



UNITED  
NATIONS

EP

UNEP/MED WG. 524/Inf.9/Rev/1



UNITED NATIONS  
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME  
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

20 May 2022  
English

Third Steering Committee Meeting of the EU-funded IMAP-MPA Project

Videoconference, 7 June 2022

**Agenda item 9: Gender Desk Review**

For environmental and economic reasons, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

UNEP/MAP  
Athens, 2022

**Output 12: Comprehensive desk review on gender mainstreaming in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by reviewing available resources on gender in MPAs, marine pollution and coastal livelihoods; draft 'Gender in MPAs' report that will inform project activities**

## Gender in MPAs

### Introduction

Increasingly, efforts are made to simultaneously tackle sustainable environment management and gender equality objectives, recognizing that existing gender inequalities can severely hamper project objectives, if left unaddressed. Recognizing that 'community based' and 'participatory' approaches are not necessarily 'gender-responsive' is critical for project success, which can only be met by fully and meaningfully engaging all community members and leaving no-one behind. This also holds true in the case of promoting effective Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), where efforts are being made to reduce human-induced stress on marine habitats, a result of overfishing, coastal development, unsustainable tourism and pollution, further compounded by climate change.<sup>1</sup> MPAs are a critical source of food, income and employment for both women and men, enhancing livelihoods through coastal protection, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. According to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 2 indicates that "*Protected area*" means a geographically defined area which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives.<sup>2</sup>

### **BOX 1. THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND GENDER EQUALITY<sup>3</sup>**

The CBD, in its preamble, recognizes "*the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and affirms the need for full participation of women at all levels of policy-making and implementation for biological diversity conservation.*"

Consideration of the gender dimensions of biodiversity involves understanding women's and men's use of bio- logical resources; identifying the institutions—both formal (e.g., policies, laws etc.) and informal (e.g., customs, values, norms etc.) – that influence women's and men's use, management and conservation of biodiversity; and examining how different biodiversity-related outcomes (e.g., loss, degradation, sustainable management etc.) impact women and men differently.

Gender-responsive sustainable management and conservation of biodiversity therefore requires that laws, policies, programmes and public services take into account existing structures of gender inequality and proactively aim to overcome and remove those inequalities in order to contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and women's enjoyment of their human rights.

### Objective

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/oceans-seas/what-we-do/promoting-effective-marine-protected-areas>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/convention/articles/?a=cbd-02>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/convention/articles/?a=cbd-00>

The objective of this desk review is to: (a) undertake a literature review of gender mainstreaming activities in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) across different regions; (b) establish a baseline of how gender elements have been integrated (or not) in MPA project activities in the Mediterranean basin; and (c) identify key gender issues in MPAs and opportunities to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through project and program activities within the context of IMAP-MPA, as well as wider UNEP/MAP activities. Overall, this desk review aims to enhance UNEP/MAP's knowledge of gender issues in MPAs in the Mediterranean basin, identify any missed opportunities in effectively mainstreaming gender across MPAs activities and ways in which this can be mitigated in the future.

### **Why is it important to mainstream gender in MPAs?**

According to the European Environment Agency (EEA), *marine protected areas (MPAs) are geographically distinct zones for which protection objectives are set, aimed at biodiversity preservation and ecosystem restoration. MPAs should be effectively and equitably managed, whilst resource extraction and fisheries are not permitted.*<sup>4</sup> Integrating the human dimension in conservation practice and ecosystem management is necessary in order to understand how different historical, demographic, cultural and socio-economic factors affect relations between women and men and determine forms of marine and coastal resource management, particularly decision-making and benefit-sharing.

In relation to marine protection and natural resource management, integrating a gender perspective involves understanding and integrating the relations and differences between men and women into project design and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. Women and men have different roles, entitlements, endowments and opportunities to access, use, manage and benefit from marine and coastal resources. Existing gender inequalities tend to prevent women from fully participating in and benefiting from MPA initiatives: cultural, educational, institutional, affecting decision-making and welfare of marine resources and coastal communities. As traditionally women have been key actors in coastal livelihoods linked to natural resources, improving the quality of ecosystems and their resilience can have positive impacts by enhancing women's social inclusion, giving rise to income-generating opportunities and improving their voice and agency. Key issues covered in this review include:

1. **Barriers preventing women from fully and meaningfully participating in MPA processes and management**
  - a. **Equal access to natural resources in MPAs:** legal, policy and social barriers limiting women's full and equal access to natural resources (marine parks, nature reserves and locally managed marine areas that protect reefs, seagrass beds, shipwrecks, archaeological sites, tidal lagoons, mudflats, saltmarshes, mangroves, rock platforms, underwater areas on the coast and the seabed in deep water, as well as open water).
  - b. **Equitable benefits from natural resources in MPAs:** sustainable income generation for women through employment and entrepreneurship opportunities (through sustainable tourism, fishing, aquaculture); collective action to improve women's benefits from MPAs and their sustainable use

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/europes-seas-and-coasts/assessments/marine-protected-areas>

(through biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration; raising the profile for tourism options and offering more economic pathways for local development; providing opportunities for training and skills enhancement; educating visitors about the relationship between people and the marine environment; and reversing negative trends of declining fish population)

