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Athens, Greece, 25-29 May 2015

Agenda item 10: Marine and Coastal Protected Areas, including in the open seas and deep seas

10.2.2. Activities for the development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) network through the boosting of MPAs creation and management

Progress Report of the Activities of the "Regional Project for the Development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) Network through the Boosting of MPAs Creation and Management" (MedMPAnet Project)

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(UNEP/MAP)

Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA)
Boulevard du Leader Yasser Arafat
B.P. 337 - 1080 Tunis Cedex - Tunisia
E-mail: car-asp@rac-spa.org

The original version of this document was prepared by the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA): Atef LIMAM, MedMPAnet Programme Officer.

FOREWORD

This document was prepared for the needs of the Twelfth Meeting of Focal Points for SPAs that will be held in Athens (Greece) from the 25th to the 29th of May 2015, in the presence of representatives of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and also the relevant regional organisations working on the Mediterranean marine environment and its preservation.

It gives an extensive overview on the activities being implemented as part of the MedMPAnet Project since its launching at April 2010.

The sections of this document tried to follow the activities as presented in the Project document, focusing on four main sets of activities: (i) Establishment of coordination mechanisms for regional MPA management, (ii) Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness, (iii) Improving MPA management, and (iv) Ensuring financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks.

The present Meeting of Focal Points for SPAs will allow RAC/SPA to readjust if necessary some activities based on recommendations and evaluations from the partner countries.

The Report author:

A. LIMAM

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**Progress Report of the Activities of the "Regional Project for the Development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) Network through the boosting of MPAs Creation and Management"
(MedMPAnet Project)**

1. MedMPAnet Project data sheet

Project title:	Regional Project for the Development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) Network through the boosting of MPAs Creation and Management
Project acronym:	MedMPAnet
Project context:	UNEP/MAP-GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership) / Component 3: Conservation of biological diversity: Implementation of SAP BIO and related NAPs / Sub-component 3.1: Conservation of coastal and marine diversity through the development of a Mediterranean marine and coastal protected areas (MPAs) network
Executing agency:	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA, Tunisia) / UNEP/MAP
Beneficiary countries:	12 Mediterranean riparian countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey
Duration:	69 months (April 2010-December 2015)
Inception milestones:	<i>Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between UNEP and RAC/SPA signed: 7 October 2009</i> <i>First installment of funds received by RAC/SPA: 7 April 2010¹</i> <i>Project inception meeting: 2 June 2010 (Second Meeting of National Correspondents of SAP BIO, Istanbul)</i> <i>Project team fully recruited: 21 June 2010</i>
Closure date:	September 2015
Funding agencies / Co-finance amount:	European Commission (EC) / 1,578,020.07 EUR Spanish Agency for International Cooperation to Development (AECID) / 886,770.49 EUR French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) / 100,000 EUR
Co-finance RAC/SPA:	200,000 EUR (Cash) + 216,000 EUR (In kind)
Co-finance partner countries:	1,390,000 EUR (In kind)
Total Project costs:	2,764,790.56 EUR (Cash) 4,370,790.56 EUR (Cash / In kind)
Other related projects:	1. MedPartnership Sub-component 3.1 MedPAN South project: executed by WWF-MedPO (Rome) and serving the objectives of the MedPAN Network 2. MedPartnership Sub-component 3.2: "Promote the sustainable use of fisheries resources through the application of ecosystem-based management approaches": executed by FAO (Rome)

¹ According to the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) terms, the Project effectiveness should start at the date of receipt by RAC/SPA of the first installment of funds.

Project Objective	Enhancing the effective conservation of regionally important coastal and marine biodiversity features, through the creation of an ecologically coherent MPA network in the Mediterranean region, as required by Barcelona Convention's Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol)
Project activities:	<i>Activity 1:</i> Establishment of coordination mechanism for regional MPA management <i>Activity 2:</i> Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representiveness <i>Activity 3:</i> Improving MPA management <i>Activity 4:</i> Ensure the financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of several actions prioritized by the SAP BIO programme - Existing and proposed MPAs will coalesce to form part of a coherent and geographically balanced network that exists at both institutional and ecological levels - Greater representation of the Mediterranean's vulnerable and critical coastal and marine habitats brought under statutory protection - Tools and capacity for the management of recognized Mediterranean coastal and marine biodiversity sites improved - Permanent coordination, monitoring, evaluation and support mechanisms for regional coastal and marine biodiversity conservation - Innovative approaches to the funding of regionally important existing and future coastal and marine biodiversity conservation initiatives in place

2. MedMPAnet Project implementation status

2.1 Establishment of coordination mechanisms for regional MPA management

2.1.1 Setting-up of the Project Coordination Unit at RAC/SPA

The Project Coordination Unit (PCU), made up of four full-time members: (i) Project Officer, (ii) Project Coordination & Technical Backstopping Officer, (iii) Technical Assistant Officer, and (iv) Administrative Assistant, was fully staffed during the second quarter of 2010. The Technical Assistant Officer left the PCU as of 1 May 2014. Then, following a restricted selection procedure, a Technical Assistant and a Communication & Capacity Building Assistant have joined the Project team as of 1 June and 1 July 2014, respectively.

