



THE INTERREG MED BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION COMMUNITY

A Mediterranean partnership for nature protection

1_ Priorities and goals

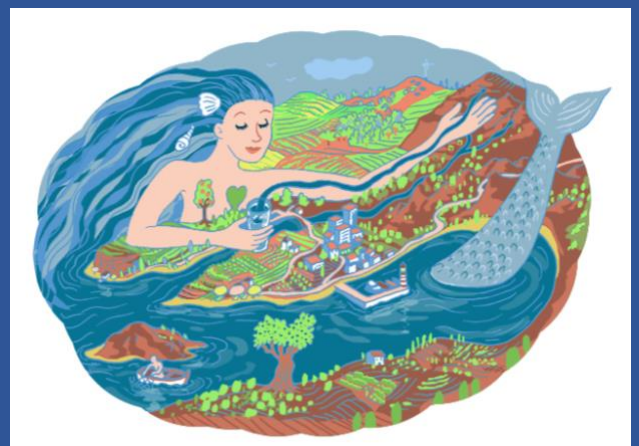
The Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Community (the community) aims to foster a constant dialogue among policy makers, practitioners, NGOs and researchers to ensure and promote more effective biodiversity protection and natural resource management in the Mediterranean region.

The community embraces 12 projects: 11 are thematic - ACT4LITTER, AMARe, ConFish, EcoSUSTAIN, FishMPABlue2, MEDSEALITTER, MPA-ADAPT, PHAROS4MPAS, POSBEMED, PLASTIC BUSTERS MPAs and WETNET - and 1 is transversal, PANACeA, to streamline their efforts

and produce joint recommendations targeting gaps and actions needed for better biodiversity management and more effective policy implementation.

The main priorities defined by this community are the development of scientific and pragmatic evidence on ways to improve the management of biodiversity and natural resources and the design and widespread use of common tools to better manage, monitor, and respond to environmental and man-made pressures on Mediterranean ecosystems and to reduce their impacts on biodiversity.

The vision in the community is based on holistic, participatory and ecosystem-based approaches to reduce environmental pressures and their impacts on biodiversity as a means to maintain and improve ecosystem functions in coastal and marine areas.



Building on individual transferable methods, instruments and results developed by the projects in the Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Community, the role of PANACeA is to streamline key findings, best practices and lessons learnt to targeted stakeholders into

current and future biodiversity management and policy schemes.

Global, European, Mediterranean and regional actors are targeted to benefit from the findings of the community at different policy and management scales as addressed in the community roadmap.

Located in inland, coastal and marine ecosystems, these protected areas have various protection categories, ranging from national to European, Mediterranean and International designations. Protected areas in the community include National Parks, Natural Parks, Natura2000 and Ramsar sites among others and cover around 114,990 Km² in the Mediterranean, equivalent to Greece.

In terms of the size of the sites involved, the Pelagos Sanctuary (87,338 Km²) has the largest share, accounting for around 76% of the surface area involved in the community.

In terms of the number of sites, around 50% of the participating areas (30 out of 61 sites) belong to the marine ecosystem, 36% cover coastal ecosystems, and the rest (14%) include inland ecosystems with terrestrial and freshwater components (figure 2).

In addition to the protected areas involved in the community, over 40 locations and transects across coastal and marine regions (some of them with no particular protection status) have served as sampling or participating sites for environmental monitoring and transfer of knowledge by the projects.

See our interactive online map of partners and participating protected areas in the community here.

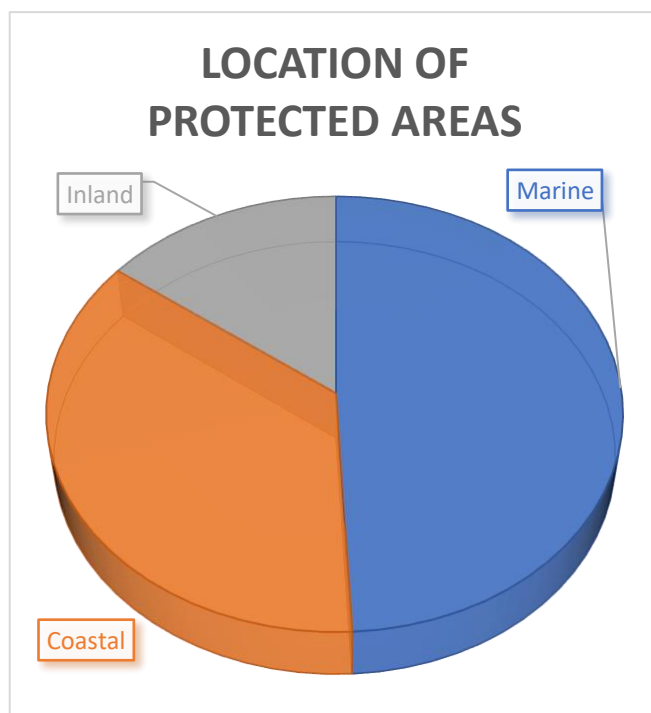


Figure 2: Type of protected areas according to location

3_ Research, policy, civil society and management intake

According to the Interreg MED typology of institutions involved in the community of projects, public authorities, higher education and research, and interest groups represent almost 75% of the community partners. Enterprises

including Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs), as well as Business support organisations, are still a minority in the community accounting for less than 8% of the total. The full composition of the Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Community can be found in figure 3.

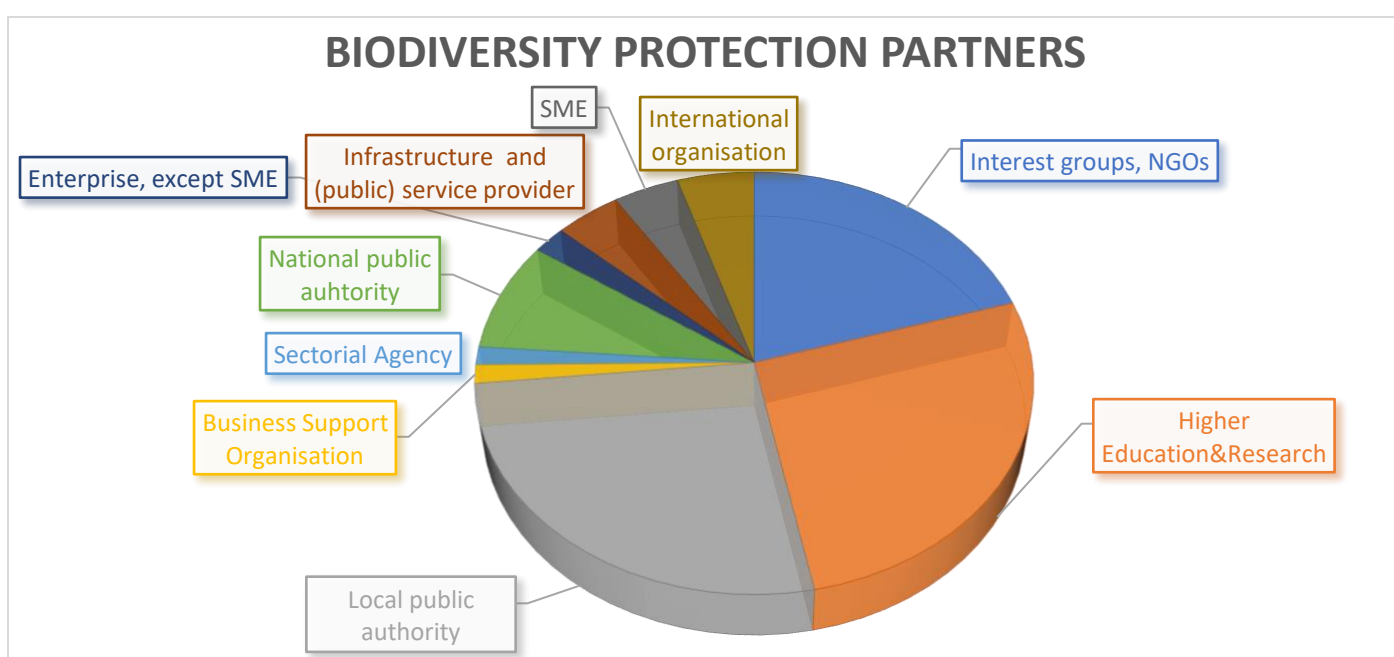


Figure 3: Partners in the Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Community by type of organisation

4_ Participation by country

The proportional rate of participating organisations in the thematic projects by country can be seen in figure 4, with Italy, Spain and

France leading the top of the list, followed by Greece and Croatia, while countries like Montenegro, Cyprus and Bosnia-Herzegovina have a very limited representation.