- c. Equal access to decision-making and governance mechanisms in MPAs: ensuring participation of women in policy development and implementation; ensuring that policies aim to address gender inequalities and build women's capacity in policies, legal provisions and projects
2. Opportunities to promote women's participation in MPA processes, through implementation of gender activities
    - a. Capacity-development on gender equality and women's empowerment: provision of training and on gender and biodiversity/MPA management to MPA staff, local communities and policy-makers; provision of opportunities to women to access training opportunities to develop technical skills related to MPAs management; establishment of a gender review body, including representatives from local communities, for all documents and processes related to MPAs
    - b. Sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis: collect and analyze sex-disaggregated data to report on benefits arising from women's engagement in MPAs management; integrate sex-disaggregated data collection and gender-specific indicators for national biodiversity targets in national strategies and action plans
    - c. Gender-responsive financing: provide technical support to women's groups, associations and women-led NGOs to access much-needed financing from international financiers who promote gender and biodiversity objectives; adopt gender-responsive budgeting to ensure policies take into account the needs and interests of both women and men;
    - d. Gender action plan and implementation resources: ensure sufficient resources (budget, staff, technical support, time allocated) are in place to implement the gender action plans established

### **UNEP/MAP gender activities in MPA management**

UNEP has recognized the importance of promoting gender equality and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls in environmental governance in 2019.<sup>5</sup> As part of the EU-funded IMAP-MPA project<sup>6</sup>, women and men's different roles in coastal livelihoods and differentiated access to resources are taken into consideration to ensure gender imbalances are considered and addressed. A key consideration of the project is to identify the role of gender within the IMAP and MPA processes to allow women to fully and meaningfully participate in, as well as benefit from, the protection of marine ecosystems and pollution reduction efforts. Gender mainstreaming in integrated monitoring and MPA policies can simultaneously maximize resource protection (through compliance and low resistance) and

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://leap.unep.org/sites/default/files/unea-resolutions/Promoting%2520gender%252.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/what-we-do/projects/IMAP-MPA-Project>

provide an opportunity for women's empowerment (through alternative livelihood options, income-generating opportunities, enhanced decision-making).

The GEF-funded MedProgramme<sup>7</sup>, implemented by UNEP/MAP between 2020-2024, has recognized gender equality and women's empowerment as one of the three key pillars and has adopted a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy with the aim promote women's role in sustainable environment management. One of the aims of the MedProgramme is to maintain globally significant biodiversity in landscapes and seascapes in the Mediterranean, including through the protection of marine biodiversity in Libya's Marine Protected Areas in the context of the child project (GEF ID 10158) titled "Management Support and Expansion of Marine Protected Areas in Libya". As part of this project, gender-disaggregated data are collected as part of socio-economic surveys and analyzed to ensure that the perspectives of both women and men on MPA management are considered. Targeted efforts also seek to promote women's participation in MPA governance structures, stakeholder consultations, training and the network of stakeholders to be established for the conservation of marine megafauna and key habitats in specific sites.

UNEP/MAP demonstrates its commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in sustainable environment management through targeted and highly visible communications outputs. In 2021 and 2022, UNEP/MAP published gender-focused articles on its website to celebrate International Women's Day and raise awareness about the importance of including women and recognizing their contributions in sustainable environment management: first, in the context of the its flagship MedProgramme that has devised a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy guiding implementation across 7 Child Projects; and, second, in the context of UNEP/MAP activities, the commitment made to ensure there is no shortage of women in leadership positions and that UNEP/MAP removes barriers that hinder the ability of women to reach their full potential.

The UNEP/MAP Gender Action Plan 2022-2023 builds on the following key policy documents and guiding principles of UNEP related to gender equality and mainstreaming: (a) UNEP Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment Guide (2015); (b) the UN System-Wide Strategy on Gender Parity 2017; (c) the UNEP Gender Parity Implementation Plan 2018-2019; (d) the UN Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025. The UNEP/MAP Gender Action Plan 2022-2023, aims to strengthen gender equality by: enhancing knowledge of UNEP/MAP staff on gender equality and environment linkages, as well as UN and UNEP gender policies; outline specific actions and related targets on how to reflect UNEP gender policies in the work of the UNEP/MAP; and establish a basis for monitoring how gender aspects are mainstreamed into the work of UNEP/MAP, including meeting organization, projects preparation, evaluation cycle, implementation of Gender Parity Strategy of UNEP.

In 2019, the Ocean's Day theme was "gender equality". Recognizing the importance of addressing gender inequality to achieve the ocean-related SDG and targets, the UN Chief flagged that *"for too long, women have also been unable to share equally in ocean-supplied benefits [...] often segregated in low-skilled and unrecognized labour [...] denied decision-making role"*. It was noted that, bringing positive ocean change, can only be achieved by

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/what-we-do/projects/MedProgramme>

empowering women and girls to be agents of change and build a gender equal society and ensuring they access economic opportunities in related sectors such as shipping, coastal tourism and marine science.

Specifically, on the occasion of International Women's Day 2021, UNEP/MAP highlighted the achievements of women who embody the principles enshrined in the Barcelona Convention who also happen to be engaged in MPA-related management and economic activities. There are stories from Albania, Lebanon and Turkey, whereby women assume leading roles in the management of MPAs, engaging with local communities to promote the benefits of conservation among fishers whose livelihoods depend on the MPA resources, *"building a successful management model where women have a leading and managerial role in nature protection and monitoring"*.<sup>8</sup> Women become green entrepreneurs by taking advantage of unwanted products and turning invasive species, such as lionfish, into local delicacies in a Turkish MPA.

During the 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP22), a roundtable discussion with women Heads of Delegations was held, chaired by the First Lady of Turkey, to discuss the gender-related obstacles that prevent women and girls from reaching their full potential. For the first time ever, the Antalya Ministerial Declaration, following COP22, made an explicit reference to gender equality and women's empowerment as key for the protection of the environment and a green recovery in the Mediterranean.

