



**BIODIVERSITY
PROTECTION**



Working group 1: Biodiversity protection and transboundary challenges

THE MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT

Considered a biodiversity hotspot, the Mediterranean basin is a semi-enclosed sea surrounded by more than 20 countries, each of them with different levels of biodiversity and natural resource protection, use and management practices. Nearly 9.7% of the Mediterranean Sea (i.e.

245,950 km²), has been designated as Marine protected areas (MPAs), mainly in the northern Mediterranean varying widely in location, size and purpose. While this implies that the region has almost reached the Aichi target to designate at least 10% of the marine ecoregion by 2020, the vast majority of the northern Mediterranean protected areas are 'paper parks', lacking any management and monitoring systems¹ and a large part of the southern Mediterranean is left unprotected. The lack of management and monitoring is mostly due to little logistic and financial resources, including human resources, in addition to poor implementation strategies.

Furthermore, increasing pressures posed by growing population rates in the region's coastal areas, economic development interests, differences across regions, unsustainable consumption rates and production patterns are affecting biodiversity and ecosystem inside and outside protected areas. In addition to climate change and pollution (i.e. marine litter), these are some of the cross-cutting issues affecting Mediterranean ecosystems and biodiversity and putting key ecologically important areas in need of urgent protection.

¹ Gomei M., Abdulla A., Schröder C., Yadav S., Sánchez A., Rodríguez D., Abdul Malak D. (2019). Towards 2020: How Mediterranean countries are performing to protect their sea. 38 pages.



THE WORKING GROUP

The Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community seeks solutions - bridging science, management practices and policy - to address priority threats through a targeted roadmap for its 'biodiversity protection and transboundary challenges Working Group 1' (WG1) until mid-2022. After consultation with members of the Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community and the associated partners from 2016 to 2020, the policy context prioritised by this WG touches different regional environmental policies, management practices and networks in addition to targeted transferability actions at sub-regional territorial level.

Targeted institutional bodies, relevant legal frameworks, networks, initiatives and projects identified for the MBPC community are presented in the following table, in which the ones prioritised for this working group 1 action plan are identified by the yellow dots in the table and are highlighted.

Other stakeholders that will be involved in specific activities and dissemination of key messages include: the overall Interreg MED Community; Joint Secretariat; Axis 4; PANORAMED and related Strategic Projects, and other horizontal and modular projects active in protected areas and biodiversity

related issues, among others BlueIslands and Destimed belonging to Sustainable Tourism community and new ones to define. Relevant projects identified in Montenegro are mentioned in the following section.

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

Working Group 1 aims to increase understanding, knowledge and awareness on multiple environmental threats on biodiversity and natural resources and to promote best practice guided by Ecosystem-based Management (EBM) tools mainstreaming them in regional governance mechanisms to address cumulative pressures and impacts on biodiversity and ecologically significant areas, focusing on functional ecosystem units. In brief, WG1 works to:

- Promote the harmonisation of sampling methodologies, monitoring and management tools allowing a common regional approach to address cumulative impacts of major environmental pressures, including marine pollution and litter (ML), climate change (CC), and transboundary governance (TG).
- Integrate the [Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Knowledge Platform](#) and regional databases for protected areas at Mediterranean level (see MAPAMED and MedPAN databases) with new data to identify environmental risks and highest priority management actions at different regional scales.
- Improve knowledge by integrating results from modular projects (MPs), spatial information and indicators, to showcase current efforts to policymakers and stakeholders in pilot sites.

- Promote the integration of Community knowledge into Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and provide transferable best practices among protected areas and at transboundary level.

- Implement priority actions at sub-regional territorial levels to increase the regional capacity to tackle environmental pressures and foster an Ecosystem-based management approach to biodiversity and governance of natural resources (check table 1 “Sub-regional territorial targets”).

The modular projects co-financed by the Interreg Med programme to be involved in WG1 are:

- **ACT4Litter/ PlasticBusters MPAs / MedSeaLitter:** Implementation of monitoring tools and methodologies related to marine litter and its impact on biodiversity, development of indicators for better decision making and support to management plans and measures to tackle marine litter in protected and ecologically significant areas for Mediterranean biodiversity
- **AMAre:** Transfer of shared and collaborative methodologies and spatial fine-scale tools to stimulate concrete MSP applications for managing protected areas.
- **MPA-Adapt / MPA-Engage:** Building resilience and adaptation to Climate Change impacts in Marine Protected Areas and raising awareness on the importance of citizen science.



