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MEDMPANET NEWSLETTER

Towards a representative Mediterranean MPA network !

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Towards the development of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas in Montenegro

Within the framework of the MedMPAnet Project, RAC/SPA has actively pursued close collaboration with the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism and concluded the signature of a Memorandum of Cooperation including the main activities to be undertaken.

In this regard, a rapid assessment of natural habitats along the coast of Montenegro has been undertaken with the involvement of national experts from the Institute of Marine Biology of Kotor and the Nautilus NGO along with international experts recruited by RAC/SPA.

This rapid assessment survey, undertaken from 25th October to 3rd November 2011, helped to finalize a natural habitats assessment along the coast of Montenegro, including notably the areas not covered in 2008 RAC/SPA field survey and better assessment of Kotor Bay.

During the 8 field work days, totally 12 dives were performed. They have permitted collecting information on the most important benthic and fish assemblages, dominant macro flora and fauna, protected species and providing photo documentation.

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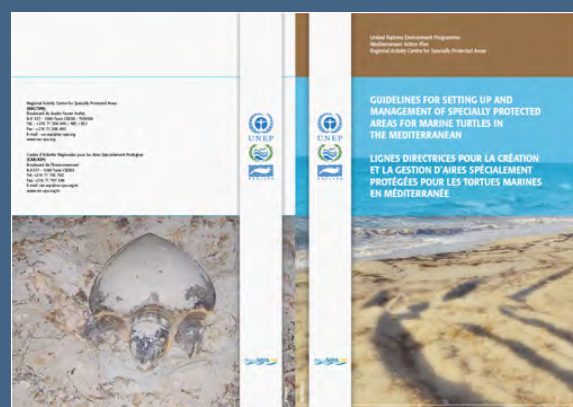
New publications

If you wish to receive a copy of any publication, please provide your name and full postal address to: medmpanet@rac-spa.org

Guidelines for the establishment and management of Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans



Guidelines for setting up and management of Specially Protected Areas for marine turtles in the Mediterranean



Inception, planning and development of Kuriat Islands MPA in Tunisia

After a preliminary mission (July 2010), where RAC/SPA have conducted a marine survey to assess the biological features and the ecological interest of the marine area of Kuriat Islands, a second mission (June 2011), has been undertaken with the collaboration of the Coastal Protection and Planning Agency (APAL).



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This second mission had provided additional information on the natural heritage found around the islands, mainly barrier reefs of *Posidonia oceanica* (characterization and mapping) and the localization of the maerl banks.

Furthermore, the field survey helped inventorying marine biocenosis and interesting species in the marine area which have been compiled according to the Standard Data-entry Form (SDF).

The outputs of those field missions will lead to update the initial zoning plan and will help to elaborate the management plan for the Kuriat Islands.

