Decision IG.25/12

Protecting and conserving the Mediterranean through well connected and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including Specially Protected Areas and Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance

The Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols at their 22nd Meeting,

Recalling the General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",

Recalling also the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res.10 of 15 March 2019, entitled "Innovation on biodiversity and land degradation",

Mindful of the ongoing work on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to be adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Kunming, China),

Having regard to the Barcelona, in particular Article 10 thereof, whereby Contracting Parties shall, individually or jointly, take all appropriate measures to protect and preserve biological diversity, rare or fragile ecosystems, as well as species of wild fauna and flora which are rare, depleted, threatened or endangered and their habitats, in the Mediterranean Sea Area,

Having also regard to the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, hereinafter referred to as "the SPA/BD Protocol", in particular Article 5 thereof on the establishment of specially protected areas, and Article 8 thereof, on the establishment of the List of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance,

Recalling Decision IG.17/12 on the Procedure for the Revision of the Areas included in the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI) List, adopted by the Contracting Parties at their 15th Meeting (COP 15) (Almeria, Spain, 15-18 January 2008),

Recalling also Decision IG.24/6 on the Identification and Conservation of Sites of Particular Ecological Interest in the Mediterranean, including Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance, adopted by the Contracting Parties at their 21st Meeting (COP 21) (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019),

Recalling further the mandate of the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC), as laid down in Decision IG.19/5 on the Mandates of the Components of MAP, adopted by the Contracting Parties at their 16th Meeting (COP 16) (Marrakesh, Morocco, 3-5 November 2009), and its relevance to the implementation of this Decision,

Considering Decision IG.24/2 on governance, adopted by the Contracting Parties at their 21st (COP 21) (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019) Meeting and *noting with appreciation* work undertaken by the Secretariat in strengthening linkages with other Secretariats in relation to spatial-based management and conservation in the Mediterranean, as a key component of the governance mechanisms in the region,

Appreciating the support of donors and Contracting Parties and contribution of relevant partner organizations in the establishment and management of Specially Protected Areas and Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance,

Appreciating also the support provided by the Ad hoc group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean to the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties during the current biennium,

Having considered the report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity (SPA/BD Focal Points) (Teleconference, 23-25 June 2021),

1. *Adopt* the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures in the Mediterranean, hereinafter referred as to "the Post-2020 Regional Strategy", set out in Annex I to this Decision;

2. *Call upon* the Contracting Parties to take effective measures to implement the Post-2020 Regional Strategy, thus enhancing the implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol in the Mediterranean region;

3. *Request* the Secretariat (SPA/RAC) in coordination with other regional and international organizations, to support the Contracting Parties with technical and, where possible, financial assistance to undertake the activities indicated in the Post-2020 Regional Strategy with the aim to effectively achieve its strategic outcomes and targets;

4. *Request* the Secretariat (SPA/RAC) to develop an evaluation and monitoring framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy, with the technical support of the Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean, using to the extent possible existing monitoring tools in the region in particular those established under UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention as well as in the framework of SDG, Post-2020 Biodiversity and related target monitoring;

5. *Adopt* the Concepts to set up the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance Day and the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance Certificate, set out in Annex II to this Decision;

6. *Invite* the Secretariat (SPA/RAC) to organize the first edition of the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance Day in 2022 and encourage all Contracting Parties to support and contribute to these celebrations;

7. *Request* the Secretariat (SPA/RAC) to work with the relevant designated national authorities in Albania, Algeria, France and Italy to carry out the ordinary periodic review for the five Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance listed below, and bring the outcome of that review process to the attention of the Contracting Parties at their 23rd Meeting (COP 23):
- Karaburun Sazan National Marine Park (Albania) in 2022,
- Banc des Kabyles Marine Reserve (Algeria) in 2023,
- Habibas Islands (Algeria) in 2023,
- Les Calanques National Park (France) in 2023, and
- Portofino Marine Protected Area (Italy) in 2023;

8. *Adopt* the Criteria for inclusion of Specially Protected Areas in the Directory of Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas, including the associated updates in the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS), set out in Annex III to this Decision;

9. *Call upon* the Contracting Parties to report on the Specially Protected Areas to the Directory of Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas based on the adopted Criteria, at the time of submitting their national implementation reports under Article 26 of the Barcelona Convention, starting with the national implementation reports for the biennium 2020-2021 to be submitted by December 2022; to this aim also encourage the Contracting Parties to report on other effective area-based conservation measures;

10. *Request* the Secretariat (SPA/RAC) to:
a) provide an analysis of the reports on Specially Protected Areas and as appropriate on other effective area-based conservation measures, at every meeting of the SPA/BD Focal Points, and
b) maximize synergies and foster closer cooperation with relevant regional and international organizations to assess potential other effective area-based conservation measures under their mandate;

11. *Welcome* the progress made in relation to synergies with other Secretariats in spatial-based protection and management measures for marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean Area, and request the Secretariat to continue to strengthen these synergies with the objectives to ensure the conservation and the sustainable use of the marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean through the application of the Ecosystem Approach.

Annex I

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

Executive Summary

In December 2019, the Conference of Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 21) requested the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP) Secretariat, through the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), to elaborate a post-2020 strategic document to further advance and strengthen the network of marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean. It was further recognized that to achieve comprehensive and coherent systems of well-managed MCPAs/OECMs, the strategy should be ambitious, transformational, and in line with the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and other regional and global processes. Central to the transformative approach will be the incorporation and integration of recognized OECMs in the region to help achieve the ambitious Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework relevant targets.

Through a series of consultations and workshops, this Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean was developed under the leadership of the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre, (SPA/RAC) the guidance of its Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas s in the Mediterranean (AGEM), and in consultation with Contracting Parties Focal Points and Regional and International Organizations active in the Mediterranean. The strategy is aligned with a number of international, regional and sub-regional relevant strategies and ongoing programmes.

POST-2020 TARGETS

It is recognized that each individual country will have its own specific MCPA and OECM coverage targets, however in keeping with global targets for protected areas, regional marine conservation community recommendations, and sub-regional targets for enhanced levels of protection. Two post-2020 targets have been identified for the Mediterranean Sea as a whole; these are-:

i)   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.

ii)   By 2030, the number and coverage of marine and coastal protected areas with enhanced protection levels is increased, contributing to the recovery of marine ecosystems.

STRATEGY

To help achieve these ambitious targets, the strategy has identified five strategic pillars-:
1.   Governance- Inclusive governance is essential to ensure effective systems of MCPAs and OECMs. This pillar promotes the participation of all levels of stakeholders in both the decision-making processes and management of these systems.
2.   MCPA coverage- There is a clear need to establish and expand the MCPA network to achieve the ambitious post-2020 target for the Mediterranean. The design of these systems, however, requires a greater balance across countries, sub-regions and habitats coverage to achieve a greater ecological representation across the region and to consider enhanced levels of protection for MCPAs or parts of MCPAs.
3.   OECMs- A relatively new concept for the region, recognizing marine OECMs, in addition to **increasing** MCPA coverage, will be critical to help advance towards the 30% coverage target for the region.
4.   MCPA effectiveness- Increasing the management effectiveness of MCPAs is necessary to achieve conservation outcomes and is essential to avoid MCPA existence on paper only. As the coverage of MCPAs increases over the coming years, it is essential to mitigate barriers to effective management ensuring these new MCPAs and those already established, are managed effectively to enhance their conservation outcomes.

5.   Government and stakeholder action and support- A cross-cutting pillar essential to all other pillars identified. Government and stakeholder action and support will be the foundation of achieving all other outcomes and outputs.

Under each of these pillars, a clear strategic outcome, with corresponding outputs have been identified. Recognizing that countries are at different stages with regard to the establishment and management of their MCPAs, a number of indicative, rather than prescriptive, actions are also proposed at both, Contracting Parties and Regional and International Organization levels. Below summarizes the main aspects for each of the five pillars identified.

Pillar 1: Governance
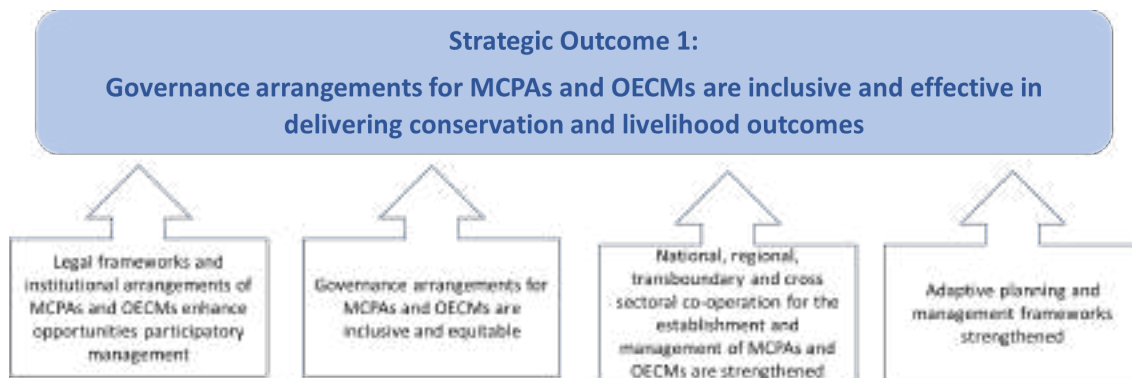
To meet post-2020 targets for the region, it is essential that governance and co-operation among other sectors and stakeholders, including transboundary co-operation, is strengthened for the establishment and management of MCPAs and OECMs. Effective and inclusive governance is a core element for achieving effective systems of MCPAs and OECMs. It is necessary therefore to ensure that enabling legislation and best practices are applied, that promote the effective and equitable involvement of key stakeholders of all levels in decision-making processes and the management of MPCAs and OECMs, and that their respective planning and management frameworks can adapt to any changes in political, social and environmental conditions that arise. Appropriate governance models are critical for creating and maintaining the necessary conditions for efficient management. Participatory, inclusive and adaptive decision-making, therefore, is critical to the overall success of MCPAs and OECMs.

Pillar 2: MCPA coverage
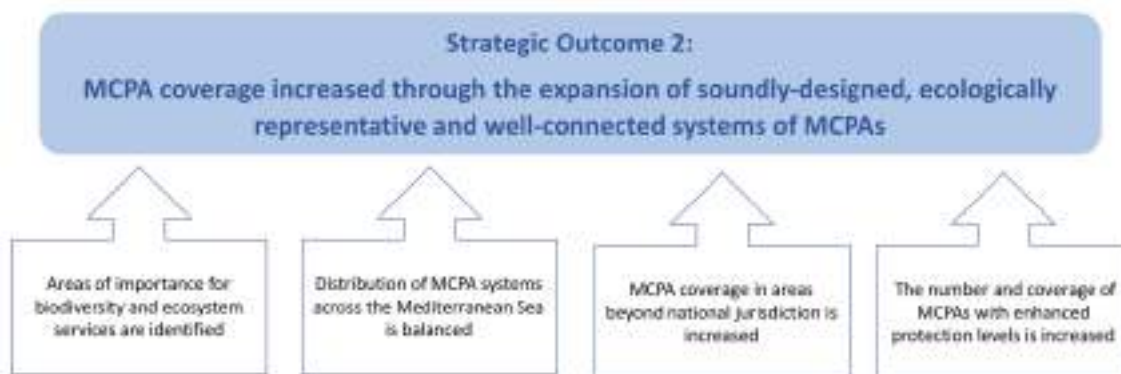
MPCA coverage in the Mediterranean currently stands at 8.3%, there is clear need therefore to establish new MCPAs and to expand existing networks if the region is to advance towards meeting this ambitious post-2020 target. It is further essential that this increase in coverage coincides with a more balanced representation across countries, sub-regions and depths and includes areas beyond national jurisdiction. In addition, and in keeping with regional and sub-regional targets, there is a need

where appropriate to enhance the protection measures of MCPAs and to consider identifying or establishing MCPAs or core zones within MCPAs with enhanced protection measures, for example, no-entry, no-take and no-fishing zones. Identifying important areas for protection, documenting and sharing knowledge between Contracting Parties and enhanced transboundary co-operation, will be essential actions under this pillar if outputs and outcomes are to be achieved.

Pillar 3: OECMs

Strategic Outcome 3:

Marine and coastal OECMs in the Mediterranean are identified, recognized and reported towards post-2020 global and regional targets

| Awareness in Contracting Parties and stakeholders on OECMs enhanced and guidance for the application of OECM criteria provided | OECMs identified, recognized and reported to regional and global databases by Contracting Parties and regional organizations | Effectiveness of identified OECMs is enhanced, including through prioritization in cross-sectoral marine spatial planning | New OECMs are established and recognized OECMs expanded |

In addition to expanding MCPA coverage, OECMs will play an increasingly important role in progressing the region towards its post-2020 target. As a relatively new concept for the region, creating awareness on OECMs, providing guidance for applying screening tools and assessments against criteria, and supporting their subsequent reporting to the relevant databases will be key elements under this pillar. Effective inter-sectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement, and documenting and sharing experiences, will be critical for the success of this outcome. Since the responsibility for OECMs will generally fall under other sectors, marine spatial planning processes will be an important avenue to help prioritize and promote the identification and recognition of OECMs and to enhance their biodiversity conservation measures. This strategy focuses on the identification, recognition and reporting of OECMs only, and not their subsequent management and monitoring, which are likely to fall under other sectors' mandates.
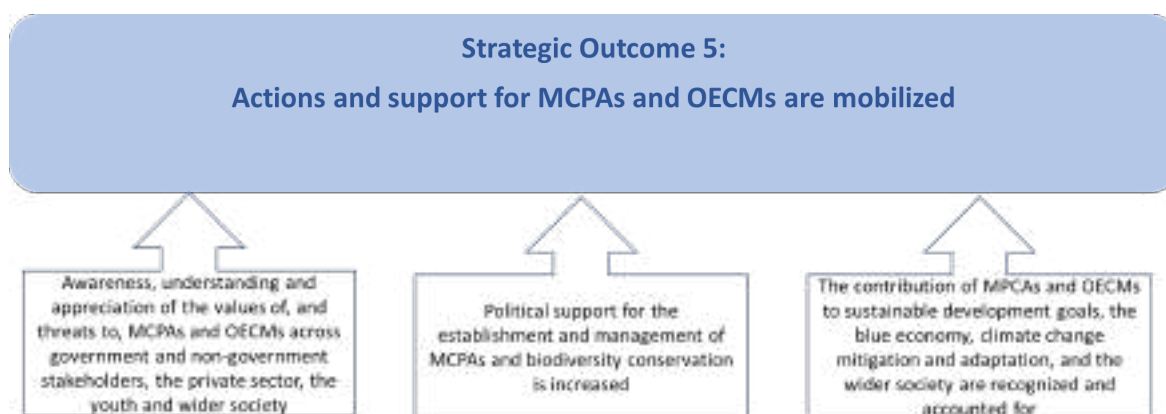
Pillar 4: MCPA Management Effectiveness

Strategic Outcome 4:

MCPAs are effectively managed and their conservation outcomes successfully delivered

| All MCPAs have adaptive management plans adopted, effectively implemented and periodically reviewed | Sufficient and sustainable resources for the establishment and management of MCPAs in the Mediterranean are mobilized | Individual and institutional capacity for MCPA management is enhanced | Surveillance and enforcement in MCPAs are strengthened and ensured, and user compliance is promoted | Monitoring and evaluation of management effectiveness are strengthened across the MCPA system |

Global Biodiversity targets for MCPAs recognize that increasing their coverage is not sufficient on its own and once established, MCPAs must be effectively managed. Identifying desired conservation outcomes, developing frameworks for their management, and ensuring management effectiveness is routinely evaluated are critical steps for ensuring adaptive and effective management of MCPAs. Plans alone however will not safeguard the biodiversity and socio-economic values of MCPAs, such plans need to be implemented effectively. To do so, it is critical that sufficient and sustainable funds are available to MCPA managers across the region and that institutions and their staff have the relevant

capacity for management plan implementation. Increasing funds will also be necessary to support all actions under this strategy including the establishment of MCPAs. As part of management plan implementation and assessing conservation outcomes, strengthening surveillance and enforcement of MCPA rules and regulations, fostering good co-operation with relevant law enforcement agencies, and monitoring ecosystem health, threats and socio-economic indicators will be essential to achieve this outcome.

