



Note: The designation employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of RAC/SPA and UNEP concerning the legal status of any State, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of their frontiers or boundaries. The views expressed in the document are those of the author and not necessarily represented the views of RAC/SPA and UNEP.

© 2013 United Nations Environment Programme  
Mediterranean Action Plan  
Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA)  
Boulevard du leader Yasser Arafat  
B.P.337 - 1080 Tunis Cedex - Tunisia  
E-mail: [car-asp@rac-spa.org](mailto:car-asp@rac-spa.org)

The original version (English) of this document has been prepared by:

Souha EL ASMI, MedMPAnet Project Officer, RAC/SPA; and

Atef LIMAM, MedMPAnet Project Technical Coordination and Backstopping Officer, RAC/SPA.

## **FOREWORD**

This document was prepared for the needs of the Eleventh Meeting of Focal Points for SPAs that will be held in Rabat (Morocco) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2013, 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 on 2013-2014.

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.

The present Meeting of Focal Points for SPAs will allow RAC/SPA to readjust if necessary some activities based on recommendations and evaluations from the partner countries.

The Report authors:

S. EL ASMI & A. LIMAM



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. MedMPAnet Project data sheet .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. MedMPAnet Project implementation status.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.1 Establishment of coordination mechanisms for regional MPA management ..</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1.1 Setting-up of the Project Coordination Unit at RAC/SPA.....	2
2.1.2 Organization of the Project Inception Meeting .....	3
2.1.3 Organization of the Project Mid-term Meeting.....	3
2.1.4 Developing communication and information tools and raising awareness of key stakeholders on MPAs values and importance .....	4
<b>2.2..... Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representativeness .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.2.1 Establish priority activities needed to create MPAs (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro and Syria) .....	5
2.2.2 Identify stakeholder group and potential partnerships (Albania, Libya and Morocco).....	6
2.2.3 Characterization of priority marine sites suitable to become MPAs (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro and Morocco) .....	7
2.2.4 Demonstration Projects for MPA creation: Inception, planning, zoning and development of newly created MPAs (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Montenegro and Tunisia) .....	8
2.2.5 Identification of local stakeholder participation mechanism for the pilot MPAs (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Libya and Montenegro) .....	10
2.2.6 MPA creation guidelines and teaching packages .....	10
2.2.7 Demonstration Project in Libya: the environmental case for a national network of MPAs in Libya .....	12
<b>2.3 Improving MPA management.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.3.1 Organizing Mediterranean MPA Regional Training Workshops for MPA managers, practitioners and relevant authorities .....	12
2.3.2 Organizing specific technical assistance and exchange/twinning programmes.....	13
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 .....	14
<b>2.4 Ensuring financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks .....</b>	<b>15</b>
2.4.1 Financial analysis for the establishment of new MPAs .....	15
2.4.2 Demonstration Project: Demonstrating financial sustainability mechanisms for new MPAs in four different areas (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro and Tunisia).....	15
<b>3. Conclusion and perspectives.....</b>	<b>16</b>



**Progress Report of the Activities of the "Regional Project for the Development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) Network through the boosting of MPAs Creation and Management" (MedMPAnet Project)**

**1. MedMPAnet Project data sheet**

<b>Project title:</b>	Regional Project for the Development of a Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MPAs) Network through the boosting of MPAs Creation and Management
<b>Project acronym:</b>	MedMPAnet
<b>Project context:</b>	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
<b>Executing agency:</b>	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA, Tunis) / UNEP/MAP
<b>Beneficiary countries:</b>	12 Mediterranean riparian countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey
<b>Duration:</b>	60 months (5 years)
<b>Inception milestones:</b>	<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 2010<sup>1</sup></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>
<b>Closure date:</b>	June 2014
<b>Funding agencies / Co-finance amount:</b>	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
<b>Co-finance RAC/SPA:</b>	200,000 EUR (Cash) + 216,000 EUR (In kind)
<b>Co-finance partner countries:</b>	1,390,000 EUR (In kind)
<b>Total Project costs:</b>	2,888,673 EUR (Cash) 4,494,673 EUR (Cash / In kind)

