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**Agenda item 2: Progress Report for the period 2024-2025**

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UNEP/MAP PAP/RAC  
Split, 2025

## INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this report is to summarise the activities implemented by [PAP/RAC](#) in 2024-2025. Putting together this overview of the main achievements and challenges in implementing the Programme of Work (PoW) approved by COP23 (Portorož, Slovenia, December 2023) for the current biennium will give PAP/RAC FPs a good insight into the progress made jointly by PAP/RAC, the Contracting Parties (CPs) and other partners in implementing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in the Mediterranean Region.

The overview is structured according to the Main Themes and Outputs of the 2024-2025 PoW of UNEP/MAP, in line with the [UNEP/MAP Medium-Term Strategy \(MTS\) 2022-2027](#) adopted by COP 22.

To avoid overburdening the report with excessive details, direct links are provided to all major projects implemented, documents produced, and events organised. We kindly invite you to review them and contact PAP/RAC for any additional information you may require.

## MTS Programme 3: TOWARDS A CLIMATE RESILIENT MEDITERRANEAN

### Outcome 3.1

Legal, policy and institutional framework strengthened at the regional and national level to efficiently address climate change-related challenges (flooding, erosion, land degradation, pollution, disasters, etc.)

### *GEF/SCCF project on adaptation to climate change*

The activities of this project, funded by a GEF Special Climate Change Fund, are implemented in an integrated manner with the activities of the GEF MedProgramme in Montenegro and Morocco (see MTS Theme 4). Climate change issues were discussed in all meetings related to the preparation of the Coastal Plans for Boka Kotorska in Montenegro (launched in June 2022) and Tanger-Tetouan-Al Hoceima in Morocco (launched in March 2022) of national teams composed of government officials, national experts and PAP/RAC, jointly developing recommendations and measures for adaptation to climate change which today make part of the two Coastal Plans. Cost-benefit analysis was carried out for selected adaptation measures in both Plans, as well as the analysis of institutional and legal barriers and opportunities.

The activities are being implemented in close cooperation with Plan Bleu. All workshops organised with national stakeholders used the “Climagine” participatory method to obtain their feedback.

In addition to this, the SCCF project enabled PAP/RAC to prepare the study on risks for investors in the low-elevation coastal zones. The key messages from this study were prepared as a [Policy Brief](#).



Figure 1. Policy Brief on Risks of Investing in LECZ

Another project activity resembled 10 case studies, mainly in the project countries, which were prepared to complement the existing 11 case studies resembled with the previous EU-funded project [AdriAdapt](#), aiming to form the case studies bank for the future coastal resilience platform MedAdapt.

Within the framework of this project, PAP/RAC contributed to Plan Bleu’s workshops, organized in Kotor, Montenegro on October 3-4 2024, and in Tanger, Morocco, on November 4-5, on Nature-based Solutions (NbS). The workshop presented NbS for adaptation to climate change in different coastal typologies, as well as recommendations related to NbS from the two Coastal Plans.

PAP/RAC also contributed to the GWP-Med’s and Plan Bleu’s regional roundtable “[Catalysing Financing for Climate Change Adaptation in the Mediterranean: The Role of the Private Sector](#)”, organized in Athens on 2-3 December 2024.

The SCCF project is presented at the new PAP/RAC website, dedicated to the GEF-funded projects at the following web page: <https://gefmed.paprac.org/sccf-project/>

The project was completed in December 2024.

### ***Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for adaptation to climate change in different coastal typologies***

This publication entitled [Nature-based Solutions for Adaptation to Climate Change in Different Coastal Typologies](#), was initiated in early 2023. It presented specific coastal ecosystems recognised by the ICZM Protocol, the challenges faced by coastal zones, and proposed solutions, as well as examples of good practices from all over the Mediterranean. The document was presented at the [Regional Workshop](#) in Rome in April 2024, during which representatives from 14 countries provided comments and suggestions. The document was finalised and disseminated through the PAP/RAC website.

At the request of the NFP from Cyprus, a [training session](#) was organised in October 2024 in Nicosia to present the document to national and local authorities and institutions.



Figure 2. Conference in Nicosia, October 2024.

### ***DesirMED – EU Horizon 2020 project***

In January 2024 PAP/RAC launched the implementation of the activities within [DesirMED](#), 5-year project, together with 33 other partners, aiming to demonstrate and mainstream NbS for climate-resilient transformation in the Mediterranean. PAP/RAC is leading the working package on upscaling innovative NbS and fostering their mainstreaming across the Mediterranean. Additionally, PAP/RAC is part of the demonstration region of Split-Dalmatia County, which was chosen as a demonstration area due to the existence of the County Coastal Plan and two municipality-level plans, as well as the governance mechanisms established in the

framework of these plans. PAP/RAC supported the development and implementation of these planning initiatives through membership in their Advisory Boards. Through this project, PAP/RAC is contributing to the development of another successful story that can be replicated elsewhere in the Mediterranean.