Pillar 5: Government and stakeholder action and support

Strategic Outcome 5:

Actions and support for MCPAs and OECMs are mobilized

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	Political support for the establishment and management of MCPAs and biodiversity conservation is increased	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

To move away from business-as-usual, it is necessary to ensure that across all stakeholder groups, including the wider society, MCPAs and potential OECMs are valued and appreciated for their functional and supportive role in helping to achieve other non-biodiversity related national agendas and their role as nature-based solutions. Enhancing political support is particularly crucial as without political will, the Region cannot meet the relevant post 2020 targets. Key to increasing political support will be advancing their recognition of the value and importance of MPAs and OECMs in achieving national and international commitments, particularly as they related to Sustainable Development Goals and Nationally Determined Contributions, as well as their contribution to the national economy. The development and implementation of effective and targeted communication and awareness strategies will be essential for mobilizing action in government and non-government stakeholders.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation

The implementation of this strategy should be a co-operative process and as such places the effective participation and collaboration of local, national, sub-regional, and regional stakeholders, encompassing inter-governmental agencies, local communities, civil society, private sector, research/academic community, MCPA networks, and relevant Regional and International Organizations at its core for successful implementation.

Contracting Parties will be responsible for the delivery of relevant indicative actions at the national and local levels and creating the enabling conditions for fostering the effective collaboration and active participation of national and local stakeholders and other sectors. SPA/RAC will undertake a central role in co-ordinating and facilitating the delivery of the strategic outcomes through technical, logistical and financial support to the Contracting Parties and fostering regional collaboration between Contracting Parties, and Regional and International Organizations. Regional and International Organizations will also play a supportive role in delivering the outcomes of this strategy through sharing best practices, building capacity, co-financing activities and advising on new tools and approaches.

Financing

Additional and substantial financing will be necessary to support the implementation of national and regional actions identified under this strategy. This will be achieved through the identification and implementation of innovative and diversified financing mechanisms across Contracting Parties and the region, and through the support of Regional and International Organizations and donors.

Monitoring and evaluation

The timeframe for the implementation of this strategy is 2021-2030. A full review of the strategy should occur at its mid-point (2026) and at the end of its timeframe (2030). Once adopted, a detailed monitoring and evaluation framework, with associated indicators and targets will be developed. As a living document, progress towards output and outcome indicators and targets should be periodically reviewed and the strategy and its actions revised as required.

A schematic representation of the strategy is provided on the following page.

OUTPUTS

OUTCOMES

Targets

Pillar 1 Governance

- Legal frameworks and institutional arrangements allowing for participatory management
- Governance of MCPAs and OECMs are inclusive and equitable
- National, regional, transboundary and cross-sectoral co-operation strengthened
- Adaptive planning and management frameworks strengthened

Inclusive and effective governance of MCPAs and OECMs

By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative, and effective systems of MCPAs and OECMs, ensuring adequate geographical balance, with the focus on areas particularly important for biodiversity

Pillar 2 MCPA Coverage

- Areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services identified
- Distribution of MCPA systems across the Mediterranean is balanced
- MCPA coverage in areas beyond national jurisdiction increased
- Number and coverage of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels is increased

Increased coverage of effective MCPA systems
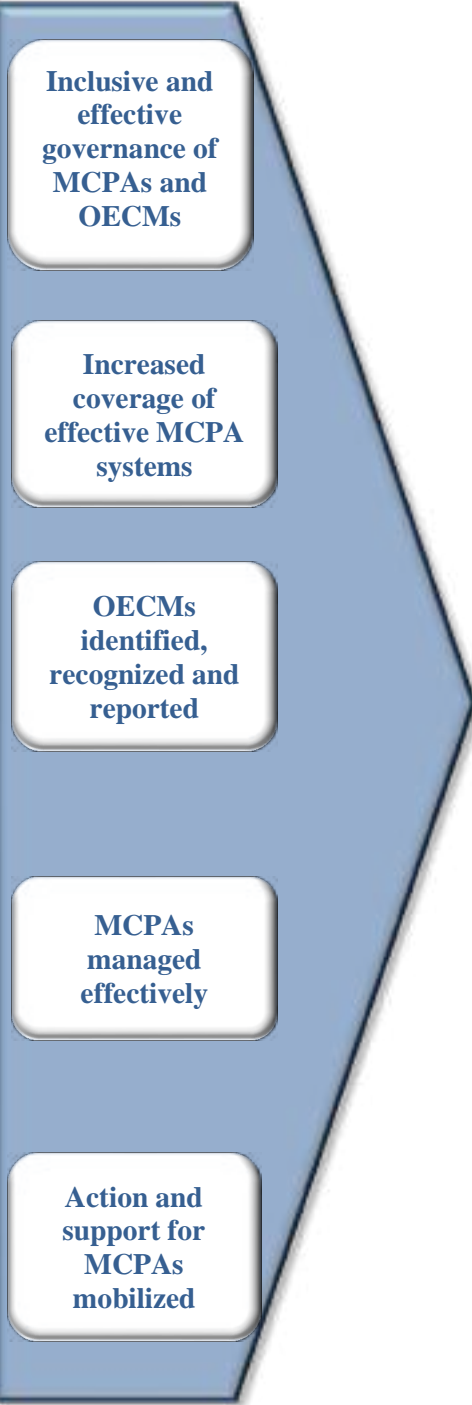
Pillar 3 OECMs

- Awareness on OECMs enhanced and guidance for the application of OECM criteria provided
- OECMs identified, recognized and reported to regional and global databases
- OECMs effectiveness is enhanced, including through prioritization in cross-sectoral marine spatial planning
- New OECMs established and recognized OECMs expanded

OECMs identified, recognized and reported

Pillar 4 MCPA Management Effectiveness

- Management plans for all MCPAs are adopted, implemented and periodically reviewed
- Sufficient and sustainable financial resources mobilized
- Individual and institutional capacity for effective MCPA management enhanced
- Surveillance and enforcement strengthened and ensured, and user compliance promoted
- Monitoring of conservation outcomes and management effectiveness evaluations strengthened

MCPAs managed effectively

By 2030, the number and coverage of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels is increased, contributing to the recovery of marine ecosystems

Pillar 5 Government and Stakeholder Action

- Awareness, understanding and appreciation of the values
- of, and threats to MCPAs and OECMs is increased across all stakeholders
- Political support for the establishment and management of MCPAs and biodiversity conservation increased
- The contribution of MCPAs and OECMs to sustainable development goals, the blue economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the wider society are recognized and accounted for

Action and support for MCPAs mobilized

Acronyms

ABNJ	Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
AGEM	Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas s in the Mediterranean
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCH	Cetacean Critical Habitat
COP	Conference of Parties
CP	Contracting Party
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area
EcAp	Ecosystem Approach
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
FRA	Fisheries Reserve Area
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
IBA	Important Bird Area
IMAP	Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and related Assessment Criteria
IMMA	Important Marine Mammal Area
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MAPAMED	Database on marine protected areas in the Mediterranean
MedPAN	Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean
MAP CU	Mediterranean Action Plan Coordinating Unit
MCPA	Marine and Coastal Protected Areas
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
NbS	Nature-based Solution
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NIS	Non-indigenous Species
OECM	Other effective area-based conservation measures
PA	Protected Area
PR	Public Relations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPA	Specially Protected Area
SPA/BD	Specially protected areas and biological diversity
SPAMI	Specially Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance
SPA/RAC	Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre
PSSA	Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WD	World Database

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Post-2020 Regional Strategy for marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean

I. Introduction

I.1. Background

1.   The Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity (SPA/BD) in the Mediterranean was adopted in 1995 under the Barcelona Convention, to provide a regional framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity in the Mediterranean. Since its adoption a number of strategies, programmes, action plans and roadmaps have been developed to help the Contracting Parties meet their obligations under the Protocol. In 2016, at COP 16, a Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed Marine Protected Areas to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean was adopted, and in 2019, a final evaluation of this roadmap was made, where findings and priority actions for marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) post-2020 were presented at COP 21. In response to this, and noting the shortcomings of the region in meeting global 2020 targets for MCPAs, the geographical imbalance, the strong bias regarding the type of ecosystems protected, and the weak management and enforcement, Contracting Parties requested the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP)-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, through its Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), to elaborate an ambitious and transformational post-2020 strategy that would further advance and strengthen the network of MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean, and that is in line with the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and other regional and global processes (Decision IG.24/6). Central to the transformative approach will be the incorporation and integration of recognized OECMs as a means to achieve the ambitious Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework relevant targets.

I.2. Strategy Development

2.   This strategy was developed under the leadership of the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre, the guidance of its Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (AGEM), and in consultation with the Contracting Parties SPA/BD Focal Points and Regional and International Organizations active in the Mediterranean over a period of 5 months.

3.   A draft strategic framework (strategic pillars, outcomes and outputs), developed in consultation with SPA/RAC and the AGEM members, was presented in a 2-day remote workshop with 51 participants representing National, Regional and International Organizations, as well as Focal Points, individual experts and representatives from academic institutions. During this 2-day workshop the framework was finalized, and a number of key actions identified for each output. Actions were identified at two levels: Contracting Parties level and Regional and International Organization level. Workshop outputs were incorporated into the strategy with participants provided a further opportunity for review.

4.   The revised strategy was then presented to the second meeting of AGEM, then to the SPA/BD Focal Points in a remote consultation workshop where comments were incorporated.

5.   A second draft Post-2020 Strategy was presented at the Fifteenth Meeting of the SPA/BD Focal Points in June 2021, and subsequently revised.

6.   This strategy intends to be further submitted to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points (Teleconference, 10-17 September 2021) and eventually to COP 22 (Antalya, Turkey, 7-10 December 2021) for consideration.

I.3. Context

7.   The Mediterranean Sea is the world largest semi-enclosed sea. It is considered a biodiversity hotspot, representing just 0.3% of the global ocean volume while hosting 4 to 18 % of identified global marine species[1]. In addition to its biodiversity value, the Mediterranean has significant historical, cultural and socio-economic value. The Mediterranean comprises 20% of the global marine product despite representing only 1% of all global oceans[2], is among the world's leading tourism destination[3] and encompasses three major maritime crossings. In addition, fisheries and aquaculture, another very important sector in the Mediterranean's blue economy, is thought to provide direct and indirect employment for at least one million people[4].

8.   As a semi-enclosed sea, the Mediterranean is more susceptible to human impacts than more open waters and is one of the world's biomes that shows strong negative responses to land use and climate change pressures[5]. The Mediterranean Sea is already being impacted by climate change at rates exceeding global averages, with more rapid warming during all seasons and a trend towards drier conditions[6]. The Adriatic, Aegean, Levantine and north-east Ionian Seas in particular are amongst the areas currently most impacted by climate change[7].

9.   Approximately 80% of marine pollution comes from land-based sources, mainly agriculture, industry, and municipal waste[8]. Marine litter, largely comprising macro and microplastics, is considered one of the main sources of pollution in the Mediterranean Sea. Commercial fishing however has also been recognized as a significant source of litter, particularly discarded fishing gear, such as nets, and fish stock waste[9]. As a major shipping hub, underwater noise and accidental discharges from oil spills and other hazardous substances are also sources of pollution in the region. The high shipping traffic in the Sea presents a further hazard to many marine mammals and the risk of collision between ships and marine mammals is high[10].

10.   The Mediterranean is among the most overfished seas in the world[11] with bottom trawling and gill nets extensively used in the region. Bottom trawling is the main pressure facing coralligenous assemblages and accidental bycatch is having a profound impact on a number of species, such as marine turtles and seabirds. Non-indigenous and invasive species (NIS) are also increasingly present in the Mediterranean Sea, with a total of more than 1,199 non-indigenous marine species recorded, of

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[2] Randone et al. 2017. Reviving the economy of the Mediterranean Sea: Actions for a Sustainable Future. WWF Marine Initiative, Rome, Italy

[3] UNWTO 2015. Mediterranean trends. 2015 edition

[4] UNEP/MAP and Plan Bleu 2020. State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean. Nairobi

[5] Newbold, T., Oppenheimer, P., Etard, A. et al. 2020. Tropical and Mediterranean biodiversity is disproportionately sensitive to land-use and climate change. Natural Ecology and Evolution, 4: 1630–1638. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-020-01303-0

[6] UNEP/MAP and Plan Bleu 2020. State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean. Nairobi

[7] MedECC 2020. Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin – Current Situation and Risks for the Future. First Mediterranean Assessment Report [Cramer, W., Guiot, J., Marini, K. (eds.)] Union for the Mediterranean, Plan Bleu, UNEP/MAP, Marseille, France, 600pp, in press

[8] Hildering, A., Keessen, A.M. & van Rijswick, F.M.W. 2009. Tackling pollution of the Mediterranean Sea from land-based sources by an integrated ecosystem approach and the use of the combined international and European legal regimes. Utrecht Law Review, 5(1), 80.

[9] UNEP-MAP-RAC/SPA. 2015. 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. Ed. RAC/SPA, Tunis

[10] IUCN 2012. Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles of the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Gland, Switzerland and Malaga, Spain: IUCN

[11] FAO. 2020. The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2020. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome

which more than 107 are invasive[12]. The main introduction of non-indigenous species to the Mediterranean, excluding natural migration or in response to climate change impacts, are largely from the shipping industry through ballast water and hull biofouling.

11.   MCPAs are widely considered to be one of the key tools to preserving and restoring biodiversity and regular functioning of marine ecosystems[13]. A healthy and functioning marine ecosystem is essential to provide food security, jobs, climate regulation and human wellbeing, and therefore for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The important role MCPAs play in helping Contracting Parties to meet national, regional and global commitments is well recognized. Mediterranean countries propose the enlargement of the marine protected area network, setting up ecological corridors to prevent genetic isolation and to allow for species migration, while making it more representative of the Mediterranean Sea ecoregions, particularly extending to the Southern and Eastern coasts. Incorporating Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), in line with the CBD criteria, such as protected cultural areas, and military zones and expanding into the open seas through Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs of GFCM) and candidate areas in Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME of FAO), Particularly Sea Sensitive Areas (PSSAs of IMO) while favouring their setting within Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs listed in the CBD repository), are also proposed.

I.4. The value of MCPAs and OECMs

12.   Biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are considered two of the most significant threats to the global economy over the next decade[14]. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are defined as "*actions that protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits[15]*". MCPAs and OECMs offer nature-based solutions to support global efforts towards climate change adaptation and mitigation. They preserve marine biodiversity, enable marine ecosystems to act as heat and carbon pumps, strengthen their resilience to global warming and help to combat acidification. *Posidonia oceanica* meadows in particular, are an important carbon sink and buffer against sea acidification and MPCAs play a very important role in protecting this vulnerable habitat. MCPAs can also protect important coastal habitats by acting as natural barriers to the impacts of climatic hazards through ensuring the effective functioning of the land-sea interface, and by being nature-based solutions for mitigating extreme events, thereby reducing coastal erosion and flood regulation.

