



Event Report

**EPPA Sub-Regional Workshop on the implementation of the
Barcelona Convention**

16-17 February 2021

Live video conference



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- Annex 2: List of Participants (provided as a separate document)
- Annex 3: Presentations (provided as a separate document)



1 Introduction

The sub-regional workshop on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention took place on February 16-17, 2021, via live video conference. The workshop was organized in cooperation with TAIEX, and under the EPPA project work programme, namely activity 3.3 “Assistance for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention”. It targeted the following EPPA beneficiaries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Turkey.

The participants came from the relevant authorities of the EPPA beneficiaries involved in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention. They represented the Ministries with the environment, infrastructure, energy, and water portfolios, in addition to national environmental and nature agencies, water management agencies, hydroengineering institutes, and coastal zone management bodies. Details are available in the list of participants. Civil society was represented by NGOs from the beneficiaries, namely: LIR Evolution (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Association of Young Ecologists of Niksic (Montenegro), and KADOS - KADIKOY Friends of Science, Culture and Art Association (Turkey). The EU Delegations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Turkey were also present.

The speakers represented EU Member States’ and EU institutions’ experience. There were experts from the national authorities of Romania and Slovenia, and from the Marine Environment and Water Industry Unit, DG Environment, European Commission. Additionally, the workshop mobilized the contributions of the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre¹, the UN Environment Programme Mediterranean Action Plan², the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research³, and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization of Turkey (Marine and Coastal Management Department)⁴. Details are available in the agenda.

The presentations can be downloaded in both the TAIEX website and in the EPPA project website.

2 Objectives of the training and expected results

The aim of the Workshop was to provide advice and guidance to strengthen the national capacities of EPPA beneficiaries for effectively addressing implementation challenges and needs regarding the application of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. In particular, the Workshop aimed at examining the content and implications in terms of national strategic documents of the requirements of implementing Barcelona Convention and three Protocols: Land-Based Sources Protocol, Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol, and the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol (ICZM).

In addition, the Workshop presented and discussed various tools, such as new policy instruments and action plans required for implementing the Protocols; the latest EC developments and findings of relevant projects, particularly for the Adriatic and Ionic Seas, as well as a set of proposed recommendations by participants welcoming regional actions and cooperation in tackling pollution reduction and transboundary management of the Adriatic and Ionic Sea, and how the experience gained in the Barcelona Convention has been used in other Regional Seas Convention, such as the Black Sea.

The other 3 protocols of the Barcelona convention will be the subject of another similar event.

3 Highlights

3.1 Opening remarks and introduction

Mr. Mihail Dimovski and Ms. Mihaela Popovici opened the workshop by thanking the engagement of all stakeholders in its preparation and development, namely the beneficiaries, responsible services in the EC, and Barcelona Convention actors. They reviewed the agenda and explained the workshop objectives in light of the EPPA’s work plan activities that support marine management and marine biodiversity. Ms. Mihaela Popovici led a round of introduction of the workshop participants.

¹ <https://www.rac-spa.org/>

² <https://www.unep.org/unepmap/>

³ <https://www.hcmr.gr/en/>

⁴ <https://cygm.csb.gov.tr/en/units/department-of-marine-and-coastal-management/2168>



Ms. Marijana Mance opened the workshop with a presentation on a long-term vision for monitoring and assessment tools in the Mediterranean relevant to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive - MSFD (2008/56/EC) and to the Ecosystem Approach of Barcelona Convention – IMAP.

The MSFD main objectives are:

- To achieve "Good Environmental Status" (GES) by 2020
- Healthy, clean & productive seas
- Make sustainable use of the EU's seas
- Links with other legislative frameworks
- Regional coordination

Marine strategies, as mandated by the directive are developed in several stages. The first is to assess the current state of seas followed by the definition of the ideal environment, that is what constitutes a good environmental status by setting targets. The second step is to monitor the seas through monitoring programmes. The monitoring will allow to identify and implement the needed actions, expressed through programmes of measures. This process is done in 6 years cycles.

The Ecosystem Approach of the Barcelona Convention comes from Decision IG. 17/6 'to progressively apply the Ecosystem Approach to the management of human activities that may affect the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment' and it aims to achieve a healthy Mediterranean with marine and coastal ecosystems that are productive and biodiverse for the benefit of current and future generations.

The Good Environmental Status is determined by 11 descriptors/ ecological objectives, namely:

- Biodiversity: Biodiversity is maintained or enhanced.
- Non-indigenous species: NIS do not adversely alter the ecosystem.
- Commercial fish & shellfish population: CF & S are within biologically safe limits
- Marine food webs: Alterations to components do not have long-term adverse effects
- Eutrophication: Human-induced eutrophication is prevented
- Sea-floor integrity: Sea-floor integrity is maintained
- Hydrographical conditions: Alteration of hydrographic conditions does not adversely affect coastal and marine ecosystems.
- Contaminants (in environment): The natural dynamics of coastal areas are maintained and coastal ecosystems and landscapes are preserved
- Contaminants (in seafood): Contaminants cause no significant impact on coastal and marine ecosystems and human health.
- Marine litter: Marine and coastal litter does not adversely affect coastal and marine ecosystems.
- Energy & underwater noise: Noise from human activities cause no significant on marine and coastal ecosystems.

The data to be collected should reflect the main pressures on marine environments and respective human activities responsible for them. The monitoring data then should reflect the impacts on ecosystems in birds, mammals, turtles, fish; pelagic & benthic habitats; and ecosystems, including food webs.



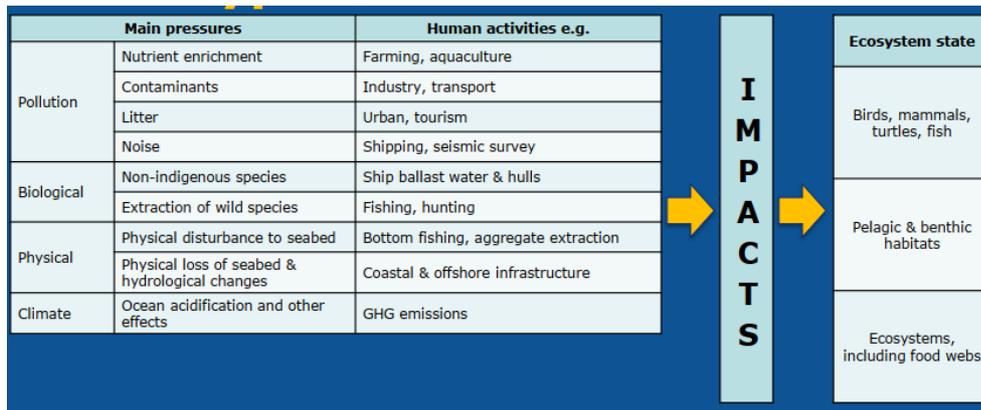


Figure 1 - Monitoring for GES

Both Member States and the European Commission have undertaken steps to implement the MSFD and to achieve GES. For the Member States they are:

- Assessed status of their marine waters (Art.8)
- Determined their "Good Environmental Status" (Art.9)
- Set targets to achieve GES (Art.10)
- Set up monitoring programmes (Art.11)
- Set up programmes of measures (Art.13)

In turn, the EC has:

- Supported a "Common implementation strategy" with Member States & stakeholders
- Assessed Member States' initial assessment, GES & targets COM(2014)97 final
- Reported on marine protected areas COM(2015)481 final
- Assessed Member States' monitoring programmes COM(2017)3 final
- Assessed Programmes of measures COM(2018)562 final

The report of the 1st implementation cycle of the MSFD concluded that the directive provides a strategy for the entire marine environment, protects marine biodiversity, assesses the impact of all human activities, drives new research and legal initiatives. The report recommended that the definitions of GES be revised to be more ambitious, that more resources and collective action are devoted to address key pressures, the development of coherent and effective networks of MPAs, and called for data comparability across regions.

Furthermore, the EU supports the implementation of the Barcelona Convention through specific projects (Ecosystem Approach project I (2012-2015), Ecosystem Approach project II (2016 – 2019), Ecosystem Approach project III, Mediterranean Marine Litter Project I and II, Mediterranean MPAs Project and IMAP-MPA project) and funding (EMFF, ENI, Horizon Europe, Global Public Goods and Challenges, etc.).

3.2 Updates on the Barcelona Convention by the UNEP/MAP Secretariat

Ms. Tatjana Hema presented the UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention framework and its synergies with EU legislation. She started by highlighting the value of good environmental status of the Mediterranean towards the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15, especially through its goals of preventing land and seas pollution, preserving biodiversity and ecosystems and preserving land and sea interactions.

Ms. Tatjana Hema gave an overview of the Mediterranean Action Plan and the Barcelona Convention. The Barcelona resolution on MAP was adopted in 1975. The Convention was adopted in 1976. Both were amended in 1995. There are 22 Contracting Parties, including the EU. The Convention is complemented by 7 Protocols: Dumping, Prevention and Emergency, LBS, Hazardous Wastes, SPA/BD, Offshore, ICZM. The Convention has been the seat to discuss and agree on the MSSD, and other Strategies, Integrated Policies and Action Plans to combat and prevent pollution and protect/conservate marine and coastal biodiversity. The ecosystem approach as the overarching principle to



achieve/maintain Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean Sea and Coasts. The MAP vision is to create a healthy Mediterranean with marine and coastal ecosystems that are productive and biologically diverse for the benefit of present and future generations.

