



**Mediterranean
Action Plan**
Barcelona
Convention



REPORT

of the Meeting of PAP/RAC Focal Points

(Video conference, 24-25 May 2021)

Split, May 2021

DRAFT REPORT
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Venue, participation and objectives

1. The PAP/RAC Focal Points (FPs) meeting was held by video conference, on 24-25 May 2021. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following 19 Contracting Parties (CPs): Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, European Union, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, and Turkey. In addition, the representatives of UNEP/MAP, INFO/RAC, PAP/RAC, PB/RAC and SPA/RAC representatives attended the meeting, as well as the representative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). A complete List of participants is attached as Annex I to this Report.

2. The main objective of the meeting was to present and discuss the status of implementation of the PAP/RAC activities in the current biennium, and to get the first feedback on the proposal of the PAP/RAC workplan for 2022-2023.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

3. The PAP/RAC Director welcomed the participants and thanked them for attending the meeting in such a large number. She particularly greeted the ones that attended for the first time, raising hope that next time it will be possible to host the meeting in the PAP/RAC premises in Split. She introduced the objectives of the meeting, and then gave the floor to the UNEP/MAP Deputy Coordinator.

4. The Deputy Coordinator of UNEP/MAP greeted the participants on behalf of the UNEP/MAP Coordinator. She pointed out the importance of this meeting as an essential element on the path towards CoP 22 in December 2021, where new strategic mandates should be adopted, such as the new Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) of UNEP/MAP, a new SAP-BIO strategic programme, the MEDPOL's regional plan for marine litter, a plan for sludge management, the REMPEC's strategy to implement the Protocol for the pollution prevention, etc.

5. The PAP/RAC Director thanked for the introduction on the UNEP/MAP upcoming activities, provided some technical information about the meeting, introduced the Rules of Procedure and suggested the officers of the meeting.

6. The following Bureau members were unanimously elected:

- Chair: Ms Isabel Flores Montoya, Spain
- Vice-chair: Ms Michelle Borg, Malta
- Vice-chair: Mr. Tarik Kupusović, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Rapporteur: Ms Snježana Dominković Alavanja, Croatia

7. The Chair introduced the agenda of the meeting, which was adopted as contained in Annex II to this report.

Agenda item 2: Progress Report for the period 2020-2021

8. The PAP/RAC's Progress Report for the 2020-2021 was presented by the PAP/RAC Director who highlighted that the activities were carried out in line with the UNEP/MAP MTS for 2016-2021 and the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) for 2020-2021, as well as the Action Plan contained in the Common Regional Framework (CRF) for ICZM (2020-2027) adopted at the last COP21 (Naples, Italy, December 2019). She summarised the main activities and achievements within four themes of the UNEP/MAP PoW (Governance; Land-sea interactions and processes; ICZM; and Climate change adaptation), namely: the 2020 Mediterranean Coast Day held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with local celebrations in several Mediterranean countries; the Coastal Area Management Programme (CAMP) on-going in Bosnia and Herzegovina and two CAMPs about to start (the already signed transboundary CAMP for Albania and Italy, and the transboundary CAMP for Cyprus and Israel in development); the support provided to Albania and Montenegro within the GEF Adriatic project with regard to the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP); the other activities supporting the implementation of MSP in the Mediterranean (development of an MSP Toolbox; testing of the Land-Sea Interactions guidance document in Malta; supporting the MSP in Slovenia; EU Interreg PORTODIMARE project in the Adriatic-Ionian Region); the preparatory activities for the implementation of the GEF MedProgramme Child Project 2.1 on ICZM; the MedOpen virtual training course on ICZM and the lectures on ICZM for the Syrian Virtual University (SUV) to be delivered in September 2021; the implementation of the EU Interreg ADIADAPT project focused on climate change. In addition, she mentioned that PAP/RAC was invited to contribute to many conferences and workshops, to give lectures to students, webinars, advices, and recently received a visit of the Montenegrin delegation aimed at the finalisation of the GEF Adriatic project and starting of the GEF MedProgramme. The power point presentation on the PAP/RAC progress is available [here](#).

