

# **Implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principle and practices in the ENP South region – SEIS Support Mechanism (ENI SEIS II South)**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Progress Report**

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**Authors:**

**Galina H. Georgieva, Cécile Roddier-Quelefec (EEA)**

**with contribution from**

**Tatiana Hema, Stavros Antoniadis (UN environment MAP)**



**European Environment Agency**



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# 1 Project description

## 1.1 Name of Coordinator of the grant contract

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has been awarded the current contract, funded by EC DG NEAR following the previous EEA project activities in the European Neighbourhood South region in the period 2010-2015. The proposed action is envisaged to be implemented jointly by EEA and UN environment Mediterranean Action Plan (formally known as UNEP/MAP). This is aimed at a better integration with the Barcelona Convention / Mediterranean Action Plan network and developing work activities to the benefit of effective mainstreaming and streamlining of the Mediterranean knowledge and environmental decision-making.

## 1.2 Name and title of the contact person

European Environment Agency  
PAN – Partnerships and Networks  
Mrs Galina Georgieva, Head of group  
Kongens Nytorv 8  
1050 Copenhagen K, Denmark  
Tel.: +45 33 36 72 78  
E-mail: [Galina.Georgieva@eea.europa.eu](mailto:Galina.Georgieva@eea.europa.eu)

European Environment Agency  
PAN – Partnerships and Networks  
Mrs Cecile Roddier Quefelec, Project Manager - ENI SEIS Support Mechanism South  
Kongens Nytorv 8  
1050 Copenhagen K, Denmark  
Tel.: +45 3343 5940  
E-mail: [cecile.roddier-quefelec@eea.europa.eu](mailto:cecile.roddier-quefelec@eea.europa.eu)

UN Environment Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)  
Barcelona Convention Secretariat  
Mrs Tatjana Hema, Deputy coordinator  
Vassileos Konstantinou 48,  
Athens 11635, Greece  
Tel.: +30 210 7273115  
E-mail: [tatjana.hema@unepmap.gr](mailto:tatjana.hema@unepmap.gr)

## 1.3 Target countries and partners

The action is covering the following nine European Neighbourhood South partner countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia. Cooperation with Syria remains suspended until further notice from the EC.

#### *1.4 Name of beneficiaries and affiliated entities in the Action*

The main project partners are the national environmental and statistical organisations leading in the field of environmental information within the ENI area: ministries, agencies and statistical offices responsible for collecting, producing, storing and disseminating environmental data and information. Each country has nominated two National Focal Points for this process — high level official, representing the environmental and statistical organisations respectively and responsible for managing and developing the environmental information system in the countries.

#### *1.5 Title of the Action*

“Implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles and practices in the ENP South region” – SEIS Support Mechanism.

#### *1.6 Contract number*

No. ENI/2015/347-199

#### *1.7 Start date and end date of the reporting period*

This first progress report covers the first full year of the project implementation (1 February 2016 to 31 January 2017) and builds on the inception report covering the initial 6-month period (1 February 2016 to 31 July 2016) that was formally submitted to the Contracting Authority on 20 September 2016.

## 2 Assessment of Implementation of Action activities

### 2.1 Executive summary of the Action

The current project on further implementation of SEIS principles and practices in the European Neighbourhood South region, builds on the outcome of the previous EEA cooperation with the region (under the ENPI-SEIS: 2010-2015, and InSEIS:2014-2015 projects) and is fully in line with the Barcelona Convention efforts on reducing marine pollution. This is a 4-year project (from 1 February 2016 to 31 January 2020) funded by the EU European Neighbourhood Initiative (ENI) and jointly implemented by the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the UN environment Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP). Activities under the project are aimed at contributing to the implementation of the Horizon 2020 Initiative to de-pollute the Mediterranean Sea by 2020, in conjunction with other EU-funded projects and initiatives. The overarching objective is to ensure coherence and harmonisation of environmental reporting at regional level in support of more efficient policy-making, while the specific objective of the project is to improve the availability and access to relevant environmental information to the benefit of effective and knowledge-based policy-making in the ENP South region.

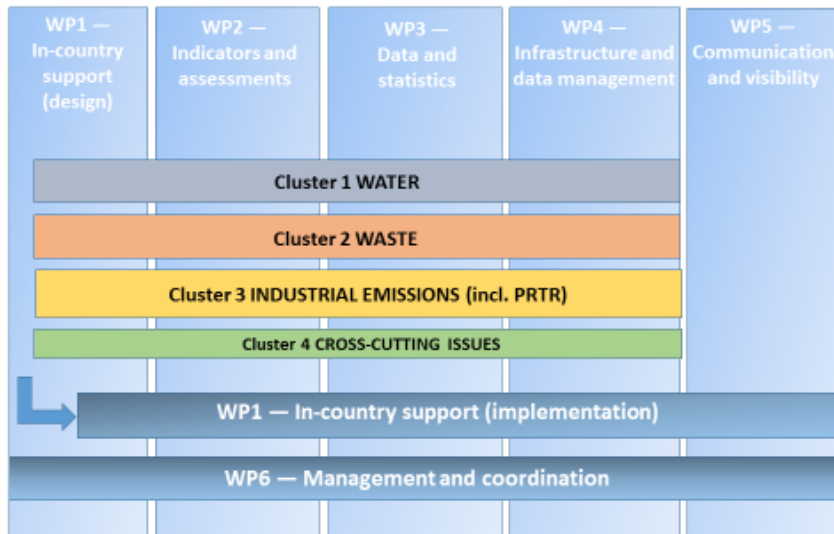
While ensuring proper linkages with the work programmes of the two implementing organisations (EEA and UNEP/MAP) and aligning to the agreed work programme of Horizon 2020 Initiative for the period 2015-2020, the expected results of the ENI SEIS II South Support Mechanism project are the following:

- *Result 1:* The H2020 indicator set is stabilised, refined and complemented in order to be able to serve multiple purposes, as well as to ensure that the progress of achieving H2020 objectives is properly measured, while also contributing to assessing compliance with commitments under the Barcelona Convention.
- *Result 2:* The in-country processes for organising sharing of data sets underlying the H2020 indicators are stabilised.
- *Result 3:* The infrastructure for reporting offered by the EEA ('Reportnet') and UN environment (UNEP/MAP Reporting Network) is more widely used.
- *Result 4:* Indicator-based H2020 report(s) and assessments are produced in line with good practices from the EU region. This will be complemented by similar reports developed for the EU and West Balkan countries under the upcoming MSFD reporting cycle (2018) in order to come up with a comprehensive picture of the whole Mediterranean region and align the various reporting processes.