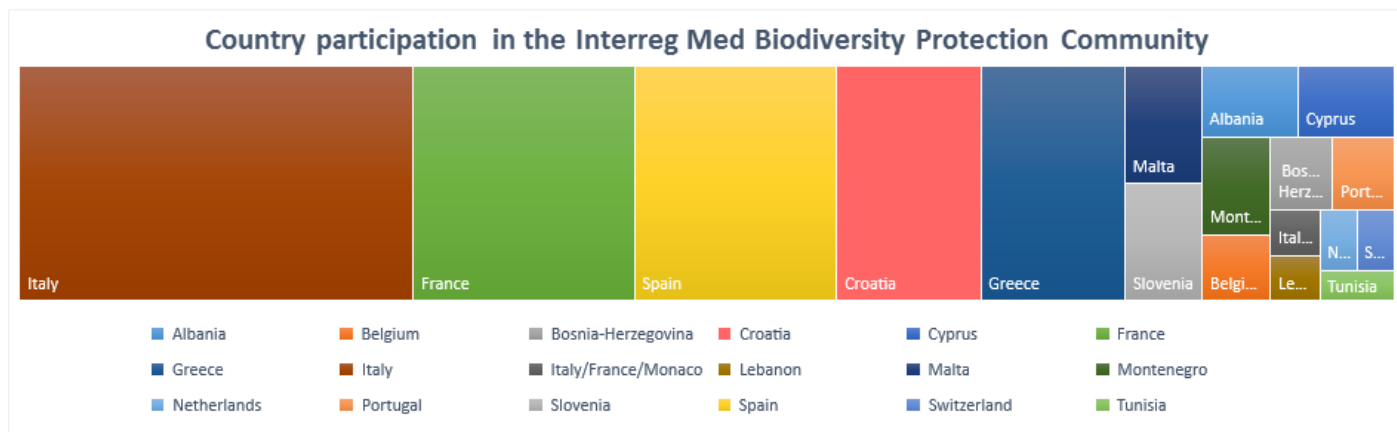


Figure 4: Country participation in Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection projects

5_ Working topics and thematic collaborative groups

The Biodiversity Protection Community projects are framed under the Interreg MED Programme priority axis 3 "Natural and cultural resources – Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources", and under the specific objective 3.2 "To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas". This is accomplished by the projects in collaboration with PANACeA, whose role is to serve as a capitalisation and collaboration platform for the community by promoting a multi-stakeholder approach, transboundary cooperation, eco-regional scales analysis, and supporting environmental priority policies under three dynamic working groups:

- **WG1:** Biodiversity protection and management with a focus on marine litter, climate change, cumulative impacts and ecologically important areas
- **WG2:** Sustainable use of natural resources, with a focus on co-management and small-scale fisheries in protected areas
- **WG3:** Integrated ecosystem monitoring and management, with a focus on land and sea interactions and wetlands

With biodiversity protection as an overall topic, the projects are addressing major challenges in the Mediterranean by studying, testing, capitalising and integrating innovative methodologies and data as follows:

ACT4LITTER	Joint measures to preserve natural ecosystems from marine litter in Mediterranean Protected Areas
AMAre	Actions for Marine Protected Areas
ConFish	Connectivity among Mediterranean fishery stakeholders and scientists for connectivity
EcoSUSTAIN	Ecological sustainable Governance of Mediterranean protected areas via an improved Scientific, Technical and Managerial Knowledge Base
FishMPABlue2	Fishing governance in Marine Protected Areas: potentialities for a Blue Economy 2
MEDSEALITTER	Developing Mediterranean-specific protocols to protect biodiversity from litter impacts at the basin and local Marine Protected Area scales
MPA-ADAPT	Guiding Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas through the climate change era: Building resilience and adaptation
PHAROS4MPAS	Blue Economy and Marine Conservation: Safeguarding Mediterranean MPAs in order to achieve Good Environmental Status
PLASTIC BUSTERS MPAs	preserving biodiversity from plastics in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas
POSBEMED	Sustainable management of Posidonia beach-dune systems in the Mediterranean
WETNET	Coordinated management and networking of Mediterranean wetlands

Figure 5: Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection thematic projects

The map in figure 6 shows the location of the leading institutions and the number of partners in the Med region in each of the projects. For an interactive version and to navigate through specific projects, click here.

Detailed information on the institutions partnering in the 12 Med Biodiversity Protection

projects and the results of their joint work from projects individually and as a community are available to the public through an online resource and spatial data denominated Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Knowledge Platform: biodiversity.uma.es