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<b>Other related projects:</b>	<p>1. MedPartnership Sub-component 3.1 MedPAN South project: executed by WWF-MedPO (Rome) and serving the objectives of the MedPAN Network (Hyères)</p> <p>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)</p>
<b>Project Objective</b>	<p>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)</p>
<b>Project activities:</b>	<p><i>Activity 1:</i> Establishment of coordination mechanism for regional MPA management</p> <p><i>Activity 2:</i> Identification and planning of new MPAs to extend the regional network and enhance its ecological representiveness</p> <p><i>Activity 3:</i> Improving MPA management</p> <p><i>Activity 4:</i> Ensure the financial sustainability of regional and national MPA networks</p>
<b>Expected results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementation of several actions prioritized by the SAP BIO programme</li> <li>- Existing and proposed MPAs will coalesce to form part of a coherent and geographically balanced network that exists at both institutional and ecological levels</li> <li>- Greater representation of the Mediterranean's vulnerable and critical coastal and marine habitats brought under statutory protection</li> <li>- Tools and capacity for the management of recognized Mediterranean coastal and marine biodiversity sites improved</li> <li>- Permanent coordination, monitoring, evaluation and support mechanisms for regional coastal and marine biodiversity conservation</li> <li>- Innovative approaches to the funding of regionally important existing and future coastal and marine biodiversity conservation initiatives in place</li> </ul>

## 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 convened 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 were hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain and the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med).

The meetings allowed:

- 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 Inception Workshop**  
(Istanbul, Turkey, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010) © Atef LIMAM / RAC/SPA



**MedMPAnet Project Mid-Term Workshop**  
(Malaga, Spain, 4-6 July 2012) ©Souha EL ASMI / RAC/SPA

## 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 newsletters through RAC/SPA mailing list;
- Dissemination of the major achievements of the Project through other electronic channels: RAC/SPA website ([www.rac-spa.org](http://www.rac-spa.org)), the MedPartnership collaborative web portal ([www.themedpartnership.org](http://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);
- Videos prepared in partnership with the Environmental General Authorities (EGA) in Libya, the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon and the 'Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte contre la Désertification' (HCEFLCD) in Morocco (footages made during the field surveys executed in the three countries);
- The Project has presented a special event during the 2012 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (Antalya, Turkey, 25-28 November 2012) on the "Identification and creation of new MPAs in the Mediterranean: Lessons learned and challenges";
- The Project has also supported the 2012 MPA Forum website development ([www.medmpaforum2012.org](http://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.



MedMPAnet Project Leaflet (2012 version)



Second issue of the MedMPAnet electronic Newsletter (Jan. 2013)

## **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 activities and meetings have been undertaken to establish the priority activities needed to create MPAs in Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro 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.

From 18 to 28 June 2012, SPA/RAC, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon, the National Council for Scientific Research of Beirut and the IUCN-Med office in Lebanon, carried out field surveys in three selected sites along the Lebanese coast: Ras Chekaa, Enfeh and Raoucheh. A team of international and national experts have participated to the survey, which results have been processed and led to drawing up an ecological characterization along with a zoning and management outline proposals for the potential sites to be declared as marine protected areas.

In 2013, RAC/SPA and the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon organized a meeting in Beirut, on 27 May 2013, with the participation of the National Council for Scientific Research's National Centre for Marines Sciences (CNRS-NCMS) of Lebanon, the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med) and the University of Alicante (Spain). This meeting allowed discussing the progress so far made under the MedMPAnet Project in Lebanon, especially in assessing biological features and ecological interest of three marine sites: Enfeh Peninsula, Ras Chekaa cliffs, and Raoucheh cliffs and caves.

This meeting served also to plan for the upcoming phase of the Project aiming at the survey of three new important sites in Southern Lebanon (Sidon, Tyre and Nakoura). The field work will be starting in September 2013.

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). The project led to the identification, through a rapid assessment, of 24 sites of conservation interest along the Libyan marine and coastal areas.

It was then agreed to focus the MedMPAnet project activities on the development of a national strategy for the establishment of an MPA network in Libya.

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 experts selection process and the activity launching have been postponed after the Libyan National Congress election (July 2012).

Early 2013, the expert's selection process has been finalized and the work has been launched. A technical visit to Tripoli (Libya) from 9 to 13 June 2013 has been convened and allowed organizing several technical meetings with the different representatives of the institutions and organizations concerned by the MPA creation and planning. These meetings have also permitted analyzing the priority needs for MPA creation and planning and identifying stakeholders and potential partnerships for MPA creation and planning.

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.



Presentation meeting of the Project results (Beirut, May 2013)  
© Atef LIMAM / RAC/SPA



Stakeholders meeting for the development of a national strategy for the establishment of an MPA network in Libya  
© Atef LIMAM / RAC/SPA

## 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 recruited national and international consultants. Activity implementation is ongoing.

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 already conducted an extensive analysis of the existing institutional and partnerships frameworks and elaborated recommendations for an engagement strategy for stakeholders groups and potential partnerships to create a national MPA network.

