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Agenda item 2: IMAP-MPA Project: Progress Report

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List of Abbreviations

ALG	Algeria
APAL	Agence de Protection et d'Aménagement du Littoral (Tunisia)
ANPE	Agence Nationale de Protection de l'Environnement (Tunisia)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CI	Common Indicator
CNRS-L	National Council for Scientific Research of Lebanon
CORMON	Correspondence Group on Monitoring
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
DG ENV	Directorate-General for Environment of the European Commission
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations of the European Commission
EC	European Commission
EcAp	Ecosystem Approach
EcAp MED Project	Mediterranean Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, in coherence with the EU MSFD
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
EGY	Egypt
EO	Ecological Objective
EU	European Union
IMAP	Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme
IMAP-MPA project	Towards achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean Sea and coast through an ecologically representative and efficiently managed and monitored network of Marine Protected Areas
INFO/RAC	Information and Communication Regional Activity Centre
INPA	Israel Nature and Parks Authority
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
ISR	Israel
JOR	Jordan
LEB	Lebanon
LIB	Libya
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MCPA	Marine and Coastal Protected Area
MED POL	Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme
MED QSR	Mediterranean Quality Status Report
MedPAN	Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MOR	Morocco
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
NIS	Non-Indigenous Species
OECM	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measure
OWG	Online Working Group
PAL	Palestine
PAP/RAC	Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre
PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
SPA/BD	Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity
SPA/RAC	Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre
SSFA	Small-Scale Funding Agreement
TCNR	Tyre Coast Nature Reserve (Lebanon)
ToRs	Terms of Reference
TUN	Tunisia
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP/MAP	United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1. Introduction

1. The Project “Towards achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean Sea and coast through an ecologically representative and efficiently managed and monitored network of Marine Protected Areas” (hereafter referred to as “IMAP-MPA project”), is funded by the European Union (EU) – the European Commission’s (EC) Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) and the Green MED III: ENI South regional environment and water programme 2018-2022 financial instrument.
2. The project is coordinated and implemented by the UNEP/MAP Secretariat and implemented through its Mediterranean Pollution Assessment and Control Programme (MED POL) and Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC). It covers a period of 42 months starting in August 2019 until February 2023, with an overall budget of USD 4,459,309 (EUR 3,999,660).
3. The beneficiary countries for the specific national activities are Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia; while Jordan and Palestine can also benefit from the regional / capacity building activities of the project.
4. This progress report represents a substantive update of the report submitted to the Project Second Steering Committee Meeting held in March 2021, by videoconference, with a particular focus on the activities and outputs delivered during March 2021-March 2022.

2. Project Summary and Objective

5. The overall objective of the IMAP-MPA project is to contribute towards the achievement of Good Environmental Status (GES) in the Mediterranean Sea and along its coast. In so doing, the project proposes to consolidate, integrate, and strengthen the ecosystem approach (EcAp) for Marine Protected Area (MPA) management and their sustainable development. This will be achieved through the monitoring and assessment of environmental status in the Mediterranean Sea and its coast, including MPAs, in a comparative and integrated manner.
6. The project aims at enhancing MPA management through coordinated implementation of the MAP Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to Achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean, as well as enhance the integration of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) in this process. The IMAP-MPA project is strengthening and is further developing the Mediterranean network of ecologically representative, inter-connected, effectively managed and monitored MPAs. This is achieved through improving national biodiversity-related governance and policies; preparing and implementing management plans for MPAs and improving MPA management with targeted actions.
7. The project is supporting the process for aligning the Mediterranean priorities with the upcoming Convention on Biological Diversity’s (CBD) post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as with other global and regional emerging issues.
8. The project is contributing to the assessment of MPA effectiveness through the implementation of the IMAP biodiversity and non-indigenous species, pollution and marine litter and hydrography clusters, in an integrated manner. This is showcased by presenting and highlighting environmental status differences between MPAs and areas that are under high-pressure due to human activities. In so doing, the project is also contributing to the overall Mediterranean Sea and coast status assessment and provides support to the beneficiary countries in enhancing their relevant capacities, e.g., through targeted trainings, exchange of specific best practices, and undertaking of pilot IMAP monitoring activities in new areas, within and outside MPAs, with a focus on the sub-regional level.

3. Project Structure

9. The project is structured around three major components, with five outcomes and nine outputs, as hereunder described:

Component 1: Promotion and support of IMAP implementation at the regional, sub-regional and national scale

Outcome 1: Enhanced level of capacity in each country to implement IMAP and report reliable data for the IMAP common indicators

- Output 1.1: In depth identification at country level of the capacities required to enable IMAP implementation and facilitate the provision of reliable and quality assured data for the MED 2023 QSR.
- Output 1.2: Capacity building and exchange of best practices at the national, sub-regional and regional level through specific training sessions and meetings.

Outcome 2: Harmonised monitoring and assessment including at sub-regional level, of IMAP common indicators for biodiversity and Non-Indigenous Species (NIS); pollution and marine litter; and hydrography, both within and surrounding MPAs

- Output 2.1: Integrated/joint monitoring in MPAs and high-pressure areas carried out in identified pilot sites for agreed common indicators.

Component 2: Improvement and support for the development of a comprehensive and coherent Mediterranean network of well-managed and monitored MPAs to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 in the Mediterranean

Outcome 3: Enhanced implementation of the governance and policies which relate to the Marine Protected Areas in the Southern Mediterranean countries

- Output 3.1: Support for the development of a National MPA Network Strategy for the Egyptian coast.
- Output 3.2: Organisation of the 2020 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean to pave the way for the post 2020 MPA agenda process in the Mediterranean.
- Output 3.3: The development of a strategic document on MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures in the Mediterranean, in line with the CBD post-2020 global biodiversity framework through a participatory process.

Outcome 4: Improved on-site MPA management and identified mechanisms that ensure MPA sustainability

- Output 4.1: Elaboration of MPA management plans and provision of support for their effective implementation.
- Output 4.2: Improvement of MPA management through capacity building and initiation of management plan implementation.

