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Third Meeting of National Correspondents of the Strategic
Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological
Diversity in the Mediterranean Region (SAP BIO) /
MedMPAnet Project Mid-term Workshop

Malaga, 4-6 July 2012

MedMPAnet PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Delegates are kindly requested to bring their documents to the meeting

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FOREWORD

This document was prepared for the needs of the Third Meeting of National Correspondents of the SAP BIO serving also as the MedMPAnet Project Mid-term Workshop that will be held in Malaga (Spain) from the 4th to the 6th of July 2012, in presence of representatives of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and also the relevant regional organisations working on behalf of the Mediterranean marine environment and its preservation.

It gives an extensive overview on the activities being implemented as part of the Project since its launching at mid-2010, and also the planned activities in the short and mid-term.

The sections of this document tried to follow the activities as presented in the Project document, focusing on four main sets of activities: (i) Establishment of coordination mechanisms for regional MPA management, (ii) Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness, (iii) Improving MPA management, and (iv) Ensuring financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks.

At the end of each of these sections, we've tried to give some figures showing the rate of implementation of each activity (Implementation indicators tables).

The present Project mid-term meeting will allow RAC/SPA to readjust the Project work-programme, based on recommendations and evaluations from the partner countries and also on the Project rate of progress and ground realities.

The Report authors:

S. EL ASMI & A. LIMAM

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MedMPAnet PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

1. MedMPAnet Project data sheet

Project title:	Regional Project for the Development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) Network through the boosting of MPAs Creation and Management
Project acronym:	MedMPAnet
Project context:	UNEP/MAP-GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership) / Component 3: Conservation of biological diversity: Implementation of SAP BIO and related NAPs / Sub-component 3.1: Conservation of coastal and marine diversity through the development of a Mediterranean marine and coastal protected areas (MPAs) network
Executing agency:	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA, Tunis) / UNEP/MAP
Beneficiary countries:	12 Mediterranean riparian countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey
Duration:	60 months (5 years)
Inception milestones:	<i>Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between UNEP and RAC/SPA signed: 7 October 2009</i> <i>First installment of funds received by RAC/SPA: 30 April 2010¹</i> <i>Project inception meeting: 2 June 2010 (Second Meeting of National Correspondents of SAP BIO, Istanbul)</i> <i>Project team fully recruited: 21 June 2010</i>
Closure date:	June 2014
Funding agencies / Co-finance amount:	European Commission (EC) / 1,040,000 EUR Spanish Agency for International Cooperation to Development (AECID) / 1,548,673 EUR French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) / 100,000 EUR
Co-finance RAC/SPA:	200,000 EUR (Cash) + 216,000 EUR (In kind)
Co-finance partner countries:	1,390,000 EUR (In kind)
Total Project costs:	2,888,673 EUR (Cash) 4,494,673 EUR (Cash / In kind)
Other related projects:	1. MedPartnership Sub-component 3.1 MedPAN South project: executed by WWF-MedPO (Rome) and serving the objectives of the MedPAN Network (Hyères) 2. MedPartnership Sub-component 3.2: "Promote the sustainable use of fisheries resources through the application of ecosystem-based management approaches": executed by FAO (Rome)

¹ According to the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) terms, the Project effectiveness should start at the date of receipt by RAC/SPA of the first installment of funds.

Project Objective	Enhancing the effective conservation of regionally important coastal and marine biodiversity features, through the creation of an ecologically coherent MPA network in the Mediterranean region, as required by Barcelona Convention's Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol)
Project activities:	<i>Activity 1:</i> Establishment of coordination mechanism for regional MPA management <i>Activity 2:</i> Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representiveness <i>Activity 3:</i> Improving MPA management <i>Activity 4:</i> Ensure the financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of several actions prioritized by the SAP BIO programme - Existing and proposed MPAs will coalesce to form part of a coherent and geographically balanced network that exists at both institutional and ecological levels - Greater representation of the Mediterranean's vulnerable and critical coastal and marine habitats brought under statutory protection - Tools and capacity for the management of recognized Mediterranean coastal and marine biodiversity sites improved - Permanent coordination, monitoring, evaluation and support mechanisms for regional coastal and marine biodiversity conservation - Innovative approaches to the funding of regionally important existing and future coastal and marine biodiversity conservation initiatives in place

2. MedMPAnet Project implementation status

2.1 Establishment of coordination mechanisms for regional MPA management

2.1.1 Setting-up of the Project Coordination Unit at RAC/SPA

The Project team, made up of four full-time members: (i) Project Officer, (ii) Project Coordination & Technical Backstopping Officer, (iii) Technical Assistant Officer, and (iv) Administrative Assistant, was fully staffed during the second quarter of 2010, despite some administrative and financial difficulties (non-availability of co-financing for project staff salaries). These difficulties could have severely hindered the project's smooth and timely execution, without a positive reaction and active solution-seeking from both RAC/SPA and the UNEP/MAP-FEM MedPartnership Project Management Unit (PMU) sides.