The 2020 State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean (SoED) report, recognizes women as a key pillar for inclusive development, addressing inequalities and involving civil society in decision and action. It also notes that the socially constructed gender roles and gender-based perceptions result in different outcomes for women and men in relation to the environment. The report highlights the lack of sex-disaggregated data as a key knowledge gap.

The report includes sex-disaggregated data to illustrate the gender gap in inclusive environmental management in the Mediterranean: the discrepancy in economic activities between women and men can be attributed to social norms regarding women's role as a caretaker and occupation with household tasks, women's time burden, lack of work-life balance and gender-based discrimination in the workplace, as well as barriers related to lack of safe, affordable, reliable transport and lack of access to finance to start a business. According to the report, *"Economic participation and opportunity for women remains much lower than for men in all Mediterranean countries. The gender gap to be closed is between 20 and 75%, being larger in most SEMCs than the global average of 42% and around the world average or narrower in NMCs"*. Women in the Mediterranean also lag behind in political participation at all levels, as well as in environmental decision-making structures.

### **Online survey of IMAP-MPA stakeholders to identify gender issues**

---

<sup>8</sup> [http://rac-spa.org/node/2019#story\\_1](http://rac-spa.org/node/2019#story_1)

As part of the IMAP-MPA project, an online stakeholder survey was conducted in March 2022 in order to identify the role of gender within the IMAP and MPA processes. This will help establish a baseline of how women and men in coastal communities manage and protect marine ecosystems across the Mediterranean, reduce pollution and fully and meaningfully participate in and benefit from IMAP and MPA processes. The questionnaire was sent to 20 key stakeholders, of which only 5<sup>9</sup> responded. Most respondents find that:

- Women and men's roles are not different in MPA activities. Only one respondent finds that the roles of women and men are different in MPA activities due to social norms and the expectation that women shoulder most household tasks and unpaid care work, highlighting that certain women's groups actively play a key role in MPA management and possess the knowledge and experience to contribute to policies and programs of environmental awareness and education.
- Women and men currently benefit equally from MPAs and related management activities, however noting that there are MPAs where women do not benefit equally. According to one respondent, women and men do not benefit equally from MPA activities due to (i) structural gender inequalities and unequal access to resources; (ii) unequal decision-making structures in MPAs, and (iii) lack of women's participation in activities at all levels. According to another respondent, in Lebanon there is higher representation of men and there is no quota for women's participation in MPA committees. When it comes to MPA services, women and men from local communities can equally benefit, in line with their roles, activities and responsibilities.
- Women fully participate in MPAs decision-making processes. In Lebanon, the government official responsible for MPAs at the national level is a woman, whilst one of the protected areas includes four women in its governance committee. At the local level, women seem to be less represented in MPA committees and management teams in Lebanon. IUCN's head marine biologist for the Mediterranean is a woman as is the agency's Director-General.
- The barriers usually preventing women from participating in MPA processes, including meetings, are their lower educational background and increased childcare and elderly care responsibilities.
- Women participate in the development, implementation and update of environmental policies, plans, strategies and actions in all Mediterranean countries. Some respondents note that women participate at all levels (regional, national and local); other respondents note that women rarely participate in those processes at the local level due to social norms and women's increased household responsibilities.

According to half of the respondents:

- Gender considerations are not integrated in MPA governance, legislative or jurisdictional frameworks, while the rest aren't aware of these issues.
- Women's groups/associations participate in MPA activities and management, whilst there rest are unaware of such activities. For example, these can be women-led NGOs represented in MPA management committees or in various stakeholder groups related to MPAs, or perhaps as NGOs working on marine conservation at all levels. Respondents mention that even if women participate in MPA activities, it's mainly at

---

<sup>9</sup> ANPE Tunisie; SPA/RAC; IUCN; Department of Ecosystems, Lebanon Ministry of the Environment; Israel International Relations and Park Authority

the local level and without much impact; that it's on a case by case basis, whereby women sometimes benefit from MPA activities and trainings and sometimes they can be service providers to the MPAs or support groups;

- *Their respective organizations do not collect, analyze and report sex-disaggregated data, as gender is not considered an issue in the context of MPAs.*

Respondents confirm they collect, analyze and report on the following sex-disaggregated data:

- Number of women and men involved in the preparation of strategies for MPA management
- Number of women and men MPA staff
- Number of women's organizations/networks represented in MPA meetings
- Number of women and men in MPA community meetings
- Number of women's organizations/networks represented in MPA meetings
- Number of MPA project activities targeting women, men, youth and vulnerable groups
- Level of engagement by women and men during MPA community meetings and workshops (e.g., who speaks; whose points are taken up for action)

Sex-disaggregated data is not collected on the following indicators:

- Number of women and men in MPA leadership positions, at the local, district and national levels
- Number of women and men involved in MPA-related trainings and workshops
- Number of communications campaigns inclusive of gender-responsive messaging



## **Key Gender Issues in Marine and Coastal Resource Management from Literature**

### **1. Unequal access to land and natural resources between women and men**

#### **Gender differences exist in access to and control over resources across the Mediterranean.**

Existing gender inequalities prevent women from assuming a leading role in MPAs management, which is why it is critical to identify and address gender differences in policies and practices related to tenure and use rights, literacy, employment, education, health, local governance, decision-making and access to financial resources.