Component 3: Effective project management ensured for guidance during the project as well as coordination for overall project implementation

Outcome 5: Effective and timely project coordination and implementation ensured:

- Output 5.1: Project management and coordination.

4. Country Support

10. The project provides support to Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia, through concrete national and regional activities with regard to IMAP implementation and effective MPA management; Jordan and Palestine through inviting them to the project regional events or capacity building activities. Table 1 presents in a summarised way the different types of support provided by the different outputs to the respective beneficiary countries.

Table 1: Different types of support provided to the respective beneficiary countries through the different outputs.

	ALG	EGY	ISR	LEB	LIB	MOR	TUN	JOR	PAL	Regional
Output 1.1										
Output 1.2										
Output 2.1										
Output 3.1										
Output 3.2										
Output 3.3										
Output 4.1										
Output 4.2										
Output 5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

5. Activity Progress during the Period: March 2021 – March 2022

Component 1: Promoting and supporting IMAP implementation at regional, sub-regional and national scales

Outcome 1: Enhanced level of capacity in each country to implement IMAP and report reliable data for the IMAP common indicators

Output 1.1: In depth identification at country level of the capacities required to enable IMAP implementation and facilitate the provision of reliable and quality assured data for the MED 2023 QSR

11. Work by the National Experts/Consultants: A draft of the study to support the integration of the national monitoring programmes in Tunisia was elaborated and revised by SPA/RAC. Bilateral meetings with the national consultant were organised to update the document and consider all relevant comments and to align with the Project requirements. The updated version was elaborated and shared with SPA/RAC and the national authorities for their feedbacks.
12. A draft of the study to support the integration of the national monitoring programmes in Libya was elaborated and discussed with the national authorities. Comments were addressed to the consultant to update the draft and consider all relevant inputs. An updated draft was elaborated and is under revision by the national authorities.
13. The national experts for Israel and Morocco are being supported under the relevant legal agreements (Small Scale Fund Agreement (SSFA) and Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)).
14. The next steps for Output 1.1 within 2022 are described hereunder:
 - Additional national experts will be supported in Algeria, Egypt and Lebanon through the signature of the relevant legal agreements, to support the implementation of the national monitoring programmes and facilitate the provision of data for the QSR in these countries.

Outcome 1: Enhanced level of capacity in each country to implement IMAP and report reliable data for the IMAP common indicators

Output 1.2: Capacity building and exchange of best practices at the national, sub-regional and regional level through specific training sessions and meetings.

15. National project kick-off meetings and establishment of National IMAP Committees were implemented in most of the countries: Israel (July 2020), Tunisia (Oct. 2020), Libya (Oct. 2020), Morocco (Feb. 2021), Algeria (Mar. 2021) and Lebanon (July 2021)
16. Follow-up correspondence and bilateral meetings are frequently organised between the respective countries, the Secretariat and SPA/RAC to support as much as possible the timely implementation of the planned activities.
17. The Lebanese expert who will supervise and manage the IMAP implementation in Lebanon took part to a dedicated training on monitoring techniques of biodiversity common indicators in MPAs and marine nurseries areas, to build capacity and share best practices. This training (France, 9-13 August 2021) was organised by the University of Perpignan (France). It was an opportunity to introduce theoretical and practical aspects of appropriate monitoring techniques that will be applied in Lebanon for the IMAP implementation.
18. In Egypt, the project activities could not start on time as initially planned due to missing official authorisations. Regular correspondence and follow-up have been addressed to the Egyptian authorities and a high-level coordination meeting (Oct.2021) has been held at country level between UNEP/MAP Coordinator and the Chief Executive Officer of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) to urge the issue of the last authorisation and start the project activities implementation.
19. Following official correspondence addressed by SPA/RAC to the Egyptian authorities (January 2022), an official response regarding the approval and the issue of the official authorisations from the competent authorities to initiate the project implementation in Egypt was received (February 2022). A face-to-face coordination meeting was held in Cairo with the representatives of EEAA (March 2022) to present the planned activities in Egypt and to discuss the establishment of the national IMAP committee.
20. Three Egyptian scientists who will be involved in their national IMAP implementation participated in a training session on seabirds monitoring. This training was organised by Association les Amis des Oiseaux (AAO/Birdlife Tunisia) (Tunisia, 20-30 January 2022) to build capacity and share best practices.
21. The next steps for Output 1.2 within 2022 are described hereunder:
 - The organisation of the national kick-off meeting and the establishment of the national IMAP Committee in Egypt are expected to be done in the second quarter of 2022.
 - Specific trainings on monitoring common indicators related to biodiversity and pollution clusters are expected to be organised during the second and third quarters of 2022.
 - Specific trainings on data reporting are expected to be organised in cooperation with the INFO/RAC and in synergy with the EcAp MED III and Marine ML II projects, during the second and third quarters of 2022 aiming at strengthening national capacities to report data into the IMAP Info System.

Outcome 2: Harmonised monitoring and assessment including at sub-regional level, of IMAP common indicators for biodiversity and Non-Indigenous Species (NIS); pollution and marine litter; and hydrography both within and surrounding MPAs

Output 2.1: Integrated/joint monitoring in MPAs and high-pressure areas carried out in identified pilot sites for agreed common indicators

