



Working group 3: Integrated ecosystem monitoring and management

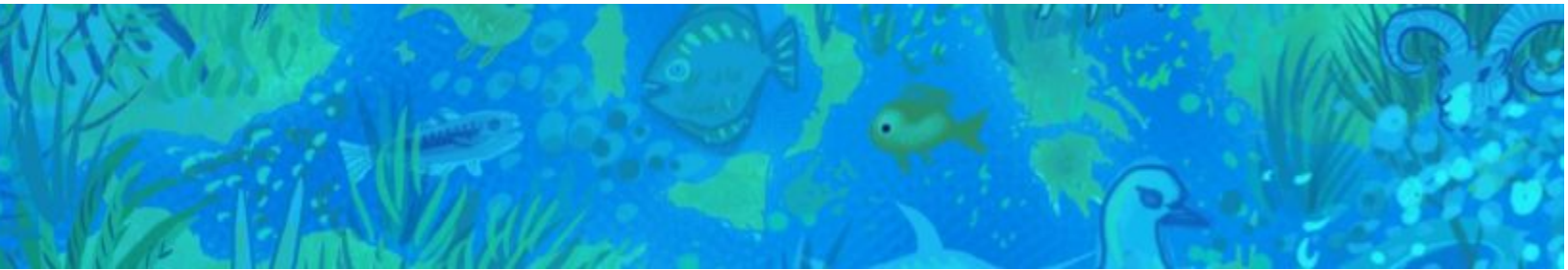
THE MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT

An **integrated vision** of Mediterranean ecosystems and their relations with human activities, among other actions and conditions, is necessary to enhance the understanding of their evolution, value and

most importantly, how they are threatened by human impacts.

Over the years, policies and instruments were implemented to monitor these ecosystems, focusing on common topics such as land-sea interactions or specific kinds of ecosystems such as wetlands. Specific policies and instruments addressing land-sea interactions at the Mediterranean scale are the Barcelona Convention’s Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) and the Ecosystem Approach (EcAP) process, and related EU level policies, including the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive.

Specific instruments focusing on wetlands are the RAMSAR Convention and the MEDWET Initiative. Important complementary directives related to environmental issues are the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Water Framework Directive. The table below presents the synergies between the existing legal frameworks and key Mediterranean stakeholders, with ongoing and closed Modular Projects and developed actions/tools. Additional global and EU post-2020 target policies that the



Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community (MBPC) will focus on are the EU Green Deal, the new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 outlining the EU's ambition for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and the global Sustainable Development Goals – Agenda 2030.

THE WORKING GROUP AND ITS OBJECTIVES

The Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community is pursuing solutions to strengthen the Science-Policy-Interface, building on such instruments to develop an action plan for a community working group focusing on integrated ecosystem monitoring and management (WG3).

Targeted institutional bodies, relevant legal frameworks, networks, initiatives and projects identified for the MBPC are presented in the following table. The ones prioritised for this WG 3 action plan are identified by blue dots.

The WG 3 outcomes and key messages dissemination encompass various stakeholders of Interreg MED Communities: the Joint Secretariat, Axis 4 - PANORAMED project, Horizontal Projects, Modular Projects of the MBPC and its WGs 1 and 2. Furthermore, the MBPC's advisory board

and associated partners will be contributors and key target stakeholders within WG 3's activities. A cooperation with the SHAREMED strategic project is being explored.

The following members of the advisory board and associated partners have been identified as relevant to WG 3's activities: UNEP-MAP SPA/RAC, MedPAN, WWF Mediterranean, Adriatic Ionian Euroregion, Sud-Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, Fondation Tour du Valat and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas.

