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The Resource Mobilisation Strategy for the Post-2020 SAPBIO, including the Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs, for the period 2022-2030

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SPA/RAC
Tunis, 2024

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10.1. Measures taken for the implementation of the Post-2020 SAPBIO

The Resource Mobilisation Strategy for the Post-2020 SAPBIO, including the Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs, for the period 2022-2030

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**Resource Mobilisation Strategy
for the Post-2020 SAPBIO,
including the Post-2020 Strategy
for MCPAs and OECMs, for the
period 2022-2030**



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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACCOBAMS	Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of Parties
EcAp	Ecosystem Approach
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GES	Good Environmental Status
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
IMAP	Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MCPA	Marine and coastal protected area
MPA	Marine protected area
MSSD	Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development
MTS	Medium-Term Strategy
OECM	Other effective area-based conservation measure
Post-2020	Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region
SAPBIO	Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPA	Specially Protected Areas
SPA/BD	Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity
SPAMI	Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance
SPA/RAC	Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

Resource Mobilisation Strategy for the Post-2020 SAPBIO, including the Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs, for the period 2022-2030

1. Introduction

The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), signed in 1976 and amended in 1995, with its related seven Protocols, is the only regional multilateral legal framework setting the obligations “*to prevent, abate, combat and to the fullest extent possible eliminate pollution of the Mediterranean Sea Area*” and “*to protect and enhance the marine environment in that area so as to contribute towards its sustainable development*”.

The seven Protocols to the Barcelona Convention have expanded its application to the seabed and its subsoil, to terrestrial coastal areas, including wetlands, and to river watershed; taken measures to conserve marine biodiversity, enhancing the alignment with global targets; promoted specially protected areas; strengthened the commitments of the region to more ambitious objectives for ensuring integrated coastal zone management; phased out pollution from land- and sea-based sources; and promoted transition to sustainable patterns of consumption and production and circular economies.

The Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean¹ (SPA/BD Protocol) was adopted in 1995 with the view of strengthening the efforts of the Contracting Parties to protect, preserve and manage in a sustainable and environmentally sound way threatened or endangered species of flora and fauna as well as areas of particular natural or cultural value, notably by the establishment of specially protected areas. It calls Parties to adopt strategies, plans and programmes for the conservation of biological diversity. It is in this context that the Post-2020 SAPBIO was adopted as an overall umbrella of all thematic strategies and action plans adopted in the framework of the SPA/BD Protocol, including the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean², and the regional action plans for the conservation of endangered species and vulnerable habitats³.

The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) is giving capital importance to a realistic operational implementation of the Post-2020 SAPBIO supported by the Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs. To this end, SPA/RAC intends, during the 2022-2023 biennial period, to develop activities aiming at gathering the Contracting Parties and partners to initiate this process. The first step is the elaboration of a resource mobilisation strategy for marine and coastal biodiversity conservation in the Mediterranean, based on the Post-2020 SAPBIO and Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs, for the period 2022-2030.

¹ https://www.rac-spa.org/sites/default/files/protocole_aspdb/protocol_eng.pdf

² https://www.rac-spa.org/sites/default/files/doc_cop/cop22/decision_25.12_en.pdf

³ <https://www.rac-spa.org/publications#en4>

2. Background

2.1. The Post-2020 SAPBIO

The Post-2020 SAPBIO was adopted by the Barcelona Convention's Contracting Parties at their COP 22 (Antalya, Türkiye, 7-10 December 2021). It resulted from a long bottom-up process of national, sub-regional and regional consultations, coordinated by SPA/RAC during the 2020-2021 period, with the involvement of the Contracting Parties and their respective national stakeholders, as well as key intergovernmental, non-governmental and other relevant regional and international organizations:

- i. National processes involving national stakeholders in order to identify the needs, priorities and orientations in favour of the Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity beyond 2020.
- ii. Sub-regional level consultations to identify similarities, shared issues, priorities and possible synergies among neighbouring countries.
- iii. The regional level consultations involving the SAPBIO National Correspondents (representatives of the Contracting Parties) and the SAPBIO Advisory Committee which is made of representatives of most relevant international and regional organizations, provided a platform for consultation at all the stages of the Post-2020 SAPBIO elaboration and allowed a better harmonization and integration at regional and global levels.

The countries' inputs to the Post-2020 SAPBIO have been analysed and 42 Actions were identified at national, sub-regional and regional levels for the conservation of the Mediterranean marine ecosystems and species, as well as for the implementation of sustainable marine and coastal activities including fisheries from an ecosystem-based approach point of view.

While bringing a high level of ambition, the Post-2020 SAPBIO is action-oriented and made of activities tailored towards realistic objectives that countries could reasonably achieve with the assistance of relevant international and regional organizations and the support of donors and funding agencies.

It is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and harmonized with the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), through the optic of the Mediterranean context. It includes principles, approaches, measures, targets, timetables and priorities for action, as well as a priority list for intervention to be implemented by or in coordination with the Contracting Parties, and relevant international and regional partners in the Mediterranean region.

The structure of the Post-2020 SAPBIO follows a hierarchical pattern and terminology analogous to that proposed by the CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework:

- a) **A Vision to 2050:** "By 2050, marine and coastal biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy Mediterranean Sea and coast, and delivering benefits essential for nature and people";
- b) **A Mission to 2030:** "By 2030 start to reverse the loss of biodiversity and put the Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity on the path to recovery for the benefit of nature and people";

- c) **Three (3) Goals to 2030:** (i) Goal 1. Reduce the threats to biodiversity; (ii) Goal 2. Ensure that biodiversity is preserved and maintained or enhanced in order to meet people's needs; and (iii) Goal 3. Enable the necessary transformative change, putting in place tools and - solutions for implementation and mainstreaming.
- d) **27 SMART Targets** related to the following subjects:

Goal 1 Reduce the threats to biodiversity

- ADDRESS PRESSURES
- MARINE AND COASTAL PROTECTED AREAS
- ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Goal 2 Ensure that biodiversity is preserved and maintained or enhanced in order to meet people's needs

- IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE
- SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES
- MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY

Goal 3 Enable the necessary transformative change, putting in place tools and nature-based solutions for implementation and mainstreaming

- IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING
- CAPACITY BUILDING AND NETWORKING
- OUTREACH AND AWARENESS
- MOBILIZING SUFFICIENT RESOURCES

The full lists of the 27 targets and 42 actions are provided in annex to this document.

2.2. The Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean

The Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs is built around **5 Strategic Pillars:** (i) Governance, (ii) MCPA network expansion, (iii) OECMs, (iv) Management effectiveness, and (v) Government and stakeholder action and support. Under each pillar, a clear strategic outcome (**5 Strategic Outcomes**), with corresponding outputs (**20 Outputs**) and proposed key actions (at national and international levels) have been identified (**126 Actions**). The strategic outcomes and outputs are provided in annex to this document.

The Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs aims to achieve the **2** following Targets, by **2030:**

- at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, with the focus on areas particularly important for biodiversity.
- the number and coverage of marine and coastal protected areas with enhanced protection

- levels are increased, contributing to the recovery of marine ecosystems.

3. Resources needs

The main needs expressed by the Mediterranean countries during the elaboration process of the Post-2020 SAPBIO included in particular:

- **Technical and financial support for:**
 - i assessment of the effectiveness of M CPA management, elaboration of management plans for MCPAs,
 - ii Streamline biodiversity conservation into national strategies, action plans and legal frameworks.
- **Capacity building** including technical training sessions, guidelines and exchange of experience through field visits.
- **Training and information sessions targeting judiciary and administrative resources** involved in the enforcement of marine biodiversity related legislation.
- **Support by legal experts** for the establishment of MCPAs and the setting up of national legal frameworks for OECMs.

4. Alternative scenarios

The implementation of the Post-2020 SAPBIO requires the simultaneous follow-up of several complementary funding approaches. It is up to each country to mobilize the financial resources for the actions it intends to undertake within the framework of the Post-2020 SAPBIO. However, for several countries support from donors and funding agencies will be necessary.

Indeed, it emerges from the assessment of the previous SAPBIO of 2004-2018 that the non-availability of financial resources was a serious hindrance to the implementation of concrete actions. This difficulty was also reflected in the national reports provided as part of the of Post-2020 SAPBIO elaboration.

Within the framework of this strategy the resource mobilisation will cover:


- the identification of the financial and in-kind resources that could be made available at national level;
- assistance to countries to develop their national programmes for the sustainable funding of the biodiversity conservation;
- capacity building of countries in relation to the development of funding requests;
- elaboration of regional project concepts and contacts with potential donors;
- advocacy towards the governments and organisations having funding programmes of relevance for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity with the view of persuading them to consider the Post-2020 SAPBIO actions among their priority topics for the Mediterranean;
- assistance to countries to develop their national programmes for the sustainable funding of MCPAs in line with Target 19 of the Global Biodiversity Framework that aims at:

- Significantly increasing domestic resource mobilization, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of adapted national instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances;
- Leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments;
- Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, benefit-sharing mechanisms, with environmental and social safeguards;
- Optimizing co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises.

5. Operating method

The Resource Mobilisation Strategy outlines how the SPA/RAC will conduct the processes of prioritising, planning, selecting, monitoring projects, as well as coordinating with the Contracting Parties for mobilising and effectively using the identified resources, in collaboration with MAP Components and relevant regional partner organisations.

The Strategy will allow to target suitable donors for prioritising approved actions and to establish new long-lasting partnerships.



• **Elaboration of the RMS Concept Note Nov 2022:**

- The SPA/RAC elaborate an RMS concept note which define the content, structure and specific objectives of the final document. The draft was prepared by the SPA/RAC and reviewed by the contracted experts.



• **Elaboration of brief project concepts:**

- A set of brief project concepts is elaborated based on the priority actions within the 42 Actions included in the Post-2020 SAPBIO and the 126 proposed actions of the Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs. These projects are aimed to be implemented at the Mediterranean regional, sub-regional or multinational levels to assist Mediterranean countries to implement the above-mentioned strategies. They are part of the RMS document.



• **Mapping of the potential donors and funding agencies:**

- This step defines all the potential multilateral and bilateral donors from the public and private sectors, analyses their profiles and identifies the most relevant ones for each project



• **Elaboration of a project portfolio:**

- Four full project proposals are developed, with regional and sub-regional scope using the above-mentioned brief concepts. These full project concepts will constitute the Portfolio of projects to be presented to donors. The full project concepts are drafted based on donors-fitting, the Post-2020 SAPBIO priorities, funding modalities and requirements of the identified high potential donors.



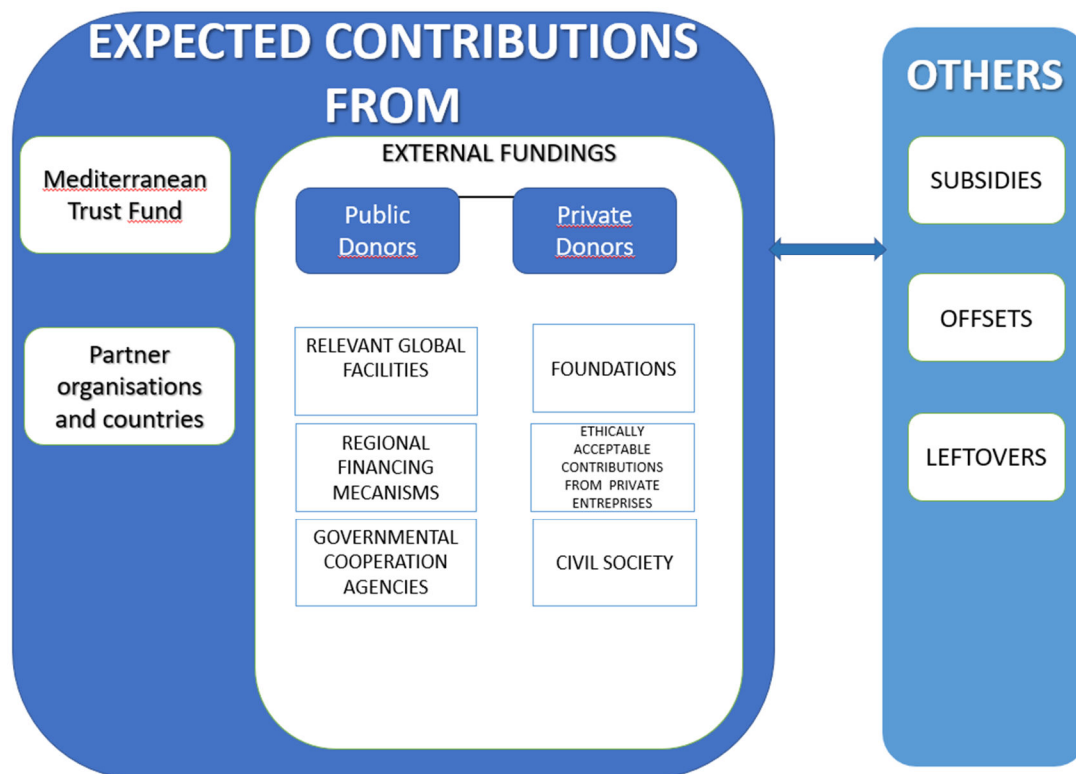
• **Finalisation of the RMS:**

- The strategy is based on a multitude of approaches adapted to the various socio-economic and political contexts of the region. The final document of the RMS includes not only the portfolio of projects but also provides a framework for the provision by the Mediterranean countries of national funding and in-kind resources. It includes/identifies several kinds of needs, such as capacity-building, technical, scientific, legal, or institutional assistance; financial resources mobilization; etc.



• **Preparation of the donor conference:**

- The donor conference will gather and attract key donors and funding agencies in a roundtable and aims at presenting the elaborated project portfolio. Since the project portfolio aims to implement the Post-2020 SAPBIO and Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs, an overview of the proposed outcomes, priority actions and implementation plan of the Post-2020 SAPBIO and Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs will also be presented to potential donors.



