



WORKING GROUP 1: BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

THE MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT

Considered a biodiversity hotspot, the Mediterranean basin includes a semi-enclosed sea that is surrounded by more than 20 countries, each of them with different levels of resource use, and protection and management practices. There are 1231 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean covering 179,798 km², a surface of 7.14% under legal designation, including only 0.04% of fully and strongly protected areas¹. Most of these are not effectively managed due to low human, material and financial capacities. These MPAs also vary widely in size, purpose and management depending on various factors.

However, they all face the common increasing pressures of growing population rates, changing climate, rapid economic development, high competition across regions, and unsustainable consumption and production patterns. Climate change and marine litter are some of the emerging concerns to Mediterranean ecosystems and biodiversity putting key ecological areas in need of urgent protection.



THE WORKING GROUP AND ITS OBJECTIVES

The MED Biodiversity Protection Community is seeking solutions to bridge science, practice and policy to address priority threats through an action roadmap for its working group 1 which focuses on protected areas, namely MPAs, and biodiversity management (WG1). After consultation with members of the MED Biodiversity Protection Community and the advisory board, the policy landscape targeted by this group reaches different levels of environmental policy, management practices and networks converging in the region and has been defined as follows:

¹Assessment on the Status of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs). 2016. MedPAN and SPA/RAC. Available in: <http://medpan.org/marine-protected-areas/mediterranean-mpas/>

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REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER Montenegro

Global

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

EU

- Blue Growth Strategy
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- EEA Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) strategy
- European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)
- Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD)
- Nature Directives (Natura 2000)

Mediterranean

- Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal region of the Mediterranean and its protocols
- Barcelona Convention EcAp and Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP)
- Barcelona Convention Regional Plan for Marine Litter in the Mediterranean
- Barcelona Convention Roadmap for a comprehensive coherent network of well-managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean

KEY NETWORKS AND STAKEHOLDERS

- AdriaPAN - Adriatic MPA Network
- Emerald Network
- EMODNet
- IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles (MEDASSET)
- MedPAN - Mediterranean MPA Network
- UN Environment/MAP SPA/RAC Mediterranean - Platform on Marine Biodiversity
- UN Environment/MAP PAP/RAC
- UN Environment/MAP SCP/RAC
- Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
- Task Force on Environment and Climate Change

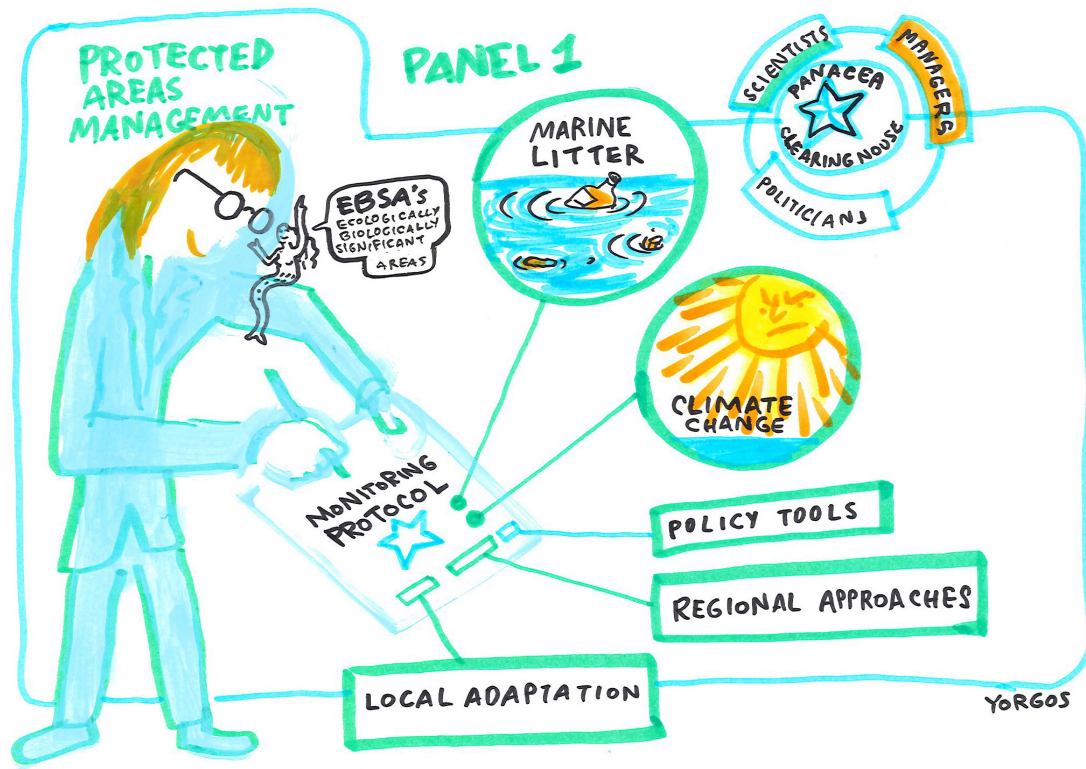
For a full picture of the MED Biodiversity Protection Community analysis of relevant policies and instruments, see [here](#)