13.   MCPAs and OECMs also play a critical role in sustainable blue economic growth by restoring and enhancing the value of the Mediterranean's natural capital on which many sectors depend. Strategically designed MCPAs have shown to increase fish yield via spillover of larvae and adults[16]. It is thought that if 30% of the Mediterranean is effectively conserved, the biomass of predatory and large pelagic fish species will show a noticeable increase[17]. In addition, MCPAs with high levels of enforcement, among other attributes, have demonstrated healthier fish stocks in their buffer zones, and as a result the incomes of fishers were higher[18]. Well-managed MCPAs and OECMs that maintain

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[12] UNEP/MAP, 2020, Status of NIS in the Mediterranean and Roadmap for the Elaboration of Baseline at National and Regional Levels. Integrated Meetings of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Groups on IMAP Implementation (CORMONs), Videoconference, 1-3 December 2020. UNEP/MED WG.482/Inf.6. 8 p

[13] Claudet, J., Loiseau, C., Sostres, M. & Zupan, M. 2020, Underprotected Marine Protected Areas in a Global Biodiversity Hotspot. One Earth 2, 380–384

[14] World Economic Forum 2021. Global risk report 2021 16th edition

[15] WCC-2016-Res-069-EN. Defining Nature-based Solutions. IUCN, World Conservation Congress Hawaii

[16] Cabral et al. 2020. A global network of marine protected areas for food. PNAS 117 (45).

[17] WWF 2021. 30 BY 30: Scenarios to recover biodiversity and rebuild fish stocks in the Mediterranean

[18] Di Franco et al. 2016. Five key attributes can increase marine protected areas performance for small-scale fisheries management. Scientific Reports, volume 6, Article number: 38135

healthy biodiversity and ecosystems are also an important driver of tourism demand - another significant industry in the region.

I.5. Current status of MCPAs and OECMs in the region

14.   There are currently 1,126 MCPAs in the Mediterranean Sea covering 209 303 km² (8.3%), including only 0.06% of strictly protected areas. There are no OECMs reported for the Mediterranean to date, however combining areas that could be potential OECMs (i.e. 1 Particularly Sensitive Sea Area and 8 Fisheries Restricted Areas) the total MCPA and potential OECM coverage currently stands at 9.3% of the Mediterranean Sea. Although good progress has been made, with some countries exceeding, meeting, or very close to the 10% by 2020 (Aichi target 11), the region as a whole fell short. There is a large disparity in MCPA coverage between countries, with the majority of MCPAs occurring in the western Mediterranean Sea and 90.05% occurring in in the northern part of the Mediterranean. In addition to geographical representation, there is also uneven distribution of MPAs according to sea depth, with less than 4% of depths greater than 1000 m covered by MPAs. As the region now faces new targets, not only is coverage expected to increase, but it is essential that coverage is more equitably represented across Contracting Parties and the different ecosystems.

15.   In addition to coverage, previous and current targets (Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework) for protected areas stipulate that systems of protected areas (PAs) and OECMs must be effectively managed. Several surveys have been conducted over the years[19] to assess management effectiveness and to identify barriers and limiting factors for the establishment and management of MCPAs, however few MCPAs and systems of MCPAs complete regular evaluations of management effectiveness. The surveys and country assessments revealed a number of cross-cutting barriers to the effective management of MCPAs (table 1). Ensuring political will and support for the establishment and management of MCPAs and OECMs is one of the most crucial elements to overcome the remaining barriers in order to meet 2030 targets for MCPAs and OECMs in the region.

Table 1: *Main Barriers to effective MCPA management*

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[19] A survey launched by SPA/RAC and MedPAN, in 2015, for the 2016 MPA status report (MedPAN and SPA/RAC, 2019. The 2016 status of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean. By Meola B. and Webster C. Ed SPA/RAC & MedPAN. Tunis 222 pages.); a survey launched by MedPAN, in 2019, about MPA management and enforcement; and a survey launched by SPA/RAC, MedPAN and WWF, in 2020, to prioritise the limiting factors hindering the achievement of MPA objectives, in the framework of the 2020 MPA Forum process and its related post-2020 MPA roadmap development.

- **Lack of Political Will and Support**
For MPA establishment and management

- **Insufficient Financing**
Not enough, not sustainable, heavy reliance on external funds

- **Inadequate Human Resources**
Not enough MPA staff, where staff are occurring, many do not have the necessary technical skills for MPA management

- **Lack of Sectoral and Stakeholder Involvement, Cooperation and Support**
Poor coherence and harmonization of policies plans and actions

- **Insufficient Knowledge**
Knowledge gaps for effective decision-making

- **Lack of Management Plans**

- **Inadequate Surveillance and Enforcement**
Unclear procedures in legislation, lack of by-laws, poor cooperation with enforcement agencies, irregular routine patrols, unclear mandates and responsibilities for enforcement

- **Insufficient Monitoring and Evaluation**
Insufficient and inadequate monitoring of management effectiveness, insufficient biodiversity and biological monitoring

I.6. Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures

16.   As mentioned previously, the Mediterranean Sea does not currently have any formally recognized OECMs. OECMs will be an essential tool to help Contracting Parties achieve their global and also regional targets for biodiversity conservation under the Barcelona Convention, and to recognize the effort of other sectors in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into sustainable development. As an increasingly important tool to help Contracting Parties meet these targets and, given the lack of experience across the region in recognizing OECMs in the marine and coastal environment, it is necessary to provide clear guidance and to harmonize the recognition of OECMs across the Contracting Parties. As such, OECMs have been identified as a key strategic pillar (chapter 2) to help Contracting Parties achieve relevant targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework in the Mediterranean Sea. OECMs are defined 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. (CBD 2018).

17.   OECMs provide a means for more formal recognition of important areas for biodiversity beyond MCPAs. A key difference between MCPAs and OECMs is that protected areas have a primary conservation objective, whereas OECMs deliver effective conservation of biodiversity regardless of their objectives and their types of governance[20]. In 2018, at their 14th Conference, Contracting Parties

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[20] IUCN/WCPA 2020. Potential contribution of "Other-effective area-based conservation measures" to achieving Aichi Target 11 in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries. IUCN Gland, Switzerland and Malaga, Spain. IUCN 20 pp

to the CBD agreed on a definition, guiding principles, common characteristics, and criteria for the identification of OECMs (Decision 14/8). The CBD decision however highlights that the criteria should be applied "*in a flexible way and on a case-by-case basis*".

18.   The adoption of the definition and the criteria creates opportunities for Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to begin to recognize and report on OECMs, which, as mentioned, will likely be necessary if the region is to meet the ambitious Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Further, the process of identifying OECMs also provides opportunities to bring together the Fisheries and Conservation sectors, both at national and regional levels, with the possibility of fishery-related OECMs helping to achieve both General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and Barcelona Convention objectives. Although no marine OECMs are currently reported for the region, terrestrial OECMs have been recognized and reported in countries within and outside the Mediterranean region. This presents an opportunity for Contracting Parties to learn from the experience gained by these countries in applying the CBD criteria. The following provides a non-exhaustive list of the types of areas that could be potential OECMs in the Mediterranean:

- Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs)[21], in particular those that host critical species, and those that are permanently restricted so as to enhance the long-term conservation outcomes
- Marine or coastal military closure areas, as some are often no go-areas and can have good conservation outcomes[22]
- Archaeological and cultural heritage[23] (sunken ships, archaeological shipwrecks, underwater ancient remains, cities, etc.)
- Areas with oil and gas restrictions
- Areas managed for navigation purposes such as IMO Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas.

II. Strategy

19.   Protected areas are considered the cornerstone of biodiversity conservation. Marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) are being increasingly recognized as one of the most effective management and conservation tools to help mitigate the global trends in marine and coastal ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss. In addition to providing biodiversity and ecosystem service benefits, MCPAs and OECMs are also critical tools in helping countries meet their Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) through the protection and restoration of natural capital. Despite this, their immense socio-economic and cultural values, as well as their role as nature-based solutions, are often poorly understood and underappreciated.

20.   The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the most important international legal instrument addressing protected areas. The ongoing work of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) under CBD, represents a new era for biodiversity conservation, with new goals and targets. The target for protected areas (target 2) is setting out an ambitious target to: "*By 2030, protect and conserve through well connected and effective systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures at least 30 per cent of the planet with the focus on areas particularly important for biodiversity*". It is recognized that each individual country will have its own specific MCPA and OECM coverage targets, however in keeping with these global targets for protected areas, the post-2020 target for Mediterranean MCPAs and OECMs across the region as a whole which could be amended as the draft Post-2020 GBF progresses- has been identified as:

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[21] A Fisheries Restricted Area (FRA) is a geographically defined area in which some specific fishing activities are temporarily or permanently banned or restricted in order to improve the exploitation patterns and conservation of specific stocks as well as of habitats and deep-sea ecosystems
[22] Note: some areas may be for weapon testing and could have impacts on ecosystems.
[23] Note: the location of these areas may be sensitive to share publicly due to risks of looting and illegal trade.

By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective[24] 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.

21.   In addition, and in keeping with the regional marine conservation community recommendations (2% - The 2016 Forum of MPAs in the Mediterranean, Tangier declaration) and sub-regional targets (10% - EU Biodiversity Strategy) for enhanced levels of protection, a further regional sub-target has been identified:

By 2030, the number and coverage of marine and coastal protected areas with enhanced protection levels is increased, contributing to the recovery of marine ecosystems.

22.   In order to achieve these ambitious targets, Contracting Parties and the region require transformative actions over the next decade, with an increasing role for OECMs. This Strategy therefore has identified five main strategic pillars necessary to achieve the post-2020 target for Mediterranean MCPAs and OECMs. These are: Governance, MCPA network expansion, OECMs, MCPA management effectiveness, and Government and stakeholder action and support. All of the pillars are inextricably linked and there are several cross-cutting outputs. For example, sustainable financing and enhanced cooperation between sectors, MCPA networks, stakeholders, countries and the region, are necessary for all five pillars. This strategy is aligned with a number of relevant international, regional and sub-regional strategies and policies (Appendix 1).

23.   Under each pillar a clear strategic outcome, with corresponding outputs and proposed key actions at both Contracting Party, and Regional and International Organization levels, has been identified. Recognizing that countries are at different stages with regard to the establishment and management of their MCPAs, the proposed actions under each output therefore are meant to be indicative and not prescriptive.

24.   This chapter presents each strategic pillar separately and provides a brief rationale and overview of the main focus for each of these five pillars.

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[24] Effective systems are understood to comprise the four components identified by the IUCN Green List standards: Good governance; sound design and planning, management effectiveness and achieving conservation outcomes. https://iucngreenlist.org/

II.1 Strategic Pillar 1: MCPA and OECM Governance

> **Strategic Outcome 1:**
> **Governance arrangements for MCPAs and OECMs are inclusive and effective in delivering conservation and livelihood outcomes**

25.	Strengthening governance and co-operation among actors for both the establishment and management of MCPAs is essential if 2030 targets are to be achieved. Effective governance establishes the overarching framework for MCPA establishment and the management to follow. Governance[25] is multi-faceted and considers not only which body or institution has authority over MCPAs, but also who makes decisions and how these decisions are made. MCPA-relevant legislation is relatively strong across the region however a number of gaps have been identified. These gaps largely centre around procedures for enforcement of both national legislation and local by-laws, overlapping or conflicting policies across the different sectors for MCPA governance within and outside MCPAs, and poor legislation for promoting/supporting participatory and delegated management of MCPAs. Several countries also report a need for institutional reform, especially to avoid overlap in cases where different authorities are responsible for the country's protected areas. There is a need therefore to ensure that appropriate legislation and institutional frameworks are in place for the establishment and management of MCPAs (output 1.1) and that MCPAs are integrated into countries' SDGs and NDCs, and that, as per best practices, governance models include equitable and effective participation of stakeholders (output 1.2).

26.	It is recognized that MCPAs cannot be managed in isolation and stakeholders must be involved at all levels. There is a need therefore for MCPAs to be integrated, recognized and engaged in the governance of surrounding territories, and that inter-sectoral co-operation, policy and action harmonization is improved (output 1.3). Lastly, recognizing that decisions can change in response to changes in political, social and environmental conditions, it is important to ensure that there is flexibility in planning and management frameworks to adapt to these changes (output 1.4).

Table 2: *Key outputs and proposed actions for outcome 1*

Output 1.1: Legal frameworks and institutional arrangements of MCPAs and OECMs allow for opportunities for participatory management
Contracting Parties
A.1.1.1 Assess current relevant legislation and institutional arrangements to allow for participatory management and identify any gaps or areas which need revision, paying particular attention to national and local regulations and participatory mechanisms
A.1.1.2 Develop appropriate governance frameworks to integrate MCPA strategy goals and policies into other sectors' policies
A.1.1.3 Establish, as appropriate, a readily accessible process to identify, hear and resolve complaints, disputes or grievances related to the governance or management of MCPAs and OECMs, or tackle this through already existing processes such as appeals and tribunals.
A.1.1.4 Develop national MCPA and OECM system strategies, standalone or as part of relevant national strategies, with clearly identified monitoring frameworks for system expansion and management
Regional/International Organizations
A.1.1.5 Provide tailored assistance to Contracting Parties for strengthening appropriate legal and institutional frameworks as required

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[25] Governance is "the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say" (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013)

A.1.1.6 Support the development and implementation of national MCPA and OECM system strategies, including when relevant, transboundary and sub-regional MCPA and OECM systems and action plans	

Output 1.2: Governance arrangements for MCPAs and OECMs are inclusive and equitable

Contracting Parties

A.1.2.1 Adapt governance structures and mechanisms of MCPAs to provide civil society, stakeholders and rights-holders with appropriate opportunities to participate in management planning, decision-making processes and actions

A.1.2.2 Where appropriate, create a national commission for MCPAs and marine conservation comprising government and non-government stakeholders including the private sector

A.1.2.3 Enhance governance arrangements to advance gender equity in and around MCPAs and OECMs

Regional/International Organizations

A.1.2.4 Provide case studies and guidelines for best practices on co-management and participatory governance arrangements and support their replication and scaling-up

A.1.2.5 Promote the prerequisite for co-management as an eligibility criterion for regional and national MCPA financing institutions

A.1.2.6 Enhance opportunities for building capacity of national and local stakeholders in co-management

Output 1.3: National, regional, transboundary and cross sectoral co-operation for the establishment and management of MCPAs and OECMs are strengthened

Contracting Parties

A.1.3.1 Establish cross-sectoral platforms to improve integrated marine spatial planning and co-ordination and to enhance dialogue between MCPAs and other sectors

A.1.3.2 Enhance transboundary co-operation for the identification of new priority areas of conservation and for the establishment and management of MCPAs

Regional/International Organizations

A.1.3.3 Facilitate regional and transboundary co-operation

A.1.3.4 Support sharing of experiences and best practices between Mediterranean countries

A.1.3.5 Strengthen and support existing national, regional and sub-regional networks of MCPA managers and other stakeholders

A.1.3.6 Facilitate exchanges among similar types of MCPAs such as the previous SPA/RAC's SPAMI Twinning Programme, and build capacity for MCPAs and OECMs' establishment and management across countries

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

Contracting Parties

A.1.4.1 Ensure flexible and responsive institutional frameworks for governance, management and finance

A.1.4.2 Raise awareness and promote the use of MCPAs/OECMs as reference sites for IMAP within the Barcelona Convention Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) process

A.1.4.3 Ensure appropriate multi-stakeholder feedback mechanisms for the integration of scientifically sound monitoring results and any changes in political, social and environmental conditions into MCPA management plans and actions

Regional/International Organizations

A.1.4.4 Follow progress of the BBNJ negotiations and ensure integration of its implementation in the Mediterranean context

A.1.4.5 Support Contracting Parties' disaster and emergency responses to natural hazards, human-made disasters and future pandemics by sharing experiences, human and other resources across the MCPA and OECM systems as necessary

II.2. Strategic Pillar 2: MCPA Network Expansion

> **Strategic Outcome 2:**
> **MCPA coverage increased through the expansion of soundly-designed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of MCPAs**

27.   MCPA coverage in the Mediterranean Sea currently stands at 8.3%[26]. This figure alone however does not illustrate the uneven distribution of MCPAs across the region. There are disproportionately more MCPAs occurring in the western Mediterranean sub-region compared to other sub-regions, significantly more MCPAs occurring in northern Mediterranean countries' waters compared to southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, and the majority of MCPAs occur in shallow waters close to the coast. It is evident that in order for Contracting Parties to advance towards the 30% target, a more strategic approach to establishing MCPAs is needed, so that there is more equal representation of MCPAs across the Mediterranean Sea sub-regions and ecosystems.