The current first progress report covers the activities carried out by EEA and UNEP/MAP during the first year of the project implementation (1 February 2016 to 31 January 2017) and builds on the inception report covering the initial 6-month period (1 February 2016 to 31 July 2016) that was formally submitted to the Contracting Authority on 20 September 2016. The activities implemented and reported under the inception phase are hereby included for completeness.

The project is structured around six Work Packages covering four thematic clusters that are visualised through the diagram below, illustrating the conceptual framework of the project:

## Conceptual framework ENI SEIS South Support Mechanism



The project activities across the above work packages are summarised further in section 2.2 below. In preparation of the report, the specific project activities have been cross-checked against the logical framework for the project. The progress to date on the different work packages is reflected in the status of the expected results against the objectively verifiable indicators of achievement of the logframe (see in Table 2 at the end of section 2.2).

- Setting up and securing the **institutional arrangements** at national level by engaging with the relevant authorities in the beneficiary countries, which covered the nomination process of the two project National Focal Points, initiation of the discussion for the establishment of SEIS National Team and development of the National Work Plans in support of the regional activities.
- Putting in place the necessary **administrative and financial arrangements by the two implementing partner organisations** that covered the establishment of the contribution agreement between EEA and UNEP/MAP under FAFA provision, recruitment of the project team, tendering of new framework contract in support of national and regional level activities, engagement with Eionet/European Topic Center and other relevant experts.
- **Dialogue with the countries** in defining their SEIS vision and identifying their needs to implement it, design SEIS National Work Plans and initiate negotiation on financial agreement (Small Scale Financial Agreement) to be signed through UNEP/MAP.
- Prepare and hold the **1<sup>st</sup> project Steering Committee Meeting** jointly with the **7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the H2020 Review and Monitoring** group. Frame regional activities (main focus on operationalisation of regional information system (InfoMAP) and ensure integration of various assessment-based processes).
- **Coordination with other H2020 components** – liaising with SWIM-H2020 SM and PRPI/MESHIP and with other regional partners/initiatives (Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat, CEDARE, Arab WG on Indicators, EMWIS, SwitchMed, ClimaSouth), preparation of the **1<sup>st</sup> review of progress in the implementation of the Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial declaration** on Environment and Climate Change.

- **Coordination with Eionet/EEA marine activities** to further coordinate and integrate activities of the Barcelona Convention and ENI SEIS II South Support Mechanism within the EEA marine work (in particular as regards reporting, indicators and assessments).
- Creation of **dedicated project website**, preparation of the **project leaflet** and first issue of the ENI SEIS II South Support Mechanism **Newsletter**, as well as visibility actions through presentations at relevant regional meetings and events.

The setting up of the institutional arrangements between EEA and UNEP/MAP has taken longer than planned. This combined with the fact that the project team is not fully in place, has caused some delays in the planned implementation. Nevertheless, the time invested in securing the institutional arrangement has been of definite added value, ensuring strong integration of the planned activities, more efficient coordination (higher coordinated and substantive inputs from countries in key technical and political meetings) and a solid platform for assistance to the countries.

The key focus for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of implementation is on the **implementation phase of the National Work Plans** – deployment of national assistant, expert support, methodological development of the **H2020 Indicators**, support to the **data production**, organisation of the **data exchanges**, and framing of the 2<sup>nd</sup> H2020 Indicator-based assessment (scheduled for 2019).

Further information about the project activities under its work packages during the reporting period is presented in section 2.2 below.

## 2.2 Project activities during the reporting period

The reported project activities covering the first year of the project implementation follow the work packages structure in the Description of Action. Within the reporting period the thematic clusters have not been addressed separately but work has been put in embedding them into the National Work Plans.

### Work package 1. In-country support

The activities under this work package were at the heart of the discussions with the countries during the first year of implementation. During the inception phase of the project and in advance of the preparation of the 1<sup>st</sup> project Steering Committee in December 2016, the EEA together with support from the Framework contractor (UBA-Vienna) engaged in a close dialogue with the partner countries to secure the national governance i.e. nomination of the National Focal Points (NFPs), support to the setting-up and/or reactivation of national coordination structure (e.g. SEIS National Team, national committee), clarify their SEIS national vision and detailed their implementation needs. These have been based on the identified needs by the partner countries and documented during the first implementation phase of the ENPI-SEIS (2010-2015), as well as on the findings derived from the cooperation under the InSEIS project (2014-2015). This was done in support of elaborating the **National Work Plans** capturing actions and activities needed to further enhance availability and access to relevant environmental information and contribute to the expected results of the project and respond to H2020 programme of work. Except when there were requests for project country visits (Algeria, Egypt) to facilitate dialogue with the national partners, the NFPs have been facilitating this national discussion themselves and doing the necessary preparations with support of the project coordinator at EEA.

In line with this, the ENI SEIS II South Support Mechanism team visited Egypt on 30 November-1 December 2016 and participated in a 2-day workshop with the Egyptian partners involved in environment data and information. The aim of the visit was to discuss national priorities and prepare an initial National Work Plan for the implementation under SEIS II project for the period 2017-2019 (<http://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/south/communication/events/project-related-events/1st-national-workshop-for-the-implementation-of-seis-phase-ii-project-cairo-egypt-nov-30-to-dec-1-2016>). In the same period, an active dialogue was carried out with the partners in Algeria in view of preparing a country visit before the end of 2016, however despite the substantive efforts from all sides and numerous exchanges, no suitable arrangements could be made and this visit has not yet taken place (see further info in Table 1).

