

Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020

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Annual Report 2016

Technical part

Article 77(2) of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 897/2014

15.02.2017

1. IDENTIFICATION

Managing Authority	Regione Autonoma della Sardegna
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Reporting Period	From 18/12/15 to 31/12/16
Date of approval by the Joint Monitoring Committee	14/02/2017

2. KEEP DATABASE¹

No activity related to this chapter has been carried out so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

¹ A limited number of statistics are requested from you in this report based on the assumption that most data are available in the KEEP database - hence the importance of maintaining KEEP up to date.
<http://www.keep.eu/keep/>

3. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

3.1 Executive summary

Main achievements and problems/difficulties encountered by programme bodies during the reporting period both at programme and project level (max. 1 page)

During this first year of implementation, several preparatory actions were carried out. The Programme bodies were appointed and they started to carry out their tasks.

In particular, the JMC was established in March 2016 in Cagliari during its first meeting, where its rules of procedures were approved. In addition, the JMC discussed a first draft of the guidelines for grant applicants for the standard projects, and took two decisions. The first one was on the submission and evaluation procedure, while the second was on the budget allocation per priority.

The set up of the JTS has also started through the recruitment of the first four persons at the end of 2016. The director of the Audit Authority was appointed mid 2016.

The MA carried out institutional meetings with the National Authorities in each participating country in order to strengthen the cooperation with them. Indeed, the main results of the previous programming period and the main provisions of the new strategy were discussed with selected national stakeholders. These meetings also aimed at ensuring that the programme circuits at national level could be set up according to the requirements of the ENI regulation.

In addition to the twelve institutional meetings, six awareness raising events on the programme strategy were carried out in each of the Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC).

In December 2016, the main documents of the application pack of the first call for proposals for standard projects were approved during the second JMC meeting held in Athens, where the launching conference of the new programme also took place.

As far as the main difficulties encountered are concerned, the programme reported a delay in the signing process of the Financing Agreements (FA) and, consequently, in the launching of the first call for proposals. In fact, in order to ensure a full participation of all the MPCs, the JMC decided to wait for the first months of 2017 to see whether all the countries could sign their FA before launching the first call for proposals.

Moreover, given the increased number of responsibilities foreseen by the ENI regulation, some countries are facing delays in finalizing the description of their national circuits that need to be included in the Description of Management and Control System.

Finally, as far as the MPCs are concerned, the delays in the signing of the FAs is also affecting the finalization of the paragraphs concerning the description of the national circuits since some of them will depend on specific national contents to be approved by the EC through the FA.

3.2 Progress achieved in implementing the Programme and its Priorities

No activity related to this chapter has been carried out so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

3.3 Problems and achievements reported by beneficiaries

No activity related to this chapter has been carried out so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

3.4 Implementation of Large Infrastructure Projects (LIPs) (NOT APPLICABLE)

3.5 Financial implementation

The financial information related to the preparatory actions carried out in 2016 will be reported in the ENPI CBC MED 2007-2013 annual implementation report 2016, since these activities have been financed through TA funds still available for the previous programming period.

3.5.2 Figures for the reporting period

No information related to this chapter is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

3.5.3 Total cumulative figures of previous and current reports

No information related to this chapter is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

4. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

4.1 Summary of main activities

a) *Please summarise the main activities carried out by the MA, the JMC and the JTS/BO as well as NAs and CCPs, highlighting the problems encountered (in terms of implementation/management, achievement of results, target groups involvement, data collection, etc.) and the good practices developed.*

Managing Authority

The MA organised - in close cooperation with all National Authorities - twelve institutional meetings involving key national stakeholders. Each meeting tackled the expectations and requirements for the

new ENI CBC Med Programme 2014 -2020 by reviewing the national participation in the ENPI CBC Mediterranean Programme 2007-2013, both in terms of results and lessons learned.

All national experiences were extensively analysed taking into account the information provided by the selected representatives from projects funded by the Programme 2007-2013. The lessons learned were discussed and collected to improve the application procedure, project monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.

