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Regional Meeting on Reporting of Releases to Marine and Coastal Environment from Land Based Sources Activities and related Indicators

Tirana, Albania, 19-20 March 2019

Report of the Meeting

The meeting has been organized in collaboration with the European Union funded Project ENI SEIS II South Implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles and practices in the ENP South region – SEIS Support Mechanism

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2019

Table of Contents

	Pages
Report of the Meeting	1 - 6
Annex I: List of Participants	
Annex II: Provisional Agenda	
Annex III: Conclusions and Recommendations	

Introduction

1. In accordance with the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work 2018-2019 adopted by the 20th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (Tirana, Albania, 17-21 December 2017), the Secretariat organized a Regional Meeting on Reporting of Releases to Marine and Coastal Environment from Land-Based Sources and Activities and related Indicators. The Meeting was held in collaboration with the European Union funded Project ENI SEIS II South Support Mechanism. The Meeting was hosted in Tirana, Albania on 19-20 March 2019 at the kind invitation and contribution of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania.
2. The Meeting reviewed and discussed a number of documents and related issues including:
 - a. Lessons learned from the ongoing 4th Cycle of the National Baseline Budget (NBB) of Pollutants Update reporting and support provided to the countries to implement and further develop their capacity on Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) implementation;
 - b. Methodology for developing and applying national emission factors; and
 - c. Horizon 2020 Initiative/ National Actions Plans (H2020/NAP) Assessment Outline for industrial emissions cluster indicators at national and regional levels focusing on the ways and means to ensure/maximize synergies between 4th Cycle of NBB and ENI SEIS II H2020/NAP industrial emissions cluster indicators and linkages to evaluation of implementation of National Action Plans and Regional Plans.
3. The Meeting provided detailed information on tools for data collection for use in the 4th Cycle of NBB update and H2020/NAP Indicator on industrial emissions cluster particularly via NBB/PRTR Infosystem and InfoMAPNode.

Participation

4. The meeting was attended by representatives from the following Contracting Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Montenegro, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. The United Nations Environment (UN Environment), including the Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention Secretariat (UN Environment/MAP) were also represented, along with the following Mediterranean Action Plan Components: the Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL) and the Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC).
5. The following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, convention secretariats and intergovernmental organizations were represented: The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the European Environment Agency (EEA).
6. The following non-governmental organizations and other institutions were represented: The Environmental Centre for Administration and Technology in Tirana (ECAT Tirana).
7. The full list of participants is attached as Annex I to the present report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

8. The Meeting was opened at 09:30 on 19 March 2019 by H.E. Ornela Cuci, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, emphasizing the common problems in the Mediterranean region such as plastics pollution, deforestation, urban waste which would require joint action not only on the regional level but also on the national level. She underlined the need for stronger joint actions in order to deal with, and solve, common problems stemming from the fact that the countries present in the meeting physically share a common sea; a natural resource that contributes to the wealth of the countries in terms of fishing and tourism.

9. Mr. Mohamad Kayyal, UN Environment/MAP - MED POL Programme Manager, thanked the Government of Albania for their excellent hospitality and welcomed the Deputy Minister and all the participants to the meeting on behalf of UN Environment/MAP. He stressed the objective of the meeting and kindly noted its expected outputs.

Agenda item 2: Organizational Matters

a) Rules of Procedure for the Meeting on Reporting of Releases to Marine and Coastal Environment from Land Based Sources Activities and related Indicators

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

b) Election of Officers

11. Subject to Rule 20 of the rules of procedure mentioned at para. 2(a) for meetings and conferences of the Contracting Parties, the Meeting elected one (1) President, three (3) Vice Presidents and one (1) Rapporteur from among the participants, as follows:

Chair: Mrs Enkeleda Shkurta, Albania
Vice-Chair: Mr Neven Bujas, Croatia
Vice-Chair: Mr. Inigo De Vicente-Mingarro, Spain
Vice-Chair: Mr Giordano Giorgi, Italy
Rapporteur: Mrs Olfat Hamdan, Lebanon.

c) Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

12. Subject to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure mentioned at para. 2(a), the proposed agenda appearing in document UNEP/MED WG.462/1 and annotated in the UNEP/MED WG.462/2 document was reviewed and accepted with modifications, as proposed by the Chair. The Annotated Agenda was adopted by the Meeting as appended to the present document.

d) Organization of Work

13. The discussions were proposed to be held in plenary sessions.

14. Simultaneous interpretation in English and French was provided during the Meeting. Documentation was available in English and French. As per normal practice, pre-session documentation was not distributed on paper. Participants were encouraged to download the documentation on their computers in advance of the session.