**Overview of the countries situation in terms of governance and state of play** at the end of the first year of project implementation is presented in Table 1.

As foreseen in the Description of Action, **the financial support to the countries is envisaged to be done through the Small Scale Financing Agreement (SSFA)** signed with UNEP/MAP MED POL. These legal agreements will provide support for the implementation of activities in line with their national priorities and taking into account their regional obligations. On the basis of the discussions held during the 1<sup>st</sup> project Steering Committee meeting, MED POL prepared the initial skeleton of the SSFAs. Following updating and finalisation of the National Work Plans, MED POL will further develop the SSFAs in consultation with the countries and EEA in the first quarter of 2017.

It is expected that the SSFA with the countries would be developed and sent to the countries for signature by mid-April 2017, anticipating to have them in place by the end of May 2017.



Under the SSFAs, it is foreseen **deployment of dedicated national assistants** in the partner countries to ensure better operationalisation of daily work, coordination of planned events, monthly reports, and follow-up on the implementation of the agreed activities among key stakeholders, linked to the NAPs update, implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) as well as the H2020 programme of work. Draft ToRs for the dedicated national assistants are being developed and will be shared with the countries in preparation of the SSFAs signature.

Under this work package, there are plans to develop further **regional PRTR Guidelines** and emission factors for some countries and establish **PRTR pilots in interested countries (at least 3 of them)**, including development of legislation on PRTR. The work on PRTR at national level will be supported through the SSFAs to be signed with UNEP/MAP. Due to the fact that the signature of the agreement between EEA and UNEP/MAP was only concluded in September 2016 and no dedicated project manager is yet in place, this work is advancing slower than foreseen.

As part of the discussion about the medium/long-term SEIS national vision and preparation of the National Work Plans, a preliminary assessment of the existing national infrastructure and information services has been initiated (see under WP4 below).

**Connection is being ensured with the work of the H2020 Review and Monitoring group**, also led jointly by EEA and UNEP/MAP, and the National Action Plans (NAPs) submitted by the countries in 2016 with focus on monitoring, data and information sharing issues.

The project NFPs have actively engaged in **setting-up of National Teams** and preparing the ground for working on the design and development of the SEIS National Work Plans. The presentation of the initial SEIS National Work Plans and achievements took place at the 1<sup>st</sup> project Steering Committee, held jointly with the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the H2020 Review and Monitoring Group on 12-14 December 2016 in Athens, Greece (see under WP6 below).

#### **Upcoming activities:**

- MED POL to prepare and share with the countries guidance note on SSFA preparation, including terms of reference of the national assistant.
- Validation of the National Work Plans and signature of the SSFA with UNEP/MAP.
- Initiation of the work on PRTR pilots.
- Deployment of national assistants to support the implementation of the identified national activities under the SSFA.
- Initiation of the implementation phase of the national activities identified.
- Presentation of progress / main achievements in the implementation of the National Work Plan at the next project Steering Committee meeting in October 2017.

## **Work package 2. Indicators and Assessments**

Activities under this work package focused on putting in place the necessary administrative arrangements to develop the activities on Indicators and Assessments and framing the regional actions to be implemented. To that end, UNEP/MAP has signed a Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Plan Bleu in February 2017.

The focus of the work package is the further development of the **H2020/NAP indicators and the preparation of the outline of the 2<sup>nd</sup> H2020 indicator-based assessment**. Over the reporting period attention has been given to closely liaising with MED POL and EcAP as regard the development of NAP and Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) indicators and Quality Status Report indicator factsheets. In order to secure full convergence among all indicator initiatives in the region and to facilitate a common response and communication around it, in December 2016 the project Steering Committee/H2020 RM group proposed the

establishment of an ad hoc Working Group to prepare a proposal of a core set of Mediterranean indicators. The WG is encompassing the following volunteer countries and partners: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, CEDARE, UBA-Vienna.

#### **Upcoming activities:**

- Review H2020 assessment framework and prepare a roadmap for streamlining the preparation of reports envisaged to be delivered in 2019.
- Development of draft outline of the 2<sup>nd</sup> H2020 assessment.
- Prepare guidance for countries contribution – national indicator-based assessment.
- Review the H2020 indicators and propose revised indicator specification (methodological guidance).
- Propose, develop and test new indicators on Hazardous waste, marine litter and industrial emission.
- First workshop on Indicators – meeting of the established ad hoc Working Group, in May 2017 in Copenhagen.
- Regional workshop of H2020 RM group on assessment framework, September 2017.
- Provision of expert support to the partner countries on indicators (adjusted according to the planned SSFA activities), as well as national workshops to review indicators and related data flows (in synergy with planned EcAP MED II national workshops).

### **Work package 3. Data and Statistics**

Activities under this work package have not yet been initiated, except for a training workshop on water statistics (see below) and initial reflections that have been made on assessing gaps, tools, methodologies, quality assurance and infrastructure status related to H2020 related data. The work on this WP will be in focus for the upcoming period. The activities mainly focused on putting in place the necessary administrative arrangements to develop the activities on data and statistics and framing the regional actions to be implemented. The signed PCA between UNEP/MAP and Plan Bleu in February 2017, referred to under WP2, is also covering this area of work.

The training workshop on water statistics and water accounts, targeting officials and employees of National Statistical Institutes, was organised by UBA-Vienna and Eurostat with involvement of experts from the following three ENP South countries: Jordan, Israel and Palestine. The workshop took place on 18-20 April 2016 in Vienna and was design to be built on the activities under InSEIS project that covered the above 3 countries and gave the opportunity to the experts from the South region to interact with colleagues from some EU Member States (Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Kosovo, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sweden, Slovenia) Switzerland and Turkey and exchange information and experiences in producing water statistics and water accounts. The training was used to identify the needs of the countries in terms of data information and future trainings to be provided under the ENI SEIS II South implementation phase in order to build up their water information systems and water accounts.