Figure 3. DesirMED General Assembly, February 2025, in Valencia

## MST Programme 4: TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES INCLUDING CIRCULAR AND BLUE ECONOMY

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### Outcome 4.1

Sustainability of coastal and marine resources achieved through the synergetic implementation of planning and management approaches, including the adequate consideration of Land-Sea Interactions (LSI)

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#### *Coastal Area Management Programme (CAMP)*

For decades, CAMP projects have been the flagship PAP/RAC-led initiative, providing a valuable opportunity to demonstrate an integrated approach by actively engaging other UNEP/MAP Components whenever possible.

##### ▪ *CAMP Israel*

Due to regional instability, CAMP Israel activities have been extended into 2024. During this period, the Common Candidate Indicator (CCI)<sup>25</sup> assessment report was finalised. Key preparatory efforts led to a climate change workshop on April 9, 2024, which engaged stakeholders from 22 Israeli Mediterranean coastal local authorities and representatives from the National Planning Authority and the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Three expert-led webinars preceded this workshop:

- March 17 – National-level actions and challenges
- March 26 – Global insights on sea level rise and coastal climate change
- April 2 – Scientific knowledge on Israel's coastline: past, present, and future

Additionally, a student contest for beach amenities was conducted as part of a university module initiated in 2023, with proposals submitted for judging in July. Two tenders were implemented: one assessing coastal and beach sports and another focused on beach lighting.

The Final Conference was held on November 27 at Tel Aviv University, providing a platform for knowledge exchange and capacity building among coastal stakeholders. CAMP Israel also contributed to the National Coastal Authorities Annual Event, further supporting engagement at the national level. By December 2024, all major project activities had been completed.

Translations and preparation of the Final Project Report were finalised in early 2025.

##### ▪ *CAMP Malta*

The content of the Feasibility Study was agreed upon with Malta's Focal Point, and a tenderer for the preparation of the Feasibility Study was selected in early July. The first output, an Annotated Outline of the Feasibility Study, was submitted on October 24 and subsequently validated by PAP/RAC and Malta's PAP National Focal Point. During the first few months of 2025, a consultation process was launched with UNEP/MAP components to identify opportunities for their involvement in future CAMP Malta.

##### ▪ *CAMP Türkiye*

As part of pre-CAMP Türkiye activities, an MSP training course for national stakeholders was held in Ankara on June 12-13 2024 (see more details under 4.2). Based on the needs identified, a Feasibility Study for the CAMP project, to be implemented in Izmir region, was drafted. The National Focal Point submitted the draft study, and PAP/RAC provided comments and suggestions for improvement. The final version has been completed and will serve as the basis for preparing the CAMP Agreement by the end of 2025. The potential involvement of other UNEP/MAP components has been considered, and all components were invited to participate in

preliminary discussions to ensure a truly integrated project approach.

### **GEF MedProgramme**

In this biennium, the GEF-funded **MedProgramme** and its [Child Project 2.1, "Mediterranean Coastal Zones: Water Security, Climate Resilience and Habitat Protection"](#), and SCCF project "[Enhancing Regional Climate Change Adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas](#)" were instrumental in contributing to the implementation of the ICZM Protocol, contributing to many of the PAP/RAC activities within PoW 2024-2025. These projects mainly contributed to implementing several major national-level activities, namely:

- ***Coastal Plan for the Boka Kotorska Region (Montenegro)***

The development of the Coastal Management Plan for Boka Kotorska Bay progressed, culminating in the finalisation of a draft Plan in June 2024, which was presented to the national Working Group on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), coordinated by the Government of Montenegro, on July 4. Following feedback from several institutions, the Plan was refined accordingly. Additionally, a summary version was developed with the support of a graphic designer.

Two key outputs from the SCCF project advanced significantly:

- The Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) was received and presented at the Annual Stakeholder Meeting in Podgorica on 23 April 2024.
- The Analysis of legislative and institutional barriers and opportunities was finalised for discussion with the National Working Group on ICZM in early July.

