Background note to the 1st UFM Task Force on ENVIRONMENT

The UfM ENV TF (30/01/2018) and the UfM External Evaluation

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change - May 2014

Created by the 43 Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government meeting in Paris on 13th July 2008, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat is a multilateral partnership composed of 43 countries (28 EU Member States and 15 Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries) with the mandate of enhancing regional cooperation and integration between both shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

The first UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change (hereinafter the Declaration) was adopted in Athens on 13 May 2014¹. Through this joint Declaration, the 43 UfM Ministers expressed the urgent need to join forces on three main axes of work, the so called "green economy package" namely:

- The H2020 Initiative for the De-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea
- Sustainable Consumption and Production and green/circular economy
- Climate Change adaptation and mitigation

Moreover, biodiversity and ecosystem protection, integrated maritime policy, integrated coastal zone management, awareness and education for sustainable development, governance and stakeholder involvement were also highlighted as areas for closer cooperation. In this regard, the Declaration pursues targets which are instrumental in achieving various Sustainable Development Goals (e.g. SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, SDG 13 Climate Action, SDG 14 Life below water, SDG 15 Life on land, and it strongly contributes to others such as SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities).

In order to assess progress in the implementation of the recommendations agreed upon in Athens,

the Declaration itself envisaged a specific mechanism: "Ministers invite high level experts and officials to meet regularly, at least every two years, and where appropriate in synergy with other regional meetings dealing with environment or climate issues, as long as such meetings remain relevant, in the form of a UfM Working Group on Environment and Climate Change (hereinafter the UfM Working Group) to follow-up on this Declaration and assess the progress made...".

¹ <u>http://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-</u>

content/uploads/2014/05/20140515_UfM_declaration_FINAL_compromiseeditorial-changes.pdf

The UfM Working Group on Environment and Climate Change (March 2017)

The 1st UfM Working Group on Environment and Climate Change met on 14-15 March 2017 in Barcelona, Spain, two and a half years following the adoption of the Declaration to review the progress in the implementation up to date. The report "*Initial Review of the Progress in the Implementation at Regional Level of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change*" presented at the meeting gave an overview of the progresses made over the years by the various organizations and bodies operating at regional level in the implementation of the Declaration under the different topics.

This initial review was built on the contributions provided on a voluntary basis by partner organizations and countries. Processes, programmes, projects, initiatives, and even single activities were screened and the most significant information and data was collected, processed and presented so as to capture the efforts made in the implementation of the Declaration. This allowed major developments and achievements to be highlighted and emerging issues identified.

The "Agreed Conclusions" of the 2017 UfM Working Group on Environment meeting's conclusions (see the attached background documents) include:

- Establish priorities for action on environment and climate change in the Mediterranean region after 2020, to be the basis for a possible future Ministerial Meeting;
- Launch an external evaluation of the implementation of the Declaration to contribute towards defining priorities, operational modalities and the work programme post-2020, and
- Set up a Task Force on Environment (TF on ENV) to facilitate the transition towards the post 2020 agenda on environmental action in the Mediterranean region and identify the regional priorities ahead.

As presented in Annex 1 to the Explanatory note, the Working Group also agreed on a number of specific actions to support the "green economy package" regarding H2020, sustainable consumption and production (SCP); climate change, climate-environment science policy interface; other environmental issues such as marine protected areas (MPAs), the Bern Convention, integrated maritime policy/blue economy and eco-cities; environmental and climate change governance and stakeholder involvement; increased awareness and education for sustainable development; ensuring implementation of required environment and climate investments; and proposal for emerging dossiers on land restoration/ sustainable land management/forestry, desertification, water, biodiversity, climate mitigation/adaptation; and promote closer involvement of local and regional administrations through the Bologna Charter - the charter of the Regions for the promotion of a common framework for strategic actions aimed at the protection and sustainable development of the Mediterranean coastal areas, to be further integrated in order to support the overall objectives and work of the Ministerial Declaration.