The MBPC Policy and network targets

- Directive / Policy instruments/ Networks focusing on NATURE
- Directive / Policy instruments/ Networks focusing on the use of natural resources
- Working group 1: Biodiversity protection and transboundary challenges
- Working group 2: Sustainable use of natural resources
- Working group 3: Integrated ecosystem monitoring and management

Global scale

- Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi targets 2020 + upcoming strategy)
- The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs mainly SDG 14)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- New Urban Agenda-UN HABITAT - City prosperity Initiative

European scale

- Nature Directives
 - Habitat Directive
 - Birds Directive
 - Natura 2000 network
- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and MAES WG
- Water Framework Directive
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)
- EU Common Fisheries Policy (incl. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF))
- EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change
- European Climate Pact (incl. EU Climate ADAPT action)
- Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD)
- Blue Growth Strategy
- European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy
- EEA Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) Strategy
- Sea Basin Strategies (incl. Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR), WESTMED)

Mediterranean scale

- Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAP BIO) (UNEP MAP / SPA RAC)
- Barcelona Convention Roadmap for a comprehensive coherent network of well-managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean (UNEP MAP / SPA RAC)
- The Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal region of the Mediterranean and its protocols (UNEP MAP)
- Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) (2016–2025) (and its Mid-term evaluation 2020–2021) (UNEP-MAP)
- ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean Sea (UNEP MAP / PAP RAC)
- Conceptual framework for Marine Spatial Planning (UNEP MAP / PAP RAC)
- Common Regional Framework for ICZM (UNEP MAP / PAP RAC)
- Decision on Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP Decision IG 22.7) (UNEP MAP)
- EcAp roadmap : Mediterranean Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, in coherence with EU MSFD
- Barcelona Convention Regional Plan for Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean (UNEP MAP / MedPOL)
- 2017 Malta Declaration for Sustainability for Mediterranean Fisheries

Sub-regional territorial targets

- The Mediterranean cetaceans Corridor - MPA (Spain)
- New MPAs in Montenegro and ensure their efficient management and monitoring
- Widening the network of MPAs in the Southern Adriatic Ionian Region
- Strengthening the network of MPAs in Croatia, Spain, France & in the Pelagos area

Multi-level key networks and stakeholders

- UN Environment/MAP SPA/RAC
- MedPAN - Mediterranean MPA Network
- AdriaPAN - Adriatic MPA Network
- FARNET
- WWF Mediterranean Marine Initiative
- IUCN World Commission on Protected Area
- International Whaling Commission - International Convention of the Regulation of Whaling
- Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles (MEDASSET)
- The MedFund
- ACCOBAMS secretariat
- OCEANA
- MEDSea Foundation
- Emerald Network
- UN Environment/MAP Coordination Unit
- UN Environment/MAP PAP/RAC
- UN Environment/MAP SCP/RAC
- UN Environment/MAP MED POL
- UN Environment/MAP Plan Bleu
- Mediterranean Platform on Marine Litter
- Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas
- The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)
- Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
- MedWet policy task Force
- Mediterranean Advisory Council (MEDAC)
- BLUEMED initiative
- European Parliament Intergroup Seas, Rivers, Islands & Coastal Areas (SEARICA)
- EMODNet
- Marine data and knowledge
- Interreg-Med funded networks
- Interreg Balkan-Mediterranean



OBJECTIVES

WG 3 aims to address key challenges for the Mediterranean in relation to integrated ecosystem monitoring, contributing to a better understanding of land-sea interactions and wetland ecosystems. Within the activities of the second phase of the MPBC project, WG 3 will pursue transferring and capitalisation actions focusing on land-sea interactions and wetlands to further identify, disseminate and support the development of “integrated ecosystem monitoring and management” efforts at the Mediterranean, European and national levels.

Land-Sea Interactions (LSI) gather two typologies: interactions due to natural processes and interactions between land and sea-based activities. The influence of LSI on planning processes and plans for land and sea areas, as well as on relations between land and sea communities, will be taken into account in the work done under WG 3.

The modular projects contributing to WG 3 (TUNE UP, MPA NETWORKS, POSBEMED 2 and MPA ENGAGE and when relevant the 11 previous modular projects from Phase 1) will provide substance to enrich and complement the previous deliverables

drafted in Phase I. Specifically, WG 3 will focus on:

1. Strengthening monitoring and management tools and contributing to UNEP-MAP Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme’s (IMAP) review and revision: considering its efforts to promote integrated governance for the sustainable management of Protected Areas (PAs), WG 3 focuses on strengthening monitoring and management tools in PAs.