22. Work by the Regional Experts/Consultants: Monitoring and assessment scales, assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values for the IMAP common indicators 3, 4 and 5 related to marine mammals and marine turtles were elaborated by the regional experts, discussed within the thematic online working Groups (OWG) and endorsed by the CORMON meeting on Biodiversity and Fisheries (10-11 June 2021) and the SPA/BD Focal Point meeting (23-25 June 2021). These proposals were agreed by the 8th EcAp Coordination Group meeting (9 September 2021) for their use for the purpose of the 2023 MED QSR.
23. Monitoring and assessment scales, assessment criteria and thresholds values for the IMAP common indicator 6 related to NIS were elaborated by the regional expert, were discussed with the OWG experts and were presented during the CORMON meeting on Biodiversity (10-11 June 2021). The meeting welcomed the work and requested further development of thresholds values and provided some minor comments to be included. This deliverable was amended following an online discussion with the Contracting Parties (November 2021) who provided the comments. The updated version was submitted to the CORMON meeting on Biodiversity (28-29 March 2022) as information document.
24. The Regional expert in charge of the elaboration of the NIS baseline reviewed the national NIS lists provided by the designated national NIS experts. The finalised lists were validated by the countries' experts during several bilateral and OWG meetings. The regional and sub-regional NIS baselines were shared by the regional expert, were discussed with the members of the OWG on NIS (December 2021) and were discussed during the 2022 CORMON meeting on Biodiversity (28-29 March 2022). Several comments were provided by the Contracting Parties to be included in the final version of the baselines.
25. The document on monitoring and assessment scales, assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values for the IMAP common indicators 3, 4 and 5 related to seabirds was shared by the regional expert, was discussed with the OWG on sea birds (April and December 2021) and was submitted to the CORMON meeting on Biodiversity (28-29 March 2022). The meeting endorsed the document for its use for the purpose of the 2023 MED QSR preparation, pending written comments to be provided by Contracting Parties.
26. The work on the development of monitoring and assessment scales, assessment criteria, thresholds and baseline values for common indicators 1 and 2 related to benthic habitats is being prepared by the regional expert in close collaboration with the informal OWG on benthic habitats. The proposed elements are planned to be submitted to the CORMON meeting on Biodiversity in autumn 2022 (tbc) to agree on their use for the purpose of the 2023 MED QSR.
27. The regional expert to support the implementation of IMAP component for Biodiversity has been onboard since December 2021. A draft report including an analysis of the national IMAPs and a proposal for integration of the national monitoring programmes on biodiversity with the pollution and hydrography clusters was prepared and is under review.
28. Pollution and hydrography regional experts (EO5, EO7/8, EO9, EO10) have analysed the corresponding national IMAPs and draft reports were reviewed and shared with countries. In response to the said analysis, bilateral meetings were organised in May-June 2021 between the regional expert on marine litter and the competent national teams with the scope to clarify a few elements and to seek additional information. Additional bilateral meetings were also organised for eutrophication and hydrography.
29. The regional experts in charge of hydrography and eutrophication have prepared questionnaires (in ENG and FR) which were shared by the Secretariat with all the project's Focal Points. Feedback is still pending from the countries, which will be extremely useful for the following steps of this analysis.
30. Draft Memoranda of Agreement (MoA), establishing the modalities of cooperation to carry out activities related to IMAP implementation at national level along with proposed budgets, were shared with the beneficiary countries (i.e., Algeria/MoE, Egypt/EEAA, Israel/INPA, Lebanon/MoE, Libya/MoE, Morocco/MoE and Tunisia/APAL for biodiversity cluster and ANPE for pollution cluster).

31. Bilateral meetings have been organised with each national institution in charge of the IMAP implementation (i.e., Algeria (MoE), Israel (INPA), Libya (MoE), Morocco (MoE) and Tunisia (APAL and ANPE)) to discuss, revise and finalise the MoAs and related budgets.
32. The MoAs were signed with both APAL (Tunisia) and MoE (Morocco) in November 2021, with the respective funds transferred to the partners. Procedures to hire national consultants to take charge of the implementation of the field work and to support the national teams are ongoing for APAL (Tunisia), while the process was finalised for MoE in Morocco, with three national experts onboard since March 2022.
33. The MoA finalisation with the ANPE (Tunisia) regarding the pollution cluster is still pending the appointment of a new general director. The project was informed by the MEDPOL Focal Point that it will be possible for the ANPE to sign the legal agreement only following the appointment of a general director).
34. A face to face meeting and working sessions with Libyan Minister of Environment were organised in Libya in mid-December 2021. These productive discussions led to the signature of the MoA. Procedure of fund transfer is still ongoing pending the provision of bank account details.
35. In-person meeting was organised with the representatives of the MoE in Algeria in March 2022. The MoA and related budget were thoroughly discussed and reviewed. A finalised agreed version was elaborated but is not yet signed, pending the provision of bank account details
36. Following the addendum to the project, the SSFA between the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit and INPA was signed in the October 2021. Data were collected from field work held during the Q4 2021, and are currently under analyses before being uploaded on the IMAP-Info System.
37. Online meetings with the INPA (Israel) were organised to discuss and review the legal document for the budgetary resources allocated to Israel under SPA/RAC budget. The finalisation of this legal agreement is pending the budget re-allocation to UNEP/MAP.
38. Following an official letter addressed to the Minister of Environment in Lebanon, the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS-L) was designated on 2 March 2022 as the national institution in charge of the IMAP implementation in Lebanon. Bilateral meetings are being organised with the representatives of the CNRS-L and the discussions to finalise the draft MoA and related budget are ongoing.
39. Following the approval and the issue of the official authorisations from the competent authorities in Egypt to initiate the project implementation (February 2022), a face-to-face coordination meeting was held in Cairo with the representatives of EEAA (March 2022) to present and discuss the planned activities and related workplan. The draft MoA is being prepared based the discussion of this meeting with the aim to finalise/sign it during the second quarter of 2022.
40. The next steps for Output 2.1 within 2022 are described hereunder:
 - The signature of the SSFA and MoA with the remaining countries should be finalised during the second quarter of 2022.
 - The implementation of the field surveys at national level to be organised during the second, third and fourth quarter of 2022.