6. Project portfolio

6.1. Methodology

Four level criteria were used to identify the projects to be included in a first portfolio of projects covering the period 2024-2026:

- ***First level criteria:*** Only Very high priority actions with a regional scope were considered.
- ***Second level criteria:*** From the Very high priority actions, only those corresponding to one or more of the core provisions of the SPA/BD Protocol were considered.
- ***Third level criteria:*** Actions already covered by ongoing or planned regional projects (*see table 4. in annexe*) were not considered.
- ***Fourth level criteria:*** High priority actions that could help the implementation of the identified projects have been considered, regardless of their scope (National or Regional).

The application of the above levels of criteria led to the identification of four project proposals for each of them a Project concept was developed, as a first phase of implementation, in consultation with (i) the Partner organisations that are members of the SAPBIO Advisory Committee and (ii) the National Correspondents of SAPBIO. The Project concepts are presented in the following section "6.2 Project proposals".

A second project portfolio will be prepared in 2026 following the mid-evaluation of the implementation of the Post-2020 SAPBIO planned for the last month of 2025.

6.2. Project proposals

6.2.1. Project 1: Conserving biodiversity and promoting sustainable blue economy as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Mediterranean through MCPAs and OECMs

6.2.1.1. *Covered Actions of the Post-2020 SAPBIO:*

- 11. SPATIAL PLANNING:** Support countries for the development of systematic conservation planning taking into account ICZM, land use/marine use planning and management aspects in the context of MSP
- 13. CLIMATE CHANGE:** Increase climate change impacts monitoring and contributions to mitigation and adaptation, particularly to warming, acidification, and to disaster risk reduction, through nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based
- 15. MCPAs and OECMs:** Assist countries in the implementation of the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs
- 23. SMALL SCALE FISHERIES:** Promote the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Small Scale Fisheries (VGSSF) and co-management practices in professional small-scale fisheries, advised by traditional ecological knowledge and the best available science
- 25. TOURISM:** Develop a framework of specific indicators for assessing the impact of marine and coastal tourism on destinations and for promoting ecotourism
- 40. EMPLOYMENT:** Adequately increase the employment, notably public employment in direct relation to marine biodiversity conservation (and eventually include redirecting existing one) as basic component for future blue economy wise development approaches

6.2.1.2. *Issues at stake*

By adopting, in December 2021, the Post-2020 SAPBIO⁴ and the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs⁵, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention⁶ agreed that "**by 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved** through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, with the focus on areas particularly important for biodiversity".

Marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) are recognised as effective tools for preserving natural sites. In the Mediterranean, since the adoption, in 1995, of the Barcelona Convention's Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol), a number of strategies, programmes, action plans and roadmaps have been developed to help the Contracting Parties meet their obligations under the Protocol in relation to the protection and management of natural sites of conservation interest.

However, despite the important achievements, gaps persist in terms of geographical balance, representativeness and management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). These gaps have been identified as the main challenges to be considered within the framework of the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean.

⁴ Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region.

⁵ Post-2020 Regional Strategy for marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures in the Mediterranean.

⁶ The 22 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention are: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Türkiye, and the European Union (EU).

For the achievement of the five Strategic outcomes of the Strategy, most of the Mediterranean countries need substantial technical and financial support, in particular, concerning the expansion of the network of MCPAs, the improvement of their management effectiveness and the identification of marine and coastal OECMs in the Mediterranean, their recognition and reporting towards the post-2020 global and regional targets. Indeed, funding shortages and discontinuity are remarked in the national and subregional assessments as the recurring obstacles to the development and sustainability of effective MCPAs and OECMs throughout the Mediterranean.

Although often perceived by the public and some stakeholders to be in direct competition with human economic activities, MCPAs have an important potential to play a functional and supportive role to promote a sustainable blue economy. In this context, there is a need to ensure a wider recognition of the socio-economic values of MCPAs and OECMs and their role in helping to achieve other non-biodiversity conservation agendas, especially through opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. Ensuring that MCPAs and the blue economy work in tandem to promote sustainable growth, decent work and reduce poverty is another challenge for the Mediterranean countries.

In addition to their central role in biodiversity conservation, MCPAs have therefore a great potential to provide socio-economic benefits and contribute to sustainable development.

6.2.1.3. Links with relevant International/Regional Policies

In addition to contributing to achieve commitments taken by the Mediterranean countries under the Barcelona Convention and other regional agreements such as ACCOBAMS and GFCM, this project is a contribution to the achievement of global goals, in particular, those promoted by:

- The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and
- The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in particular its Target 3: "*Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories*".

6.2.1.4. Geographical coverage of the project

The project will focus on the relevant Mediterranean zones **with particularly low MCPA coverage**. It will be implemented in the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Türkiye. Other Mediterranean countries will be involved in the project by providing technical support and/or participating in the project actions with a regional scope.

6.2.1.5. *Project Work packages*

6.2.1.5.1. **Work package 1: MCPA Network Expansion**

6.2.1.5.1.1. **Activity 1.1 Inventory of areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services**

Rationale

The coverage of marine protected areas is far from being representative of the Mediterranean Sea biodiversity. Increasing the MCPA coverage requires that areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem services are clearly identified across the region, in particular in countries with particularly low MCPA coverage, such as the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries.

The Dark Habitats Action Plan adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Decision IG.25/13) urged countries to Implement and/or extend MPAs to include already identified sites of interest that host dark habitats at national level and in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).

Description of the activity

This activity will consist in adequately supporting the identification of areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services and sharing information through regional platforms in particular for under-represented ecosystems such as offshore and deep-sea ecosystems, and those situated in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). National plans/strategies will be developed to **establish ecologically coherent national MCPA systems** with clear priorities and timeframes, based on gap analysis to identify and prioritize areas requiring conservation along with their expected level of protection considering their natural, cultural and landscape values and associated ecosystem services. The national MCPA systems to be established under this activity should also ensure that the number and coverage of marine and coastal protected areas **with enhanced protection levels** are increased.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 1.1.1 National inventories of areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services	National plans (or strategies) for establishing an ecologically coherent national MCPA system with clear priorities, levels of protection and timeframes, based on priority natural, cultural and landscape values and associated ecosystem services	Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Türkiye .	SPA/RAC, ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, MedPAN, ETC-UMA
Action 1.1.2 Inventories of areas with vulnerable ecosystems located in ABNJ	A regional plan for establishing appropriate protection regimes for the areas with vulnerable ecosystems located in ABNJ taking into account the Joint Cooperation Strategy on Spatial-based Protection and Management Measures for Marine Biodiversity signed by the Secretariats of UNEP/MAP,	(Action with a regional scope)	SPA/RAC, REMPEC, ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN-Med, ETC-UMA

Action	Expected results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
	ACCOBAMS, GFCM and IUCN-Med.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.1.5.1.2. Activity 1.2 Establishment of soundly designed MCPAs, including areas with enhanced protection levels and encompassing areas beyond national jurisdiction

Rationale

Among the urgent action over the decade to 2030, the Contracting Parties to CBD agreed to ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (GBF Target 3).

In the Mediterranean, the MPA coverage is still not balanced in terms of geographical distribution and representativeness of the Mediterranean ecoregions since most of the existing MPAs are located in the northern part of the Mediterranean and in coastal waters. Furthermore, the number and coverage of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels need to be increased, including by reviewing protection measures and statuses of existing MCPAs.

Description of the activity

This activity will support Mediterranean countries with particularly low MCPA coverage to establish new protected areas within their territories. The assistance to be provided relates to the technical, scientific and legal support for the delimitation of the candidate MCPAs, the identification of protection and management measures applicable to each proposed MCPA and the facilitation of stakeholder consultation. A special focus will be on building capacity and experience sharing to promote connectivity and complementarity of MCPAs and for the creation of new MCPAs with enhanced protection levels, including no-take zones. To this end, tools for monitoring, documenting and communicating the impacts of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels will be produced and made available.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 1.2.1 Establishment by countries of well-connected, soundly designed and effective MCPA national systems	Increased coverage of MCPA Distribution of MCPA systems across the Mediterranean Sea is balanced	Albania, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, and Tunisia.	SPA/RAC, IUCN-Med, MedPAN, ETC-UMA
Action 1.2.2 Facilitate collaboration between	A regional plan for establishing appropriate	(Action with a regional scope)	SPA/RAC, REMPEC, ACCOBAMS, GFCM,

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
neighbouring countries to protect areas with vulnerable ecosystems located in ABNJ using existing instruments (SPAMIs, FRAs, PSSAs, etc.)	protection regimes for the areas with vulnerable ecosystems located in ABNJ		ETC-UMA

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.1.5.2. Work package 2: Marine and coastal OECMs

6.2.1.5.2.1. Activity 2.1 Promote understanding of OECM criteria and conducting the needed processes for the recognition and reporting to MAPAMED and WD-OECM of potential and candidate OECMs

Rationale

In 2018, the CBD defined an “other effective area-based conservation measure” as: “A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values”. OECMs allow recognizing efforts and contributions by other sectors to biodiversity conservation. Some OECMs may host important biodiversity and ecosystem services that would benefit from additional area-based measures to increase their biodiversity outcomes and should therefore be prioritized in cross-sectoral marine spatial planning so that new OECMs can be established.

Although no marine OECMs are currently recognized in the Mediterranean region, there has been some experience among Contracting Parties in the recognition of terrestrial OECMs. These present an opportunity for learning and adapting these to the marine context.

Description of the activity

This activity will focus on (i) supporting Contracting Parties in understanding OECM criteria and ensuring appropriate and harmonized approaches to the application and testing of sites against these criteria, (ii) building capacities of Mediterranean countries on the identification of OECMs and the application of the CBD’s OECM criteria and (iii) identifying a family of other measures that are applicable to OECMs in the Mediterranean context.

Further guidance and support will be provided for potential and candidate OECM recognition and reporting to relevant regional and global databases.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 2.1.1 Communication and awareness about OECMs and their role in contributing to biodiversity conservation and SDGs across Contracting Parties and sectors	Understanding and awareness of Contracting Parties and stakeholders on OECMs enhanced	Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Türkiye.	SPA/RAC, ACCOBAMS, IUCN-Med, MedPAN, ETC-UMA
Action 2.1.2 Assist countries to establish multi-stakeholder platforms to identify potential OECMs using relevant screening tools	OECMs identified, recognized and reported to relevant regional and global databases		
Action 2.1.3 Training programme on the identification of OECMs and the application of OECM criteria	Enhanced capacity of the Mediterranean countries for the identification, designation and reporting of OECMs		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.1.5.3. Work package 3: MCPA Management

6.2.1.5.3.1. Activity 3.1 Ensure that all MCPAs develop integrated conservation and management measures

Rationale

Ensuring adequate conservation of biodiversity through MCPAs goes beyond simply increasing their geographical coverage but requires that they benefit from effective management.

In the Mediterranean, one of the significant persisting weaknesses regarding MPAs is that less than one-fourth of the Mediterranean MPAs has a management plan, and less than half of these are effectively implemented. Management plans are crucial tools in providing clear guidance to both MCPA managers and users of the area. They should be developed in close consultation with stakeholders.

Lack of sufficient and sustainable finances and lack of institutional and staff capacity have been identified across all Mediterranean countries as the main barriers to effective management plan elaboration and implementation.

There is therefore a clear need to support the development of practical and cost-effective management plans for MPAs in the region as well as to ensure the review of those that require updates.

Description of the activity

This activity will start with the assessment of (i) the status of MCPA management plans in the Mediterranean to identify where they are lacking and where they need review/updating and (ii) the capacity development (training) needs of the MCPA staff across the region. Based on the results of these assessments, the countries participating in the project will be assisted to develop/review the management plans of their respective MCPAs. Simultaneously regional and national training will be carried out, including through exchange of experience.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 3.1.1 Identify MCPAs where management plans are lacking and assess the effectiveness of existing management plans	All MCPAs have management plans integrating conservation and management measures that include MCPA conservation challenges beyond their border, climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, a zoning plan, and site-specific measures for all marine activities	Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya , Morocco, and Tunisia.	SPA/RAC, ACCOBAMS, IUCN-Med, MedPAN, The MedFund, ETC-UMA
Action 3.1.2 Assist countries to develop or review the management plans of their MCPAs		Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia .	
Action 3.1.3 Regional and national training programmes based on the assessment of MCPA staff training needs		Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro , Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Türkiye .	

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.1.5.3.2. Activity 3.2 Ensure, through pilot action, the sustainability of blue economy in MCPAs or OECMs (SSF, nature-based tourism)

Rationale

Small-Scale Fishing (SSF) and nature-based tourism may contribute to better integrate MCPAs or OECMs within their socioeconomic contexts while ensuring a high level of ownership and adherence from the local populations to the conservation objectives. Although there are examples of successful integration of sustainable fishing and tourism in some Mediterranean MCPAs, such approaches are still lacking in many countries, in particular in the Southern Mediterranean where there is a high level of reluctance from fishers and other sea users in relation to the establishment of MCPAs in their zones.

Description of the activity

This activity will consist of a series of pilot actions to promote small-scale sustainable fishing and nature-based tourism in and around MCPAs. This will include for each pilot action a feasibility study to assess its sustainability after the project lifespan as well as a wide consultation process at the local and national level to define the beneficiaries, the needed support and the required institutional/legal arrangements.

