

**Nature-based Solution Coalition  
Proposed Contribution  
of the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Monaco**

**Sustainable financing mechanism for Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas**

- Context and rationale:

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are crucial tools for the long-term conservation of the marine environment, including its species, habitats, ecosystems, and the services it provides, with the aim of ensuring sustainable management and sustainable use of marine resources.

Their success and sustainability are directly dependent on the size and effective management, including the question of funding (recurrent costs, including staff costs, equipment, monitoring, research, training and management, delimitation of borders, law enforcement, etc.). In many cases around the World, MPAs remain underfunded, resulting in less effective protection.

MPAs are directly linked both to the CBD Aichi target 11, SDG 15 targets 2 and 5, as well as targets on marine ecosystems mentioned in the UNFCCC Paris Agreement.

Beyond SDG 14, it can also contribute to SDG 2 (no hunger) because of the possible indirect benefits for sustainable fisheries and food security, and SDG 13 (climate action) as some studies showed that MPAs can also enhance resilience to climate change.

In addition to the primary objective of protection of marine biodiversity, MPAs also have socio-economic benefits, in particular for local coastal communities as it can support food security, small-scale fisheries, sustainable tourism.

- Overview of the contribution:

The Principality of Monaco has a long-standing commitment to develop and promote MPAs. Among the initiatives undertaken, Monaco set regional tools in cooperation with its neighboring countries such as the Pelagos Agreement<sup>1</sup>, establishing the Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals in Mediterranean Sea, for which Monaco is the depository.

The Principality would be willing to help duplicate some of the tools already implemented in the Mediterranean region to enhance support to MPAs in the world.

In particular, a sustainable financing initiative for MPAs in the Mediterranean region could be built on in other regions. Indeed, while the financial resources of MPAs in the Mediterranean region today depend on rather conventional mechanisms (public funds, European projects, bilateral aid or international donors), there are other more innovative mechanisms that could contribute to perpetuate financial stability.

---

<sup>1</sup> Signed in Rome in 1999 by France, Italy and the Principality of Monaco

In the light of the absence of long-term financial mechanisms in the region, an initiative was launched jointly by France, Monaco, and Tunisia during the high-level session of the International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC3), in October 2013, to fill this gap. It was also raised at the Network of MPAs Managers in the Mediterranean (MedPAN) workshop in Albania in November 2014.

In 2015, the Association for the Sustainable Financing of the Mediterranean MPAs (M2PA), a non-profit Monaco based organization, was created, bringing together States and civil society. It is open to:

- States that have confirmed their commitment to implementing an ambitious policy to support MPAs and explicitly shown their support for the initiative (to date: Albania, France, Monaco, Morocco, Tunisia and Spain);
- regional organizations involved in the conservation of Mediterranean marine and coastal ecosystems (Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre, MedPAN, WWF-Mediterranean, IUCN Mediterranean Programme, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, Monaco Oceanographic Institute, Conservatoire du Littoral, Mediterranean Small Islands Organization and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund).

It was also designed to be a cooperation platform that sets up a regional conservation trust fund (CTF). The establishment of the M2PA initiative lays down the foundations for the creation of a regional CTF to enhance the management effectiveness of Mediterranean MPAs through improving their long-term financial sustainability.

M2PA benefits, inter alia, from financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and *Le Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial* (FFEM) to design the most appropriate institutional, legal and financial structure to manage this CTF and to fund pilot MPAs in Mediterranean countries. This fund is financed by the contributions of public and private donors, States, multilateral donors and even Foundations, Companies or private patrons.

At the Second Forum on Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas, in Morocco in November 2016, M2PA announced the granting of its first funding for 2 existing MPAs in Morocco and Tunisia (30.000 dollars each). These grants will be utilized for day-today management of these MPAs. They come as complements to national financing. Since then, support to an MPA in Albania was also officially announced in 2018.

This initiative is a regional mechanism focusing solely on the Mediterranean, but it can be replicated in other regions, bringing together States and relevant existing organizations and civil society as well local communities and scientific expertise in a regional context.

This initiative can indeed complement and be closely coordinated with existing international, regional and national programs, especially those carried out under the Barcelona Convention, and contribute to the implementation of the national strategies related to MPA, which can be replicated elsewhere.

It can enhance existing MPAs to prove their ecological, social and economic value, thus encouraging the creation of additional MPAs. It is aiming at mobilizing funding to supplement current Mediterranean MPA funding, including through innovative mechanisms, and at fostering long-term financing, particularly for MPA activities that receive little funding but are essential for

the effective management effectiveness. Lastly, it can also be relevant to regional networks supporting MPA managers (capacity-building, exchanges of experience, etc.).