The LBS Protocol to reduce and control pollution has originated 10 Regional Plans, including legally binding measures targeting urban environment and industrial development; 6 new/updated Regional Plans taking into account GES and targets, namely municipal wastewater treatment, sewage sludge management, agriculture nutrients management, aquaculture nutrients management, urban storm water management, marine litter; data collection, analysis, QA/QC, assessment of pollution loads and trends determination; sectoral guidelines facilitating the realization of pollution reduction actions (municipal wastewater, marine litter, management and disposal of pollutants, desalination, dumping, PRTR, inspection etc.); over 47 capacity building and technical assistance activities organized with the Contracting Parties from 1998 to 2020.

The SPA protocol provides a Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed MPAs to Achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean MPA (COP 19, Athens, 2016). In particular, its objectives are to strengthen networks of protected areas at national and Mediterranean levels, including in the high seas and ABNJ; to improve Mediterranean MPA network through effective and equitable management; to promote sharing of environmental and socio-economic benefits and integration into the ecosystem and marine spatial planning approaches; and to ensure the MPA network stability by enhancing their financial sustainability. MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) coverage in the Mediterranean is estimated to reach 8.9% of the Mediterranean Sea surface and about 13% of the territorial waters of Mediterranean States. The SPAMI List was established in 2001 to promote cooperation in management and conservation of natural areas and the protection of threatened species and habitats. There are 35 SPAMIs included in the SPAMI List. 4 new SPAMIs are on the way of being declared. There is a regular assessment and review of the SPAMI list.

The Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning facilitates the implementation of the ICZM Protocol. It is built on the following principles: a) Ecosystem-based management to ensure sustainable development and integrity of the coastal zone, its ecosystems and related services and landscapes; b) address natural hazards and the effects of natural disasters, in particular coastal erosion and climate change; c) achieve good governance among actors involved in / related to coastal zones. Regarding marine spatial planning, the CRF seeks to introduce MSP in the Med as the main tool/process for the implementation of ICZM in the marine part of the coastal zone and to provide a common context to CPs for the implementation of MSP in the Mediterranean Region.

The Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean is defined through 11 Ecological Objectives covering all the main aspects of the marine and coastal environment (COP 17, Decision IG. 20/4), including:

- Biodiversity
- Non-indigenous species
- Harvest of commercially exploited fish and shellfish
- Marine food webs
- Eutrophication
- Sea-floor integrity
- Hydrography
- Coastal ecosystems and landscapes
- Pollution (contaminants)
- Marine litter
- Energy including underwater noise

The objectives are broken into 61 indicators. The Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) provides for 23 Common Indicators and 4 Candidate Indicators (COP 19, Decision IG.22/7) to monitor the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean.

The MAP system relies on constant assessment as a key component to support policy making and implementation. As an example, one can look at the Mediterranean 2017 Quality Status Report. The



report focused on the 11 Ecological Objectives covering all the main aspects of the marine and coastal environment (COP 17, Decision IG. 20/4). It was the first ever Quality Status Report for the Mediterranean. It used 23 IMAP Common Indicators, using for data sources the Contracting parties' data sets as part of the MED POL database, and other relevant data provided by MAP Components and MAP implementing projects, and GFCM and other regional sources of data, including projects. The report offered specific findings, conclusions, and key messages per indicator. It also identified key knowledge gaps and limitations.

A 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status report is under preparation. It will assess the status of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and the progress towards its GES, as basis for informed decision-making and enhanced action. There is also work towards creating an integrated GES assessment. It comes from the need to ensure better understanding of interaction of pressures, impacts and current state. The process will likely be divided in two stages: an assessment of predominant pressures and their impacts, including mapping when appropriate; and an assessment of the environmental status of marine ecosystems.

The COP 22 of the Barcelona Convention is expected to take place in December 2021 in Turkey. The Parties are expected to discuss the results of ongoing work, mandated during the COP 21, including:

- UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027
- Post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAPBIO)
- Post-2020 Strategic document on MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures in the Mediterranean
- Ballast Water Management Strategy for the Mediterranean Sea (2022-2027)
- Post-2021 Mediterranean Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships
- New Regional Plans under LBS Protocol Article 15
- Implementation of Roadmap for Proposal for the Possible Designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as SO_x Emission Control Area
- MAP Data Management Policy

3.3 Barcelona Convention experience harnessed in the Black Sea Convention Implementation of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Marine Litter Policy by Romania

Mr. Gheorghe Constantin presented Romania's experience with Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) of the Black Sea Convention. There is established cooperation between Black Sea Convention and Barcelona Convention through a Memorandum of Understanding, specific scientific projects, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), and through the articulation provided by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. That cooperation is most visible in tackling marine litter, implementing maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management, as well as implementing the MSFD (for EU Member States or those aspiring to become members).

The Memorandum of Understanding with UNEP/MAP was endorsed during the 31st BSC Meeting and signed at 19th COP of Barcelona Convention on 11th February 2016. The BSC PS also agreed to cooperate with UNEP/MAP Secretariat with respect to EU-funded "Marine Litter MED project". BSC PS signed the Small-Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with UNEP/MAP (Barcelona Convention) in December 2016. A bilateral Meeting with UNEP/MAP on progress in Marine Litter MED project was held at UNEP/MAP premises in Athens on 24th July 2017 where Marine Litter elements of the joint work plan between BSC PS and UNEP/MAP were agreed. On the 24th of October, 2018, during the 34th BSC Regular meeting, the Draft Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Black Sea (BS ML RAP) was adopted and the Draft Marine Litter Monitoring Programme (BS ML MP), elaborated by the pool of experts, was considered by the BSC. Further work is needed to improve this document for further adoption by BSC members.



The Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Black Sea contains concrete activities on ML, which will be regularly revised and considered at the BSC Advisory Groups meetings. Additionally, draft Guidelines on Marine Litter (based on JRC experience) were finalized under the Agreement with UNEP/MAP but were not adopted by the Black Sea Commission yet. Guidelines will be further considered by the Advisory Groups, considering the experience of other Regional Sea Conventions (RSCs) and relevant projects and organizations (cooperation with EMBLAS II Project).

Further cooperation between the Black Sea Convention and the Barcelona Convention included three annual joint meetings between UNEP/MAP and Black Sea Commission's Secretariats held in 2017, 2018 and 2019. During these meetings, a joint work plan between the UNEP/MAP and the BSC PS was prepared and implemented. During 3rd Bilateral meeting in December, 2019 in Istanbul the recent developments and priorities, as well as the ways forward in fostering Joint Implementation Plan and MoU, as well as to produce the Joint Workplan for the year 2020 were discussed. Apart from successful cooperation in marine litter issues, further collaboration in the field of ICZM was discussed, with the Black Sea countries adopting the ICZM Guidelines, which are to a great extent similar to the provisions of the Mediterranean ICZM Protocol. PAP/RAC invited the BSC to present best available practices during their dedicated activities in April 2019. The BSC also hosted PAP/RAC colleagues in Istanbul at BSC ICZM Advisory Group meeting. At the moment, The BSC has been discussing with PAP/RAC the possibility to introduce the Mediterranean experience in MSP and to develop a document similar to the *Conceptual Framework For Marine Spatial Planning In The Mediterranean* for the needs of the Black Sea countries.

Regarding cooperation with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean the FOMLR AGs adopted the short annual reporting format for fisheries, including the indicators elaborated and proposed by GFCM. Other synergetic activities include the meeting of GFCM Working Group on Black Sea on 11th July, 2018 in Burgas, Bulgaria; the High-Level meeting on fisheries and sustainable aquaculture on 10th June, 2016 in Sofia, Bulgaria; the concept and activities of Black Sea4Fish Project; and the GFCM Forum on Fisheries Science (Fish Forum), held in FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy from 10-14 December, 2018.

The ICZM Protocol addresses land and sea ecosystems, coastal and maritime planning, including tourism, energy, etc., impacts of climate change and adaptation in a multi sectoral /holistic approach. The ICZM Platform has been supported by the development and implementation of a spatial data infrastructure (SDI) for the Mediterranean and Black Seas through the PEGASO project. The main objective of PEGASO is to build on existing capacities and develop common novel approaches to support integrated policies for the coastal, marine and maritime realms of the Mediterranean and Black Sea Basins in ways that are consistent with and relevant to the implementation of the ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean. In terms of ICZM in the Black Sea Region, under its Convention, the next steps are:

- Development of ICZM legal instrument at the regional level
- Continuation of ICZM methodology & best practice work
- Implementation of ICZM pilot projects
- Development of indicators for the 'state of the coast' assessments, progress indicators for ICZM implementation
- Increase cooperation with the Barcelona Convention

The Black sea is affected by multiple issues in its maritime and coastal zones. They include eutrophication, loss of coastal and seabed habitats, pollution and marine / beach litter, coastal sensitivities to oil spills, operational/illegal spills along maritime routes, overfishing and decline in living marine resources. The problems require coastal and marine spatial planning, as well as coastal and marine conservation. The key tools to introduce such ICZM measures are in legislation (state legislation, local regulatory documents), planning (development strategies and sector plans, spatial planning), financing (participation in state programmes, attraction of international funds, rational budget planning, strengthening of taxation framework), infrastructure (traffic routes, tourism and recreation facilities, nature and landscape protection, facilitated areas), and communication (website development, local information systems).

