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Agenda item 6: Conservation of sites of particular ecological interest

6.1. Report by the Chair of the Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (AGEM) on the group's works during the biennial period 2022-2023

6.1.1. Elaboration of an evaluation and monitoring framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean

Draft Evaluation and Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean

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Draft Evaluation and Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean

I. Background

1. The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, at their COP 22 (Antalya, Türkiye, 7-10 December 2021):
 - Adopted the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean (Post-2020 Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs); and
 - Requested SPA/RAC to develop an evaluation and monitoring framework (EMF) for the strategy, with the technical support of the Ad hoc Group of Experts for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (AGEM), using to the extent possible existing monitoring tools in the region, in particular those established under UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention as well as in the framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Post-2020 Biodiversity framework and related target monitoring.

II. Guidance for the development of the Evaluation and Monitoring Framework

2. During its third meeting (teleconference, 1 March 2022), AGEM requested SPA/RAC to prepare an overview of data and resources available, including reporting requirements, indicators and data in the framework of:
 - the Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAPBIO);
 - the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP);
 - the Barcelona Convention Reporting System (BCRS);
 - the European Union (EU) Biodiversity Strategy processes;
 - the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) reporting;
 - the CBD Post-2020 Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF);
 - the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
 - Regional Seas contribution to the GBF; and
 - the zero draft of the MCPA-OECM strategy indicators, mid-term and final targets (drafted in 2021 during the strategy elaboration process).
3. AGEM also suggested aligning, where relevant, the evaluation and monitoring framework with the ongoing work on management effectiveness indicators in the EU's Natura 2000 network of protected areas.
4. AGEM recommended to have the evaluation and monitoring framework focused on the minimum requirement of indicators to ensure that the strategy objectives and achievements are effectively monitored; and to involve the SPA/BD Focal Points since the early stages of its development.
5. AGEM agreed to establish a dedicated working group on evaluation and monitoring (WG-E&M) formed by volunteer members, to focus on the development of the EMF, before validating it within the whole group.

III. Development of the Evaluation and Monitoring Framework

6. After the adoption by the CBD COP 15 (Montreal, Canada, 7-19 December 2022) of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as well as the Monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, SPA/RAC was able to compile a comprehensive background document to help the AGEM working group members to discuss and develop the evaluation and monitoring framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean.
7. Two meetings of the AGEM WG-E&M working group were held on 31 March 2023 and 5 April 2023, by teleconference, and led to the discussion and development of a draft Evaluation and Monitoring Framework. The draft was circulated for review and endorsement by all the AGEM members, before being submitted by the Secretariat for informal consultation with the SPA/BD Focal Points (teleconference, 18 April 2023).
8. The resulting draft Evaluation and Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean is submitted to this meeting for review and endorsement.
9. The draft Evaluation and Monitoring Framework appears in Table 1 here below. The framework will have the format of an Appendix II to be appended to the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs, adopted by COP 22.

Table 1: Appendix II – Draft Evaluation and Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean, including indicators, mid-term and final targets.

Output	Indicator	Mid-term target 2026	Final target 2030	Means of verification
The Strategy overall target: By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, with the focus on areas particularly important for biodiversity				
--	% coverage of MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean Sea	15% of the Mediterranean Sea	30% of the Mediterranean Sea	MAPAMED database ¹
Strategic Outcome 1: Governance arrangements for MCPAs and OECMs are inclusive and effective in delivering conservation and livelihood outcomes				
Output 1.1: Legal frameworks and institutional arrangements of MCPAs and OECMs allow for opportunities for participatory management	Number of Contracting Parties with legal frameworks and institutional arrangements of MCPAs allowing for opportunities for participatory management.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	National reports Official data provided by the Contracting Parties
	Number of Contracting Parties with legal frameworks and institutional arrangements of OECMs allowing for opportunities for participatory management, considering the objectives of such OECMs.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	
Output 1.2: Governance arrangements for MCPAs and OECMs are inclusive and equitable	Number of Contracting Parties with governance structures and mechanisms (e.g., a national commission or other) for MCPAs established and functional, that facilitates inclusive and equitable governance.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	National reports Official data provided by the Contracting Parties
	Number of Contracting Parties with appropriate procedures and mechanisms for the effective participation of and/or coordination with other stakeholders in OECM processes.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	

¹ SPA/RAC should ensure that the MAPAMED database is expanded to cover all the indicators agreed upon under this Evaluation and Monitoring Framework, and includes coastal protected areas.