- **MPA-NETWORKS:** setting strong human networks for effective Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean.

- **POSBEMED (I and II):** Sustainable management and awareness raising on the value of *Posidonia oceanica* beaches and dunes in the Mediterranean coastal region.

- **PHAROS4MPAs:** Regional recommendations to maritime sectors to minimise the environmental risks of the Blue Growth strategy.

Other projects, in and outside the community, might be invited to contribute to the WG1 activities according to their scope and planned actions such as relevant projects identified in Montenegro: GEF “Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning” (GEF Adriatic), “Promoting Protected Areas Management through Integrated Marine and Coastal Ecosystems” (GEF C/MPA), IPA “Support to Implementation and Monitoring of Water Management, Montenegro”; Interreg Balkan and Adrion projects; BlueMed CSO; IOC UNESCO and MSPglobal initiative among others.



MEDITERRANEAN BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

WG 1'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			
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Development Goals - Agenda 2030 Goals 13, 14.2 • EU Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive • EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (Climate Pact) • EU Climate Pact • EU and EEA Climate Adapt platform • UN Environment/MAP EcAp and Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) • Convention on Biological Diversity(CBD) • Interreg MED PANORAMED (Governance) • Interreg MED Programme • Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPA-ADAPT • MPA-ENGAGE • AMARE • POSBEMED I & II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Disciplinary Working Group • Tailor made contributions to EU Green Deal consultations and debates on the Climate Pact the new Adaptation Strategy • Thematic factsheets on CC impacts, mitigation, and adaptation – nature-based solutions • Case studies on 2 MPAs tackling Climate Change for Climate ADAPT • 5 additional tools for MBPC Tools Catalogue: 3 CC citizen science monitoring protocols; - 1 updated T-MEDNet; one method for participatory CC Adaptation Plans



FOCUS	LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND KEY MED STAKEHOLDERS	RELEVANT PROJECTS	ACTIONS AND TOOLS
2. Spatial data and new knowledge			
Pollution and marine litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU MSFD Directive Descriptor 10 and the 2017 decision of GES • UN Environment / MAP EcAp and IMAP Ecological Objective 10 on Marine litter • UN Environment/MAP Regional cooperation platform on marine litter and its regional activity centres • European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy • Interreg MED -PANORAMED (Governance) and related Strategic project SHAREMED • Interreg MED Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT4LITTER • AMARE • MEDSEALITTER • PHAROS4MPAS • PLASTICBUSTERS MPAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Disciplinary Working Group • Updated Thematic database on marine litter impacts on marine biodiversity – MedBiolitter • New report on MedBiolitter knowledge base • New ML monitoring protocol (1) for MBPC Tools Catalogue • Local and regional targeted awareness raising activities on ML • New knowledge base on noise pollution impacts on marine biodiversity • Participation to CONAMA technical committee on marine litter
Transboundary governance, ecological network connectivity, ecologically significant areas (EBSAs); and effective management and sustainable financing of MPAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) • EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive • Barcelona Convention and its protocols • Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) • Post 2020 Mediterranean MPA Roadmap • Post 2020 global biodiversity framework • Interreg MED -PANORAMED (Governance) and related Strategic project SHAREMED • Interreg MED Programme • Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) • INTEMARES Mediterranean Cetaceans Corridor MPA in Spain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT4LITTER • AMARE • MEDSEALITTER • MPA NETWORKS • MPA-ADAPT • MPA-ENGAGE • PHAROS4MPAS • PLASTICBUSTERS MPAS • POSBEMED I & II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Disciplinary Working Group • Technical documents identifying priority management activities in the South Adriatic EBSA • Guidelines for transboundary governance in the South Adriatic and proposal for enlarging the network of MPAs in the Southern Adriatic Ionian Region • Designation and capacity building for new MPAs in Montenegro • Policy Paper from MPA Networks - 2022 • New Business plan for MPAs for the MBPC Tools catalogue - 2021