28.   A first step in applying a more strategic approach to the establishment of MCPAs is to ensure that areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem services and their planned level of protection are clearly identified across the region (output 2.1), and that Contracting Parties with particularly low MCPA coverage, such as the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, are supported to establish soundly designed MCPAs across these priority areas (output 2.2). MCPAs are also poorly represented in areas beyond national jurisdiction and, particularly as threats continue to emerge in these open waters, there is an urgent need for the establishment of soundly designed MCPAs in these areas (output 2.3). Building upon the text for UNCLOS[27], an international legally binding instrument under the Convention for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, of which measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, are currently being elaborated[28]. This initiative is expected to provide a more explicit framework for establishing and governing MPAs in areas beyond Exclusive Economic Zones in the future and this strategy will ensure synergy with the elaborated text once finalized.

29.   MCPAs with enhanced protection levels, including no-take or no-fishing zones, are also severely underrepresented across the Mediterranean MCPA system, with only 0.06% of the Mediterranean considered strictly protected. In keeping with regional and sub-regional expert recommendations and commitments therefore, output 2.4 identifies a need for increasing the percentage of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels, including no-take zones and other enhanced protection measures, across the Mediterranean Sea.

Table 3: *Key outputs and proposed actions for outcome 2*

Output 2.1: Areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services are identified
Contracting Parties
A.2.1.1 Adequately support the identification of areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services and share information through regional platforms in particular for under-represented ecosystems such as offshore and deep seas
A.2.1.2 Based on a gap analysis, identify and prioritize areas requiring conservation along with their expected level of protection

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[26] MAPAMED, the Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas Database. 2019 Edition. © 2020 by SPA/RAC and MedPAN. Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

[27] The reference made to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) should not be interpreted as a change in the legal position of States not party to UNCLOS, nor could it be interpreted as imposing any legally binding obligation on non-party States to UNCLOS.

[28] UN General Assembly Resolution 69/292 and Resolution 72/249

A.2.1.3 Collaborate with neighbouring countries to promote joint co-ordinated research in ABNJs and to identify potential MCPAs based on harmonized monitoring protocols

A.2.1.4 Develop plan for establishing an ecologically coherent national MCPA system with clear priorities, levels of protection and time-frames, based on priority natural, cultural and landscape values and associated ecosystem services

Regional/International Organizations

A.2.1.5 Provide scientific, logistical and financial support for the identification of important areas based on countries' needs

A.2.1.6 Support the creation of stakeholder meeting/dialogue platforms for proposed MCPAs to obtain appropriate levels of engagement and buy-in from the beginning

Output 2.2: Distribution of MCPA systems across the Mediterranean Sea is balanced

Contracting Parties

A.2.2.1 Contracting Parties with advanced MCPA systems to share experiences and lessons learnt in system design

A.2.2.2 Design and establish a well-connected, soundly designed and effective MCPA system covering all key biodiversity areas, coastal and offshore, based on the best available knowledge and ensuring appropriate engagement of local communities and stakeholders

Regional/International Organizations

A.2.2.3 Provide priority technical, financial and awareness raising support to southern and eastern Mediterranean Contracting Parties to design and establish well-connected, soundly designed and effective MCPA systems

Output 2.3: MCPA coverage in areas beyond national jurisdiction is increased

Contracting Parties

A.2.3.1 Strengthen co-operation between neighbouring States in areas where marine boundaries have not yet been agreed upon, making use of area-based management tools, as relevant

Regional/International Organizations

A.2.3.2 Encourage states to collaborate in establishing transboundary MCPAs to ensure representation of ecosystems beyond their national jurisdiction, as guided by the BBNJ process

A.2.3.3 Assist and support Contracting Parties in the identification of potential transboundary MCPAs and create a platform for initiating and facilitating dialogue

Output 2.4: The number and coverage of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels is increased

Contracting Parties

A.2.4.1 Establish new MCPAs with enhanced protection levels and review existing MCPAs leading to enhanced protection levels, facilitate their rezoning, and increase protection measures, in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 where applicable

A.2.4.2 Document experiences and impacts of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels, including the no-take zones

Regional/International Organizations

A.2.4.3 Provide scientific, logistical and financial support, build capacity and enhance experience sharing for the creation of new MCPAs with enhanced protection levels, including no-take zones

A.2.4.4 Provide tools for monitoring, documenting and communicating impacts of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels

II.3. Strategic Pillar 3: Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures

> **Strategic Outcome 3:**
> **Marine and coastal OECMs in the Mediterranean are identified, recognized and reported towards post-2020 global and regional targets**

30.   OECMs will be a critical tool to help Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention meet Post-2020 GBF targets. The Barcelona Convention has an important role to play in facilitating the identification, recognition and reporting of OECMs, but their management and monitoring would generally fall under other sectors and within the mandate of other regional organizations. Therefore, under this strategic pillar, outputs and activities centre around supporting Contracting Parties to only identify, recognize and report on OECMs in areas within and beyond their jurisdiction.

31.   Although no marine OECMs are currently recognized in the region, there has been some experience among Contracting Parties in the recognition of terrestrial OECMs. These present an opportunity for learning and for adapting these to the marine context. Activities under this pillar will therefore focus on supporting Contracting Parties in understanding OECM criteria and ensuring appropriate and harmonized approaches to the application and testing of sites against these criteria (output 3.1). Further guidance and support will be provided for potential and candidate OECM recognition and reporting to relevant regional and global databases (output 3.2).

32.   OECMs provide an opportunity to recognize 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[29] (MSP) (output 3.3) so that new OECMs can be established (output 3.4). This is highly relevant to achieving Target 1 of the current GBF but also to achieving the various commitments and initiatives on MSP under the Barcelona Convention.

Table 4: *Key outputs and proposed actions for outcome 3*

Output 3.1: Awareness in Contracting Parties and stakeholders on OECMs enhanced and guidance for the application of OECM criteria provided
Contracting Parties
A.3.1.1 Raise awareness on OECMs across multi-sectoral stakeholders and promote understanding of the CBD criteria[30] for their identification
A.3.1.2 Where appropriate, establish multi-stakeholder platforms and use relevant screening tools to identify potential OECMs
Regional/International Organizations
A.3.1.3 Increase awareness on OECM identification, recognition and reporting across Contracting Parties and key sectors
A.3.1.4 Increase communication and awareness about OECMs and their role in contributing to biodiversity conservation and SDGs across Contracting Parties and sectors
A.3.1.5 Facilitate and initiate inter-sectoral and regional dialogue and sharing experiences around OECMs
A.3.1.6 Develop sectoral and other guidance, such as tools and templates, for applying OECM criteria and establishing processes for identifying OECMs

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[29] MSP is a "public process of analyzing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives that are usually specified through a political process" (Ehler & Douvere, 2009)
[30] CBD COP Decision 14/8

A.3.1.7 Provide training on the identification of OECMs and the application of OECM criteria
Output 3.2: OECMs identified, recognized and reported to regional and global databases by Contracting Parties and regional organizations
Contracting Parties
A.3.2.1 Engage with the relevant sectors and governance authorities of the potential OECMs identified to encourage and establish processes for a full assessment of the potential OECMs against the CBD criteria
A.3.2.2 Enable assessments of the potential OECMs (identified in output 3.1) against the CBD criteria through a multi-stakeholder process and following relevant guidelines, and recognize OECMs that meet the CBD criteria, ensuring consent by the governing authorities of the areas
A.3.2.3 Report OECMs to MAPAMED and WD-OECM databases and ensure regular update of OECM data as new OECMs are identified and provide relevant data for OECM status reports, as part of regular reporting.
Regional/International Organizations
A.3.2.4 Support countries in their efforts to identify, recognize and report OECMs
A.3.2.5 Document and analyze Mediterranean countries' experiences and challenges of applying OECM criteria to marine and coastal areas
A.3.2.6 Relevant regional organizations to assess potential OECMs under their mandate, recognize the areas meeting the CBD criteria as OECMs, and accordingly report them to MAPAMED and WD-OECM
Output 3.3: Effectiveness of identified OECMs is enhanced, including through prioritization in cross-sectoral marine spatial planning
Contracting Parties
A.3.3.1 Initiate and/or advance Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)
A.3.3.2 Prioritize OECMs (alongside MCPAs) in the MSP process and encourage cross-sectoral dialogue to enhance their biodiversity outcomes
A.3.3.3 Encourage OECM governance authorities to include specific biodiversity conservation objectives in OECM management, where needed
Regional/International Organizations
A.3.3.4 Support Contracting Parties in their MSP processes
A.3.3.5 Encourage and assist Contracting Parties to identify potential threats to OECMs from other sectors
A.3.3.6 Facilitate dialogue with other sectors to increase the protection level of identified OECMs
A.3.3.7 Develop best practices and share lessons learnt/success stories on integrating OECMs and MCPAs in marine spatial planning exercises
Output 3.4: New OECMs are established and recognized OECMs expanded
Contracting Parties
A.3.4.1 Engage with the relevant sectors, stakeholders and governance authorities of potential OECMs that partially met the full assessment, to enhance governance, management and/or monitoring of the areas in order to fully meet the OECM criteria and be recognized as OECMs
A.3.4.2 Engage with the relevant sectors and stakeholders to establish new OECMs or expand areas of existing OECMs ensuring compliance with the CBD criteria
Regional/International Organizations
A.3.4.3 Develop guidance for future OECM designation, recognition and reporting
A.3.4.4 Undertake analyses and provide recommendations to Contracting Parties and relevant regional organizations on needs for additional new OECMs

II.4. Strategic Pillar 4: MCPA Management Effectiveness

> **Strategic Outcome 4:**
> **MCPAs are effectively managed and their conservation outcomes successfully delivered**

33.   Post-2020 GBF targets go beyond simply increasing coverage of MCPAs and OECMs and require that protected area systems must also be effectively managed. There are a number of MCPAs in the Mediterranean that currently lack management plans, and many of those that have plans are not implementing them effectively, if at all. Management plans should be developed in participation with stakeholders and are a crucial tool in providing clear guidance to both MCPA managers and users alike. There is a clear need therefore to support the development of practical and cost-effective management plans for MCPAs in the region (output 4.1). Although an essential first step, a standalone plan will not increase the management effectiveness of MCPAs, and these plans, once developed, need to be implemented in an effective and cost-efficient manner. Lack of sufficient and sustainable finances and lack of institutional and staff capacity have been identified across all countries as the main barriers for effective management plan implementation. If MCPAs are to be established and managed effectively in the long-term, sufficient and sustainable finances are also required (output 4.2). Many Mediterranean MCPAs in addition have insufficient staff numbers and capacity. Once MCPAs have staff in place, it is essential that there are targeted and regular capacity development and training programmes available. Thus, capacity and training needs specific to MCPAs should be reviewed and regional capacity development programmes supported (output 4.3).

34.   A central activity to reduce threats and enhance MCPA management effectiveness is ensuring the effective enforcement of MCPA rules and regulations and promoting compliance among MCPA users (output 4.4.). Strengthening enforcement across MCPAs will require appropriate infrastructure and equipment, and agreed and clearly defined roles, responsibilities and powers identified for all agencies responsible for enforcing MCPA regulations. Since enforcement requires the support of external enforcement agencies, ensuring they are fully aware of MCPA regulations and that guidelines for enforcement procedures are provided will be essential actions under this output.

35.   Lastly, routine and regular patrolling and monitoring of illegal activities, ecosystem and biodiversity health and socio-economic benefits is critical to support adaptive management efforts and in turn the effective management of MCPAs. Supporting and harmonizing biodiversity, socio-economic, and threat monitoring methods will help fill the biodiversity and threat status information gaps that exist and provide the information necessary to carry out management effectiveness evaluations (output 4.5). Ensuring there is adequate handling, management, analysis and interpretation of data, and that data is fed back into management, will be key to strengthening the effective management of MCPAs and MCPA systems across the region.

Table 5: *Key outputs and proposed actions for outcome 4*

Output 4.1: All MCPAs have adaptive management plans adopted, effectively implemented and periodically reviewed
Contracting Parties
A.4.1.1 Identify MCPAs where management plans are lacking and ensure that all MCPAs develop integrated 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
A.4.1.2 Ensure there is a mandatory requirement for all MCPAs to have a management plan that is developed in participation with stakeholders (local and national actors, users and other sectors and ministries)

A.4.1.3 Periodically review, revise and adapt MCPA management plans and actions and ensure plans are effectively implemented, monitored and enforced
Regional/International Organizations
A.4.1.4 Develop guidelines for participatory management planning tools and key components to be included in management plans and support their development by providing small grants and building capacity for management planning
A.4.1.5 Strengthen networks of MCPA managers at national, regional and sub-regional scales to facilitate experience and knowledge sharing regarding management plan development and adoption
A.4.1.6 Encourage national and regional financing tools to include the existence of a management plan for access to funding
Output 4.2: Sufficient and sustainable resources for the establishment and management of MCPAs in the Mediterranean are mobilized
Contracting Parties
A.4.2.1 Build capacity for, and develop sustainable financing plans for MCPAs and national systems of MCPAs, and where appropriate develop business plans
A.4.2.2 Diversify income generation opportunities by MCPAs beyond tourism to ensure greater resilience to the financial impacts of future pandemics, human-made risks or natural hazards
A.4.2.3 Establish national environmental/MCPA financing mechanisms (including trust funds) to increase the ear-marking of finances for MCPAs from national trust funds
A.4.2.4 Establish offset mechanisms[31] for MCPAs establishment including MCPA conservation
A.4.2.5 Include values of MCPAs into natural capital accounting and increase MCPA investments funding as part of National Recovery Plans, if applicable
Regional/International Organizations
A.4.2.6 Support and promote the regional MedFund and national MCPA trust funds to donors
A.4.2.7 Identify opportunities for regional and national MCPA financing mechanisms (e.g. blue carbon, blue bonds, etc.) including in case of emergencies
A.4.2.8 Provide guidance to Contracting Parties and build capacity in MCPA managers for diversified and sustainable financing mechanisms
Output 4.3: Individual and institutional capacity for MCPA management is enhanced
Contracting Parties
A.4.3.1 Carry out capacity development needs' assessments and undertake capacity development programmes for MCPA staff, management authorities and MCPA-related stakeholders
A.4.3.2 Support the establishment and long-term functioning of national networks of MCPA managers to enhance the sharing of experiences
A.4.3.3 Strengthen stakeholder involvement and engagement particularly in conflict prevention and resolution
Regional/International Organizations
A.4.3.4 Support capacity development programmes in meeting MCPA staff training needs across the region and support and strengthen joint training programmes from different regional organizations to target MCPA managers and other relevant stakeholders
A.4.3.5 Support and prioritize national, sub-regional and regional MCPA manager networking, capacity building initiatives, and experience sharing and exchange programmes, in particular between north and south Mediterranean countries
Output 4.4: Surveillance and enforcement in MCPAs are strengthened and ensured, and user compliance is promoted
Contracting Parties

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[31] offsets are measurable conservation outcomes designed to compensate for adverse and unavoidable impacts of projects, in addition to prevention and mitigation measures already implemented (https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-briefs/biodiversity-offsets)