The project concluded with the Final Conference, "Collaborating for a Sustainable Future: Adapting to Climate Change in Boka Kotorska While

Enabling Socio-Economic Growth," held in Kotor Bay on December 10, 2024. The event gathered representatives from institutions, NGOs, experts, and donor organisations to define priority actions for implementing the Coastal Management Plan. The conference's [extensive national and local media coverage](#) underscored the importance of strategic cooperation for a sustainable future for Boka Kotorska Bay. The article on this initiative was published in the [GEF International Waters newsletter](#). Finally, the [Coastal Management Plan](#) and its [Summary](#) for decision-makers are available on the new PAP/RAC website dedicated to GEF-funded initiatives.



Figure 4. Final Conference, Kotor, December 2024.

- ***Coastal Plan for the Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima Region (Morocco)***

Significant progress has been made on Morocco's Coastal Plan for the Tanger-Tetouan-Al Hoceima (TTAH) Region. The Plan was drafted and reviewed through an extensive stakeholder consultation process, incorporating valuable feedback into the final draft, which now awaits ministerial approval.

A key milestone was the presentation of the Plan to national and regional stakeholders during the workshop "*Les Solutions fondées sur la Nature et l'adaptation côtière en Méditerranée*", held in Tangier on 4-5 November 2024. Additionally, both the Moroccan and Montenegrin Coastal Plans were featured at the regional roundtable on Catalysing Financing for Climate Change Adaptation in the Mediterranean coastal area

(Athens, 2-3 December 2024), reinforcing their strategic importance in the region.

Preparations are underway for the final conference in Tangier, which will serve as a platform to promote the adoption and implementation of the TTAH Coastal Plan. However, finalisation of the Coastal Plan revealed that additional efforts are needed to meet the legal requirements for the *Schéma Régional du Littoral*. As a result, possible solutions have been explored, including separating the two processes or securing additional funding to fulfil all legal obligations.

- ***National ICZM Strategy for Lebanon***

Following a lengthy preparatory period, the first half of 2024 marked significant progress in the development of the National ICZM Strategy and the Draft ICZM Law for Lebanon. A national team of 14 experts across 10 disciplines drafted key documents, including Diagnostic Analysis, Initial Recommendations for the National ICZM Strategy, Introductory Document for the ICZM Law, and Initial Recommendations for the ICZM Law. Due to the unstable political situation, work on developing these documents was organised with the support of online tools, such as MS Teams. Monthly meetings were regularly held with the expert team, PAP/RAC NFP, and relevant partners until the summer of 2024. [An Inter-ministerial ICZM Group](#), comprising key representatives from various ministries, was established, with an online consultation held on April 19, 2024. Also, an online [meeting with the Minister of Environment](#) was held on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Within the framework of the GEF MedProgramme, an assessment of land cover change in the Lebanese coastal zone has been completed, as well as a comparative assessment of coastal legislation in Lebanon.

Furthermore, joint efforts commenced on an Integrated Management Plan for Damour, with bi-weekly meetings facilitating progress. PAP/RAC experts played a crucial role in

boundary delineation, data and GIS gap analysis, and stakeholder engagement.

- ***Vulnerability studies for the wilayas of El Tarf and Mostaganem (Algeria)***

In Algier, elaborating the vulnerability studies for the wilayas of El Tarf and Mostaganem has not yet been completed. However, validation of the 1st phase is yet to be completed.

- ***Update of the methodological guidance for Coastal plans***

From national experiences, MedProgramme CP 2.1 is also contributing to the update of the methodological guidance for Coastal plans, based on the previous GEF MedPartnership, as well as taking into consideration other similar plans launched by other partners in response to the ICZM Protocol and inspired by the PAP/RAC Coastal Plans. The team responsible for preparing this document comprises the team leaders and other key experts from similar PAP/RAC initiatives.

- ***Assist CPs in implementing MSP***

These MTF-funded activities resulted in the initial consultations with national partners in Albania, which were conducted to assess the current state of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and design future support activities. A scoping report was prepared, outlining the existing MSP framework and proposing key actions to advance the national MSP process.

A significant development in 2024 was the launch of MEDIGREEN, a new MSP project funded under EMFAF, which commenced on 1st November 2024. MEDIGREEN aims to accelerate the [European Green Deal](#) transition in the Mediterranean Sea through MSP.

- ***Analysis of key barriers and levers for improving marine policies coherence***

PAP/RAC's activities within the [MSP4BIO](#) project are, among others, focused on supporting the analysis of key barriers and levers towards Policy Coherence and Co-production of Solutions. In 2024, PAP/RAC participated in the 4th General Assembly, held from May 21 to 23, 2024, in Cádiz, Spain, where the latest developments and challenges in MSP4BIO were discussed. The activity of Screening MSP plans in Slovenia and Malta resulted in drafting recommendations to enhance policy coherence and biodiversity policy implementation, as well as updating the online ESE platform with initial policy recommendations. PAP/RAC co-authored a blog post titled "*Mitigating Marine Threats with Restoration Measures*", which was published in September 2024 ([available here](#)) and participated in a science-policy dialogue during the EU MSP Week. In February 2025, PAP/RAC participated in an online General Assembly to further contribute to project development.