This activity will include the following actions:

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 3.2.1 Pilot actions to ensure the sustainability of small-scale fishing activities when they are authorized in MCPAs or OECMs	Demonstrated added value of MCPAs or OECMs in terms of social and economic benefits and ecosystem services they could sustainably generate, while protecting biodiversity.	Algeria, Egypt and Libya, Montenegro and Tunisia.	SPA/RAC, GFCM
Action 3.2.2 Pilot actions to ensure the sustainability of nature-based tourism activities when they are authorized in MCPAs or OECMs		Morocco, Israel, Libya, Montenegro and Tunisia.	SPA/RAC, Plan Bleu, IUCN-Med

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.1.5.3.3. Activity 3.3 Assist countries in using MCPAs and OECMs as nature-based solutions to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation

Rationale

The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention agreed among the targets they adopted within the Post-2020 SAPBIO that by 2030, all Mediterranean countries have adopted and started implementing short- and medium-term measures for climate change mitigation and adaptation. They also recommended the inclusion of MCPA initiatives in NDCs and other climate-related programmes.

In addition to their potential to contribute, as nature-based solutions, in the efforts to the mitigation of and adaptation to Climate Change, MCPAs, may also play a role as sentinels in the monitoring and early detection of the impacts of Climate Change on ecosystems, particularly seawater warming and acidification.

Description of the activity

The actions under this activity will be oriented towards enhancing knowledge of the role of MCPAs and promoting their inclusion in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other climate-related programmes. As recommended by the Post-2020 SAPBIO, a coordinated climate change monitoring network will be established in the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs) to provide countries with climate-related information for early warning, risk assessment, mitigation strategies and adaptation plans. Under this activity, the project will also assist MCPAs to elaborate their

respective plans for adaptation to the effect of Climate Change on their ecosystems (one pilot MCPA per country).

This activity will include the following actions:

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 3.3.1 Coordinated climate change monitoring network in SPAMIs	Enhanced knowledge of the role of MCPAs in relation to Climate Change Climate-related information for early warning, risk assessment, mitigation strategies and adaptation plans	Albania, Algeria, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia .	SPA/RAC, IUCN-Med, MedECC
Action 3.3.2 Assistance to MCPAs in the elaboration of their respective plans for adaptation to the effect of Climate Change	Enhanced resilience of MCPAs to Climate Change	Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro , Morocco, Syria and Tunisia .	SPA/RAC, Plan Bleu, IUCN-Med

Implementation timetable

Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	

6.2.1.5.4. Work package 4: Project coordination and management

The Project implementation will be coordinated by SPA/RAC in collaboration with the Project partners and with the guidance of a Steering Committee composed of representatives of the participating countries and the Project partners.

The rules of procedure for the Steering Committee will be defined in close consultation with the financing partner(s).

A full-time project coordinator and an administrative assistant will be appointed for the project duration.

In addition to the regular reporting to the financing partner(s), reports about the progress made in the implementation of the project will be submitted by SPA/RAC to the SPA/BD Focal Points. The other partners may also report to their respective relevant governing bodies.

A mid-term evaluation and Final evaluation of the project will be undertaken taking into account the result indicators to be agreed in the logical framework of the project

6.2.1.6. Project partners

Being of a regional scope, the project will be implemented with the participation of all Mediterranean countries through their respective SPA Focal Points and other national organisations in charge of MCPAs. The following national organisations will be responsible for the implementation of the project actions to be carried out in their respective countries:

- Albania: Ministry of Tourism and Environment
 - National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA)
- Algeria: Ministère de l'Environnement
 - Commissariat National du Littoral (CNL)
- Bosnia & Herzegovina: Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo (HEIS)
- Egypt: Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)
- Israel: Ministry of Environmental Protection
 - Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA)
- Lebanon: Ministry of Environment
 - National Centre for Marine Sciences of the National Council for Scientific Research of Lebanon (CNRS-Lebanon)
- Libya: Ministry of Environment
- Montenegro: Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism
 - Environmental Protection Agency of Montenegro
 - Public Enterprise for Coastal Zone Public Management (PE Morsko dobro or PE-CZPM)
- Morocco: Agence Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (ANEF)
- Syria: Ministry of Local Administration and Environment
- Tunisia: Ministère de l'Environnement
 - Agence de d'Aménagement et de Protection du Littoral (APAL)
- Türkiye: Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change

Project partner organisations: The following organisations will provide assistance to the national authorities in implementing the project activities (listed in alphabetical order)

- ACCOBAMS - The Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area.
- ETC-UMA - The European Topic Centre on Spatial Analysis and Synthesis of the University of Malaga.
- GFCM - The Secretariat of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.
- IUCN-Med - The International Union for Conservation of Nature Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation.
- MedECC - The Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change.
- MedPAN - The Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean.
- PAP/RAC - The Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (of UNEP/MAP)
- Plan Bleu - The Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (of UNEP/MAP).
- REMPEC - The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (of UNEP/MAP and IMO).
- SPA/RAC - The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (of UNEP/MAP).
- The MedFund - Conservation Trust Fund for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean.

6.2.1.7. *Project Timetable*

Workpackages		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Work package 1: MCPA Network Expansion	Activity 1.1 Inventory of areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services						
	Activity 1.2 Assistance to countries for the establishment of soundly designed MCPAs, including areas with enhanced protection levels and encompassing areas beyond national jurisdiction						
Work package 2: Marine and coastal OECMs	Activity 2.1 Assistance to countries in understanding OECM criteria and conducting the needed processes for the recognition and reporting to MAPAMED and WD-OECM of potential and candidate OECM						
Work package 3: MCPA Management	Activity 3.1 Assist countries to identify MCPAs where management plans are lacking and ensure that all MCPAs develop integrated conservation and management measures						
	Activity 3.2 Ensure, through pilot action, the sustainability of blue economy in MCPAs or OECMs (SSF, nature-based tourism)						
	Activity 3.3 Assist countries in using MCPAs and OECMs as nature-based solutions to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation						

6.2.1.8. Project Cost estimates (USD)

	Expected funding from donor(s)	Expected co-funding (in-kind from countries and partners)	Total estimated cost
Activity 1.1 Inventory of areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services	195 000	60 000	255 000
Activity 1.2 Assistance to countries for the establishment of soundly designed MCPAs, including areas with enhanced protection levels and encompassing areas beyond national jurisdiction	550 000	85 000	635 000
Activity 2.1 Assistance to countries in understanding OECM criteria and conducting the needed processes for the recognition and reporting to MAPAMED and WD-OECM of potential and candidate OECM	450 000	100 000	550 000
Activity 3.1 Assist countries to identify MCPAs where management plans are lacking and ensure that all MCPAs develop integrated conservation and management measures	1 170 000	265 000	1 435 000
Activity 3.2 Ensure, through pilot action, the sustainability of blue economy in MCPAs or OECMs (SSF, nature-based tourism)	500 000	70 000	570 000
Activity 3.3 Assist countries in using MCPAs and OECMs as nature-based solutions to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation	700 000	60 000	760 000
Project coordination	450 000	135 000	585 000
Total	4 015 000	775 000	4 790 000

6.2.2. Project 2: Recovering key Mediterranean marine and coastal habitats

6.2.2.1. Covered Actions of the Post-2020 SAPBIO:

1. **SPECIES AND HABITATS PLANS:** Update Mediterranean action plans for selected species and habitats listed under the SPA/BD Protocol
2. **SPECIES RECOVERY:** Develop recovery plans and implement emergency actions for endangered and threatened species whose continued survival depends on such actions, including their habitats
12. **RESTORATION:** Support restoration of ecosystems providing key services, those degraded and expected to become increasingly critical in a changing climate, such as wetlands and shallow seashore habitats among others
17. **INVERTEBRATES:** Survey distribution and abundance, and assess status and main anthropogenic pressures, over priority invertebrate species with focus on *C. rubrum*, *P. nobilis*, and vermetid platforms
18. **VERTEBRATES:** Establish the distribution, status, and the main anthropogenic pressures of species listed under Annex II to the SPA/BD Protocol

6.2.2.2. Issues at stake

The Mediterranean Sea is the victim of decades of unsustainable use despite the efforts for an effective management. The severe pressure from intense fisheries, maritime traffic, land-based pollution, the introduction and spread of non-indigenous species, generated cumulative impacts on its species and habitats. The available data shows that about 21% of the Mediterranean habitats are listed as vulnerable and 11% as endangered in the Red List category in the EU28.

Reversing the decline in Mediterranean key marine habitats and endangered species populations requires first to improve the patchy knowledge on the distribution and status of habitats. There is still strong need to map and inventory habitats, particularly coralligenous, seagrasses, and dark ecosystem to ascertain their status. Indeed, knowledge, data availability and sharing, are insufficient and very patchy, due to limited financial (national or regional), technical and institutional capacities. The National reports, prepared as part of the Post-2020 SAPBIO elaboration process, noted a great disparity between the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean in terms of inventories, mapping and ecological monitoring.

The initiatives to restore degraded Mediterranean key habitats that support the health of the marine environment as well as the sustainability of economic sectors are in their infancy and in need of scaling up. Countries with the support of regional organisation should take advantage of the momentum generated by the Resolution 73/284 of the United Nations General Assembly adopted in March 2019 proclaiming the "United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030)". The Decade implementation is expected to raise awareness of the importance of successful ecosystem restoration and to reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide. Most of the Mediterranean countries stressed the need that the Post-2020 SAPBIO addresses, as a matter of Very High Priority, the restoration of ecosystems. A first step will be the development, by 2027, of a full inventory of ecosystems with the highest ecological relevance and/or regeneration potential (as nursery areas and/or carbon stocks), and by 2030 complete the restoration of most of those selected.

6.2.2.3. *Geographical coverage of the project*

Tackling the restoration of key Mediterranean marine and coastal habitats requires the participation of all Mediterranean countries, not only for the project actions having a regional scope, but also for the actions to be implemented at national level through mutual assistance and exchange of experiences. The habitat mapping actions and the pilot restoration actions will be implemented in the following countries: Albania, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia.

6.2.2.4. *Project Work packages*

6.2.2.4.1. **Work package 1: Improving knowledge**

6.2.2.4.1.1. **Activity 1.1 Mapping of key marine habitats and inventory of areas with degraded ecosystems**

Rationale

Data availability regarding the distribution of the key Mediterranean habitats is insufficient and very patchy. Indeed, national and regional reports have noticed that the information about the distribution, extent and status is very incomplete in many countries and missing in big parts of the southern and eastern basins.

Such information is of crucial importance for the elaboration and implementation of conservation measures, the spatial planning of human activities in the marine environment and for the Environmental Impact Assessment of projected industrial, touristic, infrastructure and other installations in the coastal and marine zones.

Description of the activity

This activity will be mainly dedicated to elaborate detailed maps of (i) key Mediterranean marine habitats focusing on seagrass meadows, coralligenous assemblages and deep-sea habitats, with the view of providing decision makers with habitat distribution maps to take into account when adopting conservation measures, elaborating maritime spatial plans and other plans of relevance for the marine and coastal environments and (ii) degraded ecosystems with the view of developing and implementing national restoration strategies of marine ecosystems.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 1.1.1 Acquiring detailed cartography of key Mediterranean marine habitats in identified priority areas	Maps showing the distribution, extent and status of key habitats available for decision-making in relation to conservation programmes, regulation of sea uses (anchoring, fishing, pipelines, etc.), maritime spatial planning, etc.	Albania, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro and Tunisia	SPA/RAC, Plan Bleu, GFCM, IUCN-Med, ETC-UMA

Action	Expected results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 1.1.2 Identification and mapping of degraded ecosystems and evaluation of their potential for restoration	Improved knowledge of the location, extent and degradation state of key Mediterranean marine ecosystems as baseline information for the elaboration of national strategies for marine ecosystem restoration. Development of national restoration strategies in accordance with the 24 steps of the Short-Term Action Plan on Ecosystem Restoration (STAPER) adopted under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.	Egypt, Lebanon, Montenegro, and Tunisia	

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.2.4.1.2. Activity 1.2 Prediction and warning systems for Marine Heat Waves (MHWs)

Rationale

In its Issues Brief of October 2021 about Marine Heat Waves (MHWs), IUCN stressed that "due to increased greenhouse gas emissions, extended periods of extreme warming in seas and oceans have increased in frequency by 50% in the past 10 years and are becoming more severe". MHWs are discrete periods of unhabitual rise of sea water temperature occurring in surface or deep waters. They have been shown to generate damages to and a decrease of recruitment of some species and also to kill or reduce the productivity of economically important species.

In the Mediterranean, severe impacts on sessile marine species have been attributed to abnormal persistence of MHW events. To better understand the relationship between MHWs and observed impacts, coordinated continuous monitoring of seawater temperature is needed through a network of observation points ensuring wide coverage of MHW Sensitive Habitats.

Description of the activity

Under this activity a network of observation points will be selected and equipped with in-Situ seawater temperature dataloggers in site with MHW sensitive assemblages and habitats to ensure continuous monitoring of the seawater temperature variation. Standard monitoring protocol will be used by the national teams participating in this activity of the project. The collected data will be made available through a dedicated platform and regularly compiled to serve as an early warning system about the occurrence of MHWs and their possible impacts. The installed dataloggers will be regularly visited by scuba diving to retrieve the recorded data and ensure required maintenance operations.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 1.2.1 Setting a Mediterranean network for the monitoring of seawater temperature in habitats that are sensitive to MHWs	Better knowledge of the impact of MHWs on habitats and species	Israel, Morocco, Montenegro	SPA/RAC
Action 1.2.2 Elaboration of standard protocol to collect data and share it through a dedicated platform	Availability of long series of data allowing to detect trends Timely availability of data to serve as early warning system	(Action with a regional scope)	SPA/RAC, ETC-UMA

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.2.4.2. Work package 2: Restoration

6.2.2.4.2.1. Activity 2.1 Pilot actions for ecosystem restoration

Rationale

Achieving Target 2 of the Global Biodiversity Framework requires to ensure that "by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity". For the Mediterranean, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention agreed, through the Post-2020 SAPBIO to develop by 2027 the full inventory of ecosystems with the highest ecological relevance and/or regeneration potential and by 20230 complete the restoration of most of those selected. However, creating a momentum for ecosystem restoration at national and regional levels, requires the mobilisation of resources, capacity building, cooperation, mutual assistance and technology transfer between the countries of the region. To create such a momentum, there is a need to foster political will through advocacy and demonstrative action showing the feasibility of restoration and the benefits that can be generated not only in terms of reversing biodiversity loss but also in recovering the ecosystem services.