The final version of the *Review of the Progress in the Implementation at Regional Level of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change* is circulated as background document to the ENV TF in its final version including:

- All the information collected for the March 2017 Working Group on ENV and CC, together with its agreed conclusions;
- The country reports, provided between March and November 2017,
- The implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between UnepMap (UN Environment/MAP) and the UfM Secretariat, shared also as information document at

the 20th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols, Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017.

2. The UfM ENV TF (30/01/2018) and the UfM External Evaluation

The 1st meeting of the UfM Task Force on Environment will be held in Jordan on the 30 January 2018 and will serve to:

- 1. Collect countries and stakeholders' views and inputs on the post-2020 priorities for action of the post-2020 UfM work program on environment and climate change in the Mediterranean region (to be progressively discussed for future inclusion in the 2rd UfM Ministerial Declaration on ENV and CC scheduled for end 2019-early 2020)
- 2. Based on point 1, guide and provide inputs to the TERMS OF REFERENCE of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) External Evaluation of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change to contribute towards defining priorities, operational modalities and the UfM work programme post-2020, called for by the 43 countries at the UfM WG on ENV and CC in March 2017.

In Annex 1, the draft questions collected by the consultant in preparation of mentioned ToRS are attached to support/stimulate inputs by participants to the UfM ENV TF

As per agenda, the ENV Task Force will focus on a <u>reinforced and integrated</u> green/circular/lowcarbon economy package.

Topics under discussion at the UfM ENV Task Force:

H2020 Initiative for a Cleaner Mediterranean
- completion of the initiative in 2020 and future scenario/s -

Main points for discussion - H2020 Initiative for a Cleaner Mediterranean

• Objectives/Priorities – still priorities for action? Reformulation within a wider green economy context

Since its launch, H2020 addresses municipal waste, industrial pollution and wastewater; marine pollution and hazardous waste were added as emerging issues with the 2014 UfM Ministerial Declaration on ENV and CC • Structure and operational modalities – did they serve the purpose the initiative? Can a similar setting serve in the future?

The four components – capacity building, monitoring and review, investment, research where at the basis of the initiative. Despite each component had its own implementation timing and activities, they were serving the same shared objectives.

The H2020 Focal Points are and have been the main reference Focal Points for the UfM Environment agenda and portfolio.

An H2020 core group of partner/implementing organisations has been set up to maximize effectiveness in achieving the common goals

- Way forward H2030...or a wider initiative on green/circular/low-carbon economy
 - A wider green/circular/low-carbon economy initiative with a package of actions depollution/pollution prevention reinforced and integrated
 - *Plastic (and marine litter) could have a more prominent role with a focus on production and consumption side)*
- Pollution Prevention/Sustainable Consumption and Production; Increased environmental awareness and education for Sustainable Development focus and options for future programming -

Main points for discussion: Sustainable Consumption and Production as main approach to pollution prevention, in line with the SDGs

- Identifying the core 5/10 actions to support, in line with the Regional Plan on SCP, to upscale Sustainable Production based on the activities carried out so far on green industries and green entrepreneurship
 - o Increasing Resource efficiency in production
 - Supporting recovery of raw materials through: product responsibility, ecodesign and efficient recycling systems
 - Repair, refurbish and remanufacturing enabling reuse of products
 - Securing sustainable supply of raw materials (substitutions, renewable resources, environmental/social transparency of supply and value chains)
 - Eco innovation and new business models (e.g. product service systems, technological and social innovation, industrial symbiosis, etc.)
 - Governance, Market incentives and finance (cross cutting issues green procurement, certification schemes, reforms and taxation favouring green investments businesses entrepreneurship, etc.)
- Reinforce the links between SCP- CC

- Reinforce action to stimulate Sustainable Consumption, including actions to be undertaken by the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development to support sustainable consumption
- Way forward A wider green/circular/low-carbon economy initiative with a package reinforced and integrated of actions

