



ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT

The Mediterranean experience

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In the Mediterranean, a process has been initiated for the application of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities that may impact the marine and coastal environment





We consider ecosystem approach as the strategy for the comprehensive integrated management of human activities based on the best available scientific knowledge about the ecosystem and its dynamics, in order to identify and take action on influences that are critical to the health of marine and coastal ecosystems, thereby achieving sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services and maintenance of ecosystem integrity





The goal of the ecosystem approach is:

to restore and sustain the functions of marine and coastal ecosystems, based on their health, productivity and biological diversity, and the overall quality of life through management systems that are fully integrated with social and economic goals, for the benefit of current and future generations





EC/MAP Project (ECOMED)

AIMS:

- ❖ To facilitate the implementation of the ecosystem approach by MAP and its components;
- ❖ To develop a road map.





In the framework of the project:

- ➔ a working group of experts was set up which met twice (April & November 2006)**
- ➔ a document with proposals that was discussed at a Regional meeting of government-designated experts (February, 2007) was prepared.**





Moving to the ecosystem approach

- ⇒ not a **revolutionary** step but
- ⇒ an **evolution** of integrated management of human activities with a greater emphasis on ecosystem implications





MAJOR STEPS IN THE APPROACH

- ❖ **TRANSFORM** our Vision for the marine ecosystem from a descriptive status (clean, healthy, etc.) to a measurable target
- ❖ **REDRAFT** existing management plans on the basis of the agreed ecosystem and operational objectives
- ❖ **IMPLEMENT** the management plans following the ecosystem approach principles





RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE BARCELONA CONVENTION

1. Progressively apply the ecosystem approach **to the management of human activities** that may affect the marine and coastal environment
2. Initiate a process, involving scientists and policy makers, aiming at the gradual application of the ecosystem approach, which would include the following steps:





PROPOSED ROAD MAP

- a) **Definition of an ecological Vision for the Mediterranean**
- b) **Setting of common Mediterranean strategic goals**
- c) **Identification of the important ecosystem properties and pressures**

(Note: From this point onwards, it is necessary to consider the appropriate spatial and temporal scale of application of the approach)





PROPOSED ROAD MAP

- d) Development of a set of ecological objectives corresponding to the Vision and strategic goals**
- e) Derivation of operational objectives with indicators and target levels**
- f) Revision of existing monitoring programmes for ongoing assessment and regular updating of targets**
- g) Redrafting the management plans**





3. Consider the launching of pilot projects as a model for the application of the approach





ECOLOGICAL VISION PROPOSED

A Mediterranean with marine and coastal ecosystems that are healthy, productive and biologically diverse for the benefit of present and future generations





PROPOSED STRATEGIC GOALS

- a) To protect, allow recovery and, where practicable, restore the structure and function of marine and coastal ecosystems, thus also protecting biodiversity, in order to achieve and maintain good ecological status allowing for their sustainable use.
- b) To reduce pollution in the marine and coastal environment so as to ensure that there are no significant impacts or risk to human and/or on ecosystem health and/or on uses of the sea and the coasts.
- c) To preserve, enhance and restore a balance between human activities and natural resources in the sea and the coasts and reduce their vulnerability to risks.





WHAT NEXT?

Decide on:

- ➔ **Management areas**
- ➔ **Pilot studies**

And proceed with step 3 of road map:

Identification of the important ecosystem properties and pressures (assessment)

