

Draft Decision IG.22/13

Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to Achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean

The 19th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, hereinafter referred to as “the Barcelona Convention”,

Recalling the objectives of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the 2030 Agenda adopted by the UN Summit, on Sustainable Development 2015 and including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 14;

Recalling further Decisions IG.19/13 of COP 16 (Marrakesh, Morocco, November 2009) regarding the Regional Working Programme for the Coastal and Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean including the High Sea, and IG.21/5 of COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013) regarding the preparation of a roadmap for a comprehensive coherent network of well-managed MPAs to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean for consideration by COP 19;

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration adopted by COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013) according to which the States resolved to develop, a comprehensive, well-managed, effective and equitable, ecologically representative and well-connected system of coastal and marine protected areas in the Mediterranean by 2020 in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and in particular to meet by 2020 Target 11 in the Mediterranean;

Recalling Decision IG.20/4¹ and IG.21/3² of COP 17 (Paris, France, February 2012) and COP 18 (Istanbul, Turkey, December 2013) respectively adopting Ecological Objectives, Operational Objectives, GES and related targets;

Taking into consideration the outcomes of the Mediterranean Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) (Málaga, Spain, April 2014), and the 6th IUCN World Parks Congress (Sidney, Australia, November 2014);

Having considered the description of the Mediterranean areas meeting the EBSA criteria, included by the Twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, October 2014) in the EBSA repository and information-sharing mechanism;

Welcoming cooperation and coordination with relevant international and regional organizations, in particular within the framework of MOU, to contribute to the implementation of the Regional working programme for the coastal and marine protected areas supported by this Roadmap;

1. *Adopts* the Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to Achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean, as set out in Annex I to this Decision, as guidance to update and implement the Regional Working Programme for the Coastal and Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean including the High Sea;
2. *Strongly encourages* the Contracting Parties, with the support of the Secretariat, to take into account the Roadmap in the implementation of the Regional Working Programme for the Coastal and Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean including the High Seas;
3. *Strongly emphasizes* the importance of cooperation with relevant international and

¹ Implementing MAP ecosystem approach roadmap: Mediterranean Ecological and Operational Objectives, Indicators and Timetable for implementing the ecosystem approach roadmap

² Decision on the Ecosystems Approach including adopting definitions of Good Environmental Status (GES) and targets

regional organizations, including donors, to contribute to the implementation of the Regional Working Programme for the Coastal and Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean including the High Sea supported by this Roadmap in a synergic and coordinated way, promoting sharing networks, experiences and resources, and to assist countries to upgrade MPA management and undertake the appropriate steps to urgently increase the surface areas covered by MPAs in the Mediterranean;

4. *Welcomes* as an example of an innovative financial mechanism for biodiversity, the establishment of a trust fund for Mediterranean MPAs promoted by Monaco, Tunisia and France and welcomes the progress made in this regard, in particular the financial contribution by Monaco; and looks forward to the support by Stakeholders to this initiative;

5. *Requests* the Secretariat to strengthen links with relevant international and regional organizations in order to promote sustainable management of marine areas through appropriate area-based conservation measures, including on the high seas, as appropriate;

6. *Takes note of* the suggested actions as included in objective 4, addressing the need to ensure the sustainability of the network of Mediterranean MPAs by enhancing their financial sustainability and requests the Secretariat to include appropriate measures in the new, comprehensive Resource Mobilization Strategy being prepared for COP 20 in accordance with Decision IG 22/1;

7. *Requests* the Secretariat to undertake an evaluation of the implementation of the Regional Work Programme supported by this Roadmap and report the results to COP 20.

Annex

**Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to Achieve Aichi
Target 11 in the Mediterranean**

Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to Achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean

Rationale

1. Being committed under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to achieve the Aichi Targets, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention requested SPA/RAC to prepare a roadmap aimed at guiding and harmonizing their efforts towards achieving the Aichi Target 11 by 2020 (Decision IG.21/5). The Roadmap should emanate from the “Regional Working Programme for the Coastal and Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean Sea including the High Sea”³ and build on the progress made so far in the Mediterranean to develop marine and coastal protected areas. It should also consider other effective area-based conservation measures having a potential to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the components of the marine and coastal Mediterranean biodiversity.