2.1.2 Organization of Inception, Midterm and Final Workshops

Inception and Mid-term Workshops were organized respectively on 2 June 2010 in Istanbul (Turkey) and from 4 to 6 July 2012 in Malaga (Spain).

Those meetings allowed countries (i) a full comprehension of the scope and activities of the MedMPAnet Project, (ii) adapting the Project activities to current reality and state of progress and (iii) enhancing the MedMPAnet Project results coordination, dissemination and replication among the Mediterranean countries and regional bodies.

The final workshop is planned to be held on November 2015.



MedMPAnet Project Inception Workshop
(Istanbul, Turkey, 1st June 2010) © Atef LIMAM / RAC/SPA



MedMPAnet Project Mid-Term Workshop
(Malaga, Spain, 4-6 July 2012) ©Souha EL ASMI / RAC/SPA

2.1.3 Organization of SAP BIO Advisory Committee and National Correspondents Meetings

3 SAP BIO National Correspondents meetings were organized respectively in Istanbul (Turkey) on 1 June 2010, in Malaga (Spain) on 4 July 2012 and in Rabat (Morocco) on 1 July 2013.

2 SAP BIO Advisory Committee meetings were also organized respectively in Istanbul (Turkey) on 1 June 2010 and in Malaga on 4 July 2012.

19 regional organizations and 21 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have participated to the above-mentioned meetings allowing:

- Discussing and updating of SAP BIO to the new CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi targets for 2020;
- Reviewing the development of ongoing and new regional projects regarding the implementation of SAP BIO regional priorities.

2.1.4 Developing communication and information tools and raising awareness of key stakeholders on MPAs values and importance

Communication and information tools and activities were developed in order to raise the visibility of the project and to enhance awareness of key stakeholders on Marine Protected Areas (MPA) values and importance. In this regards, the following actions have been undertaken:

- A website was created as well as 6 pages on social networking platforms ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Flickr](#), [Vine](#), [Thinglink](#), [SoundCloud](#)),
- Four issues of the MedMPAnet e-newsletter were compiled and disseminated,
- RAC/SPA was involved in several regional events and international meetings, to share its experience related to MPA programmes and spread inspiring activities. The Centre has co-organized the 2012 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean, held in Antalya (Turkey) from 25 to 28 November 2012, and actively participated to the third edition of the International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC 3), held in Marseilles (France) from 21 to 27 October 2013. RAC/SPA has also participated to the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress, held from 12 to 19 November 2014 in Sidney (Australia), and to the first Arab World MPA Symposium, held in Hurghada (Egypt) from 19 to 21 January 2015.
- Bookmarks, postcards, brochures, DVDs, canvas bags, etc., as well as the photobook "Méditerranées», were distributed during workshops and events organized by RAC/SPA and other partners,

- A documentary film about MPAs in the Mediterranean is being produced. The first screening of the film is scheduled for November 2015, during the Project Final Workshop.



MedMPAnet Project Leaflet



Fourth issue of the MedMPAnet electronic Newsletter (March 2015)



Accordion style leaflet on the project implementation in Morocco

2.2 Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness

2.2.1 Albania

Porto Palermo Bay, situated in the southern part of Albania, a few kilometers from Himara town with a very limited access to the Bay which has been a military area until 1991, was selected to be a future MPA following consultations with the Albanian environmental authorities. The ecological studies conducted in 2013 and 2014, including the mapping of most important marine habitats and species, confirmed the presumed richness of the site. The ecological and socio-economic study reports of the Porto Palermo Bay area were finalized in English and translated into Albanian in 2014.

The process of elaboration of the management plan of Porto Palermo Bay, based on the ecological and socio-economic assessments and consultations with the different stakeholders, started in June 2014. The first draft was ready in Albanian language by late September 2014 and has been presented to local authorities during a workshop held in Himara, on 12 November 2014.

The forthcoming activity in Albania will consist in demonstrating the financial sustainability for the Porto Palermo pilot MPA along with a training session on business planning for MPA managers and practitioners in Albania.

On the other hand, RAC/SPA started early 2012 an extensive analysis of the existing legal and institutional frameworks in Albania, in close collaboration with IUCN-Med. In this regards, the report on the “Legal and institutional framework assessment for conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity and the establishment of MPA in Albania” has been endorsed by the Albanian environmental authorities, in both Albanian and English languages.

2.2.2 Algeria

In Algeria, a process to develop a national strategy for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and a Coastal Plan for Réghaia area (Eastern Algiers) was initiated by the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment (MATE), in partnership with the Regional Activity Centre for Priority Actions Programme (UNEP/MAP - PAP/RAC, Split). Both initiatives were supported by UNESCO-IHP, RAC/SPA and the Conservatoire du littoral (CdL, France). In this context, the marine part of Réghaia coastal area has been selected to become a Marine Protected Area (MPA).

As a first step and in support to the Réghaia Coastal Plan, a socio-economic study, including the identification of potential stakeholders and partnerships that could be involved in the Réghaia future MPA creation and management, was carried out in 2013. The draft report was reviewed and endorsed by the Algerian Ministry of Environment.

