no later 4 July 2023 to allow their consideration as appropriate for the version to be submitted to the EcAp Coordination Group Meeting (September 2023).

EO1 – Biodiversity

2023 Med QSR Benthic Habitats (EO1) assessment (UNEP/MED WG. 550/03 Rev.1)

5. To ease the reading and the understanding of the assessment results and outcomes, the Meeting recommended to more clearly separate the assessment of EO1 and EO6 . It also recommended to consider more benthic habitat types in the next cycle of the IMAP in particular those used for the identification of the Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) and in order to assess the impact of climate change and marine litter.
6. The representative of a Contracting Party indicated that the use of modelling approaches is limited or even wrong where there is a lack of data. He recommended to continue efforts in collecting more data for the next cycle assessment exercise.
7. The meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to submit the 2023 Med QSR Benthic Habitats (EO1) assessment to the EcAp coordination group for consideration.

2023 Med QSR Cetaceans (EO1) assessment (UNEP/MED WG.550/04 Rev.1)

8. The meeting acknowledged the importance and the richness of the data provided in the document. It thanked ACCOBAMS Secretariat for the valorous contribution thanks to ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative (ASI).
9. It emphasized the importance and urgency that ACCOBAMS finalise the necessary steps towards launching the next Basin Survey Initiative and encouraged the contracting parties to provide the necessary contributions.
10. The meeting recommended to more involve ACCOBAMS Secretariat and ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee in the elaboration of the assessment chapter on Cetaceans for the next cycle of IMAP.
11. The meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to submit the 2023 Med QSR Cetaceans (EO1) assessment to the EcAp coordination group for consideration.

2023 Med QSR Mediterranean Monk Seal (EO1) assessment (UNEP/MED WG.550/05 Rev.1)

12. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to the improvement made on the assessment report including the valuable data provided by the Contracting Parties, Partners and Experts.
13. The Meeting stressed the need to include recent information on monk seal from the Mid-term evaluation of the Mediterranean strategy for the conservation of monk seal presented in the document UNEP WG548/8 Rev.1
14. After discussing the assessment of the Good Environmental status (GES) related to Monk seal, the Meeting agreed to adopt the regional and sub-regional scale for the common indicator 3, 4 and 5.
15. The meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to submit the 2023 Med QSR Mediterranean Monk Seal (EO1) assessment to the EcAp coordination group for consideration.

2023 Med QSR Marine Turtles (EO1) assessment (UNEP/MED WG.550/06 Rev.1)

16. The meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to submit the 2023 Med QSR Marine Turtles (EO1) assessment to the EcAp coordination group for consideration.

2023 Med QSR Marine Birds (EO1) assessment (UNEP/MED WG.550/07 Rev.1)

17. The meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to submit the 2023 Med QSR Marine Birds (EO1) assessment to the EcAp coordination group for consideration.

EO2 – Non-indigenous species**2023 Med QSR Non-indigenous Species (EO2) assessment (UNEP/MED WG.550/08 Rev.1)**

18. The representative of a Contracting Party highlighted the quality of the report and the improvement made on the version presented to this meeting. He expressed his satisfaction about the good coordination and collaboration with national experts and institutions.
19. The representative of another contracting Party stressed the importance of including (i) in the key message that the trend of NIS introduction is upwards, (ii) in the conclusions and recommendation of the section more emphasis on action to mitigate and to control NIS introduction. He informed the meeting that he provided written comments to the Secretariat. The meeting invited the secretariat to take into consideration, as appropriate, the provided comments and inputs.
20. The meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to submit the 2023 Med QSR Non-indigenous Species (EO2) assessment to the EcAp coordination group for consideration.

OE3 – Fisheries**2023 Med QSR Fisheries assessment (UNEP/MED WG.550/09)**

21. The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the good collaboration between UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC and GFCM Secretariat for the elaboration of the 2023 Med QSR section on ecological objective 3 (OE3, Fisheries).
22. The meeting endorsed the document considering the discussions and comments and invited SPA/RAC to submit the 2023 Med QSR Fisheries assessment to the EcAp coordination group for consideration.

