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Report of the Project Steering Committee Meeting of the GEF Adriatic Project – Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning

Tirana, Albania, 30 May 2018

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Introduction

1. The Project Steering Committee Meeting of the GEF Adriatic Project (“Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning”) was held on 30 May 2018 in Tirana, Albania at the premises of the MAK Albania Hotel.
2. The objectives of the Project Steering Committee Meeting are: 1) to inform the Members of the Committee on the progress made to date in the project execution; and 2) to submit the Draft Inception Report, the Draft Revised Project Logical Framework, the Draft Revised Project Budget, the Draft Revised Annex H, and Draft Revised Appendix 6 for the deliberation of the Steering Committee.

Attendance

3. The meeting was attended by five representatives from the eligible countries (three from Albania and two Montenegro); several representatives from the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention and components of the Mediterranean Action Plan (SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC and MEDPOL); and a representative from UN Environment. The attendees were the following:

Albania

Ms. Ornela Cuci, Deputy Minister;
Mr. Zamir Dedej, Director General of the National Agency of Protected Areas of the Ministry; and
Ms. Klodiana Marika, MAP Focal Point.

Montenegro

Mr. Esef Husic, General Director for Climate Change and Mediterranean Affairs; and
Ms. Ivana Stojanovic, Advisor in the Department for Mediterranean Affairs (and MAP Focal Point).

UN Environment

Mr. Yegor Volovik, GEF International Water Portfolio Manager.

UN Environment MAP

Mr. Lorenzo Galbiati, Project Pool Manager; and
Ms. Shelley Farrington-Gavalas, Project Assistant.

PAP/RAC

Ms. Marina Markovic, Programme Officer;
Mr. Ivan Sekovski, Programme Officer; and
Mr Lada Jakelic, Administrative Officer.

SPA/RAC

Mr. Daniel Cebrian Menchero, Programme Officer; and
Mr. Anis Zarrouk, EcAp Adriatic & Bycatch Projects Officer.

MEDPOL

Ms. Jelena Knežević, Programme Officer.

Agenda of the Meeting

4. Agenda of the Project Steering Committee meeting was as follows:

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting, Election of Officers and Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda Item 2: Progress and Financial Reports

Agenda Item 3: Report on the Recommendations Made by the Inception Meeting

Agenda Item 4: The Way Forward: Draft Revised Project Workplan

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

Agenda Item 6: Adoption of the Conclusions and Recommendations

Agenda Item 7: Closure of the Meeting

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting, Adoption of the Agenda and Election of Officers

5. The Meeting was opened at 9:55 a.m. on Wednesday 30 May 2018 by the UN Environment/GEF International Water Task Manager, Mr. Yegor Volovik.
6. At 10:00 a.m. the participants were informed by Mr. Lorenzo Galbiati of the Project Management Unit (PMU), that the Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols will apply mutatis mutandis to the present Meeting (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI).
7. Subject to the Rules of Procedure, the Project Steering Committee then elected a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson from among the representatives of the Countries participating in the GEF Adriatic Project. The elected Chairperson of the meeting was Ms. Ornela Cuci, while the Vice Chairperson was Ms. Ivana Stojanović.
8. Subject to the Rules of Procedure, the proposed agenda appearing in document UNEP/MED WG.449/1 and annotated in the UNEP/MED WG.449/2 document were reviewed at 10:10 a.m. and adopted for the Meeting.

Agenda item 2: Progress and Financial Reports

9. Mr. Lorenzo Galbiati presented, in the name of the PMU, the progress made to date in the project execution, highlighting the main achievements and challenges encountered during the Inception Phase..
10. The Steering Committee reviewed the progress report and the budget revision, and after deliberations approved the budget at 10:30 a.m.
11. Mr. Zamir Dedej raised a question on local contribution, i.e. country co-financing, being more transparent. Mr Galbiati replied that there will be a template provided on co-financing, containing further clarifications and some additional information. Mr. Dedej and Ms. Cuci welcomed this, and highlighted that such template is needed as soon as possible, also to synchronize country's contribution for other projects.