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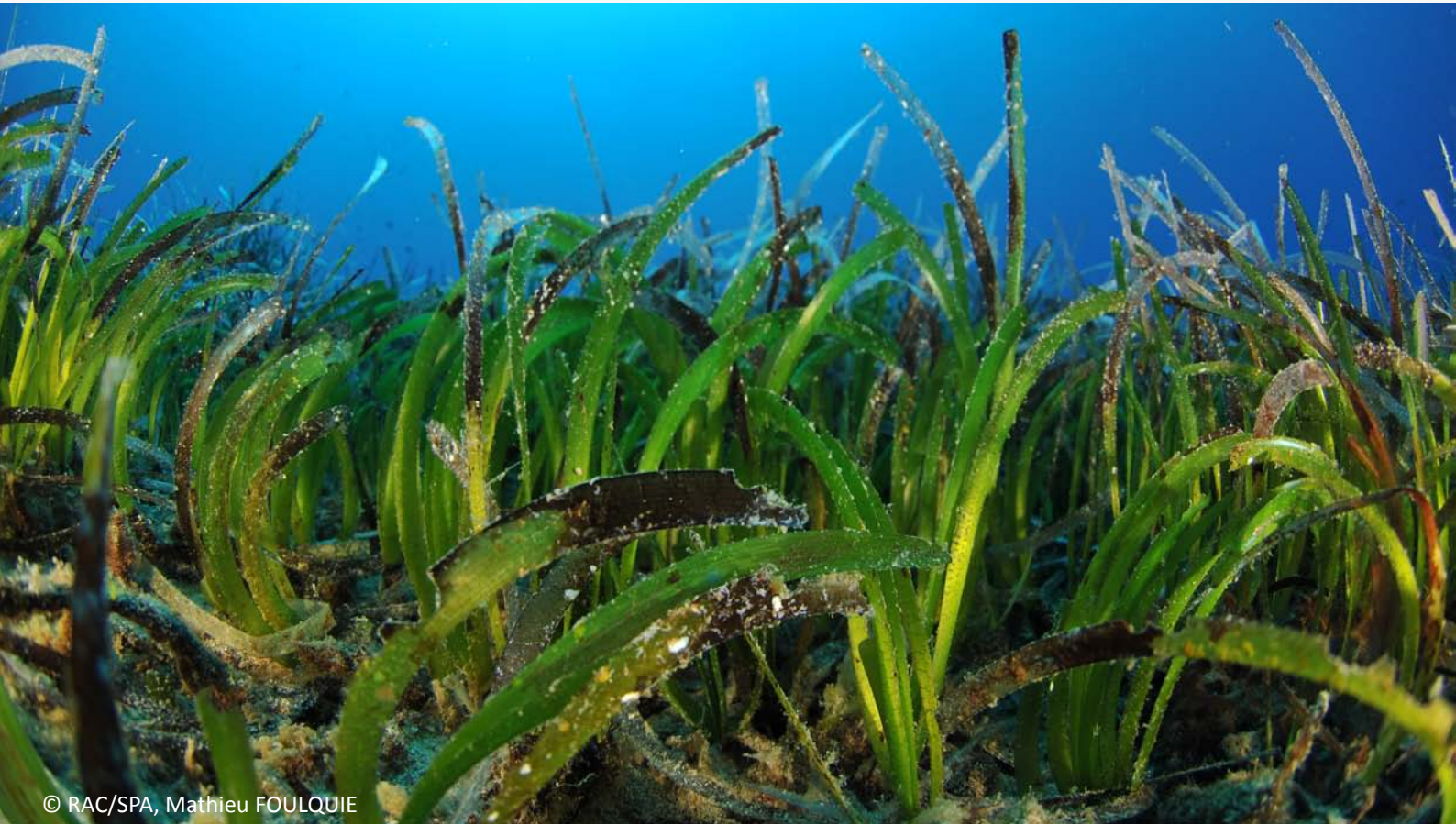


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Towards the development of a national network of MPAs in Libya



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Within the framework of the MedMPAnet Project, a marine survey has been conducted by RAC/SPA and WWF-MedPO to assess the biological features and the ecological interest of Ain Al-Ghazala and Bomba Bay marine and coastal areas. More than ten Libyan and international experts took part to that assessment undertaken late September 2010. During the surveys, the international experts delivered a brief on-the-job training on MPA siting and socio-economic aspects related to MPA establishment.

The filed survey carried out in Ain Al-Ghazala and Bomba Bay marine areas had

identified a high heterogeneous seascape characterized by priority habitats and species for the Mediterranean Sea. Main marine habitats recorded were *Posidonia oceanica* meadows (macro atolls, posidonia on rocky bottom, posidonia on sandy bottom, posidonia on gravels, hill facies, drop off matte, dead matte), *Cymodocea nodosa* meadows, *Caulerpa prolifera* meadows and *Cystoseira* spp. belts.

Seven species listed in the Annex II of the SPA/BD Protocol were recorded in Ain Al-Ghazala and Bomba Bay marine areas: *Aplysina aerophoba*, *Caretta caretta*, *Cymodocea nodosa*, *Cystoseira* sp., *Dendropoma*

petraeum, *Pinna nobilis* and *Posidonia oceanica*. Two species (*Epinephelus marginatus* and *Paracentrotus lividus*) are listed in the Annex III of the SPA/BD Protocol.

The data collected served to the Environment General Authority of Libya (EGA) as a basis to elaborate the proposal for the management of the areas. Consequently, The General Public Committee of Agriculture, Animal and Marine Wealth (the Ministry responsible for MPAs), has officially declared Ain Al-Ghazalah Gulf and Al Elba Island as Natural Protected Area for the conservation of marine turtles and sea birds and forbidding all fishing activities in these areas.

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Mediterranean training session on the identification and classification techniques of marine and coastal species for the ecological monitoring on the MPAs



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In order to strengthen the capacity building of Mediterranean MPA managers, practitioners and lead staff, RAC/SPA has organised within the framework of the MedMPANet Project, a **Mediterranean training session on the identification and classification techniques of marine and coastal species for the ecological monitoring on the MPAs.**

The training session contributed to strengthen skills of 8 MPA managers and practitioners from 7 Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Croatia, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia), by providing them with the tools and know-how needed to improve their knowledge on the taxonomy of the marine and coastal species.

The training session was convened in collaboration with the University of Alicante (Spain) and took place at the Marine Research Centre of Santa Pola (CIMAR) from 25th September to 1st October 2011. The training, delivered by a group of professors from the University of Alicante and RAC/SPA experts, has been alternating between

field work and theory lessons.