FOCUS	LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND KEY MED STAKEHOLDERS	RELEVANT PROJECTS	ACTIONS AND TOOLS
2. Spatial data and new knowledge			
Demonstration sites Marine pollution Climate change EBSAs Mobile species (cetaceans/ turtles) Blue Growth (marine renewable energy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Environment/MAP Regional Cooperation platform on marine litter • UN Environment/MAP Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) • UN Environment/MAP SPA/RAC Med Platform on Biodiversity • EEA/SEIS, EMODNet, MAPAMED and MedPAN database on MPA management • EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy / Climate Adapt • Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD) • Interreg Med Strategic project SHAREMED • Interreg MED Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT4LITTER / AMARE • PLASTICBUSTERS MPAS • MEDSEALITTER • MPA-ADAPT / MPA- ENGAGE • POSBEMED I - II • PHAROS4MPAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate key spatial datasets into the MBP Knowledge Platform and existing permanent databases of protected areas at Mediterranean level • Cartography on geographical coverage of modular projects, study areas, and relevant Mediterranean project results • Presentation of updated regional spatial data and environmental indicators and links with the 2020 Mediterranean MPA Status Report and Roadmap • Update and validation of cumulative pressures and impact assessments in the Mediterranean region • Development of new knowledge base relevant to Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and Ecosystem-based management (EBM) • Mapping of biodiversity vulnerability to cumulative and transboundary impacts in demonstration EBSA / Southern Adriatic
3. Networking and showcasing			
Transfer and adoption of best practices to protected areas and biodiversity practitioners, managers and policy-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and frameworks identified by all stakeholders • Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) • Barcelona Convention • Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) • EU BlueMed/ IOC-UNESCO / MSPGlobal • Ramsar Convention • UN Environment/MAP SPA/RAC Med Platform on Biodiversity • UN Environment/MAP Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter • UN Environment/MAP post 2020 Roadmap for a network of MPAs in the Mediterranean • UN Agenda 2030 for SDGs • MedPAN – SPA/RAC - WWF • Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas Forum 2021 • Interreg MED - PANORAMED • SHAREMED (Governance) • Interreg MED Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT4LITTER • AMARE • MEDSEALITTER • MPA NETWORKS • MPA-ADAPT • MPA-ENGAGE • PHAROS4MPAS • PLASTICBUSTERS MPAS • POSBEMED I & II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review on available tools for Biodiversity protection and transboundary governance • Side events during MBPC Capitalisation events (2021 and 2022) • External events and side activities related to policies' development • Contribution to MPA Forum 2021 • Contribution to IUCN WCC in 2021 • Contribution to Barcelona COP22 in 2021 • Fostering the participation and networking of protected area and biodiversity managers in training workshops and webinars in Montenegro and Strengthening the network of MPAs in Croatia, Spain, France and in supra-national networks (Adriatic, Pelagos, Cetacean corridor, PARES) • Workshops on challenges to EBM/MSP and EBSAs in the Mediterranean • Communication Actions



MILESTONES

The Sustainable use of natural resources working group (WG1) will be showcasing its work during the next two years, particularly through EU and Mediterranean events and publications identified to date and adapting to the new Mediterranean scenario and policy agenda changes due to the COVID19 pandemics. Many of the events mentioned

below might change formats and become online webinars and the like.

An [online shared calendar](#) of events is available and regularly updated with opportunities to participate and organize joint activities.

	INTERNATIONAL EVENTS	EVENTS IN EU/ MED AREA	WG1 PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES
2020	<p>UN MAP / Regional cooperation platform on marine litter</p> <p>UN Decade of Oceans Science for Sustainable Development events</p> <p>Union for the Mediterranean events</p>	<p>Med Webinar Revamping the Community – 12 June</p> <p>EU Green Week – 20-22 October in Brussels</p> <p>PANORAMED Dialogues & Interreg Med 30 Anniversary - 6 November</p> <p>EU biogeographical seminars for the Med (marine N2000 sites)</p> <p>BlueMed, EUSAIR and Western Med key meetings/events</p> <p>Interreg, PANORAMED and SHAREMED meetings</p>	<p>Webinar Joint action roadmap for Mediterranean biodiversity protection and transboundary governance -12 June</p> <p>Webinar WG1 action plan, 26 June</p> <p>EBM MSP preparatory webinar, 17 September</p> <p>Preparatory webinar AIE workshop, 4 December</p> <p>Climate change and protected areas in Montenegro training workshop, 20 November</p>