15. Sessions were scheduled for the two-day meeting from 09:30-12:30 and 14:30-17:30.

16. The Meeting addressed all Agenda items during the two-day meeting. The Meeting closed at 17:30 on 20 March 2019 after adopting its Conclusions and Recommendations appended to this present document.

Agenda item 3: Template on PRTR Regulation

17. Under this agenda item, UNECE, presented the Protocol on PRTR, further detailing the scope of the Protocol as a reporting tool for industries to provide data and information on their emissions loads. It was highlighted that PRTRs are aimed to provide the tool for factual decision making at multiple levels including government, industry and public.

18. The meeting took note of current practices and recent developments focusing on the outcomes of the 3rd Global Round Table on PRTRs. It was also emphasized the role of PRTR in helping governments to fulfill their obligations under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The meeting took note of the provided information regarding accessing to UNITAR PRTR platform¹ and reference documents for competent authorities and industrial facility operators regarding monitoring, mass balance, emission factors and estimates of loads for reporting the PRTR at national level.

19. The Meeting appreciated the presentation by UNECE particularly with regards to tools and modalities that can be used by the Countries for national implementation of PRTRs.

20. The Secretariat presented the PRTR legal template developed to facilitate and support drafting of national regulations by the Contracting Parties aiming to establish PRTR systems² at national level in order to enforce reporting by industrial operators to competent authorities in accordance with PRTR Protocol and the regional obligations under Barcelona Convention.

21. The meeting proposed modification on the document emphasizing further need for streamlining it with the Kiev PRTR Protocol and E-PRTR, especially regarding the clauses related to minimum requirements for reporting and information disclosure.

Agenda item 4: Practical Implementation Guidelines on PRTR

22. Under this agenda item, the Secretariat presented the updated proposal of the MEDPOL PRTR Implementation Guide (UNEP/MED WG.462/4). The document was reviewed, including roles of operators, authorities and its appendices specifying the chemical substances and targeted activities to be reported. The meeting underlined the fact that the minimum reporting should be as required by E-PRTR³ or Kiev PRTR requirements,⁴ noting that Countries could further report any additional data as they deem necessary.

23. The meeting discussed the need for the threshold values, considering the advantages of international versus national emission factors for reporting on PRTR, and embarked on a discussion about the inclusion of diffuse sources and agriculture in the PRTRs, and how these sources should be reported. It was noted that in some countries, reporting diffuse sources can be only undertaken based on emission factors which vary based on national and regional conditions of the particular country, and those loads were not calculated by the operators but by the competent authorities. The Meeting noted that PRTRs are systems designated to collect best information that facilities can provide, however the PRTR systems do not aim for compliance as such. The Meeting emphasized the confidentiality of the data reported by operators to the competent authorities which can or cannot be disclosed based on the Protocol.

24. The Meeting took note of the fact that the competent authorities are responsible to complete the quality check of the data reported and ensure that data is quality-checked and comparable. With regards to PRTR and NBB, the Secretariat highlighted that NBB provides the tool for reporting by Government to fulfill the reporting obligations under the Barcelona Convention; whereas PRTR is a tool for reporting by industrial operators to the competent authorities. Hence PRTR is a tool to facilitate NBB reporting.⁵

25. Based on the aforementioned discussions, the Meeting requested additional time to review and comment on the document.

¹ <https://prtr.unece.org/>

² <https://prtr.unece.org/International-agencies-and-organizations>

³ <https://prtr.eea.europa.eu/#/pollutantinfo>

⁴ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/PRTR_Protocol_e.pdf

⁵ <https://idc.info-rac.org/>

26. The Meeting invited Albania, Italy, Spain and Turkey to present their national experience on PRTR implementation and reporting showcasing the good practices on reporting and implementation progress of the PRTR at national level.