The ENI CBC Med Programme 2014-2020 strategic framework was also presented as regards the main technical and financial implementation rules (i.e. type of projects; timeframe for implementation, geographical eligibility etc.). Finally, restricted meetings on management and control system with relevant ministries were held to set up national circuits according to the requirements set by the new regulatory framework.

Here is the list of all institutional events organised, sorted by date and Country:

	Country	Dates
1	Tunisia	18 March 2016
2	Jordan	30 March 2016
3	Malta	13 April 2016
4	Israel	3 May 2016
5	Palestine	4 May 2016
6	Spain	12 May 2016
7	Egypt	21 June 2016
8	France	29 June 2016 10 November 2016 (follow up)
9	Greece	05 July 2016
10	Portugal	14 July 2016
11	Cyprus	20 September 2016
12	Italy	27 October 2016

Joint Monitoring Committee

The JMC was officially settled in Cagliari at its first meeting (March 2016, 7th and 8th), where the rules of procedure were also adopted unanimously by its members.

The following **main decisions** were taken by the JMC:

- Constitution of the Joint Monitoring Committee and adoption of its Rules of Procedure;
- The approval of the JMA proposal on the Preparatory actions for 2016 using Technical Assistance funds of the ENPI CBC MED 2007-2013;
- The approval of the JMA proposal on the allocation of the available budget per priority;
- The approval of the JMA proposal on the submission of applications in one stage, and evaluation of applications in two steps;
- Discussion on the Guidelines for Grant Applicants and the Full Application Form;
- Discussion on the Financing Agreements signature procedure;
- Discussion on the Libyan participation;
- Discussion on the ToRs for the recruitment of the Joint Technical Secretariat and Branch Offices Staff, to be approved by written procedure.

The **2nd meeting of the JMC** was held in Athens (Greece) on December, 13th and 14th 2016. The main decisions adopted were:

- Approval of the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, in particular the administrative requirements and technical requirements of the Call for proposals (eligibility and financial clauses, limitation to the number of applications/grants, financial features of the projects, exclusion situations, selection and award criteria);
- An agreement on the adoption of the *de minimis* rule in dealing with State Aid relevant projects has been reached.
- Discussion on the Financing Agreements (FA), in particular on the final deadline to launch the call or on possible solutions to overcome the eligibility issue of organisations located in MPCs not having signed FAs. No decision taken pending the signature of at least three FAs before launching the call,
- General agreement on the formats of documents included in the Application Package (Application Form, Budget & Financial Plan, Declarations) and on the simplified approach of the budget.
- Discussion on the main provisions of the Grant Contract model.
- Discussion on the Communication campaign.
- General agreement on the MA proposal on the agreement with the UfM.

Three rounds of consultations on the Guidelines for Grant Applicants were launched:

- From 31/3/2016 to 21/4/2016

- From 11/5/2016 to 1/6/2016
- From 5/8/2016 to 25/9/2016

All comments and proposals sent by the delegations were included in the final version submitted for the JMC approval during the Athens meeting.

In addition, a number of JMC decisions were taken via the following **Written Procedures**, in compliance with the JMC Rules of Procedure.

Content of the written procedure	Dates (from – to)	Results
Terms of Reference for the selection of the JTS and BOs staff	20.05.2016 - 03.06.2016 Re-launched 06.06.2016 Closed on 20.06.2016	Approval of the terms of reference
Approval of the updated financial table of the JOP concerning the EC commitments for 2016 and 2017 and changes in the names of Spanish institutions involved as NA and CCP	12.07.2016 Closed on 22.07.2016	Approval of the proposed major changes
Selection of the ENI CBC Med Programme's logo	20.07.2016 - 03.08.2016 Re-launched on 20.09.2016 Closed on 12.10.2016	Approval of the Proposal Logo n.3

As far as the main difficulties encountered are concerned, the main issue that has been tackled in Athens was the fact that the first call for standard projects could not be launched in December due to the lack of Financing Agreements signed (see also par. 3.1).