2.1.2 Organization of the Project Inception Meeting

RAC/SPA convened the Second Meeting of the SAP BIO National Correspondents that served also as Inception Workshop for the MedMPAnet Project. This Meeting was held in Istanbul (Turkey) on 2 June 2010, with the support of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey. It allowed countries a full comprehension of the scope and activities of the MedMPAnet Project.

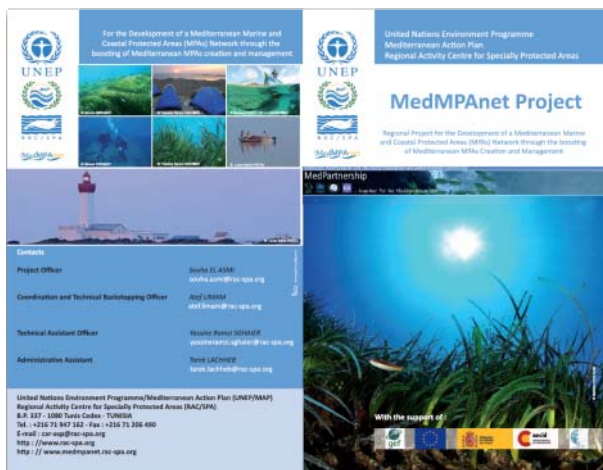
Prior to the SAP BIO National Correspondents Meeting, RAC/SPA has held, on 1 June 2010, a consultation meeting among the SAP BIO Advisory Committee members that were present in Istanbul.

2.1.3 Organization of the Project Mid-term Meeting

RAC/SPA is convening on 4-6 July 2012, in Malaga (Spain), the Third Meeting of National Correspondents of the SAP BIO serving as Mid-term Workshop for the MedMPAnet Project and the Fourth Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the SAP BIO (4 July 2012). These meetings are hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain and the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med).

The meetings will allow:

- Discussing and organizing the updating of SAP BIO to the new CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi targets for 2020;
- Reviewing the development of ongoing and new regional projects regarding the implementation of SAP BIO regional priorities;
- Discussing a first draft of indicators of climate change impact on marine and coastal biodiversity to be measured in marine protected areas;
- Adapting MedMPAnet Project activities to current reality and state of progress;
- Enhancing MedMPAnet Project results coordination, dissemination and replication among the Mediterranean countries and regional bodies.



MedMPAnet Project Leaflet (2011 version)



First issue of the MedMPAnet electronic Newsletter (Jan. 2012)

2.1.4 Developing communication and information tools and raising awareness of key stakeholders on MPAs values and importance

With the aim of raising awareness of key stakeholders on MPAs roles and values and on the Project progress and results, RAC/SPA is undertaking the main following communication activities:

- Regular updating of the MedMPAnet Project website (<http://medmpanet.rac-spa.org>);
- Compiling and disseminating the MedMPAnet electronic newsletter through RAC/SPA mailing list;

- Dissemination of the major achievements of the Project through other electronic channels: RAC/SPA website (www.rac-spa.org), the MedPartnership collaborative web portal (www.themedpartnership.org), and social media (<https://www.facebook.com/MedmpAnet>);
- Elaboration and dissemination of leaflets featuring the Project objectives and scope (first version in 2011; second version in 2012);
- A video film was initially planned for preparation in 2011 in partnership with the environmental national authorities in Libya (footage already made during the field surveys executed in Libya, in 2010);
- The Project will be presenting a special event during the 2012 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (Antalya, Turkey, 25-28 November 2012);
- The Project will be also supporting the 2012 MPA Forum website development (www.medmpaforum2012.org) and the creation of a movie on MPA networking in the Mediterranean in collaboration with the MedPAN Secretariat.
- RAC/SPA-MedMPAnet Project responsible officers made several conferences on the Project scope, activities and expected results, during national and regional events they attended, in: Algiers, Ankara, Bizerte, Korba, Hyères, Marseilles, Pirana, Sidi Mechreg, Tunis, Vodice, etc.