Description of the activity

This activity will consist of a series of pilot actions in selected sites identified within the framework of Action 1.1.2 of this project (Identification and mapping of degraded ecosystems and evaluation of their potential for restoration). For each pilot action, a feasibility study will be undertaken to define the most suitable restoration approach for the site and to assess the possible adverse impact that might be generated by the intervention. In this context, lessons learnt from other restoration actions already undertaken shall be considered combining, as appropriate, active and passive restoration approaches.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	To be implemented	
		In the following countries	With the support of the following project partners
Action 2.1.1 Pilot actions to restore ecosystems in selected sites	Feasibility of and benefits from ecosystems restoration demonstrated to decision-makers to foster political will towards restoring the degraded marine ecosystems	Israel, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia	SPA/RAC, Plan Bleu, GFCM, IUCN-Med, MedPAN, ETC-UMA
Action 2.1.2 Development of regional trainings and guidelines for ecosystem restoration	Enhanced capacity of the Mediterranean country to perform Marine ecosystem restoration	(Action with a regional scope)	

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.2.4.3. Work package 3: Project coordination and management

The Project implementation will be coordinated by SPA/RAC in collaboration with the Project partners and with the guidance of a Steering Committee composed of representatives of the participating countries and the Project partners.

The rules of procedures for the Steering Committee will be defined in close consultation with the financing partner(s).

A full-time project coordinator and an administrative assistant will be appointed for the project duration.

In addition to the regular reporting to the financing partner(s), reports about the progress made in the implementation of the project will be submitted by SPA/RAC to the SPA Focal Points. The other partners may also report to their respective relevant governing bodies.

A mid-term evaluation and final evaluation of the project will be undertaken taking into account the result indicators to be agreed in the logical framework of the project

6.2.2.5. Project partners

Being of a regional scope, the project will be implemented with the participation of all Mediterranean countries through their respective SPA/BD Focal Points and other national organisations in charge of habitat conservation. The following national organisations will be responsible for the implementation of the project actions to be carried out in their respective countries (habitat mapping and pilot restoration actions):

The project will be implemented by the following national organisations:

- **Albania:** Ministry of Tourism and Environment National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA)
- **Egypt:** Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)

- **Israel:** Ministry of Environmental Protection Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA)
- **Lebanon:** Ministry of Environment National Centre for Marine Sciences of the National Council for Scientific Research of Lebanon (CNRS-Lebanon)
- **Libya:** Ministry of Environment
- **Montenegro:** Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism, Environmental Protection Agency of Montenegro, Public Enterprise for Coastal Zone Public Management (PE Morsko dobro or PE-CZPM)
- **Morocco :** Agence Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (ANEF)
- **Tunisia :** ministère de l'Environnement, Agence de d'Aménagement et de Protection du Littoral (APAL)

Project partner organisations: The following organisations will provide assistance to the national authorities in implementing the project activities (listed in alphabetical order)

- ETC-UMA - The European Topic Centre on Spatial Analysis and Synthesis of the University of Malaga.
- GFCM - The Secretariat of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.
- IUCN-Med - The International Union for Conservation of Nature IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation.
- MedPAN - The Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean.
- Plan Bleu - The Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (of UNEP/MAP).

6.2.2.6. Project Timetable

6.2.3.	6.2.4.	Year 1	Year 2		Year 3	
Work package 1: Improving knowledge	Activity 1.1 Mapping of key marine habitats and inventory of areas with degraded ecosystems		■	■	■	■
	Activity 1.2 Prediction and warning systems for Marine Heat Waves (MHWs)		■	■		
Work package 2: Restoration	Activity 2.1 Pilot actions for ecosystem restoration			■	■	■

6.2.4.1. Project Cost estimates (USD)

	Expected funding from donor(s)	Expected Co-funding (In kind from countries and partners)	Total Estimated cost
Activity 1.1 Mapping of key marine habitats and inventory of areas with degraded ecosystems	800 000	60 000	860 000
Activity 1.2 Prediction and warning systems for Marine Heat Waves (MHWs)	200 000	55 000	255 000
Activity 2.1 Pilot actions for ecosystem restoration	600 000	60 000	660 000
Project Coordination	300 000	20 000	320 000
Total	1 900 000	195 000	2 095 000

6.2.5. Project 3: The Conservation of Marine Turtles in the Mediterranean Region: preserving ecosystem function & climate resiliency through enhanced marine turtle populations in the Mediterranean

6.2.5.1. Covered Actions of the Post-2020 SAPBIO:

2. SPECIES RECOVERY Develop recovery plans and implement emergency actions for endangered and threatened species whose continued survival depends on such actions,

13. CLIMATE CHANGE Increase climate change impacts monitoring and contributions to mitigation and adaptation, particularly to warming, acidification, and to disaster risk reduction, through nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches

14. GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS Promote actions, including scientific research, with the view of achieving GES for all biodiversity-related ecological objectives within the Ecosystem Approach EcAp/IMAP

27. STREAMLINE Post-2020 SAPBIO Streamline the Post-2020 SAPBIO and Regional strategies and action plans, developed in the framework of the SPA/BD Protocol, into national strategies, action plans and legal frameworks

36. CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE Post-2020 SAPBIO AT NATIONAL LEVEL Enhance the national capacities to implement the Post2020 SAPBIO, to manage MPAs and vulnerable marine and coastal habitats and species

38. AWARENESS Increase awareness, understanding and appreciating of the values and threats to the marine environment, stimulating improved behaviour, and of the responses and good practices, by targeting decision-makers and the general public,

39. OUTREACH AND EDUCATION Promote the integration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems conservation concerns into school, higher education, professional training, and citizen science, so that best practices and innovative technologies to protect marine and coastal ecosystems are more accessible and replicable

6.2.5.2. Issues at stake

Human pressure on ecosystems and climate change combine to hinder the capacity of coastal areas, nearshore environments, and the high seas, to adjust and adapt to the ensuing impacts.

This scenario is no different to that in the Mediterranean Sea. The Mediterranean Sea is rapidly changing in response to the global warming of the world's atmosphere and oceans, and to the synergy of multiple local human disturbances. As a consequence, the Mediterranean is one of the most degraded basins in the world and its rich and diverse life, as well as the economic and social systems that depend upon it, are being threatened by phenomena predicted to increase. These rapidly changing conditions risk the ability of ecosystems and biodiversity to deliver essential ecosystem services and co-benefits that support livelihoods and perform crucial functional roles for the benefit of the region. With temperatures going up 20% faster than the global average, and sea level rises expected to exceed one meter by 2100, the Mediterranean is becoming the fastest warming and the saltiest sea on the planet. Overall, the region's ecological resilience has been radically reduced by unsustainable development – and with USD\$ 450 billion of ocean-related value generated from the Mediterranean's natural capital each year, the socio-economic future of the region is uncertain.

The combination of human pressures and climate change pressures greatly threaten the survival, function and services of marine turtles in the Mediterranean region – considered sensitive species to climate change. Three species of marine turtles are commonly present in the Mediterranean, with two species nesting (Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Green (*Chelonia mydas*)* and Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*)) and are considered species of community interest, in need of strict protection.

Concerning the Mediterranean softshell turtle *Trionyx tringuis* (Forskål, 1775), which is a brackish water species, its presence is limited to Eastern part of the Mediterranean region.

These species are included in the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, annexed to the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean.

In the [IUCN RED List of Threatened Species](#), Green turtles are classified as “Endangered” in the Mediterranean with Leatherback turtles as “Vulnerable”. The Mediterranean sub-population of Loggerhead turtle is assessed as “Least Concern” (LC), but conservation **dependent**. This means that if conservation efforts cease, their population will likely decrease. It is estimated that with current conservation efforts, there are approximately **4,000** and **7,000** green and loggerhead nests each year in the Mediterranean. Moreover, some population estimates are as low as 810,000 and 260,000 in the Mediterranean for loggerhead and green turtles, respectively⁷.

The Mediterranean subpopulation of softshell turtle *Trionyx tringuis* (Forskål, 1775) is listed as Critically Endangered under criteria C2a.

Increasing terrestrial temperatures are predicted to disrupt sex ratios in marine turtle hatchlings, leading to the feminisation of turtle populations / cease in male production, a 1 °C increase in temperature can reduce hatching success by 25%, with 35 °C temperatures nearing 0% success, and increased temperatures reducing hatchling survival rate. Sea level rise is also expected to reduce nesting site area availability, impacting over 1/3 of the marine turtle population, compounded by competition with coastal development, further predicting reduced population numbers.

In the marine environment, reduced Sea Surface temperatures (SST) caused by changes in weather patterns, can affect the physiology ability of turtles, inhibiting their ability to successfully forage, whilst increased SST can cause indirect stress through rapid phytoplankton and pathogenic growth as well as disrupting breeding patterns and possibly reducing clutch sizes. Sea level rise is expected to reduce nesting site area availability impact over 1/3 of the marine turtle population, compounded by competition with coastal development, further predicting reduced population numbers.

The impact of climate change, alongside the continued pressures from bycatch, loss of critical habitat and reduced population resiliency, paints a damning picture for marine turtle populations, and the many services they provide, in the Mediterranean, and Globally.

Marine turtles - even at diminished population levels - play important ecological roles in ocean ecosystems by maintaining healthy seagrass beds, providing key habitat for other marine life, helping to balance marine food webs and facilitating nutrient cycling from water to land. Marine turtles also provide valuable cultural, social and economic services to communities, stakeholders and the tourism industry within the Mediterranean.

Actions to tackle the impact of climate change are hindered by the lack of data due to the current fragmented monitoring, the effectiveness of direct interventions and lack of resources, political will, and funding to implement national and regional strategies. Therefore, in order to limit or reduce the detrimental impact of climate on marine turtles, and critical habitats, in the Mediterranean, the response is two-fold: direct interventions and overarching mitigations coupled with a need to fill knowledge gaps, improve current monitoring and assessment efforts and development and adoption of ecosystem-based management strategies.

Marine turtles should be regarded by Mediterranean people and visitors as a real biodiversity treasure. However, the future of marine turtles will be determined by current and future actions. The development and implementation of good management plans for the conservation of these species, and the services they provide, should be an urgent priority.

⁷ Casale & Heppell 2016

6.2.5.3. Link With relevant international/ Regular Policies

Framework Directive (MSFD) EcAp/IMAP Post-2020 SAP BIO); Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs ; The EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC; The Mediterranean Action for the Conservation of Marine Turtles; The EU Climate Law (EU Green Deal) (EU 2021/1119); Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD 2016-2025); Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for Marine and Coastal Areas (RCCAF); GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea; Marine and Coastal Biodiversity programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 13 and 14

6.2.5.4. Geographical coverage of the project

The activities of this project are of relevance for all Mediterranean countries. So far, the following countries have expressed their interest to participate in the project: Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Spain, Tunisia, Türkiye.

6.2.5.5. Project Work packages

6.2.5.5.1. Work package 1: monitoring and research: Advancing the Latest Science to understand climate change impacts on marine turtles

6.2.5.5.1.1. Activity 1.1- Continued monitoring of marine turtles on both land and at sea to guide management measures.

Rationale

Under the SPA/RAC protocol for Action Plans concerning Marine Turtles, alongside the IUCN MTSO key research priorities, understanding the impact of climate change on marine turtles is a key priority. Harmonised monitoring protocols will be implemented at local, national, and regional scales, building on existing monitoring efforts, as well as establishing baselines in geographical regions that lack existing data such as Libya, Malta, Syria and the Western Mediterranean area. The project will improve monitoring protocols both in-water and on land, advance innovative data sampling techniques and improve the understanding of marine turtle behaviour in lesser studied geographical regions. Additionally, the project will coordinate with international bodies such as the GFCM to supplement available data on vulnerable and protected species to support obligations under the GFCM Strategy 2030 and support the identification of Important Marine Turtle Areas (IMTA).

Description of the activity

The project aims to support national marine turtle monitoring networks and the creation (and implementation) of tools that will enable the monitoring of threats to marine turtles and result in an increase in ability for their mitigation. As sentinel indicators for climate change, monitoring the status and trends of marine turtles will provide a crucial indication to the impacts of climate change in the Mediterranean region. Monitoring efforts will contribute to the implementation of sustainable management plans for marine turtles and their habitats in the Mediterranean, established in line with the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp), and by adopting a participatory and integrated approach that consider both local socio-economic and environmental contexts.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 1.1.1 Monitor in-water marine turtle, threat analyses and establishment of appropriate conservation measures, including: -Satellite tracking of marine turtle juveniles, sub-adults, males, and females from less studied regions, and; -locating, assessing, and monitoring key foraging and wintering locations of marine turtles and identify migratory routes.	Monitoring practices for marine turtles and their habitats are advanced with rigorous scientific data used to report on the status of marine turtles, critical habitat identification and conservation response development to key threats through science-based management.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey GFCM
Action 1.1.2 Develop and implement a national monitoring programme for marine turtle bycatch in Mediterranean fisheries to understand and mitigate bycatch, in collaboration with the MedBy-Catch Project.		
Action 1.1.3 Continue monitoring of indexed nesting sites and expansion of monitoring efforts to new and sporadic nesting sites, alongside recommendations for appropriate adaptation measures.		
Action 1.1.4 Coordinate with the GFCM and their data collection protocols of vulnerable and protected species included in the GFCM Strategy 2030.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.1.2. Activity 1. 2 – Important marine turtle areas (IMTA) identification process

Rationale

Important Marine Turtle Areas (IMTA) are discrete areas within existing marine turtle regional management units (RMUs) that are of particular biological significance for the persistence of marine turtles, and/or where the contributions of marine turtles to traditions and cultures of local people are particularly significant.