Romania already has an established legal framework for ICZM, built progressively from 2002 to 2016. The Romanian Black Sea coastline is 244 km long and situated in the south-eastern part of the



country, stretches from Ukraine in the north to Bulgaria in the south. The Romanian coastal zone, bordering the Black Sea, is entirely located in the Dobrogea region, the latter covering an area of 15,485 sq km, corresponding to almost 6.5 % of the entire Romanian territory.

The National Committee of the Coastal Zone (NCCZ) was established in June 2004 by Government Decision no. 1015/2004 in order to ensure an integrated coastal zone management. According to the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 202/2002 on integrated coastal zone management approved with further modification through Law no. 280/2003, representation in NCCZ encompasses about 40 central, local and regional authorities, institutions and stakeholders, NGOs. The National Committee of Coastal Zone has the following responsibilities:

- Endorsing the plans regarding integrated coastal zone management and local and regional spatial planning;
Endorsing the studies regarding environment impact of activities having an important impact in the coastal zone as well as the environment audit for the existing ones;
- Endorsing the projects regarding establishing of natural parks and reserves;
- The NCCZ, through its Permanent Technical Secretariat (PTS), is empowered to inform the competent organizations about critical situations in the coastal zone which need rehabilitation actions and initiating of specific projects.

The National Institute for Marine Research and Development “Grigore Antipa” (NIMRD) is responsible for the Permanent Technical Secretariat (PTS) activities. Under the NCCZ, Working Groups (WG) consisting of key experts from relevant authorities and research institutes providing advice and guidance on specific topics such as monitoring and control of the coastal environment, coastal spatial planning, coastal erosion, action planning and strategy development were set up. The implementation of ICZM in Romania is financed through the state budget, European funds, environmental fund budget, local authorities’ budgets, private companies, and projects support.

The main objectives of ICZM in Romania are to optimize benefits from coastal and marine resources, specifically for local communities, to identify desired uses, to minimize conflicts and to prevent environmental degradation.

Romania’s main actions to tackle marine litter are the implementation of the Single Use Plastic Directive, introducing a reimbursable fee for plastic bottles (0.5 ROL ~10 cents), separate collection and recycling of household waste, increasing the awareness and fines, improving the monitoring and surveillance system, developing port facilities for waste collection.

Romania is also experiencing coastal erosion. Field measurements were performed by NIMRD “Grigore Antipa” Constanta during surveys organized together with the Hydrographic Maritime Directorate. The measurements were shoreline surveys using GIS class GPS devices (GeoXH, ProXH, Juno-INCDM) and geodetic GPS devices (Leika GPS - DHM). Field trips were performed approximately during the same period for each section (May-June 2012 for Sulina - Ciotica, September 2012 for Zăton - Periboina). The southern part of the coast requires protection and rehabilitation against further erosion. The main measures deployed are construction of emerged or submerged dikes and beach nourishment. Based on geomorphological measurements (25 sections) performed by NIMRD before and after nourishment (2015 and 2017), the average beach gained around 10ha of area.

3.4 Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol: Offshore and coastal blue corridors for biological diversity and sustainable fishery

Mr. Sašo Šantl presented the Special Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol and the implementation of blue corridors in Slovenia as a tool to preserve biodiversity. The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention, 1978) is a corner stone for the promotion of environmental protection and integration in the Mediterranean. It includes seven protocols: Dumping, Prevention and Emergency, Land-Based Sources, Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity, Offshore, Hazardous Wastes, Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

The SPA/BD Protocol is the Mediterranean’s main tool for implementing the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, as regards the in situ sustainable management of coastal and marine biodiversity



(adopted the Protocol in 1995). The Protocol envisages three main elements in order to ensure the safeguard of biological diversity in the Mediterranean: the creation, protection and management of Specially Protected Areas (SPAs); the establishment of a list of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs); and the protection and conservation of species. In order to meet these objectives, the following aspects are developed:

- Conservation of types of marine and coastal ecosystem that are typical of the Mediterranean;
- Protecting habitats that are in danger of disappearance or are necessary for the survival, reproduction, and restoration of threatened or endemic species;
- Protecting sites of scientific, aesthetic, cultural or educational interest;
- Development and implementation of management plans;
- Setting up and promoting Specially Protected Areas;
- Conservation of species that are threatened of extinction, endangered, or to be managed;
- Sustainable use of biological resources

The SPA/BD Protocol recommends concrete protection measures to safeguard elements of biological diversity through Action Plans and technical tools for inventory. The Protocol recommends setting up Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs), including trans-boundary areas, in areas where several states have sovereignty and in international waters. This has resulted in the Mediterranean MPA system, as shown below.

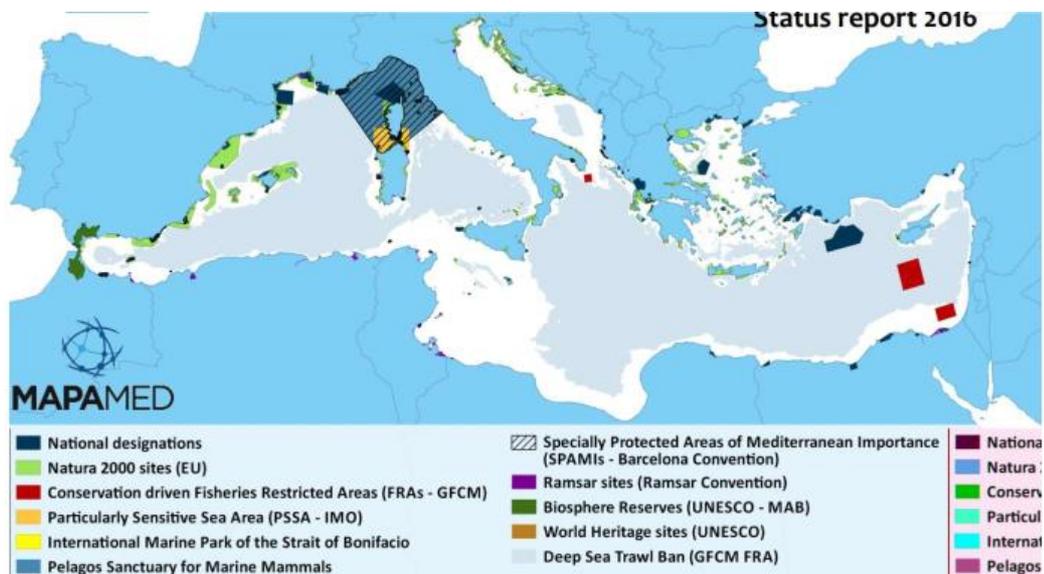


Figure 2 - The Mediterranean MPA system

Many of the areas under protection are coastal. However, there are also opportunities to create conservation areas in the open seas. The figure below shows the sites that could be candidates to be integrated the SPAMII list. The protection of open sea areas is of increasing importance given the high concentration of fishing vessels in the Mediterranean. Some areas are reported to have as many as 15 000 boats in operation. The concentration is particularly high in the Adriatic.



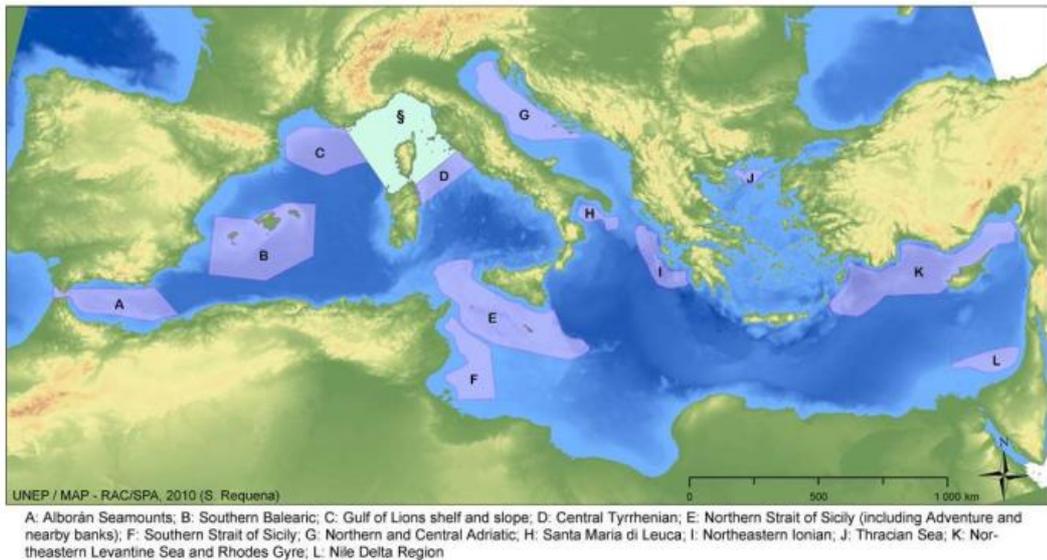


Figure 3 - Potential open seas SPAMI list sites

Additional threats to the Adriatic, in terms of visible trends, are oil and gas production, maritime transport and ports, marine aquaculture, tourism, renewable energy offshore, and marine mining.

Under this scenario, the creation of blue corridors becomes an important tool of conservation by connecting core habitats (for instance those already under protection) into a coherent ecological network in the sea and supporting the achievement of good environmental status.