Women's labor force participation rate is lower than that of men in all UNEP/MAP Contracting Parties, even though the size of the gap varies considerably between sub-regions. In some countries particularly in the Southern Mediterranean, women tend to drop out of the labor force once they have a family, considering that powerful social norms dictate that family duties are the primary responsibility of women. Female youth are much more likely than men to be unemployed. In terms of economic opportunities, women generally earn less than men pointing to a significant gender pay gap, are disproportionately concentrated in less lucrative activities in lower-skilled, lower paid jobs with fewer opportunities to advance their careers.

The Southern Mediterranean region is where the OECD data shows the lowest rates of female land ownership: indicatively, women in Egypt hold 5% of land titles, whilst the figure is 4% for Morocco and 3% for Jordan. Given the requirement to use a collateral in order to get a loan, women's lack of land ownership in most countries severely restricts their ability to access finance. Equitable land tenure security is so critical for closing gender gaps that is included in three SDG targets<sup>10</sup>; it is more than formal land titles and encompasses group rights for access to natural resources (wetlands, mangrove forests, flora, fauna).

**Table 1. Resources and Assets**

<b>Natural Resources</b>	Land, water, biodiversity
<b>Financial Assets</b>	Credit, capital, income
<b>Physical Assets</b>	Technology
<b>Information Assets</b>	Local knowledge, formal education, access to information

---

<sup>10</sup> Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources...'.  
Target 2.3: 'By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment ...'.  
Target 5A: 'Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

**Nevertheless, women and men know different aspects of resources, simply because they occupy different spaces in the landscape.** Women's role in the management of marine and coastal resources tends to be overlooked, even though women are key stakeholders, resource users and natural resource managers. Making use of women's and men's traditional knowledge and customary practice of natural resource management in the context of MPAs is key for conservation and sustainability efforts.

**Marine and coastal economic activities are characterized by a gendered division of labour.** Women across the Mediterranean may rarely work in the marine area (fishing, diving, working with watersport businesses). Women play a key role in fish processing and selling.

## **2. Unequal decision-making in MPAs between women and men**

**Women tend to be under-represented decision-making processes related to issues affecting coastal livelihoods.** Given women do not participate equitably in decision-making processes, there is the risk of being left out and not fully expressing different opinions to those of men. Decision-making should be based on information from all parts of the population, otherwise resource threats may be misunderstood and not incorporate all needs and views. As a result, policies and project activities tend to focus solely on men's needs and priorities. In some cases, women can be effective at setting up community-based MPAs because they are not seen as part of the power structure or competing for authority.

**Women face barriers to fully participating in planning and management of marine and coastal resources.** Based on the summary of progress in the Western Indian Ocean region towards each element of Aichi Target 11, there is very little progress made on measuring equity, including gender equality, in MPA management and outcomes, pointing to a clear need for further research and development.<sup>11</sup>

**A well-designed household survey and context-specific gender analysis can often highlight gender based differences in community-based decision-making processes.** Research from a project in Armenia indicated that, women seem to assume decision-making roles more often when: (a) they become the head of household, as a result of widowhood or male out-migration; (b) they are engaged in full-time employment and public activities, therefore earning an income and being more independent; and (c) joint decision-making is promoted as a practice within the household.<sup>12</sup>

## **3. Unequal access to economic opportunities**

**Substantial employment opportunities are generated in MPAs, which can be accessed by women.** These are 'green jobs', i.e. employment directly contributing to, preserving or restoring the environment in the sectors with the greatest greening potential or in green cross-cutting sectors. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) definition, green jobs include both jobs that produce environmentally beneficial goods and services

---

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/marine-protected-areas-outlook>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/gender/publications/CBD-Best-practices-Gender-Biodiversity-en.pdf>

(whether or not their production processes benefit the environment) and jobs that use environmentally friendly production processes (whether or not they produce “green” goods or services).<sup>13</sup>

**Traditionally, women’s employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the Mediterranean have been restricted due to a number of barriers.** Women’s limited access to resources such as land, finance and technology, gender horizontal segregation in education which is later on translated in gender vertical segregation in the labor market, discriminatory norms and social norms that limit women’s access to specific jobs and structural gender inequalities that lead to women’s increased time burden due to unpaid care work, all prevent women from accessing economic opportunities in the context of MPAs and the economy more generally.

**Economic opportunities for women in MPAs occur in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.**

In general, fishing practices are gendered: due to established gender norms, men have greater access to decision-making structures, credit and extension services, fishing practices and technologies. In small-scale fishery activities, women dominate in post-harvest activities focusing mainly on processing and marketing. Women source fish from family members or the community or buy from local sellers. Women’s work in the sector tends to be informal and insecure, focused on low-value added activities such as drying, smoking, salting and fermenting. Moving away from unhealthy processing methods, such as fish smoking, would require replacing this practice with solar dryers. By applying sustainable fisheries practices, women can access green jobs created in the sector, enhance their livelihoods and increase their income.