Agreed Conclusion extracted from the March 2017 WG on ENV and CC "consider the importance of having adequate financial resources beyond 2018 to keep up the momentum created at regional level by the SwitchMed Programme; scale up thematically and geographically the existing efforts into a set of longer term expanded actions, including access to financing and facilitation of SCP/RE related investments, so as to consolidate the critical mass of regional and local capacities necessary to support the move toward SCP and green/circular economy models

• Current pressures on natural resources (plastic/marine litter, desertification, sustainable land management, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, etc.) and integration of socio economic aspects (migration, urbanization, demographic growth, etc.); stronger link to Climate Change

- Main needs and options/scenarios for action-

Main points for discussion: "other environmental topics" fully integrated into the wider green/circular/low-carbon economy

- Natural resources as main drivers and enablers for national and regional economies
 - *Biodiversity/Marine Protected Areas as as ecological and socio-economic asset, natural infrastructure and nature-based solutions in supporting ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation to climate change*
 - Strengthened focus on land restoration/desertification; closer links with FAO and the UNCCD Secretariat (Agreed Conclusion extracted from the March 2017 WG on ENV and CC "Integration/association of the overall Mediterranean Forestry/Silva Mediterranean frameworks to address desertification, water, biodiversity, sustainable land management, climate mitigation/adaptation as well as contribute to promoting SCP business models, job creation and green investments)
 - 5 Strengthened focus on land-sea interactions, with an integrated management approach
- Integration of socio economic aspects (migration, urbanization, demographic growth, etc.) into the wider green, circular economy package
- Stronger link to Climate Change

The Climate Change priorities are dealt by the Climate Change Expert Group, which reports as well to the Working Group on ENV and CC (scheduled in November 2018). However, given the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas, efforts are increasing to ensure full integration of climate aspects into national and regional plans and actions; UfMS has been focusing on the implementation of UfM integrated climateenvironment actions/projects, such as the:

- UfM/FAO and UfM/UNCCD collaboration on forestry, land restoration, desertification, droughts and biodiversity in relation to the implementation Paris Agreement;
- *MedECC Environment/Climate Science-policy interface;*
- *MedCoast4BlueGrowth, focusing on the coevolution of human activities and natural systems in coastal areas devoted to tourism, with a particular focus on the climate change impacts (coastal erosion, floods etc)*
- UfM Regional Finance Committee on Climate Change Actions;
- Ongoing UfM Studies on Climate Change and Agriculture; Climate Change and Tourism

For information - Integrated Maritime Policy/Blue Economy and Sustainable Cities have become well established UfM agendas.

Links between the environment agenda and these agendas is and will be closely maintained.

• Environmental Governance and stakeholders involvement

- main needs and options/scenarios for action -

Main points for discussion:

- Collaboration with local and regional authorities (*Agreed Conclusion extracted* from the March 2017 WG on ENV and CC "quoting from the "to promote closer involvement of local and regional coastal administrations through the Bologna Charter (the charter of the Regions for the promotion of a common framework for strategic actions aimed at the protection and sustainable development of the Mediterranean coastal areas. The Bologna Charter is open to more Southern & Eastern coastal administrations of the Mediterranean to join on a voluntary basis)
- Coordination among funding programmes to optimize the use of available limited resources around joint environment and climate change related priorities
- To what extent has the Declaration fostered closer involvement and coordination of other concerned national authorities, including the Ministries of Finance/Economy/Planning
- Increased stakeholder's participation in the implementation of priority environment (and climate change) actions
- Mainstreaming environment and climate change in other sectors policies

ANNEX 1

Draft elements of the ToRs of the External Evaluation of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change to contribute towards defining priorities, operational modalities and the work program post-2020

1. EVALUATION - TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience of the UfM external evaluation are the 43 countries of the UfM (28 EU Member States and 15 Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries), the UfM Jordanian and EU Co-Presidencies, the UfM Secretariat and the key partners of the UfM Environment (and climate change) agendas.

