



Workshop on the Preparation of the Action Plan for Biodiversity and marine protection with special reference to the establishment of marine protected areas in the part of the Adriatic Sea belonging to BIH

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LEGAL OPTIONS AND LIMITING FACTORS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY AND SHARED GOVERNANCE IN THE REGION

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MEDITERRANEAN ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS (EBSAs)

- 2008

The CBD COP 9 adopted scientific criteria for identifying ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs).

- 2012

The Barcelona Convention COP17 endorsed a preliminary EBSA Map, featuring 11 priority areas in the Mediterranean.

- 2014

UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC regional workshop identifies 17 EBSAs of which 15 were included in the EBSAs Repository.



MEDITERRANEAN ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS (EBSAs)

- Four of these EBSAs are within, or partially within, the Adriatic-Ionian region.
- The South Adriatic Ionian Strait (SAIS) is identified and assessed against the CBD EBSA criteria during the Workshop Plenary, meeting all the criteria established by the CBD.



SOUTHERN ADRIATIC-IONIAN STRAIGHT ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS (SAIS-EBSA)

- 2019

The PANACeA Interreg MED project (2016-2019) hosts workshop 'Towards an action plan for the Ecosystem-based management on the Southern Adriatic Ecoregion' identifies pressures, conservation measures, governance mechanisms, policy tools and commitments that need to be made to ensure the management of the region.

- 2021

A second workshop was organized as part of the **Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community (MBPC)** Interreg MED project. A Draft Action Plan and Roadmap was developed identifying a range of governance tools for the sustainable use of the SAIS-EBSA.

- 2022

A third workshop as part of the MBPC project finalised the **Action Plan and Roadmap**



SAIS-EBSA CONSERVATION COMMUNITY (SECC)

- The SAIS-EBSA process has been widely supported by the scientific community through the MBPC and created the SAIS-EBSA Conservation Community (SECC).
- Technical and scientific support has been augmented by preliminary Marxan analysis to aid decision makers as part of a broader planning process.
- Marxan allows the integration of values, objectives, and data from stakeholders across industry, conservation and government, including the identification of conservation features, targets and scenarios.
- Further MSP in the region requires access to policy makers at various levels and key representatives of industry stakeholders as partners in developing the initiative.



POLICY PAPER FOR THE DEFINITION OF A GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOUTH ADRIATIC-IONIAN STRAIGHT ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREA (SAIS-EBSA)

Study prepared as part of Work Package 5 of the Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community, funded by the Interreg Mediterranean Programme

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This policy paper is built upon [previous publications](#) and [contributions to the MBPC website](#), and exchanges with participants from the [SAIS-EBSA workshop](#) undertaken in May-June 2022.

OUTPUTS FROM THE ROAD-MAP

POLITICAL COMMITMENT

- While regional institutions have significant resources that can assist in the development of the SAIS-EBSA initiative, **the national authorities are the most important decision makers in the region.**
- The **SAIS-EBSA and other EBSAs in the AIR provide an opportunity** to fulfil international and regional **targets for conservation (30% BY 2030)** while maintaining a **blue growth agenda.**
- The national authorities have the opportunity to **request assistance from the regional institutions.**
- Conversely, the **regional institutions have the capacity to encourage their national focal points to engage,** particularly the transfer of data and uptake of the DST approach.
- The **role of the sub-national authorities** will be critical throughout the process to **ensure the legitimacy** of this process as they are at the policy-society interface.

OUTPUTS FROM THE ROAD-MAP

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- What is clearly missing from the process is the engagement with the leading sectoral groups, stakeholders, and **decision-makers from industry**.
- There is an urgent need to **identify key leading bodies and develop motivational hooks**, including economic strategies, to ensure meaningful and equitable engagement.
- This would **facilitate co-design, including structured and periodic discussions** on milestones to produce useful tools and actions and strengthen the proposed process.

OUTPUTS FROM THE ROAD-MAP

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Of particular importance would be the **development of skills for the assessment of the economic value** of the region taking into consideration the **ecosystem services** currently provided, the **vulnerability of the region to climate change** and the enumeration of **conservation costs and burdens**.
- In addition, experience with the **implementation of Decision Support Tools**, the **interpretation of outputs and engaging** with policy makers, industry and partners at the science-policy-society interface are urgently required.
- From a practical aspect, the **data utilised by the DST software** needs to be **formatted and ground-truthed**,
- Computer programming, script writing and data management expertise are missing.