A.4.4.1 Identify and pilot innovative and cost-effective approaches for surveillance control and enforcement including by engaging with the private sector, academics and universities etc., to identify potential emerging technologies (for example drones or VMS for tracking movement of boats)
A.4.4.2 Identify and meet staff, infrastructure and equipment needs for effective surveillance and enforcement
A.4.4.3 Strengthen collaboration and where appropriate establish enforcement inter-agency committees to build awareness and capacity in enforcing MCPA rules and regulations, as well as to jointly develop enforcement procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
A.4.4.4 Raise awareness to improve knowledge of environmental legislation and MCPA regulations at local and national levels, and engage resource users in the decision-making process to increase compliance
Regional/International Organizations
A.4.4.5 Strengthen and support regional co-operation, experience and data sharing between Contracting Parties and other key actors (e.g. networks of environmental prosecutors) for effective surveillance and enforcement
A.4.4.6 Provide technical and financial support to Contracting Parties for the effective surveillance and enforcement of MCPA rules and regulations
A.4.4.7 Provide information on new, emerging and cost-effective technologies and their applications for surveillance
Output 4.5: Monitoring of conservation outcomes and evaluation of management effectiveness are strengthened across the MCPA system
Contracting Parties
A.4.5.1 Establish monitoring programmes and define a set of performance measures and thresholds to evaluate conservation outcomes of MCPAs and systems of MPCAs, including levels of conservation of MCPA values, level and intensity of threats, and achievement of management goals and objectives
A.4.5.2 Adopt standards and undertake regular evaluations of MCPA management effectiveness
A.4.5.3 Ensure data collection methods are environmentally friendly, sustainable, feasible in terms of cost and capacities, reliable, and adaptive
A.4.5.4 Build partnerships with academic institutions, NGOs, and citizen science initiatives, to meeting needs for both monitoring and management effectiveness evaluation and seek out opportunities for increasing stakeholder participation in these activities
A.4.5.5 Establish national information systems and databases and ensure data sharing and data viability
A.4.5.6 Identify potential emerging technologies that could be piloted and used to assist MCPAs monitoring
Regional/International Organizations
A.4.5.7 Support MCPA contributions to IMAP within the Barcelona Convention Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) process
A.4.5.8 Identify priority information gaps for the region as a whole and promote them widely across academic institutions
A.4.5.9 Identify regional and harmonized biodiversity, socio-economic and threat indicators for MCPAs and establish a data repository
A.4.5.10 Strengthen and support regional co-operation for monitoring and data sharing between Contracting Parties and other MCPA-related stakeholders and institutions
A.4.5.11 Provide information on emerging technologies and their applications for monitoring to Contracting Parties
A.4.5.12 Provide guidance on, and implement a regional approach for evaluating management effectiveness of MCPAs and OECMs
A.4.5.13 Facilitate capacity building across Contracting Parties for the implementation of MCPA management effectiveness assessments, including on the socio-economic aspects

II.5. Strategic Pillar 5: Government and Stakeholder Action and Support

> **Strategic Outcome 5:**
> **Actions and support for MCPAs and OECMs are mobilized**

36.   The central aim of this outcome is to initiate change in behaviour across the different sectors, to move away from business-as-usual and to have MCPAs and OECMs valued as essential elements to achieve national agendas. Output 5.1 therefore aims to increase 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. Key actions under this output will centre around the development of a communication and awareness strategy targeting the different groups though a variety of mechanisms, including workshops, publications and other awareness creating activities. The socio-economic values of MCPAs and the impact of poorly managed MCPAs on these socio-economic values should be a major focus of these activities in addition to their biodiversity values and threats. It is important that harmonization of communication and awareness messages occur across the region, and that positive, non-technical language and wording are used to convey key MCPA-related terms and concepts to local actors and other key stakeholders. In addition to communicating messages and information, encouraging the greater involvement of stakeholders in management activities can also promote more positive attitudes towards MCPAs, which is an important driver for initiating change and enhancing support.

37.   A major barrier to achieving the 2020 target for MCPAs has been the lack of political will to establish MCPAs and to support MCPA management. Without political will and support, Contracting Parties will not be able to achieve the new Post-2020 GBF targets for MCPAs and OECMs. Critical to securing government support will be advancing their recognition of the value and importance of MCPAs and OECMs in contributing to achieving national and international commitments as well as their contribution to the national economy. There is a need therefore to establishing strong communication channels between MCPA management and governments and to reinforce networking and co-operation between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders at local, national and Mediterranean levels. Further, ensuring governments are familiar with their MCPAs, the biodiversity they protect, their economic importance, and their importance as nature-based solutions for meeting SDGs and national climate change agendas, will be a key focus of actions under this output (output 5.2).

38.   Stakeholders often perceive MCPAs to be in direct competition with their own needs. Ensuring that the wider society recognizes the functional and supportive role that MCPAs and OECMs play in helping to achieve other non-biodiversity conservation agendas, and their socio-economic value, especially through opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, will be critical to mobilizing action and support across the different sectors and wider society (output 5.3). There is a need therefore to strengthen cross-sectoral partnerships and collaboration in order to recognize MCPAs and OECMs values and their contribution to achieving countries' SDGs and NDCs. Studies and success stories demonstrating the tangible benefits of MCPAs and OECMs to these sectors need to be shared, and the benefits of MCPAs and OECMs to livelihoods and ecosystem service protection must be enhanced, understood and valued in the wider society.

Table 6: *Key outputs and proposed actions for outcome 5*

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
Contracting Parties

A.5.1.1 Develop a national communication and awareness strategy tailored to each intended audience on MCPAs/OECMs focusing on the ecological, cultural and socio-economic values of MCPAs and the impact of poorly managed MCPAs/OECMs to these values
A 5.1.2 Establish a national online repository accessible to stakeholders and the general public for accessing information and updates on marine ecosystems and MCPAs/OECMs
A.5.1.3 Seek out opportunities for increasing exposure of MCPAs/OECMs and the marine environment on national media outlets (TV, radio, newspapers, social media)
A.5.1.4 Provide concrete examples of successful MCPAs, in particular no-take zones, providing ecological and socio-economic benefits to local actors and how they contribute to the national economy and GDP, as well as towards other national policies and agendas
A.5.1.5 Promote further research on the financial impacts of unhealthy marine ecosystems on the national economy, socio-economic benefits and other sectors and compare with costs for MCPA and OECM protection
A.5.1.6 Engage in in-country consultations with local and national stakeholders about the environmental and socio-economic effects of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels
Regional/International Organizations
A.5.1.7 Promote a regional approach to communication and environmental education regarding the marine environment and MCPAs/OECMs ensuring harmonization of wording and messages
A.5.1.8 Gather and share success stories of MCPAs providing social, cultural and economic benefits to local stakeholders and the private sector and the negative financial impacts of a degraded marine environment
A.5.1.9 Develop and disseminate regional communication and awareness publication materials for use across Contracting Parties
Output 5.2: Political support for the establishment and management of MCPAs and biodiversity conservation is increased
Contracting Parties
A.5.2.1 Increase awareness and appreciation of the wider reaching values, in particular climate adaptation and socio-economic contribution of MCPAs, across the different ministries
A.5.2.2 Provide concrete examples of the contribution of the countries MCPA network to wider society and the national economy
A.5.2.3 Reinforce knowledge sharing and networking links between government and MCPAs
A.5.2.4 Ensure key decision makers are familiar with national MCPA networks, by supporting familiarization trips and develop opportunities for interactions between government and field actors and recognition of efforts towards MCPAs
A.5.2.5 Establish and encourage Public-Private Partnerships
Regional/International Organizations
A.5.2.6 Facilitate higher level government decision-makers field trips to successful MCPAs across the region, in particular for Contracting Parties with low MCPA representation or where political support is significantly lacking
A.5.2.7 Strengthen information and capacity for benefit assessments of MCPA's ecosystem services
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
Contracting Parties
A.5.3.1 Enhance knowledge of the role of MCPAs and promote the inclusion of MCPA initiatives in NDCs and other climate-related programmes and funding
A.5.3.2 Initiate pilot projects that demonstrate sustainable blue economy growth in line with MCPA/OECM objectives
A.5.3.3 Encourage further studies on the values of MCPAs/OECMs to the sustainable blue economy, local livelihood and climate change mitigation and adaptation and other SDGs, and widely disseminate findings to the wider society using various media
A.5.3.4 Promote the use of MCPAs as sentinel sites for climate change monitoring

Regional/International Organizations
A.5.3.6 Provide cases studies and best practices for scaling up benefits of MCPAs to wider society
A.5.3.7 Enhance collaboration between regional organizations supporting MCPAs and OECMs and other platforms on SDGs, blue economy, and climate change mitigation and adaptation
A.5.3.8 Provide guidance on using MCPAs and OECMs as nature-based solutions to contribute to climate change and SDGs building on success stories, case studies and exchanges, at a regional level

III. Strategy implementation

III.1. Implementation

39.   This Post-2020 Strategy should be used as a tool to harmonize efforts to meet 2030 targets for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean and to promote joint activities by Contracting Parties, SPA/RAC, and other Regional and International Organizations and programmes. As such, the implementation of this strategy should be a co-operative process and its successful implementation will depend on the effective participation and collaboration of local, national, sub-regional, and regional stakeholders, encompassing inter-governmental agencies, local communities, civil society, the private sector, the research/academic community, MPA networks, and relevant Regional and International Organizations.

40.   Under the direction of the UNEP/MAP and the supervision of the MAP co-ordinating Unit (MAP CU), SPA/RAC, supported by the AGEM, will undertake a central role in co-ordinating and facilitating the delivery of the strategic outcomes. The main role of SPA/RAC will be to provide technical assistance and support to the Barcelona Convention Contracting Parties, to foster collaboration, strengthen synergies and joint efforts between the different implementing partners, as well as other MAP regional activity centres, to contribute in mobilizing resources for strategy implementation, to support and strengthen existing relevant regional initiatives, and to ensure that awareness of the strategy is raised, and progress towards outcomes are regularly communicated among all key actors engaged with MCPA- and OECM-related activities in the Mediterranean.

41.   The overall success of this strategy, however, relies on the political will of Contracting Parties for its implementation. Contracting Parties will be responsible for the delivery of indicative actions at the national and local levels and for creating the enabling conditions for fostering the effective collaboration and active participation of national and local stakeholders, including socio-economic sectors. Key socio-economic sectors and industries include spatial planning, fisheries, tourism, culture, shipping, oil and gas, trade and industry, agriculture, education, research, social affairs, economic, local small, medium and large enterprises and multinationals. Implementation of strategic actions will also require transboundary cooperation between the Contracting Parties.

42.   Although shouldering the main responsibilities for strategy implementation, Contracting Parties and SPA/RAC will depend on crucial partnerships and technical, logistical and financial support from National, Regional and International Organizations that are active in marine biodiversity conservation and MCPAs/OECMs in the Mediterranean. The efforts of these organizations to share best practices, build capacity, co-finance activities and advise on new tools and approaches will be critical. In addition, and although not directly responsible for implementation, the inclusive, equitable and meaningful co-operation, collaboration and participation of local communities, civil society, the general public and other sectors, an overarching principle central to all five strategic pillars, will be essential to successfully achieving the targets of this Post-2020 Strategy.

43.   Lastly, in order to recognize and report marine OECMs as a relatively new concept for the region, effective inter-sectoral dialogue and co-operation will be essential to successfully achieve this particular outcome. Therefore, engagement with stakeholders involved in countries' MSP processes, as well as the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, will be important.

III.2. Financing

44.   Mobilizing sufficient and sustainable finances for the establishment and management of MCPAs and OECMs at both national and regional levels is a key output under this strategy. Additional and substantial financing will be required however to implement the national and regional actions identified under this strategy. The development of this strategy provides an opportunity for enhanced regional co-operation, the harmonization of activities and the avoidance of duplication of effort across organizations, thereby increasing overall cost-efficiency through the co-financing and joint implementation of overlapping interests from Regional and International Organizations. The strategy also provides clearly identified actions for implementation, aspects of which can be packaged and presented to potential donors targeting specific and individual mandates by each donor agency. The adoption of this strategy by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention will further create opportunities for funding by demonstrating Contracting Parties' commitments to the outputs identified, making it more attractive to potential regional and international trust funds and donors such as The MedFund, EU, and the GEF, for example. Countries and MPA actors are encouraged to identify and use innovative, diversified and sustainable financing mechanisms, that suit best their context, at national and local levels.

III.3. Monitoring and Evaluation

45.   Adaptive management is an important guiding principle for this strategy. It is essential that as the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework targets evolve, and as knowledge and circumstances change, that the plan is responsive and is adapted accordingly. Conducting periodic reviews that allow for learning and adaption of actions as necessary will be important to ensure 2030 targets for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean are met. The Directory of Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) could serve as a tool recognized by the countries to report and measure the progress towards the targets of the post-2020 strategy.

46.   An external mid-term evaluation of the strategy should be conducted in 2026. The mid-term evaluation should focus on evaluating progress against indicators and on providing recommendations for any necessary changes required to increase the likelihood of achieving the strategy's post-2020 targets. Mid-term review findings and proposed amendments should be presented at the 2027 subsequent COP meeting of the Barcelona Convention, and an effective communication and awareness strategy should be developed to disseminate findings among Contracting Parties and National, Regional and International Organization and stakeholders. A final external evaluation should also be conducted towards the end of the strategy's timeframe, focusing on lessons learnt and any barriers or enabling factors that either prevented or enhanced the achievement of the proposed outcomes. The final evaluation (to be conducted in 2030) and its recommendations should assist with the development, in 2031, of a new strategy for the post-2030 decade (2031-2040) and findings should be presented at the 2031 COP meeting and distributed to the wider stakeholder community.

47.   To ensure the necessary time to identify practical indicators, a detailed monitoring framework with indicators and targets will be developed in line with the global biodiversity one, under the guidance of the Contracting Parties and with the support of AGEM, once the strategy is adopted at the next COP meeting. This detailed monitoring framework will be then submitted for adoption at the following COP meeting.

Appendix 1: Linkages with other global, regional and sub-regional strategies

Other strategies	Post-2020 Strategy MCPAs and OECMs
International	
Zero draft Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework	Target 1& 2, 7, 10, 11 *All outcomes*
Sustainable Development Goals	SDG 14.1 *outcome 1 &5*; SDG 14.2 *outcome 4*; SDG 14.3 *outcome 1 &5*; SDG 14.4 *outcome 2,3 & 4*; SDG 14.5 *outcome 2*; SDG 14.7 *outcome 4*; SDG 14.c *output 2.*; SDG 12.2 *all outcomes*; SDG 12.8 *output 5.1*; SDG 13.1 *outcome 1 & 5*
Convention of the Law of the Sea	Output 2.3
Regional	
UNEP/MAP Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2021	SO 3.1 *all outcome*s; IKO 1.1.4 *output 5.2*; SO 1.6 *output 5.1*; SO 2.6 *output 1.3*; IKO 3.2.2/3 *output 3.1&3.2*; IKO 3.3.2./3 *output 4.4*; SO 3.4 *output 4.5*; SO 3.5 *output 4.3*; SO 3.5 *output 4.3*; SO 3.6 *outcome 1&5*; SO 3.7 *output 2.3*; IKO 5.1.2 *outcome 1*; IKO 6.4.1, 7.1.1, 7.1.5 *output 5.3*
Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity (SAP BIO) in the Mediterranean Region.	*All outcomes*
Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025.	SD 1.1, 6.1, 6.3 *output 1.3*; SD 2.1, 2.3, 5.3-5.3 *outcome 5*; SD 4.1 *output 5.3*; SD 4.4 *output 1.1*; SD 6.2 *output 1.2*; SD 6.5 *output 4.3*
Ecosystem Approach and agreed roadmap for its implementation	EO1 *outcome 2,3 & 4*; EO2,4-11 *outcome 1&5*
Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management	*Outcomes 1 and 5*
Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and related Assessment Criteria	*Output 1.4*
Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas	SD 1.5 *output 4.1*; SD 2.2 *output 1.3*; SD 4.1 *output 5.1*; SD 4.3 *outcome 5*
Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in the Mediterranean4.	OO 3.1 *output 1.3, 5.3*
UfM post 2020 Environment Agenda	Thematic axis 3; *All outcomes*
GFCM strategy towards sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea	Target 1 and 4; *all outcomes*
Post-2020 MPA roadmap (jointly led by SPA/RAC, MedPAN and WWF)	*Outcomes 1,2,4,5*
Sub-regional	

EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive	*Outcome 2*
EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030	Obj. 2.1 *outcome 2; Obj. 2.2.6/9/10 output 1.3, outcome 5*
EUSAIR	S.O. 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2 *All outcomes*
Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean	Priority 2.4; Goal 3 -*All outcomes*
The EU Habitats Directive	*All outcomes*
The EU Birds Directive	*All outcomes*
EU Green Deal	Preserving and protecting biodiversity policy and actions; *All outcomes*

Annex II

Concepts to set up the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance Day and the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance Certificate

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

COP	Conference of Parties
CSO	Civil society organization
EU	European Union
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SPA/BD	Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity
SPAMI	Specially Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance
SPA/RAC	Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre
TAC	Technical Advisory Commission
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Concepts to set up the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance Day and the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance Certificate

1. Background

1.   The Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) is a Component of the United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)-Barcelona Convention system. It was established by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in order to assist the Mediterranean countries in implementing the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol) of the Barcelona Convention. SPA/RAC's main objective is to contribute to the protection, preservation and sustainable management of marine and coastal biological diversity in the Mediterranean and, in particular, the creation and effective management of marine and coastal areas of particular natural and cultural value and the conservation of threatened and endangered species of flora and fauna in the Mediterranean.