Relationship between this Roadmap and the strategic orientations under the Barcelona Convention

2. This Roadmap is not intended as a new binding document under the Barcelona Convention, but it rather includes recommended actions that are fully in line with the orientations set in the main strategic documents of the MAP system, in particular the Mid-Term Strategy (MTS)⁴, the SAP BIO⁵, the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) process and the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development (MSSD). Furthermore, the biennial Programme of Work for 2016-2017 fully takes into account the actions proposed in the Roadmap. The added value of this Roadmap is to provide a compendium of actions emanating from the MAP strategic orientations and harmonized in a way that facilitates (i) joining the efforts of the Mediterranean countries to improve the Mediterranean network of MPAs in accordance with Aichi Target 11, (ii) harmonizing the contributions of the relevant international organizations in assisting countries towards achieving Aichi Target 11, and (iii) assessing the progress made as well as ensuring a better visibility, at regional and global levels, of the MAP contribution in building the comprehensive coherent network of well-managed MPAs referred to in Aichi Target 11.

Implementation approach

3. The proposed actions provide general guidance to achieve the agreed objectives, while the details about their implementation at national level will be defined by each Contracting Party according to its national legal and institutional context.

4. The Roadmap will be implemented within the legal framework provided by the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and in line with the relevant provisions of the other international and regional instruments (agreements or conventions)[, such as CBD and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)⁶,

5. In this context, the Resolution 69/292 related to the “Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction”, adopted by the UN General Assembly, on 19 June 2015, is welcomed.

³ Adopted by the Sixteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Marrakesh, Morocco, 3-5 November 2009).

⁴ The UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021.

⁵ The Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region, adopted by the Thirteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Catania, Italy, 11-14 November 2003).

⁶ Statement made by Turkey: “Turkey reserves its position with respect to the reference made in this paragraph to the United Nations Convention on the law of the sea to which it is not a Party. This reference should not be interpreted as a change in the legal position of Turkey with regard to the said Convention. Nor could it be interpreted as imposing any legally binding obligation on a non-Party to Turkey”.

6. Moreover, an initiative aiming at the contribution to the creation of a trust fund for Mediterranean MPAs was launched in 2013 by the Governments of France, Monaco and Tunisia. This initiative was welcomed by Ministerial Message conveyed by the Ajaccio High-level Policy meeting organized in the framework of the 3rd International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC 3, Marseilles and Ajaccio, France, 21-27 October 2013). This trust fund aims to contribute to enhancing Mediterranean MPAs sustainability.

Elements considered for the elaboration of the Roadmap

7. In preparing the draft Roadmap, SPA/RAC considered first the results of the 2012 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (Antalya, Turkey, 25-28 November 2012) and in particular the roadmap approved by the participants to the Forum, whose elaboration was based on a consultation process involving a wide range of stakeholders: MPA managers, scientists, decision-makers, IGOs, civil society, donors, etc. The roadmap issued in Antalya was not intended to be a document committing countries, but a tool providing detailed recommendations and proposing steps, principles and activities to decision-makers, MPA managers, sea users and other stakeholders, in order to strengthen the Mediterranean MPAs with the view of having them evolving towards a more coherent, representative and efficient network. The Roadmap also takes into account the outcomes of relevant initiatives at global and regional levels, in particular the decisions adopted by international (e.g. CBD, Ramsar, UNCLOS, UNESCO) and regional (e.g. ACCOBAMS, GFCM) fora.

8. SPA/RAC also considered the results of three particularly relevant events:
- The 3rd International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC 3, Marseilles and Ajaccio, France, 21-27 October 2013);
 - The Mediterranean Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) (Málaga, Spain, 7-11 April 2014);
 - The 6th IUCN World Parks Congress (Sidney, Australia, 11-19 November 2014).

9. In addition, SPA/RAC took due account of the recommendations of the UNEP/MAP Secretariat's Initial Gap Analysis on existing measures under the Barcelona Convention relevant to achieving or maintaining good environmental status of the Mediterranean Sea, in line with the Ecosystem Approach (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.401/5), which highlight the need for strengthened and more coordinated implementation efforts, to achieve the agreed regional EcAp targets.