Table 1: Implementation indicators related to the "Establishment of coordination mechanisms for regional MPA management" activity

Output / Achievement / Result	Number
Third Meeting of the SAP BIO Advisory Committee (Istanbul, 1 June 2010)	Number of participants: 13 participants from 9 member organizations (ACCOBAMS, FAO, GFCM, IUCN-Med, MedPAN, REMPEC, RAC/SPA, UNEP/MAP and WWF-MedPO) Meeting report: issued in English
Second Meeting of the SAP BIO National Correspondents / MedMPAnet Project Inception Workshop (Istanbul, 2 June 2010)	Number of country/Party representatives: 29 participants from 17 countries and the EC (Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus (2), European Union, France (4), Greece (2), Italy (2), Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey (6)) Number of organizations represented: 16 participants from 15 organizations (100 HS, ACCOBAMS, CdL, FAO, FFEM, GFCM, IUCN-Med, MedPAN, REMPEC, TÜDAV, UNEP, UNEP/MAP-GEF PMU, UNDP Turkey, WWF-MedPO and WWF Turkey) Total number of participants: 44 participants Meeting report: issued in English and French
Coordination and planning meetings at country level	Number of meetings: 13 meetings (in: Albania (2), Croatia, Lebanon, Libya (2), Montenegro, Morocco (2), Syria (2) and Tunisia(2))
Partners participating in the Project implementation at <u>national</u> level (Ministries, national agencies, universities, research institutes, NGOs, intergovernmental organizations, UNEP/MAP components, funding agencies)	Number of partners: 34 partners
Partners participating in the Project implementation at <u>regional</u> level (international conventions and agreements, intergovernmental organizations, universities, research institutes, NGOs, UNEP/MAP and its components)	Number of partners: 36 partners
Partners participating in the Project implementation at <u>national and regional</u> levels	Number of partners: 65 partners
Leaflet on the MedMPAnet Project	Number of leaflets: 2 leaflets
Awareness raising material	Number: 8 awareness raising materials (Albania: 4 brochures in Albanian language; Montenegro: 1 booklet and 3 leaflets in Serbo-Croatian language)
Public information and awareness workshops	Number: 2 public awareness workshops (in Albania and Montenegro)

Regional strategies (capacity-building and technical tools)	Number of strategies: 2 strategy reports
MedMPAnet Project website	Website available in English language Number of visits since its creation in January 2011: 2000 visits
Photographic library	Number of photos: around 6000 photos including underwater photos (Lebanon, Libya Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia)
Video images	Video timing: 167 minutes (Libya and Tunisia; including 59 minutes of underwater video images)
Scientific papers and others	Number of papers published in scientific journals: 3 scientific papers (1 paper under preparation) Number of papers published in workshop proceedings: 1 paper

2.2 Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness

2.2.1 Establish priority activities needed to create MPAs (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro and Syria)

A number of preliminary activities and meetings have been undertaken to establish the priority activities needed to create MPAs in Lebanon, Libya and Syria.

RAC/SPA had a Planning and Coordination Meeting for the MedMPAnet Project activities in Beyrouth, **Lebanon**, on 24 February 2011, with officers from the Lebanese Ministry of Environment. This meeting allowed discussing and reviewing the Project activities initially planned for Lebanon based on the 2003 SAP BIO identified needs. It was agreed that the MedMPAnet Project activities in Lebanon shall be fully harmonized with the relevant achieved, underway or planned projects at country's level. The MedMPAnet Project activities were then reoriented towards concrete achievements, rather than priority listing, including field surveys in identified sites along the Lebanese coast, to collect data and improve ecological knowledge on marine and coastal biodiversity.

In this context, a rapid assessment was carried out, early June 2011 along the Lebanese coast, and led to the identification of three ecologically important sites to be extensively surveyed in June 2012. A detailed work programme was also set up and partnerships were established. The 2012 field survey, undertaken by RAC/SPA international and Lebanese national consultants' team, started on 18 June 2012 and will last till the end of June 2012.

In **Libya**, the preliminary Planning and Coordination Meeting in the country, conducted on 15-16 June 2010, led to the fact that this activity was partially achieved by IUCN-Med, as part of its MedRAS project (phase 1). It was then agreed to hire national and international consultants that will complement and adapt the preliminary work made by IUCN.

Official communication with Libyan environmental authorities in Tripoli has been interrupted during 2011 due to the political situation prevailing in the country. The collaboration has then resumed in mid-December 2011, during a meeting, held in Tunis (Tunisia), with officials from the Libyan Environment General Authority (EGA). This Meeting allowed updating the work-plan. The terms of reference of national and international consultants have been agreed and finalized with the Libyan environmental authorities, early 2012. However, the expert selection process and the activity launching have been postponed after the Libyan National Congress election (scheduled during July 2012).

Concerning **Syria**, RAC/SPA conducted a Planning and Coordination Meeting in Damascus on 27 February 2011 in the Syrian Ministry of State for Environment Affairs, in presence of a number of relevant national institutions. During this Meeting, the Project activities planning, stakeholders and implementation modalities were agreed upon. A national and an international consultant have been then hired, in close consultation with the Syrian environmental authorities; and an expert field assignment in situ (Lattakia and Tartous areas, Northern Syria) have been planned then for mid-April 2011. However, this survey was cancelled for security reasons. Activities are since then in a stand-by position, due to the current political situation in the country.