Agenda item 3: Presentation of the main on-going projects

9. Programme Officers of PAP/RAC and SPA/RAC presented the GEF Adriatic project, a sub-regional project implemented in Albania and Montenegro, which aims at restoring the ecological balance of the Adriatic Sea through the implementation of the ecosystem approach and MSP. The first step of the project was linked to the "transposition" of IMAP. The teams of national and international experts were established and they prepared a gap assessment regarding data and information available in both countries, which led to the preparation of integrated monitoring programmes for coastal and marine environment. The first survey of the entire marine area of Montenegro fully in line with IMAP was carried out in 2019, and for the Patok-Rodoni Bay in Albania in 2020. In Montenegro, a national database to store IMAP data was developed to be used for data assessment and reporting to IMAP systems. Assessments of Good Environmental Status (GES) for both countries were carried out and reports prepared. Another important component of the project was the first MSP drafted for Montenegro. The power point presentation on the GEF Adriatic project is available [here](#).

10. Answering to the question raised by the representative of Spain if there were any general conclusions about the environmental state of the sea in both project countries, the presenters pointed out that there were no general conclusions since for certain parameters it can be said that the state is good, for some that it is not good, while for many others it was not possible to assess GES due to the lack of data.

11. The representative of Montenegro thanked PAP/RAC and SPA/RAC for the assistance provided through the GEF Adriatic project, which also contributed to the EU integration process of Montenegro and to the national spatial planning system with the MSP component.
12. The representative of Slovenia thanked PAP/RAC and other partners of the GEF Adriatic project. He added that, during a working group between UNEP/MAP and EU DG MARE on EcAp and MSP, the decision was taken to use the approach followed in the GEF Adriatic project as a pilot case for the whole Adriatic sub-region to demonstrate ICZM and MSP synergies.
13. The PAP/RAC FP for Malta presented the results of testing the Land-Sea Interactions (LSI) methodology developed by PAP/RAC. She pointed out that seven online exchanges held in the period July2020 - March2021 helped Malta to identify and agree on the list of main interactions in terms of spatial extent and temporal aspects. That allowed to evaluate the impacts of LSI on maritime uses and protected areas, prepare factsheets on LSI and identify policy gaps and synergies. The main lessons learnt so far are the understanding of LSI and the need to take into account temporal uses of the sea and challenges of the traditional planning focused on permanent use of a site. Malta hopes that the next MSP plan will take more into consideration the environmental component, since now there are new perspectives for the analysis that need to be taken. The power point presentation on LSI is available [here](#).
14. A PAP/RAC Programme Officer presented the concept of an MSP toolbox that is being evolving from a static document to a dynamic tool, which will be incorporated into the ICZM platform as an updateable and interactive workspace. The central part of the toolbox is the bookshelf, with all relevant information on LSI, climate action and ecosystem approach. Also, there will be a part to share experience and a part with self-assessment tools, inspired by the MEDWET project and work on wetlands. The work on the MSP toolbox is in progress, and if proposed PAP/RAC budget revision is approved, it will be finished by COP 22 in December this year. The power point presentation on the MSP toolbox is available [here](#).
15. In the discussion that followed, the representative of IUCN congratulated PAP/RAC for this interesting tool and recommended that reference be made to other useful tools, such as the IOC-UNESCO guide on MSP, while the representative of Spain announced that his country would soon make public their marine spatial plan for the Mediterranean Sea.
16. A PAP/RAC Programme Officer presented the Geoportal for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (GAIR) developed within the EU Interreg project "Portodimare". The aim of the GAIR is to provide access to datasets, information and tools related to coastal and marine areas for ICZM and MSP in the Adriatic-Ionian region. PAP/RAC was in charge of the Geoportal's testing and demonstration through the organisation of two training workshops, coordination of the six case studies, development of strategies and action plans in four GAIR testing areas, and preparation of the GAIR practical guide and GAIR maintenance and transferability plan. He also presented the main functionalities of the Geoportal, pointing out that this geoportal, although focused on the Adriatic-Ionian region, has potential to be replicated in other Mediterranean sub-regions. The power point presentation on the "Portodimare" project is available [here](#).

17. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina reminded that this project and the Geoportal were very useful for his country in developing a number of spatial data that can serve future MSP and that it would hopefully be capitalized in the CAMP project.

18. The representative of Slovenia, in his function of the Chair of the EUSAIR environmental pillar, encouraged the cooperation in Adriatic-Ionian region, and said that MSP and ICZM were important also for the non-EU countries in the enlargement process to West Balkans. The "Portodimare" geoportal can be seen as a way to enhance this process.

19. The representative of Turkey informed that 90% of the coastal zone in her country were covered by coastal plans. The geoportal will be useful for her country to compare projects and find inspiration for the future.

20. The Senior Programme Officer of PAP/RAC presented the EU Interreg project "AdriAdapt", which aims to improve the local climate change adaptation capacity in the Adriatic region by creating an online knowledge platform that enables access to guidance, data and tools. The platform will help local authorities to take adequate policy measures and develop plans to increase resilience in urban and coastal areas. There are 43 adaptation options on the platform prepared so far, divided into societal, grey or green options. In addition, 11 case studies are on the platform, mainly from the Adriatic region but also from different Mediterranean countries. Various guidelines and handbooks related to climate change adaptation and resilience can also be found on the platform, which are presented according to the core of the platform – a detailed step-by-step process on how to develop plans for adaptation to climate change. The power point presentation on the "AdriAdapt" project is available [here](#).

21. The representative of IUCN mentioned that the adaptation planning of the sea is also important and expressed the hope to collaborate regarding sea and coastal environment adaptation. She also reminded of an IUCN project on cities and nature-based solutions.

Agenda item 4: Programme of Work for the biennium 2022-2023

22. The PAP/RAC Director briefly introduced the proposed PoW for the biennium 2022-2023 structured according to the new UNEP/MAP MTS for 2022-2027 (in preparation) and taking into account the Action Plan adopted within the Common Regional Framework for ICZM by COP 21 (Naples, Italy, December 2019). The proposed PoW contributes to five MTS programmes, namely: P3 - Towards a climate resilient Mediterranean; P4 - Towards sustainable use of coastal and marine resources including circular and blue economy; P5 - Governance; P6 - Together towards a shared knowledge and foresight of the Mediterranean Sea and coast; and P7 - For informed and consistent advocacy, awareness, education and communication. Her presentation is available [here](#).

23. Several participants expressed their appreciation of the ambitious and focussed PoW. They underlined the well-balanced programme that would contribute to the implementation of MSP and LSI in particular, as well as to the adaptation to climate change and implementation of IMAP Ecological Objectives (EOs) and ecosystem-based management. All these challenges are interconnected and should be tackled in an integrated manner in order to contribute to sustainable Blue Economy in the region. The role of MSP as a policy instrument adopted by COP 19 (Tirana 17-20 December 2017) should be promoted especially in the countries that are not yet bound by legal

obligation to prepare sea-use plans. Experiences from the Mediterranean EU member states should be promoted and collaboration supported for mutual benefit. In doing so, co-operation with other MAP Components and partners (e.g. IUCN, IOC-UNESCO, EEA) was underlined in seeking synergies.

24. Several participants referred to some specific activities which they would like to implement, such as the assistance for the ratification of the ICZM Protocol or pilot activities in the Adriatic-Ionian sub-region in order to avoid overlapping and demonstrate synergies between UNEP/MAP and EU processes.

