



Process for the elaboration of the  
"Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable  
Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region" (Post-2020 SAP BIO)

## **GUIDANCE ELEMENTS FOR THE DESIGN AND ORIENTATIONS OF THE PROCESS<sup>1</sup>**

### **Background**

In 2003, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention during COP13 (Catania, Italy, 11-14 November 2003), adopted the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region (SAP BIO) with the view of coping with the various threats to which marine and coastal biodiversity was subject in the Mediterranean.

The SAP BIO adopted in 2003 was elaborated through a coordinated consultation process developed at national level. The outcomes of the national consultations were then compiled to elaborate a regional Strategic Action Programme made of priority actions to be implemented at national and regional level. The elaboration process took three years and involved national experts designated by the countries to diagnose the state of marine and coastal biodiversity, to identify national priorities and to craft a National Action Plan (NAP) for each identified priority issue. The elaboration process included also a regional component that compiled the outcomes of the national processes and defined the activities needed at regional level to complement the efforts by the countries and to ensure a maximum level of harmonization and complementarity.

Most of the relevant International and/or Regional Organizations contributed to the process, mainly through their participation in the Advisory Committee established as part of the elaboration process.

Fifteen years after the adoption of SAP BIO and following a request formulated by the contracting Parties in 2017, SPA/RAC undertook the evaluation of the implementation of SAP BIO with the help of international consultants and in close consultation with the SAP BIO National Correspondents and the National Focal Points for SPA/BD. The evaluation covered the period 2004-2018 and concluded that, besides a series of gaps in its implementation, the SAP BIO constituted a major contribution to the preservation of the natural heritage in the Mediterranean marine and coastal zones. It played, indeed, an important role as a strategic framework for implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol at national and regional levels in terms of harmonization and alignment of planning for biodiversity conservation. It also played a role in facilitating exchanges among departments within and among countries on common concerns in biodiversity conservation. The evaluation concluded also that given the changes occurred in the context of and the policies on biodiversity during the 15 years since adoption of the SAP BIO the conservation of biodiversity needs orientations that put emphasis on

---

<sup>1</sup> These guidance elements were developed by SPA/RAC taking into account (i) the lessons learned from the elaboration of the SAPBIO adopted in 2003, (ii) the conclusions and recommendations of the consultation process to evaluate the implementation of the SAP BIO for the period 2004-2018 carried out by SPA/RAC in close consultation with the Focal Points for SPA and (iii) the relevant instructions from the Contracting Parties set in their Decision IG 27/4 by which they requested the Secretariat to prepare in 2020-2021 the "Post-2020 SAP BIO.

priorities tailored to address current and future regional and national challenges in the Mediterranean in relation to marine and coastal biodiversity.

Taking into accounts the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation and considering the developments in the Mediterranean Action Plan-Barcelona Convention work since the adoption of the SAP BIO in 2003, the Contracting Parties requested the Secretariat to prepare the “Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region” (Post-2020 SAP BIO). The elaboration process should be conducted during the biennium 2020-2021 with the view of submitting the Post-2020 SAP BIO for consideration by the Contracting Parties at their 22nd Meeting (COP 22).

### **Proposed approach for the elaboration of the Post-2020 SAP BIO**

SPA/RAC will coordinate the process for the elaboration of the Post-2020 SAP BIO which will be conducted through a participatory approach starting at national level (national processes) and involving the relevant authorities and stakeholders. The national processes will be followed by sub-regional consultations. The final stage of the elaboration process will use the outcomes of the national processes and the sub-regional consultations and compile them to craft the draft Post-2020 SAP BIO to be submitted for consideration by COP 21 in 2021.

#### The national processes for the development of SAPBIO

At the level of each country, an analysis of the situation of marine and coastal biodiversity will be carried out on the basis of the data and information available and using where possible any recent analyses carried out in relevant frameworks such as those related to the national biodiversity strategies or the EcAp process. For the member countries of the European Union, the analyses and evaluations made within the framework of the implementation of the MSFD can be also very useful in this regard.

The analysis should relate, in particular, to the following elements:

- The state of the main ecosystems, habitats and associated species;
- Marine and coastal biodiversity’ threats and other factors of degradation, including fisheries interaction with marine vulnerable species and habitat;
- Threats and other elements related to climate change;
- Measures and other elements of governance related to the conservation and sustainable use of components of marine and coastal biodiversity including fisheries interaction with the marine vulnerable species and habitat;
- The main gaps in knowledge and governance;
- Needs for capacity building, networking, data access/share and exchange of experience.