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

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. Following that characterization, the Cap des Trois Fourches situated in the Northern Moroccan coast near the Nador area, has been identified as the main intervention site to be comprehensively surveyed.

An on-site survey has been planned and carried out in September 2012 at the Cap des Trois Fourches area. It allowed running a rapid natural habitats assessment of the site along with the elaboration of recommendations on the management.

In 2013, a joint meeting between the 'Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte contre la Désertification' (HCEFLCD) and the RAC/SPA-MedMPAnet Project has been organized on 18 April 2013, in Rabat (Morocco). This gathering allowed presenting the progress made and discussing the results achieved as part of the MedMPAnet Project in the country.

Further to this first phase and under the MedPartnership project, it is anticipated to elaborate a management plan, including the setting-up of a sustainable financing mechanism, for the future MPA of the Cap des Trois Fourches (Northern Morocco) before the end of 2014.

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 particular the best sites to become MPAs, including GIS-based mapping has been finalized in November 2012.



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



Presentation meeting of the Project results (Rabat, April 2013)  
© Atef LIMAM / RAC/SPA

For **Bosnia & Herzegovina**, the opportunity of such activity is still under discussion with Bosnia & Herzegovina environmental authorities.

#### **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.

After a selection process, RAC/SPA signed an MoU with the Institute of Nature Conservation in Albania (INCA) for the implementation of the project activities (March 2013).

Following first contacts with the local authority and few meetings with the interested stakeholders (fishermen) in the Porto Palermo bay area, socio-economic and ecological studies are being undertaken.

During the MedPartnership 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

In March 2013, RAC/SPA started a socio-economic study, including the identification of potential stakeholders and partnerships that could be involved in the Réghaïa marine protected area creation and management. An ecological study is planned for the second half of 2013.

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) started during the second half of 2012.

On 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013 Croatian partners signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the RAC/SPA, the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia, the State Institute for Nature Protection and the Public Institution Priroda. This enabled the starting of the MedMPAnet field activities implementation in Croatia, which will last until March 2014.

In April and May two fieldworks for the socio-economic fisheries study were conducted mainly through interviews with local fishermen. The fieldwork was undertaken around two study areas – one MPA and three proposed marine NATURA 2000 sites of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, which is the pilot coastal county of the MedMPAnet Project.

On 2-3 May a meeting of the Working Group for the Development of the Croatian National Monitoring Protocol for Coralligene was held at the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection in Zagreb. State of the coralligene research and monitoring in the Mediterranean and in the Adriatic were discussed and outline of the monitoring programme and scheme were presented.

Ecological field work will be undertaken during summer 2013.



Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in Croatia  
(March 2013)  
© Zeljka RAJKOVIC



Meeting with local authorities and fishermen in Albania  
© Zamir DEDEJ

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, Boka Kotorska Bay has been selected as pilot site. Thus, RAC/SPA has joint efforts to PAP/RAC and CP/RAC in the "Pilot Project on Testing the Ecosystem Approach (ECAP) application in Boka Kotorska Bay". In this concern,

RAC/SPA has contracted an international consultancy firm which carried out an ecological survey of the Kotor Bay marine area using the side scan sonar technique, and a fishery study. Discussions are underway with PAP/RAC and CP/RAC in order to coordinate and plan the common pilot activities and especially those related to financial sustainability and green economy.

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.

Based on the results of the above-mentioned field surveys (2010 and 2011) and the socio-economic study (2012), the activity aiming at the elaboration of a detailed management plan for the Kuriat Islands and the setting-up of a consultation mechanism involving all stakeholders have been launched during the last trimester of 2012.



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



Stakeholders consultation for the elaboration of a management plan the newly created MPA of Kuriat Islands  
© Souha EL ASMI / RAC/SPA

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

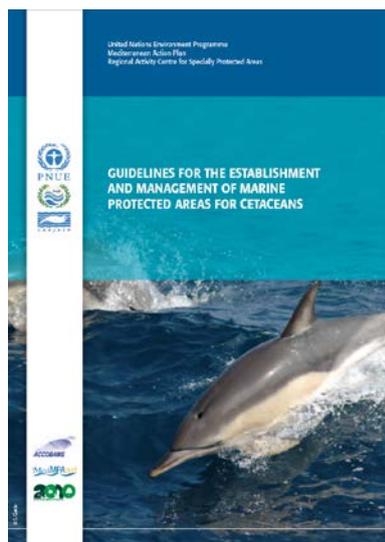
This activity concerning the identification of local stakeholder participation mechanism for the pilot MPAs will be implemented during the second half of 2013, as part of the demonstration projects presented in the above sub-section 2.2.4.