OUTPUTS FROM THE ROAD-MAP

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

- The roles of UNEP/MAP Components - PB/RAC, PAP/RAC and especially SPA/RAC have been essential in the development of the process.
- Given the type of pressures identified by experts, there is a clear **need to engage also with REMPEC** and utilise the MoUs signed between SPA/RAC and other regional authorities, **particularly the GFCM and the IMO**.
- **EUSAIRTSG₃** has also played a fundamental role in the process, but likewise it is important now to **engage with the other TSGs to ensure the SAIS-EBSA initiative is on the MSP agenda** of all the relevant institutions.
- These institutions have a role to encourage the **mainstreaming of conservation policy into economic policy** in the region.

PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ADRIATIC SEA AND COASTAL AREA

Agreement between former Yugoslavia and Italy in Belgrade 1974

- The **first milestone** in the sub-regional environmental protection in Adriatic sea
 - Its main achievement was the establishment of a **Joint Commission for the Protection of the Adriatic Sea against pollution**, extended to all Adriatic waters, including high seas
- In 2010, the Trilateral Commission, was **joined by Montenegro**, to become a Quadrilateral Commission
- In 2011, the last Ordinary meeting was held in Portorož: **officially invite Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina** to join the Commission.
- **In 1979, concurrently Greece and Italy** concluded an Agreement on the protection of the marine environment of the Ionian Sea and its coastal zones in Rome
- In 2014 the EUSAIR TSG3 included the **topics of sub-commission in the EUSAIR Action Plan**.
- In 2021, a trilateral meeting occurred in Ljubljana (IT, SLO, HR) to **discuss connectivity, blue economy and environmental protection** of the Adriatic Sea.

POST 2022

- December 2022, **new commitments from the CBD COP15**, including **30% by 2030** (adopted by the UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC and EU Biodiversity Strategy).
- December 2022, Mediterranean Interreg Project: **Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community concludes – Policy Paper**
- January 2023, Euro-Med Interreg Dialogue₄Nature (D₄N) project commences.
 - Transferring the **lessons learned from the SAIS-EBSA process** to other EBSAs in the Mediterranean, including the Sicily Channel and the Western Mediterranean.
 - **Mediterranean Resilience Network (MRN)** will be established to **coordinate cooperation at the broader Mediterranean scale on climate change, biodiversity, and sustainable development policies**.
 1. Improve **policy coordination and governance mechanisms**.
 2. **Mainstreaming conservation** understanding.
 3. **Enhancing capacities** for effective policy delivery.

THE MEDITERRANEAN RESILIENCE NETWORK (MRN)

- Strategy to formalise the existing network and coordinate capacity building based on biodiversity-based boundary organisations.
 - Examples of science-policy-society organisations include the Stockholm Resilience Centre, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, and the California Ocean Science Trust.
- Based on the development of SAIS-EBSA Conservation Community, the development of the Adriatic-Ionian Resilience Centre.
 - Provide credibility and greater coordination.
 - Embedding this within a leading institution in the region would allow the extension of the expertise beyond the EBSA regions.
 - Focus would be on biodiversity conservation, climate crisis alleviation and broader sustainable development policies, including food security.
- Mainstreaming conservation into social and environmental policy, will also improve human health and well-being and to ensure a more resilient socio-economic model.

CONCLUSIONS

- Reinforce the governance arrangements in place.
 - Create a clear link between the legislation and the policy framework.
 - Support from inter-governmental organisations.
 - Recognition that the **environment is the base** on which Blue Growth, Transportation and Tourism reside.
- Provide **science-based information through a dedicated transboundary network / centre** to inform policymakers.
 - **Independent funding** (non-project related).
 - **Apolitical** base.
 - Institutional **credibility**.
 - **Stable governance** structure.

*HOW CAN WE ENGAGE WITH THE PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF THE ADRIATIC SEA AND COASTAL AREA?*