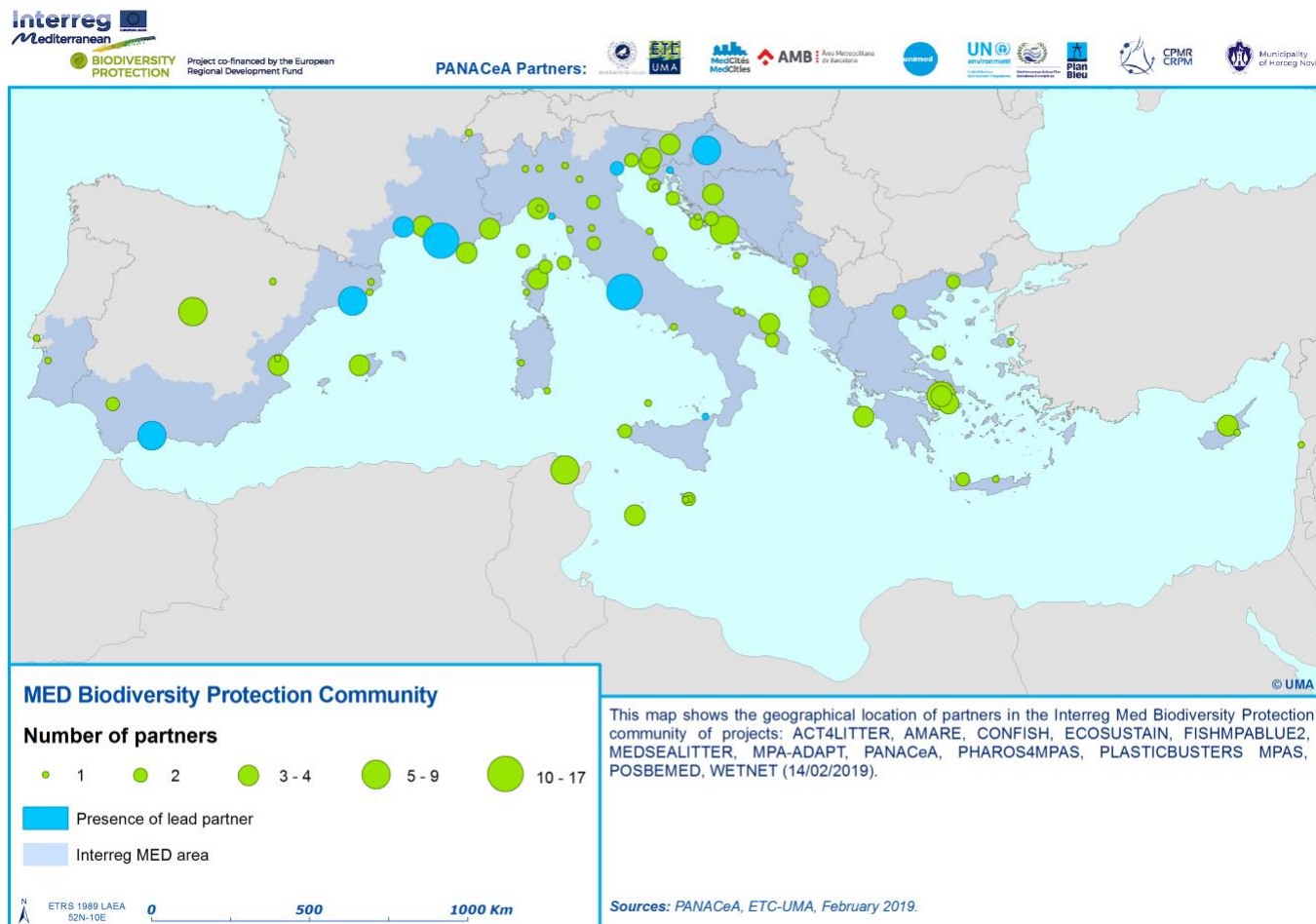


Figure 6: Location of partners in Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection projects

6_ Level of participation by protected areas

The participation of protected areas in the Biodiversity Protection Community is varied, with some of them taking part in more than one project in the community. These protected areas can be considered as mega-sites, where more than one project is contributing to better biodiversity protection and management.

Marine Protected Areas in the community are playing several roles in the projects, ranging from Lead Partner, Partner, Associated Partner, Pilot case study area and external collaborator.

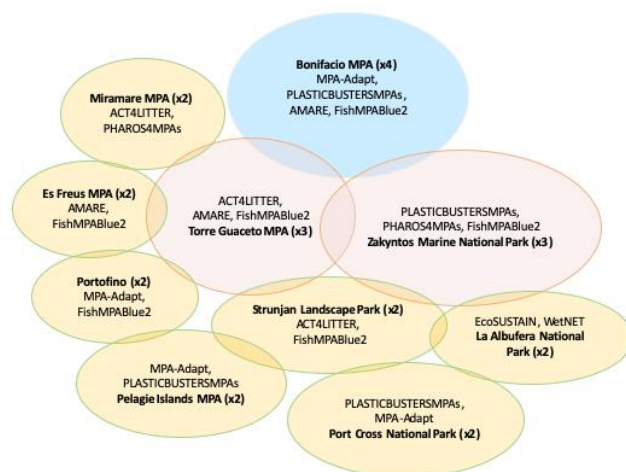


Figure 7: Protected Areas participating in more than one Interreg Med Biodiversity Protection project

7_ Timeframes for Med Biodiversity projects

The work of the 12 participating projects spans from the end of 2016 to 2022, implying the gradual production of joint materials and recommendations aligned to the results

achieved by the community. In the graph below the calendar of implementation for the current projects is shown, corresponding to initiatives approved in the first and second call for projects by Interreg MED.