Agenda Item 1.C.ii: Pollution CORMON (*Adopted Conclusions*)

23. Following the review and discussion of the Working Document UNEP/MED WG.550/10 “2023 Med QSR: The Proposal of the IMAP Pollution Cluster Chapters,” the Meeting reached the following conclusions with regards to the assessment of IMAP Common Indicators 13 and 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26 and 27:

IMAP Common Indicators 13 and 14:

24. The Meeting approved the assessment findings related to eutrophication of the Aegean Sea Sub-division of the Aegean-Levantine Sea Sub-region, the Central Mediterranean Sea Sub-region, and the Western- Mediterranean Sea Sub-region by using satellite-derived Chla data for the application of the Simplified G/M comparison, along with the complementary assessment findings for the Tyrrhenian Sea Sub-division provided by application of the Ecological Quality Ratio (EQR) methodology. Further to incorporating the additional supplementary information provided by several participants, the Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023.

25. The Meeting approved the supplementary information included in the assessment findings related to the NEAT GES Assessment of the Adriatic Sea Sub-region, and the Simplified G/M comparison assessment of the Levantine Sea Sub-division, as provided in UNEP/MED WG.550/10, following up on their approval by the Meeting of CorMon Pollution (1-2 March) (UNEP/MED WG.556/3). The Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023.

IMAP Common Indicator 17:

26. The Meeting approved the supplementary information included in the NEAT assessment findings related to Common Indicator 17 in the Adriatic Sea Sub-region and the Western Mediterranean Sea as provided in UNEP/MED WG.550/10, along with a few supplementary additions included during the discussion, following up on their approval by the Meeting of CorMon Pollution (1-2 March) (UNEP/MED WG.556/3). The Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023.

IMAP Common Indicator 18:

27. The Meeting approved the supplementary information included in the assessment findings related to Common Indicator 18 as provided in UNEP/MED WG.550/10, following up on their approval by the Meeting of CorMon Pollution (1-2 March) (UNEP/MED WG.556/3). The Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023.

IMAP Common Indicator 19:

28. The Meeting approved the amended assessment findings for CI-19 as provided in UNEP/MED WG.550/10 and its Addendum 1 further to addressing requests provided by several participants of the Meeting of CorMon Pollution (1-2 March). The Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023.

IMAP Common Indicator 20:

29. The Meeting approved the supplementary information included in the assessment findings related to Common Indicator 20 as provided in UNEP/MED WG.550/10, along with a few supplementary additions included during the discussion, following up on their approval by the Meeting of CorMon Pollution (1-2 March) (UNEP/MED WG.556/3). The Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023.

IMAP Common Indicator 21:

30. The Meeting approved the amended assessment findings related to Common Indicator 21 as provided in UNEP/MED WG.550/10 further to consideration of the compatibility of one national

assessment with the regional assessment findings, and by following up on their approval by the Meeting of CorMon Pollution (1-2 March) (UNEP/MED WG.556/3). The Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023.

IMAP Candidate Common Indicators 26 & 27:

31. The Meeting approved the supplementary information included in the assessment findings for cCI 26 and 27, as provided in UNEP/MED WG.550/10, following up on their approval by the Meeting of CorMon Pollution (1-2 March). The Meeting recommended the integration of these assessment findings in the 2023 MED QSR within its submission for approval of the Meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Group and the Meeting of MAP Focal Points which will be held in September 2023
32. The Meeting:
 - a. Expressed its appreciation for the support provided by the Partners and the Contracting Parties of UNEP/MAP regarding the preparation of the 2023 MED QSR IMAP Pollution Cluster.
 - b. Took note of the measures as approved for IMAP CIs 13, 14, 17, 18, 20 and 21 by the Meeting of MED POL Focal Points (24-25 May 2023), along with the measures for IMAP CI 19 with a view to their integration in the 2023 MED QSR.