	INTERNATIONAL EVENTS	EVENTS IN EU/ MED AREA	WG1 PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES
2021	<p>IUCN World Conservation Congress – 3-11 September, Marseille</p> <p>CBD COP15</p> <p>Union for the Mediterranean events</p> <p>UN MAP / Regional cooperation platform on marine litter</p> <p>UN Decade of Oceans Science for Sustainable Development events</p>	<p>Mediterranean MPA Forum SPA/ RAC, MedPAN, and WWF, Online, February 2021</p> <p>Barcelona Convention</p> <p>COP22– December, Turkey</p> <p>Interreg Med Summer School – 5-9 July (tbc), Italy</p> <p>EU biogeographical seminars for the Med (marine N2000 sites)</p> <p>BlueMed initiative, EUSAIR and Western Med key meetings/events</p> <p>IUCN World Conservation Congress – 3 to 11 September 2021</p> <p>Interreg, PANORAMED and SHAREMED meetings</p> <p>EU Green Week 2021</p>	<p>EBM MSP Mediterranean school online March followed by visit in autumn</p> <p>Midterm MBPC event – Spring 2nd training workshop</p> <p>Montenegro on pollution and MPAs – May/ June</p> <p>Campus session with the Sustainable Tourism community on EBM tools in the Mediterranean – IUCN WCC</p> <p>MPAs as nature-based solutions to climate change adaptation mitigation and increasing resilience, IUCN WCC MAVA Stand –IUCN WCC</p> <p>Training module young professionals and decision makers on biodiversity protection and management tools in the Mediterranean – Joint Interreg HP school, 5-9 July (tbc)</p> <p>MedBiolitter update: synthesis and trends – September</p> <p>Transboundary governance action plan - September</p> <p>3rd training workshop MPAs Montenegro and governance – December (tbc)</p>
2022	<p>UN MAP / Regional cooperation platform on marine litter</p> <p>UN Decade of Oceans Science for Sustainable Development events</p> <p>Union for the Mediterranean events</p>	<p>The Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community at the EU Parliament – April 2022</p> <p>EU biogeographical seminars for the Med (marine N2000 sites)</p> <p>EUSAIR and Western Med key meetings/events</p> <p>Interreg, PANORAMED and SHAREMED meetings</p>	<p>Updated MedBioLitter assessment on impacts of marine litter on biodiversity – March</p> <p>EU Climate Adapt platform: 2 updated and 2 new case studies on MPA Adaptation to CC</p>



MILESTONES PREVIOUSLY ACHIEVED BY WG1

Over the previous phase (PANACeA 2016-2019), WG1 featured actions and analyses under these topics, among which:

- [Factsheet WG1- Marine litter and biodiversity interactions in the Mediterranean Sea](#)
- [Factsheet WG1 - Tackling Marine Litter in the Mediterranean: Knowledge and Tools](#)
- [Policy report WG1- Tackling Marine Litter in the Mediterranean: Knowledge & Tools](#)
- [Report WG1- Mediterranean Biodiversity and Marine Litter: An interaction knowledge base](#)
- [MedBioLitter: thematic database on research efforts concerning marine litter interactions with marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean.](#)
- [MARLICE: Marine Litter knowledge and tools in Mediterranean protected areas, Seville, 11-12 April 2019](#)
- [Ecosystem-based approaches to managing transboundary and cumulative impacts in the Mediterranean, with a focus on marine plastic litter and climate change, Cairo, 27 November 2018](#)
- [Managing Transboundary Impacts in Priority Areas: Towards and Action Plan for Ecosystem-based Management \(EBM\) in the Southern Adriatic Sea Ecoregion - Herceg Novi, 31 May 2019](#)



VISIT OUR WEBSITE:



biodiversity-protection.interreg-med.eu



biodiversity.uma.es

CONTACT US:

panacea-med@uma.es

sonsolessanroman@uma.es

cperezv@amb.cat

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



[@BiodiversityProtectionCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/BiodiversityProtectionCommunity)



[@Biodiversity Protection Community](https://www.linkedin.com/company/BiodiversityProtectionCommunity)



[@MEDCommunity3_2](https://twitter.com/MEDCommunity3_2)



[@PANACeA Biodiversity Protection](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



SIGN THE FBM DECLARATION