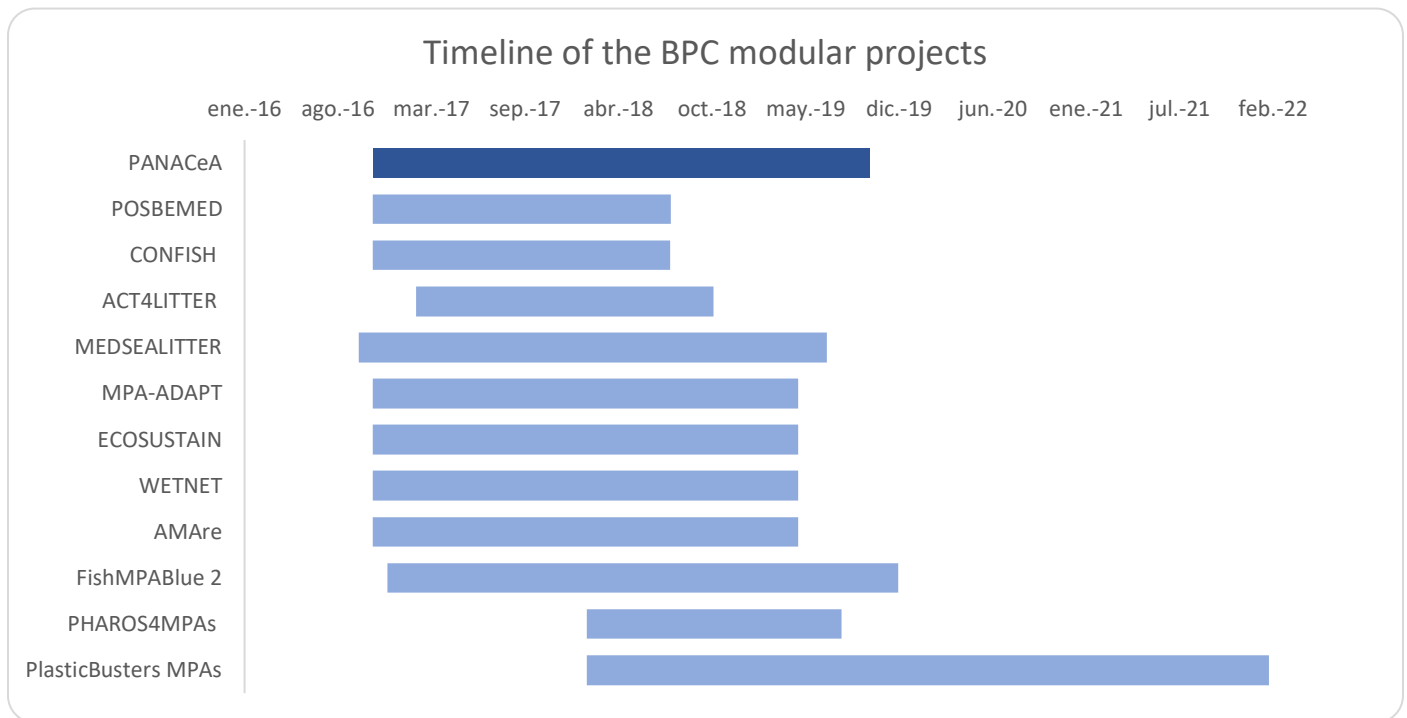


Figure 8: Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection projects' calendar

8_ Cooperation and links with other Med communities

The Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Community maintains regular contact with other Interreg Med Communities, in particular those focusing on Green and Blue Growth, Sustainable Tourism and Governance. The development of the Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Knowledge Platform (online)

ensures that data and information, measurement testing and mapping, spatial analyses, and case studies and solutions identified are accessible to the entire Interreg Med Programme and open to any other interested parties.

 Biodiversity Platform

 <https://www.facebook.com/PanaceaInterregMed>

 <https://biodiversity-protection.interreg-med.eu>

 panacea-med@uma.es

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

 Biodiversity Protection Community

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The MED Biodiversity Protection Community is featured by PANACeA