In 2014, an Algerian firm of consultants was hired in order to carry out a complementary ecological survey in the Réghaia area, as well as to elaborate a management plan for the future MPA. Data collection and field work have been undertaken respectively in September 2014 and March 2015. The draft report of the complementary ecological study has been submitted for its approval on April 2015. The elaboration of the management plan of the Réghaia marine area is underway and is planned to be presented to the local stakeholders by July 2015.

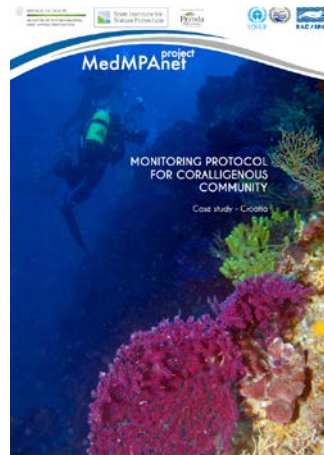
2.2.3 Croatia

Following the signature, on 13th March 2013, of the Memorandum of Understanding between RAC/SPA, the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia, the State Institute for Nature Protection and the Public Institution Priroda, the project has been implemented along the coasts of the islands of Prvié, Sveti Grgur, Goli, Krk, Rab, Veliki and Mali Ćutin, Susak, Unije and Srakane, which belong to the County of Primorje & Gorski Kotar, in northern Croatia. Ecological studies were conducted in these areas, during 2013 and 2014, in order to map species and habitats and to assess their status. A socio-economic and fisheries study was also conducted with a view to encouraging sustainable fishing in the region.

In addition, two national monitoring protocols for *Posidonia* and Coralligenous habitats and a field manual for monitoring of *Posidonia oceanica* beds were developed.



Monitoring protocol for *Posidonia oceanica* beds _ Case study-Croatia



Monitoring protocol for coralligenous community _ Case study-Croatia



Field manual for monitoring of *Posidonia oceanica* seagrass meadows_ Case study-Croatia

In 2014, Croatian environmental authorities approved the monitoring protocols and endorsed the final field survey reports on *Posidonia*, Coralligenous, and Fisheries, integrating the results of 2013 and 2014.

Besides, as part of the project capacity building programme for the inventory of marine biodiversity in Croatia, three trainings on GIS application with regards to marine environment were delivered respectively at Rijeka (30 September-4 October 2013), at Zagreb (4-8 November 2013) and at the Public Institution Priroda, Rijeka (14-15 November 2013) and benefited to 6 Croatian environmental agencies technical staff.

On the other hand, RAC/SPA started early 2012 an extensive analysis of the existing legal and institutional frameworks in Croatia, in close collaboration with IUCN-Med. In this regards, the report on the “Legal and institutional framework assessment for conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity and the establishment of MPA in Croatia” has been endorsed in 2014 by the Croatian environmental authorities, in both Croatian and English languages.

2.2.4 Egypt

Initially, the Project did not include any biodiversity-related pilot activity for Egypt. However, thanks to the additional funds from EC over the 2014 - mid-2015 period, RAC/SPA has been given the possibility to provide some support to the efforts towards the Planning for the management of the Marine Protected Area of Sallum.

Unfortunately, due to the security reasons, RAC/SPA received only by end 2014 a preliminary approval from the Egyptian Focal Point concerning the Sallum Bay MPA activity. For that end, a technical meeting with the representatives of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) concerning the MedMPAnet Project activity in Egypt, was held in Cairo, on 18-20 January 2015.

Hence, due to remaining time of the project’s closure, the relevant Egyptian authorities and the MedMPAnet team have agreed that in this stage, only a socio-economic study in the region can be done. For that purpose, an Egyptian consulting firm (Environics) was recruited to carry out a literature review and to collect data on the relevant socio-economic activities related to the Sallum Bay Marine Protected Area. The final report will be available on 30 June 2015.

2.2.5 Lebanon

Following the planning and coordination meetings held in 2011 with the representatives of the Lebanese Ministry of Environment, It has been agreed that the MedMPAnet Project activities in Lebanon shall be fully harmonized with the relevant achieved, underway or planned projects at country's level. The MedMPAnet Project activities were then reoriented towards concrete achievements including field surveys in identified sites along the Lebanese coast, to collect data and improve ecological knowledge on marine and coastal biodiversity.

Thorough studies were then conducted during June 2012 and August 2013 in six marine sites, namely Enfah Peninsula, Ras Chekaa Cliffs, Raoucheh Cliffs, Sidon, Tyre and Naqoura. Inventory of species, mainly of patrimonial and fishing interest, and mapping of benthic habitats were performed.

In 2014, the synthesis report of the ecological characterization of the six studied sites has been finalized, including the outlines of zoning and management proposals. The final version of the synthesis report has been presented during the final presentation workshop held in 18 April 2015 in Beirut, under the patronage of his Excellency Mr Mohammad Machnouk, Minister of Environment of Lebanon.



Lebanon final presentation workshop, organized under the patronage of his Excellency Mr Mohammad Machnouk, Minister of Environment (Beirut, 18 April 2015)



MedMPAnet Project results presentation workshop ((Beirut, 18 April 2015)
© Atef LIMAM, RAC/SPA



Synthesis report of the ecological characterization of the six studied sites in Lebanon

2.2.6 Libya

In Libya, a first marine survey aiming to assess the biological features and the ecological interest of Ain Al-Ghazala marine and coastal area was conducted by RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO, late September 2010. More than ten Libyan and international experts took part to this assessment.