IMTAs will be identified based upon the biological and/or cultural significance of the area, and various ecological criteria. However, for effective identification and establishment, essential data are required. The Conservation of Marine Turtles in the Mediterranean Region is therefore in a prime

position to supply data and advance the IMTA process based on previous assessment efforts (Phase I & II) and the proposed Phase III activities.

Description of the Activity

The project will identify IMTAs through global standardised processes supported through a multi-stakeholder approach including the pre-identification of potential IMTA sites through collected data and resources (e.g., including population data, regional management and assessment documentation, tracking and survey data, and local, published and unpublished reports).

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 1.2.1 Provision of data to support and test the IMTA identification process within the Mediterranean region enabling the two-step criteria process based on biological and/or culturally significant places.	Monitoring practices for marine turtles and their habitats are advanced with rigorous scientific data used to report on the status of marine turtles, critical habitat identification and conservation response development to key threats through science-based management.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey IUCNmed
Action 1.2.2 Identify IMTAs using collected data on Important areas for nesting/hatching and important habitats for feeding, wintering and migratory passages during previous phases		
Action 1.2.3 support the development of the IMTA processes, in collaboration with the IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group (MTSG), through technical iterations based on the experience and resources developed by the project.		
Action 1.2. 4 support, in collaboration with the IUCN MTSG, the implementation of the IMTA process in the Mediterranean through an IMTA regional pilot testing thanks to technical iterations based on the experience and resources developed by the project		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.1.3. Activity 1.3 – Filling knowledge gaps for monitoring and managing ecosystems for marine turtles in the face of climate change

Rationale

The effective implementation of conservation strategies for marine turtles in the Mediterranean needs to be guided by sound science and rigorous application of monitoring protocols, that are holistic to the ecosystem and consider biodiversity within the system. However, there are existing gaps in the knowledge and capability of practitioners and organisations to implement protocols. There is a clear need for the development of resources, activities, and publications to address these gaps by the partnership to enable effective management actions to increase resiliency and adaptation potential to climate change. Effective management decisions must be supported by appropriate monitoring data and evidence. Due to the sporadicity of monitoring data within the region, and knowledge gaps around the impact of climate change, it is critical that collected data are stored and centralised

appropriately to facilitate access and enable collaborative actions, improve interoperability, and fill existing gaps in assessment data. This is particularly important for regional Mediterranean work.

Description of the activities

The project will build up on the activities in 1.A and B and, at least, produce annual technical reports and technical summaries to share knowledge and good practices around the Mediterranean, ensuring their dissemination to keys stakeholders, organisations, and practitioners within the region. Regional and international for a will also be attended by the project to disseminate knowledge and build capacity.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 1.3.1 Coordinate communications strategy for the dissemination of developed products for the monitoring and management of marine turtles.	Monitoring practices for marine turtles and their habitats are advanced with rigorous scientific data used to report on the status of marine turtles, critical habitat identification and conservation response development to key threats through science-based management.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey IUCN med
Action 1.3.2 Address any intra-partnership knowledge gaps and collate share, and store all resources (produces, reports, publications) via the Partnership and host online in a centralised location (Mediterranean Biodiversity Paltform). As well as Data from project partners		
Action 1.3.3 Product annual technical reports and annual technical summaries that will be disseminated and proposed to relevant national and regional authorities in to timely inform management decisions		
Action 1.3.4 Participate and present key technical summaries and monitor data at international sea turtle I and regional Mediterranean conferences.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.2. Work package 2: Threat Reduction: an ecosystem-based approach & promoting conservation

6.2.5.5.2.1. Activity 2.1- Identification and selection of hotspots for threats and pressures

Rationale

To understand areas of high-impact and pressures for marine turtles, spatial and/or seasonal identification of hotspots need to be recognised through rigorous monitoring programmes. Building upon the activities in Theme 1, and in particular the identification of IMTAs, the project will highlight areas where marine turtles are, or likely to be, subject to direct and indirect threats, and in turn, locating key areas threatened by the impacts of climate change and loss of critical habitat (impacting

ecosystem integrity and biodiversity loss). These threats include tourism, bycatch, pollution, marine litter, poaching or intentional killing, invasive species, and climate change.

Description of the activities

the Project will utilise existing and collected monitoring data, to identify these critical hotspots, from innovative satellite telemetry, sporadic and indexed nesting assessments, to threat assessments and analyses, to overlay critical habitats (i.e., IMTA) and areas of high-risk for marine turtles. This will enable the determination of 'hotspots' to guide conservation measures and highlight possible solutions mitigating and/or possible adaptation to climate change. Not only will this identification facilitate local-scale management measures but also contribute to, and facilitate, the Post-2020 SAPBIO Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs, the EcAp/IMAP, and SDG 14.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 2.1.1. Collate of existing spatial monitoring data (abundance, population, nesting etc.) and spatial threat assessments.	Threats to marine turtles are identified, minimised and mitigated against through coordinated responses, and a suite of tools is applied in the Mediterranean, encouraging area-based management, through local, regional and international frameworks, to maintain and enhance marine turtle populations in the Mediterranean.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey IUCN med
Action 2.1.2 Identify critical habitats and key hotspots under threat for marine turtles to develop recommendations for spatial mitigation and conservation measures.		
Action 2.1.3 Coordinate with local, national and regional frameworks to support the establishment or adaptation of measures to mitigate the impacts of threats.		

6.2.5.5.2.2. Activity 2.2- Appropriate tools to manage critical habitats for nesting, foraging, wintering and migration

Rationale

Following the identification of key habitats, hotspots and important areas in the Mediterranean for marine turtles, the project will put in place appropriate tools for the management of critical habitats for nesting, feeding, wintering and migration passages (supported by Theme 1 to increase monitoring to assess the status of marine turtles in the region). Identification of these habitats can guide holistic spatial management to aid in the mitigation of climate change, and preserve, rehabilitate and restore biodiversity.

Possible management measures include threat management on nesting beaches and nearshore areas during nesting periods, as well as greater coordination and capacities by practitioners, stakeholders and public. Supporting, and advocating for, the development and establishment of establishment of marine zones, and/or restriction of potentially impactful threats restricted, either during high-risk periods (nesting, migration, for example) or permanently, as well as coordination with tourism and fishery sectors. Protection measures, such as MPAs, will guide to protect static habitats of importance such as nesting, foraging or wintering grounds, providing refugia for marine turtles. Moreover, the establishment of MPAs will contribute to Goal 1 of the Post-2020 SAPBIO - By 2030, 100% of MPAs and as appropriate OECMs, and 50% of the remaining marine areas are sustainably managed by applying ecosystem-based approaches including biodiversity and climate change-informed marine spatial planning.

Description of the activities

To enable the implementation of such management actions, the project will aim to operate numerous, and build upon existing, pilot projects in relation to critical habitats for marine turtles. These pilot projects will develop key recommendations and good practices from lessons learned and enable the scaling-up of priorities and solutions (especially where resources are limited).

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 2.2.1. Organise of local dialogues and public participation about the identification and management of threats to marine turtles on land and at sea.	Threats to marine turtles are identified, minimised and mitigated against through coordinated responses, and a suite of tools is applied in the Mediterranean, encouraging area-based management, through local, regional and international frameworks, to maintain and enhance marine turtle populations in the Mediterranean.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey IUCN med
Action 2.2.2 Establish, or build upon, pilot projects in critical habitats and develop recommendations from lessons learnt to scale up, and replicate, solutions within the wider region.		
Action 2.2.3 Develop key management recommendations across each critical habitat to support the recognition of actions in national and regional frameworks as well as National Action Plans.		
Action 2.2.4 Provide technical and capacity to support the establishment of appropriate management tools throughout the Mediterranean for the conservation of marine turtles.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	

6.2.5.5.2.3. Activity 2.3 – Establish unified and scientifically operational national stranding network

Rationale

Stranding networks are important mechanisms that can identify presence of turtles in an area, causes of death and changes in threat levels. Stranding networks, coordinated well, can guide appropriate management actions as well as collect crucial data to quantify the presence of marine turtles, species, size, seasonality and threats, and further support insights into habitat use – helping to establish spatial management measures. However, they must hold suitable capacity for monitoring and data collection and be scientifically operated.

Description of the activities

The project will unify national networks and implement the standardised data collection and responses through the development of guidance and development of protocols (guided by the regional protocol of the MSFD: EcAp/IMAP). Guidance will include appropriate actions for necropsy, reporting mechanisms for macro-plastic and protocols for sample collection. A standardised reporting approach will enable regional analysis on the status and trends of marine turtles, further supporting policy and frameworks. In addition, rescue centres generate useful data on population status. Given their conservation value, the project will reinforce the ability of rescue centres to react to strandings and promote standardised data collection and reporting mechanisms.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 2.3.1. Implement the standardised stranding network protocols within the Mediterranean region to implement necropsy's, report on macro-plastics, and collect key [biological] samples guided by the regional protocol of the MSFD: EcAp/IMAP.	Threats to marine turtles are identified, minimised and mitigated against through coordinated responses, and a suite of tools is applied in the Mediterranean, encouraging area-based management, through local, regional and international frameworks, to maintain and enhance marine turtle populations in the Mediterranean.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey
Action 2.3.2 Develop holistic guidance for standardised protocols for networks and rescue centres.		
Action 2.3.3 Reinforce the capacities of rescue centres and marine turtle first aid response.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.2.4. Activity 2.4- improving policies for marine turtle conservation: aligning national action plans

Rationale

The effective and sustainable protection of the Mediterranean marine turtles implies management of the Mediterranean as a whole, taking into account an ecosystem-based approach, and should take advantage of the actions of all concerned stakeholders and be carried out in cooperation with organisations, programmes and plans, at the supranational and national level.

A key mechanism for supporting the conservation of marine turtles at the national level, is ensuring that Mediterranean countries develop and implement respective National Action Plan (NAP) for Marine Turtles. It is important that developed NAPs are well-aligned with each other (adopted standardised protocols, standardised report mechanisms and clear national-level indicators) as well as with regional policies to enable regional-level assessments and analyses. NAPs are a key instrument referenced in the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAPBIO). Currently, in the Mediterranean, numerous countries hold NAPs specific to marine turtles (including Albania, Egypt, for example).

Description of activities

the project will work with national agencies, through a bottom-up and participatory approach, to aid in the development, review and/or adaption of NAPs for marine turtles, and secondly, work towards their regional alignment. This will not only enable regional assessments but will also enable the fulfilment of obligations under the SPA/BD protocol, EcAp/IMAP and implementation of the Post-2020 SAPBIO.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 2.4.1. Review and synthesise existing marine turtle NAPs within the Mediterranean region and identify gaps in national policy.	Threats to marine turtles are identified, minimised and mitigated against through coordinated responses, and a suite of tools is applied in the Mediterranean, encouraging area-based management, through local, regional and international frameworks, to maintain and enhance marine turtle populations in the Mediterranean.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey
Action 2.4.2 Coordinate with national governments and ministries for the development, alignment, or adaption to marine turtle NAPs.		
Action 2.4.3 Promote standardised processes and best practices for inclusion in NAPs and encourage the contribution of data for regional assessments.		

Implementation calendar

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.2.5. Activity 2.5- Support obligations under regional policy frameworks post-2020, and international commitments

Rationale

The project aims to support the creation of monitoring networks and tools and a sustainable management plan for marine turtles and their habitats in the Mediterranean, through the implementation of harmonized monitoring protocols in line with the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) guidelines of the Barcelona Convention, and by adopting a participatory and integrated approach that consider both local socio-economic and environmental contexts and to assist the contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention to fulfil their obligation under the SPA/BD Protocol, the Strategic Action Programme for the conservation of Biological Diversity (SAP BIO) in the Mediterranean Region, the Regional Action Plan for the conservation of Marine Turtles in the Mediterranean and enable the national Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP) implementation.

Description of the activities

the project will continue contributing to the implementation of regional policies and treaties including the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, the EU Biodiversity Strategy, Post-2020 Barcelona Convention Strategy and the UfM Greener Mediterranean Agenda. Countries will also be facilitated in their commitments to international agreements including the CITES Convention, Bonn Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as the UN SDGs 13 and 14.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 2.5.1. Deliver high-quality and scientifically sound guidance to regional and international instruments to enable countries to fulfil obligations either through reporting and	Threats to marine turtles are identified, minimised, and mitigated against through coordinated responses, and a	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
<p>conserving marine turtles. The project will utilise the experience of its partners to ensure contributions at the national level and the partnership will advocate for marine turtles at the regional level.</p>	<p>suite of tools is applied in the Mediterranean, encouraging area-based management, through local, regional and international frameworks, to maintain and enhance marine turtle populations in the Mediterranean.</p>	<p>WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey</p>
<p>Action 2.5.2 contribute to international commitments and objectives; submit the three-year project timeframe as a voluntary commitment to the UN Ocean Conference Community of Ocean Action.</p>		

6.2.5.5.3. Work package 3: Building capacity of internal project partners

Rationale

Ensuring a strong, pro-active and well-equipped partnership is essential for the successful conservation of marine turtles in the Mediterranean. Within the partnership each partner holds valuable strengths and experience to implement key activities in during the project's timeframe. This is includes driving scientific research and the advancement of protocols, capacity building, communication and integrating the project's activities in line with regional and international frameworks.