Figure 4 - Proposed MPAs and blue corridors by the COHENET project in the Adriatic

In order to implement blue corridors, one must understand the inter-dependency of action-reaction between human activities offshore and on the coastline (micro, mezzo, macro levels) and biodiversity and biological resources. Intersectoral planning incorporating sustainable use of biological and natural resources also at different spatial levels: local/national (National Marine Spatial Planning), (macro)regional (e.g., Adriatic; EUSAIR), considering UNEP/MAP –Barcelona Convention system).

Mr. Sašo Šantl then presented Slovenia’s process of introduction of biodiversity conservation measures, including blue corridors. Slovenia has 45 km of coastline, an area of 213 km². Nevertheless, it has a high dependency on fishing activities compared to other Adriatic countries. When preparing its marine spatial plan, Slovenia had to take into account fishing, as well the other predominant pressures and interests in its coast, such as: marine traffic, tourism, aquaculture and nature protection.

The marine spatial plan also involved the study of marine migration corridors, currents, location of important habitats and river estuaries, which allowed to identify micro, mezzo and macro blue corridors. The identification of such corridors is recognized by the marine spatial plan by offering them special protection.

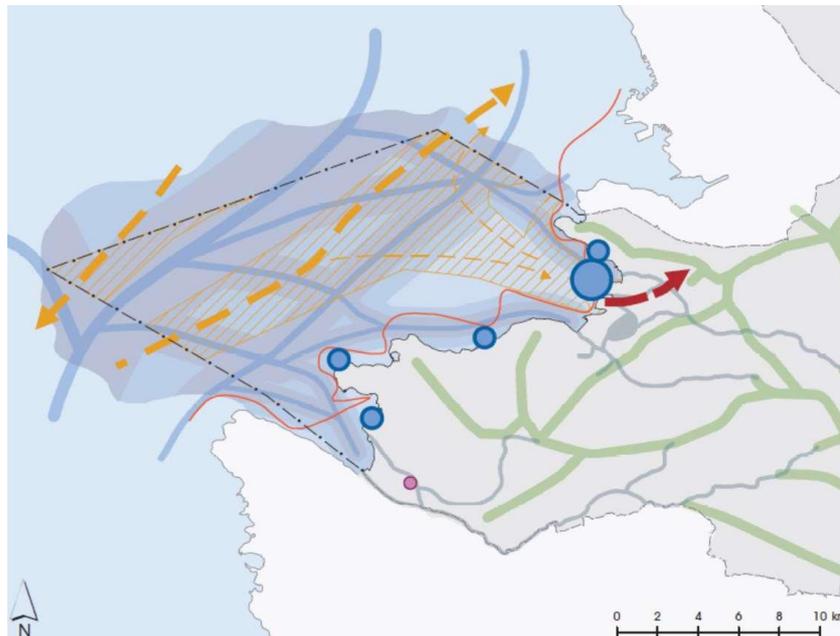


Figure 5 - Blue corridors in Slovenian waters

Given the size of the Slovenian territorial waters, the marine spatial planning process also originated cross border cooperation on corridors and protect areas, with the aim to preserve biodiversity and a sustainable sea food supply in Gulf of Trieste. This resulted in restrictions in fishing activities in blue corridors toward Soča/Isonzo and Dragonja rivers estuaries, restrictions in fishing activities in the area of three borders (CRO-ITSLO) with its prolongation toward the south Adriatic.

3.5 Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol: MPAs in the EPPA countries

Mr. Vangelis Papathanassiou presented marine protected areas in the EPPA beneficiaries in the framework of the Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol. Marine protected areas (MPAs) are geographically distinct zones for which protection objectives and management options are set. MPAs are recognised and proved to be a powerful tool for safeguarding biodiversity, conservation of marine resources, maintaining marine ecosystem health and supply ecosystem services. However, they are threatened by external pressures at local, regional and global scales. Recently, a series of initiatives and regulations have motivated the shift from individual, autonomous MPAs to the concept of MPA networks, a holistic vision of marine protection and management.

MPA networks includes MPAs and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), using all the already protected spaces as “nodes” of networks covering coastal, offshore, and deep-sea systems. The network links require conservation and management measures under the implementation of MSFD to achieve GES. In 2016, the Mediterranean had 1215 MPAs and OECMs (Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures), covering 6.81% of the sea.

The EPPA project is assisting its beneficiaries in establishing new marine protected areas through a Study to develop initial proposals for establishment of new marine protected areas (MPAs) in 3 EPPA countries in the Adriatic Sea basin, namely with 2 MPAs in Albania, 1 MPA in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 2 MPAs in Montenegro.

The study collected and integrated the scientific information and aligned the potential national plans; it performed a GIS analysis to identify the MPAs with a view to include potential key habitats and key species, defining- where possible- the conservation plan proposed to achieve the adequacy criterion



(sufficient size and shape and properly protected to ensure the ecological viability, integrity and resilience of habitats and species); it integrate different efforts, to identify the candidate conservation areas, in order to represent a consensus of the future planning.

The study is currently on its final phase of development. Its final draft will propose the MPAs, that would be designated under regional or global agreements and would comply with the relevant designation criteria. The results will be presented in a Regional Workshop (for all 3 countries, MNE, B&H and AL). It is expected that the countries will investigate further the limits of the proposed MPAs by introducing dedicated studies and propose management measures.

In the case of Albania, Karaburun-Sazani is the most explored area in terms of biodiversity in Albania and together with Sazani Island has been established as MPA. The biodiversity potential includes coralligenous biocenosis with calcareous red seaweeds, gorgonians and bryozoans together with biocenosis of mediolittoral caves and at least 36 marine species of international concern (e.g. *Posidonia oceanica*, *Corallium rubrum*, *Lithophaga lithophaga*, *Cystoseira*, “trottoirs” of *Lithophyllum byssoides* and, *Caretta caretta*, Dolphins – common & bottlenose dolphin and *Monachus monachus* etc.). The management plan was adopted in 2015 and drafted in collaboration with GEF-UNDP project for Marine and Coastal Protected areas.

There are National Plans for new MPAs, with sensitive habitats and presence of species of international concern in Rodoni – Lalzi area, Lagji Cape area, Gjipe area, Kakomea área, Porto Palermo, Ksamil, and Stillo Cape. Currently, information is limited on a comprehensive inventory of biodiversity data and species and habitats. Information from various reports, initiatives and publications could only partly contribute to fulfil the ecological and biological criteria. However, a comparative analysis revealed that the wider areas of Porto Palermo and Rodoni-Lalzi area are prioritised (two of the areas also proposed by the government). Additional monitoring effort is needed for these areas especially for management (based on the Strategic Plan on Marine and Coastal Protected Areas in Albania). The new MPAs have to be large enough to accommodate the large-scale movement of adults and include adequate habitat space for ecosystem protection and in agreement with the suggestions made from COHENET (EU project (2020)). Wider zones for Porto Palermo and Rodoni-Lalzi area have a representative range of key habitats and species at appropriate levels. Both fulfil the criteria of adequacy and networking, also for the South Adriatic Sea.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are no protected coastal and marine habitats, but there are plans to protect the Botanical and floristic reserve Mediteranetum in Neum (size: 1,256 ha). The candidate protected area in Neum-Klek contains species of conservation concern and four species of skates and rays which are endangered by overfishing and lack of protection. In the same area there are several spawning grounds of skates and rays where illegal fishing activities are a major threat. Proposing an MPA in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a complex issue due to availability of data; overlaps with the new proposed MPA made by the COHENET and in connection with the Croatian adjacent waters, where MPA/NATURA 2000 sites are declared. Communication between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, especially on management protection and measures is essential.

Montenegro has no declared protected marine areas, despite the rich marine bibliography and reports that have been made within national and international projects and initiatives from national and international scientific groups during the past decade. The potential areas for MPAs are: Platamuni and Seka Albaneze (with 2-3 ‘no take’ zones to allow regeneration of fish, Katič - Areanear Petrovac (Katič island and Dubovica), Ratac, Old Ulcinj – as the area from Mendra (lighthouse) Cape to Old Ulcinj and Tivat Salina (Tivat Salt pans).

3.6 Issues faced, planned efforts and regional cooperation initiatives in the EPPA beneficiaries on the implementation of Barcelona convention

Albania

Ms. Klodiana Marika started by presenting Albania’s legal and policy framework on waste, a key area to preserve marine environment and curb land-based pollution sources. The most recent development is the new waste management strategy and action plan approved since May 2020. Future priorities are to maximize separate collection and recycling rates, increase public awareness and to



uptake innovative materials and alternatives. The new waste management strategy and action plan is a comprehensive document, including most aspects of integrated waste management as well as several aspects of the Circular Economy package, e.g., extended producer responsibility, green procurement and waste prevention.

