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Management and Regional Cooperation  
for the Implementation of Ocean-related  
Sustainable Development Goals**

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**Unedited case studies on policies and institutional arrangements to enable cross-sectoral cooperation to achieve ocean related objectives associated with Sustainable Development Goals (compiled)**

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## Case studies on policies and institutional arrangements to enable cross-sectoral cooperation to achieve ocean related objectives associated with Sustainable Development Goals

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals requires cross-sectoral cooperation. For example, addressing pollution sources require action on the side of sectors that are associated with these sources, such as navigation, fisheries, agriculture and mining. Cross-sectoral approaches have been promoted these days at various levels; local, national, regional and global. When we focus on the 'marine ecosystems', such cooperation at the regional seas level (for example, Baltic Sea, Western Indian Ocean and Southern Ocean) is highlighted. Several examples have started emerging recently and providing different models for coordinated policy development and institutional cooperation between/among the regional organisations.

Under the United Nations Environment Programme – European Commission project, “Integrated Management and Governance Strategies for Delivery of Ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals” in which exchanging practical experiences and synthesize guidance on: (i) effective application of area-based management measures; and (ii) policy interactions and institutional arrangements to support the implementation of Ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals in different regional and national contexts, a component was created to collect and collate information on the experiences of existing cross-sectoral cooperation frameworks to highlight usefulness of such cross spectral regional ocean governance to achieve ocean related objectives, which may or will be associated and aligned with Ocean related Sustainable Development Goals. This aims at justifying a regional ocean governance approach in consolidating efforts at various levels across the relevant sectors to achieve agreed regional and global ocean related objectives. In order to achieve this, this component will produce a paper summarizing the experiences of the existing cross spectral cooperation frameworks at the regional level, including the elements of successful cooperation, challenges faced, and opportunities. The report will also include a set of recommendations for the regional organisations to start into cross spectral dialogue for cooperation with particular aim of harmonized and ecosystem-wise implementation of the Ocean related Sustainable Development Goals. The report will be used for further international discussion on the implementation of the SDG14 to review the possible use of regional ocean governance frameworks and partnerships to promote implementation and follow-up of SDG14.

The case studies compiled to date for the above-noted purposes include the following:

- Mediterranean Sustainable Development Strategy and Commission (Mediterranean Action Plan);
- Mediterranean cooperation on protection of marine ecosystems between GFCM, MAP and others (IUCN, WWF, MedPAN, ACCOBAN) (GFCM)
- Helsinki Commission Shipping cooperation (Helsinki Commission)

- Memorandum of Understanding on the oil pollution response and cooperation among the Northwest Pacific Action Plan member States (Marine emergency response centre supported by UNEP and IMO)
- Black Sea Commission and Danube Commission cooperation (Black Sea Commission)
- 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy and African Ocean Governance Strategy (UNEP)
- CPPS Integrated Ocean Policy discussion (CPPS to be prepared in Spanish with support from IASS)
- ROPME Ecosystem based Management strategy and cooperation with RICOFI (ROPME and/or UNEP)
- Abidjan Convention and Sub-regional Fisheries Commission cooperation on ecosystem approach (Commission Sou Regional des Peches)
- OSPAR cross sectoral cooperation framework, including OSPAR-NEAFC Collective Arrangements, OSPAR-IMO MOU. OSPAR-ISA MOU (OSPAR)

Below are the first draft case studies, which are yet to undergo technical editing and further review. It is proposed that a synthesis of the experiences and lessons learnt in such cross-sectoral cooperation and policy coherence be produced together with the finalized case studies.

## **Delivering the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 through a highly inclusive process to translate the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs at the regional level**

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### **Context and Background**

The objective of this case study on cross-sectoral cooperation is to demonstrate through the example of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) review process:

- 1) the added value of a highly inclusive/participatory process, following a transversal approach, to deliver a sustainable development policy to translate [the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development \(2030 Agenda\)](#) and its [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) at the regional level,;
- 2) the importance of [the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 \(MSSD 2016-2025\)](#) implementation and monitoring for the Mediterranean region and people; and,
- 3) the potential for replication of such an inclusive process as appropriate in other regions of the world.