27. Albania presented their progress on implementation of their PRTR system sharing national experience and problems faced and best practices.

28. Turkey made an intervention during the sessions regarding their on-going capacity building project on PRTR, stressing out that the project has commenced in 2017 and would continue till 2019 aiming to build capacities for 20 pilot industries in 20 provinces with 91 pollutants.

29. Spain made an intervention regarding their experience at national level, stressing the fact that PRTR systems are good tools for collecting best available data and underlined especially the fact that the aim of PRTR reports were not directly related to compliance for the operators, but to complement compliance for national authorities. The meeting stressed out that the PRTRs are systems for public access to information and collecting the best available information for policy makers.

30. Italy made an intervention regarding reporting obligations under PRTRs, focusing on their national approach on reporting diffuse sources, which is not covered under PRTR; but under the Water Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy Directive. Italy also explained the use of emission factors for estimating pollutants' loads from diffuse sources in particular.

Agenda item 5: Methodology for Developing and Applying National Emission Factors

31. Under this agenda item, the Secretariat presented the proposal on the methodology for developing and applying national emission factors, and for providing technical support to the countries to develop their own emission factors based on globally-recognized emission factors. The Meeting noted that the document is of importance especially for the southern Mediterranean Countries where there is no monitoring and/or reporting systems from industries at national level due to various reasons (such as non-existing national obligations for the operators and confidentially issue regarding the data requested).

32. The Meeting recognized the fact that actual measurements would be the optimal method for reporting pollutants loads in most cases, whereas, in some cases, such as diffuse sources, agriculture, small facilities etc., emission factors would present a good alternative to report reliable and comparable information in terms of pollution loads.

33. It was highlighted that emission factors constitute an appropriate tool for acquiring accurate data needed for computing pollutants loads; however, they are typically presented in ranges based on the prevailing conditions of the country. The Meeting embarked on a discussion regarding the conditions for using national emission factors, instead of international emission factors and when and how national emission factors would be favorable.

34. Regarding proposed methods for developing national emission factors, the Meeting pointed out especially that the method for using ELVs for developing emission factors could be misleading since there might not be scientifically-based research for designating the ELVs in all cases.

35. The Meeting also considered the method of using BREF documents for developing emission factors. It was highlighted that this particular method needs to be better elaborated due to its particular dependence on prevailing conditions of industrial installations and country conditions; underlining at the same time that these conditions might be drastically different at local and regional levels.

36. The Meeting also underlined the importance of using the international emission factors, whilst countries might want to develop their own emission factors based on real conditions using prevailing

conditions in industrial facilities which could provide reliable results for calculating the pollution loads.

37. The Meeting complemented the information provided by the Secretariat with national experiences and presentations related to the implementation of different aspects and provisions of data collection under the 4th Cycle of NBB with short presentations by each country. Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Morocco, Montenegro, Israel, Lebanon, Tunisia and Turkey shared their national experiences regarding the on-going 4th Cycle of NBB Update and progress under ENI SEIS II Project.

38. As presented, the Meeting took note on inventories of the existing pollution sources per each sector of activity; preliminary results for available industries (industry density index); data availability for NBB reports and PRTR Pilots; and preliminary quantification of the pollutants/emissions releases for each pollutant per sector and sub-sector and the riverine inputs from water streams.

Agenda item 6: Regional Tools for Data Collection: Manual for NBB/PRTR Infosystem and Manual for InfoMAPNode; Training on NBB and PRTR Data collection and upload

39. Under this agenda item, UN Environment/MAP INFO/RAC presented the NBB InfoSystem⁶ as a reporting infrastructure developed by UN Environment/MAP, demonstrating the system's features and components for its users. The Meeting recognized the NBB InfoSystem as the tool for uploading NBB data under 4th Cycle of NBB update where the data would be submitted by MEDPOL FPs after quality assurance by the country in a unified format.