#### **Upcoming activities:**

- Assessment of current data reporting and quality assurance systems.
- First workshop on Indicators – meeting of the established ad hoc Working Group, in May 2017 in Copenhagen.
- Develop guidelines for data production (data catalogue), QA/QC systems for Industrial emissions, water, waste related data flows. This development will be closely linked with the InfoMAP development and methodological discussions held in the framework of IMAP (e.g. activities of the EcAP Corresponding groups – CORMON – on factsheets, scales).

- Organise the initial data collection of the H2020 indicators
- Carry out expert support to countries on indicators (adjusted according to planned SSFA activities).
- Organise two regional technical workshops (tentatively foreseen for October 2017, and spring 2018).

#### **Work package 4. Infrastructure and data management**

As for WP2 and 3, key activity under this WP focused mainly on putting in place the administrative and expert capacity, in particular linked to the mobilisation of UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre on Information – InfoRAC. In January 2017, EEA and UNEP/MAP initiated an overall reflection to define the main orientations for InfoRAC in supporting SEIS implementation and H2020 efforts. On this basis a detailed implementation plan has been prepared. This plan covers 4 main area of work:

- i) assessment of national infrastructure and development of metadata catalogue,
- ii) setup of new data reporting (data model, adjustment of regional infrastructure),
- iii) development of data policy documents at country level,
- iv) assistance to initiate and implement national Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI).

#### **Upcoming activities:**

- Assessment of national infrastructure and data management.
- Building catalogue of metadata.
- Propose new data model for regional reporting (in line with IMAP guidelines, EcAP and H2020 indicators) and develop corresponding XML schema and data dictionaries.
- Carry out expert support to countries on data policy (access and sharing - adjusted according to planned SSFA activities).
- Develop guidelines for implementation of SDI platform at national level.

#### **Work package 5. Communication and visibility**

With respect to the communication and visibility activities under the project, the following should be taken into consideration for the reporting period:

- Project's kick-off presentation done at the Horizon 2020 Steering Group meeting on 23-24 February 2016 in Brussels.
- Preparation of project's leaflet for wider dissemination and raising awareness about the project's partners and objectives. Templates for project's documents, agendas, meeting reports, etc. developed for use by EEA, UNEP/MAP and their constituencies under project activities.
- Presentation of the project objectives at SWIM/H2020 Support Mechanism Steering Committee in September, EcAP Correspondence Group CORMON meeting on Pollution Monitoring in September, regional MSSD indicators workshop in October, 2016 Marine EIONET Workshop on Marine assessments and data flows in November 2016, Eionet NFP meeting (October 2016, February 2017).
- Project website developed and put in place: <http://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/south>. The website is integrated in the Eionet platform hosted by EEA and follows the functionalities of the platform. Currently the project website is being further populated and developed to respond to the project needs. Link from the UNEP/MAP website enabled.

- Dedicated News section on the project website highlights recent developments in the project implementation and news from the partner countries.
- Project newsletter developed using EEA Newsletter template as a model. The first issue of the SEIS Support Mechanism project ready for dissemination in February 2017 (in English, French and Arabic). Second issue planned for autumn 2017.
- Contribution to UNSD newsletter in December 2016.
- Contribution to revamping of SWIM/H2020 website.
- Regular dialogue and identification of synergies and potential common areas of work with relevant projects and regional partners was held during various meetings and events. Link to other related projects and regional initiatives is made available through the project website.
- Extensive information about the Horizon 2020 Initiative, H2020 sub-group activities and previous meetings of the H2020 Review and Monitoring (RM) sub-group, jointly chaired by EEA and UNEP/MAP, made available on a dedicated page on the website.

#### **Upcoming activities:**

- Dissemination of the 1<sup>st</sup> project Newsletter.
- Translation of the 1<sup>st</sup> project Newsletter into French and Arabic and further dissemination.
- Preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of the project Newsletter (autumn 2017).
- Population and further development of the project website – country inputs/access to National Work Plan/monitoring of progress/best practices/pilots
- Presentation of project's objectives and activities at the Arab Working Group on environmental Indicators in March 2017.
- Development of dedicated project banner for future visibility actions.
- Side events planned for the World statistics congress in Marrakech in July 2017, during 'Our Ocean' Conference in Malta in October 2017, and the Barcelona COP20 in Tirana in December 2017.

#### **Work package 6. Management and coordination**

Given the fact that the action is to be jointly implemented by EEA and UNEP/MAP, the close coordination and regular dialogue between the two organisations is essential, especially when it comes to ensuring synergies with other relevant project and activities at regional level. For this purpose and with the appointment of the interim Project Manager from MAP, **weekly communication has been established** at Project Manager level and monthly communication between the teams in place from both sides. High-level meeting between the Directors of the two organisations have taken place at the occasion of UNEA-2 meeting in Nairobi in May 2016 with the agreement to try to keep them at least on annual basis, if not more often.

**Regular dialogue** is ensured with the Contracting Authority in DG NEAR and relevant colleagues in DG ENV.

The presentation of the initial SEIS National Work Plans and achievements in the first year of project's operation took place at the **1<sup>st</sup> project Steering Committee**, held jointly with the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the H2020 Review and Monitoring Group on 12-14 December 2016 in Athens, Greece. This model of back-to-back meetings was found very beneficial by the partner countries and would be considered for the future.

In the framework of the SSFAs that will be signed with the countries, the commitment would be to report biannually to UNEP/MAP on the implementation of the activities funded through the

SSFA, which in turn will be **feeding the biannual reports on the project progress** to be submitted by UNEP/MAP to the EEA.

The plans for holding the 2<sup>nd</sup> project Steering Committee are tentatively for mid-October 2017 in Barcelona, Spain.

