

CONDITIONS AND CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF THE TITLE OF REGIONAL ACTION PLAN PARTNER



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1 Background

In accordance with its mission, the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) is assisting the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in fulfilling their obligations under the SPA/BD Protocol, the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-200 SAPBIO) and the regional Action Plans and strategies to protect vulnerable habitats, endangered species, and areas of conservation interest.

Elaborating and implementing regional action plans to address threats to biological diversity within a common framework, namely the Barcelona Convention, is an effective way to step up efforts by the Mediterranean countries to safeguard the region's natural heritage. Although they do not have a binding legal character, these action plans set out the priorities and activities to be undertaken as defined and agreed with the Contracting Parties.

In all the action plans, coordination of efforts, cooperation and solidarity are a fundamental point. This approach has indeed proved necessary to ensure the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity in the Mediterranean as a whole.

The Contracting to Barcelona Convention adopted the following Regional Action Plans:

- Action Plan for the management of the Monk Seal
- Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles
- Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans
- Action Plan for the conservation of marine vegetation
- Action Plan for the conservation of bird species registered in Annex II of the SPA/BD Protocol
- Action Plan for the conservation of cartilaginous fishes (Chondrichthyans) in the Mediterranean Sea
- Action Plan concerning species introduction and invasive species
- Action Plan for the conservation of the coralligenous and other calcareous bio-concretions in the Mediterranean Sea
- Action Plan for the conservation of habitats and species associated with seamounts, underwater caves and canyons, aphotic hard beds and chemo-synthetic phenomena in the Mediterranean Sea

To encourage and reward contributions to the work of applying the Action Plans, the Contracting Parties may at their ordinary meetings grant the title of "Action Plan Partner" to any organization (governmental, NGO, economic, etc.) that has to its credit concrete actions likely to help the conservation and the protection of the species/group of species in question.

To this end, the present Conditions and criteria for the award of the title of Regional Action Plan Partner were adopted by the last Contracting Parties meeting (Decision IG.26/5, Portorož, Slovenia, 5-8 December 2023).

The following conditions and criteria take into consideration the decision on MAP/Civil society cooperation and Partnership (UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG 337/8) adopted by 16th meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols (COP 16).



2 Conditions and criteria for the award of the title of regional action plan partner

The present conditions and criteria will apply to the evaluation of proposals for the awarding and the renewal of the awarding of the title of Regional Action Plan Partner.

No limit is set on the total number of the Partner to the Regional Action Plan. However, Parties agree that the awarding will be based the following criteria. Any Organization can request the title of Partner for more than one Action Plan.

2.1 General conditions and criteria

2.1.1 Types of organizations eligible for the title of Regional Action Plan Partner

- International and regional organizations
- International and regional NGOs
- National organisations
- National and local NGOs from Mediterranean riparian states.
- Research institutions/Laboratories
- Private organizations/ companies (environmental responsibility)
- Any other organization which so requests, and which carries out, or supports (financially or otherwise) the carrying out of concrete actions (conservation, research, etc.) likely to facilitate the implementation of the concerned Action Plan, taking into account the objectives and priorities contained therein.

2.1.2 General conditions of candidate partners

- Be representative in the field(s) of their competence and fields of action related to the concerned Action Plan(s)
- Be able, through their work and specific project or programme, to support the achievement of the objectives and the implementation of the concerned Action Plan(s)
- Be able to make known the concerned Action Plan(s) in the region and/or their respective countries and to contribute, through a specific event or manifestation linked to public awareness-raising.
- Be able to provide, through their specific activity or experience, expert advice and/or best practices on the definition of objectives, priorities and actions for the concerned Action Plan(s)
- Be able to provide information or views related to their own area(s) of expertise, either on their own initiative or at the SPA/RAC request.

2.2 Specific conditions and criteria

2.2.1 Awarding criteria

Candidate partners at the time of submitting request to become an action plan partner should fulfil the following criteria:

- To have legal status; terms of reference, objectives and scope of activities related to one or more SPA/RAC areas of activity and objectives and the scope genuinely related to the concerned Action Plan(s)
- To have existed for at least 5 years.
- To submit financial and activity reports from the last two years.
- To have their regional office or headquarters in a Mediterranean country.
- To demonstrate proof of general or specialized, technical or scientific competence on issues related to the activities of SPA/RAC and the concerned Action Plan(s)
- To demonstrate what contributions the partner could make the concerned Action Plan(s).

2.2.2 Awarding procedure

- The concerned organization should send a request to SPA/RAC, using the form in Annex 1, at least 90 days before the Meeting of SPA/BD Focal Points. The proposal must be submitted either in English or in French.
- SPA/RAC will consult with the concerned focal point about the received request of National organisations, National and local NGOs and research institutions/laboratories
- SPA/RAC will then forward a copy of the proposal in its original version with the recommendation of the concerned focal Point, to the MAP Coordinator.
- SPA/RAC will proceed to the translation of the original version so that the proposal may be submitted in English and French at least a month before the Focal Points meeting, which will proceed to evaluate it in the light of the above agreed criteria using the table in annex II.
- The meeting of SPA/BD Focal Points will examine the request accompanied by the evaluation by the Centre and will decide where to award or not the Regional Action Plans Partner title.
- Once approved by meeting of SPA/BD Focal Points, the candidate partner will be notified by official communication from SPA/RAC, including duration of the award and a request to nominate a contact person to ease coordination with the Centre.

2.2.3 Renewal of awarding

- Award will be renewed every five years, when the implementation of the concerned Action Plan (s) is assessed and the Action Plan updated, the partner organisation should request the Centre to renew their awarding of the Regional Action Plan Partner title.
- The request should show what contribution the partner organisation has made to the implementation of the concerned Action Plan (s)



2.2.4 Awarding Renewal procedure

The same procedure as the initial awarding applies.