2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE - ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR

The objective of the external evaluation called for by the 43 UfM countries is to undertake an indepth external review of implementation at the regional level of the 2014 Ministerial Declaration on Environment (and Climate Change), including the analysis of successes, challenges and gaps, with a view to elaborate a set of recommendations for the post-2020 environment workprogramme on:

- Priorities;
- Operational modalities; and
- Scenario's and options for action.

It should be noted that the climate change related priorities of the Ministerial Declaration will be tackled through a complimentary work run with the UfM Climate Change Expert Group. However, links with the Climate Change agenda will also be addressed by the UfM Task Force on Environment.

The recommendations, scenarios and options for action emerging from the UfM Task Force on Environment, the UfM Climate Change Expert Group and of the UfM External Evaluation of the 2014 UfM Ministerial Declaration on ENV and CC will flow and be integrated for further discussion and decision at the UfM Working Group on Environment and Climate Change, scheduled for November/December 2018, and will then be used to formulate the note to the UfM Senior Official/MoFA for advancing the 2nd Ministerial Meeting on ENV and CC in late 2019-early 2020.

A tentative of the External Evaluation timing is attached.

3. EVALUATION – INITIAL DRAFT GUIDING QUESTIONS AND TASKS by the consultants

The external evaluation will build on a set of key questions and feedbacks, which may be expanded by the countries and consultants as appropriate.

First proposed set of overall questions:

- 1. To what extent has the Ministerial Declaration been implemented at the regional level and what concrete changes have been achieved in shifting towards green, circular, low carbon economy? Have the overall axes of work been addressed adequately? What concrete changes have been achieved in the implementation of the H2020 initiative and in shifting towards green, circular economy.
- 2. To what extent were the priorities and operational modalities of the supporting initiatives, programs and projects (H2020 projects, SwitchMed/Med ReSCP, Lake Bizerte, etc.) instrumental in achieving the priorities set in the Ministerial Declaration?
- 3. To what extent can the increased regional cooperation and partnerships serve as basis to the post 2020 agenda and work programme? How can they serve future initiatives?
- 4. To what extent has the Ministerial Declaration resulted in the mobilization of additional funding for the priority areas of action?
- 5. To what extent has the UfM's multi-partner approach been leveraged to foster synergies and the exchange of best practices and experiences, as well as to identify innovative and complementary pathways for the implementation of the recommendations included in the Declaration?
- 6. Which and how could the key regional socio-economic challenges be integrated/linked to agenda on the green, circular low carbon package?
- 7. To what extent has the Ministerial Declaration been instrumental in increasing synergies between regional and national organisations, the IFIs, private sector, academia, NGOs and other key stakeholders, as well as developing synergies between regional initiatives?
- 8. To what extent have increased efforts at regional level fostered/provided impulse at national level? To what extent has the UfM approach been translated in national greener policies?
- 9. What are the key success stories towards achieving a green, circular, low carbon economy that could be further implemented in the post 2020 agenda?
- 10. With regards to ensuring the implementation of environment and climate investments, and increasing resource allocation where necessary and as identified by the Declaration, should increased efforts be envisaged?

Questions to be fine-tuned following the comments/inputs received during the ENV Task Force Meeting

First proposed set of questions related to the H2020 Initiative for a Cleaner Mediterranean

There has been a collective focus on pollution reduction (progressively integrated with pollution prevention aspects) in the Mediterranean through implementation of the Horizon 2020 Initiative for a Cleaner Mediterranean.

