

Intervention to Agenda Item 3 (3 min)

27-28 Nov.2023 (10th Meeting of Working Group on PRTR)

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Dear Representative of the Countries,

Dear Experts and Colleagues,

I am happy to join the 10th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and being able to give you a brief on the activities carried out under UNEP/MAP MEDPOL for the last Biennium (2022-2023).

In the 9th meeting of the Working Group of the PRTRs, we informed the Group that MEDPOL is developing a couple of guidelines that could be potential areas of interest for further collaboration. The guidelines have been prepared by MED POL and have been extensively discussed in the specific working groups composed of the representatives of the Contracting Parties of the Convention. The guidelines were approved by the MED POL Focal Point Meeting, which took place on 23-25 May 2023, here in Athens.

1. Regional guideline on available treatment technologies for urban wastewater and sewage sludge and decision support systems (DSS) for their selection;

Guideline is elaborated to address specific technical aspects, including best practices in the Med, of the adopted Regional Measures related to design and operation of wastewater treatment plants in order to assist the Contracting Parties in their implementation.

The guideline focuses on

- (i) Potential for recovery of materials,
- (ii) Resource recovery technologies,
- (iii) Treatment technologies for contaminants of emerging concern,
- (iv) Occurrence, detection and removal of microplastics, and
- (v) Decision Support Systems for selection of environmentally friendly technologies.

2. Regional guideline on pre-treatment standards and applicable BATs for industrial sectors eligible to discharge to urban wastewater collection systems;

This Guideline aims to provide relevant information and knowledge on application of BAT and implementation of BEP to enable industrial facilities to meet the pre-treatment effluent standards which set the emission limit values (ELVs) for discharge of industrial wastewater into collecting systems and urban wastewater treatment plants as stipulated in the Regional Plan on Urban Wastewater Treatment.

3. Guideline on Regional Standards for Discharge from Desalination Plants and Decision Support Systems for Sustainable Desalination Technologies in the Mediterranean

- (i) Available state of the art desalination technologies and their possible implementation in the context of sustainable desalination solutions.
- (ii) Regulatory aspects for seawater desalination including compliance with the amendments to the Annexes of the LBS Protocol; recommended emission limit values based on prevailing regional standards for seawater desalination

4. Guidelines for Monitoring Microplastics coming from WWTP and Report on the source of microplastics entering to the collecting system in Mediterranean

This guideline extracts from the most commonly applied methodologies for **monitoring riverine inputs of marine litter**. Its focus is on monitoring macro- and micro-litter through the application of visual observations, surveys on the riverbanks, use of manta nets and water pumps. The present guideline aims to guide the technical personnel of the IMAP competent institutes and laboratories for collecting and processing real data on the ML. The work is still ongoing which is expected to be finalized in 2024.

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Dear Participants,

Regarding the potential areas of cooperation:

At global level...

Diffuse sources of pollution are gaining importance, not only to track pollution but also sustainably manage nutrients. UNEA 4 Resolution 14, in 2019, and UNEA 5 Resolution 2, in 2022, calls for sustainable nitrogen management and ask member states to develop national action plans for nitrogen. The inception face of the national action plans is to estimate the nitrogen releases from agricultural and aquaculture which this group has an expertise. Therefore, this could be one of the potential areas for further development.

Lastly, regarding the Mediterranean level,

I would like to brief you on the on-going work and future work of UNEP/MAP MEDPOL. As it was reported in the 9th Meeting of this Working Group, last year, MED POL has developed three guidelines on estimation of pollutant releases from Agriculture, Aquaculture and Run-off water. This biennium we supported two Contracting Parties to apply these guidelines, in the Sectors of Agriculture and Aquaculture. I will present the preliminary work of Agriculture in agenda item 5.

I would like to also inform you that UNEP/MAP will initiate its 5th cycle of National Baseline Budget exercise in 2024, and will make a data call for the Contracting Parties to report measured, estimated or calculated pollutants in accordance with the LBS Protocol. The intention is to use the PRTRs data, where available, and to collect data at national level by using estimation guidelines. We hope to report the findings of these data calls in 2026 here in this group.

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Thank you very much,