It will be oriented in such a way as to lead to the identification of clear and realistic objectives as well as priority actions needed to achieve the objectives.

A first draft of this analysis will be prepared by one (or more) national expert (s) designated by the focal point for SPA/BD. It will be then reviewed within the framework of a consultation meeting or workshop involving stakeholders playing active role in the planning and/or implementation of measures in relation with the conservation and sustainable use of the marine and coastal biodiversity components. The final product of the consultation workshop will be a

new version of the document prepared by the national expert, which will be submitted to SPA/RAC as the country's national report on the preparation of the Post-2020 SAPBIO.

To assist countries in carrying out this analysis and with a view to ensuring a high level of harmonization between the national processes, the SPA/RAC will elaborate and make available to countries guidelines detailing the expected content of the national reports as well as Terms of Reference for the national experts.

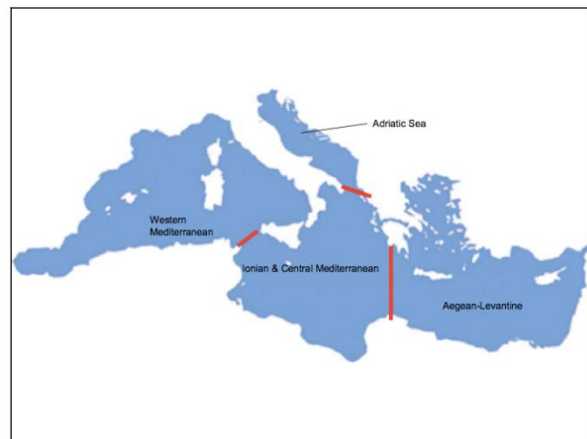
The SPA/RAC may also provide, at the request of the national focal point and within the limits of the means available, financial support to cover the costs relating to the national expert and the organization of the consultation meeting or workshop.

### Sub-regional consultations

Given the transboundary nature of most of the issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, it is important that the actions planned at the national level be harmonized also at the sub-regional, as appropriate and where possible. This is likely to ensure more efficiency and complementarity between the efforts undertaken at national level by countries. For a number of analysed issues, the subdivision of the Mediterranean into four sub-regions agreed by the Contracting Parties within the framework of the EcAp process may be used, when appropriate, for the identification of priorities within the framework of the Post-2020 SAPBIO elaboration process.

These sub regions are:

- Western Mediterranean
- Ionian & Central Mediterranean
- Adriatic Sea
- Aegean-Levantine



For each of the four sub-regions, where appropriate, the definition of priorities will be based on the outcomes from the national processes. To this end, a sub-regional workshop should be convened, to which SPA/RAC will invite from each country of the sub region the SPA/BD Focal Point and/or the SAP BIO National Correspondent as well as one or two experts having contributed to the national report. The number of participants will be decided later, depending mainly on the availability of financial resources.

The outputs expected from each sub-regional workshop are therefore and where relevant (i) a summary of the situation of marine and coastal biodiversity in the concerned sub-region as well as existing or potential threats including interaction with fisheries, (ii) the identification of priorities for the sub-region for the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity.

If the progress of the national processes in the four sub-regions will allow to have them timely finalized, the SPA/RAC could organize the four workshops back-to-back. Also, if the logistics allow it, the option of organizing, instead of four workshops, only one "joint workshop" bringing together participants from the four sub-regions could be envisaged. The "joint workshop" would

include 2 plenary sessions and 4 working groups (1 for each sub-region): A first plenary session will be for the opening and the presentation of the proposed work methodology and organization. It will be followed by working group sessions, whose results will be presented and discussed in a concluding plenary session.

After the sub-regional consultations, the draft Post-2020 SAPBIO will be developed through the compilation of outputs from national processes and sub-regional consultations. It will indicate the objectives to achieve at the regional level and will integrate the priority actions identified at the national and sub-regional levels. In addition, it will propose the actions needed at the regional level to support, accompany and coordinate the implementation of the priority actions to be implemented by the countries at the national level.