<p>Output 1.3: National, regional, transboundary and cross sectoral co-operation for the establishment and management of MCPAs and OECMs are strengthened</p>	<p>Number of Contracting Parties with multi-sectoral cooperation tools (e.g., committees, consultations, agreements, etc.) for MCPAs or OECMs established.</p> <p>Number of transboundary co-operation agreements for MCPAs or OECMs.</p>	<p>11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention</p> <p>3 Agreements</p>	<p>All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention</p> <p>5 Agreements</p>	<p>National reports</p> <p>Official data provided by the Contracting Parties</p>
<p>Output 1.4: Adaptive planning and management frameworks of MCPAs and OECMs that anticipate, learn from and respond to changes in decision-making are strengthened</p>	<p>Number of MCPAs that have management plans.</p> <p>% of MCPAs applying adaptive management.</p> <p>% of OECMs that have flexible procedures in place to ensure that results from monitoring, evaluation, consultation, and multiple knowledge sources are used to inform management and planning processes.</p>	<p>50% of MCPAs</p> <p>50% of MCPAs</p> <p>50% of OECMs</p>	<p>100% of MCPAs</p> <p>100% of MCPAs</p> <p>100% of OECMs</p>	<p>MAPAMED database</p>
<p>Strategic Outcome 2: MCPA coverage increased through the expansion of soundly-designed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of MCPAs</p>				
<p>Output 2.1: Areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services are identified</p>	<p>Number of Contracting Parties that have identified areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, serving to inform MCPAs establishment process.</p>	<p>11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention</p>	<p>All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention</p>	<p>National reports</p> <p>Official data provided by the Contracting Parties</p>
<p>Output 2.2: Distribution of MCPA systems across the Mediterranean Sea is balanced</p>	<p>The unbalanced MCPA distribution between the 4 Mediterranean sub-regions (Adriatic Sea; Aegean - Levantine Sea; Ionian Sea and Central Mediterranean Sea; and Western Mediterranean Sea) is reduced.</p> <p><u>Baseline: % coverage of MPAs per Mediterranean sub-region²:</u> Adriatic Sea: 4.8% Aegean - Levantine Sea: 2.1%</p>	<p>The unbalanced distribution is reduced by 50%</p>	<p>The distribution is balanced</p>	<p>MAPAMED database</p>

² Source: SPA/RAC and MedPAN, MAPAMED 2019 edition.

	Ionian Sea and Central Mediterranean Sea: 1.8% Western Mediterranean Sea: 20.4%			
Output 2.3: MCPA coverage in areas beyond national jurisdiction is increased	The coverage of MPAs in ABNJ ³ is increased. <i>Baseline: % coverage of MPAs in ABNJ: [less than 1.85%]⁴</i>	The coverage of MPAs in ABNJ is increased by 50%	The coverage of MPAs in ABNJ is increased by 100%	MAPAMED database
Output 2.4: The number and coverage of MCPAs with enhanced protection levels is increased	% coverage of NTZs ⁵ within MCPAs/OECMs. <i>Baseline: % cumulative surface of no-go, no-take or no-fishing area⁶: 0.04%</i>	2%	5%	MAPAMED database National reports
Strategic Outcome 3: Marine and coastal OECMs in the Mediterranean are identified, recognized and reported towards post-2020 global and regional targets				
Output 3.1: Awareness in Contracting Parties and stakeholders on OECMs enhanced and guidance for the application of OECM criteria provided	Number of Contracting Parties that established processes for identifying OECMs, applying the guidance for application of OECM criteria.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention which have not reached the 30% target only through MCPAs	National reports Official data provided by the Contracting Parties
Output 3.2: OECMs identified, recognized and reported to regional and global databases by Contracting Parties and regional organizations	Surface of OECMs recognized and reported.	OECM surface complementing MPA surface to 15%	OECM surface complementing MPA surface to 30%	MAPAMED database
Output 3.3: Effectiveness of identified OECMs is enhanced, including through	Number of OECMs included within MSP measures adopted by the Contracting Parties. Number of projects to evaluate the effectiveness of OECMs.	3 OECMs 3 projects	6 OECMs 6 projects	National reports Official data provided by the

³ The extent of ABNJ in the Mediterranean depends on the number of EEZs declared by coastal States. If all the coastal States declare their EEZ, there will be no more ABNJ.

