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Athens, Greece, 25-29 May 2015

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

10.2.4. Roadmap - Towards a comprehensive, ecologically representative, effectively connected and efficiently managed network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas by 2020

Draft Roadmap for a comprehensive coherent network of well managed MPAs to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean

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Foreword¹

During their 18th Ordinary Meeting, held in Istanbul, Turkey (3-6 December 2013), the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention requested the Secretariat to prepare “**a draft roadmap for a comprehensive coherent network of well managed MPAs to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean for consideration by COP19 with a view to its adoption**” (Decision IG.21/5). In accordance with the provision of the Decision, RAC/SPA consulted with relevant stakeholders, including the relevant regional organizations to prepare the first draft of the roadmap. It will also consult with the Focal Points for SPAs to finalize the draft that will be submitted to the next COP.

In preparing the draft roadmap, RAC/SPA considered first the results of the Mediterranean Forum on Marine Protected Areas (Antalya, Turkey, November 2012) and in particular the roadmap approved by the participants to the Forum and whose elaboration was based on a consultation process involving a wide range of stakeholders: MPA managers, scientists, decision-makers, IGOs, civil society, donors, etc. The roadmap issued in Antalya was not intended to be a document committing countries, but a tool providing detailed recommendations to decision-makers, MPA managers, sea users and other stakeholders.

RAC/SPA also considered the results of three particularly relevant events:

- The International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC 3, Marseilles and Ajaccio, France, October 2013);
- The Mediterranean Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant marine Areas (EBSAs) (Malaga, Spain, April 2014);
- The 6th IUCN World Parks Congress (Sidney, Australia, November 2014).

The outcomes and concepts that emerged from these events provided additional elements that allowed a further refinement of the draft roadmap proposed hereinafter.

Furthermore, RAC/SPA submitted the preliminary draft roadmap to an *ad hoc* meeting² (Tunis, 27-28 April 2015) to which it convened a group of MPA experts, including representatives of Partner Organizations (ACCOBAMS, GFCM, IUCN, MedPAN, WWF-MedPO). The draft roadmap as reviewed and amended by the *ad hoc* meeting is presented hereinafter. The Focal Points for SPAs will be invited during their 12th Meeting (Athens, Greece, 25-29 May 2015) to examine the draft roadmap with the view of submitting it the Contracting Parties for consideration and adoption.

¹ This foreword will not appear in the final version of the roadmap. It is aimed at providing the Focal Points for SPAs, during their 12th Meeting (Athens, Greece, 25-29 May 2015), with explanations about how RAC/SPA proceeded and the initiatives it considered to prepare the first draft.

² The convening of this meeting is supported by FFEM in the framework of the MedMPAnet project. The MedMPAnet project is implemented in the framework of the UNEP/MAP-GEF-MedPartnership with the financial support of: EC, AECID and FFEM.

DRAFT ROADMAP FOR A COMPREHENSIVE COHERENT NETWORK OF WELL MANAGED MPAs TO ACHIEVE AICHI TARGET 11 IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

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

To this end, the activities proposed in the roadmap were oriented towards achieving the following four Strategic Objectives:

Strategic Objective 1:

Strengthen systems of protected areas at national and Mediterranean levels, including in the open seas and in ABNJ, as a contribution to the relevant globally agreed goals and targets.

Strategic Objective 2:

Improve the system of Mediterranean MPAs through effective and equitable management.

Strategic Objective 3:

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

Strategic Objective 4:

Ensure the stability of the system of Mediterranean MPAs by enhancing their financial sustainability.

The four Strategic Goals and the related activities proposed hereinafter take into account the results of the First Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (Antalya, Turkey, November 2012) that led to a detailed roadmap in which the Mediterranean MPA community (managers, sea users, scientists, organizations, donors, etc.) proposed steps, principles and activities to strengthen the Mediterranean MPAs with the view of having them evolving towards a more coherent, representative and efficient network. They also take into account the outcomes of relevant initiatives at global and regional levels, in particular the decisions adopted by international (e.g. CBD, UNESCO, Ramsar) and regional (e.g. GFCM, ACCOBAMS) fora.

Timeframe

Considering the short period remaining before 2020, the roadmap proposed hereinafter contains only concrete actions that should be implemented as soon as possible, by the Contracting Parties and relevant international and regional organizations, in accordance with the timetable indicated for each of these roadmap actions.

The Contracting Parties shall report to COP 20 about the steps they will undertake during the biennium 2016-2017.

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

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

Strategic Objective 1:

Strengthen systems of protected areas at national and Mediterranean levels, including in the open seas and in ABNJ, as a contribution to the relevant globally agreed goals and targets.

In order to meet Aichi Target 11, Mediterranean MPAs or other effective area-based conservation measures need to be organized into a network, or system of networks, with the following elements being enhanced in particular: a) **extension** through the designation of new areas, the expansion of existing areas, and the incorporation of areas benefiting from other types of protection measures; b) **ecological representativity**, with a greater fraction of areas designated to protect open sea and deep sea habitats; c) **ecological connectivity**, with the new areas strategically located to ensure that they are spatially distributed in an ecologically meaningful way; and d) **geographical balance**, with area-based conservation more homogeneously distributed across the region, both within and outside national jurisdiction.

In the long term, the Mediterranean countries should also commit to make a reality the Promise of Sidney made at the 6th IUCN World Parks Congress, in particular by ensuring that at least 30% of each Mediterranean marine habitat are covered by MPAs.