Agenda item 3: Report on the Recommendations Made by the Inception Meeting

12. Mr. Lorenzo Galbiati presented, in the name of the PMU and execution partners, the recommendations extended by the Inception Meeting on the Draft Inception Report, the Draft Revised Project Logical Framework, the Draft Revised Project Budget, the Draft Revised Annex H and the Draft Revised Appendix 6.
13. The Steering Committee discussed and acknowledged the recommendations of the Inception Meeting. The Recommendations were the following:

“The Participants to the Inception Meeting of the Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning – GEF Adriatic Project, held in Tirana, Albania, 29 May 2018, commending the efforts of the governments of Albania and Montenegro, UN Environment, UN Environment/MAP, PAP/RAC, SPA/RAC:

 1. *Recognizes* the importance of and supports the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) in the Adriatic Sea with the aim to support Albania, Montenegro and the entire sub region to achieve the Good Environmental Status (GES).
 2. *Recognizes* the importance of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) and supports its execution in Albania and Montenegro in full coordination with the respective national priorities and in line with the relevant decisions taken by the Contracting parties to the Barcelona Convention.
 3. *Recognizes* the importance and supports the use of the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) based on the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp), as an important tool to make informed and coordinated decisions on the sustainable use of marine resources. This is particularly important for the Adriatic Sea and its sub-regional dimension.
 4. *Welcomes* the efforts made by UN Environment, UN Environment/MAP, PAP/RAC, SPA/RAC to prepare a clear and comprehensive Inception Report providing detailed description of the activities that will be executed in Albania and Montenegro.
 5. *Welcomes* the cooperation and synergies between the governments and stakeholders of Albania and Montenegro as an effective mechanism to achieve the Good Environmental Status (GES) in the Adriatic Sea.
 6. *Acknowledges* with appreciation the wide and comprehensive discussion held with and the engagement of the relevant stakeholders during the inception phase, which is reflected in the definition of the activities to be executed in Albania and Montenegro.
 7. *Recommends* to the Project Management Unit and all executing partners to fully refer to the Inception Report and the activities defined within this document with the view to efficiently and timely achieve all the outcomes and outputs identified in the Approved Project Document of Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning – GEF Adriatic - Project.
 8. *Recommends* to the Project Steering Committee to adopt the Inception Report as a solid base to support the successful execution of the Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning – GEF Adriatic - Project. “

14. The Project Coordinators from both countries – Mr. Dedej and Ms Stojanović declared that the Inception Meeting was very successful and had achieved its objectives.

Agenda item 4: The Way Forward: Draft Revised Project Workplan

15. Mr. Lorenzo Galbiati presented, in the name of the PMU and execution partners, the Draft Revised Project Workplan for the execution of the GEF Adriatic Project.
16. The Steering Committee members reviewed and approved the work plan.
17. Ms. Cuci and Mr. Dedej asked for a more detailed table of outputs for each partner, to enable a greater visibility of tasks and deadlines.
18. Mr. Volovik, UN Environment, inquired whether the pilot areas had already been selected. Ms. Marković, PAP/RAC, said that the precise locations were not defined, although a number of options were being considered, for example, either the whole territorial sea, or else a limited number of specific areas. Mr. Volovik highlighted that the selection criteria for pilot sites should be clearly defined and that the relevant stakeholders should be engaged in the selection of the pilot areas.

Agenda item 5: Any Other Business

19. Participants were invited to discuss other matters that may require attention of the Project Steering Committee that were raised and agreed upon during the adoption of the provisional agenda.

Agenda item 6: Adoption of the Conclusions and Recommendations

20. The Steering Committee reviewed and adopted the draft conclusions and recommendations prepared by the PMU. The Members of the Steering Committee:
1. *Welcomed* the efforts made by UN Environment/MAP, PAP/RAC and SPA/RAC to efficiently finalize the Inception Phase of the Project.
 2. *Welcomed* the 2017-2018 progress and financial reports presented during the Steering Committee and their consistency with the budget and workplan included in the Project Document approved by the GEF CEO on October 2016.
 3. *Acknowledged* with appreciation the Progress Report shared with Albania and Montenegro.
 4. *Expressed deep appreciation for the high-quality results delivered during the Inception Phase and the level of consultation achieved with the stakeholders of Albania and Montenegro.*
 5. *Welcomed the efforts made to disseminate the results achieved so far and recommended to continue with this practice.*
 6. *Recognized the importance and relevance of the recommendations made by the Inception Meeting held on 29 May 2018 in Tirana, Albania.*
 7. *Took note of the timeframe finally required to set up the national project executing structures in line with the national processes ongoing in Albania and*

Montenegro, and acknowledge the delays caused by factors beyond the project's control.