**Upcoming activities:**

- Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) working group on environment and climate change, 13-15 March 2017, Barcelona.
- H2020 Core-Group meeting on the occasion of the UfM WG on Environment and Climate Change in Barcelona, 13 March 2017.
- Management Group meeting of the ENI SEIS II South project on the occasion of the UfM WG on Environment and Climate Change in Barcelona, 15 March 2017.
- H2020 Pollution Reduction and Prevention Investment Group (PRPI) meeting in April 2017.
- Regular exchange with the relevant EC colleagues on the dialogue with the countries and putting in place the SSFA agreements.
- Participation and contribution to the Barcelona Convention preparatory meetings to the COP (RACs focal points meeting, CORMON, EcAp correspondence group, Marine litter coordination platform).

**Table 1. Overview of the countries situation in terms of governance and state of play**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Governance structure</b>	<b>State-of-play</b>
<b>Algeria</b>	NFPs in place – National team to be set-up NFP from Ministère des Ressources en Eau et de l'Environnement (ONEDD) nominated on 11 April 2016, NFP from Office National des Statistiques(ONS) nominated on 29 August 2016	Difficult interaction with ONEDD, Country visit cancelled at last minute, no attendance to Project steering Committee. Strong engagement/willingness to cooperate of ONS.  Action needed to find ways to get full and effective participation of environment actors.  No draft NWP
<b>Egypt</b>	NFPs in place – National team to be set-up  Little interaction with Ministry of Environment, steering by Egypt Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).  NFP from Egyptian Ministry of Environment, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency nominated on September 2016, NFP from CAPMAS nominated on February 2016 and changed on 5 December 2016.	NWP still to be developed; limited availability of ENV NFP.
<b>Israel</b>	NFPs in place and stable. Good national coordination, but not formalised national team.  NFP from the Ministry of Environmental Protection nominated on 29 February 2016, NFP from Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) nominated on 16 February 2016.	Draft NWP available, SSFA to be prepared
<b>Jordan</b>	NFPs in place – national team not formalised but active coordination from H2020 NFP. Risk of new nomination.  NFP from the Ministry of Environment nominated on 25 April 2016, NFP from Department of Statistics - on 5 April 2016.	NWP I to be further developed.  In coordination with EUD, provide expert support to draft ToR for Municipal waste Monitoring Information System.
<b>Lebanon</b>	Almost no interaction with Central Administration for Statistics (CAS), but strong engagement from Ministry of Environment but with limited resources. National Team to be set-up.  NFP from the Ministry of Environment nominated on 16 June 2016 – No formal nomination from Central Administration for Statistics Lebanon, but contact with former ENPI-SEIS Focal Point	Almost no interaction with CAS, but strong engagement from Ministry of Environment.  High need of assistance for Project implementation  NWP almost finalised, SSFA to be prepared.

<b>Libya</b>	Governance to be confirmed, but technical team in place.  NFP from Environment General Authority nominated on 19 April 2016.  Exchange of letters with Statistical authority.	Important efforts to develop a SEIS vision and prepared draft NWP
<b>Morocco</b>	NFPs in place, National team to be set-up  NFP from Ministère délégué chargé de l'Environnement nominated on 27 October 2016, NFP from Statistics Directorate/HCP nominated on 11 November 2016	NWP not develop yet. Need project support to facilitate national dialogue
<b>Palestine</b>	NFPs in place and active. National team to be reactivated/scope to be updated.  NFP from the Environment Quality Authority nominated on 21 February 2016, NFP from Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) nominated on 24 February 2016	NWP almost finalised, SSFA to be prepared
<b>Tunisia</b>	NFPs in place and active, national team in place and active.  NFP from Observatoire Tunisien de l'environnement et du développement durable (OTEDD) nominated on 23 February 2016, NFP form Institut National de la Statistique nominated on 10 March 2016	NWP almost ready – SSFA to be prepared.

**Table 2. Synthetic progress against OVI for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of project implementation**

<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement*</b>	<b>Sources and means of verification*</b>	<b>Progress – 1st year of Project implementation</b>
<i>R1: The H2020 indicator set is stabilised, refined and complemented in order to: a) serve multiple purposes (be used in different products/reports), b) ensure proper measurement of progress in achieving H2020 objectives, c) assess compliance with the countries' commitments under the</i>	1.1 Production and regular update of methodological documents, i.e. indicators specification factsheets and assessments	National SEIS work plans  2nd Regional indicator-based H2020 assessment report (scheduled for 2019)	Coordination with MSFD, UNEP/MAP expert groups on indicator methodological development (data models, factsheets, etc).  Focus of Year 2.
	1.2 Number of expert missions, capacity building and technical assistance activities on indicator management and integrated assessments in line with best EU practices	Reports from country visits, meetings and workshops organised under the project made available on the web	Water accounts WS, Expert mission on Municipal Waste Information System in Jordan.  Not started yet – implementation under NWP and WP 2, 3 and 4 regional activities. Implementation to start Q2 2017.

<i>Barcelona Convention.</i>		Annual project progress report	
<i>R2: National processes for sharing data sets underlying the H2020 indicators are stabilised.</i>	2.1 Number of inter-institutional agreements between key partners, as well as NWP agreed in the partner countries	Reports of country visits to partner countries, regional and national workshops organised within the project	Important support/dialogue on setting-up National Team. NWP under finalisation. SSFA to be signed Q2 2017.
	2.2 Progress on sharing relevant information and statistics and revision of NWP achieved	Publication of project activities and outputs on the EEA and UNEP/MAP websites	N/A – to start Q3 2017
<i>R3: The infrastructure for reporting offered by the EEA ('Reportnet') and UNEP (UNEP/MAP Reporting Network) is more widely used.</i>	3.1 Number of countries data sets shared/uploaded online through the agreed reporting tools and methodology	External project evaluation reports	No data Exchange yet – but organisation of regional infrastructure (InfoMAP draft data model) and design of comprehensive action plan for infrastructure and reporting support.
<i>R4: Indicator-based H2020 report(s) and assessments are produced in line with good practices from the EU region.</i>	4.1 Degree of response to the biannual updates/review of the H2020 priorities in line with the agreed H2020 phase II work programme (R4)		Review of H2020 assessment framework initiated taking into account Quality System Report, MSFD, etc.  Draft outline Q4 2017  Support to country level assessment as part of NWP/SSFA.
	4.2 Timely delivery of the 2nd Regional indicator-based H2020 assessment report scheduled for 2019 (R1, R4)		N/A – Q2 2019.
<i>Coordination and management of the action</i>	5.2 Quality and number of progress reports on the implementation of the NWPs presented to the project Steering committee annually (R1-4)  Number of visits to the project website		Five draft NWPs presented during the project Steering Committee meeting in Dec. 2016.  NWPs to be further detailed to be included into SFFA.
<i>WP1. In-Country support: enhance the national capacities by</i>	WP1. National Work Plans between key national stakeholders on sharing and use of	Drafts NWP	Draft NWP for Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Tunisia prepared and presented at Steering