A second survey was conducted, late October 2010, by RAC/SPA and the Conservatoire du Littoral, in order to assess the marine and coastal ecological features of the El Kouf National Park. This assessment was undertaken by more than fifteen Libyan and international experts.

Early 2011 and based on the results of RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO field surveys undertaken in Ain Al-Ghazala area, the Libyan Ministry of Agriculture, Animal and Marine Wealth has declared the Ain Al-Ghazala coastal lagoon and its facing Elba Island as a Marine Protected Area (Decision N° 2_Year 2011 of 17 January 2011).

Yet, there is neither specific legislation for protected areas nor a national strategy to develop MPAs and to reinforce stakeholders' participation in Libya. In order to overcome this legal and institutional gap and following a request from the Libyan Environment General Authority (EGA), several workshops were conducted in 2013 and 2014 in order to elaborate a draft law on Protected Areas. The last workshop was held in Tripoli, on 7 May 2014, following which a draft law was proposed to the Libyan authorities in order to undertake necessary procedure for its adoption.

Besides and following the same participatory approach, a draft national strategy for MPA establishment was developed during 2013 and 2014. The resulting strategy is being share with all the stakeholders for comments and recommendations in view to its final endorsement by EGA.



The Bardaa Island, Bomba Gulf (Libya)
© Mathieu FOULQUIE / RAC/SPA



The Ain Al-Ghazala field working team (Libya)
© Renaud DUPUY DE LA GRANDRIVE / RAC/SPA

2.2.7 Montenegro

In Montenegro, rapid assessments were undertaken, in 2011 and 2012, along the Montenegrin coast in close collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of Montenegro and with the involvement of national experts from the Institute of Marine Biology of Kotor and the Nautilus local NGO, as well as international experts. A synthesis report for the valuation of marine areas, in particular the best sites to become MPAs, including GIS-based mapping has been finalized in November 2012.

Further to this preliminary step, Boka Kotorska Bay was selected as a pilot site. An ecological survey of the Kotor Bay marine area using the side scan sonar technique, and a fishery study were carried out in the bay. The collected data contributed to the establishment of a GIS database that also served the purpose of CAMP Montenegro project.

Furthermore, RAC/SPA has joined efforts to PAP/RAC and SCP/RAC in implementing a pilot project on testing the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) in Boka Kotorska Bay. In this regards, the report on marine biodiversity status of Boka Kotorska was finalized in September 2014, and endorsed by the Montenegrin environmental authorities. A feasibility study on ecotourism, aiming at encouraging the development of green entrepreneurship, was also elaborated and presented during a public consultation workshop held in February 2014. It was finalized and endorsed by Montenegrin environmental authorities in September 2014.

On the other hand, RAC/SPA started early 2012 an extensive analysis of the existing legal and institutional frameworks in Montenegro, in close collaboration with IUCN-Med. In this regards, the report on the "Legal and institutional framework assessment for conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity and the establishment of MPA in Montenegro" has been endorsed by the Montenegrin environmental authorities in November 2014, in both Montenegrin and English languages.

2.2.8 Morocco

Following the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between RAC/SPA and the "Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte contre la Désertification" (HCEFLD), a valuation of marine areas along the Moroccan Mediterranean coast, including GIS-based mapping, in order to select the best areas suitable to be declared as MPAs, has been undertaken. A synthesis report on that valuation has been approved in 2012.

Following the above-mentioned valuation, the Cap des Trois Fourches situated in the Northern Moroccan coast near the Nador area, has been identified as the main intervention site to be comprehensively surveyed within the framework of the MedMPAnet Project.

On-site ecological and socio- economic surveys have been carried out in September 2012 and September 2013 at the Cap des Trois Fourches area. They allowed running natural habitats assessment of the site along with the elaboration of recommendations on the management.

Following the 2012-2013 ecological and socio- economic characterization, a process aiming at the elaboration of a management plan of the marine and coastal area of the Cap des Trois Fourches has been launched in June 2014. This process is being run based on a participatory approach with the local stakeholders.

An inception workshop followed by several surveys and meetings with the local stakeholders allowed preparing on a first stage a diagnosis and assessment report. That report has been discussed and endorsed with the local stakeholders during a second workshop which took place on 18 October 2014 in Nador. That workshop served to present the diagnosis and assessment phase and to discuss the management vision and objectives with stakeholders. Recently, in 21 and 22 April 2015, a third workshop took place in Nador under the patronage of the Governor of Nador and was dedicated to discuss with the local stakeholders the zoning proposal, the proposed management actions and programmes and the mechanisms of local stakeholders participation and involvement in the creation and management of the future MPA of the Cap des Trois Fourches.

The final presentation and consultation workshop on the management plan of the Cap des Trois Fourches marine and coastal area is planned to be held end of July 2015.

2.2.9 Tunisia

The demonstration project in Tunisia, aims at the inception, planning, zoning and development of the future MPA of Kuriat Islands (north eastern Tunisia).

