



## Second General Assembly Oceanographic Institute in Paris - 16 June 2016

### Strategy Paper

#### An established and recognized regional initiative

The initiative to set up a sustainable financing mechanism for Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) was launched jointly by France, Monaco and Tunisia in October 2013 in Ajaccio, during the high-level session of the International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC3). It received political support from the countries bordering the Mediterranean, in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean<sup>i</sup> and the Barcelona Convention.<sup>ii</sup>

This initiative contributes to reaching the targets adopted under international and regional conventions, especially:

- Aichi Target 11, adopted in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- the roadmap for MPAs<sup>iii</sup> adopted in the framework of the Barcelona Convention;
- Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 on oceans, seas and marine resources;
- the targets on marine ecosystems mentioned in the UNFCCC Paris Agreement.

#### Principles and aims of the initiative

The initiative:

- will complement and be closely coordinated with existing international, regional and national programs, especially those carried out under the Barcelona Convention;
- will contribute to the implementation of the national strategies related to MPA;
- will enhance existing MPAs to prove their ecological, social and economic value and thus will encourage the creation of additional MPAs;
- will mobilize funding to supplement current Mediterranean MPA funding, including through innovative financing mechanisms;
- will foster long-term financing, particularly for MPA activities that receive little funding but are essential for the management effectiveness of the MPA;
- will help regional networks supporting MPA managers (capacity-building, exchanges of experience, etc.).

#### An Association bringing together States and civil society to lead the initiative

The Association is a cooperation platform that aims to set up a trust-fund-type mechanism (the Fund) that should help to sustainably develop and improve the management of Mediterranean MPAs.

It is open to States that have confirmed their commitment to implementing an ambitious policy to support MPAs and explicitly shown their support for the initiative (to date, Albania, Croatia, France, Monaco, Morocco and Tunisia) and to regional organizations involved in the conservation of Mediterranean marine and coastal ecosystems (RAC/SPA, MedPAN, WWF Mediterranean, IUCN-Med, Initiative PIM, etc.).

Its main missions are as follows<sup>iv</sup>:

1. To keep working on the strategy and organization of the Fund

The aim is to lay the foundations of the Fund, together with all members of the Association and the financial partners, namely by:

- specifying the needs of the MPAs with the countries concerned and defining the operational objectives of the Fund;
- defining the legal architecture, governance and financial strategy.

2. Mobilize public and private financial partners for capitalization of the Fund

Several public and private financial actors have already confirmed their interest in this initiative. It is now necessary to continue discussions with them to establish the terms, conditions and schedule of their contribution to the Fund.

It is also necessary to define the various financial tools that the Fund will host, in liaison with these financial partners.

The Association will seek additional financing opportunities to supplement existing investment in the conservation of Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity.

It will also endeavour to initiate innovative financing partnerships (such as payments for ecosystem services, compensation systems, the creation of “green-blue” bonds, etc.).

3. Initiate a financing pilot phase to help enhance existing MPAs in Association member countries

Before the end of 2016, the Association will allocate some of the funds it has received to support the first batch of MPAs in Association member countries that have detailed their financial needs. The aim is to give positive, illustrative and tangible signs that there is a will and capacity to take prompt actions.

This funding will be allocated on the basis of the priorities and eligibility criteria set out in the document entitled “2016 Pilot Phase - Financing Arrangements”. During this pilot phase, various financing arrangements will be tested over a period of two to three years.

The means of action of the Fund will be discussed in light of the outcomes of this pilot phase.

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<sup>i</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Environment and Climate Change in May 2014.

<sup>ii</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention in February 2016.

<sup>iii</sup> Roadmap towards a comprehensive, coherent and efficiently managed network of MPAs, in order to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean, adopted in Athens in February 2016 at the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

<sup>iv</sup> Based on meetings carried out in May 2016 with the main partners of the initiative and the conclusions of the technical workshop held in September 2014.