<i>addressing particular national needs and contribute to regional coherence.</i>	environmental data and indicators agreed.		Committee Meeting, Dec 2016. SSFA under preparation.
	WP1. Monitoring reports on implementation of the work plans presented to the project Steering Committee annually.	Presentations form 1st Steering Committee Meeting, Dec 2016	Presentations made at SCM, Dec 2016.
<i>WP2. Indicators and Assessments: ensure regular production of indicators, agreed at regional level under ENPI-SEIS project, and indicator-based assessments relevant to inform and monitor progress of the Horizon 2020 Initiative and contribute to achieving the objectives of the other work packages.</i>	WP2. Methodological documents and national assessments/outlooks on the H2020 priority areas regularly produced.		N/A - To start in Y2.
	WP2. Countries' contribution to the 2nd regional indicator-based H2020 report (scheduled for 2019).		N/A - To start in Y2 and deliver in Y3.
	WP2. National assessments/country briefings included in the 2019 regional report.		N/A - To start in Y2 and deliver in Y3.
<i>WP3. Data and statistics: ensure timely production and sharing of harmonised, quality assessed statistics and data related to Horizon 2020 thematic priorities.</i>	WP3. Produced data and statistics documented in reports from workshops and technical assistance visits.		N/A - to start in Y2.
	WP.3 Number of datasets published and/or available online.		N/A - to start in Y2.
	WP3. Guidance/methodological documents produced on the priority areas addressed.		N/A - to start in Y2.
<i>WP4. Infrastructure and data management: establish and maintain national and regional environmental information</i>	WP4. Environmental indicators and data made available online and regularly/annually updated by EEA and UNEP/MAP, including also information on national websites.		H2020 2014 reported data available online (Reportnet) No update available. Update to be implemented in Y2.

<i>systems and data sharing in line with SEIS establishment.</i>	WP4. Meeting reports documenting the countries' progress in data sharing and exchange, reporting tools and formats used, as well as QA/QC aspects.	1st SCM, Dec 2016	Presentations made on H2020 progress from Israel, Lebanon, Palestine.
	WP4. National PRTR pilots extended to more industries; PRTR guidelines validated at dedicated regional event(s); catalogue of PRTR good practices in the region created.		N/A – to start in Y2.
<i>WP5. Visibility and communication: ensure high visibility of the EU support in the actions implemented and active communication with the key project partners and beyond.</i>	WP5. Project outputs and communication materials produced, made available online and shared at relevant regional and national events (reported also in the progress reports annually).		Leaflet (EN, FR, AR). Project Website ( <a href="http://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/south">http://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/south</a> ). 1st project Newsletter (March 2017). Project presentations made at SWIM/H2020 SC Sept. 16, CORMON pollution Oct. 16, UfM WG on Environment and CC March 17, Arab WG on Indicators March 17.
	WP5. Contribution to newsletters/info materials of other key regional partners provided on regular basis.		Contribution to UNSD Newsletter Dec 2016 edition Revamping H2020 MEP website, SWIM/H2020 website.
	WP5. Organisation of SEIS-awareness raising and side events linked to relevant regional and/national meetings.		EG country visit, Nov 2016 3 side events planned in 2017.
<i>WP6. Coordination and management: ensure effective and smooth implementation of the project activities, including project management and administration, as</i>	WP6. Regular meetings/teleconferences with the Contracting Authority on the project implementation.	Summary minutes	Conference call 30/08/2016 Meeting Barcelona 15/03/2017.
	WP6. Regular (annual) Project Steering Committee meetings held.	Summary minutes	Jointly with 7th H2020 RM group meeting, 12-14/12/2016, Athens.

<i>well as regular coordination with relevant partners and initiatives.</i>	WP6. Regular dialogue/contact with the H2020 coordination group and among the H2020 groups and their chairs.		H2020 Core Group, 28/09/2016. H2020 Core Group, 13/03/2017. PRPI, June 2016, April 2017. SWIM/H2020 SC, Sept 2016.
	WP6. Number of joint meeting with other regional projects/initiatives.		1 <sup>st</sup> project Steering Committee Meeting jointly with H2020 RM group meeting. 12-14 December 2016, Athens

*\* As per the logframe of the project*

## 2.3 Administrative and financial activities

### 2.3.1 Recruitment of project staff

The recruitment of project-funded experts was initiated after the formal commencement of the action. The work related to the initial project activities performed during the first months of project duration were conducted by the core EEA and UNEP/MAP staff, with support by experts from the European Topic Centre on Inland, Coastal and Marine Water (ETC/ICM) and the Framework Contractors for the South region (UBA-Vienna).