Albania has the following waste management activities planned to be achieved in 2021:

- Establishing a database on waste management
- Preparation of some other local waste management plans
- Construction of two composting areas, specifically in Cerrik and Roskovec
- Development of composting schemes in families
- Raising public awareness regarding the benefits of composting in every LGUs
- Preparation of some legal acts on waste management
- Raising public awareness in the rest of municipalities

Ms. Klodiana Marika highlighted some key projects under the Barcelona Convention. The Barcelona Convention's Regional Plan for Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean and the European Union Marine Strategy Framework Directive have helped things advance in the right direction. Yet there is still a long way ahead towards implementing policy commitments and effectively reducing marine litter and the risks it poses to Mediterranean marine wildlife. The Plastic Busters MPAs is an Interreg Med funded project aiming to maintain biodiversity and preserve natural ecosystems in pelagic and coastal marine protected areas by defining and implementing a harmonized approach against marine litter. Albania has also implemented the programme "Adopt the Beach" to reduce marine litter. Involving multiple stakeholders at different levels, it supported clean up activities in 2 areas: Bune and Radoni Bay. The data collected from the initiative shows that plastic waste predominates.

Looking forward, Albania is preparing other projects. The project "Addressing Plastic Pollution in Albania (Realizing Blue Economy Potential in Albania)" will help the implementation of the Action Plan for bans of plastic bags and single use plastics; support preparation of a comprehensive program on plastics in general through bringing international experience and expertise; support preparation of a Circular Economy Roadmap on Plastic as a leader country in Europe; facilitate knowledge exchange in the region and globally. In addition, Albania is also preparing the Child Project 2.2 (GEF ID 9685) of the MedProgramme, a GEF project: Towards Ecological Objective 9 (EO9) Good Environmental Status Assessment for the Republic of Albania - on Contaminants in Albanian marine environment, a Feasibility Study for a Transboundary CAMP Project between Albania and Italy (Otranto Strait area), and an IPA II project "Support to Circular Economy and Green Growth in Albania", which aims to improve the capacities and the conditions for environmental quality investments and promote green economic growth through the implementation of Circular Economy and Green Growth in Albania. The specific objectives are to improve resource efficiency, eco-design and greening of production; and to enhance recycling as share of waste management.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ms. Sabina Hadziahmetovic presented Bosnia and Herzegovina's initiatives to implement the Barcelona Convention. Bosnia and Herzegovina is an almost landlocked country. It is bordered by Croatia to the north, west and south; Serbia to the east; and Montenegro to the southeast. The coastline, limited to a length of 25 km along the Adriatic Sea, is bounded on both sides by Croatia and does not contain natural harbours. It's the second smallest coastline in the world. The Municipality of Neum is located there. The whole coastline of B&H serves as beach for bathing and tourists occupy most of artificially created or semi-natural beaches. The main threat from land is insufficient water and waste management to meet the development needs.

The Article III of the B&H Constitution defines the responsibilities and relations between the institutions of B&H and its two constituent entities: the Federation of B&H and the Republic Srpska and Brčko District. The responsibilities for water sector are not clearly defined by the Constitution, nor by the competencies of the state of B&H, nor by the entities. By adopting the Law on Ministries and other administrative Bodies of Bosnia and Herzegovina in March 2003, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and



Economic Relations (MVTEO or MOFTER) was given the authority to deal with environmental issues and natural resources issues in international relations at the state level, including water.

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry oversees water resources, development plans, water balances, water use, water protection, protection against water, and other activities specified by Law. Within the watershed area of the Adriatic Sea, the Cantonal / County Ministries (Canton 10, West Herzegovina Canton and Herzegovina-Neretva Canton) are involved in water management in addition to the federal one and to the Adriatic Sea Watershed Agency. The Federal Institute for Public Health performs the tasks of testing substances hazardous to the health and life of people in water, rivers, seas, flora and fauna, food for humans and animals, in regular conditions, in an emergency events, or when an emergency is suspected and suggests the protection measures.

In Republica Srpska Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of RS is an independent administrative body that performs administrative and other tasks in several administrative areas and is directly subordinated to the Government. The implementation of water management tasks in the Sava River Basin and Trebisnjica River Basin is entrusted to the Public Institution "Vode Srpske" in accordance with Article 24. of RS Water Law. The Public Health Institute of RS is a public health institution responsible for the field of public health. The Institute carries out social - medical, hygienic - ecological, epidemiological and microbiological health care activities. The Institute has 5 regional centers.

Ms. Sabina Hadziahmetovic then presented the legal framework in both entities for water management competences. Bosnia and Herzegovina became a party to the Convention by succession. Considering the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has not ratified the amendments to the Convention of 10.06.1995., as well as amendments to its protocols, most mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol have not been established in BiH, which is regularly stated in the reports submitted by BiH since 2000. Also, the provisions of the Convention are not fully integrated into national (or any Entity) legislation. The entity's environmental laws do not contain any provisions guaranteeing the promotion of integrated coastal zone planning and management, including areas of environmental and landscape importance, and the rational use of natural resources (Article 4, paragraph 3 (e) of the Convention).

Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have monitoring programs in place for assessment of the state of marine environment and coastal areas based on the requirements of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols. Bosnia and Herzegovina has not developed or adopted a Marine Strategy in accordance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and it does not carry out monitoring programs in accordance with the requirements of the Maritime Strategy Framework Directive, nor has it carried out an initial assessment of marine waters in accordance with the requirements of this Directive.

As a next step, it is recommended that the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic relations (MOFTER) should prepare a document related to implementation of the requirements of IMAP within the Barcelona Convention requirements and submit it to the Councils of Ministers of B&H for adoption. The Council of Ministers than adopts the relevant document on implementation of IMAP by Decision and at the same time entrusts it to the competent institutions for further implementation.

Regarding coastal management, Bosnia and Herzegovina is developing a Coastal Area Management Programme, that will contribute to the implementation of various decisions of the BC related to ICZM, pollution, biodiversity and contingency planning, as well as to other international obligations such as to UN Sustainable Development Goals, EUSAIR and alike. The CAMP B&H project area is the entire coastal zone which belongs to a single coastal municipality – Neum. The project will produce a Coastal plan for the Project area incorporating inputs of several individual activities; increase capacity of all the stakeholders, especially the local level ones; raise awareness of coastal processes and integrated management; and proposals for follow-up activities.

Montenegro

Ms. Ivana Stojanovic presented the implementation of the Barcelona Convention in Montenegro through its legal framework, that includes the ratification law of the Barcelona Convention and its 4 protocols, work under the WFD, monitoring programme, etc. The Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone



Management has entered into force in 2011 and provides the basis for the implementation of the MSP Directive and MSFD. The protocol resulted in the National Strategy for Coastal Management of Montenegro.

The SPA BD Protocol is an important contribution to marine biodiversity investigation and monitoring, data collection and protection. Under this heading, there have been several projects implemented in Montenegro on marine biodiversity mapping and protection, a post 2020 SAP bio national report was developed, 3 MPAs are expected to be proclaimed during 2021, with management plans, and a contribution to the preparation of the National Integrated Monitoring Programme.

Ms. Ivana Stojanovic also highlighted the importance of recognizing the interlinkages among EU policies like the MSFD, WFD and the MSP. Namely, she reflected on the importance of ecosystem-based approach, land-sea interactions, data collection, stakeholder engagement and cross-border cooperation for a more efficient and sustainable management of marine resources. In this regard, there are multiple projects in progress in Montenegro supporting the implementation of the Barcelona Convention: GEF Adriatic project, GEF C/MPA project, MedProgram (GEF 7), other smaller projects such as pilots with SCP/RAC, and EU MSFD transposition and implementation activities.

The MSFD was transposed by the Law on Marine Environment protection (December 2019), but the respective bylaws are still being finalized. The implementation is supported by regional and subregional instruments and projects included in the IPA AD 2016 on water: "Support to Implementation and Monitoring of Water Management, Montenegro", as well as by the project GEF Adriatic.

Ms. Ivana Stojanovic identified the main MSFD and GES challenges.: attaining the necessary scientific knowledge of the elements that define the state of the marine environment. Increasing scientific knowledge on the marine environment and its processes is required to adequately achieve this goal. Some lessons learnt and recommendations from the region (through EUSAIR) are:

- Use the Mediterranean experience in the EU accession process
- Analyse and use any of the recently completed/ongoing projects which can (even partially) contribute to the process
- Provide synergies as much as possible and work continuously on the development/improvement of the information system(s)
- Joint efforts at Adriatic level are needed
- Importance of the already established monitoring program in line with MEDPOL/IMAP (build it up to comply with MSFD)
- CAMP Montenegro and Integrated Coastal Zone Management
- Link with the Habitats Directive and contribution to the establishment of Natura 2000 network
- Reporting to MEDPOL and EEA
- Improvement of the information system and building a GIS database
- Important links with WFD to be established

Turkey

Ms. Eda Bayar presented Turkey's MSFD Studies and participation in Regional Sea Conventions. The EU Integrated Approximation Strategy 2016-2023, in the context of Chapter 27- Environment and Climate Change, covers implementation of EU's environmental acquis. The priority areas are water, solid waste, air, industrial pollution control, nature protection and horizontal sector. Turkey has realized projects to gain capacity and develop understanding of MSFD.

One of them was the project MARinTURK (IPA). The project provided a diagnosis of state of art in Turkey, with suggestions on further developments and harmonization. It also provided capacity building and enhanced cooperation among public institutions. Turkey's marine strategy includes a wide geographical scope covering all seas including Marmara Sea. It will also introduce a new commission to coordinate MSFD related national stakeholders as the legal structure about marine environment in Turkey is complicated.



MSFD-WFD-Regional Sea Conventions form the basis of monitoring studies in Turkey. The Integrated Marine Pollution Monitoring Programme includes the 11 descriptors of MSFD and 11 Monitoring Guidelines are applied in 355 monitoring stations.