40. The Secretariat presented the Regional Data Collection Template to be filled in by industrial facilities and/or authorities with the aim to prepare the national reports to be uploaded into the NBB InfoSystem focusing on the particularities regarding the facility identification data and pollutants loads released per each industrial facility as defined in the PRTRs.

41. UN Environment/MAP INFO/RAC provided information to national experts to collect and share data through the Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI), InfoMAPNode⁷, as a reporting infrastructure developed by UN Environment/MAP-INFO/RAC in the framework of ENI SEIS II Project.

42. InfoMAPNode was presented to the Meeting which was developed explicitly for collecting data to populate the H2020/NAP indicators and display georeferenced data as agreed under ENI SEIS II Project. The Meeting also took note of different features of the InfoMAPNode such as accessing layers for metadata and data, creating map based on those layers, giving access to information and permission for viewing and editing documents and uploaded data.

43. The meeting discussed the accessibility rights from the countries to infoMAPNode.

Agenda item 7: H2020 Assessment Outline: Links to the Evaluation on National Action Plans and Regional Plans Implementation

44. Under this agenda item, the EEA provided comprehensive information on development principles and main elements of the H2020 Assessment Report Outline focusing on the details and characteristics of integrated environmental assessment including assessment across thematic chapters; issues across geographical scales and stakeholder inclusion at all stages of assessment. The Meeting further elaborated on the thematic assessment chapters as defined in the H2020 Assessment Outline based on the agreed H2020/NAP indicators on three agreed clusters, i.e., water, industrial emissions and waste management including marine litter.

⁶ <https://idc.info-rac.org/>

⁷ <http://infomapnode.info-rac.org/>

45. The Meeting further discussed the proposed conclusions and key messages that H2020 Assessment aims to provide to policy makers and took note of deadlines for final data submission of relevance for H2020/NAP reporting.

46. With relevance to H2020 Assessment, the meeting discussed the possibility and modality to present assessment results and additional key messages in national assessments with complementary data that was available at national level to flag up country specific messages to the policy makers for further investment and improvement.

47. The Secretariat presented the framing questions to be addressed by populating H2020/NAP Indicators in line with the data standards and data dictionaries uploaded to the MAP/MEDPOL Infosystem and InfoMAPNode for industrial emission cluster; further explaining the links to the evaluation on National Actions Plans and Regional Plans implementation.

48. The Meeting discussed the framing questions developed in line with the respective COP Decisions and the H2020 Initiative to assess the state of the Mediterranean aiming at providing evidence-based analyses based on all relevant H2020/NAP indicators, populated with data, and focusing on Pressures, Drivers and Responses.

Agenda item 8: Any Other Business

49. The Meeting participants did not raise and discuss any other matters, as agreed during the adoption of the agenda.

Agenda item 9: Conclusions and Recommendations

50. The Meeting participants reviewed and adopted the conclusions and recommendations as prepared by the Rapporteur and appended to this Meeting Report.

Agenda item 10: Closure of the Meeting

51. The Chair closed the Meeting at 17:30 on Wednesday, 20 March 2019.

**Annex I:
List of Participants**

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**SECRETARIAT TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION AND COMPONENTS OF
THE MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN SECRETARIAT DE LA CONVENTION
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Annex II
Provisional Agenda

Provisional Agenda

- Agenda item 1:** Opening of the Meeting
- Agenda item 2:** Organizational Matters
- Agenda item 3:** Template on PRTR Regulation
- Agenda item 4:** Practical Implementation Guidelines on PRTR
- Agenda item 5:** Methodology for Developing and Applying National Emission Factors
- Agenda item 6:** Regional Tools for Data Collection: Manual for NBB/PRTR Infosystem and Manual for InfoMAPNode; Training on NBB and PRTR Data Collection and upload
- Agenda item 7:** Horizon 2020 Assessment Outline: Links to the Evaluation on National Actions Plans and Regional Plans Implementation
- Agenda item 8:** Any Other Business
- Agenda item 9:** Conclusions and Recommendations
- Agenda item 10:** Closure of the Meeting

Annex III
Conclusions and Recommendations

On 19 and 20 March 2019, the Regional Meeting on Reporting of Releases to Marine and Coastal Environment from Land-Based Sources and Activities and Related Indicators was held in Tirana, Albania at the International Tirana Hotel. The Meeting was organized in collaboration with the European Union-funded Project ENI SEIS II–South Support Mechanism.

