

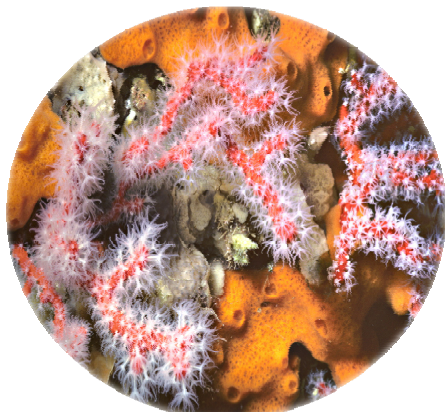
The 1st Mediterranean Symposium on the Coralligenous was held in Tabarka (Tunisia) on 15th & 16th of January 2009. It was organized by the Regional Activity Center for Specially Protected Areas (UNEP-MAP) under the patronage of the Tunisian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, in collaboration with the RAMOGE Agreement and the OKIANOS Centre.



Opening session



Symposium general view



Coralligenous in the Mediterranean



Participants

Context & objectives

This Symposium is in line with the framework of the implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of the Coralligenous and other Calcareous Bio-concretions in the Mediterranean Sea adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in 2008 ([for more info...download the Action plan](#)).

The Symposium is aimed to identify and bring together coralligenous specialists from all over the Mediterranean and promote their exchanges in order to establish a state of the current knowledge concerning this important ecosystem and take stock of current research in this area.

Participation

122 participants, representing 11 Mediterranean countries have attended the Symposium. These days allowed exposing scientific work with 20 oral presentations and 36 posters, but also many profitable exchanges during the discussions and the round-table on the various threats hanging over these formations and particularly those related to climate change impacts ([for more info...see the presentations](#)).

Conclusion et recommendations

Considering i) the importance of the coralligenous assemblages at regional level in terms of biodiversity, landscape and economic importance, ii) the lack of knowledge and iii) the threats to which they are subjected, the following recommendations were made:

- To strengthen knowledge on the coralligenous assemblages in particular through the elaboration of reference states, the collection of long chronological series of data and the setting-up of a Mediterranean network of experts.
- To initiate monitoring networks, locally managed and coordinated at regional level and propose standardized protocols able to be applied to the whole Mediterranean region.
- To identify indicator species of these formations health and quality standards allowing to inform us about specific anthropogenic impacts.
- To encourage the creation of "sanctuary areas" through the taking into account of these assemblages for the establishment of new marine protected areas.
- To strengthen legislation applied to these assemblages at national and international levels and establish guidelines to take into account these settlements in impact assessments and exploitation of living resources management.

To devote a particular effort to public awareness and to decision-makers in relation to the coralligenous and other bio-concretions of the Mediterranean. ([for more info...see the detailed conclusions and recommenadations](#)).