Introduction

As decided by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention during their 19th Ordinary Meeting (COP19, Athens, Greece, February 2016), the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism (the SIMPEER) is a framework for mutual learning and improvement from past experiences and other national approaches. SIMPEER was mandated by Decision IG. 21/12 (COP18, Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013) and Decision 22/17 (COP19, Athens, Greece, February 2016). Based on a voluntary basis principle, the proposed peer review aims at engaging a dialogue between two or more Mediterranean countries for a mutual improvement and learning process on National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs).

It seeks to establish within an agreed methodology the exchange of experiences, policies and good practices on implementing sustainable development at national level, as opposed to creating a scrutiny framework between reviewers and countries under examination. This peer review mechanism will also contribute to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD 2016-2025) implementation and monitoring. Indeed, the SIMPEER represents an important tool to enable NSSDs review in line with the regional Strategy and as a contribution to the global Sustainable Development Goals specifications.

UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Coordinating Unit supported by its Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (PB/RAC) has launched a consultation process to test a pilot on such simplified peer review mechanism; terms of reference were developed, two consultants have been identified, and a methodological road map is finalized.

This test is performed on three main phases:

1) Literature review of existing peer review mechanisms and analysis of their performances and constraints;
2) Design of a simplified peer review mechanism in line with MSSD 2016-2025 vision and objectives, and test application with the involvement of two to four volunteer Mediterranean countries;
3) Review of the mechanism by MAP’s system bodies and National Focal Points (MCSD Steering Committee and ad-hoc meetings) and submission to COP20.

Taking opportunity of the organization of the technical workshop on “How to monitor the MSSD 2016-2025 implementation and the Regional Action Plan on SCP in the Mediterranean?” that will be held on
the 17th October 2016 at the Sant Pau Art Nouveau Site in Barcelona (Spain), the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Coordinating Unit and Plan Bleu decided to organize, back to back, the SIMPEER first technical meeting on the 18th October 2016 at the Catalan Waste Management Agency in Barcelona.

The technical meeting aims to present to the members of the MCSD Steering Committee and volunteer countries the road map and the proposed methodology in order to have their feedback, comments and orientations to move forward on the pilot test of the SIMPEER.

The expected results of the meeting are as follows:
1) the road map towards the SIMPEER’s test pilot is discussed and feedback from participants are provided to finalize it;
2) the methodological report on the SIMPEER is discussed and feedback from participants are provided to finalize it;
3) Next steps (notably desktop analysis and missions in countries) of the pilot test are defined and planned with volunteer countries involved.

**Agenda Item 1. Opening of the meeting - Remarks of organizers - Presentation of participants**
The SIMPEER’s first technical meeting will be opened by UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Coordination Unit and Plan Bleu representatives. A “tour de table” will allow participants to introduce themselves and to express their expectations on the meeting results.

**Agenda Item 2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work**
The agenda will be presented by the Plan Bleu’s representative, in order to be discussed and adopted by participants. The agenda is provided hereafter in Annex 1. The meeting will be moderated by the SIMPEER’s project team who will elaborate the meeting’s report.

**Agenda Item 3. Introduction: COP’ Decisions on the simplified peer review mechanism and implementation progress**
The Plan Bleu representative will recall COP18 Decision IG21/12 and COP19 Decision IG 22/17 – Annex II on the simplified peer review mechanism and will present actions taken by UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Coordination Unit and Plan Bleu to implement these decisions.

**Agenda Item 4. Review of the methodological roadmap**
Participants will be invited to consider the methodological roadmap elaborated and submitted to their attention by the SIMPEER’s project team. They will provide their feedback, comments and possible inputs to finalize it. The related document is provided to the participants 30 days before the meeting.

**Agenda Item 5. Review of the draft methodological report**
Participants will be invited to discuss the methodological report which defines the proposed mechanism. The methodology is based on one hand on the analysis and comparison of existing peer review mechanisms that are relevant for the Mediterranean context, and on another hand on the specific attributes defined by the COP Decisions.
**Agenda Item 6. Countries’ expectations and needs**
Under this item, a brainstorming session will be organized to raise the expectations and needs of the volunteer countries with particular regard to its complementarity and synergy with other achieved and/or ongoing assessment processes at national level (for example in relation to HLPF, ECE/UNECE, etc.).

**Agenda Item 7. Anticipation of country missions**
Volunteer countries representatives will be invited to suggest agenda of missions in countries, as proposals for discussion. To ensure the simplicity of the mechanism and its financial feasibility, countries’ missions should be as short as possible (i.e. two days, including meetings with government representatives and key stakeholders, plus face-to-face interviews) and involve as many stakeholders as needed to ensure a participatory process. In agreement with, and support of, the National Focal Point, missions in countries will include a plenary meeting with representatives of all stakeholders, and bilateral meetings and interviews with persons previously identified among decision-makers and key actors of civil society, private sector and media.

**Agenda Item 8. Wrap up and way forward**
The closing session of the SIMPEER’s first technical meeting will be reserved for the record of decisions and identification of the next steps for the implementation of the SIMPEER’s pilot test at the national level.
Annex 1: Agenda of the first technical meeting of the SIMPEER

9h00 – 9h30  Agenda Item 1.
             Opening of the meeting
             Remarks of Organizers
             Presentation of participants

9h30 – 9h45  Agenda Item 2.
             Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work

9h45 – 10h15 Agenda Item 3.
               Introduction: COP’ Decision on the simplified peer review mechanism
               and implementation progress

10h15 – 11h15 Agenda Item 4.
                Review of the proposed methodological roadmap

11h15 – 12h30 Agenda Item 5.
                Review of the master report draft on “The MSSD implementation through
                the simplified peer review mechanism”

12h30 – 14h00 Lunch break

14h00 – 15h30 Agenda Item 6.
                Country’ expectations and needs

15h30 – 16h30 Agenda Item 7.
                Anticipation on country missions

16h30 – 17h00 Agenda Item 8.
                Wrap up and way forward