Thus, two surveys to assess the marine biological features of the Kuriat Islands have been undertaken respectively in 2010 and 2011. Barrier reefs of *Posidonia oceanica*, maerl banks and other marine biocenosis were characterized and mapped. This allowed also the design of a preliminary zoning for the area and the delivery of on-job training for local experts.

Besides, a socio-economic study has been undertaken on the area during the first half of 2012.

Based on the results of the above-mentioned field surveys and the socio-economic study, the activity aiming at the elaboration of a management plan for the Kuriat Islands and the setting-up of a consultation mechanism involving all stakeholders, have been launched in 2013, in close collaboration with the Tunisian Coastal Protection and Planning Agency (APAL).

A first workshop for consultation with local stakeholders was organized in Monastir, at early April 2014. A second workshop aiming to discuss the zoning and management programme proposal took place on 26 May 2014. Based on the results of these workshops, a management plan was drafted and presented during a stakeholders' public workshop, held on 26 March 2015 in Monastir. The management plan was thus endorsed by the stakeholders.

The MedMPAnet project has thus completed its activities in Tunisia. However, the Tunisian Coastal Protection and Planning Agency (APAL) took rapidly action and built on the project achievements. In this regard, a meeting with key stakeholders took place in Monastir on 18 March 2015 and let to set up the future MPA local steering committee.



Stakeholders consultation and presentation workshops on the management plan of the future MPA of Kuriat Islands
© Atef LIMAM / RAC/SPA (left) and Souha EL ASMI / RAC/SPA (right)

On the other hand, a Funding Agreement (SSFA) on the implementation of a replication activity aiming at initiating the establishment of a new MPA in Tunisia was signed between RAC/SPA and UNEP/MAP. This replication activity concerns the running of ecological and socio-economic studies in view of the creation of an MPA in the north-eastern part of Kerkennah Islands.

A recent meeting on the 3rd April 2015, with the Tunisian Coastal Protection and Planning Agency allowed to identify the relevant actors to take part of the field work of the ecological, socio-economic and stakeholders studies, and to delimit the study area.

The field work of the ecological assessment in the north-east area of Kerkennah is planned for late July 2015, with an already identified team of experts and scientists.

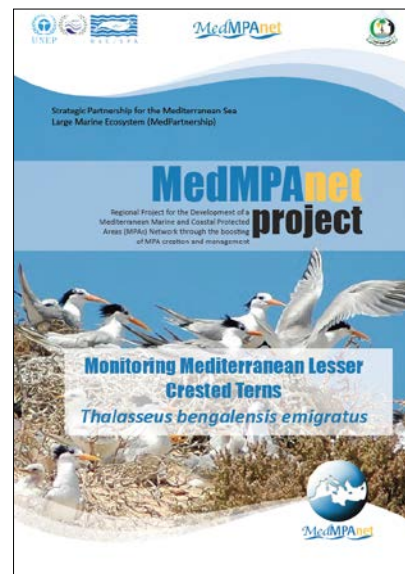
2.2.10 MPA creation guidelines and teaching packages

This activity aims at developing practical methodologies to create sustainable MPAs and make them available to managers and practitioners. Thus, a number of guidelines and technical tools for MPA creation and management elaborated within the Barcelona Convention context (SPA/BD Protocol) have been reviewed and edited (in both English and French), for their dissemination among Mediterranean MPA managers and decision-makers:

- Guidelines for setting up and management of Specially Protected Areas for marine turtles in the Mediterranean;
- Guidelines for the establishment and management of Marine Protected Areas for cetaceans; and
- Guidelines for management and monitoring threatened population of marine and coastal bird species and their important areas in the Mediterranean.
- Cetaceans manual for MPA managers (English).



Cover page of the Guidance for building marine protected areas networks



Cover page of the Guidelines Guidelines for the monitoring of Lesser Crested Terns *Thalasseus bagalensis emigrates*

RAC/SPA has also collaborated with the MedPAN Network Secretariat and WWF-MedPO, in running a region-wide need assessment in terms of guidebooks and technical tools among MPA managers and practitioners and relevant authorities in the Mediterranean countries. The results of this study have been issued in March 2012. Based on the findings of this survey, RAC/SPA has edited a set of guidelines and teaching packages, meeting the actual needs of marine protected areas planners and managers:

- Guidance for building marine protected areas networks (English/French).
- Stakeholder participation toolkit for identification, designation and management of Marine Protected Areas (English).
- Guidelines for the monitoring of Lesser Crested Terns *Thalasseus bagalensis emigrates* (English).

Furthermore, a Manual on Coastal Biota and their Environmental Monitoring in Mediterranean MPAs has been finalized in Spanish (original version), and is being translated into English and French.

2.3 Improving MPA management

2.3.1 Organizing Mediterranean MPA Regional Training Workshops for MPA managers, practitioners and relevant authorities

This activity is mainly led by WWF-MedPO as part of the MedPAN South project, but implemented in collaboration with the RAC/SPA MedMPAnet Project. In this concern RAC/SPA has technically and financially contributed to the three following regional training workshops:

- 1st Regional Training Workshop on MPA Management Planning (Tabarka (Tunisia), 14-23 November 2009): 41 participants from 13 Eastern and Southern Mediterranean countries took part to the training,
- 2nd Regional Training Workshop on Planning for Sustainable Fisheries in MPAs (Kas (Turkey), 2-11 October 2010): 48 MPA managers, practitioners and officials from relevant authorities from 11 countries in the South and East of the Mediterranean and 8 experts from the region participated to this Workshop,

- 3rd Regional Training Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Planning in MPAs (Split (Croatia), 3-8 October 2011): 30 MPA managers, lead staff, practitioners and officials of relevant authorities/administrations from 10 Mediterranean countries took part to this training workshop.