- 11. To what extent have the objectives of Horizon 2020 been achieved, and is there a need for a future Horizon 2030 or beyond? If so, which should be the key priorities for the future?
- 12. (Since its launch, H2020 addresses municipal waste, industrial pollution and wastewater; marine pollution and hazardous waste were added as emerging issues with the 2014 UfM Ministerial Declaration on ENV and CC)
- 13. Were the operational and organisational modalities of H2020 (capacity building, monitoring and reporting, investment and research) instrumental and efficient in achieving the priorities set? Are there recommendations for possible future reorganization of the initiative and its sub-components?
- 14. Should more focus be given to actions related to pollution prevention? Should there be greater focus on key challenges such as plastics/marine litter?
- 15. To what extent has the implementation and enforcement of regulatory frameworks supporting the H2020 Initiative goals been achieved, in line with UNEPMAP guidance, the Ecosystem Approach (ECAP) and the priorities included in the National Action Plans (NAPs)? What were the major challenges and obstacles?
- 16. To what extent have pollution reduction priority investments been implemented and hotspots tackled? What is the level of coordination with IFI's and how if needed can this been enhanced in the future? What are the major future investment initiatives in the region (such as the GEF MedProgram) and what type of coordination mechanism would increase efficiency in national implementation of the investments?
- 17. How can regional environment priorities shared by all translate into greater prioritization of national investment projects in municipal waste, industrial pollution and waste water?
- 18. To what extent has the monitoring and reporting component of H2020 been implemented, and what were the major challenges and obstacles?
- 19. The H2020 initiative was supported by various programmes and projects. Link with the projects and/or initiatives which can be accounted for having supported H2020 priorities other than the specific EU funded ones
- 20. Can the most effective and efficient management tools for pollution reduction (ecoinnovation, BATs, certification schemes, etc) be identified for further implementation in the post 2020 agenda?
- 21. The H2020 FPs, also UfM FPs, were the institutional memory of a long process how to value this contribution and build on it for the future?

Questions to be fine-tuned following the comments/inputs received during the ENV Task Force Meeting

Pollution Prevention/Sustainable Consumption and Production; Increased environmental awareness and education for sustainable development

In line with key international developments and the SDGs, the 2014 Ministerial Declaration has adopted SCP as the main approach to green, circular, low carbon and equitable economy, together with the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025.

- 22. What are the key steps forward to fully implement the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production and achieve SDG 12: Ensure responsible consumption and production pattern?
- 23. What have been the most successful actions and initiatives towards achieving SCP, that can be upscaled/replicated within the region in the future to create the needed critical mass and push towards resource efficiency in production, recovery of raw materials

through ecodesign, efficient recycling systems etc; securing sustainable supply of raw materials; ecoinnovation and new business models (industrial symbiosis, etc)?

- 24. How can cross cutting issues such as governance , market incentives and finance (financial incentives, tax reduction on green technology, removal of subsidies, green procurement, etc) knowledge sharing, information systems, be further tackled?
- 25. What actions can be undertaken by the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development to support sustainable consumption? Or how else can sustainable consumption be promoted?
- 26. How can we build upon existing efforts to identify and promote SCP related local and national initiatives (i.e. the Mediterranean SCP Hub and Green Entrepreneurs)? Should these initiatives, companies and/or individuals be part of a longer-term promotion of good practices, i.e. such as "champions" for the region?
- 27. To what extent are donors and countries committing financial and human resources towards implementing SCP?

Questions to be fine-tuned following the comments/inputs received during the ENV Task Force Meeting

Environmental Governance; closer involvement of local and regional administrations

- 28. How can the participation of/interaction/collaboration with local and regional authorities be further reinforced?
- 29. To what extent has increased coordination among funding programmes been achieved to optimize the use of available limited resources around joint environment and climate change related priorities? What more can be done?
- 30. Has there been an increased participation of civil society, including NGOs, academic, financial and research institutions, local and regional authorities, the private sector, and other stakeholders in the implementation of priority environment (and climate change) actions?

Questions to be fine-tuned following the comments/inputs received during the ENV Task Force Meeting

Current pressures on natural resources (plastic/marine litter, desertification, sustainable land management, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, etc.) and integration of socio economic aspects (migration, urbanization, demographic growth, health, etc.);

Integrated Maritime Policy/Blue Economy and Sustainable cities have become well established UfM agendas. Links between the environment agenda and these agendas will be closely maintained.

