

# Ecosystem Approach: the UNEP MAP experience

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United Nations Environment Programme  
Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)  
Barcelona Convention



# Ecosystem Approach: the UNEP MAP Experience

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- The Barcelona Convention and its 7 Protocols set the legal framework, key principles and obligations for the Mediterranean marine and coastal environmental protection;
- The Convention and Protocols provide for a range of policy and management approaches and tools including ICZM and SPA creation;
- The ecosystem approach is the overarching principle of UNEP MAP for integration into all MAP policies;
- A specific Roadmap was agreed in 2008 to apply the ecosystem approach in order to define and achieve Good Environmental Status (GES).



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# Ecosystem Approach Roadmap: Seven Steps

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1. Definition of an Ecological Vision for the Mediterranean
2. Setting of common Mediterranean strategic goals
3. Identification of important ecosystem properties and assessment of ecological status and pressures
4. Development of a set of ecological objectives corresponding to the Vision and strategic goals
5. Derivation of operational objectives with indicators and target levels
6. Revision of existing monitoring programmes for ongoing assessment and regular updating of targets
7. Development and review of relevant action plans and programmes



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# Ecosystem Approach: State of Play (Step 1-6)

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- Agreement on vision and goals (COP 17);
- Preparation of the Integrated Assessment of the Mediterranean Ecosystem 2010-2011 (COP 17);
- Adoption of 11 ecological objectives and corresponding 28 operational objectives (COP 17);
- Adoption of an integrated list of 61 indicators and GES descriptions (COP 18);
- Preparation of an Integrated Monitoring System based on the agreed common indicators and targets (draft IMA submitted to COP 19);
- Socio-economic assessment to complement the 2011-2012 Integrated Assessment of the Mediterranean (COP 19);
- Cyclic/periodical assessments of the marine and coastal environment to assess GES.



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# Ecosystem Approach: State of Play (Step 7)

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Development and review of relevant action plans and programmes:

1. Streamline GES targets in the Programmes of Measures adopted in the framework of Barcelona Convention and its Protocols:
  - *Regional Plan on Marine Litter*
  - *SAP BIO*
  - *Regional Strategy to Combat Pollution from Ships*
  - *Action Plan to Implement Offshore Protocol*
2. Update of NAP under the LBS Protocol to design national PoM to achieve GES
3. Gap Analysis on existing UNEP MAP Measures was undertaken in light of EcAp Targets.



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# Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Program

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Key element of IMAP is the integrated approach, through the following steps:

- At country level, development of Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programmes, following region-wide agreed common indicators;
- Development of common indicator assessment fact sheets, to link assessment and monitoring in a practical manner;
- Assessment to be carried out in an integrated manner (overall status of GES - key products: 2017 Status Quality Report and 2019 State of Environment and Development Report);
- Implementation of IMAP to be supported by an Integrated Data and Information System (in line with IMAP delivery, region-wide, electronic format, with quality control and validation process);
- Cooperation among CPs and with regional bodies, to ensure cost-efficiency, exchange of best practices, and scientific adequacy.



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# IMAP: key elements

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- Common indicators/candidate indicators (23 common indicators and 4 candidate indicators);
- Biodiversity and NIS (6 common indicators);
- Pollution and litter (9 common indicators related to eutrophication, contaminants and litter, 1 candidate indicator in relation to ingested litter);
- Coast and Hydrography (2 common indicators, 1 candidate indicator in relation to land use change);
- Energy including underwater noise (2 candidate indicators), developed by ACCOBAMS;
- Supported by List of Species and Habitats, Pollution and Litter Assessment Criteria and the draft Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Guidance.



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# Next Steps and Challenges

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- Finalize gap analysis of programmes of measures adopted under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols to assess the need for new or updated ones to achieve GES;
- In collaboration with regional Partners define an efficient governance mechanism to support a coordinated implementation of IMAP by the all Mediterranean countries including financial support;
- Support the implementation of national PoW by the Contracting Parties and gradually extend their scope to include the 11 ecosystem based MAP ecological objectives;
- Support and coordinate research work to support IMAP and programmes of measures implementation with relevant partners and research projects;
- Establish an efficient information system to collect and process data coming from IMAP implementation based on SEI principles;
- Support of the EU instrumental through funding of three projects since 2005 to enhance ecosystem approach implementation.



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