10. Furthermore, it built on the experience and knowledge generated through the EcAp-MED 2012-2015 EU financed project, which paved the way towards the establishment of a joint network of SPAMIs in the high seas (the "Joint Management Action of EC with UNEP/MAP for identifying and creating Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs) in the open seas, including the deep seas" project), with the three priority sites for engagement are: the Alboran Sea, the Adriatic Sea and the Sicily Channel/Tunisian Plateau.

11. The outcomes and concepts that emerged from these events, analysis and projects provided additional elements that allowed a further refinement of the draft Roadmap proposed hereinafter.

12. Furthermore, SPA/RAC submitted the preliminary draft Roadmap to an ad hoc meeting⁷ (Tunis, Tunisia, 27-28 April 2015) to which it convened a group of MPA experts, including representatives of relevant partner organizations (ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN, MedPAN, and WWF-MedPO). The draft Roadmap as reviewed and amended by the ad hoc meeting was then examined by the Focal Points for SPAs during their Twelfth Meeting (Athens, Greece, 25-29 May 2015) that made some changes to the text and invited SPA/RAC to pursue its consultation

⁷ The convening of this ad hoc meeting was supported by FFEM in the framework of the MedMPAnet project. The MedMPAnet project is implemented in the framework of the UNEP/MAP-GEF MedPartnership with the financial support of: EC, AECID and FFEM.

on the Roadmap with the Focal Points for SPAs and with the other MAP Components with a view to preparing a revised version of the Roadmap to be submitted to the MAP Focal Points Meeting (Athens, Greece, 13-16 October 2015).

13. The present version of the Roadmap takes into account the comments made by the Twelfth Meeting of Focal Points for SPAs as well as the comments collected during the email consultation undertaken during July 2015 among the Focal Points for SPAs, MAP Components and partner organizations.

Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to Achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean

14. This Roadmap was elaborated to guide the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and harmonize their efforts to achieve the globally agreed Aichi Target 11.

15. To this end, the activities proposed in the Roadmap were oriented towards achieving the following four Objectives:

Objective 1: Strengthen networks of protected areas at national and Mediterranean levels, including in the high seas and in ABNJ, as a contribution to the relevant globally agreed goals and targets.

Objective 2: Improve the network of Mediterranean MPAs through effective and equitable management.

Objective 3: Promote the sharing of environmental and socio-economic benefits of Mediterranean MPAs, and the MPAs integration into the broader context of sustainable use of the marine environment and the implementation of the ecosystem and marine spatial planning approaches.

Objective 4: Ensure the stability of the network of Mediterranean MPAs by enhancing their financial sustainability.

Timeframe

16. Considering the short period remaining before 2020, the Roadmap proposed hereinafter contains only suggested actions to guide the Contracting Parties and relevant international and regional organizations, to timely implement the regional working programme for the coastal and marine protected areas in the Med including the high seas with the goal to achieve Aichi target 11 by 2020.

17. The Contracting Parties will report to COP 20 (2017) about the steps they have done during the biennium 2016-2017 and steps they will undertake during the biennium 2018-2019.

18. SPA/RAC shall provide COP 20 with an assessment of the progress in implementing the Roadmap (based on the reporting by the Contracting Parties).

19. By the end of year 2019, an evaluation will be made at regional level to assess the progress made (including success and possible failure) by the Mediterranean countries towards achieving the Aichi Target 11.

Objective 1: Strengthen networks of protected areas at national and Mediterranean levels, including in the high seas and in ABNJ, as a contribution to the relevant globally agreed goals and targets

20. In order to meet Aichi Target 11, Mediterranean MPAs network or other effective area-based conservation measures need to be organized into a network, or system of networks, with the following elements being enhanced in particular: a) **extension** through the designation of new areas, the expansion of existing areas, and the incorporation of areas benefiting from other

types of protection measures; b) **ecological representativity**, through the selection of marine protected areas based on scientific information, which are to be identified within all marine areas, including within ABNJ; c) **ecological connectivity**, with the new areas strategically located to ensure that they are spatially distributed in an ecologically meaningful way; and d) **geographical balance**, with area-based conservation more homogeneously distributed across the region, both within and outside national jurisdiction.