The results of the MPBC will feed the ongoing and planned efforts of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention and UNEP/MAP regarding the IMAP requirements to determine Good Environmental Status (GES) and targets, specifically to the EcAp Ecological Objectives 1 (marine biodiversity conservation), 9 (contaminants) and 10 (marine litter). Specific gaps require improvement and attention: the need for fine-tuning/scaling of data on biodiversity within and outside MPAs (including human pressures), close cooperation between



MPA managers and key actors in the vicinity of the MPAs and improving coordination and data sharing across MPAs.

2. Collecting data generated by the projects to feed the MBPC Knowledge Platform as well as the existing permanent database of protected areas at the Mediterranean level (e.g. MAPAMED), ultimately supporting the development of cartography for EU Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and potentially feeding the Plan Bleu regional Observatory with data generated by its projects. It will also need coordination with INFO/RAC and the InfoMAP Platform that is considered the backbone of the 2023 MedQSR (Quality Status Report) and must be fed by all available data on indicators within and outside MPAs.
3. Providing spatial data for MSP, considering conflicts and compatibility: based on the projects' pilot site results and their strategies for transferring these results, WG 3 efforts will strive to showcase LSI management tools, such as MSP and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). PAP/RAC recently published the Common Regional Framework for ICZM adopted during the Barcelona COP 21 (December 2019, Naples) to support the implementation of the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean.

4. Implementation of integrated land-sea conservation and management. An integrative approach should be adopted when managing MPAs, since integrated conservation planning allows one to meet conservation targets more efficiently while accounting for human uses occurring on land that affect marine habitats.

The WG 3 is open to all ongoing and closed modular projects within the Community, such as:

- **AMAre:** Development of shared methodologies and special tools to foster the resilience of a Mediterranean MPA network as well as concrete MSP applications.
- **EcoSUSTAIN:** Improved management and networking of protected areas by building capacity and testing innovative water monitoring solutions.
- **PHAROS4MPAs:** Regional integrated framework for recommendations on the necessary practical collaboration between Mediterranean MPAs and the maritime sectors.
- **POSBEMED:** Sustainable management of Posidonia-beaches systems in the Mediterranean region.



- **WETNET:** Coordinated management and networking of Mediterranean wetlands.

The **MBPC** welcomes **four new Modular Projects**. In line with WG3 objectives, several of them add new specific management examples or recommendations based on the results of previous Modular Projects, such as governance contracts (TUNE-UP) and joint strategies for the sustainable management of beaches with Posidonia in Protected Areas (POSBEMED2).

- **TUNE-UP:** Multilevel governance tool based on the WETNET project's experience of River/Wetland Contracts. TUNE UP aims at increasing coordination among stakeholders and decision makers while strengthening the network of Mediterranean MPAs and improving marine and coastal biodiversity.
- **POSBEMED2** (based on POSBEMED project): Joint strategy for promoting better management of the Posidonia littoral landscape and banquettes on beaches in Protected Areas, involving key stakeholders.
- **MPA ENGAGE** (based on the MPA-Adapt Project): this project supports and promotes the role of Mediterranean MPAs as central

tools for climate change adaptation and mitigation and the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp) roadmap, fostering the implementation and development of standardised monitoring tools to produce vulnerability assessments.

- **MPA NETWORKS:** will focus on providing sustainable solutions to challenges requiring an approach that goes beyond MPA boundaries.

Other projects in and outside the MBPC may be invited to contribute to WG 3's activities according to their scope and planned actions. For example, the Interreg Balkan-Mediterranean WetMainAreas project has been identified since its main goal is to contribute to the protection, conservation and development of wetlands as a shared asset of the Balkan Mediterranean territory. Other relevant projects to be taken into consideration include the EU-funded IMAP-MPA project "Towards achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast through an Ecologically Representative and Efficiently Managed and Monitored Network of Marine Protected Areas" (2020-2023), implemented by UNEP/MAP and SPA/RAC, as well as the GEF Adriatic Project (with IMAP and MSP outputs) and the ODYSSEA EU-funded project.