**Economic opportunities for women in MPAs also occur in the tourism sector.** Even though the tourism sector suffered a big shock due to COVID-19, it is now recovering and expected to play a key role as a driver of economic growth in the Mediterranean region. Whilst the region has been characterized by “conventional tourism” practices leading to high GHG emissions, water consumption, discharge of untreated water, waste generation and damage to local terrestrial and marine biodiversity, ecotourism and nature-based tourism linked to MPAs can be promising sectors in terms of jobs creation for women with substantial variations across types of jobs. Women tend to predominate in food and beverage, accommodation and recreational services sectors.<sup>14</sup>

#### **4. Unequal access to knowledge and technologies**

**Projects promoting access to technology, information and training related to marine protection have traditionally targeted men.** Quite often, MPA staff have been conveying information only to men, wrongly assuming that the men will convey this information to women in their community. Moreover, MPA staff are usually male, since in many cultures women are not encouraged to learn how to swim and do not have experience of working on boats. This is partly due to the fact that men traditionally pursued advanced studies in marine

---

<sup>13</sup> ILO. 2016. “What is a green job?” ILO website. 13 April. [http://www.ilo.int/global/topics/green-jobs/news/WCMS\\_220248/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.int/global/topics/green-jobs/news/WCMS_220248/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>

biology and ecology, engineering, biochemistry and biotechnology, holding academic and research positions in oceanographic and fisheries research bodies.

**Quite often, women’s knowledge about biodiversity goes unnoticed, even though they interact differently with the marine environment than men.** (e.g. their role in post-harvest activities such as gutting fish, may give them greater knowledge about fish reproductive seasons). When training sessions are delivered, it is critical to ensure women have the opportunity to participate on equal footing with men. Moreover, it is key to ensure women access technical, business and soft skills training as well as scientific education training, such as occupational health and safety in fish processing. To ensure community activities have a wider impact on gender, gender awareness raising sessions can be included in community and sectoral trainings.

SDG target 5.b aims to enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology to promote women’s empowerment. Natural resource management case studies from Armenia and Bolivia showed that the introduction of financing for adoption of technologies reduced women’s time burden, whilst crowdsourcing for funds was used as a tool by women environmentalists to save an endangered species in Indonesia.

#### **5. Lack of sex-disaggregated data on gender in MPAs**

**Women’s unpaid role as users and guardians of natural resources is often invisible and not captured in national official statistics.** It is of utmost importance that MPA management project design is based on the development and use of good quality sex-disaggregated data and qualitative assessments of women’s insights about biodiversity conservation and MPAs management, as key stakeholder of these processes. Household surveys, focus group discussions and other survey techniques and tools should specifically target women as well as men and include gender-specific questions in order to use the findings in shaping gender-responsive MPAs management plans.

**Collecting and analyzing sex-disaggregated data can lead to gender-responsive MPAs action and programming.** A case study from Tunisia showed how recognizing women’s previously unrecognized role in the fisheries sector by creating a database was used as a proof for accessing social benefits during the months of unemployment, as their job is of seasonal nature. Another case study from Armenia, a country with a high percentage of female-headed rural households due to male out-migration, showed that, by targeting women in a project survey it better reflected the demographic profile and highlighted decision-making structures and social issues.

#### **BOX 2. EXAMPLES OF SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA & GENDER ANALYSIS**

In the context of MPAs management, the following questions are key in conducting a gender analysis and collecting sex-disaggregated data that will inform the design of gender-responsive project activities:

*Access to resources*

Number of MPA management plans with gender-sensitive activities

Number of MPA project activities targeting women, men, youth

*Participation in MPA decision-making*

Number of women and men involved in preparation of strategies for MPA management

Number of women and men MPA staff

Change in female shares in professional staff, by headcount

Number of women and men in MPA community meetings

Number of women's organizations/networks participating in MPA meetings

Number of women representatives of women's groups in MPAs committee

Number of women and men in MPA leadership positions at the local, district and national level

Men and women's perception on the quality of their participation in MPA community meetings and workshops (e.g., who speaks; whose points are taken up for action)

Number of women and men involved in MPA-related trainings and workshops

*Access to information and knowledge*

Number of communications campaigns inclusive of gender-responsive messaging

Number and types of cases in which organizations maintain or improve their representation in local communities

Men and women's perceptions of the degree to which they are aware of their legal rights

*Sex-disaggregated (demographic) data*

Distribution of male and female employment in MPAs project areas, by sector

Women's access to training opportunities

Heads of environmental ministries, by sex, by sector

Executive managers of national utilities, by sex

## Case study examples

### **The gender approach in Karaburun-Sazan National Marine Park, Albania<sup>1516</sup>**

The National Marine Park of Karaburun-Sazan in Albania is led by a woman, Director of the Regional Administration of Protected Areas in Vlora region (RAPA Vlora). According to the Management Plan, there is strong engagement with local communities to promote the benefits of conservation among fishers whose livelihoods depend on the MPA resources, including women. Gender gaps exist and need to be addressed, which is why there is a focus on gender equality in the management of MPAs (NAPA/Ministry of Tourism and Environment). Remedial actions include the promotion of women in decision-making positions, while emphasis is placed on promoting awareness-raising among youth, with a focus on women.

### **The gender approach in Tunisia in the AMCP of the Kneiss Islands, Tunisia<sup>1718</sup>**

The clam collection business in Kneiss is female-dominated (about 97%) and about 80% of participants in knowledge exchanges are women. An effort is made to promote gender equality in all aspects of MPA creation and management in Kneiss, valuing the skills and knowledge of fisherwomen and involving them in other types of fishing, such as blue crab fishing and providing training on marketing and involvement in various stages of the value chain. Working with women's fishing development groups (Khawela, Zaboussa) and the Association of Women Clam Collectors in Kneiss is also key. It is necessary to involve fisherwomen in the implementation of the axes of the co-management plan of the AMCP Kneiss (Axis 1 :Protection of the site vis-à-vis anthropogenic activities / Axis 2: Preservation of the biodiversity of ecosystems / Axis 3: Development of the area) and on the implementation of the roadmap, involving women-led CSOs.