Suggested actions for the National Authorities

- 1.1 Undertake, at national level, gap analyses to identify the ecosystems and other components of marine biodiversity that are under-represented in the existing MPA system, taking into account the EBSAs identified and adopted in 2014 by the Parties to the CBD. The gap analyses should take into account the wide range of objectives for specially protected areas as provided for by the SPA/BD Protocol (Part II, Section One). The gap analyses should also identify the needed steps to enhance connectivity among Mediterranean MPAs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.1					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.2					

- 1.3 Engage, wherever appropriate and possible, with neighbouring National Governments in the designation of transboundary MPAs, taking into account the scientific information provided in the description of EBSAs extending over multiple jurisdictions and/or into ABNJ, also taking advantage from lessons learned in similar previous experiences (e.g. the Pelagos Sanctuary Agreement).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.3					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.4					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.5					

- 1.6 Offer assistance to national authorities and, where needed, facilitate the multilateral processes for the identification of potential MPA sites including in ABNJ, in particular taking into account the EBSAs listed in the CBD repository, and where appropriate facilitating bilateral initiatives.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.6					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.7					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.8					

- 1.9 Undertake by 2020 an assessment of the status of the Mediterranean network of MPAs with the view of evaluating the progress made (including success and possible failure) by the Mediterranean countries towards achieving the Aichi Target 11 (encouraging countries to notify the designation to MAPAMED).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 1.9					

Strategic Objective 2:

Improve the system of Mediterranean MPAs through effective and equitable management.

Aichi Target 11 requires protected areas to be “effectively and equitably managed”, and Mediterranean nations should invest a special effort to satisfy such condition as far as their area-based conservation measures are concerned. Elements where improvement is urgently needed include ensuring that **management** planning is implemented in all areas through effective management mechanisms, with adequate availability of human, material and financial resources. Key to effectiveness success will be in particular the building and sharing of capacity to manage transboundary and open sea areas, as well engaging managers and stakeholders from the private sector and civil society in integrating conservation needs with socio-economic opportunities provided by MPAs.

Suggested actions for the National Authorities

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.1					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.2					

- 2.3 Ensure that in each MPA a management plan is prepared, adopted and implemented (inclusive of measures such as zoning, monitoring, enforcement, research) with clear objectives and concrete measures based on the best available knowledge, and that all MPAs have adequate management teams in terms of skills and staff number.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.3					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.4					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.5					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.6					

- 2.7 Facilitate the elaboration of management approaches for MPAs that promote harmonization and complementarities between MPAs at national and regional level.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.7					

- 2.8 In order to ensure the effective management of transboundary MPAs, or MPAs extending into ABNJ, offer assistance to national authorities to facilitate the needed multilateral processes, without prejudice to the rights, the present and future claims or legal views of any State relating to the Law of the Sea.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 2.8					

Strategic Objective 3:

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

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

Suggested actions for the National Authorities

3.1 Ensure conciliation between the conservation objectives and the requirements for the local economic and social development by establishing and implementing adequate measures, such as zoning systems for MPAs.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.1					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.2					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.3					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.4					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

3.5 Provide assistance to the relevant national authorities in further integrating MPAs into their territorial, social and economic contexts, in particular through the development of guidelines and promoting exchange of experiences, in promoting the sharing of environmental and socio-economic benefits of Mediterranean MPAs, and the MPAs' integration into the broader context of sustainable use of the marine environment, through the implementation of the ecosystem and marine spatial planning approaches

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.5					

3.6 Facilitate, through technical and financial support, stakeholder networking initiatives at national and regional level with the view of generating further synergies between MPAs and other relevant human activity sectors, in particular fisheries and tourism.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.6					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 3.7					

Strategic Objective 4:

Ensure the stability of the system of Mediterranean MPAs by enhancing their financial sustainability

The long-term sustainability of the Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) will be ensured only if the legal framework governing their planning and management is appropriately adapted to the challenges they are facing. The weaknesses in the MPA legal frameworks may undermine the stability of Mediterranean MPAs, particularly where there is low political will and no real commitment from States to marine biodiversity conservation. Legislation governing MPAs should ensure (i) long term stability of the legal status of MPAs, (ii) participation and involvement of stakeholders in the planning and management processes, (iii) equitable access and sharing of resources and of benefits generated by MPAs, and (iv) securing the financial sustainability of Mediterranean MPAs. Such sustainability is a prerequisite to ensure their stability and the achievements of their objectives. In many Mediterranean countries decision makers are not fully aware of the socio-economic benefits that MPAs could generate if properly integrated into the local and national development plans. Investing in marine protected areas, through innovative financing approaches, has the potential to make MPAs not a financial burden for States, but rather a booster for income generation and the economy in general.

Suggested actions for the National Authorities

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.1					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.2					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.3					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.4					

Suggested actions for Regional and International Organizations

- 4.5 Support the ongoing process of establishment of a Mediterranean Fund for MPAs endowed with appropriate and sustainable replenishment systems and using transparent funding procedures. The Fund should intervene according to the priorities agreed at regional level within the framework of the relevant Conventions and multilateral Agreements, in particular to subsequently increase by 2020 the surface areas covered by well managed MPAs that are representative of the Mediterranean marine biodiversity and their networking activities.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.5					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.6					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.7					

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

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Action 4.8					