- ***Integration of transboundary EIA/SEA into the Barcelona Convention***

[A regional technical consultation](#) was held on 6 February 2025 in Athens to explore options for integrating EIA and SEA in a transboundary context within the framework of the Barcelona Convention. Based on a draft legal study, participants considered approaches ranging from guidelines to potential amendments of existing legal instruments or the development of a dedicated Protocol. There was broad agreement on the need to strengthen transboundary EIA/SEA to support the implementation of the Convention. Participants recommended drafting guidelines for adoption at COP 25 (2027) while also proposing an exchange of international and national experiences in the Mediterranean region related to transboundary environmental assessments. The meeting emphasized the importance of exchanging best practices, promoting training, and enhancing capacity in collaboration with the Espoo Convention Secretariat.

In addition, assessment of potential activities to strengthen MAP capacity on EIA/SEA in synergy with the existing global and regional relevant mechanisms is being undertaken. National experts from countries not bound with the ESPOO convention have been involved to provide relevant inputs addressing national needs and priorities.

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#### **Outcome 4.2**

#### **Sustainable Blue and Green Economy tools and approaches in the context of Sustainable Development and MSSD implementation**

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- ***Creating a community of MSP practice in the Mediterranean***

In response to a request from the Turkish Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation, and Climate Change, a training course on MSP was organised on 12-13 June 2024 in Ankara. Titled "*Marine Spatial Planning in Türkiye: From Theory to Practice*", the training provided cutting-edge methodologies and updates on MSP implementation in the Mediterranean region. The event brought together 37 participants from 20 national and regional institutions, offering essential insights into governance, funding opportunities, data management, the ecosystem approach, land-sea interactions, and climate change. The training also showcased diverse experiences from Bulgaria, Italy, Montenegro, Malta, and Slovenia. A key feature of the course was the MSP simulation exercise, which utilized the MSP Challenge board game to engage participants in a hands-on approach to spatial planning.

The training was highly productive, addressing national priorities and laying the groundwork for the upcoming CAMP Türkiye project, which will focus on ICZM and MSP.



Figure 5. MSP training, Ankara, June 2024.

Additionally, the preparation of the [Position Paper on Advancing Maritime Spatial Planning \(MSP\) in the Mediterranean](#) is under progress. The aim of the position paper is to support the implementation of the Decision IG.26/10 and provide practical proposals for advancing MSP within the framework of the Barcelona Convention. The outline of the Position paper was discussed with the MSP Working Group, based on which the draft document is being prepared.

PAP/RAC actively contributed with providing strategic inputs to the update of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and participated in four meetings related to the MSSD. As a support to these efforts, a working group on MSP was providing its inputs for updating the strategy by addressing MSP-related priorities. The first meeting of the WG was organised on 23 October 2024 in Marseille during EU MSP Week. Two additional meetings took place online, in February and March 2025. Following the COP Decision IG.26/10, the WG will continue its work as an official WG within Barcelona Convention for advancing MSP in the Mediterranean.

## MTS Programme 5: GOVERNANCE

### Outcome 5.1

Effective implementation and enforcement by the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols, MAP policies, including Ecosystem Approach related COP decisions, the MSSD and Programme of measures achieved at regional and national levels

With the support of the GEF MedProgramme CP 2.1, a comparative analysis of coastal laws in Algeria, France, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia, conducted in relation to the ICZM Protocol, provided a foundation for developing [recommendations for coastal legislation](#) improvements in all participating countries. Insights from the Regional Workshop organised within the same project further enriched these recommendations. A publication compiling these findings was edited, illustrated, designed, and prepared for upload, print, and dissemination, ensuring broad accessibility and impact.