Component 2: Improvement and support for the development of a comprehensive and coherent Mediterranean network of well-managed and monitored MPAs to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 in the Mediterranean

Outcome 3: Enhanced implementation of the governance and policies which relate to the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Southern Mediterranean

Output 3.1: Support for the development of a National MPA Network Strategy for the Egyptian coast

41. The national MPA network strategy for the Egyptian Mediterranean coast is planned to be produced considering both conservation objectives and the requirement for MPAs to be integrated within their economic and social environment, based on a consultation process involving related stakeholders at national and local levels.
42. The project activities in Egypt did not start as initially planned, pending the official authorisations from the competent authorities to initiate the activity in Egypt. Official correspondence has been addressed to the Egyptian authorities respectively in March and July 2021 and regular contact and follow-up have been maintained by SPA/RAC with its SPA/BD Focal Point of Egypt regarding the situation and actions undertaken to start executing the activities related to the implementation of the national monitoring programme on marine biodiversity, non-indigenous species (NIS), pollution and hydrography along the Egyptian coast and to the elaboration of a national strategy for marine protected areas in the Mediterranean coast of Egypt.
43. On the 5th of October 2021, a high-level coordination meeting was held at country level between the UNEP/MAP Coordinator and the Chief Executive Officer of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) where the Egyptian authorities were requested to urge the issue of the last authorisation so as to initiate concrete actions towards the project activities implementation.
44. In 2022, following official correspondence by SPA/RAC addressed to the Egyptian authorities on January 14th, SPA/RAC received on February 10th, an official response on the approval and the issue of the official authorisations from the competent authorities to initiate the activity in Egypt.
45. Based on that, a face-to-face technical coordination meeting has been held in Cairo with the representatives of EEAA on March 31st, 2022. It served to update and to approve the planned activities and the related workplan and to discuss in detail the terms of reference (ToRs) prepared by SPA/RAC to hire national consultants to develop of the national strategy for an MPA network in the Mediterranean coast of Egypt.
46. The next steps for Output 3.1 within 2022 are described hereunder:
 - National consultants to develop the national strategy for an MPA network in the Mediterranean coast of Egypt are expected to be on board by the end of May, at the latest, since the call for consultancy has been launched by SPA/RAC on 20 April 2022.
 - Once the national consultants selected and onboard, SPA/RAC and the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) will run and supervise the implementation of the process at national and local levels.

Outcome 3: Enhanced implementation of the governance and policies which relate to the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Southern Mediterranean

Output 3.2: Organisation of the 2020 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean to pave the way for post-2020 MPA agenda progress in the Mediterranean

47. The Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean is a joint initiative of SPA/RAC and MedPAN. After two previous editions (Antalya 2012 and Tangier 2016), the 2020 MPA Forum was expected to take place in early-December 2020 in Monaco. This third edition has been co-organised jointly by SPA/RAC, MedPAN, WWF Mediterranean and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related sanitary situation and travel restrictions, the 2020 MPA Forum face-to-face event was postponed to the end of 2021.
48. Worth mentioning that SPA/RAC's contribution to the development of the Post-2020 Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas Roadmap, developed jointly by MedPAN, SPA/RAC and WWF, part of the MPA Forum collaborative process, and entrusted to a team of consultants, was financially supported by SPA/RAC core funds (MTF), whereas the IMAP-MPA project was expected to support the organisation of the face-to-face event of the Forum including participants travel and accommodation fees, venue, simultaneous interpretation, communication, translation of deliverables and printing of materials.
49. The main activities undertaken in view of the organisation of the 2020 MPA Forum, were as follows:
- A consultant was engaged in May 2021 to take the lead for the preparation of the Virtual Forum Sessions, the 2020 MPA Forum and the finalisation of the post-2020 MPA roadmap.
 - Taking advantage of the postponement of the different biodiversity events at the global level, the Virtual Forum Sessions were organised online from 2 to 4 June 2021. More than 400 participants joined online and contributed to the different discussion sessions that aimed at drafting recommendations for the roadmap.
 - A call for interest and contribution was launched in late July 2021 and closed in late September. 558 responses were received, from which 309 participants were interested to participate physically in Monaco and 249 interested to follow online. 175 case studies proposals were received from the different MPA stakeholders in the Mediterranean and beyond.
 - Organisation of the Fourth Steering Committee of the 2020 Forum of Marine Protected areas in the Mediterranean (teleconference, 5 October 2021) to discuss the Zero draft MPA roadmap, the preparations for the presential Forum programme and sessions, including the pre-identified case studies selection. It was proposed to hold the face-to-face event in 2022 due to sanitary conditions.
 - Registration to the MPA Forum was opened on 19 October 2021, with the possibility to attend physically in Monaco and online.
 - The 2020 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean was organised by the SPA/RAC, MedPAN, WWF and The Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation from 28 November to 1 December 2021 in Monaco (at the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco and at the Novotel Hotel) as well as online. It brought together 224 in person participants from 26 Mediterranean countries and beyond. The participation encompassed the wider MPA community, predominantly management bodies or national or local public authorities in charge of MPAs (29%), universities, research institutes, and expert (18%), NGOs (18%), international or regional intergovernmental institutions (10%) and networks (10%). In addition, 466 participants attended online (out of 517 registered).
 - A report of the Forum was prepared and shared with all the participants two weeks after the closure of the Forum. It is available at [this link](#). The pictures of [the field trip](#) and [the event](#) have been uploaded to Flickr. The recordings of the Forum sessions are available on the [YouTube Channel](#) of the MPA Forum.
50. The next steps for Output 3.2 within 2022 are described hereunder:
- Finalisation of the integration of the MPA Forum feedback in the roadmap; and

- Organisation of the Firth Steering Committee meeting of the 2020 MPA Forum.