Furthermore, RAC/SPA collaborated with WWF-MedPO and MedPAN in designing a long-term capacity-building strategy to enhance the management of Mediterranean MPAs. For that aim, a regional gap-analysis was conducted among Marine Protected Areas managers and regional national and international institutions dealing with capacity building in the region. The study synthesis was issued in June 2012. As a first step towards implementing this strategy, the three partner organizations are setting-up a Mediterranean web portal for capacity-building related to marine conservation issues

2.3.2 Organizing specific technical assistance and exchange/twinning programmes

Participants to the above-mentioned 2nd and 3rd regional training workshops (Kas 2010 and Split 2011) developed specific projects intended to enhance their capacities and apply what they have learned on the field within their MPAs, over the 10-12 months following each regional session. These projects are implemented following an agreement (Implementation Agreement) with WWF-MedPO or RAC/SPA.

In this concern, RAC/SPA has technically and financially supported 4 projects (2 projects in 2011 and 2 projects in 2012) implemented by 2 national NGOs dealing with marine conservation aspects in Albania and Montenegro (Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania (INCA) and Nautilus NGO from Montenegro).

The two technical activities undertaken in Albania, dealt with: (i) Measuring fishing efforts in the Sazan-Karaburun marine national park and raising awareness on the marine park role and benefits for fisheries, tourism, etc. (2011), and (ii) Identification of tourism potential activities in the Sazan-Karaburun MPA and surrounding area; designing and producing awareness materials for the tourism attraction; and organizing a conference on the sustainable tourism promotion with local and national stakeholders (2012).

The two technical activities undertaken in Montenegro, dealt with: (i) Surveying the pressure caused by spear fishing and some diving activities along the Montenegrin coast; and producing and disseminating awareness-raising material on spear fishing and divers' impact on the environment (2011), and (ii) Giving the opportunity to decision-makers for the management and development of tourism in "Katič" MPA area (Montenegro) to undertake an exchange visit to Miramare Marine Reserve (Italy) in order to learn about best practices for visitor management in MPAs (2012).



Awareness workshop for divers, Montenegro (2011)
© Vesna MACIC



Leaflet illustrating the Port-Cros National Park Charter
of eco-divers, in Montenegro

Besides, RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO provided their support for twenty two Libyan national officers and Marine Protected Areas stakeholders in terms of capacity-building which benefited of three

training courses on (i) Planning socioeconomic assessments in Marine Protected Areas (Bizerte (Tunisia), 26-30 May 2012), (ii) GIS application to marine environment (Tunis (Tunisia), 1-2 June 2012), and (iii) Participatory process and stakeholders' engagement in MPAs (Akyaka (Turkey), 10-14 February 2013).

Finally, well aware of the importance of experience-sharing and capacity-building to improve MPA management, RAC/SPA has developed several activities within the MedMPAnet project, as follows:

- Co-organizing with MedPAN a regional training workshop for Mediterranean MPA managers on "Climate change in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas", held in Cadaqués (Spain), from 1 to 4 April 2014,
- Supporting two Tunisian environmental NGOs in running a removal campaign of the invasive plant *Carpobrotus* in the Kuriat Islands (20 April 2014), along with the edition of a leaflet on the Kuriat biodiversity features to be disseminated to tourists and other sea users visiting the site,
- Supporting the Tunisian APAL and INSTM in running the summer turtles monitoring campaign in Kuriat Islands and also providing training to a number of Tunisian and non-Tunisian young scientists in turtle nesting sites monitoring techniques,
- Providing support to 9 marine scientists and MPA practitioners (from: Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Morocco, and Spain), to attend the RAC/SPA-convened Symposia on the Conservation of Mediterranean Marine Key Habitats (Portorož, Slovenia, 27-31 October 2014) and present the results of the MedMPAnet project habitat-related field assessments,
- Providing technical and financial support to the MedPAN network 2014 regional experience-sharing workshop on "Monitoring for managing Mediterranean MPAs" (Albania, 25-27 November 2014). The workshop gathered 150 participants from 14 Mediterranean countries and was an opportunity to support managers to better identify and implement monitoring in line with the objectives of their MPA; and to promote specific protocols to harmonize data collection throughout the regional MPA system.

2.3.3 Running on-job-training for managers, practitioners and relevant authorities in identified demonstration areas, on planning, management and ecological aspects of MPAs

Taking advantage of all the field ecological surveys undertaken in Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro and Tunisia, on-job trainings have been delivered to local experts by experienced international scientists assigned by RAC/SPA.

These on-job trainings have embraced various themes, such as: benthos sampling using underwater visual census and cameras; fish sampling using underwater visual census; recognizing animals and plants underwater; alien species; importance of socio-cultural aspects in planning MPAs; the impact of MPAs on society; human impact on MPAs, etc.