As far as **Bosnia & Herzegovina** and **Montenegro** are concerned, RAC/SPA started early 2012 an extensive analysis of the existing legal and institutional frameworks in the concerned countries, in close collaboration with IUCN-Med.



© Yassine Ramzi SGHAIER
The Al-Rosha site, Beirut, Lebanon (June 2011)



© Atef LIMAM
The Cap des Trois Fourches site Northern Morocco (December 2010)

2.2.2 Identify stakeholder group and potential partnerships (Albania, Libya and Morocco)

For the identification of stakeholder group and potential partnerships in **Albania**, RAC/SPA started early 2012 an extensive analysis of the existing institutional and partnerships frameworks in order to set up an engagement strategy for stakeholders groups and potential partnerships to create a national MPA network. This activity is undertaken in close collaboration with IUCN-Med.

Concerning **Libya**, and as stated in the above 2.2.1 sub-section, this activity is meant to be executed by the national and international consultants whose terms of references have been yet agreed and finalized with the Libyan environmental authorities. Activity implementation is planned after the forthcoming elections in Libya anticipated during July 2012.

As far as **Morocco** is concerned, the MedMPAnet Project has run a Planning and Coordination Meeting on 9-11 December 2010, in which the Project work-plan has been presented and agreed upon by all concerned partners. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between RAC/SPA and the "*Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte contre la Désertification*" (HCEFLD). For the identification of stakeholder group and potential partnerships to create MPAs in Morocco, national consultants have been already hired, in close consultation with the HCEFLD and the work is underway.

2.2.3 Characterization of priority marine sites suitable to become MPAs (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro and Morocco)

In **Montenegro**, after a joint work-plan was elaborated by the Montenegrin Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism and RAC/SPA, a rapid assessment of natural habitats along the coast of Montenegro took place, late October 2011, with the involvement of national experts from the Institute of Marine Biology of Kotor and the Nautilus local NGO, as well as international experts. In order to perform an extensive data collection, a second rapid assessment survey took place at mid-June 2012. A synthesis report for the valuation of marine areas, in order to select the best sites to become MPAs, including GIS-based mapping is planned to be provided by September 2012.



© Vesna MACIC
Diving at Iza Perasta site, Montenegro (October 2011)

This activity has been initiated in **Morocco** through the recruitment of four national consultants who have already started a valuation of marine areas along the Moroccan Mediterranean coast, including GIS-based mapping, in order to select the best areas suitable to be declared as MPAs. For that aim, a field rapid assessment is planned during September 2012.

For **Bosnia & Herzegovina**, the opportunity of such activity will be decided in consultation with the country environmental authorities, and will be based on the outcomes of the legal and institutional marine environment conservation analysis, which is underway in collaboration with IUCN-Med (see the above 2.2.1 sub-section).

2.2.4 Demonstration Projects for MPA creation: Inception, planning, zoning and development of newly created MPAs (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Montenegro and Tunisia)

Concerning **Albania**, the MedMPAnet Project has run an Inception Meeting, in Tirana on 3 May 2012, during which the Project work-plan has been presented and agreed upon by the Albanian Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration. Concerning the pilot activity in Albania, and after consultations made with the Albanian environmental authorities, the site of Porto Palermo Bay was selected to be subject of the pilot MPA creation in the country. In this concern, terms of reference for the need of national and international consultants hiring are under preparation and an ecological field survey in the area is planned during September 2012.

During the MedPartnership 2nd Steering Committee Meeting (Damascus, March 2011), **Algeria** asked for the support of RAC/SPA in order to create an MPA in the Réghaïa area, as part of the MedMPAnet Project. This area is actually subject to two other activities part of the MedPartnership: (i) Management of coastal aquifers and groundwater (led by UNESCO-IHP) and (ii) Integrated Coastal Zone Management (led by PAP/RAC).

In this context, a coordination meeting took place, end of January 2012, in the Algerian Ministry for Land Planning and Environment (Algiers, Algeria), in presence of the MedPartnership executing agencies acting in the Réghaïa area and all the concerned national institutions and stakeholders. It was agreed that RAC/SPA and the Conservatoire du Littoral (CdL) will be carrying out the needed ecological and socio-economic surveys in the area. A team of scientists assigned by the CdL has already undertaken, mid-May 2012, a survey in the coastal wetland (Réghaïa Lake) present in the area. A field survey of the marine part of the Réghaïa area will be undertaken by RAC/SPA international and Algerian national consultants' team in September 2012.

Concerning the pilot activity in **Croatia**, RAC/SPA undertook, in Zagreb late-April 2011, a Coordination and Planning Meeting with the Nature Protection Directorate (formerly part of the Ministry of Culture and presently part of the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection) and other national relevant institutions. This Meeting mainly led to refine and adjust Project activities according to actual priorities of the country. After further national consultation, a new work-plan has been set up, focusing on an ecological study, a fishery study and capacity building activities for the inventory of marine biodiversity, in the County of Primorje & Gorski Kotar. Screening and scoping activities (including sites selection and documentary reviews) will start during the second half of 2012. Actual field work will take place during 2013.

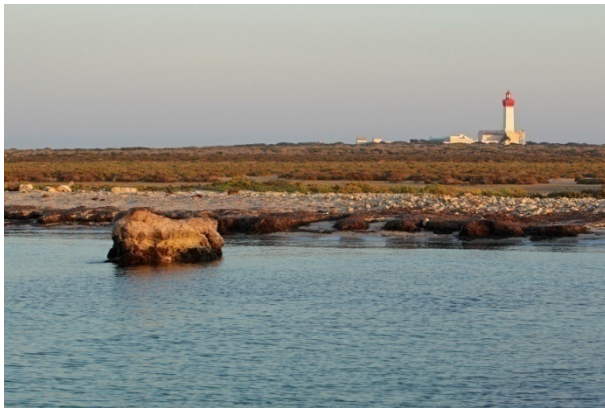
Regarding the pilot activity in **Montenegro**, and based on the preliminary results of the rapid assessments undertaken in October 2011 and June 2012, and in close consultation with the Ministry of Environment of Montenegro, it has been agreed that RAC/SPA will be joining efforts to PAP/RAC and CP/RAC in the "Pilot Project on Testing the Ecosystem Approach (ECAP) application in Boka Kotorska Bay".

The pilot activities to be undertaken by RAC/SPA will be as follows:

- Assessment of key marine ecosystems (main types and their characteristics);
- Characterization of their ecological values, including its draft spatial zoning ;
- Evaluation of their benefits, in terms of ecological service they provide and its attractiveness for economic activities;
- Characterization of the fisheries socio-economical and ecological role and involvement in the areas including and surrounding the future Kotor Bay MPA;
- Participatory mechanisms of local stakeholders and consensus achievement on activities allowed in the future Kotor Bay MPA ; and
- Financial sustainability of the future Kotor Bay MPA.

The demonstration project in **Tunisia**, aiming at the inception, planning, zoning and development of the newly created MPA of Kuriat Islands, has been initiated, through the running of a first on-site ecological field survey early July 2010. A second ecological field survey has been undertaken mid-June 2011. It allowed the design of a preliminary zoning for the area and the delivery of on-job training for local experts. The terms of reference for the elaboration of a management plan are being drafted in close collaboration with the Tunisian Coastal Protection and Planning Agency.

Besides, a socio-economic study has been undertaken on the area during the first half of 2012.



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The Kuriat Island lighthouse, Tunisia (July 2010)



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The Kuriat field survey team (Monastir, Tunisia, June 2011)

2.2.5 Identification of local stakeholder participation mechanism for the pilot MPAs (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Libya and Montenegro)

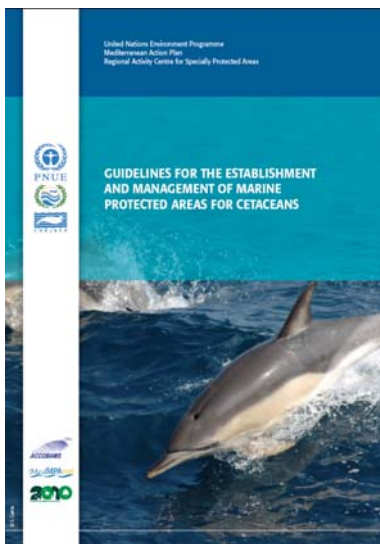
This activity concerning the identification of local stakeholder participation mechanism for the pilot MPAs will be implemented during the first half of 2013, as part of the demonstration projects presented in the above sub-section 2.2.4.

2.2.6 MPA creation guidelines and teaching packages

This activity aims at developing practical methodologies to create sustainable MPAs and make them available to managers and practitioners.

For this aim, a number of guidelines and technical tools for MPA creation and management elaborated within the Barcelona Convention context (SPA/BD Protocol) have been reviewed and edited (in both English and French), in order to be disseminated among Mediterranean MPA managers and decision-makers:

- Guidelines for setting up and management of specially protected areas for marine turtles in the Mediterranean;
- Guidelines for the establishment and management of Marine Protected Areas for cetaceans; and
- Guidelines for management and monitoring threatened population of marine and coastal bird species and their important areas in the Mediterranean.