Outcome 3: Enhanced implementation of the governance and policies which relate to the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Southern Mediterranean

Output 3.3: The development of a strategic document on MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures in the Mediterranean, in line with the CBD post-2020 global biodiversity framework through a participatory process

51. The elaboration of the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for marine and coastal protected areas (MCPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in the Mediterranean was financially supported by the SPA/RAC core funds (MTF), whereas the EU-funded IMAP-MPA project was supporting the consultation process for the finalisation of the draft strategy, including the organisation of consultation workshops involving all concerned stakeholders.
52. The Regional Strategy was developed under the leadership of SPA/RAC, the guidance of the Ad hoc group of experts for marine protected areas in the Mediterranean (AGEM), and in consultation with the Contracting Parties SPA/BD Focal Points and regional and international organisations active in the Mediterranean over a period of 4 months (February-May 2021).
53. A draft strategic framework (strategic pillars, outcomes and outputs), developed in consultation with SPA/RAC and the AGEM members, was presented in a 2-day remote workshop (8-9 April 2021), with 51 participants representing national, regional and international organisations, as well as Focal Points, individual experts and representatives from academic institutions. During this 2-day workshop the framework was finalised, and a number of key actions were identified for each output. Actions were identified at two levels: Contracting Parties' level and Regional and international organisations' level. Workshop outputs were incorporated into the strategy with participants provided a further opportunity for review.
54. The revised strategy was then presented to the second meeting of AGEM (teleconference, 3-4 May 2021), then to the SPA/BD Focal Points in a remote consultation workshop (teleconference, 18 May 2021), where comments were incorporated.
55. A second draft of the Post-2020 Strategy was presented at the 15th Meeting of the SPA/BD Focal Points (teleconference, 23-25 June 2021), and subsequently reviewed and endorsed.
56. The draft strategy was submitted to the Meeting of MAP Focal Points (Teleconference, 10-17 September 2021) and eventually forwarded to COP 22 (Antalya, Turkey, 7-10 December 2021) for consideration.
57. COP 22 adopted the "Post-2020 Regional Strategy for marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures in the Mediterranean" and called upon the Contracting Parties to take effective measures to implement it, thus enhancing the implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol in the Mediterranean region (Decision IG.25/12).
58. The next steps for Output 3.3 within 2022 are described hereunder:
 - Editing the adopted Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MCPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean and disseminating it through the UNEP/MAP and SPA/RAC websites and other relevant channels.
 - Supporting the consultation processes for the development of and Evaluation and Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Regional Strategy, with the technical support of AGEM, using to the extent possible existing monitoring tools in the region in particular those established under the

UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention, as well as in the framework of SDG, Post-2020 Biodiversity and related target monitoring, as requested by COP 22 Decision IG.25/12.

Outcome 4: Improved on-site MPA management and identified mechanisms that ensure MPA sustainability

Output 4.1: Elaboration of MPA management plans and provisions of support for their effective implementation

59. The existence of a management plan is one of the major criteria for qualifying as an MPA. This means that under this activity, and for each of the three involved protected areas, namely Rachgoun future MPA in Algeria, Tyre Coast Nature Reserve in Lebanon and Gulf of Sirte future MPA in Libya, a thorough reflection should take place, including the definition of strategic and operational objectives, setting of an action plan and a calendar of implementation, allocation of resources, and definition of indicators to assess the management effectiveness.
60. Under this activity and based on complementary ecological and socio-economic studies, management plans are being drafted jointly with the national authorities responsible for marine and coastal protected areas and in consultation with other relevant governmental bodies and other stakeholders for the three potential MPAs.
61. In Algeria, following the endorsement of the ecological and socio-economic studies of Rachgoun Island future MPA and the launching of a call for tenders to elaborate a classification study, including the elaboration of the management plan of Rachgoun Island, a national consulting firm has been selected and the work for the classification study, including the elaboration of its management plan of Rachgoun Island, has been underway since July 2021.
62. A follow-up meeting was held on 7 September 2021 between the Consulting firm, the Ministry of Environment and SPA/RAC representatives focusing on the practical and logistic aspects to hold the consultation meetings and gatherings at MPA level involving all local stakeholders. To that aim, an official correspondence was then addressed from the Ministry of Environment to the local authorities requesting them to make all the necessary arrangements and facilitate the consultation and participatory process at local level.
63. An inception workshop at local level in the Wilaya of Ain Témouchent, Algeria, was held on 12 October 2021. It gathered 34 representatives of institutional, associative and private actors and served to present and consult with them on the process goal, expected results and steps of implementation. A perfect harmony seems to have been established between the actors and those in charge of the classification study of Rachgoun Island and unanimous support has been expressed by the stakeholders who expressed their total satisfaction with the participatory and inclusive approach of local actors.
64. Following the inception workshop held in October and the field technical consultations made after that, the consulting firm has submitted, on 22 December 2021, the first deliverable of the process first phase, namely the “Pertinence study for the classification of Rachgoun Island future MPA” for endorsement by the Ministry of Environment.
65. The pertinence study has been then presented for approval to the commission of the protected areas of the Wilaya of Ain Témouchent during a workshop held on March 24, 2022, at the headquarters of the Wilaya of Ain Témouchent. The study along with the classification request were presented to the commission by the Directorate of the Environment of the Wilaya of Ain Témouchent, in accordance with the national regulations.
66. It is worth noting that the members of the Commission of the Protected Preas of the Wilaya of Ain

the second phase of the process consisting of developing a master plan and a management plan of the marine and coastal area of Rachgoun Island.