Agenda Item 1.C.iii: Coast and Hydrography CORMON (*Adopted Conclusions*)

33. The Meeting welcomed the work done and endorsed the proposed contents of the 2023 MED Quality Status Report (QSR) related to the Coast and Hydrography chapter, i.e. the working document UNEP/MED WG.550/11 “2023 on Med QSR Coast and Hydrography (EOs 7 and 8) assessments”.
34. The meeting concludes that the endorsed document UNEP/MED WG.550/11 is appropriate for the inclusion to the integrated 2023 QSR.
35. The meeting asked that the document as improved by this meeting UNEP/MED WG.550/11 to be available online in its entirety at the webpage dedicated to the 2023 QSR.

Agenda Item 1.C.iv: Marine Litter CORMON (*Adopted Conclusions*)

36. The Meeting approved the Secretariat’s proposal for updated Baseline Value as well as for establishing Threshold Value for floating microplastics (IMAP CI23), as provided in the Working Document UNEP/MED WG.550/13 and requested the Secretariat to revise the ones for seafloor macrolitter (IMAP CI23) by using the 15th percentile of the median value (i.e., 38 items/km²) provided that this value is only used for the 2023 MED QSR and that for the next MED QSR/assessment cycle this value will be subject to revision based on updated/new data.
37. The Meeting approved the use of these values for the preparation of the marine litter chapter for the 2023 MED QSR.
38. The Meeting approved the use of the updated Baseline Values (BV) and Threshold Values (TV), and after incorporating the respective revision for seafloor macro-litter, for the preparation of the marine litter chapter of the 2023 MED QSR.

39. The Meeting approved the final version of the marine litter assessments for beach macro-litter and floating microplastics of the 2023 MED QSR as provided in the Working Document UNEP/MED WG.550/12 and recommended their inclusion into the integrated 2023 MED QSR document.
40. The meeting requested the Secretariat to update the section on seafloor macro-litter and its assessment reflecting the updated Threshold Value (Q15 = 38 items/km²) for seafloor macro-litter into the marine litter assessment for 2023 MED QSR.
41. The meeting agreed to extract elements from Chapters 1, 4, 6 and 7 of UNEP/MED WG.550/12 to be incorporated into the integrated 2023 MED QSR document.
42. The Meeting approved the “Guidelines for Monitoring Riverine Inputs of Marine Litter” as provided in the Working Document UNEP/MED WG.550/14 and supported the development of common guidelines by the four Regional Seas (BSC, HELCOM, OSPAR, and UNEP/MAP).

Agenda Item 3: Review the Draft Content of the Common 2023 MED QSR Chapters

43. The Meeting approved the structure of the integrated 2023 MED QSR document as reflected in Working Document UNEP/MED WG.550/15 and requested the Secretariat to further advance with its finalization for submission to the upcoming EcAp Coordination Group Meeting.
44. The Meeting agreed with the approach of building the assessment thematic chapters of the 2023 MED QSR with selected sections from the final/updated version of Working Documents UNEP/MED WG.550/03 to UNEP/MED WG.550/12 as amended by the respective thematic CORMON sessions held on 27 June 2023.
45. The Meeting agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to further look at the horizontal chapters of the 2023 MED QSR with a view of its enhancement and completion for submission to the EcAp Coordination Group Meeting together with the Executive Summary to be elaborated by the Secretariat.
46. The Meeting opted for the Executive Summary to also include key messages and findings per each Ecological Objective in an integrated way for the consideration of the EcAp Coordination Group Meeting. The Secretariat committed to allow 1-week period for online consultations with all participants of the Integrated CORMON for any feedback.
47. The Meeting took note of the progress for the preparation of the Executive Summary of the 2023 MED QSR that should reflect overall in a summarized way the content of the QSR highlighting to the extent possible areas of improvement and areas still requiring concrete actions. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to send the draft executive Summary to the EcAp Coordination Group Meeting as early as possible, preferably by end of July 2023 encouraging the Contracting Parties to provide written feedback by 25 August 2023 that would allow the Secretariat to prepare a consolidated version of all comments received and disseminate it to the EcAp Coordination Group Meeting at least one week before the meeting.
48. The Meeting took note of the work undertaken by the Secretariat on the evaluation of the EcAp Roadmap and encouraged the discussion of the recommendation and outcome during the EcAp Coordination Group Meeting with regards to prospects for IMAP further enhancement and effective implementation.