Cover page of the Guidelines for setting-up and managing marine protected areas for cetaceans



Cover page of the Guidelines for monitoring marine and coastal birds and their important areas



Cover page of the Guidelines for setting-up and managing protected areas for turtles

RAC/SPA has collaborated with the MedPAN Network Secretariat and WWF-MedPO, in running a region-wide need assessment in terms of guidebooks and technical tools among MPA managers and practitioners and relevant authorities in the Mediterranean countries. The results of this study have been issued in March 2012. Based on the findings of this survey, RAC/SPA will be launching the elaboration of a set of guidelines and teaching packages, meeting the actual needs of marine protected areas planners and managers. In this context and during the second half of 2012, RAC/SPA will be launching the drafting of guidelines dealing with climate change issues in Mediterranean MPAs.

Responding to the lack of scientific literature on biodiversity in Arabic-speaking countries and to the challenge of understanding, interpreting, and translating scientific knowledge into Arabic, RAC/SPA is collaborating with the World Bank Marseille Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) – which is the project lead partner under the Sustainable MED programme, and the Conservatoire du Littoral, in the creation of an online thematic trilingual glossary in Arabic, English and French (ecoOnto-Med). The first phase of this thematic glossary, gathering around 150 terms of biodiversity, was made available online late October 2011. “ecoOnto-Med” glossary can be visited through this link: http://ecoonto.cmimarseille.org/index.php/Main_Page.

2.2.7 Demonstration Project in Libya: the environmental case for a national network of MPAs in Libya

The pilot activity regarding the development of a national network of MPAs in Libya is jointly implemented by RAC/SPA (MedMPAnet Project) and WWF-MedPO (MedPAN South project).

In this context, a first marine survey aiming to assess the biological features and the ecological interest of Ain Al-Ghazala marine and coastal area was conducted by RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO, late September 2010. More than ten Libyan and international experts took part to this assessment.

A second survey was conducted, late October 2010, by RAC/SPA and the Conservatoire du Littoral, in order to assess the marine and coastal ecological features of the El Kouf National Park. This assessment was undertaken by more than fifteen Libyan and international experts.



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The Bardaa Island, Bomba Gulf (Libya, October 2010)



© Renaud DUPUY DE LA GRANDRIVE / RAC/SPA

The Ain Al-Ghazala field working team (Libya, October 2010)

Early 2011 and based on the results of the field surveys undertaken in Ain Al-Ghazala area, the Libyan Ministry of Agriculture, Animal and Marine Wealth has declared the Ain Al-Ghazala coastal lagoon and its facing Elba Island as a marine protected area (Decision N° 2_Year 2011 of 17 January 2011).

RAC/SPA launched, in 2012, complementary socio-economic surveys for the pilot site of El-Kouf National Park, in view of complementing the ecological surveys undertaken in autumn 2010 and strengthening the final recommendations for the management of the area.

In the same way, a complementary socio-economic survey for the pilot site of Ain Al-Ghazala marine and coastal area is planned to be undertaken. It will also serve to complement the ecological surveys undertaken in autumn 2010 and strengthening the final recommendations for the management of the area.

Table 2: Implementation indicators related to the "Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness" activity

Output / Achievement / Result	Number
Ecological surveys	Number of ecological surveys: 7 surveys (in: Lebanon (1), Libya (2), Montenegro (2), and Tunisia (2)) Number of days: 48 days
Ecological characterization reports	Number of reports: 7 reports (Libya (3); Tunisia (3) and Montenegro (1))
Geo-referenced data	Number of GIS databases: 4 databases (Libya (2 sites); Montenegro and Tunisia)
On-site surveys (rapid assessments or field visits)	Number of surveys: 3 surveys (in: Lebanon, Montenegro and Morocco) Number of days: 12 days
On-site survey reports	Number of reports: 2 reports (Lebanon and Morocco)
Guidelines on marine protected areas creation and management	Number of guidelines: 3 guidelines (1 in English and 2 in English and French) Number of edited guidelines: 3 paper edited guidelines (1 in English and 2 in English and French)
Online trilingual glossary on biodiversity terms, in Arabic, English and French	Number of terms: 150 terms (until June 2012)

2.3 Improving MPA management

2.3.1 Organizing 3 Mediterranean MPA Regional Training Workshops for MPA managers, practitioners and relevant authorities

This activity is mainly led by WWF-MedPO as part of the MedPAN South project, but implemented in collaboration with the RAC/SPA MedMPAnet Project. In this concern RAC/SPA has technically and financially contributed to the three following regional training workshops:

- 1st Regional Training Workshop on MPA Management Planning (Tabarka (Tunisia), 14-23 November 2009): 41 participants from 13 Eastern and Southern Mediterranean countries took part to the training.
- 2nd Regional Training Workshop on Planning for Sustainable Fisheries in MPAs (Kas (Turkey), 2-11 October 2010): 48 MPA managers, practitioners and officials from relevant authorities from 11 countries in the South and East of the Mediterranean and 8 experts from the region participated to this Workshop.
- 3rd Regional Training Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Planning in MPAs (Split (Croatia), 3-8 October 2011): 30 participants (MPA managers, lead staff, practitioners and officials of relevant authorities/administrations) from 10 Mediterranean countries took part to this training workshop.