Other stakeholders to involve in the activities and dissemination of key messages include the overall Interreg MED Community; Joint Secretariat; Axis 4 - PANORAMED and other horizontal and modular projects active in protected areas and biodiversity related issues, such as BlueIslands and Destimed among the MED Sustainable Tourism projects.

Working Group 1 aims to increase understanding, knowledge and awareness of multiple environmental threats and promote best practice guided by Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) tools as a response to address the cumulative pressures and impacts in protected areas, focusing on functional ecosystem units.

In brief, WG1 will work to:

- Monitor and promote standardised sampling methodologies and management tools to allow for a common regional approach to address major environmental pressures, including marine litter (ML) and climate change (CC), and build the capacity of protected areas to tackle cumulative impacts.
- Collect data to integrate them into the MED Biodiversity Protection Knowledge Platform and regional databases for protected areas at Mediterranean level (see MAPA-MED database led by MedPAN and SPA/



RAC), and ultimately, identify environmental risks and management priorities in need of urgent action at different regional scales.

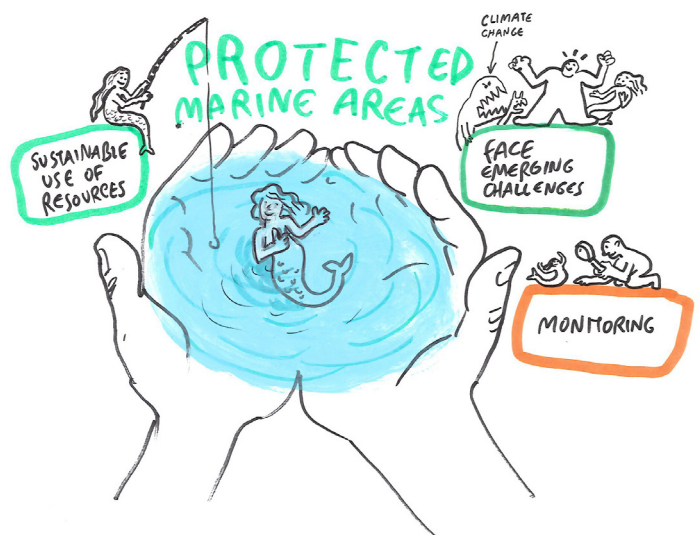
- Provide added value knowledge by integrating results from modular projects (MPs), spatial information and indicators to showcase current efforts to policy-makers and stakeholders in pilot sites.
- Promote the integration of the Community knowledge into Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and provide transferable best practices among protected areas and at transboundary level.