Following its deliberations, the Meeting concluded as follows:

1. The Meeting appreciated the work undertaken by the Secretariat in preparation of the Meeting;
2. The Meeting took note of the welcoming speech delivered by the Albanian Deputy Minister of Tourism and Environment, Dr. Ornela Cuci;
3. The Meeting appreciated the generous hospitality of the Albanian Government for hosting the Meeting;
4. The Meeting recognized the importance of PRTR as a useful tool to prepare the National Baseline Budget by the Countries;
5. During the Meeting, the Practical Implementation Guideline on PRTR was presented and discussed. The Meeting recognized the Guideline as a useful tool which identified main issues to be addressed in PRTR implementation process at national level. The Meeting requested additional time to review and comment on the document. It was agreed that Countries will provide their comments by 5 April 2019 aiming to finalize and submit the document to the MEDPOL FPs Meeting to be held in May 2019 for final consideration and approval;
6. Info/RAC presented the NBB InfoSystem as a reporting infrastructure developed by UN Environment/MAP demonstrating the system features and components. The Meeting recognized the NBB InfoSystem as the tool for uploading NBB data;
7. The Secretariat presented the Regional Data Collection Template to be filled in by industrial facilities and/or authorities with the aim to preparing the national reports to be uploaded into the NBB InfoSystem. The Meeting emphasized that the template responds to the needs of the Countries for a unified approach for data collection at national level;
8. The Secretariat presented the methodology for developing and applying national emissions factors that provide various options that can be potentially used by the countries for developing their own emission factors. Countries inquired about the applicability of the various methods and requested additional time to review and comment on the document to take into account a coherent regional methodology. It was agreed that Countries will provide their comments by 5 April 2019;
9. Countries involved in the 4th Cycle of NBB update presented the progress of NBB reporting, preliminary results for available data for the industries, and preliminary quantification of the pollutants/emission releases. The Meeting took note of work progress presented by the Countries and recommended timely delivery of their NBB updates;
10. UNECE presented a brief of the Protocol of PRTRs as well as current practices and recent developments focusing on the outcomes of the 3rd Global Round Table on PRTRs. The Meeting appreciated the presentation by UNECE particularly with regards to tools and modalities that can be used by the Countries for national implementation of PRTRs, and welcomed the offer by the Secretariat of the PRTR Protocol to support and assist the Countries;
11. The Secretariat presented the PRTR legal template developed to facilitate and support the drafting of national regulations by the Countries aiming to establish PRTR systems. The Meeting proposed some modifications on the document and requested additional time for further feedback and commenting to be provided to the Secretariat by 5 April 2019 aiming to finalize and submit the document to the MEDPOL FPs Meeting to be held in May 2019 for final consideration and approval;

12. EEA presented the overall development principles for the H2020 Assessment Report explaining how the indicators were mapped versus other processes, such as SDG, IMAP, MSSD, and underlining their comparability to other processes. EEA further introduced the outline for the regional H2020 Assessment Report, expected contributions from the Countries, emphasizing timeline for data submission, provision of indicator factsheets, and the timeline of final completion of the H2020 Assessment Report. The Meeting appreciated the assessment approach and noted the timelines for completing the H2020 Assessment;

13. The Secretariat presented framing questions on the H2020 Assessment industrial cluster, their linkages with Regional Plans and implementation of NAPs, explaining the aimed messages that should be delivered on the assessment level to policy makers. The Meeting encouraged the Countries to address within their national assessments key national priorities. The Meeting took note of the framing questions and agreed with their scope and content;

14. Info/RAC presented the Spatial Data Infrastructure for the InfoMAPNode providing detailed information about the regional infrastructure aiming to collect and display georeferenced data. The Meeting took note of the features provided by the platform which will be used to support production of H2020/NAP indicators and requested clarifications about the validation process and accessibility rights.