MEDITERRANEAN BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

WG 3's action plan for integrated ecosystem monitoring is based on a definition and agreement on an array of "actions" and "outcomes" set by the MBPC. They include the following defined products:

*Ongoing projects in the table are highlighted in **bold**.

MEANS AND MAIN STEPS

FOCUS	LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND KEY MED STAKEHOLDERS	RELEVANT PROJECTS	ACTIONS AND TOOLS
1. From science to management to policy: factsheets and technical papers featuring integrated ecosystem monitoring and management			
Land-Sea interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN 2030 Agenda for SDGs • EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and MAES Group • Water Framework Directive • ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean Sea (UNEP MAP / PAP RAC) • Decision on Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP Decision) (UNEP MAP) • ECAP roadmap • IMAP Decision • UNEP-MAP • EU Directives: MSP, Nature Directives • PANORAMED • Interreg MED Programme • Regional decision makers and management bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMArE • POSBEMED • PHAROS4MPAs • POSBEMED 2 • TUNE UP • MPA ENGAGE • MPA NETWORKS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual working group • Regional guidelines on cruise and recreational boating (call for contributions and deliverable) • Technical factsheet on Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP) on marine renewable energies • Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Tools catalogue • Inter-community toolbox • Webinars and call for contributions for the Roadmap for Sustainable Aquaculture in the Mediterranean



FOCUS	LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND KEY MED STAKEHOLDERS	RELEVANT PROJECTS	ACTIONS AND TOOLS
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands • EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and MAES Group • Water Framework Directive • PANORAMED • Interreg MED Programme • UNEP MAP / PAP RAC • MEDWET policy task Force • Tour du Valat • Regional decision makers and management bodies • BLUEMED initiative • European Parliament intergroup Seas, Rivers, Islands & Coastal Areas (SEARICA) • Interreg Balkan-Med • Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine and Coastal Bird Species listed in Annex II to the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (UNEP MAP/SPA RAC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WETNET • ECOSUSTAIN • TUNE UP • POSBEMED2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and conclusions of the first capitalisation event, during the EU Green Week on “Healthy wetlands: Our best natural answer to the biodiversity, water and climate crises: The Mediterranean case” • Advocacy paper highlighting the importance of wetlands conservation and restoration • Valuing semi-natural Mediterranean ecosystems (database) • Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Tools catalogue • Inter-community toolbox
2. Spatial data and new knowledge			
Ecosystem monitoring and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Habitats Directive • EU MSP Platform • PANORAMED • Interreg MED Programme • All stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POSBEMED • PHAROS4MPAs • WETNET • AMAre • ECOSUSTAIN • POSBEMED 2 • TUNE UP • MPA ENGAGE • MPA NETWORKS 	Collect MP’s spatial data to feed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG 3 Factsheets • MBPC Knowledge Platform • MSP Platform • Other cartographic tools: Toolbox of monitoring protocols (MPA ENGAGE) • Inter-community toolbox
3. Networking and showcasing			
Ecosystem monitoring and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders and previously identified policy frameworks • PANORAMED • Interreg MED Programme • Interreg Balkan MED Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POSBEMED • PHAROS4MPAs • WETNET • AMAre • ECOSUSTAIN • POSBEMED 2 • TUNE UP • MPA ENGAGE • MPA NETWORKS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG3 meetings • Possible side events during the MBPC’s Capitalisation events (2020, 2021, 2022) • Possible side events during Modular Project events (example: TUNE UP: a technical workshop will be organized by MEDSEA in Cagliari (October 2021) to transfer project results (especially the Regional Policy Toolkit) to MED thematic Community. Collaboration with the MBPC. • Inter-community toolbox