⁴ Figure to be updated by SPA/RAC on the following versions of the draft document (information requested from the Pelagos Agreement Permanent Secretariat).

⁵ No-Take Zones are geographically defined zones within marine protected areas that do not allow any fishing, mining, drilling, or other extractive activities.

⁶ Source: MedPAN: The Mediterranean MPA management database, 2021.

prioritization in cross-sectoral marine spatial planning				Contracting Parties
Output 3.4: New OECMs are established and recognized OECMs expanded	Guidance document on future OECM designation, recognition and reporting Number of new OECMs established.	1 10 OECMs	-- 20 OECMs	Guidance document MAPAMED database
Strategic Outcome 4: MCPAs are effectively managed and their conservation outcomes successfully delivered				
Output 4.1: All MCPAs have adaptive management plans adopted, effectively implemented and periodically reviewed	MCPAs have adaptive management plans adopted, effectively implemented and periodically reviewed.	50% of MCPAs	100% of MCPAs	MAPAMED database
Output 4.2: Sufficient and sustainable resources for the establishment and management of MCPAs in the Mediterranean are mobilized	% of MCPAs where financial constraints are not threatening the capacity of management to achieve the site's objectives.	50% of MCPAs	100% of MCPAs	MAPAMED database
Output 4.3: Individual and institutional capacity for MCPA management is enhanced	% of MPCAs with adequate numbers of appropriately trained staff provided by the responsible entity. Number of Contracting Parties with MCPA institutions in place.	50% of MCPAs 11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	100% of MCPAs All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	MAPAMED database National reports Official data provided by the Contracting Parties
Output 4.4: Surveillance and enforcement in MCPAs are	% MCPAs having regular surveillance.	50% of MCPAs	100% of MCPAs	National reports

strengthened and ensured, and user compliance is promoted				MAPAMED database
Output 4.5: Monitoring of conservation outcomes and evaluation of management effectiveness are strengthened across the MCPA system	% MCPAs with regular monitoring protocols, identifying biological, threat and socio-economic indicators	50% of MCPAs	100% of MCPAs	MAPAMED database
	% MCPAs carrying out regular site-level management effectiveness evaluations	50% of MCPAs	100% of MCPAs	
Strategic Outcome 5: Actions and support for MCPAs and OECMs are mobilized				
Output 5.1: Awareness, understanding and appreciation of the values of, and threats to, MCPAs and OECMs across government and non-government stakeholders, the private sector, the youth and wider society	Number of Contracting Parties with targeted communication and awareness strategies as standalone or as part of other national activities.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	National reports Official data provided by the Contracting Parties Stakeholder survey
	Number of CPs having education programmes including MCPAs and OECMs.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	
	% of positive attitudes towards MCPAs/OECMs across wide stakeholder groups.	30% positive attitudes towards MCPAs/OECMs	60% positive attitudes towards MCPAs/OECMs	
Output 5.2: Political support for the establishment and management of MCPAs and biodiversity conservation is increased	% of MCPAs receiving regular adequate funds from government budgets for management.	50% of MCPAs	100% of MCPAs	National reports Official data provided by the Contracting Parties
	Number of Contracting Parties that consider MCPAs in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Spatial Planning processes.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	
Output 5.3: The contribution of MPCAs and OECMs to sustainable development goals, the blue economy, climate change mitigation and	Number of Contracting Parties with MCPA/OECM considerations included into national plans and policies for climate change mitigation and adaptation.	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention	National reports Official data provided by the

adaptation, and the wider society are recognized and accounted for	Number of Contracting Parties with MCPA/OECM considerations included into national plans and policies for sustainable blue economy growth. Number of national Public Relation (PR) and awareness initiatives in relation with MCPA/OECM targeting the wider society	11 States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention 1 per Contracting Party	All States Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention 2 per Contracting Party	Contracting Parties Media produced (social media platforms, videos, etc.)
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