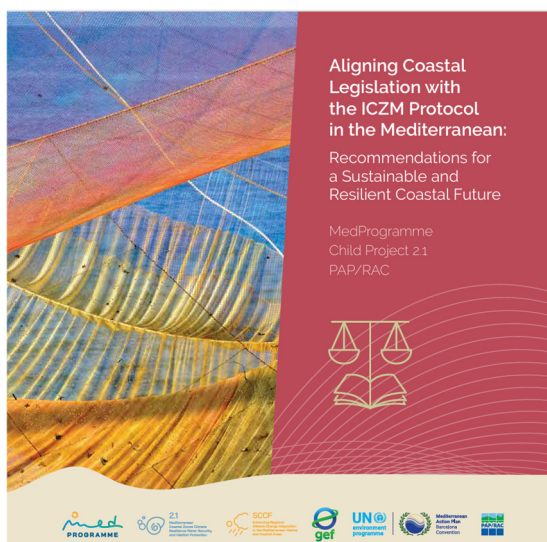


Figure 6. Recommendations for coastal legislations

The preparation of the Law on coast and sea for Bosnia and Herzegovina is a follow up activity of the CAMP BH project that has been completed in December 2023. This proposal to draft the Law is based on the analysis of national legislation in relation to the ICZM Protocol implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina that provided valuable recommendations for developing this important legal instrument., which is currently being implemented within MedProgramme Child Project 2.1. The draft Law will be presented to the coordination mechanism for ICZM in BH in April 2025 and will be finalised based on the recommendations of this interministerial body.

- **Advance the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean and IMAP in coherence with regional and global developments**

Under the EU EcAp MED PLUS project, significant progress has been made in advancing coastal and environmental management efforts. The preparation of the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA), Terms of Reference, and related budget was completed during the reporting period. Discussions were held regarding financial management modalities for Lebanon and Morocco, the two countries where PAP/RAC is responsible for coordination.

A major milestone was reached with the signing of the Small-Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with PAP/RAC in September 2024. Subsequently, contacts were established with national authorities, and the national institutions responsible for implementation were nominated. The Grant Agreements and Terms of Reference for Lebanon have been completed, and the implementation is in progress, while in Morocco, the details of the Work programme are under discussion and should be finalised soon. The first Steering Committee meeting with all eligible

countries, the donor and implementing agencies took place on 26 February 2025 in Athens.

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### Outcome 5.2

Systemic strengthening and effective functioning and delivery of MAP decision-making and advisory bodies ensures and efficiency enhanced with new digital approaches

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With the support of the GEF MedProgramme CP 2.1, several countries are implementing activities related to their Inter-ministerial committees (IMCs). In BIH a proposal for the establishment of an institutional mechanism for ICZM in B&H was developed under the CAMP BIH project. The inter-ministerial ICZM Group was established in Lebanon to support the development of the ICZM National Strategy and the drafting of the ICZM Law. The intention to formalise an IMC through the Strategy and the Law was slowed down due to the country's geopolitical situation, with hopes that the meetings will be organised in 2025 jointly with international partners within the MedProgramme – GWP-Med, UNESCO, and PB/RAC.

In Morocco, an IMC exists at both the regional and national levels. The regional group participated in developing the Coastal Plan, while the national group meeting is planned to take place in 2025.

Several online consultations were organized with Tunisian partners to support them in the implementation of a CI and the adoption of their national ICZM strategy. The analysis of the institutional framework was validated by the CAR/PAP focal point, and a proposal to reactivate an existing body (the National Commission for Sustainable Development) including a working group on ICZM was accepted.

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### Outcome 5.5

Coordinated approaches implemented to strengthen public institutions' capacities for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols

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#### *MedOpen*

Over the years, MedOpen, a virtual training course, has become an essential tool for capacity building in ICZM and MSP in the Mediterranean. Interest in this training is such that PAP/RAC is constantly updating the materials and developing additional modules. Recently, new training materials on calculating the land cover change indicator in English and French were produced with the support of GEF MedProgramme CP 2.1. The materials were uploaded to the MedOpen platform and made available for the training session, which was successfully conducted from October 15 to 29, 2024, bringing together 17 participants from 7 Mediterranean countries. The training consisted of both theoretical and practical components, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the indicator's application. To obtain certification, trainees were required to calculate the indicator for an imaginary coastal zone, reinforcing their practical skills in coastal monitoring and management.

As part of capacity-building efforts, training on land cover change monitoring was organised in Tunis from 13 to 15 February 2024 under MedProgramme Child Project 2.1. The training gathered representatives from APAL, the National Agency for Environmental Protection, the National Institute for Statistics, the National Institute for the Sciences and Technologies from the Sea, and the Ministry of Environment. It was structured into two main components: one dedicated to GIS experts responsible for indicator calculations and another focused on decision-makers utilising land cover change data for coastal zone planning and management.

#### *Syrian Virtual University (SVU)*

On June 7 and on October 11, PAP/RAC provided an [online training session](#) for students and professors of the **Syrian Virtual University (SVU)**. The main topics were the following: Mediterranean 2023 Quality Status Report; Marine Spatial Planning in the Mediterranean; Challenges of climate change; and Solutions for climate change adaptation. This activity aligns with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between PAP/RAC and the SVU.