3.7 Land-Based Sources Protocol: International Legal Instruments

Mr. Vangelis Papathanassiou presented other international legal instruments that support the Land-Based Sources Protocol. One of them is the Regional Seas Programme - United Nations Environment Programme. Its objectives are:

- Promotion of international and regional conventions, guidelines and actions for the control of marine pollution and the protection and management of aquatic resources.
- Assessment of the state of marine pollution, pollution sources and trends, and of the impact of pollution on human health, marine ecosystems and amenities.
- Coordination of efforts with regard to environmental aspects of the protection, development and management of marine and coastal resources.
- Support for education and training efforts to facilitate the full participation of developing countries in the protection, development and management of marine and coastal resources.

The initiative involves the Mediterranean Sea, the Wider Caribbean, the Northwest Pacific, the Eastern Africa region, the West and Central Africa and the East Asian Seas and the Caspian Sea under UNEP administration. In addition, there are the Non-UNEP administered (Under the auspices of UNEP), such as Black Sea Region, North-East Pacific Region, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, ROPME (Former Kuwait Regional Convention), South Asian Seas, South-East Pacific Region, Pacific Region, and the independent agreements that cooperate with the Regional Seas Programme and attend regular meetings: Arctic Region, Antarctic Region, Baltic Sea, North-East Atlantic Region. The Regional Seas Programme is the most important regional mechanism for conservation of the marine and coastal environment. It implements region specific activities, bringing together stakeholders, including governments, scientific communities, and civil societies.

All Regional Seas have an LBS Protocol. For instance, The Protocol for the Protection of the Caspian Sea against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities ("Moscow Protocol") was adopted and signed at the fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) in Moscow, Russian Federation on December 12, 2012. Another example is the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Bucharest Convention) with its (three) integrated protocols (April 1992).

The Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution was adopted in 16/2/1976 in Barcelona and entered into force in 1978 (Barcelona Convention). It was amended in 1995 and renamed as the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean. The amendments entered into force in 2004.

Such initiatives are key to protect the environment and human societies. 150 million people live in the Mediterranean area, with increasing economic activity. Their livelihoods and wellbeing are being threatened by multiple factors: industrial and chemical pollution, tourism, urban pollution, maritime transport, agricultural pollution, eutrophication, coastal erosion, alien species, overexploitation of resources, etc.

The Mediterranean Action Plan has brought important strategies, including:

- Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)
- Strategic Action Programme to address pollution from land-based activities (SAP- MED) and Action plans on pollution reduction deriving from specific provisions of the LBS Protocol
- Strategic Action Plan for the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity in the Mediterranean (SAP-BIO) and Action plans on species deriving from specific provisions of the SPA-BD Protocol
- Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean
- Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021)



- Ballast Water Management Strategy.
- The Mid-Term Strategy (MTS) to guide the path for the protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and contribution to sustainable development (2016-2021). MTS (2022-2027) under development

The UNEP/MAP mid-term strategy for 2016-2021 seeks to have a healthy Mediterranean with marine and coastal ecosystems that are productive and biologically diverse, contributing to sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. The governance is based on five Principles: 1. Representativeness, 2. Accountability, 3. Effectiveness, 4. Higher level of participation, and 5. Transparency.

Since 2008 the Ecosystem Approach has been the guiding principle with the ultimate objective of achieving the Good Environmental Status (GES) of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast. The EcAp recognises that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems and their activities must be managed so that they do not compromise ecosystem components that contribute to their structural and functional integrity.

The Convention as 7 protocols, as follows:

- Prevention of Pollution in the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (Dumping Protocol)
- Concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (Prevention and Emergency Protocol)
- Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol), including Regional plans under Article 15 of LBS Protocol
- Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA-BD Protocol)
- Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Hazardous Wastes Protocol)
- Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil (Offshore Protocol)
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol).

The objective of the LBS Protocol: to take all appropriate measures to prevent, abate and eliminate to the fullest extent possible pollution of the Mediterranean Sea from land-based sources and activities, by reducing and phasing out substances that are toxic, persistent and liable to bioaccumulate listed in Annex I to the Protocol (Article 5). In particular, the protocol seeks to limit point source discharges and pollutant releases, namely persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs); Reduction of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD5); Reduction of Inputs of Mercury; Management of Marine Litter; and Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean. Additionally, the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean is notable in that it is a legally binding instrument, setting specific measures and operational targets to achieve GES in the Mediterranean Sea, including a basin-wide marine litter reduction target of 20% of beach litter by 2024.

The Protocol on Land-Based Sources (the LBS Protocol) was first adopted on 17 May 1980 and entered into force on 17 June 1983. The Protocol was modified by amendments adopted on 7 March 1996 where the amended Protocol, was recorded as “Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities”, entered into force on 18 May 2006. After 10 years, the Secretariat, initiate the current work on updating the Annexes of the LBS Protocol during the 2016-2017 biennium and the first report was produced highlighting the technical aspects that can be subject to a possible update. During the 2018-2019 biennium, the Secretariat developed concrete proposals on possible updates of the annexes of the LBS Protocol, which was submitted to COP 21, Napoli, Italy. Contracting Parties of Barcelona Convention adopted the Decision IG.24/10 of COP-21 requesting the Secretariat to launch a formal process for updating the annexes of LBS by establishing a Working Group composed of experts designated by the Contracting Parties.

Finally, the LBS Protocol has inspired further action with the creation of 6 regional plans (process started in COP21 and expected to be completed by COP 23) in the areas of municipal wastewater



treatment, sewage sludge management, agriculture nutrients management, aquaculture nutrients management, urban storm water management, and marine litter (upgraded).

3.8 Barcelona Convention: Overview of COP 21 Outcomes and Key Issues for COP 22

Ms. Eda Bayar, on behalf of Ms. Asli Topalak, who could not attend the workshop due to last minute duties, stated that Turkey will host COP 22 in Antalya. Turkey is already preparing the meeting and asked the countries to support and engage in the preparatory efforts.

3.9 Implementation of the Barcelona Convention Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity; the elaboration of the Post 2020 SAP BIO and Post 2020 Strategy on MPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean

Mr. Khalil Attia presented the implementation of the Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity Protocol of the Barcelona Convention. The Protocol was adopted in Barcelona in June 1995. It entered into force in December 1999 (replacing the SPA Protocol, adopted in Geneva in 1982). There are 3 main areas of action:

- Creation, protection and management of Specially Protected Areas (SPAs);
- Establishment of the List of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs) including in national areas, in transboundary areas, and in international waters (Annex I of the SPA/BD Protocol);
- Protection and conservation of species and their habitats, including the listing of threatened and endangered species (Annex II) as well as species whose exploitation must be sustainably managed (Annex III)

The implementation of SPA/BD Protocol is facilitated by strategies and action plans and its implementation in different modalities. Namely, the strategies are:

- Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity (SAPBIO), 2003: logical framework for the implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol
- Regional Working Programme for the Coastal and Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean Sea including the High Sea (2009), including a Roadmap for a comprehensive coherent network of well-managed MPAs to achieve Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean (2016)
- 9 Action Plans + 1 Strategy for the conservation of endangered species and their habitats (monk seal, turtles, cetacean, birds, cartilaginous fish, vegetation, coralligenous, dark habitats, non-indigenous species) in 5 years cycles and updated taking into account EcAp/IMAP

The strategies above are deployed at a regional level (coordination, capacity-building, data management, guidelines and technical tools, communication and outreach, cooperation and partnership with global and regional relevant actors and organizations) and national level (support to countries to comply with the SPA/BD Protocol provisions at national level: development of national policies, establishment and management of MPAs, conservation and management of species/habitats, national capacities strengthening, monitoring, enforcement, awareness-raising, etc.).

The first SAPBIO was adopted in December 2003 for a 15-year period and it played an important role in providing a strategic framework for implementation of the SPA/BD Protocol at national and regional levels - harmonizing and aligning planning for biodiversity conservation in the Mediterranean; and facilitating exchanges among departments within and among countries on common objectives in biodiversity conservation.

The Barcelona Convention COP 21 (December 2019) requested to prepare in 2020-2021 the Post-2020 SAPBIO, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, harmonised with the CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework through the optic of the Mediterranean context. The Post-2020 SAPBIO should be: action-oriented, made of activities tailored towards realistic objectives, and reasonably achievable, coordinated with relevant international organizations and supportable by donors and funding agencies.



Moreover, the Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean should be actionable and transformational in line with the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the CBD, the Post-2020 SAPBIO, and other relevant global, regional and sub-regional processes and initiatives, and elaborated in consultation with relevant global and regional organizations, national institutions, and Mediterranean countries' representatives (COP 21 Decision IG.24/6). It is expected to be adopted in the next COP.

3.10 Contribution of area-based management approaches in the Black Sea region - the Romanian approach

Mr. Gheorghe Constantin presented the Romanian practice of area-based management approach for the Black Sea. An area-based (or spatial) management tool is an approach that enables the application of management measures to a specific area to achieve a desired policy outcome. Some tools are focused on managing individual activities in a specific area, such as fisheries closure areas, pollution management zones, and seabed mining exclusion areas. Other tools, such as marine spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management, seek to coordinate several types of activity in the same area.