Description of the activities:

The Project will enable resources and information to travel throughout the partnership, building the capacity of the partnership to ensure a) the implementation of best practices, b) to cohesively implement the project, achieving goals and objectives throughout the region. Key consideration will be given gender advocacy, ensuring equitable and equal opportunities for women. Therefore, the partnership will establish multiple mechanisms to ensure that the partners hold the technical capabilities for the conservation of marine turtles.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 3.1.1. Held Annual workshops and Steering Committee meetings between partners to share stories, exchange protocols and advance conservation measures.	Capacities to collect critical data, monitor marine turtles, and respond to threats and impacts is increased, producing a network of conscious stakeholders, practitioners, and citizens.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey
Action 3.1.2 Organise technical workshops for project partners to provide training in latest monitoring protocols and management practices (developed by the project) both on land and at sea		
Action 3.1.3 held online events between partners to disseminate and discuss latest pattern achievements and updates from the local, national and regional level.		
Action 3.1.4 Maintain strong communication between partners through various platforms w to coordinate actions and exchange resources and products.		

6.2.5.5.3.2. 6.2.3.5.3.1. Activity 3.1– Raise capacity and STRENGTHEN exchanges between stakeholders, operational networks & rescue centers

Rationale

To successfully manage critical habitats, mitigate against threats, adapt to climate change, and respond to marine turtle strandings, and other impacts, a network of capable and standardised responses are required. Moreover, successful management depends on the technical capacities of practitioners and managers, available resources and continuous adaptation and exchange and collaboration.

Increasing the level of capacity amongst stakeholders with the Mediterranean region will be a core activity for the project. Capacity will be built in data collection protocols, marine turtle monitoring and management, management of critical habitats, stranding response, and adaptive management to new and emerging threats such as climate change.

Description of the activities

The project will develop and deliver training courses and modules (utilising the MedPAN training programme for MPAs on mobile species), establish key networks between MPA managers, experts, scientists and NGOs (enabling the latest advancements in research and management recommendations to be communicated), exchange visits among MPA managers and rescue centres across the Mediterranean, and promote dialogues between sectors to identify best practices and solutions for the protection of marine turtles and mitigation of their threats.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 3.2.1. Organise training courses and develop modules, utilising and building from, MedPAN’s training programme for MPAs on mobile species, in collaboration with regional and local partners	Capacities to collect critical data, monitor marine turtles, and respond to threats and impacts is increased, producing a network of conscious stakeholders, practitioners, and citizens.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey
Action 3.2.2 Promote and facilitate exchanges between MPA practitioners, NGOs, Scientists and experts with exchange visits between different MPA managers and rescue centres.		
Action 3.2.3 Promote dialogue between local sectors and practitioners to build technical capacities to report or respond to marine turtle impacts (i.e., Bycatch within the fishery sector).		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.3.3. Activity 3.2- Maintain and expand communication on the project’s activities, results and achievements

Rationale

Throughout the implementation of the project’s phase I & II, the Conservation of Marine Turtles in the Mediterranean has become a brand name for marine turtles in the region, and Phase III will continue to build upon this established presence.

Description of the activities

The project holds an informative and active website and strong online presence that will be vital in continuing to maintain and expand current communication efforts of the project’s activities, results, and achievements. Effective communication is critical to disseminate publications and reports as well as raise awareness of the plights to marine turtles as well as necessary and correct responses to marine turtle threats. Moreover, effective communication and communication with stakeholders and public, as well as sectors, can not only serve to limit, minimise, or mitigate against threats, but also generate stewardship and develop a strong network of individuals to support monitoring and reporting.

In addition, it is crucial that the achievements of the project, from advancing research to management actions, are communicated accordingly on national, regional, and international platforms. As such the project will utilise fora, conferences, and other events to present and showcase achievements while engaging in high-level discussions to support regional and international frameworks.

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 3.3.1. Maintain strong communication strategies across a range of platforms including the project’s website (www.medmarineturtles.org) and various social media channels.	Capacities to collect critical data, monitor marine turtles, and respond to threats and impacts is increased, producing a network of conscious stakeholders, practitioners, and citizens.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey
Action 3.3.2 Undertake and host public awareness activities amongst fishers, tourism facilities and related stakeholders. This will be implemented by national and local project partners within local regions and could include open days at facilities, educational events at schools and group exchanges with fisherfolk. To reach wider audiences, online events such as webinars will be explored.		
Action 3.3.3 Organise targeted public campaigns during specific events of importance including nesting and hatching season, in coordination with tourism bodies, to highlight the importance of management and protection for marine turtles.		
Action 3.3.4 Participate and present the project outputs and results in national and international fora and symposia including the International Sea Turtle Symposia, Mediterranean Marine Turtle Conference, and others.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.3.4. Activity 3.3 - learning lessons and developing relationships for marine turtles outside of the mediterranean

Rationale

Developing trans-regional partnerships for the implementation of critical marine turtle management measures is essential to ensure the maximum impact of the project. Therefore, collaborative relationships with initiatives outside of the Mediterranean region will be developed with knowledge exchange between actors and the development of best practices and lessons learnt publications. By adopting best practices and understanding lessons learnt from previous projects working towards the protection of marine turtles, the project can build upon previous successes and/or failures to develop and implement valuable conservation practices and protocols. Moreover, such collaborations serve as an opportunity to promote the conservation efforts within the Mediterranean, building technical capacities on an international scale.

Description of activities

The project will:

- seek collaborative opportunities with initiatives operating in Africa, the Caribbean and Atlantic including North African Sea Turtles Network (NASTNET), West African Sea Turtles Conservation (WASTCON) and Réseau des Acteurs de la Sauvegarde des Tortues Marines en Afrique Centrale (RASTOMA).
- Coordinate with the EU-funded Ocean Governance Project multiple Twinnings including Twinnings on Coastal Resilience and Marine Protected Areas, as well as the Marine Mammal Twinning (developing an MPA assessment tool for migratory species).

Actions	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 3.4.1. Maintain its strong communication strategies across a range of platforms including the project’s website (www.medmarineturtles.org) and various social media channels.	Capacities to collect critical data, monitor marine turtles, and respond to threats and impacts is increased, producing a network of conscious stakeholders, practitioners, and citizens.	ARCHELON: DEKAMER MedPAN MEDASSET WWF Greece WWF North Africa WWF Turkey
Action 3.4.2 Undertake and host public awareness activities amongst fishers, tourism facilities and related stakeholders. This will be implemented by national and local project partners within local regions and could include open days at facilities, educational events at schools and group exchanges with fisherfolk. To reach wider audiences, online events such as webinars will be explored.		
Action 3.4.3 Targeted public campaigns will be utilised during specific events of importance including nesting and hatching season, in coordination with tourism bodies, to highlight the importance of management and protection for marine turtles.		
Action 3.4.4 Organise and /or participate in national and international fora and symposia including the International Sea Turtle Symposia, Mediterranean Marine Turtle Conference, and others.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.5.5.4. Work package 4: Project coordination and management

6.2.5.5.4.1. Activity 4.1 - A sustainable and functioning partnership for marine turtles

To maintain the impact and function of the project, the partnership will benefit from a strong governance structure, will aim to expand across the Mediterranean region and acquire appropriate financial support.

The below section details the three key areas for a sustainable partnership:

The Governance structure of the Conservation of Marine Turtles in the Mediterranean Region project addresses participation, strategic and technical oversight as well as regional coordination of the partnership.

The project aggregates marine turtle-focused NGOs, research entities, pan-Mediterranean organisations and MPA managers into a strong partnership, established during Phase I of the project and animated throughout Phase II.

The partnership forms the core of the project and provides the foundation its activities and for achievement of objectives. This is a primary strengthen of the project, bringing together collaborators from the across the Mediterranean region, a critical region for Loggerhead and Green turtles as well as Leatherback turtles.

The partnership also values Ad Hoc contributions from a range of public, private, academic, or civil society entities, individuals, short-lived projects and/or volunteer networks with a shared goal of effective conservation for marine turtles in the Mediterranean region.

A full-time project coordinator and an administrative assistant will be appointed for the project duration.

In addition to the regular reporting to the financing partner(s), reports about the progress made in the implementation of the project will be submitted by SPA/RAC to the SPA/BD Focal Points. The other partners may also report to their respective relevant governing bodies.

A mid-term evaluation and Final evaluation of the project will be undertaken taking into account the result indicators to be agreed in the logical framework of the project.

6.2.5.6. Project partners

Throughout the previous implementation of Phase I and II, the project became, and continues to be, a brand name for marine turtles with a specific and identifiable logo, synergized identity, goals, and communication tools (social media, website, videos and documentary), promoting its work and efforts, in addition to the partnership's simple reporting system, decentralized work regime, data collection, protocols, capacity building, expert panel, streaming results into national and regional reports.

For the implementation of Phase III, the project will, initially, be enacted by the following partnership of 8 members, that can be enlarged upon relevant request from other Mediterranean partners and countries:

1. ARCHELON: The Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece
2. DEKAMER (Sea Turtle Research, Rescue and Rehabilitation Center, Türkiye)
3. MedPAN (The Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean.)
4. MEDASSET (Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles)
5. SPA/RAC (The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre of UNEP/MAP)
6. WWF Greece
7. WWF North Africa
8. WWF Turkey

In addition to these core partners, the Partnership benefits from international, national and local partners collaboration: IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group (IUCN MTSG), Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency,

Egypt (EEAA); Ministry of Environment (Lebanon, Libya, Algeria, Morocco); APAL, NGB, INSTM (Tunisia); AHE (Spain); Regional Administration for Protected Areas, (Albania).

6.2.5.7. Project Timetable

Workstreams	Activities	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
1 STRENGTHEN MONITORING AND RESEARCH	a. Continued monitoring of marine turtles on both land and at sea to guide management measures	x	x	x	x		
	b. Important marine turtle areas (IMTA) identification process	x	x	x	x		
	c. Filling knowledge gaps for monitoring and managing ecosystems for marine turtles in the face of climate change	x	x	x	x		
2 REDUCING THREATS	a. Identification and selection of hotspots for threats and pressures	x	x	x			
	b. Appropriate tools to manage critical habitats for nesting, foraging, wintering and migration		x	x	x	x	
	c. Establish unified and scientifically operational national stranding network	x	x	x	x		
	d. Improving policies for marine turtle conservation: aligning national action plans	x	x	x	x	x	
	e. Support obligations under regional policy frameworks post-2020, and international commitments		x	x	x	x	x
3 EXPANDING THE MARINE TURTLE COMMUNITY	a. Building capacity of internal project partners	x	x	x	x		
	b. Raise capacity and strengthen exchanges between stakeholders, operational networks & rescue centers	x	x				
	c. Maintain and expand communication on the project's activities, results and achievements		x	x	x	x	x
	d. Learning lessons and developing relationships for marine turtles outside of the Mediterranean				x	x	x

6.2.5.8. Project Cost estimates

	Expected funding from donor(s) (€)	Expected Co-funding (€)	Total Estimated cost (€)
1: Monitoring and research: Advancing the latest science to understand climate change impacts on marine turtles	500 000	30 000	530 000
2: Threat reduction: An ecosystem-based approach & promoting conservation	550 000	30 000	580 000
3: Expanding the marine turtle community: Building capacity and effective communication	500 000	30 000	580 000
Partnership functioning	200 000	100 000	300 000
Project Coordination	250 000	110 000	360 000
<u>Total</u>	2 000 000	300 000	2300

6.2.6. Project 4: Catalysing transformative action by governments and stakeholders to halt and reverse the loss in Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity

6.2.6.1. Covered Actions of the Post-2020 SAPBIO

27. STREAMLINE Post 2020 SAPBIO: Streamline the Post-2020 SAPBIO and Regional strategies and action plans, developed in the framework of the SPA/BD Protocol, into national strategies, action plans and legal frameworks

28. POLITICAL WILL AND COORDINATION: Ensure political will and recognition at the highest levels of Government or State, to develop appropriate governance schemes, in particular cross-sectorial and multi-level institutional coordination

29. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION: Facilitate stakeholder engagement to address conflict between users, build capacity to contribute to the SAPBIO enforcement, particularly in MPA planning and management, through proper participation of all stakeholders in a transparent decision-making process

31. COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT: Enable the compliance of the provisions of the SPA/BD and the ICZM Protocols and related Action Plans at national level by strengthening capacities and cooperation between judiciary and administrative bodies

38. AWARENESS: Increase awareness, understanding and appreciating of the values and threats to the marine environment, stimulating improved behaviour, and of the responses and good practices, by targeting decision-makers and the general public, through reinforced and renewed mechanisms, including mass communications

39. OUTREACH AND EDUCATION: Promote the integration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems conservation concerns into school, higher education, professional training, and citizen science, so that best practices and innovative technologies to protect marine and coastal ecosystems are more accessible and replicable

42. COOPERATION: Increase cooperation both north/south, south-south, and between governmental and non-governmental actors at different levels, to support the Post-2020 SAPBIO, particularly in the less developed countries

6.2.6.2. Issues at stake

As stressed during COP15 of the CBD (Montreal, Canada, 7-19 December 2022), stopping and reversing biodiversity loss requires an urgent and transformative action involving governments and all of the society. This also emerged clearly from the assessments undertaken within the framework of the Post-2020 SAPBIO elaboration process that underlined the necessity to improve coherence and complementarity of all strategies, policies, plans, initiatives, planning processes and funding affecting marine conservation. This includes the appropriate coordination between the various authorities competent for both the marine and the land parts of coastal zones in the different administrative services, at all relevant levels, covering the proper participation of all stakeholders, including resource users and civil society, in a transparent decision-making process that would lead to shared and better management decisions.