The last day of the training session has been reserved to visit the Marine reserve of Tabarca where a diving session for all the participants has been organized in order to show them more concretely in the field how to manage and to plan the ecological monitoring in the marine reserve. A visit to the Tabarka marine Museum and a key presentation on the issue was ensured by the managers of the marine reserve. Two other case studies were also given, in that late afternoon, by Professor Alfonso Ramos (University of Alicante) and Dr. Atef LIMAM (RAC/SPA expert) in the Aquarium of Santa Pola.

Information on the training workshop has been disseminated in the local periodical of Santa Pola (<http://www.periodicosantapola.es>).

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Helping to understand pressure on the fish stock caused by spearfishing and some divers activities in Montenegro

RAC/SPA has supported the Nautilus NGO (Montenegro) in surveying the pressure caused by spear fishing and some diving activities along the Montenegrin coast. Awareness-raising material on spear fishing and divers' impact on environment has been produced and disseminated.

This supported programme allowed the involvement of diving clubs which helped in communication with local divers and agreed on the need of raising public awareness for marine environment protection and support of environmental friendly activities. This activity was also reinforced through the organization of a workshop to raise public knowledge on marine diversity and MPA importance and problems caused by illegal fishing and weak enforcement of the law. This regards, a promotional dive for the participants of the workshop was organized with the support of in a local diving club in Petrovac.

This activity enabled the translation of about 20 cartoons developed by Port Cros National Park in France to show eco-divers behavior in the sea. The "Charte Ecoplongeur" brochure along with brochures for grouper (*Ephinephelus marginatus*) and date shell (*Lithophaga lithophaga*) have been indeed translated and elaborated in Montenegrin language.

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Newly established Sazan-Karaburun in Albania: MPA tourism development

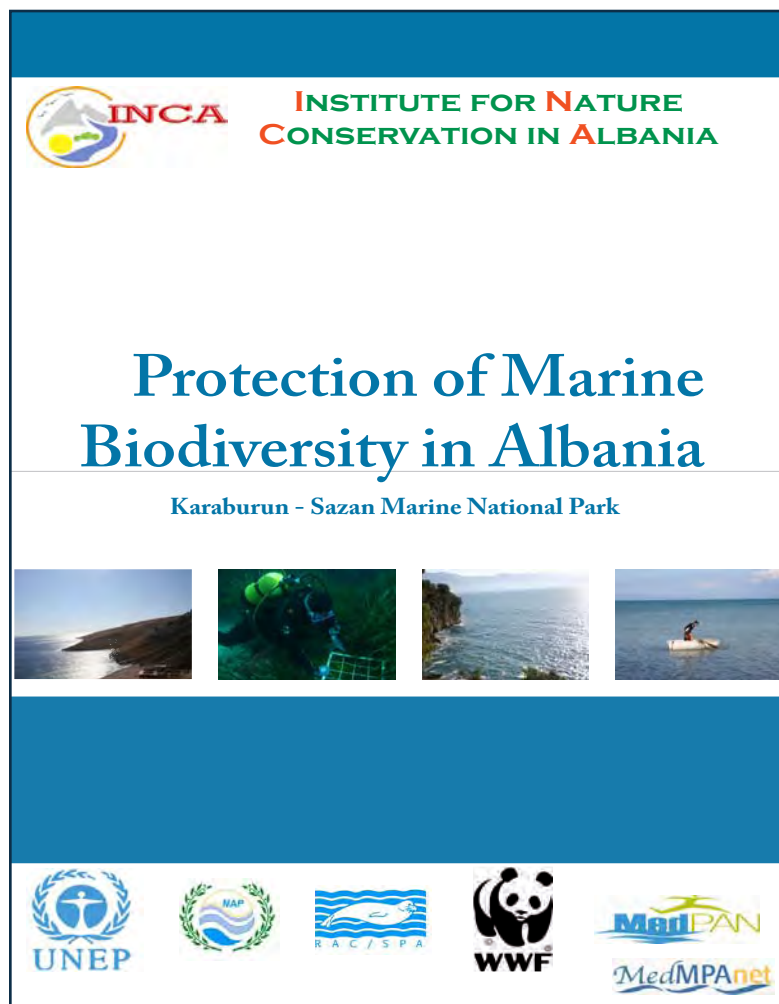
The agreement signed in 2011 between RAC/SPA and the Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania (INCA) has contributed to the establishment of the basic fishing database and the implementation of several activities in promoting the Karaburun MPA.

In this framework, INCA with the support of RAC/SPA has undertaken a series of activities as follows:

- Measuring the fishing efforts in the MPA
- Collecting information on type of fishing gear used in fishing activity
- Identifying the marine areas suitable for diving
- Integrating the results in a GIS map
- Designing and producing awareness materials on the MPA role in general, the participation and benefit for fisherman, tourism, etc.

A training workshop on the role of MPA in connection to this protected areas category has been organised at Orikum (Vlorë) on 6th and 7th December 2011. It was destined to 50 participants varying from restaurants representatives, hotels managers, local tour operators but also officials of relevant authorities/administrations.

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Third Regional Training Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Planning in Marine Protected Areas



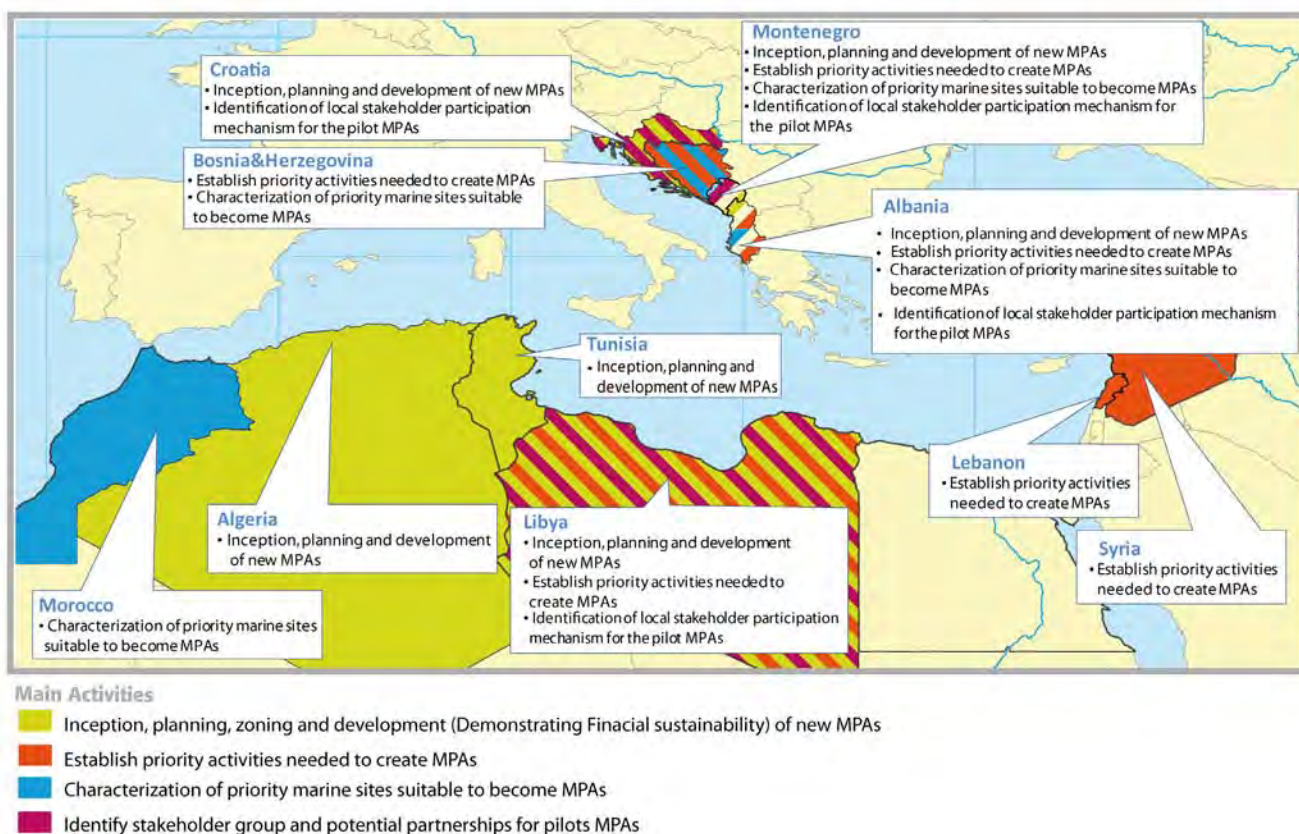
© Mahmoud Fawzi KAMEL

In the framework of the capacity building programme of the MedMPAnet and MedPAN South projects, RAC/SPA has supported WWF-MedPO to co-organise the Third Regional Training Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Planning in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), which took place in Split, Croatia, from 3rd to 8th October 2011.

The workshop has trained 30 participants (MPA managers, lead staff, practitioners and officials of relevant authorities/administrations), from 10 Mediterranean countries (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey).

It has provided to the participants the know-how needed to become familiar with concepts of sustainable tourism and tools to assess, manage and monitor the impact of visitors on the protected resources.

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