National Authorities

As far as the National Authorities are concerned, during the institutional meetings carried out by the MA, all countries showed to be very committed in defining their national circuits and the majority of them has already appointed the person acting as CCP. Please note that the CCPs are expected to start working only in 2018, given that the first call for proposals is expected to be launched only in the first half of 2017.

Joint Technical Secretariat

As stated in the JOP, the JTS recruitment process started in 2016. After the approval of the terms of references for the JTS, the MA in October 2016 launched the recruitment process for four positions (the JTS coordinator, the assistant coordinator, the IT expert and the Audit and Finance expert) and in December 2016 the three out of the four persons have been contracted (the Audit and Finance expert will be contracted starting from 1 April 2017, since the person has currently a contract as JTS financial officer under the ENPI programme until the end of March 2017).

Branch Offices

Branch offices carried out six awareness raising events (see par. on communication activities) in the six partner countries of the Programme. These events were carried out by the BOs staff recruited under the ENPI CBC MED, since the recruitment of the positions for ENI CBC MED 2014-2020 will start at the beginning of 2017. During 2016, the hosting institutions of the BOs (Generalidad Valenciana and Aqaba Special Economic Zone), have drafted the text of the public notice whose content has been shared with the MA.

b) Please describe the general progress in setting the Management and Control Systems, including national systems. Assess their functioning and describe how the results of system audits are taken into account. For CBC Partner Countries, please provide explanations about the effective functioning of the provisions laid down in the Financing Agreements.

During the 2016 the MA continued drafting the DMCS. In particular, it collected the information on national circuits from the NAs of the countries in order to draft a specific paragraph for each participating country. The paragraph was then discussed with the NAs during the institutional meetings carried out by the MA. After each meeting the MA sent the updated draft of the paragraph to the NA in order to finalize it. So far three paragraphs concerning the description of the national circuits were finalized (Cyprus, Portugal and Malta), while the other ones should be finalized by the first half of 2017.

As far as the functioning of the systems is concerned, in 2016 the national circuits were not in place yet and, therefore, no audit has been carried out so far.

As far as the internal circuits and procedures of the MA are concerned, their setting continued to be carried out including also, for example, the electronic submission of the application forms, the modifications of the structure of the MA according to the description given in the JOP², and the recognition of the adaptations to be made to the financial circuits.

c) Please describe the risk management exercise conducted during the reporting period and the resulting possible measures taken to mitigate the identified risks.

No information related to this chapter is available so far, since the programme circuits are not running yet.

d) Please summarise the main activities carried out during the period by the Audit Authority and the Group of Auditors in accordance with the audit report.

² Please note that the structure of the MA has been simplified compared to the one of the ENPI CBC MED 2007-2013. During 2016 the regional decree on the organisational structure of the MA was adopted. In particular the decree assigns the functions foreseen for the MA of the ENI CBC MED programme to the pre-existing JMA of the ENPI CBC MED within a logic of progressive alignment of its structure to the parameters foreseen in the ENI CBC MED Joint Operational Programme.

During 2016, the Audit Authority office and part of its staff were identified according to the structure foreseen in the Joint Operation Programme. After its completion, the Italian Ministry of Economy (RGS-IGRUE) will perform the verification described in the JOP on the Audit Authority structure and circuits. After being approved by IGRUE, the Audit Authority will then proceed with its audit on the programme circuits which will lead to the opinion for the designation of the MA.

The Group of Auditors will be established and convened in due time according to the ENI regulation. In the meanwhile, all participating countries are appointing the persons who will perform this role.

4.2. Management of the calls for proposals

No information related to this chapter is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

4.3 Monitoring and evaluation

No information related to this chapter is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

The annual monitoring plan is expected to be drafted by the MA and approved by the JMC by the end of the year 2017.

4.4 Technical Assistance activities: Information and communication activities

4.4.1 Please submit a detailed list of all information and communication activities undertaken. Ensure that outputs and results are well documented. Follow the table below.

Activity title and location	Aim of the activity	Target group	Message	Output	Results	Measures to ensure EU visibility
Awareness raising event held in Tunis on 16 th of October 2016, after promotion by the National Contact Point, on the Programme website/social media and following invitations sent to the Tunisian organizations included in the Programme mailing list	<p>Highlighting the cooperation opportunities provided for by the Programme</p> <p>Showcasing successful cooperation stories and valuable approaches implemented by national beneficiaries under the 2007-2013 ENI CBC Med Programme</p> <p>Explaining the content of the Thematic Objectives and Priorities</p> <p>Providing a preliminary overview of the first call</p>	90 potential participants from Tunisia	<p>A call for proposals to promote cross border cooperation will be launched soon</p> <p>Competition is high but rewards are higher</p> <p>A CBC project is a great opportunity to make an impact on people and become part of a large, diverse, vibrant Mediterranean community, with opportunities for visibility, cross-fertilization and</p>	133 participants attended the event	<p>60% of new comers (people who did not participate in the previous ENPI CBC Med Programme) attended the event³</p> <p>70% of participants willing to apply for a grant⁴</p>	<p>EU logo used in all documents, invitations, presentations</p> <p>EU contribution to the Programme highlighted in presentations. EU flags displayed in the meeting room</p>

³ Average data based on the outcomes of surveys conducted with participants after each awareness raising event.

⁴ Average data based on the outcomes of surveys conducted with participants after each awareness raising event.

	for standard projects Stimulating participation of beneficiaries from Tunisia in the next call for proposals		networking			
Awareness raising event held in Jerusalem on 25 th of October 2016, after promotion by the National Contact Point, on the Programme website/social media and following invitations sent to the Israeli organizations included in the Programme mailing list	Same as above	70 potential participants from Israel	Same as above	81 participants attended the event	Same as above	Same as above
Awareness raising event held in Ramallah on 26 th of October 2016, after promotion by the National Contact Point, on the Programme website/social media and following invitations to the Palestinian organizations included in the Programme mailing list	Same as above	90 potential participants from Palestine	Same as above	125 participants attended the event	Same as above	Same as above
Awareness raising event held in Beirut on 9 th of November 2016, after	Same as above	100 potential participants	Same as above	127 participants attended the event	Same as above	Same as above

promotion by the National Contact Point, on the Programme website/social media and following invitations sent to the Lebanese organizations included in the Programme mailing list		ts from Lebanon				
Awareness raising event held in Amman on 10 th of November 2016, after promotion by the National Contact Point, on the Programme website/social media and following invitations sent to the Jordanian organizations included in the Programme mailing list	Same as above	100 potential participants from Jordan	Same as above	137 participants attended the event	Same as above	Same as above
Awareness raising event held in Cairo on 10 th of November 2016, after promotion by the National Contact Point, on the Programme website/social media and following invitations sent to the Egyptian organizations included in the Programme mailing list	Same as above	60 potential participants from Egypt	Same as above	99 participants attended the event	Same as above	Same as above
#WEMED: launching	Officially launching the	300	Impactful success	350 people	Official hashtag of	EU logo used in all

<p>conference of the ENI CBC Med. Athens, 16th of December 2016. Wide promotion of the event on the Programme website/social media and invitations sent out to all people included in the Programme mailing list</p>	<p>ENI CBC Med Programme</p>	<p>potential participants representing the territories of the cooperation area</p>	<p>stories happened under the 2007-2013 period: let's keep working and growing together!</p> <p>A call for proposals to promote cross border cooperation will be launched soon</p> <p>Cross-border cooperation can help make the Mediterranean a more competitive, innovative, inclusive and sustainable area</p>	<p>attended the conference with participants coming from all 13 participating countries + 250 people watched online live stream</p>	<p>the conference #WEMED used over 100 times on social media</p> <p>Over 100 project ideas posted on the "Cooperation Wall" and discussed during the networking session</p>	<p>documents, invitations, publications, gadgets, video shown at the beginning of the conference, presentations</p> <p>EU contribution to the Programme highlighted in presentations. EU flags displayed in the meeting room</p>
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4.4.2 In relation to the activities targeting applicants/beneficiaries, please provide a summary of reviews by applicants/beneficiaries and analyse the impact on the applicants/beneficiaries' capacities.