To address the common challenges of marine environmental degradation, the Mediterranean Coastal States and the European Community approved in 1975 the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), the first Regional Seas Programme under UNEP's auspices followed by the adoption in 1976 of the Barcelona Convention. After 40 years of regional cooperation, [the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system](#) (MAP system) continues to be relevant and has ambitious objectives with a number of strategic decisions adopted at the most recent 19<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties of [the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean](#) (Barcelona Convention, COP 19, Athens, Greece, February 2016).

Established in 1995 – when the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention (Contracting Parties) conveyed their commitment to sustainable development and to the effective implementation, at the regional and national levels, of the decisions of [the Earth Summit \(Rio, 1992\)](#) and [the UN Commission for Sustainable Development \(UN-CSD\)](#) –, [the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development \(MCSD\)](#) is one of the regional bodies to ensure the interaction between environmental protection and sustainable development policies established by the MAP system. The MCSD is an advisory body to the Contracting Parties and other regional or local actors to assist them in their efforts to integrate environmental issues in socioeconomic programmes and, in so doing, promote sustainable development policies in the Mediterranean region.

The MCSD holds an ordinary meeting on a biannual basis and extraordinary sessions on a need-be basis. At the commencement of the first sitting of each meeting, the MCSD elects its Steering Committee (MCSD SC), which includes four members representing the Contracting Parties, including ex officio the President of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties, and three representatives from the six categories foreseen by the Terms of Reference of the MCSD. The MCSD SC oversees the work of the MCSD between sessions.

In 2005, at COP 14 (Portoroz, Slovenia), the MCSD adopted its innovative modalities of participation and engagement of civil society organisations and other major stakeholders. The MCSD is unique in its composition, as not only government representatives, but local communities, socioeconomic actors, IGOs and NGOs can all participate in the MCSD on an equal footing. As such, the MCSD includes various Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS), such as the Socio-economic Stakeholders Group, the NGOs Group, the Scientific Community Group, and the IGOs Group.

Acknowledging the implications of the outcomes of [UN Conference on Sustainable Development \(Rio+20\)](#) on the MCSD regarding the upgrading of the UN-CSD into a [High Level Political Forum](#), the 18<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 18) in its [Decision IG.21/12](#) (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013) requested the MCSD reform through revising its composition to ensure even greater representativeness and sharpening its role.

This reform was achieved at COP 19 in February 2016, through [Decision IG.22/17](#), which brings the total number of MCSD members from 37 to 40, including representatives of an additional key MGS, the Parliamentarians Group.

The objective of a strengthened MCSD is the further integration of the environment pillar into public policies, brought through focusing on the interface between environment and development, and thus building on its successes and potential. In line with this objective, [the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat](#) (the Secretariat) has been requested to support the MCSD to forge partnerships and coordinate between various actors, including the World Bank, the Union for the Mediterranean, and other UN actors besides UNEP such as the UNFCCC and the UNDP, in order to improve the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation through coordinated action. In addition, the MCSD has to encourage, through its meetings and operations, the exchange of good practices and to establish an on-line consultation platform for these purposes.

Committed to address environmental protection of marine and coastal environment and promote sustainable development, the Contracting Parties adopted in 2005 the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD, with subtitle: A Framework for Environmental Sustainability and Shared Prosperity), which was built under the MCSD coordination.

As such, the MSSD 2005-2015 provided an integrative policy framework for achieving the vision of a sustainable Mediterranean region, as well as for the deployment of sustainable development policies of riparian countries. It was a regional response to the global and regional sustainable development agenda, such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

In light of international developments and the end of the MSSD cycle of 2005-2015, COP 18, in its Decision IG. 21/12, requested not only the reform of the MCSD, but also the review of the MSSD, in

order to reflect at the regional level, global processes to better embed sustainability following the Rio+20 Conference.

[“The future we want”](#) outcome document and its acknowledgement on the importance of the regional and sub-regional dimensions, was a basis for the review process and throughout the review it was ensured that international negotiations on the parallel development of the SDGs were well reflected in the review.

### **Objectives of Cooperation during the MSSD review process**

Building on the “Future we want” outcome document, the aim for the MSSD review was to ensure that MSSD 2016-2025 will facilitate sustainable development on the regional level, based *inter alia* on (i) the assessment of the impact of the initial MSSD and of national sustainable development processes, as well as on (ii) a shared vision of sustainable development challenges facing the region.