Agenda item 5: Presentation of the main projects to be implemented in 2022-2023

25. The EU-funded EcAp MED III project was presented by the Deputy Director of PAP/RAC. He first reminded the participants of the IMAP-related COP decisions on the implementation of the ecosystem approach in the Mediterranean, and of the three clusters of Ecological Objectives (EOs) and related Common Indicators (CIs). He focussed on the coast and hydrography cluster led by PAP/RAC and briefed on three indicators: CI 15 and 16, and Candidate CI on Land cover change. He continued by presenting the main activities and the outputs to be provided by this project: assistance to eligible countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia) to monitor CIs; development of the assessment criteria and preparation/testing of the Guiding document for the application of assessment criteria (CI 16); presentation of lessons learned at CORMON meetings; and preparation of the related chapters for the 2030 Quality Status Report (QSR).

26. The GEF-funded MedProgramme Child project 2.1 and the complementary SCCF project were presented by the PAP/RAC's Senior Programme Officer. She first introduced the Component 2 of the MedProgramme Child project 2.1 aiming to enhance sustainability and climate resilience of coastal zones. Having reminded the meeting of the countries participating in the Child project 2.1 (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) and in the SCCF project (Albania, Algeria, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia), she introduced main activities, deliverables and outputs expected from both projects. She continued by presenting the activity related to the potential use of the IMAP CI on Land cover change in the context of coastal vulnerability to flooding, and emphasised the methodologies and tools produced and tested within MedPartnership and ClimVar projects, which will be used in the MedProgramme as well. Finally, she presented PAP/RAC's budget for both projects and concluded with the statement that all activities within these two projects aim at supporting the implementation and ratification of the ICZM Protocol. Her presentation is available [here](#).

27. The representative of Italy advocated for a better understanding of links between atmospheric and hydrographic characteristics and conditions, and more precise scenarios through downscaling of global climate change models to the level of the Mediterranean region. Such knowledge would contribute to addressing several IMAP EOs, such as invasive species and marine litter.

28. Several participants appreciated the efforts made by PAP/RAC to mobilise external funding from the GEF MedProgramme that will support the implementation of ICZM (e.g. preparation of coastal plans and strategies, establishment of coordination mechanisms for ICZM, assistance to ratify the ICZM Protocol), and adaptation to climate change. Representatives of several eligible CPs

expressed their commitment to provide full support and co-operation for the timely implementation of the project and ensure strong involvement of relevant stakeholders.

29. The commitment was also expressed for the provision of the monitoring results and assessments related to the IMAP common indicators belonging to the coast and hydrography cluster lead by PAP/RAC within the EU funded EcAp MED III project. All countries were invited to submit monitoring data that will allow timely preparation of the Mediterranean 2030 QSR.

Agenda item 6: Presentation of the video on Climate Change produced by the “AdriAdapt” project

30. In the morning of the second day, a video clip prepared in the framework of the EU Italy-Croatia Interreg project “AdriAdapt” was shown. The video illustrates climate change impacts in the coastal zone and proposes a tool for the preparation of local integrated adaptation plans. Although prepared for the Adriatic coastal zones, it shows challenges of preparing the response common to the entire Mediterranean region. The video clip can be seen [here](#).

Agenda item 7: Discussion on how to improve the visibility and ownership of PAP/RAC’s products and achievements

31. As a response to PAP/RAC Director’s invitation, several participants proposed to secure links on their web sites to promote products such as the “AdriAdapt” video and to enrich their on-going awareness raising campaigns with the PAP/RAC products. All participants agreed that the Mediterranean Coast Day campaign and the accompanying local events represent a good opportunity to increase the visibility of different PAP/RAC products. The importance of having all materials systematized so that they are ready and easy to be used by the countries was also emphasised. This is particularly relevant for flagship publications, but also for different thematic aspects and products, such as new, videos or similar.

32. The representative of INFO/RAC proposed to strengthen the linkage between INFO/RAC’s and PAP/RAC’s FPs in order to secure better flow of information. The opportunity of having a communication task force at the level of the entire Barcelona Convention system was emphasized, as well as the possibility of sharing news through newspapers and other media, such as the news shown during the meeting on the update of Algerian national ICZM Strategy published that same day in several national newspapers.