Overview of the experts foreseen to be recruited under the project is presented in the table below:

<i>Post, organisation</i>	<i>Name of expert</i>	<i>Status of employment</i>
Project manager/ coordinator at EEA	Cécile Roddier-Quefelec	Started as of 16 June 2016
Project officer at EEA on data management and infrastructure development	Michael Assouline	Started as of 1 October 2016
Project manager at UNEP/MAP	Recruitment process launched in the autumn 2016, expected start of the Project Manager in April 2017	Interim Project Manager (Stavros Antoniadis) assigned until the arrival of the selected Project Manager

### 2.3.2 Agreement between EEA and UN environment Mediterranean Action Plan

The work on the current project “Implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles and practices in the ENP South region” builds on the activities undertaken during the preceding cooperation with the countries in the region (in the period 2010-2015) and is designed to be implemented in close partnership by EEA and UNEP/MAP. There are plans for ensuring close synergies with relevant parallel activities, such as the EEA cooperation with its member and cooperating countries on MSFD implementation, NAPs update, implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp), implementation of other regional strategies/Action Plans, among which the MSSD, IMAP and SCP Action Plan under UNEP/MAP.

To underpin the division of responsibilities and effective execution of activities within ENI SEIS II South Support Mechanism, a project launch meeting between EEA and UNEP/MAP experts has been held (on 2 February 2016 in Athens) to initiate the process for preparation and signature of a specific contribution agreement between the two organisations under the FAFA<sup>1</sup> provisions. The overall duration of the agreement is of 3 years and a quarter (39 months), subject to its signature in mid-2016. The signature of the agreement was completed from both sides in early September 2016 (final clearance by the UN Environment Headquarters was delayed due to the summer holiday period).

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<sup>1</sup> Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between EU and UN organisations:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/partners/humanitarian\\_aid/fafa/agreement\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/partners/humanitarian_aid/fafa/agreement_en.pdf)

In order to make this possible, a joint EEA – UNEP/MAP Work Plan was developed and agreed in parallel, covering the upcoming six year period of 2016-2021. This Joint Work Plan was in line with the earlier practice for cooperation between the two organisations, agreed for the period 2006-2008. The Joint Work Plan is intended as an overarching collaborative framework between the two organisations within which the activities described under the specific agreements would be implemented in the coming years. The joint work plan was agreed by the heads of the two organisations in the margins of the UNEA-2 meeting held in Nairobi, 24-27 May 2016. It has been translated into French and Arabic languages and is available on the project website (<http://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/south/governance/eea-unep-map-partnership>) and in booklet form for dissemination.

### 2.3.3 Procurement for Framework contract

In support of the effective project implementation and similarly to the previous cooperation, since late 2015 the EEA has published a call for tender for a Framework contract to support the further implementation of the SEIS principles and practices in the ENP South region for the period 2016-2020. The call was published on 24 April 2016, with a closing date of 31 May 2016. Following an open tender process for awarding Framework contracts, they were awarded in September 2016 to two international consortia as follows:

- Lot 1 – Further implementation of the SEIS principles and practices in the Eastern Partnership countries – awarded to a consortium led by ZOI Environment network (Switzerland);
- Lot 2 – Further implementation of the SEIS principles and practices in the ENP South region (SEIS Support Mechanism) and West Balkan region – awarded to a consortium led by Umweltbundesamt (UBA-Austria).

Link to the published tender on EEA website can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/eea-pan-16-001-further>

### 2.3.4 Sub-contracting

Under the reporting period and within the provisions of the mentioned contractual arrangements, the following contracts have been put in place:

- Specific Contract No. 3437/B2016/R0-ENIS/EEA.56492 implementing Framework Contract EEA/OSE/13/002 for “Design, hosting and helpdesk services for the new website of the project “Implementation of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles and practices in the ENP South region” - SEIS Support Mechanism (ENI SEIS II South)” – March 2016.
- Specific Contract No. 3437/B2016/R0/ENIS/EEA.56489 implementing Framework Contract EEA/SES/12/001 Lot 2 for “Facilitating participation of ENI South experts in water statistics and water accounts training in Vienna, Austria (April 2016)” – March 2016.
- Contribution Agreement No B03437/B2016/R0/ENIS/EEA.56593 with the UN environment Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) for the joint implementation of the “SEIS-South Support Mechanism” project – signed in September 2016.

## 2.4 Cooperation and synergies

The implementation of the second phase of Horizon 2020 Initiative<sup>2</sup> in the ENP South region (2015-2020) is supported by the further development of a Shared Environment Information Systems (SEIS) in the ENP South region, building on a number of activities and projects, where the 'SEIS Support Mechanism-South' takes a prominent place (<http://eni-seis.eionet.europa.eu/south/related-initiatives/h2020-initiative>). A key achievement during the implementation of the ENPI-SEIS project (Q4 2009 – Q1 2015) was the preparation of the first H2020 reporting exercise on the core set of regional H2020 indicators and the production of the '*Horizon 2020 Mediterranean report – Toward shared environmental information systems*', produced jointly by EEA and UNEP/MAP. The report contributed to the Mid-term Review of the H2020 initiative and was launched during the UfM Ministerial meeting on Environment and Climate Change in Athens on 13 May 2014.

The Review and Monitoring (RM) sub-group under the H2020 Initiative is jointly chaired by the EEA and UNEP/MAP. Building on this and the previous efforts, there is a close link with the activities envisaged under the project, particularly around regional environmental indicators and mapping of related data flows to be jointly undertaken by EEA and UNEP/MAP. It is foreseen that the annual H2020 RM meetings are to be supported by the EU-funded SWIM H2020 Support Mechanism project led by LDK, Greece.

The discussion around the synergies with other activities and projects have been initiated during the H2020 Steering Group meeting held on 23-24 February 2016 in Brussels, and taken further during the 1<sup>st</sup> project Steering Committee meeting held jointly with the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the H2020 Review and Monitoring Group on 12-14 December 2016 in Athens, Greece. Complementarities would have to be ensured on regular basis in the coming years along the implementation of the different activities (such as, for example, maintaining the annual meetings of the core group/lead organisations of the different H2020 components) and Union for Mediterranean (UfM) activities.

Additionally, discussion on the framing and synergies in preparation of the second H2020 assessment (scheduled for 2019) vis-a-vis other planned reports/assessments in the coming years, both in EU and wider regional context, was initiated. In this context, the development of a specific Mediterranean task under the 2016 work programme of the European Topic Centre on Inland, Coastal and Marine waters (ETC/ICM) and outline of specific ETC support to the indicators and assessment work under the project was initiated and is envisaged to be continued throughout the project implementation in the coming years.