67. In Lebanon, following the endorsement and edition of the ecological and socio-economic studies, a call for consultancy to hire consultants to elaborate the management plan of Tyre Coast Nature Reserve (TCNR) has been prepared in close consultation with the Ministry of Environment and was launched on 8 October 2021. The consultant's team was selected in November 2021 and the work onboard started effectively in the beginning of December 2021.
68. In addition, in order to strengthen and ensure a smooth technical and logistic implementation of the management plan elaboration process and referring to the long-standing collaboration between SPA/RAC and IUCN-ROWA in Lebanon and taking advantage of IUCN-ROWA knowledge and competence on Tyre Coast Nature Reserve context and for its partnership with the main stakeholders involved in its management particularly the fishermen, an MoA has been signed between SPA/RAC and IUCN-ROWA to join the efforts towards the implementation of the process.
69. A technical meeting was held on the 20th of December 2021 between the representatives of the technical partners namely SPA/RAC, the Ministry of Environment, the Municipality of Tyre, TCNR, IUCN and the Consultants. The objective of the process and the expected participatory approach to effectively deliver the management plan ensuring a balance between the ecological, economic and social aspects of the Nature Reserve was presented.
70. Following the preparation by the consultants of a draft diagnosis-assessment report, a consultation and presentation workshop was held in Tyre with potential local stakeholders on the 3rd of March 2022. It constituted an opportunity (i) to present to the local communities and stakeholders the management plan elaboration process and its proposed inclusive approach, (ii) to understand together the environmental, social and cultural ecosystem and drivers, and to (iii) identify the opportunities to be considered towards the updating of the management plan of the Reserve.
71. In Libya, both ecological and socio-economic reports of the coastal and marine area of the Gulf of Sirte future MPA have been finalised, taking into account the comments made during the technical workshop held for the purpose and endorsed in July 2021.
72. Notwithstanding the political situation prevailing in the Gulf of Sirte, the process of the elaboration of the management plan of the future MPA was initiated by November 2021. A call for consultancy to hire consultants to elaborate the management plan was prepared and submitted to representatives of the Ministry of Environment for consultation and approval at the beginning of December 2021.
73. On the 15th of December 2021, a technical coordination meeting was organised in Tripoli between the representatives of the IMAP-MPA project and the Ministry of Environment where the terms of the above-mentioned call along with the next steps of the project activities implementation were jointly discussed and agreed.
74. Following the approval of the ToRs, a call for consultancy to hire consultants to elaborate the management plan of Shash area in the Gulf of Sirte was launched in January 2022. The consultant's team was selected at the end of February 2022 and the work started effectively by mid-March 2022.
75. The next steps for Output 4.1 within 2022 are described hereunder:
 - Following the endorsement by the Ministry of Environment of the pertinence study and the request of classification of Rachgoun Island future MPA in Algeria, the second phase of the process will start with the aim of elaborating a master plan and a management plan of the future MCPA.

- Upon the finalisation by the consultants of the diagnosis-assessment report, the second and last phase of the elaboration of the management plan of Tyre Coast Nature Reserve will be undertaken with a view of holding a second consultation workshop by mid-July 2022 to present the draft management plan.
- In Libya, a first workshop with local stakeholders to present and consult on the diagnosis-assessment phase is planned to be held by mid-June 2022. Once held and the diagnosis-report approved, the second phase of the management plan elaboration will be run at the second half of 2022.

Outcome 4: Improved on-site MPA management and identified mechanisms that ensure MPA sustainability

Output 4.2: Improvement of MPA management through capacity building and initiation of management plan implementation

76. ToRs for the hiring of consultants to develop curricula and deliver training activities on (i) the effective management, and (ii) sustainable socio-economic role of MPAs, were prepared. A call for tenders was launched and published on SPA/RAC website in May 2021 in order to have the consultants onboard by early June 2021. One offer was received regarding the training on effective management, and the kick off meeting with the consultants was held in June 2021. Due to travel restrictions, the training was held online in February 2022.
77. The SPA/BD Focal Points of the Project beneficiary countries were invited to designate the participants for the training. A total of 24 participants were designated from 6 different countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Lebanon).
78. A training workshop was organised on 2 and 3 February 2021 online for the Mentors (one senior participant per country) in order to share with them the content of the forthcoming training, and to enhance their communication and coaching skills.
79. The training workshop on MPA management effectiveness was successfully organised from 7 to 10 February online for the 24 designated participants. A curriculum of the training was prepared in English and translated into French, and simultaneous interpretations were offered during the training.
80. Another call for tenders will be launched in May 2022 related to the training on the sustainable socio-economic role of MPAs.
81. Regarding Jbel Moussa future MCPA in Morocco and following the regular coordination with the SPA/BD Focal Point belonging to the Department of Water and Forests in Morocco, it was agreed to prepare the ToRs for a sustainable fisheries plan at Jbel Moussa for review by the national authorities in November 2021. Later in November 2021, a newly adopted application decree on protected areas in Morocco designated both the Department of Water and Forests and Department of Fisheries as the two principal institutional actors responsible for the development and management of protected areas including coastal and marine parts as is the case for Jbel Moussa.
82. The above-mentioned ToRs were modified according to the guidance of the new application decree and then shared in December 2021 with the representatives of both the Departments of Water and Forests and Fisheries. They were endorsed in January 2022 which allowed the launching of the call for consultants in February 2022.
83. The consultant to be in charge of developing a sustainable fisheries plan for Jbel Moussa was selected in the beginning of March 2022 and the work started effectively by mid-March 2022.

84. In addition, a call for consultants to develop a communication strategy to promote the future MCPA of Jbel Moussa and its translation into a communication plan was launched on mid- March 2022. It is expected that the selection process of the consultants will be finalised by the beginning of April so that the effective work starts by mid-April.
85. The initiation of the management plan implementation at Kerkennah Islands future MPA in Tunisia was launched in 22 September 2021 where a coordination meeting was held with the MPA management team.
86. During that meeting, the detailed workplan for the development of a communication strategy, the development of an integrated socio-economic programme and the acquisition of the necessary field equipment to enhance management measures enforcement such as patrolling, surveillance at sea and monitoring were set up.
87. Following technical consultations and exchanges with the MPAs management team in Tunisia, the specifications of a field boat, intended for monitoring and patrolling activities, has been then prepared and agreed and a call for tenders was launched in February 2022. In March 2022, a supplier was selected and the manufacturing of the field boat has been launched.
88. In addition, a call for consultants to develop a communication strategy to promote the future Marine and Coastal Protected Area (MCPA) of north-eastern islands of Kerkennah archipelago in Tunisia, and its translation into a communication plan was launched on 29 March 2022.