21. In the long term, the Mediterranean countries should take into account/are invited to consider the Promise of Sidney made at the 6th IUCN World Parks Congress, in particular by ensuring that at least 30% of each Mediterranean marine habitat is covered by MPAs.

Suggested actions for the Contracting Parties

1.1) Undertake, at national level, gap analysis to identify the ecosystems and other components of marine biodiversity that are under-represented in the existing MPA system. The gap analysis should take into account the wide range of objectives for specially protected areas as provided for by the SPA/BD Protocol (Part II, Section One). The gap analysis should also identify the needed steps to enhance connectivity among Mediterranean MPAs. The gap analysis should be conducted through a scientifically based process that also ensures the full and effective participation of stakeholders (local communities, sea users, scientists, NGOs, etc.).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.1					

1.2) Identify and propose area-based conservation/management measures or candidate MPAs for listing in the regionally and globally recognized area-based management classifications, including, in particular, SPAMIs, GFCM's Fishery Restricted Areas (FRAs), UNESCO's Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.2					

1.3) Make use amongst other sources, of the scientific information regarding the description of areas meeting EBSA criteria including the information in the EBSA repository and information-sharing mechanism for the implementation of this Road map.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.3					

1.4) Establish and implement national plans to formally designate and/or extend, as appropriate, MPAs and other area-based marine management measures to address under-representation identified by the gap analysis, taking into account the engagement from Aichi Target 11. The elaboration of the national plans should be conducted through a scientifically based process that also ensures the full and effective participation of stakeholders (local communities, sea users, scientists, NGOs, etc.).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.4					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

1.5) Disseminate technical tools for gap analysis and MPA system planning and facilitate exchange of experiences and best practices, and where necessary, provide assistance to national authorities on these issues.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.5					

1.6) Offer assistance to national authorities and, where needed, facilitate the multilateral processes for the identification of potential MPA sites including in ABNJ, and where appropriate facilitating bilateral initiatives.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.6					

1.7) Ensure the continued functioning, updating and improvement of a regional database of protected areas, including regional inventories of sites of conservation interest.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.7					

1.8) Facilitate the application of the existing compliance mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the MPA related measures adopted to meet the commitments taken by Mediterranean Governments.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.8					

1.9) Undertake by the end of 2019 an assessment of the status of the Mediterranean network of MPAs with the view of evaluating the progress made by the Mediterranean countries towards achieving the Aichi Target 11 (encouraging countries to notify the designation to the regional database MAPAMED⁸).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.9					

Objective 2: Improve the Mediterranean MPA network through effective and equitable management

22. Aichi Target 11 requires protected areas to be “effectively and equitably managed”, and Mediterranean nations should invest a special effort to satisfy such condition as far as their area-based conservation measures are concerned, without prejudice to the rights and jurisdictions of the coastal State. Elements where improvement is urgently needed include ensuring that **management measures** are implemented in all areas through effective management mechanisms, with adequate availability of human, material and financial resources. Key to effectiveness success will be in particular the building and sharing of capacity to manage transboundary and High Sea areas, as well as engaging managers and stakeholders from the private sector and civil society in integrating and ensuring fulfilment of conservation needs with socio-economic opportunities provided by MPAs.

⁸ Database of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean: www.mapamed.org.

Suggested actions for the Contracting Parties

2.1) Review, and where necessary amend, existing institutional and legal systems applicable to MPAs. It is particularly important to (i) break down governance barriers that impede the adequate functioning of institutions and other bodies in charge of MPA management, (ii) establish institutional arrangements that ensure efficient surveillance and enforcement of legal measures, and (iii) promote participatory management in particular through the creation of consultation mechanisms at national and local level.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.1					

2.2) Assess the effectiveness of the existing governance and management system for each MPA, using and further developing management effectiveness indicators elaborated for Mediterranean MPAs⁹. It is highly recommended that the assessment be conducted regularly and through a participatory approach involving MPA managers, scientists, sea users, local communities and NGOs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.2					