2.   In order to promote cooperation in the management and conservation of natural areas, as well as in the protection of threatened species and their habitats, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention have drawn up, in 2001, the "List of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance" (SPAMI List). A SPAMI is a coastal, marine and/or high sea area that is of importance for conserving the components of biological diversity in the Mediterranean, contains ecosystems specific to the Mediterranean area or the habitats of endangered species, or is of special interest at the scientific, aesthetic, cultural or educational levels. The sites included in the SPAMI List are intended to have a value of example and model for the protection of the natural heritage of the region. To this end, the Parties must provide each SPAMI area with a legal status guaranteeing its effective long-term protection.

3.   After several rounds of SPAMI ordinary periodic reviews (since the biennial period 2008-2009), the various technical advisory commissions (TACs) in charge of the evaluations have recommended to SPA/RAC to further promote networking and exchange among SPAMIs.

4.   In this context, SPA/RAC initiated in 2018 the SPAMI Twinning Programme, which aims at developing and strengthening an effective management of SPAMIs, promoting networking and best practices/experience sharing among managers, building capacities, and involving the civil society organizations (CSOs) in marine and coastal protected areas management.

5.   In order to facilitate exchanges among SPAMI managers, promote the SPAMI List and enhance its visibility, SPA/RAC has developed a SPAMI Collaborative Platform[32], which is a virtual workspace that provides users with resources and tools aiming to facilitate communication and human interactions around SPAMIs and marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) in general.

6.   After having encouraged further cooperation and collaboration in the management and conservation of SPAMIs among Contracting Parties as well as among individual SPAMIs, COP 21 (Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019) requested the UNEP/MAP Secretariat (through SPA/RAC) to draft the concepts in order to set up the SPAMI Day and SPAMI Certificate, and submit them for consideration by the Contracting Parties at their COP 22 (Antalya, Turkey, on 7-10 December 2021) (Decision IG.24/6).

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[32] http://spami.medchm.net/en

2. Methodology

7.   The elaboration of the present SPAMI Day and SPAMI Certificate concepts was based on the review and analysis of useful documentation and sources of information related to relevant global and regional environmental initiatives, days and celebrations. This allowed to identify success stories and best practices to inspire and guide the development of these concepts.

8.   Furthermore, a rapid overview of the previous SPAMI ordinary periodic review recommendations was made, in order to identify the main gaps hindering a greater SPAMI efficiency and outreach.

3. Objectives

9.   The SPAMI Day intends to raise awareness on SPAMIs and marine and coastal protected areas in particular, and on Mediterranean marine and coastal ecosystem conservation and natural resource management, in general.

10.   The target audiences are the following:
- Decision makers relevant to MAP's mandate, such as Contracting Parties officials, and Focal Points;
- Main actors relevant to MPAs management/development such as MPA/SPAMI managers, national institutions, CSOs, MAP partners, donors and business;
- General public and influencers, such us journalists, scientific community, academic community.

11.   The concepts to set up the SPAMI Day and SPAMI Certificate are tailored to address the challenges related to communication and outreach about SPAMIs at the Mediterranean level and beyond. Hence, the SPAMI Day and SPAMI Certificate aim to achieve the main following objectives:
- to raise awareness of the general public on issues related to SPAMIs/MPAs;
- to mobilize political will and resources to address the problems of SPAMI/MPA management and marine ecosystems conservation in the Mediterranean region;
- to acknowledge and promote the achievements of existent SPAMIs, and value the initiatives of individual managers, rangers, mayors, volunteers, etc.;
- to celebrate the inclusion of and deliver SPAMI Certificates to areas newly included in the SPAMI List;
- to communicate on the SPAMI ordinary reviews results and lessons learned on a biennial basis;
- to focus on cooperation, collaboration, exchange and dialogue, and encourage unity and not disparity or competition;
- to create a forum/platform for SPAMI managers to meet and build a network, with a view to fostering cooperation among SPAMIs, sharing knowledge, offering twinning opportunities and encouraging the emergence of new projects and ideas with the contribution and collaboration of different stakeholders (e.g. donors, managers, CSOs, NGOs, institutional partners, and the research and conservation communities).

4. Expected outcomes and impacts

12.   The SPAMI Day and SPAMI Certificate expected outcomes and impacts include:
- The SPAMIs and SPAMI Day are promoted, and various target groups participation, including the general public, is enhanced;
- The role of SPAMIs as examples and models for the protection of the Mediterranean natural heritage is promoted, at local, national and regional levels;
- Effective conservation of the Mediterranean natural and cultural heritages;

- Collaboration, cooperation, participation, and involvement of local communities is enhanced;
- Political will and resources are mobilized;
- The sustainability of SPAMIs through financing and co-financing opportunities is enhanced, and solid partnerships are implemented at regional and international levels;
- Increase opportunities for inclusion of new areas in SPAMIs List and their sound management.

5. SPAMI Day concepts

5.1. Themes

13.   A SPAMI Day theme would be identified for each biennial SPAMI Day event. Preliminary discussions on the SPAMI Day theme could be held with relevant stakeholders such as the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat and other Components, SPA/BD Focal Points and SPAMI managers, to brainstorm ideas in this regard while observing the criteria listed below:

- Effective event theming would be utilized as to attract and inspire participants and the wider public, create pre-event interest, promote social media sharing and heighten engagement.
- Themes would be simple, clear, appealing and relevant to the stakeholders. Incentives should be built-in the themes such as providing sustainable livelihoods and benefits of biodiversity conservation for all.
- Themes would be linked to the main features characterizing SPAMIs, such as effective conservation of the Mediterranean natural and cultural heritage, collaboration, cooperation (bilateral and multilateral), participation, involvement of local communities, enforcement, exemplary and adaptive management methods and practices, effective protection measures, monitoring, education, awareness, effective legal framework enforcement, promotion of scientific research, promotion of sustainable development and coastal zone management within and around SPAMIs, etc.
- Themes would determine the SPAMI Day event's prevalent aims at that period of time, linked to emerging global and/or regional priorities and does not distract from those aims and priorities.
- Themes would reveal what the "takeaway" from the events would be and what is intended for the participants to remember and act upon after the events are concluded.
- Themes would be incorporated onto invitations, programmes, brochures and electronic marketing, name tags, signs and event-related gifts or memorabilia.

14.   Target groups could be engaged pre-launch, by voting for one of the theme options. Annual themes should be specified in the annual announcements to be made prior to the event, explaining the rationale and links with topical developments.

15.   SPAMI Day themes could be derived from the following keywords: SPAMIs, marine protected areas, Mediterranean, importance, natural heritage, sustainability, cooperation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods. Examples of themes: "SPAMIs, the Mediterranean model of a sustainable livelihood" or…. "Protecting the Med, sustaining livelihoods"

5.2. Date and periodicity

16.   The starting point should be a COP of the Barcelona Convention, that may decide to include a number of marine and coastal protected areas in the SPAMI List. Usually, COPs take place at the end of an odd-numbered year (e. g. December 2021). Sometimes, it could be held at the beginning of the following year (e.g. February 2022).

17.   The first SPAMI Day celebration following a COP should have the format of a regional face-to-face event (ideally in a SPAMI or a new SPAMI venue), where the SPA/RAC Director and MAP Coordinator could deliver the SPAMI Certificates to the newly declared SPAMIs.

18.   This regional event could take place in Spring, few months after the COP (e. g. April 2022). It is proposed to be the **second week of April**; and even a specific date could be chosen (e. g. **15 April 2022** - an international celebration-free day).

19.   The following SPAMI Day celebration, during the same biennium, should be a general public celebration at the level of each SPAMI (or those who wish to celebrate), with the support of SPA/RAC (e.g. 15 April 2023).

20.   An indicative timeline for the preparation and organization of the first and second SPAMI Day editions (2022 and 2023) is presented in **Appendix 1**.

5.3. Slogans

21.   SPAMIs are models for the other Mediterranean marine and coastal protected areas that provide a wide variety of benefits ranging from the conservation of whole areas that are home to important diversity of species, serving as nursery grounds for fisheries and enhancing fish stocks, protecting habitats that buffer the impacts of storms and waves, and removing excess nutrients and pollutants from the water. They also provide more sustainable tourism and economic benefits, as well as enhance other non-use values such as cultural and heritage values.

22.   Slogans would be articulated to get the above messages across and expressing SPAMIs issues and the purposes behind these messages in a manner that captures the imagination.

23.   Slogans would be linked to the themes of SPAMI Day editions, they would be short, so that they could be used on the different communication material. Hashtag as well as conventional slogans could be used. Following are a few relevant examples of Hashtags:
- #MedNatureDay
- #ProtectMedDay
- #ThinkBlueGoGreen
- #SPAMIsSupportSocieties
- #ManySpecies1Planet1future
- #SPAMILovers
- #ProtectMED

And slogans:
- Conservation works. Give the Mediterranean a chance
- Let the Mediterranean heal itself
- Time to make peace with nature in the Mediterranean
- SPAMIs, the Mediterranean model of sustainability
- The sea deserves our respect and care, polluting it is not at all fair
- Turn the tide on sea level rise.

24.   As for the themes, target groups could be engaged pre-launch, by voting for one of the slogan and hashtag options.

5.4. Logos

25.   The SPAMI and SPAMI Day logo (a derivation of the latter) should be relevant and convey a key message such as supporting livelihoods, sustainable use of resources or an iconic species.

26.   The logos should be attractive, balanced, easily recognizable, simple and follow the SPA/RAC branding, graphic charter colors and graphic lines. The logos should be versatile and well suited for a variety of applications such as letterheads, certificates, promotional materials, etc. Here below is an example of SPAMI and the derived SPAMI Day logos.

Above is an example of a SPAMI logo.   An example of the SPAMI Day logo is a deviation from the above logo (by adding the word Day).

5.5. Online dissemination, delivery and media resources

27.   The SPAMI Day would be an occasion to raise awareness of the public on issues of concern, to mobilize political will and resources to address problems, and to celebrate and reinforce achievements. The proposed resources would be designed around the theme; address the gaps, key issues and desired outcomes; and will be performed in an artistic and informative manner using visually appealing material that would inspire and engage.

28.   A wide variety of methods and techniques are available for delivering these resources and would be put to use in highlighting the gaps, messages, opportunities and relevant issues and promoting the SPAMI Day.

29.   Furthermore, there should be the development of a SPAMI Day toolkit that provides resources to all those who wish to take part in the celebration, including by organizing their own micro-events in locations other than the venue where the main SPAMI Day event would be taking place (e.g. schools, universities, MPAs, etc.).
     The following outlines the main dissemination mechanisms and resources to be utilized:

5.5.1.   SPAMI Day website and resources

30.   The world-wide web, social media and information technologies offer the most efficient means of communicating with a wide and ever-increasing range and number of target audiences. For a Mediterranean-wide impact, the implementation of the campaign and the production of materials in all Mediterranean languages is recommended. Following is a *prioritized* list of the resources that may be available on the SPAMI Day website (part of the SPAMI Collaborative Platform), many of which will be shared on other platforms:

5.5.1.1. *Stylized map/guide of SPAMIs*

31.   This double-sided poster would include a stylized map of SPAMIs on one side; the map would be inlaid with artwork highlighting iconic marine species, seabirds, authentic people portraits and cultural landmarks. The other side would feature a photo and caption for each of the SPAMIs plus informative text.

32.   Downloadable size of this map/guide of SPAMIs would be A0 (841 x 1189 mm) which could be folded to form a travel guide. (example at **Appendix 2**)

33.   The map/guide could also be declined in other formats for use in digital communication channels (social media, website, etc.).

5.5.1.2. Interactive SPAMI discovery link

34.   This is a progressive link which uses Google Technologies and takes the visitor to a 'Virtual tour across SPAMIs'. This interactive and engaging feature will take the viewer on a tour of discovery showing photos, animations and a caption for each SPAMI. A beta version of this powerful resource with about 30 of the current 39 SPAMIs has been performed for demonstration purposes (click here to view).

5.5.1.3. Royalty free artwork

35.   SPAMI Day and sponsors logos would be used by designers, SPAMI management, catalysts and other involved parties for a variety of applications such as inserting them on SPAMI Day posters and banners, artwork, press backdrop panels, drawing and other award certificates, promotional materials, letterheads, etc. Relevant advice and references could be included in the communication toolkit provided to the event organizers.

36.   Graphic clipart such as endangered and iconic species silhouettes could be used by designers for creating artwork. Using a template of silhouettes would provide them with a tool for creativity and provide for a recognizable art expression for the SPAMI Day.

5.5.1.4. Posters and banners

37.   The main poster/banner will be available in high resolution; Key ideas will include:

    A. *SPAMI Day theme poster* (example at **Appendix 3**)

38.   This poster will highlight the SPAMI Day theme in the context of marine diversity and cultural values around SPAMIs. Downloadable size posters of A0 (841 x 1189 mm) and A1 (594 x 841 mm) could be designed.

    B. *Large Seamless panorama of SPAMIs* (example at **Appendix 4**)

39.   This large attention-grabbing poster/banner/exhibit will highlight main marine and coastal habitats throughout SPAMIs (or a specific SPAMI), iconic species, submersed archaeology, cultural landmarks and sustainable human activities such as artisanal fishing, responsible diving, sailing and whale watching.

40.   The resolution and details would allow this banner to be printed at sizes ranging from 1 m x 10 m and up to 3 m x 30 m. It is designed to be printed on outdoor vinyl material and laid flat on the ground in order to eliminate the need for an exhibit space and erection costs while remain clearly visible to visitors. It is easily rolled and stored for later use.

41.   A smaller version for standard size posters of A0 (841 x 1189 mm) and A1 (594 x 841 mm) would be available for download.

5.5.1.5. Royalty free photos

42.   Royalty free photos (licenced under Creative Commons) are an excellent resource to open the field of creation to others and to enable regulated sharing, grab attention and spread awareness. These would include:
- SPAMIs seascapes
- SPAMIs exquisite coast lines
- Marine and terrestrial flora and fauna within SPAMIs
- Endangered species
- Iconic species
- Local people in authentic attire and cultural landscapes around SPAMIs.

5.5.1.6. Flyers and factsheets

43.   Flyers are important in marketing. While we might live in an age of high-tech advertising, the humble flyer is still a priceless promotion tool. Flyers are an effective way to get our messages across, are extremely cost effective and have a high impact.

44.   Flyers would focus on the following subjects:
- SPAMI Day announcements
- SPAMI Day events
- Messages
- Slogans with high impact photos
- Introducing webinars and other activities.