### **Gender Dimensions of Community-Based Management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Siquijor, Philippines<sup>19</sup>**

In the Philippines, MPAs have been established from as early as the 1970s. In some communities (Caticugan), only male fishermen participated as a result of deeply-rooted stereotypes that kept women away from participating in MPA management, thus limiting their economic opportunities. In communities (Maite and Binoongan) where women often participated in MPA management they could access income-generating opportunities and effectively participate in ecosystem preservation.

### **Gender and marine protected areas: a case study of Danajon Bank, Philippines<sup>20</sup>**

According to this research based on over 500 interviews in 12 fishing communities, the MPAs were largely perceived to be a management tool for men's fishing activities. Very few men and women reported a negative effect on their personal fishing activities or displacement from their fishing area. Women were less likely than men to report that the MPA had a

---

<sup>15</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UW3YLiyVGpk5f2RKG\\_QL07wbzcdIKWpm/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UW3YLiyVGpk5f2RKG_QL07wbzcdIKWpm/view)

<sup>16</sup> [https://medmpaforum.org/en/DS30\\_en](https://medmpaforum.org/en/DS30_en)

<sup>17</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16XEkgF9RPvFQZOM4MMPFYyDYRYtV3qbb/view>

<sup>18</sup> [https://medmpaforum.org/en/DS30\\_en](https://medmpaforum.org/en/DS30_en)

<sup>19</sup> <https://panorama.solutions/en/solution/gender-dimensions-community-based-management-marine-protected-areas-mpas-siquijor>

<sup>20</sup> <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40152-018-0107-7>

positive effect on their fishing, but women and men recommended the MPA in equal numbers. Women and men reported attending MPA meetings, but women were less likely to describe active participation in MPA management such as decision making.

### **Quirimbas National Park in Mozambique: a gender-sensitive approach to MPA establishment<sup>21</sup>**

The association of friends and residents of Ibo Island in northern Mozambique ASSOCIAÇÃO KARIBO is led by a woman, Aida Safire. To address the problem of overfishing, the organization consulted with 40 communities affected by the project to design the management plan and identify the no-take areas, so that fish stocks could recover. Aida often conducted women-only meetings and spoke with women alone, given women speak more freely when men are not around.

### **Eritrea's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan<sup>22</sup>**

In its revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, the Government of Eritrea identified the National Union of Eritrean Women to be responsible for mobilizing women to participate in biodiversity planning and implementation, tapping into the Union's track record and proven ability to engage with local communities in natural resource management project design and implementation.

### **Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation Project (MCCAP) in Belize<sup>23</sup>**

In this ecosystem-based marine conservation and climate adaptation project women played a key role in harvesting marine resources and fishing activities. The project identified women's roles in fish processing: women played a key role in marketing of fish products, preparing materials for fishing expeditions and managing household income from fishing. The project ensured women fully participated in the project and identified sub-projects for funding, participated in all project activities and had a role in decision-making in order to benefit from project resources. To address women's underexplored role in the fishing industry, the first Women in Fisheries Forum was organized in Belize in 2017. Organizing women in the fishing sector where they are underrepresented or have inequitable benefits can be an important opportunity to strengthen networking with other actors who can help improve women's benefits.

---

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.wiomsa.org/mpatoolkit/Themesheets/B3\\_Gender\\_and\\_MPAs.pdf](https://www.wiomsa.org/mpatoolkit/Themesheets/B3_Gender_and_MPAs.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/CBD-GenderPlanofAction-EN-WEB.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/55BelizeMCCAPProjectProposalJune52014-2.pdf>

## Recommendations

**Ensure all stakeholder consultations are gender-responsive.** When training and capacity development activities related to MPAs management are delivered, it is critical to ensure that there is equal proportion of female/ male trainers, there is a balanced participation of women and men, training takes place at times that take into account women's and men's different workloads and safety, selected venues are accessible by women taking into account women's and men's different mobility restrictions, whilst practical support is considered to help women overcome barriers that prevent them from accessing training opportunities e.g. access to childcare and transport.

**Support women's organizations and networks to participate in MPAs management.** This can help increase women's access to knowledge and information on MPAs, as well as how they can contribute to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration. Women can have a 'safe' space to develop technical skills, promote sustainable livelihoods and gradually build their confidence so as to later on assume decision-making roles.

**Assist countries to establish the link between gender equality and sustainable environment management at the policy level.** Identify national gender policies and implementation plans and how they can contribute to biodiversity conservation and marine protection efforts; as well as how gender considerations can be integrated in MPAs plans. Address local norms and structural inequalities that restrict women's access, use and control of natural resources, including land, while implementing MPAs management plans.

**Improve women's access to land and natural resources.** To the extent possible, promote joint land titling between spouses, equal participation of women and men in user groups and formalize informal women's collectives. This can also lead to equitable benefit sharing between women and men, with associated economic returns.

**Promote women's employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the context of MPAs.** Encourage women to take up non-traditional employment in the fisheries and tourism sectors, such as fisherwomen and in high-level leadership and management positions. It is also critical to move away from referring to women's vulnerability and highlight women's role as agents of change and their ability to drive environmental and policy change.

**Support women's leadership in MPA policy and programming processes, as well as governance bodies.** Help create female role models by changing gender stereotypes that have left women's contributions to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration unacknowledged. Increase visibility around women's contributions in MPA management at all levels (home and community), through enhanced sex-disaggregated data collection, communications and awareness-raising campaigns, and sensitization of government authorities.