As part of the MedMPAnet Project, RAC/SPA organized in September 2011 in Santa Pola (Spain), a Mediterranean training session on the "Identification and classification techniques of marine and coastal species for the ecological monitoring of marine protected areas". This training course contributed to strengthen the skills of 8 marine protected areas managers and practitioners from 7 Mediterranean countries.

As a follow-up of the successful 2011 regional training workshop undertaken in collaboration with the University of Alicante in Santa Pola (Spain), RAC/SPA will be organizing a Second regional training on ecological monitoring in MPAs, in the Tabarca Marine Reserve (Spain) during the first half of September 2012.



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Group photo, Santa Pola training course (Spain, September 2011)



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Working groups at the Split regional training workshop (Croatia, October 2011)

RAC/SPA collaborated with WWF-MedPO and MedPAN in designing a long-term capacity-building strategy to enhance the management of Mediterranean MPAs. For this aim, a regional gap-analysis was conducted among MPA managers and regional national and international institutions dealing with capacity building in the region. The study synthesis report is being finalized and will be issued end of June 2012.

2.3.2 Organizing specific technical assistance and exchange/twinning programmes

Participants to the above-mentioned 2nd and 3rd regional training workshops (Kas 2010 and Split 2011) developed specific projects intended to enhance their capacities and apply what they have learned on the field within their MPAs, over the 10-12 months following each regional session. These projects are implemented following an agreement (Implementation Agreement) with WWF-MedPO or RAC/SPA.

In this concern, RAC/SPA has technically and financially supported 4 projects (2 projects in 2011 and 2 projects in 2012) implemented by 2 national NGOs dealing with marine conservation aspects in their respective countries (Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania (INCA) and Nautilus NGO from Montenegro).

The two technical activities undertaken in **Albania**, dealt with: (i) Measuring fishing efforts in the Sazan-Karaburun marine national park and raising awareness on the marine park role and benefits for fisheries, tourism, etc. (2011), and (ii) Identification of tourism potential activities in the Sazan-Karaburun MPA and surrounding area; designing and producing awareness materials for the tourism attraction; and organizing a conference on the sustainable tourism promotion with local and national stakeholders (2012).

The two technical activities undertaken in **Montenegro**, dealt with: (i) Surveying the pressure caused by spear fishing and some diving activities along the Montenegrin coast; and producing and disseminating awareness-raising material on spear fishing and divers' impact on the environment (2011), and (ii) Giving the opportunity to decision-makers for the management and development of tourism in "Katic" MPA area (Montenegro) to undertake an exchange visit to Miramare Marine Reserve (Italy) in order to learn about best practices for visitor management in MPAs (2012).



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Awareness workshop for divers, Montenegro (2011)



Leaflet illustrating the Port-Cros National Park Charter of eco-divers, in Serbo-Croatian

RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO (MedMPAnet and MedPAN South projects) are providing their support for Libyan national officers and MPA stakeholders in terms of capacity-building in the three following priorities:

- Priority 1 - Planning socioeconomic assessments in MPAs;
- Priority 2 - GIS application to marine environment; and
- Priority 3 - Participatory process and stakeholders' engagement in MPAs.

The two first priorities were addressed during 2 technical training workshops held in Tunisia in May-June 2012: (i) GIS training (Bizerte, 26-30 May 2012), and Socioeconomic training (Tunis, 1-2 June 2012). These trainings were delivered to 14 **Libyan** participants. Three **Tunisian** nationals benefited also from these training opportunities. The third thematic training is planned in autumn 2012.

2.3.3 Running on-job-training for managers, practitioners and relevant authorities in identified demonstration areas, on planning, management and ecological aspects of MPAs

Taking advantage of all the field ecological surveys undertaken in **Libya, Montenegro and Tunisia**, on-job trainings have been delivered to local experts by experienced international scientists assigned by RAC/SPA.

These on-job trainings have embraced various themes, such as: benthos sampling using underwater visual census and cameras; fish sampling using underwater visual census; recognizing animals and plants underwater; alien species; importance of socio-cultural aspects in planning MPAs; the impact of MPAs on society; human impact on MPAs, etc. For more efficiency, RAC/SPA tried, as much as possible, to deliver these trainings in local languages.

The 2012-planned ecological field surveys in **Albania, Algeria, Lebanon, Montenegro and Morocco** will pursue delivering on-job trainings to participating junior experts.



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On-job training on seagrass measurements techniques (Monastir, Tunisia, June 2011)



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On-job training on marine species identification (El Kouf, Libya, October 2010)

Table 3: Implementation indicators related to the "Improving MPA management" activity

Output / Achievement / Result	Number
MedPAN South/MedMPAnet 1 st Regional Workshop on Management Planning for MPAs (Tabarka, 12-24 November 2009)	Number of trainees: 41 trainees from 13 countries (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) 1 training manual in English and French Number of training hours: 70 training hours
MedPAN South/MedMPAnet 2 nd Regional Training Workshop on Fisheries Management in MPAs (Kas, 4-11 October 2010)	Number of trainees: 48 trainees from 12 countries (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) 1 training manual in English and French Number of training hours: 52 training hours
MedPAN South/MedMPAnet 3 rd Regional Training Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Planning in Marine Protected Areas (Split, 3-8 October 2011)	Number of trainees: 40 trainees from 10 countries (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) 1 training manual in English and French Number of training hours: 42 training hours
Mediterranean training session on the "Identification and classification techniques of marine and coastal species for the ecological monitoring of marine protected areas" (Santa Pola, 26-30 September 2011)	Number of trainees: 8 trainees from 7 countries (Algeria, Croatia, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia) Number of training hours: 35 training hours
Regional training workshops	Number of training workshops: 4 workshops (1 by RAC/SPA and 3 by WWF-MedPO and RAC/SPA)
National training workshops	Number of training workshops: 2 workshops (Libya; by RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO) Number of trainees: 14 trainees (Libya) + 3 trainees (Tunisia)
Training manuals	Number of training manuals: 3 manuals , in English and French languages (by WWF-MedPO and RAC/SPA)
Training proceedings	Number of training proceedings: 3 proceedings (by WWF-MedPO and RAC/SPA)
Training evaluation reports	Number of training evaluation reports: 4 reports (1 by RAC/SPA and 3 by WWF-MedPO and RAC/SPA)
Technical assistance (small granting)	Number of technical assistance projects: 4 projects (Albania (2) and Montenegro (2))
Technical assistance reports	Number of survey reports: 3 reports (Albania: 1 report in Albanian and English and 1 report in English; Montenegro: 1 report in English)
On-job trainings during field surveys	Number of on-job trainees: 23 trainees (including 4 persons trained twice) (Tunisia: 8 trainees (including 1 person trained twice); Libya: 10 trainees (including 3 persons trained twice); Montenegro: 2 trainees, trained twice; and Lebanon: 3 trainees)

2.4 Ensuring financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks

2.4.1 Financial analysis for the establishment of new MPAs

This activity is planned for second half of 2012 and 2013.

2.4.2 Demonstration Project: Demonstrating financial sustainability mechanisms for new MPAs in four different areas (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro and Tunisia)

This activity concerning the identification of financial sustainability mechanisms for the pilot MPAs will be implemented as the crowning part of the demonstration projects presented in sub-section 2.2.4 and are planned during 2013.

3. Conclusion and perspectives

At this MedMPAnet Project mid-term stage (June 2012), RAC/SPA has completed a significant number of activities on the way of the Project full implementation, such as the completion of extensive ecological field surveys in Libya and Tunisia, and the running of such surveys in Lebanon and Montenegro. Four other field surveys are planned at the end of summer 2012 (September/October), in Albania, Algeria, Montenegro and Morocco.

Given the nature of the activities implemented by RAC/SPA under the MedPartnership (marine field campaigns, by scuba-diving for the study of seabed biotopes and key species, in areas to be declared as MPAs), the actual field work is organically linked to suitable weather conditions, that occur only between May/June and September/October of each Project's implementation year.

During the first half of 2012, several preparatory activities (such as: the identification and selection of sites of conservation interest, the development of detailed work-plans, the drafting of terms of reference and specifications, the signing of partnership agreements with relevant national institutions, the selection of national and international consultants, etc.), were made in preparation of a number of regional/national studies and on-site field campaigns, which should be organized between May and October 2012.

It is important to mention also that 2011 was marked by political and institutional instability in many countries of the region. However based on implementation indicators presented herewith, we could affirm that this 60 month-project is reaching its cruising speed in mid-2012 (after 26 months of implementation).

Table 4: Overall Project implementation indicators

Overall Project outputs / results	Number
Regional coordination meetings	4 meetings
National coordination meetings	13 meetings
MEETINGS	17 meetings
ON-SITE SURVEYS	10 surveys
Regional training workshops	4 workshops
National training workshops	2 workshop (Libya)
On-job trainings (national)	7 on-job trainings
TRAININGS	13 trainings
TRAINEES	169 trainees
TECHNICAL TOOLS AND TEACHING MATERIAL	7 tools
AWARENESS RAISING WORKSHOPS	2 workshops
COMMUNICATION MATERIAL	10 tools
REPORTS	21 reports
EDITED BOOKS	3 books