45.   Factsheets provide readers from our target audience with compelling information in a clear and concise format. It is inexpensively presented on a piece of paper or digitally, and informs people about relevant topics such as:
- Endangered species
- Iconic species
- Cultural values in SPAMIs
- Burning issues
- Threats to marine conservation and livelihoods
- What you can do to help
- Good practices and interesting stories from SPAMIs
- New trends in marine conservation.

5.5.1.7. PowerPoint presentation

46.   Presentations will be tailored in relation to a current SPAMI Day theme to highlight subjects such as:
- Promotion of networking among SPAMIs
- Communication skills with decision makers and key stakeholders
- Adaptive management plans
- Sustainable financing of SPAMIs
- Knowledge on values and benefits of SPAMIs/livelihoods
- Law enforcement
- Governance and institutions.

5.5.1.8. Stories and news

47.   Storytelling can be an effective communication tool. This should be aligned with the messages that are yet to be crafted. Inspiring stories related to conservation such as success stories, cultures from around the Mediterranean, whales back from the brink and best practices in SPAMIs. SPAMI ordinary review results and lessons learned could also inspire and feed news about SPAMIs.

5.5.1.9. Promotional and outreach materials artwork

48.   Artwork designed for promotional materials and goodies such as caps, bags, T-shirts and other everyday articles would be effective for conveying messages. These should be crafted if needed and considering the Barcelona Convention's zero-plastic policy and avoidance of all forms of waste.

5.5.1.10.   Links to international days

49.   Links to relevant social media platforms (following subject) and international days such as the International Day for Biological Diversity, World Environment Day, will be posted:
- UN World Oceans Day website
- Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO)
- UN Environment-Oceans
- UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030
- 2020 UN Ocean Conference
- SDG 14: Life underwater.

5.5.1.11.   SPAMIs video

50.   In addition to the existing ("SPAMIs : Protecting the Mediterranean natural heritage"), new 3 to 5-minute videos, with actual onsite footage would capture the awesome scenery around SPAMIs, the diverse cultures around the Mediterranean and stimulate the public and inspire them to value and engage in SPAMIs and the marine environment conservation.

51.   Possibly, another long version, performed simultaneously, could be around 50 minutes. This is an ambitious project that would require an enticing story and actual onsite footage.

5.5.2.   Social media

52.   Our primary goal for the social media plan is to widely share the messages listed earlier, raise public awareness about relevant issues and promote the SPAMI Day at least 6 months in advance. Social media platforms will link to SPAMI's website. Twitter, Facebook and Instagram would be performed to promote the SPAMI Day and resources. The SPAMI Day communication toolkit should include assets for sharing on social media, such as digital cards with facts and figures, visuals and quote cards.

5.5.2.1. Twitter

53.   What began on Twitter has now spread to Facebook, Instagram, Google search, and almost everywhere in between. Hashtags are an effective way to encourage engagement and get discovered.

54.   A new event hashtag (e.g. #ProtectMedDay or #SPAMIDay) is proposed, while the following hashtags can be used whenever possible to connect to other ongoing conversations on Twitter. This also helps to spread the word to new potential users:
- #SPAMIs
- #MPAs
- #BlueParks

- #marineparks
- #ocean
- #marine
- #MPAsWork
- #MedMPAs
- #mybluemed (used by WWF in Med/Euro region)
- #Mediterranean
- #SPARAC

5.5.2.2. Facebook

55.   To optimize for the SPAMI Day event attendance and engagement the following should be created:
- Create the SPAMIs Day event page on Facebook
- Invite friends and colleagues before promoting it outright
- Post teasers with necessary details and a sneak peek
- Post updates regularly
- Use event hashtag and as most relevant from above twitter hashtags in posts.

56.   SPA/RAC Facebook page would be optimized and aesthetics upgraded. More content of interest to engage enthusiasts, catalysts and other stakeholders needs to be included. Another Facebook group should be established in order to spread awareness and cater to these groups.

5.5.2.3. Instagram

57.   Instagram is an entirely visual platform. Unlike Facebook, which relies on both text and pictures, or Twitter, which relies on text alone, Instagram's sole purpose is to enable users to share images or videos with their audience. The following could be performed:
- Share eye-catching imagery with message highlights.
- Make Instagram stories.
- Interview attendees on Instagram Stories.
- Use event hashtag and as most relevant from above twitter hashtags in posts.

5.5.2.4. YouTube

58.   SPA/RAC YouTube channel would be optimized in order to seek more views and better rankings. More videos of interest could be added including content exhibiting SPAMIs and their cultural and natural landscapes.

5.6. SPAMI Day activities

59.   SPAMI Day activities will take place on the date of the event. These would take place on site and/or online depending on restrictions at the time such as budgets and other conditions, such us the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.
    SPAMI Day activities which will take place on the date of the event are to be divided as follows:

5.6.1.   SPAMIs Day onsite main event at the regional level

60.   The SPAMI Day onsite main event would be supported by SPA/RAC main sponsors and held in rotation within a SPAMI venue, considering criteria such as available infrastructure to support the event. In the event, a new SPAMI has been declared, the SPAMI Day could be celebrated at that SPAMI. This event will include the following:

5.6.1.1. The large exhibit poster

61.   Noted at 5.5.1.3 B above, will be printed and exhibited plus resources available to the local level below will also be utilized.

5.6.1.2. Regional actors

62.   Including stakeholders, the press, decision makers and relevant parties will also be invited.

5.6.1.3. Resources

63.   Described for the local level below will also be applied as relevant.

5.6.2.   SPAMI Day onsite event at the local level

64.   The SPAMI Day would be celebrated at the local level utilizing available means and website resources according to available budgets.

5.6.2.1. A Facebook event

65.   Would be created at least one month in advance and promoted across relevant online social media and online resources.

5.6.2.2. The venue

66.   The venue would be a local meeting spot accessible to the public and stakeholders such as a local library grounds, a SPAMI, an MPA, a park or within an aquarium's grounds. The SPAMI Day may could be also celebrated in other locations, including schools, universities, etc.

5.6.2.3. Open Day

67.   At MPAs and SPAMIs would welcome visitors at no charge. A community walk, bike or run on the coast would entice visitors to learn about the key messages and be enlightened and excited about the different ways everyone can enjoy and help conserve these protected areas.

5.6.2.4. A clean-up and zero-waste day

68.   Could be held on the coasts to learn about the SPAMIs and raise awareness of the mismanaged waste crisis by mobilizing the public to participate in clean-up and zero-waste actions. A biodiversity watch/talk on key species in the area could also be organized.

5.6.2.5. Promotional and outreach materials

69.   Described at *5.5.1.9* above could be utilized and would be an effective for conveying messages.

5.6.2.6. Exhibition

70.   Using the SPAMI Day website and other available local resources would be utilized.

5.6.2.7. Awards

71.   Awards are an easy way to engage and generate likes and convert participants into catalysts. It's also a great way to uncover some user-generated content. The works would be derived from the theme and messages; it would be posted on Facebook and is one of the best ways to achieve our social media goals. Awards could be monetary, visit to a SPAMI or items from our promotional materials such as caps and T-shirts plus recognition on the SPAMI Day website under the past events link and social media. Awards would be given to:
- School children drawings competition
- Mobile photo competition
- Award of excellence for initiatives of individual managers, rangers, mayors, volunteers, etc.

5.6.2.8. Webinar

72.   Addressing gaps, challenges, generating outputs and proposing solutions

5.6.2.9. Press kit

73.   Properly crafted and appropriately distributed in a credible and pointed manner would reach key audiences with targeted messages that matter to them.

5.6.2.10.   Speakers

74.   Speakers representing stakeholders would present issues related to achievements of SPAMIs, challenges, sustainable development issues, sustainable financing, blue economy and investment in SPAMIs.

5.7. Monitoring and feedback

75.   The SPAMI Day performance would have to be refined and updated through public and stakeholder engagement, continued review, monitoring and evaluation. Measuring the success after each event would allow us to set attainable goals and make more accurate estimations for future events, their planning and improvement.

76.   These concepts successful implementation depends largely on its evolution through a long term and sustained effort. In this sense it is the beginning of a long-term process, which will be continually assessed, refined and implemented.

77.   The following mechanisms will be used to monitor, evaluate and adapt the process; tracking progress event-to-event will aid in setting future goals:

5.7.1.   Ongoing SPA/RAC internal review and monitoring

78.   Internal review by SPA/RAC is key to monitor and analyze the various indicators listed below, adherence to budgets and also built-up experience to better manage future events. Information collected could also be discussed at the SPA/BD Focal Points meetings for feedback and recommendations.

5.7.2.   Stakeholder consultation and review

79.   Consultation with stakeholders, continued engagement, enhancement and integration of stakeholders' input and feedback is a cornerstone of a sustainable event. An after-event questionnaire could be prepared and circulated to stakeholders for their evaluation of a completed event and recommendations on future ones. Face to face meetings or phone calls with key stakeholders could be of utmost benefit.

5.7.2.1. Social media and online activity

80.   Will be carried on in the days leading up to the event. This will get attendees excited and talking about it on their own social network channels. Social media activity after the event will continue to be closely monitored.

81.   Hashtags will be utilized to monitor social media mentions. A quantitative way to measure using social media would be to use audience growth, shares, mentions, likes and views. Various online visitation statistics specially those of the SPAMI Day website will also be monitored.

5.7.2.2. Attendance

82.   Would be a measured as an important indicator of success of the event.

5.7.2.3. Post-event surveys

83.   Will be evaluated through a post-event survey. This will give a general idea of the attendees' perception. This helps in identifying weak points that could be improved upon.

5.7.2.4. Sponsor recognition

84.   Is vital as they are the backbone of the event because they are the ones funding it. Were they pleased with how the event went? Did they feel the event met their expectations? How can future events be improved? To get feedback on this questions, online communication or a sit-down meeting with sponsor representatives will be held to gauge the sponsors' impression.

5.7.2.5. Media coverage

85.   Publicity generated before and after the SPAMI Day event. Media coverage is an important indicator of the success of the event and can increase attendance for future events.

5.8. Stakeholders and partnerships

86.   Partnerships and stakeholders' involvement are critical for making the SPAMI Day events a success. The following major stakeholder groups have been identified:
- Organiser(s) and host organisation
- Host community, including local authorities, businesses, tourism players
- Sponsors
- Media
- Participants and spectators.

87.   SPA/RAC will seek ad hoc partnerships based on the SPAMI Day theme, venue, context, budget, etc. SPAMI Managers and national MPA managing authorities (including SPA/BD Focal Points) will be key actors. They could be part of the organizers and host organizations.

88.   Partnerships may involve local and national NGOs and CSOs, relevant regional and international partner organizations working on marine protected areas conservation, including SPAMIs, and other MAP Components.

5.9. Financing

89.   The SPAMI Day celebrations financing will rely on external funds (external donor-funded projects, other ad hoc mobilized funds, sponsors, local partnerships, etc.).

6. SPAMI Certificate

90.   SPAMI Certificates would be given to SPAMIs newly included in the SPAMI List, except for the first ceremony of certificate distribution which will involve all the SPAMIs included in the list since its establishment in 2001. Like most certificates, included fields should be few and relevant. The certificate could also include one outstanding biodiversity feature that makes the SPAMI so special i.e. corals, Posidonia etc. Following is a template which would be applicable:

SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREA OF MEDITERRANEAN IMPORTANCE

By decision of the Barcelona Convention Conference of the Parties

Xyyyyyyy Marine Protected Area

has been included in the Specialty Protected Areas of Marine Importance

Athens, Greece
20 December 2023
Valid for six years from the date of issue

Mr. Gaetano Leone

UNEP/MAP coordinator

Mr. Khalil Attia

SPA/RAC Director

APPENDIX 1: INDICATIVE TIMELINE

Action \ Month	2021 12	2022 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	2023 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
The starting point: Adoption of the SPAMI Day and SPAMI Certificate Concepts (December 2021)	■																								
Finetune the logo of the SPAMI Day		■	■																						
Select the venue of the 2022 SPAMI Day regional face-to-face event with the relevant stakeholders		■																							
Held preliminary discussions to identify options for the 2022 SPAMI Day theme		■	■																						
Adopt the 2022 SPAMI Day theme through an online survey			■																						
Hold discussions on the 2022 SPAMI Day programme		■																							
Prepare the activities of the 2022 SPAMI Day in coordination with the relevant stakeholders			■	■	■																				
Prepare / produce the SPAMI Day webpage and resources			■	■	■																				
Prepare the layout and produce the SPAMI Certificates			■	■	■																				
Promote the SPAMI Day			■	■	■																				
2022 SPAMI Day celebration					■																				
Hold preliminary discussions to identify options for the 2023 SPAMI Day theme						■	■																		

Year	2021	2022													2023											
Adopt 2023 SPAMI Day theme through an online survey							■																			
Hold discussions on the 2023 SPAMI Day activities								■	■	■																
Prepare the activities of the 2023 SPAMI Day										■	■	■	■		■	■	■									
Prepare / produce the 2023 SPAMI Day webpage and resources										■	■	■	■		■	■	■									
Promote the SPAMI Day											■	■	■		■	■	■									
2023 SPAMI Day celebration																	■									
Hold preliminary discussions to identify options for the 2024 SPAMI Day theme																				■	■					
Adopt the 2024 SPAMI Day theme through an online survey																					■					
Hold discussions on the 2024 SPAMI Day activities																							■	■	■	
Prepare the activities of the 2024 SPAMI Day in coordination with the relevant stakeholders																									■	■
Launch of the preparation / production of the SPAMI Day webpage and resources																									■	■
Start the promotion of the 2024 SPAMI Day edition																										■
Barcelona Convention COP 23																										■