2.3) Ensure that for each MPA clear objectives and concrete measures, based on the best available knowledge and with appropriate stakeholder involvement, are prepared, adopted, implemented and revised when necessary (inclusive of measures such as zoning, monitoring, enforcement, research), and that all MPAs have adequate management teams in terms of skills and staff number.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.3					

2.4) Engage in discussions, wherever appropriate, with neighbouring Contracting Parties in the development of joint mechanisms for the management of networks of MPAs, and MPAs extending over multiple jurisdictions and/or into ABNJ, also taking advantage from lessons learned in similar previous experiences.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.4					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

2.5) Provide assistance to the relevant Contracting Parties in conducting evaluation of the effectiveness of MPA management. Assistance could involve: a) direct support in the conduction of effectiveness assessments; b) the development of harmonized technical tools including guidelines, standards and indicators for the MPA management evaluation, specifically adapted to the Mediterranean context; c) the compilation and dissemination of information on lessons learnt in the context of MPA management, including success and failure stories; and d) elaboration and/or review of existing MPA management plans.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.5					

2.6) Strengthen the existing capacity building mechanisms for MPA managers, and promote their coordination into a regional capacity building system, using a wide range of training approaches (e.g. training courses, on the field trainings, online trainings modules, exchange of visits). The system should target also other actors (e.g. enforcement and judiciary authorities, private sector) and decision-makers.

⁹ This could be done through considering and further developing existing indicators such as those developed by WWF-Italy and IUCN-Med in 2013 (Guide for quick evaluation of management in Mediterranean MPAs).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.6					

2.7) Facilitate the elaboration of management approaches for MPAs that promote harmonization and complementarities between MPAs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.7					

2.8) In order to ensure the effective management of transboundary MPAs, or MPAs extending into ABNJ, offer assistance to Contracting Parties to facilitate the needed multilateral processes, without prejudice to the rights, the present and future claims or legal views of any State relating to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.8					

Objective 3: Promote the sharing of environmental and socio-economic benefits of Mediterranean MPAs and the MPAs integration into the broader context of sustainable use of the marine environment and the implementation of the ecosystem and marine spatial planning approaches

23. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) have proved their usefulness in the conservation of the marine environment and in restoring degraded habitats and depleted species populations. Their role in the economic and social development and in ensuring sustainable livelihood sources is being increasingly recognized. However, there is still need in the Mediterranean for integrating MPAs in a wider approach for the sustainable management of the marine and coastal resources and for strengthening their added values in terms of services provided to local communities, increasing food security and poverty alleviation. Once further integrated into the broader context of sustainable use of the marine environment and into the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach and taking into account the marine spatial planning approach to the management of human activities, the Mediterranean MPAs will be more effective in opening new income generating opportunities and in offering a framework for dialogue between sea users, while ensuring their primary biodiversity conservation role. Using MPAs as platforms for consultation among stakeholders may significantly contribute in the resolution of user conflicts and in promoting equitable sharing of benefits.

Suggested actions for the Contracting Parties

3.1) Ensure conciliation between the conservation objectives and the requirements for the local economic and social development by establishing and implementing adequate measures, such as zoning systems¹⁰ for MPAs that are regularly assessed.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.1					

3.2) Promote cross-sectorial policies and mechanisms for integrating the MPA national strategies and policies with other human activity sectors, in particular fisheries and tourism, through the development of appropriate governance frameworks, including the related legal and institutional arrangements. These could include, but will not be limited to, cross-sectorial coordination, marine spatial planning legislation, support groups from the business sectors for MPA management, and legal instruments for public-private partnerships.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.2					

3.3) Develop systems enabling civil society to engage effectively in MPA management.