Spatial management tools have a set of enabling conditions that affect its effectiveness, such as the spatial scale used, the legal basis of the area-based management tool, funding, institutional framework, stakeholder and multi-sector engagement, iterative and/or adaptive process, and data collection and monitoring.

The use of an area-based management tool is driven by the need to address a management issue in a reactive or proactive manner. This could include the need to sustain fish stocks, address sources of marine pollution, or to conserve critical habitats, inter alia. The area-based management tool, if effective, generates outcomes that implement a particular policy to address the underlying issue or challenge, which could ultimately contribute to Sustainable Development Goals.

The main attributes of a marine area-based management tool should be its coverage of both sea and land, reliance on spatial data and analysis, adaptive to monitoring results, stakeholder engagement, transboundary focus, multisector, but also sector focused, and ecosystem-based management.

Regional cooperation through Marine Protected Areas planning in the Black Sea is achieved under the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC). The objective is to reach Good Environmental Status which is to be determined for marine (sub) regions and should be achieved in cooperation with neighbouring Member States. In parallel, the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive implementation allows to reduce conflicts on access to maritime space, reduce cumulative impacts of maritime activities on the environment, reduce coordination costs for public authorities, and improve certainty and predictability for private investments.

In the Black Sea, Romania and Bulgaria are collaborating on the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, among other things, by establishing a transnational Marine Protected Area Network. The collaborative efforts of the two countries are supported by the existence of well-established regional coordinating bodies under the Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution, as well as the Joint Romanian-Bulgarian Commission for the cooperation on water management. Romania and Bulgaria received assistance through a European Commission funded project that helped the two countries coordinate their approaches, exchange experiences, agree on definitions of Good Environmental Status and harmonize measures and processes to achieve the objectives of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

The extension of the existing and the creation of new Natura 2000 sites in the Romanian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Black Sea was made by overlapping, up to 20 m depth, with pre-existing traditional economic activities, mainly fishing, but also offshore oil and gas exploitation. Naturally, this overlapping of MPAs on existing activities has generated limitations and constraints of economic activities, which resulted in conflicts of interests between fishermen communities and environmental protection authorities. The amiable settlement of economic and conservation interests should be made using compromise solutions. Reconciling the arising conflicts by modifying the shape of the designated protected areas, while maintaining the same surface (thus complying with the European requirements in this respect), in order to allow the deployment of fishing operations on traditional fishing grounds.



3.11 Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol: Flood prone areas as a natural retention pools to support the ICZM objectives

Mr. Sašo Šantl presented the role of flood prone areas as a natural retention tool that supports the objectives of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol. Mr. Sašo Šantl reflected on the usefulness of ICZM to address current and long-term coastal management issues, including habitat loss, degradation of water quality, changes in hydrological cycles, depletion of coastal resources, and adaptation to sea level rise and other impacts of global climate change. It is an adaptive process of resource management for environmentally sustainable development in coastal areas. ICZM is essentially a mechanism for bringing together the multiplicity of users, stakeholders, and decisionmakers in the coastal zone in order to secure more effective ecosystem management whilst achieving economic development and intra- and intergenerational equity through the application of sustainability principles. The ICZM approach is generally facilitated through existing terrestrial and marine territorial planning legislation and mechanisms, where these exist.

Mr. Sašo Šantl then introduced the implementation of ICZM in Slovenia. The legislative context of coastal and marine resources management integrates several acts, such as the Water Framework Directive, Drinking Water Directive, IPPC Directive, Bathing Water Directive, Habitat Directive, among others. Wetlands are recognized to provide benefits for nature and human societies (ecosystem services) and they play a special role in Slovenia's ICZM. Some of their main benefits are: flood control, groundwater replenishment, shoreline stabilisation & storm protection, sediment & nutrient retention and export, water purification, reservoirs of biodiversity, wetland products, cultural values, recreation & tourism, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

There are 3 main types of floods: coastal floods, pluvial floods, and fluvial floods. Coastal floods (storm surges) occur when low lying coastal land is flooded by seawater from heavy storms and extreme weather conditions that cause higher tides. This is when flood defenses help alleviate coastal flooding of local properties. Pluvial floods (flash floods and surface water) are usually unexpected and caused by sudden heavy rainfall. Natural events may be responsible for most flash flooding, which can be made worst in urban areas where large concrete areas hamper the ground's natural absorption of rainwater. Fluvial floods (river floods) occur when the water level in a river, lake or stream rises and overflows onto the surrounding banks, shores and neighbouring land. The water level rise could be due to excessive rain or snowmelt.

The retainment of freshwater in the catchment/watershed slows the drainage processes to the minimum. Therefore, the use of natural flood prone areas as retention areas provides an environment friendly engineering to sustain organism to migrate, sediment and nutrients to flow. The EU floods directive provides a such a framework for flood prevention and management. Through a risk assessment process, countries are expected to develop flood risk management plans with concrete measures. These can include structural, and non-structural measures for hazard reduction, exposure and vulnerability. The floods directive interacts with other legislation, such as the water framework directive and marine strategy framework directive, and it is at the confluence of issues of the social, economic and environmental domain.

The development of the Port of Koper in Slovenia is presenting some challenges regarding flood management while harmonizing antropocentric services (port, industry/commerce, settlement, infrastructure, intensive agriculture, ...) with ecosystem services. The issue is that the open/green channels will have higher costs and therefore reflect on the port services prices leading to lower economic competitiveness. Because of this, Slovenia is working to improve the supply of ecosystem services, using wetlands and flood prone areas, as a way to provide ICZM solutions that are adaptable to environmental, economic and social needs without losing competitiveness.

3.12 Conclusions and recommendations for actions and regional cooperation

Ms. Mihaela Popovici and Mr. Mihail Dimovski led a discussion on new, proposed activities, as an addendum to the EPPA project, that can support the beneficiaries in their work implementing the Barcelona Convention. Following the adoption of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, during the



EU and Western Balkans Sofia Summit, held on 10 November 2020, the Western Balkans have agreed on important milestones by endorsing the Leaders' Declaration on the Green Agenda that aligns with EU Green Deal and adopting the Action Plan for the period 2021 – 2024. The Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans outlines in more detail the actions related to the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans clustered around five pillars of the Green Agenda.

The overall objectives of the additional activities in EPPA is to strengthen the implementation of the EU environmental acquis in the Western Balkans and Turkey in areas water management and biodiversity protection as well as to support review of the level of transposition and implementation of EU environmental legislation. EU EPPA assistance will continue to support addressing the urgent environmental needs in the EU enlargement context and facilitate implementation of actions identified in Sofia Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.

The EPPA project is proposing to take on board the following new activities:

- New Activity/Action 3.5: Delivering knowledge-based solutions, environmental practices, and capacity building to reduce land-based sources of pollution and prevent the increase and minimize the level of microplastics in the marine area, including a report regarding the identification of possible measures and best available techniques and environmental practices to prevent the increase and minimize the level of microplastics in the marine areas and one regional workshop on regional awareness-raising activities on marine litter issues.
- New Activity/Action 3.6: Promote good practices on EU-level green and blue infrastructure projects – linking Green infrastructure with blue infrastructure (MPAs and water retention measures), including a Guidelines document on good practices on green and blue infrastructure, valid for EPPA beneficiaries, and capacity building through regional awareness raising activities to build and share knowledge around emerging green and blue infrastructure tools and policy issues, and shape capacity for implementing green and blue infrastructure practices by providing a platform for national stakeholders to disseminate the multiple benefits of green and blue infrastructure solutions.
- New Activity/Action 3.7: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management in selecting climate proof measures as part of the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs), including a Guidelines document on the criteria for the identification of climate proof measures as well as criteria for selecting monitoring and evaluation indicators for those measures, and capacity building, as an essential component of climate change adaptation initiative, through a regional workshop on awareness-raising efforts to increase the information and knowledge about climate change adaptation, climate proofing measures, and evaluation indicators for assessing their efficiency within the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs).
- New Activity / Action 5.1.5: Strengthen the regional cooperation for development of GI and ecosystem connectivity: establishment of a regional working group and development of a regional action plan, including Regional working group on the Green Infrastructure and ecosystem connectivity with 3 meetings and a Regional plan for development of GI and ecosystem connectivity.
- New Activity/ Action 5.1.6: Workshop on integration of GI and ecological corridors into the spatial planning and sector policies.
- New Activity/ Action 5.1.7: Workshop on strengthening the capacity of the national authorities in nature conservation legislation and compliance with environmental standards and assessment of development projects.

The EPPA beneficiaries supported the inclusion of the new activities in the EPPA work programme as an important regional support to marine and nature conservation, pursuing the goals of the relevant Conventions and the EU environmental acquis.



4 Conclusions

The sub-regional workshop on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention provided advice and guidance to strengthen the national capacities of EPPA beneficiaries for effectively addressing implementation challenges and needs regarding the application of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols.

The European Commission offered the keynote to the workshop: synergies between the implementation of the MSFD and the Barcelona's Convention ecosystems approach in the achievement of good environmental status of Europe's seas, including the Mediterranean. The cooperation is further reinforced by EU funding to Barcelona Convention initiatives. The EC also presented The report of the 1st implementation cycle of the MSFD. The directive provides a strategy for the entire marine environment, protects marine biodiversity, assesses the impact of all human activities, drives new research and legal initiatives. The report recommended that the definitions of GES be revised to be more ambitious, that more resources and collective action are devoted to address key pressures, the development of coherent and effective networks of MPAs, and called for data comparability across regions.