The needed transformative change should allow to streamline biodiversity conservation into national strategies, action plans and legal frameworks as well as into all environmental and sectorial policies relevant for the protection and sustainable use of marine living resources. This cannot be achieved without a real political will and recognition at the highest Government levels to develop appropriate governance schemes and ensure cross-sectorial and multi-level institutional coordination and effective collaboration between different administrations and stakeholders. To this end, it is necessary to increase awareness, understanding and appreciating of the values of and threats to biodiversity, stimulating improved behaviour, and of the responses and good practices, by targeting decision-

makers and the general public, through reinforced and renewed mechanisms, including both targeted messages to the key stakeholders and mass communications.

The transformative change should also address the weak enforcement of the legislation promulgated to protect biodiversity from various threats. Particularly underlined by the national assessments, as reported during the Post-2020 SAPBIO elaboration process, was the need to provide capacity building for judiciary and administrative resources along the enforcement chain.

6.2.6.3. *Geographical coverage of the project*

The activities of this project are of interest for all the Mediterranean countries. Their implementation will cover the needs of capacities building expressed by countries in relation to their national strategies and action plans for biodiversity and enforcement of relevant regulation.

6.2.6.4. *Project Work packages*

6.2.6.4.1. *Work package 1: Streamlining biodiversity conservation into national strategies and sectorial policies*

6.2.6.4.1.1. *Activity 1.1 Strengthening the marine and coastal biodiversity component of countries' biodiversity strategies*

Rationale

During the initial negotiation process of the CBD framework, meeting the challenge of implementation by means of an integrated, multi-sectoral, participatory instrument for national biodiversity planning crystallized into the concept of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP). In this context, Article 6(a) of the Convention requested contracting Parties to "Develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes which shall reflect, inter alia, the measures set out in this Convention relevant to the Contracting Party concerned".

As per November 2022, 18 out of 21 Mediterranean countries and the European Union submitted their biodiversity strategy to the CBD Secretariat. However, the conservation and sustainable use of Mediterranean marine biodiversity is weakly addressed in the national biodiversity strategy of most countries. In their Decision IG.25/11, the contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention invited countries to prepare or revise their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans by fully incorporating the relevant elements of the Post-2020 SAPBIO; and maximise their efforts for their timely implementation. They requested that by 2030 each Party has incorporated Post-2020 SAPBIO in its national biodiversity strategy and action plan.

Description of the activity

Under this activity the project will provide its support to Mediterranean countries to ensure appropriate incorporation of the relevant elements of the Post-2020 SAPBIO into their biodiversity national strategies through the elaboration of guidelines and their translation into the working languages of the Mediterranean countries, as well as direct assistance for the needed expertise and facilitation of consultation processes at local and national levels.

Actions to be implemented:

Action	Expected results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 1.1.1 Detailed technical and legal guidelines for incorporating Post-2020 SAPBIO in national biodiversity strategies and action plans	The national biodiversity strategies of the Mediterranean countries aligned with the targets of the Post-2020 SAPBIO which are themselves aligned with the targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework of relevance for the marine and coastal biodiversity.	SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC, IUCN-Med, MedFund
Action 1.1.2 Accompaniment with expertise and facilitation of the processes necessary for the inclusion of Post-2020 SAPBIO provisions in national biodiversity strategies and related action plans		

Implementation timetable

Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	

6.2.6.4.1.2. Activity 1.2 Advocacy activities targeting decision makers to increase their awareness, understanding and appreciation of the values and threats to marine and coastal biodiversity.

Rationale

The CBD COP15 pointed out a rising mobilisation among high level decision makers around the issue of biodiversity dramatic loss, in land and in marine media, at global, regional and local levels, and the emergency to act before reaching an unreversible situation. In the wake of the momentum created by the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework under the CBD in December 2022, fostering the decision-maker awareness and appreciation of marine biodiversity will pave the way towards achieving the targets set in the Post-2020 SAPBIO and the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Description of the activity

Outreaching to decision makers will be the main objectives of this activity. To this end a policy brief will be elaborated in relation to the action needed to timely achieve the Post-2020 SAPBIO targets, considering the specific political and socioeconomic context of the country. The policy brief will highlight the benefits that the country could yield in terms of economic growth, job creation and long-term sustainability of the relevant economic sectors. It will be supported by a realistic action plan and concrete proposals to increase mobilisation of domestic and external resources, leveraging private finance and encouraging private sector investment. Relevant mass media and opinion leaders will be also targeted by this activity and used to influence decision making processes.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 1.2.1 Elaboration of policy briefs targeting relevant decision-makers	Greater ownership, mobilisation and reactivity within local decision makers to marine biodiversity protection and marine resources sustainable management	SPA/RAC, UNEP/MAP
Action 1.2.2 Organisation of advocacy activities using strong arguments based on scientific facts adapted to the relevant targeted stakeholders (dedicated meetings with high level decision makers, use of relevant media, etc.)		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.6.4.1.3. Activity 1.3 integration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems conservation concerns into school, higher education, professional training, and citizen science.

Rationale

The integration of marine biodiversity and ecosystem conservation concerns into educational programmes and university curricula has a great potential to increase appreciation by youth generations of marine biodiversity. It will complement the awareness rising efforts and legal instruments and has the advantage of having lasting effects.

Description of the activity

Under this activity a series of educational modules covering key topics in relation to marine biodiversity conservation and sustainable use will be elaborated using modern teaching approaches. The development of educational modules will be followed by a series of training the trainers sessions organised in the participating countries targeting the school and university teachers.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 1.3.1 Elaboration of educational modules adapted to all levels (schools universities) and encompassing a wide range of biodiversity related topics (ecology, legislation, strategic planning, etc.)	Youth generation with better understanding of the marine ecosystems and the threats to which they are subject and thus prepared to operate a transformative change towards marine biodiversity in term of behaviour and ability to halt biodiversity loss and ensure sustainable use of marine living resources	SPA/RAC, UNEP/MAP, ACCOBAMS, GFCM
Action 1.3.2 Training the trainers programme		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.6.4.2. Work package 2: Compliance and Enforcement

6.2.6.4.2.1. Activity 2.1 Capacity building for judiciary and administrative resources along the enforcement chain for the regulations relating to marine biodiversity

Rationale

The lack of enforcement of legislation is among the biodiversity loss causes reported by the national reports to Post-2020 SAPBIO. Building the capacity of the judiciary and administrative staff involved in the enforcement of legislations for the conservation of marine biodiversity and regulating the uses of marine resources is one of the Very High Priority actions of the Post-2020 SAPBIO.

Description of the activity

Under this activity practical guidelines for the enforcement of legislation related to marine biodiversity will be prepared and adapted to the legal, institutional and linguistic context of each country covered by the activity. Furthermore, training and/or information sessions will be organised targeting judiciary and administrative resources involved in the enforcement chain.

Under this activity the following actions will be implemented:

Action	Expected Results	Proposed Partners (Not limited to/tbc)
Action 2.1.1 Elaboration of practical guidelines for the enforcement of legislation related to marine biodiversity	Enhanced control and enforcement of national legislation in relation to the conservation of marine biodiversity and the use of living marine resources, including in MCPAs.	SPA/RAC, IUCN-Med, The MedFund and MedPAN
Action 2.1.2 Training and/or information sessions targeting judiciary and administrative resources involved in the enforcement of marine biodiversity related legislation.		

Implementation timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

6.2.6.4.3. Work package 3: Project coordination and management

The Project implementation will be coordinated by SPA/RAC in collaboration with the Project partners and with the guidance of a Steering Committee composed of representatives of the participating countries and the Project partners.

The rules of procedures for the Steering Committee will be defined in close consultation with the financing partner(s).

A full-time project coordinator will be appointed for the project duration.

In addition to the regular reporting to the financing partner(s), reports about the progress made in the implementation of the project will be submitted by SPA/RAC to the SPA/BD Focal Points. The other partners may also report to their respective relevant governing bodies.

A mid-term evaluation and Final evaluation of the project will be undertaken taking into account the result indicators to be agreed in the logical framework of the project

6.2.6.5. Project Timetable

6.2.7.	6.2.8.	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Work package 1: Streamlining biodiversity conservation into national strategies and sectorial policies	Activity 1.1 Strengthening the marine and coastal biodiversity component of countries' biodiversity strategies	■	■	■	■		
	Activity 1.2 Advocacy activities targeting decision makers to increase their awareness, understanding and appreciation of the values and threats to marine and coastal biodiversity.	■	■	■			
	Activity 1.3 integration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems conservation concerns into school, higher education, professional training, and citizen science.		■	■	■	■	
Work package 2: Compliance and Enforcement	Activity 2.1 Capacity building for judiciary and administrative resources along the enforcement chain for the regulations relating to marine biodiversity		■	■	■	■	

6.2.8.6. Project partners

In addition to the relevant national authorities and institutions, the following regional organisations (listed in alphabetical order) will contribute in the implementation of the activities of this project :

- ACCOBAMS - The Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area.
- GFCM - The Secretariat of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.
- IUCN-Med - The International Union for Conservation of Nature Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation.
- MedPAN - The Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean.
- PAP/RAC - The Priority Actions Programme /Regional Activity Centre (of UNEP/MAP)
- SPA/RAC - The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (of UNEP/MAP).
- The MedFund - Conservation Trust Fund for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean.
- UNEP/MAP - The coordinating Unit of the Mediterranean Action Plan

6.2.8.7. Project Cost estimates (USD)

	Expected funding from donor(s)	Expected Co-funding	Total Estimated cost
Activity 1.1 Strengthening the marine and coastal biodiversity component of countries' biodiversity strategies	210 000	40 000	250 000
Activity 1.2 Advocacy activities targeting decision makers to increase their awareness, understanding and appreciation of the values and threats to marine and coastal biodiversity.	350 000	70 000	420 000
Activity 1.3 integration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems conservation concerns into school, higher education, professional training, and citizen science.	400 000	100 000	500 000
Activity 2.1 Capacity building for judiciary and administrative resources along the enforcement chain for the regulations relating to marine biodiversity	450 000	50 000	500 000
Project coordination	200 000	30 000	230 000
Total	1 610 000	290 000	1 900 000

7. Governance

7.1. Post-2020 SAPBIO National Correspondents

The SAPBIO National Correspondents, as defined in the Post-2020 SAPBIO document, is a network composed by members from each State that is Party to the Barcelona Convention, appointed by the country's Authorities whose role is to ensure liaison with SPA/RAC on the technical and scientific aspects of implementing the Post 2020 SAPBIO in her/his country, in particular, but also at the Mediterranean level, suggesting recommendations to be submitted to SPA/BD Focal Points Meetings and, where necessary and proposing amendments to the work.

The main role of the Post-2020 SAPBIO National Correspondents is to assess the progress made in implementing the Strategic Action Programme and update the work and projects scheduled.

In close consultation with the SPA/BD Focal Points, the SAPBIO national correspondents will act on:

- Identifying and establishing appropriate contacts with the national institutions/bodies concerned with the implementation of Post-2020 SAPBIO;
- Organizing, with the support and assistance of SPA/RAC, the national consultation process/workshop, eventual updating, needed for the implementation of the Post-2020 SAPBIO and in particular the preparation of projects and the implementation of NAPs;
- Passing on information and communication regarding SAPBIO from the national side to SPA/RAC and to the Network, and vice-versa.

During the SAPBIO National correspondents meeting, generally convened once a year, national correspondents are asked to suggest recommendation to the SPA/BD Focal Points meetings and, where necessary, proposes amendments to the work schedule.

The National Correspondent, to carry out her/his tasks, must necessarily be supported by resource persons, to be identified at national level, including by NGOs and the National Focal Points of the organizations that are members of the Advisory Committee.

7.2. Post-2020 SAPBIO Advisory Committee

The SAPBIO Advisory Committee, as defined by the UNEP/MED decision IG.25/27, is a regional institutional governance body composed of nominated representatives by international and Mediterranean regional bodies whose role is to provide technical and scientific advice concerning the Post 2020 SAPBIO implementation, flow and exchange of relevant information on activities implemented, on-going or planned in order to avoid duplication.

During this process, the role of the Post 2020 SAPBIO 2020 advisory committee is to assist the SPA/RAC in:

- The progress made in the Resource Mobilisation strategy elaboration process
- The steps and timeline of the Resource Mobilisation Strategy elaboration
- The deliverables and documents to be elaborated in the framework of this study.

7.3. The resource mobilisation strategy steering committee

Further to the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat and SPA/RAC representatives, the steering committee is composed by representative of key partner international and regional donors. The role of the Steering Committee is to provide overall supervision of the process, its outputs and outcomes and to ensure that it is conducted in coherence with the overall regional and international context.

The RMS steering committee is the following:

Organization	Position	Name and Last name
SPA/RAC	Director	Mr Khalil ATTIA
UNEP/MAP	Deputy Coordinator	Mr Gabino GONZALEZ
FFEM	Biodiversity Project Manager	Ms Constance CORBIER-BARTHAUX
Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation	Scientific director Coordinator of initiative	Mr Philippe MONDIELLI Ms Lina HANSSON
EC DG NEAR	Programme manager Environment, water and biodiversity Head of sector Connectivity, Environment and Climate Action	Mr Frederic FOURTUNE Mr Stefano DOTTO
OKIANOS	Director and Senior international expert	Mr Chedly RAIS

The day-to-day management of the process is under the responsibility of SPA/RAC director and supporting staff.

8. Communication

In order to build a positive image that encourages donors to provide, renew or maintain their support, a communication plan is being developed and will be implemented by SPA/RAC with the support of a specialised agency, for the period before, during and immediately after the donors' conference.

The main outputs include the creation of a mini website for the conference, giving contextual elements on the project proposals, an idea of the activities already carried out on certain priority topics for biodiversity conservation, as well as a synthetic presentation of the proposed projects, highlighting key information. The agency will also provide advice on the running of the conference and the oral presentation of the projects.