#### [Recommended principles for the elaboration of the Post-2020 SAP BIO](#)

The Post-2020 SAP BIO will be elaborated considering, as appropriate, the lessons learned from the implementation of SAPBIO during the period 2003-2018. Its content should be scientifically based and built on concise realistic objectives. It should be designed and perceived not as an additional layer of commitments for countries but rather as a tool to strengthen and streamline the implementation of the plans and strategies they have already adopted at national and international level. It should provide for more emphasis on topics related to marine and coastal biodiversity and, where possible, scale up the commitments for its preservation, especially when these topics are not sufficiently taken into account by the relevant existing strategies. It should also promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity into all relevant environmental policies as well as relevant policies for the sustainable use of marine living resources, such as fisheries.

#### [Link and harmonization with relevant frameworks](#)

The Contracting Parties required that the Post-2020 SAP BIO, while being adapted to the natural specificities and to the socio-economic and political contexts of the region, should be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and harmonized in its orientations with the relevant overarching frameworks and processes at the global level and in particular, the process engaged under the CBD for the elaboration of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. This process started in 2018 and a zero draft has been issued early this year. It is an outcome-oriented framework that promotes synergies and coordination with relevant processes to achieve goals and targets and to facilitate regular monitoring and review of progress. As proposed in the zero draft, the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will be oriented towards achieving the following five Goals:

- a) No net loss by 2030 in the area and integrity of freshwater, marine and terrestrial ecosystems, and increases of at least [20%] by 2050, ensuring ecosystem resilience;
- b) The percentage of species threatened with extinction is reduced by [X%] and the abundance of species has increased on average by [X%] by 2030 and by [X%] by 2050;
- c) Genetic diversity is maintained or enhanced on average by 2030, and for [90%] of species by 2050;
- d) Nature provides benefits to people contributing to:
  - i. Improvements in nutrition for at least [X million] people by 2030 and [Y million] by 2050;
  - ii. Improvements in sustainable access to safe and drinkable water for at least [X million] people, by 2030 and [Y million] by 2050;
  - iii. Improvements in resilience to natural disasters for at least [X million] people by 2030 and [Y million] by 2050;
  - iv. At least [30%] of efforts to achieve the targets of the Paris Agreement in 2030 and 2050.



- e) The benefits shared fairly and equitably, from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge have increased by [X] by 2030 and reached [X] by 2050.

In total, twenty action-oriented targets are proposed in the zero draft for the next decade as a milestone to the proposed 2050 vision (A world of living in harmony with nature where: “By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”).

It is expected that the final version of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will include a monitoring framework for the goals and a monitoring framework for the targets. Both will be based on monitoring elements and indicators.

The process for the elaboration of the Post-2020 SAP BIO should consider the goals, targets and the frameworks for monitoring being developed by the Open-ended working group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework established by the COP of the CBD. To this end, SPA/RAC will closely follow the meetings of the Open-ended working group and ensure that their outcomes are timely considered in the elaboration of the Post-2020 SAP BIO, without however significantly deviating from the Ecological objectives, Indicators and targets adopted within the framework of the EcAp process of the Barcelona Convention. This implies that the national experts in charge of the identification of priorities at national level and their related objectives and actions, should duly take into account the Mediterranean Ecological Objectives as well as the national IMAPs, in particular in relation to Ecological Objectives 1 (Biodiversity) and 2 (NIS). Other Ecological Objectives should be also taken into account as appropriate.

#### [Participation of relevant international and regional organization](#)

The SAP BIO Advisory Committee, made of representatives of most relevant International and Regional Organisations, provided a platform for consultation during all the stages of the elaboration of the SAP BIO adopted in 2003. The participation of these organisations allowed a better harmonisation of SAP BIO with their work plans. It is therefore highly recommended to maintain, and where possible, strengthen the role of the Advisory Committee in the elaboration process of the Post-2020 SAP BIO, preferably from the early stages. This will ensure an inclusive Post 2020 SAPBIO covering all Mediterranean stakeholders concerns and priorities.

#### [The time horizon for the Post-2020 SAP BIO](#)

The orientation at the global level as planned for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under the CBD is to work on the time horizon of 2050 with an intermediate deadline in 2030. For the Post-2020 SAP BIO, it would be advisable to opt for the horizon 2035. Indeed lessons learned from the implementation of 2003SAPBIO showed that the evolution of species in their populations and habitats, as well as rapid changes in socio-economic contexts in the countries of the region, require, that medium-term reviews of the measures, be conducted to take into account said changes and evolutions. Furthermore, the definition of the Post-2020 SAP BIO time horizon should take into account the assessments agreed by the Contracting Parties in the framework of IMAP and the elaboration of the QSRs and SoEDs.