For more efficiency, RAC/SPA tried, as much as possible, to deliver these trainings in local languages.

Furthermore, RAC/SPA organized in September 2011 in Santa Pola (Spain), a Mediterranean training session on the "Identification and classification techniques of marine and coastal species for the ecological monitoring of marine protected areas". This training course contributed to strengthen the skills of 8 Marine Protected Areas managers and practitioners from 7 Mediterranean countries.

As a follow-up of the successful 2011 regional training workshop undertaken in Santa Pola, in collaboration with the the Marine Research Centre of Santa Pola (CIMAR) of the University of Alicante (Spain) and the Marine Reserve of Nueva Tabarca, RAC/SPA organized respectively in 2012, 2013 and 2014 three other regional workshops as follows:

- A 2nd Regional training session, on ecological monitoring in Marine Protected Areas, from 23 to 28 September 2012. Twelve participants from eight Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Libya, Montenegro, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey) took part to this session which particularly focussed on field work,

- A 3rd Regional training session on ecological monitoring in MPAs, organized from 23 to 28 September 2013. Thirteen MPA managers and practitioners, and marine researchers, from Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Montenegro and Tunisia, took part to this session, and
- A 4th Regional training session on ecological monitoring in MPAs protected areas RAC/SPA organized, from 22 to 27 September 2014. Ten MPA managers and practitioners, and marine researchers, from Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Montenegro and Tunisia, took part to this session.

2.4 Ensuring financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks

2.4.1 Financial analysis for the establishment of new MPAs

RAC/SPA and MedPAN are currently collaborating with WWF-MedPO in order to: (i) elaborate a study on financial needs of Mediterranean MPAs, (ii) develop a Guide for the financing of MPA, and (iii) prepare a training workshop on MPA financing.

Data collection and processing which started since October 2014 led to the elaboration of the study of financial needs of Mediterranean MPAs. However, the Guide for the financing of MPA is underpreparation and the training workshop on MPA financing is scheduled for October 2015 in the Natura Reserve of Scandola (Corsica, France).

2.4.2 Demonstration Project: Demonstrating financial sustainability mechanisms for new MPAs in four different areas (Albania, Algeria and Morocco)

This activity concerning the identification of financial sustainability mechanisms for the pilot MPAs will be implemented as the crowning part of the demonstration projects presented in sub-section 2.2 and are planned between June and September 2015.

3. Reports and publications

At this stage (May 2015), RAC/SPA has completed a significant number of activities on the way of the Project full implementation which allowed producing a substantial number of reports and publications. Hereinafter a summary of the MedMPAnet Project reports and publications (2010-2015):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report of the 2010 Second SAP BIO National Correspondents Meeting/MedMPAnet project Inception Workshop (English/French). - Report of the 2010 Third SAP BIO Advisory Committee Meeting (English). - Report of the 2012 Third SAP BIO National Correspondents Meeting/MedMPAnet project Mid-term Workshop (English/French). - Report of the 2012 Fourth SAP BIO Advisory Committee Meeting (English). - Report of the 2013 Fourth Meeting of SAP BIO National Correspondents (French/English). 	<p>Inception and mid-term workshops, SAP BIO Advisory Committee and National Correspondents meetings // Establishment of coordination mechanisms for regional MPA management</p>
<p>Albania:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal and institutional framework assessment for conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity and the establishment of MPA in Albania (Albanian/English). - Ecological study in the Porto Palermo Bay and surrounding areas (Albanian/English). - Socio-economic survey and tourism development study in Porto Palermo Bay (Albanian/English). <p>Algeria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Socio-economic and local stakeholder participation study in the future pilot MPA of Réghaia in Algeria (French). - Draft report on the ecological characterization of Reghaia marine area in the East Algiers' area (French). <p>Croatia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal and institutional framework assessment for conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity and the establishment of MPA in Croatia (Croatian/English). - Marine and coastal habitats and species mapping in Croatia (Croatian). - Monitoring protocol for <i>Posidonia oceanica</i> beds (English). - Monitoring programme for coralligenous community in Croatia (English). - Field manual for monitoring of <i>Posidonia oceanica</i> meadows (Croatian/English). - Field Report of testing of the monitoring protocol for coralligenous community in 2013 (English) - Field Report of testing of the monitoring protocol for coralligenous community in 2014 (English) - Monitoring activities by applying National Monitoring Protocol for <i>Posidonia oceanica</i> in marine areas of Primorje and Gorski Kotar County (English) 	<p>Technical reports // Identification and planning of new MPAs</p>

- Assessment and monitoring of coastal fisheries resources and socio-economic research of local fisheries (Croatian).

Lebanon

- Synthesis Report on the ecological characterization of sites of interest for conservation in Lebanon: Enfeh Peninsula, Ras Chekaa Cliffs, Raoucheh, Saida, Tyre and Naqoura (English).
- Report of the ecological characterization of the marine areas of Enfeh Peninsula, Ras Chekaa and Raoucheh in Lebanon (English).
- Report of the ecological characterization of the marine areas of Saida, Tyre and Naqoura in Lebanon (English).

Libya

- Ecological assessment of the marine extension of the El Kouf National Park in Libya (Arabic/French).
- Economic and social survey of El Kouf National Park in Libya (English).
- Scientific field survey report for the development of Ain Al-Ghazala and Bomba Bay Marine Protected Areas in Libya (English).