This communication plan will include:

Writing and editing of texts as follows:

- For each project key messages will be formulated to ensure a clear and coherent speech with the donors and on all the communication products: vision, objectives, project's context with relevant key figures, activities, as well as 3 different short sentences that summarize the project from different angles depending on the relevance of the issues to be highlighted.
- For each project, preparation of an easily digestible **summary sheet** to be presented to the potential donors, detailing the most important information they need such as *the objective, the "problem" to be addressed, the "solution" proposed, the geographical areas covered by the project, the partners, the corresponding activities, the implementation timeline, and the budget.*
- Preparation of **text contents** to promote the work carried out by SPA/RAC on the targeted topics:
 - Presentation of SPA/RAC and its role for Mediterranean biodiversity conservation.
 - Context of the projects, with a presentation of the Barcelona Convention's flagship proposals for the conservation of biodiversity in the Mediterranean, drawn from the Post-2020 SAPBIO and the Post-2020 Regional strategy for MCPAs and OECMs.
 - Summary / short description of the activities carried out for each of the sites benefiting from SPA/RAC support in the framework of the development of a network

10. Annexes

Table 1: Post-2020 SAP BIO 27 Targets

#	Post-2020 SAPBIO Target on:
Goal 1 Reduce the threats to biodiversity	
ADDRESS PRESSURES	
1	T 1.1. on specific pressures
2	T 1.2 on NIS/IAS
3	T 1.3 on pollution control
MARINE AND COASTAL PROTECTED AREAS	
4	T 1.4. on effective systems of MCPAs and OECMs
5	T 1.5. on areas with enhanced protection levels
ECOSYSTEM HEALTH	
6	T 1.6. on ecosystem restoration
7	T 1.7. on the achievement of GES
8	T 1.8. on climate change
Goal 2 Ensure that biodiversity is preserved and maintained or enhanced in order to meet people's needs	
IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE	
9	T 2.1. Improve knowledge on threatened species
10	T 2.2. Improve knowledge on threatened habitats
11	T 2.3. on knowledge sharing
SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES	
12	T 2.4. on fishing gears, by-catch, IUU
13	T 2.5. on small-scale fisheries (artisanal, recreational)
14	T.2.6. on sustainable and biodiversity-friendly aquaculture
MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY	
15	T.2.7. on the ecosystem approach and marine and coastal spatial planning
16	T 2.8. on cross-sectoral integration and biodiversity accounts
17	T 2.9. on governance and stakeholder participation
Goal 3 Enable the necessary transformative change, putting in place tools and nature-based solutions for implementation and mainstreaming	
IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING	
18	T 3.1. on the IMAP compliance
19	T 3.2. on the SAPBIO assessment and reporting
20	T 3.3. Means for the assessment mechanisms
CAPACITY BUILDING AND NETWORKING	
21	T 3.4. on capacity development
22	T 3.5. on networking and knowledge sharing
OUTREACH AND AWARENESS	
23	T 3.6. on public awareness
24	T 3.7. on outreach and education
MOBILIZING SUFFICIENT RESOURCES	
25	T 3.8. on employment
26	T 3.9. on sustainable funding sources
27	T 3.10. on cooperation

Table 2: Post-2020 SAP BIO 42 Actions' scope and subject

#	Post-2020 SAPBIO Action on:
Goal 1 Reduce the threats to biodiversity	
1	SPECIES ACTION PLANS
2	URGENT SPECIES RECOVERY
3	MARITIME TRAFFIC
4	NIS/IAS COMMITMENT
5	NIS/IAS CAPACITY
6	NIS/IAS CONTROL AND MONITORING
7	LITTER
8	EIA/SEA
9	WIND ENERGY
10	MINERALS
11	SPATIAL PLANNING
12	RESTORATION
13	CLIMATE CHANGE
14	GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS
15	EFFECTIVE SYSTEMS OF MCPAs AND OECMs
Goal 2 Ensure that biodiversity is preserved and maintained or enhanced in order to meet people's needs	
16	BIODIVERSITY PLATFORM
17	INVERTEBRATES (status)
18	VERTEBRATES (status)
19	HABITATS
20	NIS/IAS (databases)
21	OVERFISHING and IUU
22	BY-CATCH AND FISHERIES PLANNING
23	SMALL SCALE FISHERIES (incl. recreational)
24	AQUACULTURE
25	TOURISM
26	INTEGRATING BIODIVERSITY
27	STREAMLINE Post-2020 SAPBIO
28	POLITICAL WILL AND COORDINATION
29	STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION
30	UP-DOWN BOTTOM-UP INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS
31	COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT
Goal 3 Enable the necessary transformative change, putting in place tools and nature-based solutions for implementation and mainstreaming	
32	IMAP REFINEMENT
33	IMAP IMPLEMENTATION
34	Post-2020 SAPBIO MONITORING
35	SUPPORT TO RUN the Post-2020 SAPBIO
36	CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE Post-2020 SAPBIO AT NATIONAL LEVEL
37	NETWORKING AND COMMON KNOWLEDGE
38	AWARENESS
39	OUTREACH AND EDUCATION
40	EMPLOYMENT
41	SUSTAINABLE FUNDING
42	COOPERATION

Table 3: Post-2020 MCPA-OECM Regional Strategy strategic outcomes and outputs

Strategic Pillar 1: MCPA and OECM Governance
<i>Strategic Outcome 1: Governance arrangements for MCPAs and OECMs are inclusive and effective in delivering conservation and livelihood outcomes</i>
Output 1.1: Legal frameworks and institutional arrangements of MCPAs and OECMs allow for opportunities for participatory management
Output 1.2: Governance arrangements for MCPAs and OECMs are inclusive and equitable
Output 1.3: National, regional, transboundary and cross sectoral co-operation for the establishment and management of MCPAs and OECMs are strengthened
Output 1.4: Adaptive planning and management frameworks of MCPAs and OECMs that anticipate, learn from and respond to changes in decision-making are strengthened
Strategic Pillar 2: MCPA Network Expansion
<i>Strategic Outcome 2: MCPA coverage increased through the expansion of soundly-designed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of MCPAs</i>
Output 2.1: Areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services are identified
Output 2.2: Distribution of MCPA systems across the Mediterranean Sea is balanced
Output 2.3: MCPA coverage in areas beyond national jurisdiction is increased
Output 2.4: The number and coverage of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels is increased
Strategic Pillar 3: Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures
<i>Strategic Outcome 3: Marine and coastal OECMs in the Mediterranean are identified, recognized and reported towards post-2020 global and regional targets</i>
Output 3.1: Awareness in Contracting Parties and stakeholders on OECMs enhanced and guidance for the application of OECM criteria provided
Output 3.2: OECMs identified, recognized and reported to regional and global databases by Contracting Parties and regional organizations
Output 3.3: Effectiveness of identified OECMs is enhanced, including through prioritization in cross-sectoral marine spatial planning
Output 3.4: New OECMs are established and recognized OECMs expanded
Strategic Pillar 4: MCPA Management Effectiveness
<i>Strategic Outcome 4: MCPAs are effectively managed and their conservation outcomes successfully delivered</i>
Output 4.1: All MCPAs have adaptive management plans adopted, effectively implemented and periodically reviewed
Output 4.2: Sufficient and sustainable resources for the establishment and management of MCPAs in the Mediterranean are mobilized
Output 4.3: Individual and institutional capacity for MCPA management is enhanced
Output 4.4: Surveillance and enforcement in MCPAs are strengthened and ensured, and user compliance is promoted
Output 4.5: Monitoring of conservation outcomes and evaluation of management effectiveness are strengthened across the MCPA system
Strategic Pillar 5: Government and Stakeholder Action and Support
<i>Strategic Outcome 5: Actions and support for MCPAs and OECMs are mobilized</i>
Output 5.1: Awareness, understanding and appreciation of the values of, and threats to, MCPAs and OECMs across government and non-government stakeholders, the private sector, the youth and wider society
Output 5.2: Political support for the establishment and management of MCPAs and biodiversity conservation is increased
Output 5.3: The contribution of MPCAs and OECMs to sustainable development goals, the blue economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the wider society are recognized and accounted for

Table 4: List of initiatives and ongoing projects in relation with the Post-2020 SAPBIO priority actions

Project Title	Organisation	Project status	Funding/Funding status	Project duration	Partners/Co-executing Partners
The Conservation of Marine Turtles in the Mediterranean Region: Preserving ecosystem function & climate resiliency through enhanced marine turtle populations in the Mediterranean	SPA/RAC	Full concept note finalized	Coordination funding from MAVA.	36 Months	Archelon, MedPAN, MEDASSET, DEKAMER, WWF Turkey, WWF Greece, WWF NA
MED Monk Seal Project: Enhancing knowledge and awareness on monk seal in the Mediterranean	SPA/RAC	Ongoing until May 2024	Monk Seal Alliance	Dec 2022- May 2024	FWP: Arab Federation for Wildlife and Marine Protection (Egypt) AGIR: Association de Gestion Intégrée de Ressources (Morocco) APAL: Agence de Protection et d'Aménagement du Littoral (Tunisia) ISPRA: Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (Italy); CBD-Habitat: The Foundation for the Conservation of Biodiversity and its Habitat (Spain) EAA: Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (Egypt) Ministry of Environment (Libya) NWRES: Nature, Wildlife, Resources, Environment and Society (NGO, Libya) IUCN-Med : IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation CNRDPA: Centre National de Recherche en Pêche et Aquaculture (Algeria) CNRS: Centre national de la recherche scientifique (Lebanon) DEF: Department of Water and Forestry (Morocco)
Fisheries and Ecosystem Based Management for the Blue Economy of the Mediterranean - (GEF FishEBM MED)	SPA/RAC	Prodoc approved; PCA with UNEP/MAP to be drafted and signed;	GEF	4 Years (2023-2026)	UNEP/MAP, FAO, SPA/RAC, GFCM

Project Title	Organisation	Project status	Funding/Funding status	Project duration	Partners/Co-executing Partners
		Kick off meeting and First Project Steering Committee 8-9 February 2023			
Regional Project on “Strengthening the Environmental Conservation and Monitoring in the Southern Mediterranean - SeMPA Project”	SPA/RAC	Submitted Concept Note successfully passed the final Quality Review made by the EU - DG NEAR Prodoc to be prepared by end April/beginning May for its endorsement by June 2023. PCA signature and project start planned on August 2023.	EU-funded project	4 years (23 August 2023 - 22 August 2027)	UNEP/MAP and PAP/RAC
Delivering 30X30 in the Mediterranean	SPA/RAC	Concept note to be finalized		5 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AGIR: Association de Gestion Intégrée des Ressources (Morocco) ● BlueSeeds: a services agency whose mission is to ensure the financial sustainability of conservation projects, and maximize their economic, environmental and social impacts ● GFCM: the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and Black Sea ● MedSEa ● GFN: Global Footprint Network ● HCMR: Hellenic Center for Marine Research ● IUCN-Med: the Center for Mediterranean Cooperation of the

Project Title	Organisation	Project status	Funding/Funding status	Project duration	Partners/Co-executing Partners
					International Union for Conservation of Nature ● LIFE Platform: Low Impact Fishers of Europe is an organization of organizations of European small-scale fishers who are committed to fishing in a low impact manner ● Marilles Foundation: a non-profit foundation working to make the Balearic Islands a world-leading example of marine conservation (Spain) ● MedPAN: the Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean ● NGB: Association Notre Grand Bleu (Tunisia) ● SPA/RAC: the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) - Barcelona Convention ● WWF: WWF’s Mediterranean Marine Initiative Initiative coordinates the joint efforts of WWF offices in the region to scale up marine conservation impact in the region.
Iliad Digital Twin of the Ocean	SPA/RAC	Ongoing	EU	2022-2024	SPA/RAC + 56 International partners
Support to efficient implementation of the Ecosystem Approach-based Integrated Monitoring and Assessment of the Mediterranean Sea and Coasts and to delivery of data-based 2023 Quality Status Report in synergy with the EU MSFD	SPA/RAC	Ongoing	EU-funded project	42 months September 2020 – February 2023	MED POL, PAP/RAC, PB/RAC, INFO/RAC.

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Build back a blue and stronger Mediterranean	MedPAN		GEF		
Life ENABLE'	MedPAN		LIFE		
REST-COAST	MedPAN	Ongoing	H2020		IUCN-Med
Mediterranean Posidonia Network	OFB	Ongoing			IUCN-Med, WWF
the Pelagos Initiative	FPA	Ongoing			WWF
TMedNet		Ongoing			
ENSERES	SPA/RAC, MedPAN, ETC-UMA	Ongoing (end September 2023)	ENI MED	2 years	ETC-UMA, SPA/RAC, MedCities, MedPAN, TCNR, Municipalité de Sfax
COGITO	MedPAN		FFEM		WWF
Together for the Med	BlueSeeds				IUCN Med, WWF
Le Consortium Biodiversité Méditerranée					
Mediterranean Island Collective (MIC)	PIM				
Interreg Euro-MED Programme	Projects on biodiversity were approved end December 2022 including on 'governance'- Institutional Dialogue Projects				
Blue4All		Ongoing	Horizon	4 years	IUCN Med, WWF
RESCOM		Ongoing	FFEM&MAVA	4 years	IUCN Med

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Restore4Cs	ETC-UMA	Ongoing	H2020	3 years	
Life ELBIOS	ETC-UMA	Ongoing	LIFE	3 years	
Med Sea Alliance		Ongoing	Adessium Foundation www.adessium.org, the Didier and Martine Primat Foundation fondationprimat.org and Oceans 5 www.oceans5.org.		WWF
The Palmachim Slide Marine Reserve - FRA	GFCM; Mission Blue				The Society for The Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) ; Israel Ministry of Environmental Protection (MoEP); Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA)