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European Union

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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
No. Cion doc.:	14263/23 - COM(2023) 586 final
Subject:	Draft Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union at the 23rd meeting of the Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, as regards the adoption of a Regional Plan on Agriculture Management, a Regional Plan on Aquaculture Management, a Regional Plan on Urban Stormwater Management, in the framework of Article 15 of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources, and as regards the adoption of amendments to Annexes II and III to the Protocol concerning Special Protected Areas and Biological Diversity - Adoption

1. The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols, aims to prevent and abate pollution from ships, aircraft and land-based sources in the Mediterranean Sea. The EU has been a member of the Convention since 1976. Eight EU Member States are also Parties to the Convention.¹
2. During the 23rd Meeting of the Contracting the Parties to the Convention, to take place in Portoroz, Slovenia, on 4-8 December 2022 (COP 23), the Contracting Parties are expected to adopt decisions that will be binding on the Union.

¹ Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Slovenia and Spain.

3. On 17 October 2023, the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the EU at Barcelona COP 23, as regards the adoption of a Regional Plan on Agriculture Management, a Regional Plan on Aquaculture Management, a Regional Plan on Urban Stormwater Management, in the framework of Article 15 of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources, and as regards the adoption of amendments to Annexes II and III to the Protocol concerning Special Protected Areas and Biological Diversity).²
4. The members of the Working Party on International Environment Issues (WPIEI) examined the proposal for a Council Decision at its informal meeting on 24 October 2023. Based on those discussions and on three written consultations, launched on 18 October 2023, 31 October 2023 and on 9 November 2023,³ and subsequent written comments sent by delegations,⁴ the Presidency prepared a draft compromised text⁵ which was agreed at the Working Party on the Environment on 13 November 2023.
5. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to recommend to the Council to:
 - a) adopt, by qualified majority, the draft Council Decision set out in document ST (text finalised by the Jurist-Linguists), as "A" items on the agenda of one of its forthcoming sessions;
 - b) decide, in accordance with Article 19(7)(g) of the Council's Rules of Procedure, that the text be subsequently published in the Official Journal; and
 - c) decide, in accordance with Article 218(10) of the TFEU, to inform the European Parliament of the adoption.

² 14263/23.

³ WK 14198/2023 and WK 14174/2023.

⁴ WK 14078/2023 and WK 14374/2023.

⁵ 14813/23.