- 31. In line with the SDGs, the Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the commitments under the Barcelona Convention, how can further actions on biodiversity and ecosystems conservation be integrated in a reinforced 'green economy package'?
- 32. To what extent can and should the future Ministerial Declaration address and integrate in the green economy package plastics/marine litter, sustainable land management, desertification and floods/droughts?

- 33. How can the ongoing environmental challenges be linked more realistically to the pressing regional socio-economic pressures (i.e. migration, demographic development, urbanization etc together with climate change)?
- 34. Recommendations to further enhance implementation of the above policy frameworks and are there other priority environmental issues not fully addressed?

Questions to be fine-tuned following the comments/inputs received during the ENV Task Force Meeting

Stronger links to Climate Change

- 35. What further actions can be taken to reduce GHGs and other air pollutant emissions in the region, and to assess and protect natural resources and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change and enhance ecosystem resilience?
- 36. To what extent can integrated approaches be reinforced to protect natural resources from climate change impacts? For example, coastal erosion/sedimentation; desertification; climate variability, storms and floods, dust storms, consequences of acidification of sea water, etc.
- 37. Has can new available funding for joint green growth/green economy/climate/environment be further mobilised? (Upscaling the EBRD/SCP training to national banks be further extended to other countries of the region, etc). How can we optimise the dynamics of the Paris Agreement and the 100 bns USD pledge for 2020 at the global level?
- 38. To what extent has the Ministerial declaration stimulated closer coordination among key environment and climate change stakeholders state and not state actors at regional, national and local level?
- 39. Regarding national environment and climate investments, to what extent has the Declaration fostered closer involvement and coordination of concerned national authorities, including the Ministries of Finance/Economy/Planning?

5. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The External Evaluation of the Ministerial Declaration will be conducted by independent consultants under the overall responsibility and management of the UfM Secretariat, under the close guidance and in close coordination with the UfM Co-Presidencies, namely Eu and Jordan. It will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby the UfM Secretariat, key partners, and other relevant staff are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. The consultants will liaise with the UfM Secretariat on any logistic and/or methodological issues to properly conduct the assessment in as independent a way as possible, given the circumstances and the resources offered. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used to determine project achievements. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the UfM Secretariat and promotes information exchange throughout the evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings.

The evaluation will make the best use of existing information, and take in results of monitoring missions, mission reports, stakeholders' meetings, and other reports that have been undertaken.

The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:

a. A desk review

b. Interviews (individual or in group) with:

Online contacts will be accompanied by selected missions as per below

- c. Surveys: questionnaires and electronic surveys might need to be considered
- **d.** Field visits: the evaluator(s) will visit a selected number of countries. During the visits, the evaluator will conduct interviews with the interested parties, project partners, national participating Institutions and Government officials. The country selection criteria will be: adequate regional diversity, level of progress of the country, availability and access to a large number of stakeholders.

6. TENTATIVE TIMING AND DELIVERABLES

The evaluation will commence in April 2018 and be finalized in November 2018. Table 1 below presents the tentative schedule for the evaluation.

Table 1. Tentative schedule for the evaluation	
Milestone	Proposed tentative Deadline
TOR preparation	January/February 201
Launch of the contract for the external	March 2018
evaluation	
Evaluation Inception with UfM	April 2018
CoPresidencies; preparation of the Annotated	
Table of Contents and methodology	
Collection of the documentation	April/May 2018
Telephone interviews, surveys, missions, etc.	May-July 2018
Note on preliminary findings - Zero draft	August 2018
report	
Draft Report - shared with UfM	September 2018
CoPresidencies	
Draft Report - shared with UfM partners and	October/November 2018
stakeholders	
Presentation to the 2nd WG on ENV and CC	November/December 2018
(merging the ENV and CC work and	
recommendations on the way forward)	

Table 1. Tentative schedule for the evaluation

(OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE PARTS) to be filled in