The next steps for Output 4.2 within 2022 are described hereunder:

- ToRs for the hiring of consultants to develop curricula and deliver training activities on the sustainable socio-economic role of MPAs, are being prepared, and a call for tenders will be launched by May 2022 in order to have the consultants onboard by June 2022.
- ToRs for the hiring of consultants to develop an integrated socio-economic programme at Jbel Moussa future MCPA are being prepared, and a call will be launched by end of April 2022 in order to have the consultants onboard by end of May 2022.
- ToRs for the hiring of consultants to develop an integrated socio-economic programme of the future MCPA of north-eastern islands of Kerkennah archipelago are being prepared, and a call will be launched by end of April 2022 in order to have the consultants onboard by end of May 2022.

6. Issues at stake and new challenges

89. The COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken at national, regional and international levels to contain its spread, including full/partial national lockdowns, border closures and travel restrictions, have resulted in several issues/delays listed hereunder:
 - All the physical meetings at country level were postponed during the first half of 2021 which resulted in some delays, significant in some cases, mainly linked with the organisation of the national meetings and the establishment of the National IMAP Committees.
 - The face-to-face coordination and planning meeting in Egypt for the IMAP implementation and the development of a National MPA Network Strategy for the Mediterranean Egyptian coast, postponed several times was finally organised on the 31st of March 2022. To compensate for the delay, online discussions and coordination have been continually organised and assured with the project Focal Point of Egypt.
 - Regarding the organisation of the 2020 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean, physical meetings were not allowed and thus the Steering Committee meeting was organised through online/teleconference arrangements.

- The 2020 MPA Forum face-to-face event was postponed to 29 November-1 December 2021 in Monaco. The event took place in a hybrid format.
- Regarding the improvement of MPA management through capacity building and initiation of management plan implementation in Morocco, the physical coordination and planning meeting was postponed. Continuous discussions and online coordination meetings have been organised with SPA/BD Focal Point of Morocco. Nevertheless, the national kick-off meeting of the IMAp-MPA project, held online, served to present and inform the Moroccan participants on the MPA Component and the activities planned to be executed during 2022 at Jbel Moussa future MCPA.
- Delays in the execution of the project (mainly the delays regarding the signature of the legal agreements) may put the respective funds and the effective delivery of the envisaged activities into great risk considering that the end of the project is February 2023.

7. Synergies with other initiatives

90. The project is structured mainly to build on the achievements and outputs of the previous EcAp MED II (funded by DG ENV) and MedMPA Network (funded by DG Near) projects.
91. MoAs signature and bilateral meetings with countries are conducted in synergy with the EU funded EcAp MED III and Marine ML MED projects.
92. The MPA component of the project is based on the outcomes of the previous EU-funded MedMPA Network Project, and is executed on the ground, at national level, in full synergy and complementarity with two regional projects financed by the MAVA Foundation, namely No-Take Zones/MPAs and Sea Turtles projects. The synergetic actions concern Rachgoun Island's future MPA (Algeria) and Jbel Moussa future MPA with regard to the No-Take Zones/MPAs project, and Tyre Coast Nature Reserve (Lebanon) and Gulf of Sirte future MPA (Libya) with regard to the Sea Turtles project.
93. Furthermore, under the MPA component, SPA/RAC particularly worked in synergy with two regional partners, MedPAN and WWF, with regard to the MPA agenda in the Mediterranean, by running the process towards the organisation of the 2020 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean with the purpose to pave the way for the post-2020 MPA agenda progress in the Mediterranean.
94. The project has a strong link and is executed in synergy with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which is participating with one member in the project Steering Committee. The links are based on promoting regional, sub-regional, and transnational cooperation in the sectors falling within its mandate, focusing on environmental protection.
95. In the framework of its programme of work 2020-2021, SPA/RAC anticipated to develop an MPA management effectiveness tool for the Mediterranean region and to make it available to MPA managers and planners. However, while making its preliminary research about existing tools for assessing MPA management effectiveness, SPA/RAC was informed about the Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool (IMET). The IMET Form was developed by the EC Joint Research Centre (JRC). It is a very comprehensive tool based on the Protected Areas Management Effectiveness (PAME) Framework proposed by IUCN/WCPA, and that was tested in many regions of the world. A presentation meeting of the IMET was organised on 3 December 2021 in the presence of representatives of UNEP/MAP, SPA/RAC, EC and JRC. Based on this presentation and on the comprehensiveness of this IMET digital tool, it was decided not to engage in developing a separate tool and to pursue discussions with JRC in view of making the best use of the IMET for Mediterranean MPAs. This work will continue in the framework of the current and potential future EU-funded projects.

8. Gender aspects

96. Gender balance and equity are among the project's core values and pertinent provisions and are taken into account in most of the project's activities. Gender equality and women's empowerment is also recognised

as a cross-cutting priority across all aspects of UNEP's work, including for UNEP/MAP. The Secretariat, through its core work but also through projects' implementation, promotes women and men's participation in all environmental protection and sustainable development activities.

97. In the frame of the project, a comprehensive desk review on gender mainstreaming in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) was carried out, based on available resources on gender in MPAs, marine pollution and coastal livelihoods and in synergy with the GEF funded MedProgramme.
98. This review was completed by an online consultation based on a questionnaire shared by the Secretariat to all partners involved in the project's implementation. Out of the 20 institutions contacted, 5 replied and shared valuable inputs on how they include and monitoring gender related matters in their work
99. Based on the desk review and the online consultation, a Gender Action Plan was prepared to serve as a framework for the gender mainstreaming within the IMAP-MPA project and support the project team but also partners to strengthen the importance of gender related aspects.
100. Provisions for gender balanced participation have also been included in the calls for the recruitment of regional experts/consultants for IMAP, and in this regard a balanced ratio between male and female experts should be expected. Indeed, of the six thematic regional experts involved, three of them are females.
101. Moreover, the Steering Committee of the 2020 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean was gender balanced and this is clearly documented in the progress reports of the fourth Steering Committee Meeting.
102. The SPA/BD Focal Points were invited to consider the gender aspect when designating the participants to the MPA management effectiveness training.