8. *Acknowledged the high complexity and importance of the project's activities for the national IMAP and MSP processes and the challenges posed by their execution within the project's current timeframe.*

9. *Welcomed the cooperation between the governments and stakeholders of Albania and Montenegro and encouraged the establishment of synergies with relevant initiatives in the other Adriatic countries.*

10. *Adopted the Inception Report presented to the Steering Committee.*

11. *Approved the expenditures for 2017 as presented to the Steering Committee.*

12. *Approved the proposed project budget and correspondent work plan for 2018 and 2019 as presented to the Steering Committee.*

13. *Approved the Revised Annex H - Project Implementation Arrangement, the Revised Appendix 6 - Procurement Plan and the Revised Project Logical Framework as presented to the Steering Committee.*

14. *Extended special thanks to the government of Albania, Ministry of Tourism and Environment for their hospitality and contribution to the organization of the meeting.*

Agenda item 7: Closure of the Meeting

21. The Project Steering Committee meeting was closed by Ms. Ornela Cuci at 11 a.m. on 30 May 2018.

Annex 1 Agenda

Introduction

1. At the kind invitation of the Government of Albania, the Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Project “Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning” (GEF Adriatic), will be hosted in Tirana, Albania, on 30 May 2018.
2. The objectives of the Project Steering Committee Meeting are: 1) to inform the Members of the Committee on the progress made to date in the project execution; and 2) to submit the Draft Inception Report, the Draft Revised Project Logical Framework, the Draft Revised Project Budget, the Draft Revised Annex H, and Draft Revised Appendix 6 for the deliberation of the Steering Committee.
3. The following annotations to the proposed provisional agenda for the present meeting were prepared by the Project Management Unit (PMU) to assist the meeting and its deliberations.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting, Adoption of the Agenda and Election of Officers

Working Documents: UNEP/MED WG.449/1, 2

4. The Meeting will be opened at 9.30 am on Wednesday 30 May 2018 by the UN Environment/GEF International Water Task Manager, Mr. Yegor Volovik.
5. The Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols will apply mutatis mutandis to the present Meeting (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI).
6. Subject to the Rules of Procedure, the Project Steering Committee will elect a Chairman and a Vice Chairman from among the representatives of the Countries participating in the Project.
7. Subject to the Rules of Procedure, the proposed agenda appearing in document UNEP/MED WG.449/1 and annotated in the present document UNEP/MED WG.449/2 will be reviewed and proposed for adoption by the Meeting including the timetable contained in the Annex to the present document.

Agenda item 2: Progress and Financial Reports

Working Document: UNEP/MED WG.449/4

Working Documents: UNEP/MED WG.449/Inf.3, Inf.4

8. Under this agenda item the PMU will present the progress made to date in the project execution, highlighting the main achievements and challenges met during the Inception Phase and implementation of the budget approved by the GEF.
9. The Steering Committee is expected to review the progress achieved and Budget, as presented in the progress report and the budget revision, for possible approval.

Agenda item 3: Report on the Recommendations Made by the Inception Meeting

Working Documents: UNEP/MED WG.449/3, 4, 5, 6, 7

10. Under this agenda item the PMU and execution partners will present the recommendations extended by the Inception Meeting on the Draft Inception Report, the Draft Revised Project Logical Framework, the Draft Revised Project Budget, the Draft Revised Annex H and the Draft Revised Appendix 6.

11. The Steering Committee is expected to discuss the recommendations of the Inception Meeting.

Agenda item 4: The Way Forward: Draft Revised Project Workplan

Working Document: UNEP/MED WG.449/8

12. Under this agenda item the PMU and execution partners will present the Draft Revised Project Workplan for the execution of the GEF Adriatic Project.

13. The Steering Committee is expected to review the work plan for possible approval.

Agenda item 5: Any Other Business

14. Participants will be invited to discuss other matters that may require attention of the Project Steering Committee that were raised and agreed upon during the adoption of the provisional agenda.

Agenda item 6: Adoption of the Conclusions and Recommendations

15. The Steering Committee will be invited to review and adopt the draft conclusions and recommendations prepared by the PMU.

Agenda item 7: Closure of the Meeting

16. It is expected that the Project Steering Committee will be closed by Mr. Yegor Volovik at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, 30 May 2018.

TIMETABLE
30 May 2018

Time	Agenda Item		Documents
9:00-9:30	Registration		
9:30-10:00-	1. Opening of the Meeting, Adoption of the Agenda and Election of Officers	Chairman of the Meeting UNEP/MAP GEF	UNEP/MED WG.449/1, 2
10:00-10:45	2. Progress and Financial Reports	UNEP/MAP	UNEP/MED WG.449/4 UNEP/MED WG.449/Inf.3, Inf.4
10:45-12:00	3. Report on the Recommendations Made by the Inception Meeting.	UNEP/MAP PAP/RAC SPA/RAC	UNEP/MED WG.449/3, 4, 5, 6, 7
12:00-12:30	4. The Way Forward: Draft Revised Project Workplan	UNEP/MAP	UNEP/MED WG.449/8
12:30-12:45	5. Any Other Business	Chairman of the Meeting	
12:45-13:15	6. Adoption of the Conclusions and Recommendations	Chairman of the Meeting UNEP/MAP	
13:15-13:30	7. Closure of the Meeting	UNEP/MAP GEF	