¹⁰ Zoning schemes establishment should be based on internationally established and tested guidelines and guiding principles, such as those established by IUCN.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.3					

3.4) Establish MPAs in areas particularly suitable for the conservation of living marine resources, both for extractive and non-extractive use, and encourage the equitable sharing of social and economic benefits deriving from MPAs, including for poverty alleviation and for improving the standard of living of local populations, while encouraging conservation and sustainable use of these resources.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.4					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

3.5) Provide assistance to the relevant Contracting Parties in further integrating MPAs into their territorial, national heritage, social and economic contexts, in particular through the development of guidelines and promoting exchange of experiences, in promoting the sharing of environmental and socio-economic benefits of Mediterranean MPAs, and the MPAs' integration into the broader context of sustainable use of the marine environment, through the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach and taking into account the marine spatial planning approach.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.5					

3.6) Facilitate, through technical and financial support, stakeholder networking initiatives at national and regional level with the view of (i) generating further synergies between MPAs and other relevant human activity sectors, in particular fisheries and tourism, and (ii) ensuring continued monitoring of the development of these sectors.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.6					

3.7) Provide assistance to Mediterranean countries in integrating MPAs as key reference areas within the application of the Ecosystem Approach under the Barcelona Convention.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.7					

Objective 4: Ensure the stability of the Mediterranean MPA network by enhancing their financial sustainability

24. The long-term sustainability of the Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) will be ensured only if the legal framework governing their planning and management is appropriately adapted to the challenges they are facing. Where there is sufficient understanding or higher political will and real commitment from States to marine biodiversity conservation, the stability of Mediterranean MPAs may be increased by the setting up of stronger MPA legal frameworks. Legislation governing MPAs should ensure (i) long-term stability of the legal status of MPAs, (ii) participation and involvement of stakeholders in the planning and management processes, (iii) equitable access and sharing of resources and of benefits generated by MPAs, and (iv) securing the financial sustainability of Mediterranean MPAs. Such sustainability is a prerequisite to ensure their stability and the achievements of their objectives. Mediterranean countries decision-makers' higher awareness of the socio-economic benefits that MPAs could generate will help in properly integrating them into the local and national development plans. Investing in marine protected areas, through long-term innovative financing approaches, has the potential to make MPAs not a financial burden for States, but rather a booster for income generation and the economy in general. The actions suggested in this objective are meant to be considered for the inclusion in the resource mobilisation strategy that is the mechanism to

address in a strategic manner all the operational and financial means for the full and timely implementation of the Barcelona Convention its Protocols and Action Plans.

Suggested actions for the Contracting Parties

4.1) Review, and where necessary, amend existing relevant legal and institutional frameworks with the view of improving the governance of existing MPAs and boosting the creation of new MPAs to urgently increase, in the Mediterranean, the marine surface area that is protected and effectively managed.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.1					

4.2) Assess the financial needs and gaps for MPAs and develop funding strategies, making use as appropriate of innovative funding approaches and ensuring a proper marketing of the services and benefits generated by MPAs. Applying the concepts of “user/payer” and “payment for (marine) ecosystem services” would help securing diversified and significant financial resources for natural resources conservation and particularly for MPAs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.2					

4.3) Secure the financial resources necessary to the establishment of MPAs during their initial years; MPAs being indeed more dependent on steady financial resources during their first development stages (planning and creation). Achieving the Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean requires a special financial effort from States to boost the establishment and management of new MPAs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.3					

4.4) Assist MPA managers in enhancing their fundraising capacities, in particular through the development of their business plans, by removing possible legal impediments discouraging or prohibiting autonomous fundraising by MPAs, and using financial management approaches based on efficiency, transparency and adequate financial reporting.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.4					

4.5) Establish national environmental funds and/or other mechanisms for supporting conservation actions and particularly MPAs creation and management.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.5					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

4.6) Assist countries to build national capacities for fundraising for MPAs through training activities, promoting exchange of experience and dissemination of information about best practices and innovative funding success in MPAs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.7					

4.7) Invite funding agencies and donors to consider increasing up to appropriate levels the funding for MPAs in the five coming years (2016-2020) to assist Mediterranean countries to upgrade the management of MPAs and to undertake the appropriate steps to urgently increase the surface areas covered by MPAs in the Mediterranean.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.8					

4.8) Facilitate, through coordination and technical assistance, fundraising for joint scientific surveys in Mediterranean high sea zones with the view of providing data for the establishment of SPAMIs, FRAs or the implementation of other relevant area-based conservation measures.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.9					

4.9) Assist national authorities/MPA managers in carrying out specific (pilot) monitoring activities, in line with Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme, in order to assess the status of the MPAs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.10					

