

Regional Mediterranean action plan against pollution from shipping

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The foundations for co-operation in the Mediterranean Sea area in the field of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution are laid in the Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea, 2002 (Prevention and Emergency Protocol) to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean Sea. The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), based in Malta since 1976, which is administered by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and operates within the framework of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) of the Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), co-ordinates the activities of the Mediterranean coastal States related to the implementation of the Prevention and Emergency Protocol to the Barcelona Convention. One of the objectives of REMPEC is to strengthen the capacities of the coastal States in the Mediterranean region with a view to preventing pollution of the marine environment, implementing the recognised rules, and combating / eliminating pollution. This presentation describes the risks related to maritime traffic in the Mediterranean and highlights the importance of international and regional co-operation. In this regard, the legal, institutional and financial mechanisms existing in the region to facilitate co-operation amongst Mediterranean coastal States in this field will be recalled. The presentation will address the added value and sustainability of a dedicated regional Centre in this regard and will focus on the issue of government-relevant industries partnerships in order to achieve at regional level a better level of preparedness. Some conclusions of the Mediterranean Regional Workshop on Preparedness for and Response to Marine Pollution which will be organized by REMPEC in collaboration with the Mediterranean Oil Industry Group (MOIG), in Marseille between 11 and 12 May 2009, will be provided.