2.2.5 Effects of awarding

- SPA/RAC shall draw up a list of Action Plan's partners and update it for each meeting of SPA/BD Focal Points, drawing a distinction between the category of the organisation.
- SPA/RAC shall set up a mechanism for regular dialogue between the Partners and, where necessary, organize meetings to this effect. Dialogue should be made mainly by email and tele-conference.
- Selected partners can be invited to attend expert meetings to update an action plan, and/ or invited to the meetings of SPA/BD Focal Points to provide expert inputs with status of observers in the meeting.

2.2.6 Partner title award levels

- **Bronze partner:** A partner of regional action plan, during the first 5 years of partnership,
- **Silver partner:** A partner who completed the bronze partner period, for the implementation of respective Action Plan. The silver badge should be granted for 5 years.
- **Golden partner:** A partner who completed the silver partner period for the implementation of respective Action Plan. The Golden badge should be granted for 10 years, with progress assessment at the 5th year.
- **Associate/Affiliate partner:** is the final level that granted to a Golden Action Plan partner, who successfully maintained a continuous commitment in action plan implementation for 10 consecutive years.

2.2.7 Withdrawal of awarding

A Total lack of participation in the implementation of the concerned Action Plan (s) over a period of 5 years will lead to the awarding being automatically cancelled following a hearing with the concerned Partner.

Following a formal request from the partner organisation in question if it deems that the partner organisation is no longer meets the accreditation criteria or has shown no further interest in Action Plan implementation related activities, the meeting of SPA/BD Focal may withdraw the awarding of title. The concerned organization should send the request to SPA/RAC, at least 90 days before the Meeting of SPA/BD Focal Points



Annex I: Application form for the action plan partner title

Part A	Select an Action Plan	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Plan for the management of the Monk Seal	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Plan for the conservation of bird species registered in Annex II of the SPA/BD Protocol	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Plan for the conservation of marine vegetation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Plan concerning species introduction and invasive species	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Plan for the Conservation of the Coralligenous and Other Calcareous Bio-concretions in the Mediterranean Sea
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Plan for the conservation of habitats and species associated with seamounts, underwater caves and canyons, aphotic hard beds and chemo-synthetic phenomena in the Mediterranean Sea (Dark Habitats Action Plan)	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Plan for the conservation of cartilaginous fishes (Chondrichthyans) in the Mediterranean Sea
		<input type="checkbox"/> Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans
Part B	General Information	
1.	Name and acronym of the organization (in English and French)	
2.	Organization HQ address	
	Street	
	City & Zip Code	
	Country	
	Tel	
	Email	
	Web site	
3.	Year of foundation	
4.	Type of organization (Association; federation, foundation, professional organization, umbrella organization)	
5.	Organizational status	
	President of the organization Name: Surname: Address: Tel: Email:	

	Secretary General of the organization Name: Surname: Address: Tel: Email:	
	Structure and functioning of directing bodies	
	Staff	
	Number of members	
6.	Funding	
a)	Membership fees	
b)	Public funding	
c)	Private donations	
d)	Other, please specify	
7.	Purpose Please describe briefly the goals, mandate or mission of your organization	
8.	Activities of your organization Please describe activities of your organization	
9.	Constituency Please describe briefly the support base (members/supporters/donors) of your organization	
10.	Accreditations Accreditation with other international intergovernmental organizations	
11.	Publications	
	Titles/Numbers	
	Does your organization publish an annual report?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Does your organization produce a list of available publications and or educational matters?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Part C	Areas of possible cooperation with SPA/RAC	
	Please indicate the areas of your organization's activities which correspond	

	to the SPA/RAC programme of activities and Action Plans	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Governance for environment and development	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrating environment in development	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal aspects of implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pollution control and prevention	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity conservation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated coastal zone management/Ecosystem management	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific Research	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable management of natural resources and efficient use of resources	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Public participation and awareness	
Part D	Modalities of Cooperation with SPA/RAC	
1.	In what ways does your organization think it can support SPA/RAC activities and the objectives of the selected Action Plan? (Please describe: Studies, reports, previous work in the field concerned, expertise of its members, etc)	
2.	What practical cooperation has already been established with SPA/RAC and/or other RACs? (Please describe joint activities, comments on draft documents, exchange of information, participation as experts, participation at SPA/RAC meeting and events, etc)	
3.	In what ways and audiences will your organization promote the work and development of the SPA/RAC?	

Name:

Position in the Organization:

Date:

Stamp & Signature:

Please send your completed form and required documents by email to: car-asp@spa-rac.org

Please enclose all the documents required to support your application for action plan partner title:

Submission checklist:

- Cover letter addressed to the SPA/RAC Director
- Read and endorsed the action plan partner conditions and criteria
- Completed application form
- Copy of the statute
- Financial reports of the past two years
- Annual reports of the past two years, highlighting the activities
- Copies of the organization's publications

Annex II: Evaluation table for applications to action plan partner title status

	Requirement	Check
Part A	One Action Plan is selected	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part B	General Information	
1.	Name and acronym of the organization (in English and French)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Organization HQ address	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Year of foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Type of organization (Association; federation, foundation, professional organization, umbrella organization)	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Organizational status	<input type="checkbox"/>
	President of the organization details provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Secretary General of the organization details provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Structure and functioning of directing bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Staff details provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Funding details provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Activities of your organization provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Constituency information provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Proof of other Accreditations provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Publication's list provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Copies of the organization's annual reports provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Copies of the organization's publications provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Part C	The organization provided enough information on areas of possible cooperation with SPA/RAC	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Part D	The organization provided enough information modalities of Cooperation with SPA/RAC	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



Mediterranean
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