33. Having in mind that he could not participate on the first day of the meeting when the MSP toolbox was presented, the EU representative shared some updates regarding MSP implementation in the EU Member States. He reminded that MSP was regulated by the MSP Directive for EU Member States and that there were number of projects and initiatives at the EU level relevant for the Mediterranean, such as MSP Med, the West Med initiative and the MSP Global project, the latter implemented in collaboration with IOC-UNESCO. EU has just finalised a study on the ecosystem-based approach in MSP and adopted a Sustainable Blue Economy Communication that sets out a detailed agenda for the blue economy. Recently, the UfM ministerial declaration on blue economy recognised the role of regional cooperation in MSP as the area where action should be intensified.

34. In the discussion that followed, the PAP/RAC Director confirmed PAP/RAC’s involvement in and contribution to all of the highlighted initiatives. The need was confirmed to link MSFD and MSP,

recognising the complexity of its practical implementation at national level and highlighting the integrated approach in IMAP and ICZM in the Mediterranean as processes that allow the implementation of measures for sustainable development of blue economy and good environmental status (GES). In that context, the Common Regional Framework for ICZM, together with the Conceptual Framework for MSP (the latter adopted by COP 20, Tirana, Albania, 2017), offers a framework for an ecosystem-based MSP fully linked with IMAP objectives.

Agenda item 7: Conclusions and recommendations of the meeting

35. The conclusions and recommendations, as drafted by the secretariat of the meeting and adopted by the participants, are given in Annex III to this report.

Agenda item 8: Closure of the meeting

36. The Chair thanked PAP/RAC for organising the meeting and the participants for their contribution to the meeting deliberations.

37. The PAP/RAC Director thanked the participants for attending the meeting and contributing to its success. She stressed that PAP/RAC would continue asking them for their opinion and contribution as the effectiveness and productivity of PAP/RAC depend on them, in first place. Raising hopes that the next FPs meeting could be organised face-to-face, she also thanked the interpreters and the technicians for their efficient support.

38. The Chair declared the meeting closed on 25 May 2021 at 12:30 hours.

ANNEX I

List of participants

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ANNEX II

Agenda

Monday, 24 May 2021

- 10:00 – 10:15¹ Opening of the meeting: welcome addresses, objectives and programme, organisation of work (by Željka Škaričić - PAP/RAC and a representative of UNEP/MAP).
- 10:15 – 11:00 Progress Report for the period 2020-2021 (15' presentation by Željka Škaričić, PAP/RAC).
Discussion.
- 11:00 – 12:30 Presentation of the main on-going projects (10' presentation per project by PAP/RAC and partners):
- GEF Adriatic (Marina Marković from PAP/RAC and Anis Zarouk from SPA/RAC);
 - LSI implementation (Michelle Borg, PAP/RAC FP for Malta);
 - MSP Toolbox (Marina Marković, PAP/RAC);
 - PORTODIMARE Geoportal (Ivan Sekovski, PAP/RAC);
 - ADRIADAPT (Daria Povh Škugor, PAP/RAC).
- Discussion.
- 12:30 – 14:00 Lunch break.
(Video presentations on MSP; and GEF Adriatic activities in Albania).
- 14:00 – 14:30 Programme of Work for the biennium 2022-2023 (15' introduction by Željka Škaričić, PAP/RAC).
Discussion.
- 14:30 – 15:30 Presentation of the main projects to be implemented in 2022-2023 (10' presentation per project by PAP/RAC):
- EcAp MED III (Marko Prem, PAP/RAC);
 - GEF MedProgramme (Daria Povh Škugor, PAP/RAC).
- Discussion.
- 15:30 – 16:00 Wrap-up of the day.

Tuesday, 25 May 2021

- 10:00 – 10:15 Presentation of the video on Climate Change produced by the ADRIADAPT Project.
- 10:15 – 11:30 Discussion on how to improve the visibility and ownership of PAP/RAC's products and achievements.
- 11:30 – 12:00 Coffee break.
(Video presentations on climate change).

¹ All hours in Central European Time (CET).