Surveys were carried out following each of the six awareness raising events described above to assess the effectiveness of the events and their impact on participants. 80% of respondents (average data resulting from all the questionnaires filled in) indicated that the objectives of the events were clear and highlighted the capacity of speakers in delivering the information and addressing questions. Overall, 80% of respondents (average data resulting from all the questionnaires filled in) said that the events met their expectations and substantially increased their knowledge of the Programme and main elements of the first call for proposals.

According to the surveys conducted, participants depicted partner search, training on the application pack with focus on financial rules as their main needs in terms of future support in view of the launch of the first call for proposals.

4.4.3 Please inform about whether EU delegations were invited to the events taking place in their countries and indicate their participation where the case.

EU delegations were invited to the six institutional meetings carried out by the MA in the MPCs (see par. 4.1) and to the six awareness raising events described above. Their representatives took part in 5 of them and they delivered speeches during the opening sessions. A representative of the EU delegation in Lebanon also participated in the WEMED conference, notably in the session “Fostering synergies and complementarities”, in which ways to strengthen exchange of information and joint work among cooperation initiatives implemented in the Mediterranean area were discussed. More generally, the Managing Authority will reinforce links with EU delegations by providing regular information on Programme activities, in particular in view of the launching of the first call for proposals.

4.4.4 Please describe any activity undertaken in relation to the programme website and social media (max ½ page)

Pending the development of the ENI CBC Med website, a page dedicated to ENI CBC Med was created on the Programme website, with sections displaying information on the ENI, CBC, the Programme strategy and relevant documents. A project ideas and partner search online tool was made available in May 2016 in order to allow Mediterranean organisations to promote project ideas and form partnerships according to their topic of interest.

News and updates about the ENI CBC Med Programme were published on a regular basis on the ENI section of the ENPI Programme website. As per the 2016 Google Analytics, over a third of pages viewed on the Programme website were related to ENI CBC Med.

Moreover, the accounts of the Programme on social media, namely Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube were switched from ENPI CBC Med to ENI CBC Med, with regular news and information posted about incoming cooperation opportunities and modalities for participation. An Instagram account dedicated to ENI CBC Med was also created. Currently, the Programme has 3,836 followers on Facebook, 2,719 on Twitter, and 2,178 connections on LinkedIn.

4.4.5 Please describe any activity undertaken in relation to programme publications (max ½ page)

A flyer presenting the new ENI CBC Med Programme, its objectives, priorities, budget, type of calls for proposals was edited and disseminated to participants during the WEMED conference.

In addition, a set of illustrations, depicting the main highlights of the WEMED conference, was published on the Flickr account of the Programme

(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/enicbcmmed/albums/72157674242950494>).

Finally, the draft guidelines for applicants of the first call for proposals were uploaded on the Programme website at the end of November.

4.5. Other Technical Assistance activities

Please, describe any other TA activity undertaken during the reporting period (e.g. networking, complaint resolution, reinforcement of administrative capacity, control and audit activities, ...etc.).

According to the ENI CBC MED Joint Operational Programme 2014-2020 and, in particular, par. 2.7 on coherence and complementarities, the MA is committed to look for opportunities to support wider coordination with other initiatives through tailored actions. The EU Delegations were informed and involved as far as possible the twelve institutional meetings reported above.