MILESTONES

The working group on “Integrated ecosystem monitoring and management” (WG3) will be showcasing its work during the next two years, particularly through EU and Mediterranean events and publications such as:

- Valuing semi-natural Mediterranean ecosystems (Wetlands). A draft factsheet and a database will be produced to develop a knowledge base on the ecosystem services provided by Mediterranean wetlands and to identify wetland areas to be prioritized for restoration.
- Report from the EU Green Week on “[Healthy wetlands: Our best natural answer to the](#)

[biodiversity, water and climate crises: the Mediterranean case”](#)

- Report from the IUCN WCC.
- Advocacy paper highlighting the importance of wetlands conservation and restoration.
- Regional Guidelines on cruise and recreational boating in the Mediterranean.
- Inter-community toolbox.

An online shared [calendar of events](#) is available and regularly updated with opportunities to participate and organise joint activities. Many of the events mentioned below might change formats and become online webinars due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	INTERNATIONAL EVENTS	EVENTS IN EU/ MED AREA	WG3 PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES
2020	UN Ocean Conference, Lisbon (postponed, date unknown) 2020 UN Biodiversity Conference (postponed, 17-30 May 2021)	12 June - Med Webinar Revamping the Community Online consultation process - Mediterranean MPA Forum 2020 22 October - 1st Capitalisation Event during the EU Green Week, webinar on. “Healthy wetlands: Our best natural answer to the	1 July - Webinar WG3 action plan 4, 16 November - Webinar on Sustainable Aquaculture in the Mediterranean Region 23 November - Webinar on Guidelines for the sustainability of cruises and recreational boating in the Mediterranean



	INTERNATIONAL EVENTS	EVENTS IN EU/ MED AREA	WG3 PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES
		<u>biodiversity, water and climate crises: The Mediterranean case</u>	December 2020 – MBPC and WG3 Fact sheet publication on BET/BAP for Marine Renewable Energy 10 December - Webinar WG3
2021	IUCN World Conservation Congress, 3-11 September, Marseille 2 February – World Wetlands Day Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP14), China (MedWet Policy Task Force)	Mediterranean MPA Forum 2020 – (postponed, date unknown) IUCN World Conservation Congress, Marseille, 3 to 11 September October – Transferring knowledge from TUNE UP to MBPC December - Side-event within the frame of the Barcelona Convention COP 22, Turkey, Antalya	IUCN WCC - Campus session with Sustainable Tourism Community: <u>Innovative tools practices to ensure a healthy Mediterranean biodiversity and sustainable tourism</u> IUCN WCC - MPAs as nature-based solutions to climate change adaptation mitigation and increasing resilience, IUCN WCC MAVA Stand Report from the IUCN WCC Valuing semi-natural Mediterranean ecosystems (Wetlands fact sheet and database) – March/October 2021 Second capitalisation event during the EU Green Week – Spring/ Summer 2021 Advocacy paper highlighting the importance of wetlands conservation and restoration 2021 July 2021 - Good practices database related to MPA Contract experience (TUNE UP project) December 2021 – MBPC technical fact sheet
2022		MBPC final conference at the EU Parliament – April 2022	April 2022 Organisation of a transnational policy event to interchange procedures, capitalise best practices and promote policy recommendations (POSBEMED 2) April 2022 - Policy paper on transformative change MBPC Tools Catalogue Guidelines for the sustainability of cruises and recreational boating in the Mediterranean Inter-community toolbox – Spring

In bold: events / products that MBPC will directly organize, produce or participate in.



MILESTONES PREVIOUSLY ACHIEVED BY WG3

Over the previous phase (PANACeA), WG 3 featured actions and analyses promoting several integrated ecosystem monitoring and management practices through:

- a technical paper ([Technical paper WG3 – “Innovative methods and protocols, results and recommendations addressing the monitoring of Land-Sea Interactions”](#))
- a factsheet – [“Sensitive biodiversity protection in the land sea continuum: support to decision-making through multiple-user approaches”](#)



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