**Tackle gender issues not just at the community level, but at the household level too.** Acknowledging and rewarding women's unpaid care burden and household contributions with regard to natural resources management (NRM) can help deeply-rooted gender stereotypes. Also, consider using this as an opportunity to promote shared responsibility



within the household. Identify equitable benefit-sharing modalities in relation to MPAs management, drawing on existing literature, consultations and interviews with stakeholders, including women's organizations.

**Address gender-based violence (GBV) incidents in the context of MPAs management.** Identify men champions to fight against GBV from different actors. It is noteworthy that recent studies suggest that extremely high temperatures as a result of climate change are associated with an increase in violence against women.

**Provide capacity-building to partners to find ways to support women's organizations.** Integrate women's participation as a criterion for receiving and deciding on the use of community funds and allocate human/financial resources to implement gender actions in MPA strategies and action plans. Develop a gender theory of change and include gender expertise for the gender action plan's implementation. Ensure national partners engaged in MPAs management are aware of national and international level gender commitments.

**Support women's organizations and networks to tap into gender-responsive climate and environmental financing mechanisms.** Build awareness among women's organizations on the opportunity to secure funding from donors who consider biodiversity conservation a strategic priority, namely the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and identify priority areas for investment in gender integration. Provide capacity-building and technical support to women, in order to participate meaningfully in MPAs decision-making processes at the community, local, national and regional levels.

**Ensure the monitoring framework is gender-responsive.** It is key to ensure that the gender action plan is implemented and there are lessons learned to inform and improve subsequent project activities, programs and initiatives. Undertake periodic mapping exercises to identify the data gaps in biodiversity and natural resource management in MPAs, with a specific focus on the social impacts of biodiversity degradation, that would hinder gender-responsive policy making.

**Collect and analyze sex-disaggregated data, both qualitative and quantitative, from MPA policies and programs implemented.** Include more social indicators (on governance, educational attainment, labor force participation) in national biodiversity statistics, to capture the impact of biodiversity degradation and loss on women and men, and gender-based change of perceptions over time. Given women's contributions often go unacknowledged and are not captured by official statistics, this can help identify gender gaps and design and implement gender-responsive interventions. Integrate the parameter of gender in surveys and undertake comprehensive analysis of data to inform policies and programs.

**Establish partnerships with other actors (public, private, NGOs) to design and implement gender activities in MPAs.** Joining efforts and leveraging each actor's capacity, resources and expertise can be instrumental in reaching positive gender outcomes. Raise awareness on the added value of engaging women in MPAs activities, at the community and national level, through communication campaigns.

## Gender & Environment Stakeholders

Country	Stakeholder	Activities	Contact information
<b>Algeria</b>	Ministry of Environment		
	<a href="#">Association of Algerian Women Entrepreneurs</a>		
<b>Egypt</b>			
	EEAA (Environmental agency Egypt)		
	National Council for Women		
	Alliance for Arab Women	Raises awareness about women's rights, provides training programs to improve women's socio-economic status and engages in gender dialogue	
	The Women Business Development Center	Provides Egyptian women with the skills and tools to set-up and run MSMEs or enter the labor force	
	Outreach Egypt	Provides trainings on business sustainability, including to women-led MSMEs	
<b>Israel</b>	INPA (Biodiversity agency Israel)		
<b>Jordan</b>			
<b>Lebanon</b>	Ministry of Environment		
	CNRS-L (Research Centre - Lebanon)		
	IUCN ROWA (MPA Lebanon)		
	<a href="#">National Commission for Lebanese Women</a>		

	<a href="#">Department of women's affairs – Ministry of Social Affairs</a>		
	<a href="#">Committee for the follow-up on Women's Issues - CFUWI</a>		
	<a href="#">ABBAD</a>		
	<a href="#">League of Lebanese Women's Rights</a>		
	<a href="#">Lebanese League for Women in Business</a>		
<b>Libya</b>	Ministry of Environment		
<b>Morocco</b>	Ministry of Environment		
	Department of Water and Forestry		
	<a href="#">Democratic Association of Moroccan Women (ADFM)</a>	Feminist NGO focused on the promotion of gender equality, sustainable development and climate justice	
<b>Palestine</b>			
<b>Tunisia</b>	ANPE (Pollution Agency Tunisia)		
	APAL (Biodiversity agency Tunisia)		
	Ministry of Women, Family, Children and the Elderly (MAFFEPA)	Ensures that gender equality policies are properly developed and fully implemented throughout the work of all ministries and government offices	
	The National Council of Women, the Family and Older Persons (CNFFPA)	Collaborates with governmental bodies and CSOs on gender-related policies	
	The Center for Research, Studies, Documentation and Information on Women (Credif)	Conducts and publishes gender research. Organizes trainings, collects gender statistics in collaboration	

		with the National Statistics Institute	
	Centre for Research, Study, Documentation and Information (CREDIF)	Operates under the Ministry of Women and is in charge of maintaining and disseminating gender statistics	
<b>Regional</b>	SPA/RAC		
	WWF-Med		
	GFCM		
	MedPAN		
	ACCOBAMS		
	EGA		
	AP AL		
	The Centre for Arab Women Training and Research (CAWTAR)	Conducts academic research and field studies on the status of women	
	The Arab Women's Organization	Provides capacity-building to Arab women	

## Sources

Adaptation Fund (2014). Project Proposal: Belize Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation Project. Available here: <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/55BelizeMCCAPProjectProposalJune52014-2.pdf>