UNEP/MAP Secretariat provided updates regarding activities taking place within the framework of the Barcelona Convention. A 2023 Mediterranean Quality Status report is under preparation. It will assess the status of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and the progress towards its GES, as basis for informed decision-making and enhanced action. There is also work towards creating an integrated GES assessment. It comes from the need to ensure better understanding of interaction of pressures, impacts and current state. The process will likely be divided in two stages: an assessment of predominant pressures and their impacts, including mapping when appropriate; and an assessment of the environmental status of marine ecosystems. The COP 22 of the Barcelona Convention is expected to take place in December 2021 in Turkey. The Parties are expected to discuss the results of ongoing work, mandated during the COP 21, including UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2027, post-2020 Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Mediterranean Region (Post-2020 SAPBIO), post-2020 Strategic document on MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures in the Mediterranean, among other topics.

The workshop offered the experience of 2 EU Member States, Romania and Slovenia, with aspects of the Barcelona Convention. Romania shared its experience with Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) arising from the Black Sea Convention, and its area-based management approach in the Black Sea region. Slovenia shared its experience with offshore and coastal blue corridors for biological diversity and sustainable fishery, and the use of natural solutions, such as flood prone areas as a natural retention pools, to support the ICZM objectives.

The workshop also provided an occasion to discuss EPPA's work on supporting the identification of new marine protected areas in its beneficiaries with access to the sea, and how they can be integrated in a wider network of Adriatic and Mediterranean protected areas. There was also a discussion of how EPPA beneficiaries can gain insight from other regional seas conventions regarding the Barcelona Convention's Land-Based Sources Protocol, complemented by the work of SPA/RAC on the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity. The Post-2020 Regional Strategy for MPAs and OECMs in the Mediterranean should be actionable and transformational in line with the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the CBD, the Post-2020 SAPBIO, and other relevant global, regional and sub-regional processes and initiatives, and elaborated in consultation with relevant global and regional organizations, national institutions, and Mediterranean countries' representatives (COP 21 Decision IG.24/6). It is expected to be adopted in the next COP.

The EPPA beneficiaries offered their perspective on the implementation status, and local needs, of the Barcelona Convention. Waste management and the circular economy approach are one of the priorities to curb land-based sources of pollution, followed by further legislative and institutional development to address the requirements of the Convention and of the related EU acquis, as well as capacity building towards specific aspects of implementation, such as monitoring and information systems. The EPPA beneficiaries proposed to strengthen joint efforts at the Adriatic level for all aspects of the Barcelona Convention.



Finally, the EPPA beneficiaries supported the inclusion of the new activities in the EPPA work programme as an important regional support to marine and nature conservation, pursuing the goals of the relevant Conventions and the EU environmental acquis. Following the adoption of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, during the EU and Western Balkans Sofia Summit, held on 10 November 2020, the Western Balkans have agreed on important milestones by endorsing the Leaders' Declaration on the Green Agenda that aligns with EU Green Deal and adopting the Action Plan for the period 2021 – 2024. The overall objectives of the additional activities in EPPA is to strengthen the implementation of the EU environmental acquis in the Western Balkans and Turkey in areas water management and biodiversity protection as well as to support review of the level of transposition and implementation of EU environmental legislation. EU EPPA assistance will continue to support addressing the urgent environmental needs in the EU enlargement context and facilitate implementation of actions identified in Sofia Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.

Workshop outputs

The workshop's main outputs were:

- Strengthened capacity to address the implementation challenges of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols
- Raised awareness on the latest policy developments and tools related to the Barcelona Convention
- Raised awareness of the cross-sectoral nature of marine management: connection to SUP, MSFD, Circular Economy Action Plan, as well as the broader context of the EU Green Deal
- Exchanged experiences in the implementation of the Barcelona Convention between EU Member States and the EPPA beneficiaries
- Increased regional dialogue on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention
- Identification of national obstacles (involvement and commitment, data and methodologies, coordination and cooperation, capacity building needs) towards the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and related EU Directives
- Discussion on the needs of the countries and possible options of support through the activities of EPPA project, including training needs

5 Evaluation

The participants were asked to evaluate the workshop by TAIEX using an online survey after the event. The evaluation results are presented below in a summary table.



				No. Responses	Expert Score	Yes / Excellent	No / Good	Partially / Satisfactory
80496	Workshop - participant - A. Questions	1	Was the workshop carried out according to the agenda?	12	-	11 (92%)	-	1 (8%)
		2	Was the programme well structured?	12	-	12 (100%)	-	-
		3	Were the key issues related to the topics addressed?	12	-	12 (100%)	-	-
		4	Did the workshop enable you to improve your knowledge?	12	-	11 (92%)	-	1 (8%)
		5	Was enough time allowed for questions and discussions?	12	-	11 (92%)	-	1 (8%)
		7	Do you expect any follow-up based on the results of the workshop (new legislation, new administrative approach, etc.)?	12	-	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	-
		8	Do you think that further TAIEX - <small>lipr_c_abbreviation</small> assistance is needed (workshop, expert mission, study visit, assessment mission) on the topic of this workshop?	12	-	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	-
		Workshop -	-	Mr. Constantin, Gheorghe - Speaker MS	12	89.58%	7 (58%)	5 (42%)
				No. Responses	Expert Score	Yes / Excellent	No / Good	Partially / Satisfactory
80496	Workshop - participant - B. Expert ratings	-	Mr. Dimovski, Mihail - Other speakers	12	87.5%	8 (67%)	2 (17%)	2 (17%)
		-	Ma. Popovici, Mihaela - Other speakers	12	87.5%	8 (67%)	2 (17%)	2 (17%)
		-	Mr. Santl, Saso - Speaker MS	12	95.83%	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	-
		-	Ma. Mance, Marijana - Speaker EU	12	95.83%	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	-
		-	Mr. Attia, Khalil - Speaker ENP	12	91.66%	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	-
		-	Mr. Papanthassiou, Vangelis - Speaker MS	12	93.75%	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	-
		-	Ms. Hema, Tatjana - Other speakers	12	93.75%	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	-
		-	Ms. Topalak, Asli - Speaker CC	12	87.5%	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	-
Workshop - participant - C.	1	Conference venue	5	-	5 (100%)	-	-	
	2	Interpretation	4	-	4 (100%)	-	-	
80496	Workshop - participant - C. Logistic Ratings	3	Hotel	1	-	-	-	1 (100%)
		4	Flight	1	-	-	-	1 (100%)
		5	Catering	1	-	-	-	1 (100%)
		6	Was the communication leading up to the event satisfactory?	9	-	9 (100%)	-	-
		7	Was the pre-event test useful?	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-
		8	Did you find the virtual event platform easily accessible?	11	-	11 (100%)	-	-
		9	Was the platform user-friendly?	11	-	11 (100%)	-	-
Workshop - participant - C.	10	Did the host provide adequate instructions during the event, on the use of the platform and in problem solving?	10	-	9 (90%)	-	1 (10%)	
	11	Was the IT support provided adequate?	8	-	8 (100%)	-	-	
80496	Workshop - participant - D. Comments	-	One of the speaker (Mr Saned) was warned very late due to background noise and his speaking could not be understood at that part. On the other hand, one speaker was warned and it took very long causing delay. Maybe testing can be done with	-	-	-	-	
Workshop - speaker - A. Questions	1	Did you receive all the information necessary for the preparation of your contribution?	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-	
	2	Has the overall aim of the workshop been achieved?	6	-	5 (83%)	-	1 (17%)	
	3	Was the agenda well structured?	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-	
	4	Were the participants present throughout the scheduled workshop?	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-	
	5	Was the beneficiary represented by the appropriate participants?	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-	
	6	Did the participants actively take part in the discussions?	6	-	5 (83%)	-	1 (17%)	
	7	Do you expect that the beneficiary will undertake follow-up based on the results of	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-	



88496	Workshop - speaker - A. Questions	8	Do you think that the beneficiary needs further TAIEEX - %pr_c_abbreviation% assistance (workshop, expert mission, study visit, assessment mission) on the topic of this workshop?	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-
		9	Would you be ready to participate in future TAIEEX - %pr_c_abbreviation% workshops?	6	-	6 (100%)	-	-
	Workshop - speaker - C.	1	Conference venue	2	-	2 (100%)	-	-
		2	Interpretation	1	-	1 (100%)	-	-
	Logistic Ratings	6	Was the communication leading up to the event satisfactory?	4	-	4 (100%)	-	-
		7	Was the pre-event test useful?	5	-	5 (100%)	-	-
		8	Did you find the virtual event platform easily accessible?	5	-	5 (100%)	-	-
		9	Was the platform user-friendly?	4	-	4 (100%)	-	-
		10	Did the host provide adequate instructions during the event, on the use of the platform and in problem solving?	5	-	5 (100%)	-	-
	Logistic Ratings	11	Was the IT support provided adequate?	5	-	5 (100%)	-	-
	Workshop - speaker - D. Comments	-	Excellent event judged based on the received appreciation	-	-	-	-	-
		-	Je voudrais bien avoir une idée sur l'appréciation et feedback des bénéficiaires	-	-	-	-	-
		-	The event was performed as online meeting.	-	-	-	-	-

Endnotes

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.





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