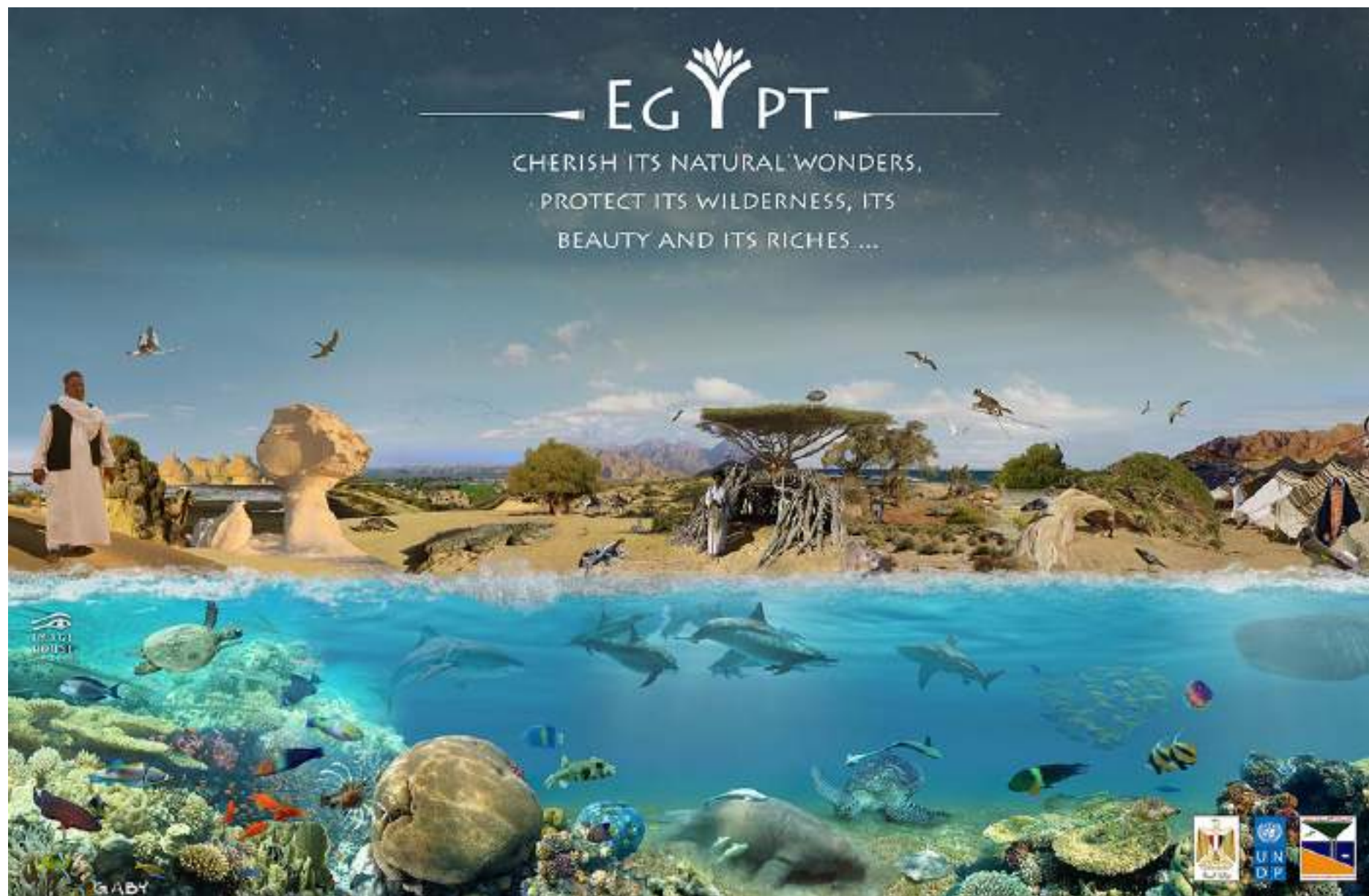**APPENDIX 2: STYLIZED MAP/GUIDE OF SPAMIs EXAMPLE**
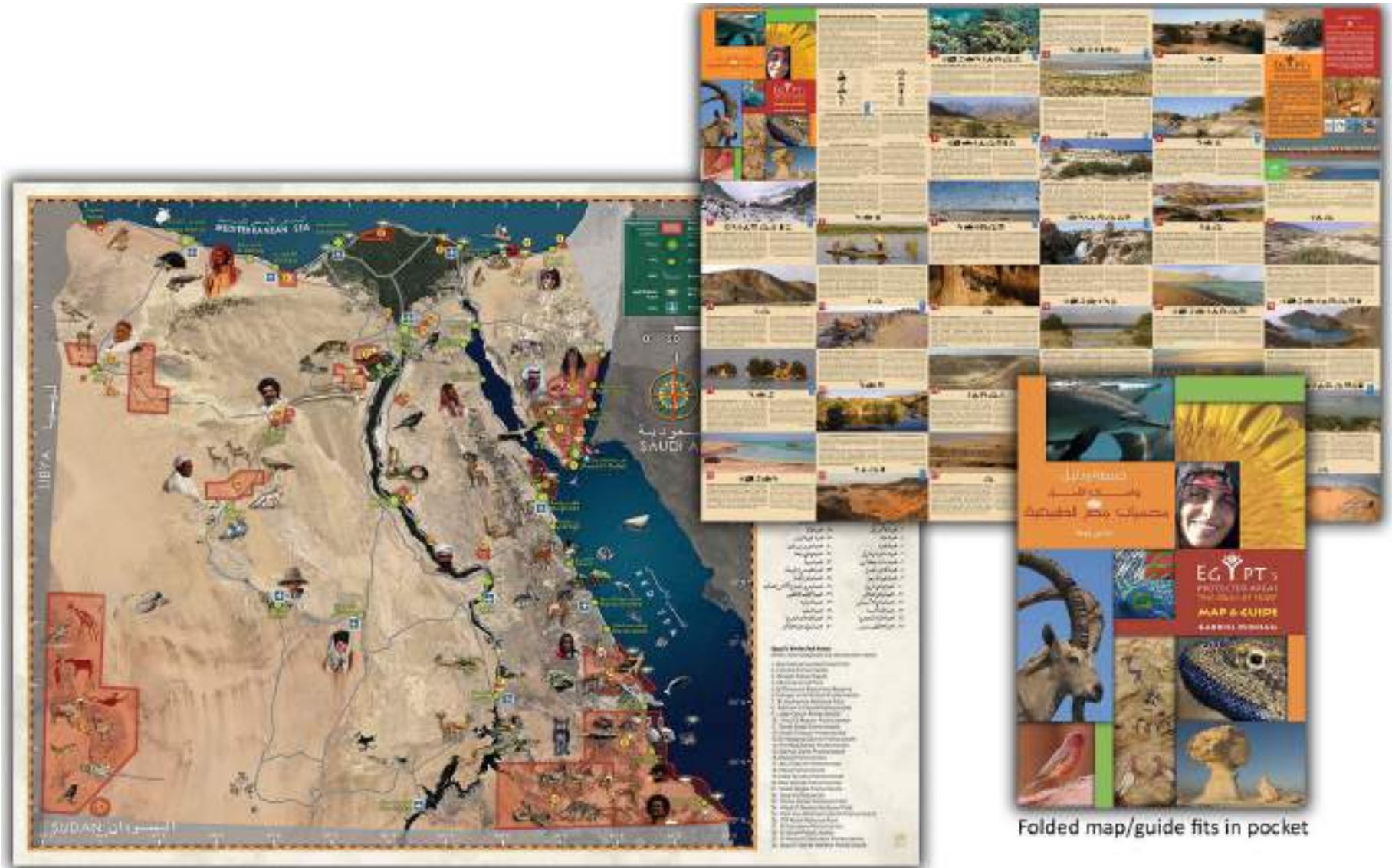
Folded map/guide fits in pocket

APPENDIX 3: SPAMI DAY THEME POSTER EXAMPLE

APPENDIX 4: LARGE SEAMLESS PANORAMA OF SPAMIs EXAMPLE

Annex III

Criteria for inclusion of Specially Protected Areas in the Directory of Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas

**Criteria for inclusion of Specially Protected Areas (SPAs)
in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs**

I. Introduction

1.   Decision IG.24/6[33] "Identification and Conservation of Sites of Particular Ecological Interest in the Mediterranean, including Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance", adopted by the 21st ordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP 21; Naples, Italy, 2-5 December 2019), requested the Secretariat to establish a Directory of Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas (SPAs), and the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) to elaborate criteria for inclusion of SPAs in the directory, for consideration by the Contracting Parties at their 22nd meeting (COP 22; Antalya, Turkey, 7-10 December 2021).

2.   Decision IG.24/6 further decided to set up the Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (AGEM) to support the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties to progress with the 2020 and post-2020 marine protected areas agenda in the Mediterranean and to work on related issues such as preparing guidelines, setting up definitions and measurable indicators, and tailoring global concepts and approaches to the Mediterranean context.

3.   The Criteria for inclusion of Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs were prepared by SPA/RAC with the full expertise and support of AGEM.

II. Elaboration of the Criteria for inclusion of SPAs in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs

4.   In view of the development of the Criteria for inclusion of SPAs in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs, the following elements are considered:
- Difference between Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) and Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs), and if SPAs should be a special category of MCPAs similar to the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs);
- Definition of a SPA;
- Purpose of the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs;
- Criteria for inclusion of SPAs in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs (and format of the proposal);
- Format/data to be contained in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs;
- Maintenance and update of the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs.

II.1. Difference between Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) and Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs)

5.   Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) don't have special criteria different from Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs). They are the same as MCPAs, but they are meant to be "officially established and fully managed" MCPAs (as opposed to paper parks).

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[33] Decision IG.24/6 "Identification and Conservation of Sites of Particular Ecological Interest in the Mediterranean, including Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance": http://www.rac-spa.org/sites/default/files/doc_cop/cop21/decision_24_6_eng.pdf

II.2. Definition of a SPA

6.   Given that there is no definition of "SPA" under the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean[34] (SPA/BD Protocol), it would be useful to have such definition, particularly to avoid confusions that may arise.

7.   Based on an examination of the various relevant articles of the SPA/BD Protocol, this definition should include the following points:
-   A geographically defined marine or terrestrial coastal area (Article 2, para. 1, of the SPA/BD Protocol);
-   Established by legal enactment;
-   Devoted to protection (should be amongst its objectives); and
-   Includes measures in the legal enactment-indications about key elements for management.

8.   A SPA definition includes: "**a geographically defined marine or coastal area that is designated by legal enactment and managed to achieve specific protection objectives (as listed in Article 4 of the SPA/BD Protocol) through appropriate protection measures**".

9.   It is particularly important that SPAs have clear protection objectives that aim to reach a specific conservation goal. It is not enough that the SPA is legally established. The SPA/BD Protocol is clear that the SPA needs to have some binding management measures in it, and in particular a management plan. In addition, it would be useful to account for the effectiveness of the protection measures in the data to be requested in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs.

10.   It may be useful to have guidance on which MCPA categories could be considered as SPAs and included in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs.

II.3. Purpose of the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs

11.   The main purpose of the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs is to facilitate and standardize reporting on progress toward the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its SPA/BD Protocol.

12.   The current reporting format for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols has a section on SPAs. The information requested in this reporting format is limited. Improving this format of standard reporting on SPAs would be needed, taking into account the criteria for the areas that should be considered as SPAs.

13.   The Directory of Mediterranean SPAs could also serve as a tool recognized by the country to report on international and regional MCPA targets (the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean) and improve level of transparency in reporting, and measure progress towards these targets. It therefore should accommodate reporting needs for various commitments on marine protected areas (MPAs) to CBD, EU directives as appropriate, etc., and also enable reporting on other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs).

14.   The Directory of Mediterranean SPAs could also provide other objectives and services including:
-   enable reporting effectiveness of the protection measures. This could ultimately enable enhance management effectiveness of these protected areas;
-   facilitate the creation of networks at Mediterranean level amongst MCPAs in different countries sharing similar objectives;
-   enable analysis of Mediterranean OECMs.

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[34] http://rac-spa.org/sites/default/files/spamis_temp/spa_bd_protocol_annexes1_to_3_v_2019_eng.pdf

15.   Ideally a SPAMI should be first listed as SPA and meet all the SPA criteria before being evaluated as SPAMI. Every SPAMI should be a SPA, but not all SPAs are expected to become SPAMIs.

II.4. Criteria for inclusion of SPAs in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs (and format of the proposal)

16.   In line with Articles 4, 6, 7, 16, 19, 23 and 26 of the SPA/BD Protocol the following criteria for inclusion of an area in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs are recommended:

(a) The SPA must be declared (established) through a legal enactment that clearly states its protection objective(s) and its boundaries. The text of the legal enactment must be provided and included in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs.

(b) The legal enactment of the SPA must include at least one of the following conservation objectives, as listed in Article 4 of the SPA/BD Protocol:
(i)   to safeguard representative types of coastal and marine ecosystems of adequate size to ensure their long-term viability and to maintain their biological diversity;
(ii)   to safeguard habitats which are in danger of disappearing in their natural area of distribution in the Mediterranean or which have a reduced natural area of distribution as a consequence of their regression or on account of their intrinsically restricted area;
(iii)   to safeguard habitats critical to the survival, reproduction and recovery of endangered, threatened or endemic species of flora or fauna;
(iv)   to safeguard sites of particular importance because of their scientific, aesthetic, cultural or educational interest.

(c) To achieve the area's conservation objectives, the legal framework of the SPA must define relevant protection measures as per Article 6 of the SPA/BD Protocol. In particular, the protection measures should include:
(i)   the regulation or prohibition of fishing, hunting, taking of animals and harvesting of plants or their destruction, as well as trade in animals, parts of animals, plants, parts of plants, which originate in specially protected areas;
(ii)   the regulation and if necessary the prohibition of any other activity or act likely to harm or disturb the species or that might endanger the state of conservation of the ecosystems or species or might impair the natural or cultural characteristics of the specially protected area.

(d) As relevant[35], the legal framework of the SPA should also include the following protection measures (protection measures also listed in Article 6 of the SPA/BD Protocol):
(i)   the regulation of the introduction of any species not indigenous to the specially protected area in question, or of genetically modified species, as well as the introduction or reintroduction of species which are or have been present in the specially protected area;
(ii)   the prohibition of the dumping or discharge of wastes and other substances likely directly or indirectly to impair the integrity of the specially protected area;
(iii)   the regulation of the passage of ships and any stopping or anchoring;
(iv)   the regulation or prohibition of any activity involving the exploration or modification of the soil or the exploitation of the subsoil of the land part, the seabed or its subsoil;
(v)   the regulation of any scientific research activity;
(vi)   the strengthening of the application of the other Protocols to the Convention and of other relevant treaties to which they are Parties;
(vii)   any other measure aimed at safeguarding ecological and biological processes and the landscape.

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[35] The term "as relevant" means that a SPA does not necessarily need to have in place all of the listed protection measures, but only those that are required, taking into account its own characteristics and conservation objective.

(e) To be included in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs, a SPA must[36] have planning, management, surveillance and monitoring measures. As per Article 7 of the SPA/BD Protocol, they should include:

    (i)   the development and adoption of a management plan that specifies the legal and institutional framework and the management and protection measures applicable;

    (ii)   the continuous monitoring of ecological processes, habitats, population dynamics, landscapes, as well as the impact of human activities;

    (iii)   the active involvement of local communities and populations, as appropriate, in the management of the specially protected area, including assistance to local inhabitants who might be affected by its establishment;

    (iv)   the adoption of mechanisms for financing the promotion and management of the specially protected area, as well as the development of activities which ensure that management is compatible with its objectives;

    (v)   the regulation of activities compatible with the objectives for which the specially protected area was established and the terms of the related permits;

    (vi)   the training of managers and qualified technical personnel, as well as the development of an appropriate infrastructure.

II.5. Format/data to be contained in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs

17.   The Directory of Mediterranean SPAs should be constructed as a multifunctional tool that would accommodate the different demands in terms of reporting, as discussed under section II.3. above.

18.   The reporting of the Contracting Parties to the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs should build upon the current reporting requirement under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Taking into consideration the purpose of the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs and SPA criteria, the current reporting requirement should be amended to include the additional information contained in **Appendix 1** (bold underlined text).

19.   It is necessary for the SPA to have a management plan that is adopted as per Article 7 of the SPA/BD Protocol (see section II.4. (e) (i) above). The reporting format should therefore be amended to delete the sub-columns "No" and "Under Development" with reference to the management plan (see Appendix 1, stricken-through text).

II.6. Maintenance and update of the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs

20.   The Directory of Mediterranean SPAs should be updated every two years, as part of the regular reporting under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols reporting system.

21.   It is important that an analysis of all submitted reports is provided by SPA/RAC at every meeting of the SPA/BD Focal Points.

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[36] Article 7, para. 1, of the SPA/BD Protocol states that Parties "*shall*" adopt planning, management, supervision and monitoring measures. The verb "shall" is understood as "have an obligation to" and, therefore, the term "must" is used here to convey the mandatory nature of these requirements.

Appendix 1

Additional information on Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) to be added to the reporting format for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, for purposes of inclusion in the Directory of Mediterranean SPAs

Note: The additional information is underlined and in bold.
The amendment of the reporting format should also delete the stricken-though text.

Table III. List of SPAs within the SPA/BD Protocol's geographical coverage

No	Name of the SPA	Date of establishment	**Legal enactment (copy of the text should be attached)**	Category	Jurisdiction	Coordinates **Polygons**	Surface (marine, terrestrial, wetland) **(total and if it's the case distinguished into marine, coastal, wetland)**	Main ecosystems, species and their habitats **(incl. species listed under Annexes II and III)**	Management plan Date of adoption **(link or attachment provided)**	~~NO~~	~~Under development~~	**Protection objectives (drop down menu from objectives in Article 4)**	**Protection measures (drop down menu from list in Article 6) Other measures?**	**Are the measures legally binding (e.g. included in an applicable regulation)? If yes, provide reference to relevant regulation**	**Existence of No-Take Zone[37] (Yes/No) If yes, provide total extent of the No-Take Zone as officially declared (in km²)**
N															
N+1															
…															

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[37] No-Take Zones are geographically defined zones within marine protected areas that do not allow any fishing, mining, drilling, or other extractive activities.