As part of ensuring the proper linkages with EEA and Eionet activities, regular information flow was ensured to the NFP/Eionet group. Presentation of the new ENI SIES II South activities has taken place during the regular NFP/Eionet meeting on 3 March 2016, followed by a short dedicated discussion on the possibilities for cooperation and dedicated technical assistance and capacity building activities in the South region that took place in October 2016. Regular information sharing and exchange with the interested NFP partners will be ensured around the regular Eionet meetings.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/horizon\\_2020\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/horizon_2020_en.htm)

## 2.5 Risks and assumptions

The successful project outcome depends on a number of political, economic and social developments in the ENI South partner countries and some risks and assumptions that have been integrated in the project logframe.

The measures put in place to ensure smooth start of the project implementation were as follows:

<b>Risks and assumptions identified in the Project Logframe</b>	<b>Status recorded by 31 January 2017</b>
Environmental cooperation is high on the political agenda of partner countries and in the Mediterranean region as a whole	Implementation of SEIS goes hand in hand with the second phase of Horizon 2020 Initiative and in synergy with other projects/initiatives.
The political situation in the ENI South region remains stable during the project life cycle	Some delays in the initial appointments of the project NFPs in the initial phase. Interactions with EUD in Libya due to unstable political situation; uncertain situation in Tunisia and Egypt with delayed communication.
Partner countries are willing to further develop Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) at national level and have capacity to do so	All partner countries have demonstrated commitment and support to the cooperation during the Project 1st Steering Committee meeting in December 2016
National Work Plans are agreed and endorsed by key stakeholders, depending on delivery of good quality NAPs	Good progress registered in the period December 2016 - February 2017 with elaboration of the National Work Plans that will be included in the SSFA agreements with UNEP/MAP (expected to be signed by end of March 2017)
Obligations under UNEP/MAP Protocols by the countries are met	N/A at this stage
Potentially limited access and use of available and/or provided data due to confidentiality or security reasons	N/A at this stage
Potential duplication of efforts at national level due to involvement of different focal points/coordinators	Intention to maintain good working relations and dialogue between different existing networks and partner initiatives, supported by EU/EEA, UfM and UNEP/MAP
Continuity and availability of human and financial resources to support this process not guaranteed	Synergies with H2020 activities should help mitigate this risk
Timely recruitment of experts in EEA and UNEP/MAP to support the execution and coordination of project activities	The permanent Project coordinator from UN Environment /MAP side not yet in place

## *2.6 Action plan for the upcoming period*

The updated action plan for the future activities of the project presented below is covering the period February 2017 till January 2018.

The monitoring of progress with the partner countries will take place during the project 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee meeting, scheduled tentatively to take place in mid-October 2017.



	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Y3	Y4
<i>Work plan (February 2017 - January 2018)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
<b>WP1 - In country support</b>													
Preparation of in-country support													
Set-up SEIS national team													
Finalised national work plan													
Agreement/signature of SSFA; recruitment of national assistant													
Country visits - Stakeholder engagement (WS1)													
Country visits - Stakeholder engagement (WS2) - pilots													
Implementation of National Work Plans									X			X	X
PRTR													
Regional PRTR guidelines													
Template for draft legislation													
Country pilots (incl. National workshop)								X					
<b>WP2 - Indicators and assessments</b>													
Review of H2020 Indicators (desk study + 1 WS)				X									
Refine H2020 assessment framework (outline of country fiches, indicators assessment)							X		X				
Develop revised indicator specifications (methodological guidance)											X		
Test new indicators													
Outline of 2nd H2020 indicator-based assessment							X		X				X
Undertake capacity building on Indicator and assessment													
<b>WP3 - Data and statistics</b>													
Assessment of current data reporting and quality assurance systems				X									
Guidelines for data production							X						
Initial data collection of H2020 indicators													
Undertake capacity building on data production													
<b>WP4 - Infrastructure &amp; data management</b>													
Identification of the state of national database infrastructure for SDI and data management													
Online survey for the identification of national databases and state of the SDI													
Building the catalogue of metadata													
Setting the INFO MAP for new data reporting													
Definition of XML schema and data dictionary for the selected ECAP													
Support PRTR developemnt													
Extension of MEDPOL Information System to include marine litter H2020 indicators													
Revision and adjustment to the regional data infrastructure for monitoring data flows for the new data reporting													
Implementation of software procedures for indicator calculation													
Development of data policy documents at country level, in support of common regional standards													
Analysis of the metadata catalogue and advice on data policy at country level													
SDI initiated and developed at country level													
Implementation of SDI platform at country level													
Training of national experts to use SDI and reporting infrastructure													
Customisation of citizen science application													
Information layers and data visualisation													
<b>WP5 - Communication &amp; visibility</b>													
Project website population/maintenance													
Newsletters (biannual)					X						X	XX	XX
Side events						X			X		X		
<b>WP6 - Management and coordination</b>													
Project Management Group meeting		X			X				X			XX	XX
Annual steering committee meetings									X			X	X
H2020 coordination group / Review and Monitoring group meetings							X					X	X
Eionet Mediterranean coordination group	X								X			XX	XX

### 3 Financial overview

During the first year of the project implementation and considering the fact that the design of the action foresaw a joint partnership between EEA and UNEP/MAP, the received first instalment was consumed with the initial activities and the pre-financing paid by EEA to UNEP/MAP under the signed agreement.

As of 31 January 2017, about 40% of the project budget has been spent as payments, covering salaries to recruited staff, costs associated with meetings and missions, as well as sub-contracting.

*Name of the contact person for the Action:*

**David Stanners, Head of Programme – Partnerships and Networks**

<Signed>

Location: EEA, Copenhagen

Date report due: 31/03/2017

Date report sent: 31/03/2017