B. M. Clabots (2013). Gender Dimensions of Community-Based Management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Siquijor, Philippines. A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Marine Affairs, University of Washington. Available here: <https://panorama.solutions/en/solution/gender-dimensions-community-based-management-marine-protected-areas-mpas-siquijor>

Convention on Biological Diversity (2017). 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action. Pocket Guide: Summary and Examples. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/CBD-GenderPlanofAction-EN-WEB.pdf>

D.Kleiber, L. Harris, A.C.J. Vincent (2018). Gender and marine protected areas: a case study of Danajon Bank, Philippines. *Maritime Studies* 17 (163-175). Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40152-018-0107-7#:~:text=MPAs%20are%20found%20in%20both,management%20tool%20for%20men's%20fishing.>

European Environment Agency. Marine Protected Areas. Available here: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/europes-seas-and-coasts/assessments/marine-protected-areas>

INFO-RAC (2019). Article: The UN World Oceans Day in the Mediterranean Region. Available here: <http://www.info-rac.org/worldoceansday/>

International Labour Organization (2016). Article: What is a green job? Available at: [http://www.ilo.int/global/topics/green-jobs/news/WCMS\\_220248/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.int/global/topics/green-jobs/news/WCMS_220248/lang--en/index.htm)

International News and Analysis on Marine Protected Areas (2002). Women and MPAs: How Gender Affects Roles in Planning and Management. Available here: <https://www.crc.uri.edu/download/MPA36.pdf>

R. Di Ciommo, A. Schiavetti (2012). Women participation in the management of Marine Protected Area in Brazil. *Ocean & Coastal Management* 62: 15-23. Available here: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257423411\\_Women\\_participation\\_in\\_the\\_management\\_of\\_a\\_Marine\\_Protected\\_Area\\_in\\_Brazil](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257423411_Women_participation_in_the_management_of_a_Marine_Protected_Area_in_Brazil)

IUCN (2020). Article: Gender is the key: effective gender mainstreaming unlocks 'Green List' success in Protected and Conserved Areas worldwide. Available here: <https://www.iucn.org/news/protected-areas/202012/gender-key-effective-gender-mainstreaming-unlocks-green-list-success-protected-and-conserved-areas-worldwide>

L. Bastian, M. Gilligan and B. Clabots (2016). Gender and Protected Areas: Exploring National Reporting to the Ramsar Convention and the World Heritage Convention. Washington, USA: IUCN. Available here: <https://genderandenvironment.org/fr/gender-and-protected-areas-exploring-national-reporting-to-the-ramsar-convention-and-the-world-heritage-convention/>

Plan Bleu (2019). Article: Journée mondiale des Océans 2019 « Genre et océan » : l'occasion d'explorer notre relation avec la Méditerranée sous l'angle de l'égalité des sexes. Available here: <https://planbleu.org/page-actualite/journee-mondiale-oceans-2019-genre-et-ocean-occasion-dexplorer-notre-relation-avec-la-mediterranee-egalite-des-sexes/>

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2022). Best practices in Gender and Biodiversity: Pathways for multiple benefits. Available here: <https://www.cbd.int/gender/publications/CBD-Best-practices-Gender-Biodiversity-en.pdf>

SPA/RAC (2021). Article: Sheroes of sustainability in the Mediterranean. Available here: [http://rac-spa.org/node/2019#story\\_1](http://rac-spa.org/node/2019#story_1)

The MedFund (2021). Portraits of active women in the Mediterranean MPAs. Available in French: <https://themedfund.org/en/uncategorized/portraits-of-active-women-in-the-mediterranean-mpas/> (*Portraits de femmes engagées dans les AMP de Méditerranée, The MedFund, 2021*)

The Forum for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean (2021). DS30: Gender sensitive approach to marine conservation. Available here: [https://medmpaforum.org/en/DS30\\_en](https://medmpaforum.org/en/DS30_en)

UNEP/MAP (2019). The IMAP-MPA Project. Available here: <https://www.unep.org/uneppmap/what-we-do/projects/IMAP-MPA-Project>

UNEP/MAP (2020). The MedProgramme (2020-2024). Available here: <https://www.unep.org/uneppmap/what-we-do/projects/MedProgramme>

UNEP/MAP (2022). Blogpost: Gender equality for people and nature in the Mediterranean. Available here: <https://www.unep.org/uneppmap/news/blogpost/gender-equality-people-and-nature-mediterranean>

UNEP/MAP & Plan Bleu (2020). State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean. Available here: <https://planbleu.org/en/soed-2020-state-of-environment-and-development-in-mediterranean/>

UNEP-Nairobi Convention and WIOMSA. 2021. Western Indian Ocean Marine Protected Areas Outlook: Towards achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets. UNEP and WIOMSA, Nairobi, Kenya, 298 pp.

UNWomen (2018). Research Paper: Towards a gender-responsive implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Available here: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/11/towards-a-gender-responsive-implementation-of-the-convention-on-biological-diversity#view>

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation – Norad, The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), WIOMSA, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (2009). Managing Marine Protected Areas. Available here: <https://www.wiomsa.org/publications/managing-marine-protected-areas-a-toolkit-for-the-western-indian-ocean/>

World Bank; Food and Agriculture Organization; International Fund for Agricultural Development. 2009. Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook. Agriculture and Rural Development; Washington, DC : World Bank. Available here: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/6603> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.”

World Tourism Organization (2019), *Global Report on Women in Tourism – Second Edition*, UNWTO, Madrid. Available here: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420384>