The main Interreg-MED modular projects currently involved in WG1 are:

- **ACT4Litter:** Development of a decision making tools and pilot actions towards joint measures to address marine litter in Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean
- **AMAre:** Actions for Marine Protected Areas, through the development of shared methodologies and spatial tools to concrete MSP applications for managing protected areas.
- **MedSeaLitter:** Common methodologies for monitoring floating macro litter and biodiversity impacts in the Mediterranean Sea.
- **MPA-Adapt:** Building resilience and adaptation to Climate Change impacts in Marine Protected Areas.
- **POSBEMED:** Sustainable management of Posidonia oceanica beaches and dunes in the Mediterranean coastal region.

- **PlasticBusters MPAs:** Actions that address the whole management cycle of marine litter, from monitoring and assessment to prevention and mitigation.
- **PHAROS4MPAs:** Regional integrated framework for recommendations on the necessary practical collaboration between Mediterranean MPAs and the maritime sectors, as well as to evaluate the environmental risks of the Blue Growth strategy.

Other projects in the community might contribute to the WG1 activities according to their scope and planned actions (CONFISH, ECOSUSTAIN, FISHMPABLUE2, WETNET).



THE MEDITERRANEAN BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

		Means and main steps	
Focus	Legal frameworks and key MED stakeholders	Relevant Projects	Actions and tools
1. From science to management and policy: Factsheets and technical papers featuring pressures, impacts and responses in protected areas and transboundary regions			
Climate change (CC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Development Goals - Agenda 2030 Goals 13, 14.2 EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy UN Environment/MAP EcAp and Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Interreg MED -PANORAMED (Governance) Interreg MED Programme Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MPA-ADAPT AMARE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-Disciplinary Working Group Synthesis prospectus and/or technical documents on Climate Change (CC) Thematic factsheets on CC impacts, mitigation, and adaptation Policy briefs
Marine litter (ML)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU MSFD Directive Descriptor 10 and the 2017 decision of GES UN Environment / MAP EcAp and IMAP Ecological Objective 10 on Marine litter UN Environment/MAP Regional Plan for Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy Interreg MED -PANORAMED (Governance) Interreg MED Programme Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT4LITTER MEDSEALITTER PLASTICBUSTERS MPAS AMARE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-Disciplinary Working Group Synthesis prospectus and/or technical documents on Marine Litter (ML) Thematic factsheets on ML amounts, impact and management Policy briefs
Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive Barcelona Convention Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Interreg MED -PANORAMED (Governance) Interreg MED Programme Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALL PROJECTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-Disciplinary Working Group Scientific report on the utility of and challenges to EBSAs as EBM units in the Mediterranean Synthesis prospectus and/or technical documents identifying priority management activities in 4 priority EBSAs in the Mediterranean
2. Spatial data and new knowledge			
Demonstration sites Marine litter Climate change Fisheries Wetlands EBSAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Environment/MAP Regional Plan for Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean UN Environment/MAP Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) UN Environment/MAP SPA/RAC Med Platform on Biodiversity EEA/SEIS, EMODNet, MAPAMED, EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD) Interreg MED Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Med-IAMER ACT4LITTER MEDSEALITTER MPA-ADAPT POSBEMED PHAROS4MPAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate key spatial datasets into the PANACeA Knowledge Platform and existing permanent databases of protected areas at Mediterranean level (MAPAMED) Cartography on geographical coverage of Interreg MED modular projects, study areas, and relevant Mediterranean project results Presentation of updated regional spatial data and environmental indicators Update and validation of cumulative pressures and impact assessments in the Mediterranean region Development of new knowledge relevant to Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Mapping of biodiversity vulnerability (to cumulative and transboundary impacts) in demonstration of EBSAs Social surveys on main transboundary management challenges in demonstration of EBSAs
3. Networking and showcasing			
Transfer and adoption of best practices to protected areas and biodiversity practitioners, managers and policy-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and frameworks identified by all stakeholders Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Barcelona Convention Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) Ramsar Convention: UN Environment/MAP SPA/RAC Med Platform on Biodiversity UN Environment/MAP Regional Plan for Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean UN Environment/MAP Roadmap for a network of MPAs in the Mediterranean UN Agenda 2030 for SDGs MedPAN - SPA/RAC Mediterranean Marine Protected Area Forum 2020 Interreg MED -PANORAMED (Governance) Interreg MED Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALL PROJECTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review on available tools for Biodiversity protection and management Side events during PANACeA Capitalisation events (2018 and 2019) External events and side activities related to policies' development Contribution to MedPAN MPA Forum 2020 Fostering the participation and networking of protected area and biodiversity managers in training workshops and webinars Workshop on challenges to EBM and EBSAs in the Mediterranean Communication Actions