9. Communication

103. A dedicated section for the project has been developed at UNEP/MAP website under the [projects' section](#), as well at SPA/RAC website where a [dedicated project webpage](#) has been developed.
104. The major events organised in the framework of the project have been advertised on UNEP/MAP and SPA/RAC websites and social media accounts:
 - On the occasion of the International Women's Day (IWD) on 8 March 2021, a communication was produced through short stories highlighting the work of women within and around MPAs, with a special focus on women working at potential MPAs of the IMAP-MPA project (e.g., the female manager of the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve in Lebanon, fisherwomen active around the Kerkennah Island's future MPA in Tunisia).
 - <http://www.rac-spa.org/node/2019>
 - <https://twitter.com/SPARACinfos/status/1368874692925419521>
 - <https://twitter.com/UNEPMAPNews/status/1368867088971010048>
 - The International Day for Biological Diversity (22 May 2021) was celebrated through an extended article highlighting the contribution of the project to biodiversity protection. The article was disseminated through social media:
 - <https://twitter.com/UNEPMAPNews/status/1395692973384511492>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4165181143530280>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6801546106040836096>

- The contribution of the IMAP-MPA project in the elaboration of assessment elements of the IMAP CI on biodiversity discussed by the OWG and endorsed by the CORMON meetings (videoconference, June 2021 and March 2022):
 - <http://rac-spa.org/node/2081>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/648650728516690/posts/5140842625964122/?d=n>
- Presentation of the project results during the IUCN World Conservation Congress
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4478554085526316>
- The 2020 MPA Forum related news:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4743396702375385>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4743850508996671>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4743916182323437>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4746443295404059>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4749916308390091>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4750771738304548>
 - <https://twitter.com/SPARACinfos/status/1465993400809934855>
 - <https://twitter.com/SPARACinfos/status/1465615251668353024>
 - <https://twitter.com/SPARACinfos/status/1465347085541249036>
 - <https://twitter.com/SPARACinfos/status/1465265859052589059>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6871033366502813696>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6871033366502813696>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6871117944038965248>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6871377822166892544>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6871378667885404160>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6871756229409071104>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6871837038111457281>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6913030392925024256>
- Signature of the Memorandum of agreements with the Libyan Ministry of Environment:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4800736836641371>
- Launch of the classification study of the marine and coastal area of Rachgoun Island in Algeria
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/4573569549358102>
 - <https://twitter.com/SPARACinfos/status/1445703672239833089>
- Official launch of the classification procedure for the Marine and Coastal Area of Rachgoun Island in Algeria
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/5145685725479812>
 - <http://www.rac-spa.org/node/2172>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6914903852060131328>
- Training course to 24 MPA managers and planners from Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, on management effectiveness and financial sustainability of Mediterranean MPAs
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/5011924655522587>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6897543061208195072>
- Workshop on the process for the elaboration of the Management Plan of TCNR
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6905119585838977024>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SPARACinfos/posts/5074514775930241>

- Coordination meeting with the Egyptian Ministry of Environment representatives in Cairo on the implementation of the IMAP-MPA activities
<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6915688478630387712>
- Participation in regional and international events to present the IMAP-MPA project:
 - Presentation of the project at the IUCN World Conservation Congress during the session “Regional and International Cooperation for the Mediterranean: Achieving the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean Sea” <https://www.iucncongress2020.org/programme/official-programme/session-52588>
 - Presentation of the project at the Forum of Marine protected Areas in the Mediterranean in Monaco during the side event “Barcelona Convention strategies and efforts related to MPAs in the Mediterranean” https://medmpaforum.org/SE01_fr
 - Thanks to the support of the project, all the sessions of the forum are available online <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSp0T2hZFfgMhGGVvftCYA/videos> and a video to present the forum has been produced <https://youtu.be/Op6trGmthhg>
 - Elaboration of a video on the EU-funded projects including the IMAP-MPA at the occasion of the COP 22 of the Barcelona Convention. The video was displayed on a giant screen in the exhibition hall and shared on the webpage of the virtual exhibition “two years of Barcelona Convention achievements”, as well as the giant panel including information on the three EU funded projects, prepared by INFO/RAC for the COP 22. <http://www.info-rac.org/cop22exhibition/>
 - Communication at the COP (link to videos):
 - English: <https://youtu.be/0RPbPoOuI88>
 - French: <https://youtu.be/MyRV6Bfstak>
 - Arabic: <https://youtu.be/CHauC9wMGz0>
 - Spanish: <https://youtu.be/CpF8GcR7NWQ>
 - Monaco Ocean Week: organisation of an event “The 2020 Forum and Post-2020 Roadmap of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean: Post-2020 challenges and solutions”
- It is also worth noting that the first phase of the classification process of Rachgoun Island in Algeria has been widely covered by the national mass media. This includes:
 - A report on the national television Ennahar News;
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xbHnDCfLHFhaVekm2TXltaJgFW3lZm2z/view?usp=sharing>
 - An article in the newspaper Ennahar ;
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lQ3YnZIH9JaNzKbLdG95AcRn2JkbqUjk/view>
 - An article in the newspaper El Watan : <https://www.elwatan.com/pages-hebdo/magazine/vers-le-classement-de-lile-rachgoun-a-ain-temouchent-07-10-2021>
 - A specialised programme "Ecologia" on the local radio station lasting 60 minutes and devoted entirely to the classification project :
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KARHiVYxgjAJnvw5S8KAHpxdyfJP57TY/view?usp=sharing>
- On the occasion of the International Women's Day (IWD) on 8 March 2022, the IMAP-MPA was mentioned in the UNEP/MAP coordinator blogspot, with the other EU-funded projects and the MED Programme, as key element for the gender mainstreaming in the region and within the UNEP/MAP system:
 - <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/fr/news/blogpost/legalite-des-sexes-pour-les-personnes-et-la-nature-en-mediterranee>