12:00 – 13:00

Conclusions and recommendations of the meeting (introduction by PAP/RAC, discussion and adoption).

Closure of the meeting.

ANNEX III

Conclusions and recommendations

On the progress in implementing the 2020-2021 Programme of Work (PoW)

1. The meeting acknowledges the progress achieved in implementing the PAP/RAC Programme of Work (PoW) in the current biennium despite difficult working conditions under Covid-19 pandemic.
2. The meeting appreciates the PAP/RAC's fundraising efforts to complement the regular MTF funding, especially through the GEF Adriatic project that contributes to the implementation of the entire Barcelona Convention, and in particular the ICZM Protocol and IMAP process.
3. The meeting also appreciates the results obtained within the EU-funded projects for the EU Member States, which ensure synergy with other strategic processes in the region (e.g. EUSAIR) and can be easily adapted for use by the rest of the Mediterranean countries, such as those related to MSP and adaptation to climate change.
4. The meeting welcomes the integration approaches followed in analysing land-sea interactions (LSI) and IMAP Ecological Objectives (EOs) for the purpose of MSP, and recommends them as good practices to be used. The meeting also takes note of the examples of good practice in LSI and MSP suggested by several participants and recommends to PAP/RAC to explore and include them in related guiding documents and platforms.
5. The meeting welcomes the synergy established by PAP/RAC with other MAP Components as well as with other partners in implementing the ICZM Protocol, as per the Action Plan 2020-2027 included in the Common Regional Framework for ICZM, and recommends to continue following this approach in the future.

On the Programme of Work (PoW) for 2022-2023

6. The meeting congratulates PAP/RAC for the ambitious and well-focused PoW proposed, the implementation of which will provide valuable practical support to tackling the complexity of ICZM, MSP and climate change, and their interconnection.
7. The meeting re-confirms the ICZM Protocol as the policy instrument for implementing MSP in the Mediterranean and conciliating the ecosystem-based management and development of a sustainable Blue Economy.
8. The meeting takes note of the suggestion to prepare and implement a pilot project on ICZM and MSP in the Adriatic-Ionian sub-region with the objective to avoid overlapping and demonstrate synergies between UNEP/MAP and EU processes.
9. The meeting endorses the climate change related activities among others as a contribution to downscaling global climate change scenarios to the Mediterranean level, with a suggestion to couple the sea and atmospheric modelling and better understand hydrographic characteristics and conditions, also with the view to better address several IMAP EOs (e.g. marine litter, invasive species, etc.).
10. The meeting appreciates the commitment expressed by several eligible countries to support the implementation of the package of activities funded by GEF.

11. The meeting takes note of the need to provide data and information related to coast and hydrography IMAP indicators in order to support the preparation of the Med2023 Quality Status Report (QSR).
12. The meeting takes note of the need to submit regular and timely reports on the ICZM Protocol implementation within the BC reporting system, regardless the status of ratification, in order to get a complete picture of the ICZM-related activities implemented in the Region during the biennium and to serve as an orientation for focusing future activities.
13. Taking into account the Action Plan 2020-2027 adopted within the Common Regional Framework for ICZM by COP 20 (Naples, Italy, December 2019) and the new UNEP/MAP Mid-term Strategy (2022-2027) in preparation, the meeting endorses the activities proposed by PAP/RAC to be included in the UNEP/MAP PoW for the biennium 2022-2023 and recommends them for consideration and endorsement by the meeting of UNEP/MAP NFPs.

On the visibility and use of PAP/RAC's results and deliverables

14. The meeting acknowledges the importance of enhancing the communication and information about the PAP/RAC's activities and deliverables, as well as their visibility and ownership by the CPs and their stakeholders, for instance through local associations, articles in newspapers, organisation of local Coast Day events, etc.
15. The meeting recommends to strengthen the links between PAP/RAC and INFO/RAC FPs in order to reach as large audience as possible, as well as to use the existing coordination mechanisms at the national level for mainstreaming ICZM outcomes into other sectoral policies.