MILESTONES

The working group on Biodiversity Management will be showcasing its work during the next two years particularly through EU and Mediterranean events and publications such as:

- MedPAN article and updated catalogue on tools for protected area management - summer 2018 / autumn 2019
- UNEP MAP State of the Environment and Development (SOED) publication- 2019

An online [shared calendar](#) of events is available and regularly updated with opportunities to participate and organize joint activities.

International events	Events in EU/MED area	2018	WG1 partnership actions
Union for the Mediterranean events 2018/2019	Interreg MED and PANORAMED 2018/2019	2018	Promotion of environmental protection as priority
	DG MARE MSP events 2018 onwards		Presentation of PANACeA and its platform capitalising on project results
	18-19 April - "MADE in MED", Rome		Exhibition and participation in the panels
5th International Marine Conservation Congress, Malaysia, 24-29 June 2018	16-18 May - PANACeA in Montenegro		Factsheet and sub-action plans for WG1 validation: EBM tools, Marine Litter and Climate Change
			Start compilation of data for the PANACeA platform 2018/2019
			Social surveys on main transboundary impacts and management challenges in demonstration EBSAs. Draft Marine Spatial and Action Plan for impact management in 2 demonstration EBSAs.
			Review document /factsheet on Marine Litter measures and tools for management: MPAs perspective
Ramsar COP13 - Dubai, 21-29 Oct. 2018			Expert Working Group and Consultation workshops on EBM in 2 priority EBSAs.
			Policy document/Technical paper/factsheet on climate change adaptation for MPAs
	MSFD Technical Group Marine Litter		Policy document/Technical paper/factsheet on marine litter pressures in the Mediterranean Sea (initial)
	October - MedPAN Annual workshop		Technical document/factsheet on marine litter impact on aquatic life (includes maps)
	Barcelona Convention Mediterranean meeting of the ML Cooperation Platform, October 2018		Position paper and Synthesis Prospectus identifying priority management activities in 4 priority EBSAs in the Mediterranean
	Nov-Dec - PANACeA Mid Term Review in Brussels		CBD Workshop on challenges to EBM of Marine Litter, Climate Change impacts in EBSAs in the Mediterranean
CBD COP 14 - Egypt, 10-22 Nov. 2018			
	Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group CORMON on Marine Litter Monitoring, March 2019		
		2019	
	Apr-May - PANACeA in Rome		Policy review/Factsheet/Report on measures to address ML management in MPAs (continuation)

International events

UN Environment
MAP/MEDPOL
Focal Points
Meeting,
May 2019

COP 21 Barcelona
Convention - 3-6
December 2019

IUCN World
Conservation
Congress, 11-19
June 2020

Events in EU/MED area

Regional Meeting on Marine Litter Best
Practices, Spring 2019

November - PANACeA final conference in
Malaga

Mediterranean MPA Forum 2020 (led by
MedPAN and SPA/RAC)

WG1 partnership actions

Scientific report on the utility of and challenges to
EBSAs as EBM units in the most impacted sea, the
Mediterranean

Update policy/technical document/ factsheet
on marine litter pressures in the Mediterranean
(continuation)

Presentation of WG1 recommendations and new
data in the BP Platform

Policy paper/factsheet on cumulative impacts
assessment in MPAs (includes maps)

Updated catalogue on tools for protected area
management

2020

You can join and follow us on

<https://biodiversity-protection.interreg-med.eu/>



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[Biodiversity Protection Community](https://www.linkedin.com/company/biodiversity-protection-community)

[PANACeA Biodiversity Protection](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)