Montenegro

- Legal and institutional framework assessment for conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity and the establishment of MPA in Croatia (Montenegrin/English).
- Rapid assessment survey of coastal habitats to help prioritize the suitable new areas needing a status of protection for the development of a network of marine and coastal protected areas in Montenegro (English).
- Fishery activities assessment in Montenegro (English).
- Ecological quantitative description of Boka Kotorska (Kotor) Bay marine area in Montenegro (English).
- Marine biodiversity of Boka Kotorska Bay (Montenegrin).
- Marine biodiversity of Boka Kotorska Bay - Summary Report (English)
- Feasibility study on ecotourism in Boka Kotorska Bay, Montenegro (English).

Morocco

- Identification of priority marine sites suitable to become MPAs in Morocco (French).
- Identification of potential stakeholders and partnerships for the establishment of a national MPA network in Morocco (French).
- Marine communities of the Cap des Trois Fourches: characterization, mapping and management outlines
- Cap des Trois Fourches: Ecological characterization and management outlines (French).
- Development of a management plan for the future marine and coastal protected area of the Cap des Trois Fourches in Morocco: Assessment and diagnosis (French).

Technical reports //
**Identification and planning of
new MPAs**

<p>Tunisia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary study of the marine habitats in Kuriat Islands in Tunisia (French). - Complementary study of the marine habitats and key species in Kuriat Islands in Tunisia: Natural assemblages of conservation interest (French). - Socio-economic study of the marine and coastal environment of Kuriat Islands in Tunisia (French). - Assessment and diagnosis report for the elaboration of a management plan for the future marine and coastal protected area of Kuriat Islands in Tunisia (French). - Management Plan for the future marine and coastal protected area of Kuriat Islands in Tunisia (French). 	<p>Technical reports // Identification and planning of new MPAs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines for the establishment and management of Marine Protected Areas for cetaceans (English). - Guidelines for threatened populations of marine and coastal bird species (English/French). - Guidelines for the management of Marine Protected Areas for turtles (English/French). - Regional study for the development of guidebooks for the MPA managers in the Mediterranean (English/French). - Stakeholder participation toolkit for identification, designation and management of marine protected areas (English). - Guidelines for the monitoring of Lesser Crested Terns <i>Thalasseus bengalensis emigratus</i> (Arabic/English). - Guidance for building Marine Protected Areas networks (English/French). - Cetaceans manual for MPA managers (English). 	<p>Guidelines and teaching packages</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Capacity Building Strategy to Enhance the Management of MPAs in the Mediterranean Sea (WWF-MedPO – RAC/SPA – MedPAN), (English). - Proceedings of the Regional Training Workshop on management planning for Marine Protected Areas (English). - Report of the Regional Training Workshop on planning for sustainable fisheries in Marine Protected Areas (English). - Report of the Regional Training Workshop on planning for sustainable tourism in Marine Protected Areas (English). - Report of the 2011 Mediterranean Training Session on identification and classification techniques of marine and coastal species for the ecological monitoring in MPAs (English). - Report of the 2012 Mediterranean Training Sessions on ecological monitoring in Marine Protected Areas (English). - Report of the 2013 Mediterranean Training Session on ecological monitoring in Marine Protected Areas (English). - Report of the 2014 Mediterranean Training Session on ecological monitoring in Marine Protected Areas (English). 	<p>Capacity-building, workshop and training reports // Improved MPA management</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Report of the Regional Training Workshop on Climate Change and Mediterranean MPAs (English).- Report of the Training Workshop on GIS Application - Libya Capacity-Building Programme (French).- Report of the Training Workshop on socio-economic studies in MPAs - Libya Capacity Building-Programme (French).- Report of the Training Workshop on stakeholder engagement in MPAs - Libya Capacity-Building Programme (English).- Report of the Training Workshop on GIS techniques (Croatian/English).- Report of the Workshop on the feasibility study on ecotourism in Boka Kotorska Bay in Montenegro (English).	<p>Capacity-building, workshop and training reports // Improved MPA management</p>
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4. Perspectives

In order to continue implementing activities on MPAs creation and management, as a priority for the region, UNEP/MAP, RAC/SPA, WWF-MedPO and MedPAN are currently discussing with the European Commission a new project funding. The overall objective of the new proposed project is to further strengthen and develop the Mediterranean network of ecologically representative, inter-connected and effectively managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

The proposed activities to be implemented within the project concern the three following components:

Component 1: MPA Regional Coordination and Networking aiming to ensure long-term networking and capacity building of MPAs in the Mediterranean, and to set up a permanent think-tank / reflection group focused on Mediterranean MPA issues, under the Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity (SPA/BD) Protocol.

Component 2: MPA Establishment aiming to the creation of new MPAs which have to be identified, characterized and set up to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness.

Component 3: Improvement of the MPA Management aiming to improve MPA management, including the development and implementation of management plans, zoning plans, fisheries management plans, etc. Moreover, under this component innovative approaches to ensure the financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks are identified and tested. Finally, some of the activities will focus on stakeholders' engagement in the governance and management of MPAs, through co-management or participatory management approaches.