Moreover, following the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Declaration on Blue Economy, approved on the 17 November 2015, the Managing Authority and the Branch Offices have participated in the following initiatives (co)organized by the UfM:

- MEDAWEEK (Med Solar Forum) – Barcelona, 26 November 2015.
- TESIM Lab-Groups and Conference (March, June and November 2016).
- Plastic Buster project meeting – Siena, 15 April 2016.
- Workshop on the initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean – Brussels, 29 September 2016.
- 2nd meeting of UfM working group on the Blue Economy – Brussels, 8 November 2016

Moreover, the Managing Authority and its Branch Offices have also participated in other events/meetings aimed at reinforcing the synergies with other Mediterranean initiatives:

- 1st meeting of Mediterranean Transnational Programmes - Valencia, 11 November 2015
- Med Lab Group - Valencia, 12 November 2015
- Focus Group “Better Governance Western Mediterranean” - Barcelona, 15 March 2016
- COP 22 - Marrakesh, 14-15 November 2016 where the report drafted by the ARLEM Secretariat in cooperation with the MA on the “Cross-border cooperation in the Mediterranean” was presented by the President of the Region of Sardinia.

Finally, the MA attended to the General Assembly of the Inter-Mediterranean Commission - 30 June and 1 July 2016 held in Venice, providing detailed information on the state of play of the Programme.

5. FORECAST FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR⁵

5.1 Programme activities

Please provide the documents mentioned in Art. 77.4 of the ENI CBC IR as an annex of this report (see page 11)

Please note that the an indicative list of activities (including the main communication activities) to be carried out in 2017 was presented to the JMC during its last meeting held in December 2016 (the presentation is attached to this report). However no approval nor a precise timeframe has been foreseen due to the fact that the majority of activities are linked to the date of launching of the first call for proposals (which remains uncertain due to the delays in the signing process of the Financing Agreements see par. 3.1). Therefore, the MA will submit through written procedure the working plan 2017 to be approved by the JMC in the following weeks.

5.2 Beneficiaries' activities

Please, list important events and activities planned by project beneficiaries during the next reporting period based on project reports or any direct contacts with beneficiaries (e.g. big conference, opening/inauguration ceremony, closing event, etc.).

Please inform about whether the concerned EU delegations are aware of the events that will take place in their countries.

⁵ As per the provision of the ENI CBC IR (Art. 77.4), "the annual report shall contain the forecast of activities to be implemented in the following accounting year". This implies that the annual report submitted in February of year x shall include a forecast of activities to be implemented from 30 June of year x-1 to 30 June of year x. Given that 2/3 of the said period will have already elapsed at the time of report submission, it is proposed (i) to extend the forecast period to end of December of year x and (ii) to focus on the activities to be implemented from March to December of year x (and remain rather brief about the previous months).

No information related to this chapter is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

Annexes

1. *Project proposals included in a reserve list (mentioning the project title, duration, EU contribution, applicant name and country), if applicable.*

No information related to this paragraph is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

2. *List of projects selected for funding under a specific call but not yet encoded in KEEP (mentioning the project title, duration, EU contribution, applicant name and country), if applicable.*

No information related to this paragraph is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

3. *Methodology used to define result indicators' baselines and targets⁶, if applicable.*

No information related to this paragraph is available so far, since the first call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

4. *Forecast activities to be implemented in the following accounting year as per Article 77(4) of the ENI CBC IR:*

- a) The audit strategy will be drafted and approved by September 2017 as foreseen by the ENI Implementing Regulation, since the first FA has been signed in December 2016.
- b) The work programme, financial plan and planned use of technical assistance will be provided when they are approved by the JMC (see par. 5.1).
- c) The annual monitoring and evaluation plan in accordance with Article 78(2) will be approved by the JMC by the end of 2017 since no projects will be running until 2018.
- d) The annual information and communication plan in accordance with Article 79(4) is currently under drafting and it will be approved by the JMC during 2017 (see also par. 5.1).

⁶ Only for programmes which have set results indicators' baselines and targets after JOP adoption