### *Erasmus +*

The kick-off meeting of the Erasmus+ KA220-YOU project "Climate Change Awareness in the Mediterranean from Youth Perspective" took place in Ankara on 24–26 February 2025, hosted by Ankara University's DEHUKAM. Alongside PAP/RAC, partners include Dokuz Eylül University (Türkiye), FISP MED (Italy), and Universidad Abat Oliba CEU (Spain).

The 30-month project aims to raise climate change awareness among Mediterranean youth through academic research, fieldwork, and interactive CASS trainings (Climate Awareness and Sustainable Skills), aligning with EU youth priorities.

PAP/RAC will contribute by supporting training sessions — especially on climate impacts in the Mediterranean — nominating 16 student participants, co-developing training modules and the e-learning platform, and hosting the closing event in Split.

## MTS Programme 6: Together for a shared vision of the Mediterranean sea and coast

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### Outcome 6.2

Science-based IMAP, foresight and other assessments and assessment tools for strengthened science-policy interface and decision-making

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The [CORMON Coast and Hydrography meeting](#) was successfully held via teleconference on 17 October 2024, gathering representatives from 15 Contracting Parties and several partner institutions. Discussions focused on proposing climate change-related indicators, exchanging updates on the EcAp/IMAP revision, and advancing the EcAp Med PLUS project.

As regards upgrading the assessment component of IMAP, including possible integrated assessment for all IMAP clusters, PAP/RAC provided contribution for the EcAp Coordination Group meeting, and proposals for improving IMAP-related EOs 7 and 8 have been presented at the CORMON coast and hydrography meeting (17 October 2024, online). The major conclusion was to include the Candidate CI 25 Land Cover Change in the List of IMAP CIs. Furthermore, discussions at the CORMON Coast and Hydrography meeting also covered Common Indicators 15, 16, and 25, resulting in agreed-upon upgrades and clarifications to methodologies, mainly through revisions to the Guiding Factsheets. These developments mark significant progress in refining the IMAP framework and enhancing regional capacities for environmental monitoring and management.

Preparatory activities started for the organisation of the CORMON in 2025 (envisaged for 8-9 July). The main agenda items will include the presentation of the proposals for the climate-related indicators, the GES assessment for the

common indicator 25 on Land cover change and other topics important for the implementation of IMAP.

PAP/RAC has contributed to the finalisation of the publication 2023 MED QSR, the preparation of the summary for policy makers as well as contributing to the EcAp Coordination Group meetings.

PAP/RAC contributed to the CORMON meeting organised by SPA/RAC, mainly by providing comments on the draft Guiding Document on EO6 Sea Floor Integrity, highlighting its interconnections with EO7.

### *Further developing IMAP Common Indicators.*

With the contribution of the GEF MedProgramme CP 2.1, progress was also achieved in monitoring land cover change, a critical environmental indicator. The calculation of the Land Cover Change indicator 25 was updated and upgraded to incorporate elevation data, and a manual for its calculation was developed. During the methodology update and upgrade, the assessments were done for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. National experts have been contracted in Lebanon, Morocco, Libya, and Tunisia, and they performed the calculation, with their reports being validated by the methodological expert group. Finally, the Manual was updated to incorporate findings from its application.

Additionally, a set of climate change-related themes under which specific indicators for EO7 and EO8 would be prepared was proposed and discussed during the CORMON Coast and Hydrography meeting on 17 October 2024. During 2025, and for the preparation of the working document for the next CORMON meeting, a draft set of climate-related indicators has been prepared, taking suggestions from the meeting into account. The final proposal will be submitted for considerations at the EcAp Coordination Group meeting in September 2025.

## MTS Programme 7: FOR INFORMED AND CONSISTENT ADVOCACY, AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

### Outcome 7.1

Stakeholders and policy-makers are informed about the state of the Mediterranean Sea and coast and aware of the environmental priority issues

With the support of the GEF MedProgramme CP 2.1, the 2024 [Mediterranean Coast Day](#) celebration took on a powerful new form by expanding its on-the-ground campaign to include a dynamic online dimension. The 2024 edition focused on the vital role women play in safeguarding coastal ecosystems across the region under the slogan '*Women's Wave for Coastal Sustainability*'. During a preparatory visit in May, the Algerian Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy discussed the details of the main celebration. The event took place on 25 September at the Sheraton Hotel in Annaba, bringing together over 160 stakeholders, including senior policymakers, environmental practitioners, and representatives from civil society. The celebration underscored the collective commitment to coastal sustainability while honouring women who are leading change at local, national, and regional levels.



Figure 7. Coast Day celebration, Annaba, September 2024.