In line with the above, the objectives of cooperation during the MSSD review process were to build on the outcomes of Rio+20, COP 18 Decisions (especially Decision IG. 21/12) the recommendations of the 15<sup>th</sup> MCSD Meeting (Malta, June 2014), with a view of developing a renewed Strategy through an inclusive process and submitting a revised MSSD for consideration of the Contracting Parties to their 19<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting.

### **Enabling Conditions and Dialogue Process – Cross-sectoral cooperation in practice**

In 2014-2015, the MSSD review was led by the MCSD, under the Maltese Presidency, with the assistance of the Secretariat through its [Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre \(PB/RAC\)](#) and with the support of the other [MAP Components](#). The Strategy was developed through a highly inclusive process, in which all Contracting Parties and key stakeholders had the opportunity to participate.

During the participatory process, a key challenge was to propose suitable means and ways to ensure ownership by regional and national decision-makers and stakeholders. The review process had to pay specific attention to regional organisations, particularly the MCSD Members and organisations officially accredited as MAP partners, aiming to enlarge the partnership framework and consolidate MAP relationships with other regional organisations. This challenge was mitigated by various outreaches with key stakeholders and information shared on regular basis on the review by the Secretariat. In addition, the MCSD President, Malta, made specific visibility events around the review to ensure engagement.

The MSSD Review was formally launched during [a ceremony held in Malta](#) (14 February 2014), which opened the first phase of the review. This Phase1 contained a stakeholder consultation (online), which took place between 10 April-9 May 2014, asking feedback on the new MSSD vision and on a set of issues to be addressed in the new strategy. In total 60 detailed responses were received during this consultation, both from individuals and from organizations representing a variety of sectors and geographic division across the Mediterranean.

***Figure 1: Issues mentioned during the first online consultation (April-May 2014)***



Thanks to on-line and face-to-face exercises of stakeholder consultation, their responsibility was the drafting of the specific axes, strategic directions, and actions of the Strategy. On-line tools, such as teleconferences, email exchanges, and other electronic platforms, completed face-to-face participatory workshops, plus a conference.

The outputs of the TWGs were compiled and reported on by thematic experts facilitating the process, with support of the Core Team (i.e. the MCSD Presidency, the Secretariat and PB/RAC). To ensure commitment of the participants, several specific letters were sent to them by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Coordinator. They were also regularly informed thanks to several “MSSD Review – Stakeholder News Briefs”. Their engagement and participation were essential for making the Strategy truly reflect the aspirations and opportunities of the region.

In January 2015, as an outcome of discussions in these TWGs, with the participation of more than 450 experts, a draft of the MSSD 2016-2025 was delivered to the MAP National Focal Points (NFPs), MCSD members, organizations accredited as MAP Partners, as well as participants of the previous consultation phases and other key stakeholders. It is worth to mention here that, at the end of the process, the “MSSD Review Stakeholders Full List” contained more than 1,000 contacts.

The Maltese Government hosted [the Conference on the Review of the MSSD](#), which gathered about 100 participants (Floriana, Malta, 17-18 February 2015), from all major groups representing the whole of the Mediterranean. The aim was to discuss the draft MSSD 2016-2025 with key stakeholders in order to get their feedback, comments, inputs and suggestions. On the basis of the Conference outputs and of the – about 500 – written comments, the draft Strategy was revised and the implementation plan was clarified.

The Moroccan Government hosted the 16th Meeting of the MCSD (Marrakesh, 9-11 June 2015), where the revised draft MSSD 2016-2025 was endorsed. The MCSD members and observers welcomed with appreciation the document, endorsed the proposed structure and content, and praised the work done for its preparation. They commended the process for its inclusiveness and the quality of the document for its novelty, ambition and completeness. The discussions led to some adjustments of the text to be reflected in the final draft, before it was officially submitted to the MAP NFPs Meeting (Athens, Greece, 13-16 October 2015) and then adopted at COP 19 ([Decision IG.22/2](#)).

### **Successful elements of cooperation**

The MSSD 2016-2025 is the result of over two years of intensive collaborative work within the MAP

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