## 2.2.6 MPA creation guidelines and teaching packages

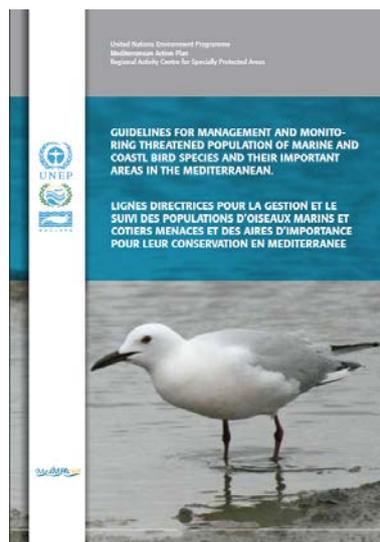
This activity aims at developing practical methodologies to create sustainable MPAs and make them available to managers and practitioners.

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

RAC/SPA has also 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 is 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, guidelines on the monitoring of Mediterranean Lesser Crested Terns have been elaborated and a technical guide on Mediterranean marine species ecological monitoring in MPAs is launched.

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](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.



The Bardaa Island, Bomba Gulf (Libya, October 2010)  
© Mathieu FOULQUIE / RAC/SPA



The Ain Al-Ghazala field working team (Libya, October 2010)  
© Renaud DUPUY DE LA GRANDRIVE / RAC/SPA

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.

## 2.3 Improving MPA management

### 2.3.1 Organizing 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:

- 1<sup>st</sup> 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.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 organized on 23-28 September 2012, a second regional training session on ecological monitoring in Marine Protected Areas. Twelve participants from eight Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Libya, Montenegro, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey) took part to this session which particularly focussed on field work, and took place in its Marine Research Centre of Santa Pola (CIMAR) and the Marine Reserve of Nueva Tabarca.



Second Regional training session on ecological monitoring in Marine Protected Areas (Spain, September 2012)  
© Yassine Ramzi SGHAIER / RAC/SPA



Working groups at the Split regional training workshop (Croatia, October 2011)  
© Mahmoud Fawzi KAMEL

Furthermore, RAC/SPA collaborated with WWF-MedPO and MedPAN in designing a long-term capacity-building strategy to enhance the management of Mediterranean MPAs. For that aim, a regional gap-analysis was conducted among marine protected areas managers and regional national and international institutions dealing with capacity building in the region. The study synthesis was issued in June 2012. As a first step towards implementing this strategy, the three partner organizations are setting-up a Mediterranean web portal for capacity-building related to marine conservation issues.

### 2.3.2 Organizing specific technical assistance and exchange/twinning programmes

Participants to the above-mentioned 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 "Katič" 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).



Awareness workshop for divers, Montenegro (2011)  
© Vesna MACIC



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

RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO provided their support for twenty two Libyan national officers and Marine Protected Areas stakeholders in terms of capacity-building on (i) Planning socioeconomic assessments in Marine Protected Areas (Bizerte (Tunisia), 26-30 May 2012), (ii) GIS application to marine environment (Tunis (Tunisia), 1-2 June 2012) and (iii) Participatory process and stakeholders' engagement in MPAs (Akyaka (Turkey), 10-14 February 2013).

### 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 **Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, 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.



On-job training on seagrass measurements techniques  
(Monastir, Tunisia, June 2011)  
© Atef OUERGH / RAC/SPA



On-job training on marine species identification  
(El Kouf, Libya, October 2010)  
© Yassine Ramzi SGHAIER / RAC/SPA

## 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 the second half of 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 the second half of 2013.

### **3. Conclusion and perspectives**

At this stage (June 2013), RAC/SPA has completed a significant number of activities on the way of the Project full implementation, such as the completion of ecological, socio-economic and institutional/legal surveys in Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro and Tunisia.

After lengthy discussion and in order to continue implementing activities on MPAs creation and management as a priority for the region, the European Commission agreed on a 1 year project extension until December 2014.

The planned activities, to be executed by RAC/SPA, during the extension phase will be as follows:

- Planning for the management of the Marine Protected Area of Réghaïa, including the elaboration of a financial sustainability mechanism (Algeria),
- Planning for the management of the Marine Protected Area of Sallum, including the elaboration of a financial sustainability mechanism (Egypt),
- Ecological characterization of marine sites suitable to be declared as MPAs in Lebanon,
- Planning for the management of El Kouf National Park marine extension, including the elaboration of a financial sustainability mechanism (Libya), and
- Planning for the management of the Marine Protected Area of the Cap des Trois Fourches, including the elaboration of a financial sustainability mechanism (Morocco).