In parallel, PAP/RAC spearheaded an ambitious digital campaign aimed at amplifying the #WomensWave movement and generating

lasting momentum. The campaign was built around three key pillars:

- Quotes and testimonials from leading experts and past Coast Day ambassadors
- Portraits and interviews with inspiring women from Lebanon, Montenegro, and Morocco, featured in the "In Conversation With" series on the Coast Day website
- A regional call for stories, inviting women across the Mediterranean to share their experiences in marine conservation, sustainable business, coastal resilience, responsible fisheries, aquaculture, and eco-tourism

The success of the campaign was evident both in its numbers and its impact. The stories and testimonials collected formed the foundation for a new digital platform — the **Mediterranean Coastal Sustainability Network** — created using ArcGIS StoryMaps. This living archive, hosted on the [Coast Day website](#), fosters collaboration and visibility for women-led coastal initiatives across the region.



Figure 8. Coast Day digital campaign visual

The digital campaign achieved remarkable outreach, reaching 13.4 million people and generating over 21 million impressions across PAP/RAC's social media channels.

To support partners in organising their own Coast Day events, a comprehensive media toolkit was developed and distributed widely. It included bilingual leaflets (in English and French), a poster, a roll-up banner, social media cards, and custom-designed tote bags distributed at the Algerian celebration.

As part of a multi-year vision, a five-year strategy was developed and an action plan aiming to scale impacts, foster new partnerships, and ensure consistent promotion of coastal sustainability messages. The campaign was further enriched through collaborations with regional organisations, who helped extend its reach and encouraged related events in their respective countries.

Coast Day 2024 celebrations were reported from Slovenia, Montenegro, Greece, and Tunisia, underscoring the event's expanding reach. A detailed activity report is prepared, capturing the collective achievements and lessons learned.

Preparatory activities for the CD event in 2025 started. The topic of the event this year will be the importance of institutions communicated also within the SDG 16. The Central event will be celebrated in Tunisia, where the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of APAL and 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SPA/RAC, together with 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MAP will be marked.

## COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

Same as in the previous biennia, PAP/RAC was often consulted and invited to intervene on ICZM, MSP and Climate Change issues, a few of which are illustrated below.

PAP/RAC [participated](#) in the first-ever [Mediterranean Green Week](#), launched by the [Union for the Mediterranean](#) and its partners in Istanbul from May 14 to 16, 2024. The event attracted approximately 150 public officials, private sector representatives, civil society members, and scientists who exchanged views on collaboratively addressing the region's interlinked climate, energy, and environmental crises. PAP/RAC presented its achievements in the GEF MedProgramme CP 2.1 and SCCF projects, as well as its work related to the importance and opportunities of MSP in the Mediterranean.



Figure 9. Mediterranean Green Week, Istanbul

PAP/RAC [participated](#) in the 10<sup>th</sup> **GEF Biennial International Water Conference**, held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from September 23 to 26, 2024. During the conference, PAP/RAC shared key findings from [Child Project 2.1](#) and the [SCCF project](#) under the MedProgramme, contributing to discussions and interactive sessions "Achieving Policy Coherence from Source to Sea" and "Looking into the Future: Ensuring Robustness to Future Challenges". [IWLearn](#) launched an interactive digital story map featuring stories and videos from 30 successful GEF International Waters projects, including the ongoing MedProgramme and the

GEF Adriatic, which was successfully closed in 2020.



Figure 10. 10<sup>th</sup> GEF IW Conference, Uruguay

PAP/RAC [showcased](#) its leadership in advancing coastal adaptation and resilience across the Mediterranean by participating in four events at the 29<sup>th</sup> **UNFCCC COP** in Baku, Azerbaijan. On November 19, PAP/RAC Director participated in an event highlighting **Tunisia's efforts toward a sustainable and resilient future** by addressing climate challenges through initiatives aimed at protecting vulnerable coastal zones and advancing ICZM. On the margins of this conference, PAP/RAC representatives held discussions with Tunisia's Minister of the Environment, the Secretary General of Maritime Affairs, and the Director General of the Coastal Protection and Planning Agency (APAL), laying the groundwork for activities, including the 2025 [Mediterranean Coast Day](#), celebrating APAL's 30th anniversary.

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, PAP/RAC contributed to the **MedECC event**, launching a new report on coastal risks that aligns adaptation actions with the UN SDGs, emphasising the region's social and cultural values. PAP/RAC contributed to the topic of science-policy-community linkages.

The same day, the PAP/RAC Director participated in the Union for the Mediterranean event "**Women leaders in climate action - perspectives from the Euro-Mediterranean region**", celebrating contributions of women in

driving climate action and inspiring future leaders.

Finally, PAP/RAC's side event, **"Enhancing Regional Climate Change Adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas,"** marked the closure of the Mediterranean Pavilion and the COP29. The session addressed the needs of coastal management authorities in terms of strategic planning and adaptation priorities. UNEP's Climate Change Division Chief of the Adaptation and Resilience Branch opened the event. Presentations of Coastal plans focusing on resilience from Šibenik-Knin County (Croatia), Boka Kotorska Bay (Montenegro), and Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima (Morocco) were followed by success stories from Tunisia, Croatia and regional partners, including GWP-Med, Plan Bleu/RAC, and the Ocean & Climate Platform. The event was closed with a panel discussion. This event, as well as PAP/RAC's participation in COP 29, was funded by the [MedProgramme's Child Project 2.1 and SCCF initiatives](#).



Figure 10. PAP/RAC event at COP29

[The third UN Ocean Conference](#) will be organised in Nice in June 2025. PAP/RAC, jointly with the Republic of Croatia, UNEP/MAP, SPA/RAC and BP/RAC, proposed an event entitled **"Ocean, Our Future, Our Responsibility: Accelerating Adaptation and Enhancing Resilience from the Mediterranean Lands to the Sea"** aiming to highlight the ocean as the final recipient of all waters, linking landscapes, communities, and ecosystems. This

event aims to promote PAP/RAC's nearly 50 years of experience in leading integrated coastal planning initiatives, jointly with all Mediterranean countries, Barcelona Convention Contracting Parties.

#### ***Communications & science: Outreach and publications***

During 2023 and 2024, [PAP/RAC](#) made significant steps in enhancing its communication activities. From strengthening communications outreach on social media using digital marketing to preparing articles tailored for various partners' newsletters and websites, such as the following articles on IW:LEARN (Global Environment Facility's (GEF) International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network):

- - [Empowering women for sustainable coastal management](#)
- [Join the Women's Wave for Coastal Sustainability in the Mediterranean](#)
- [Mediterranean Coast Day 2024 celebration in Algeria](#)
- [Want to grow your Mediterranean sustainability network?](#)
- Sustainable future of Boka Kotorska [Bay in Montenegro: A call for collaboration and action](#)

Furthermore, PAP/RAC's scientific article, ["Identifying success factors for integrated coastal zone management: Development of a regional coastal plan in Morocco."](#) was recently published in the journal Environmental Science & Policy. The article highlights the importance of integration, implementation, coordination between science and policy, and appropriate governance in ICZM.

## DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

The implementation of the PoW faced notable challenges due to the complex political and environmental circumstances in the Mediterranean region. In several countries, these conditions affected the stability of collaboration, stakeholder coordination, and the availability of human resources, leading to delays in the execution of planned activities. Despite these obstacles, efforts were made to adapt implementation modalities and maintain momentum wherever possible.

Providing support to countries in establishing or strengthening Inter-Ministerial Committees (IMCs) proved to be one of the most challenging activities in this biennium. Although this action is both strongly encouraged by the donor (GEF) and widely recognised as a cornerstone for advancing ICZM and broader sustainability goals, progress has been limited. In contrast to the previous biennium, when countries developing their National ICZM Strategies demonstrated notable success in advancing IMCs, this reporting period saw fewer requests for support of both.

Finally, new challenges require new expertise, and the limited availability of human resources and funding represents a limitation to a PAP/RAC's ability to meet all needs.

## RESOURCE MOBILISATION

Besides the resources made available to PAP/RAC through the projects already included in the PoW and described in the previous chapters (i.e. GEF MedProgramme, EcAp MED III, ERASMUS +, and the two EU Horizon Europe funded projects MSP4BIO and DesirMED), two additional projects were recently approved. In November 2024, activities were launched under MediGREEN, a new MSP project funded by the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF). In March 2025, another project, the INCORE MED project of the EU Interreg Mediterranean Programme, was approved. Along these lines, PAP/RAC continued its collaboration with EUSAIR. Recently, a project concept has been developed entitled "Promoting Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Prevention through River Basin Management (RBM), Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)".

Finally, the Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 19 December 2023, calling for strengthened cooperation on ICZM for sustainable development, together with the outcomes of the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference in June 2025, are expected to boost political momentum, regional collaboration, and access to funding. This is likely to enhance support for ICZM, MSP, and climate adaptation efforts in Mediterranean coastal zones.

## CONCLUSION

Although the political and environmental circumstances in the Mediterranean are becoming increasingly challenging, significant progress has been made in implementing the ICZM Protocol. The activities implemented were in compliance with the PAP/RAC's mandate, which is to assist Mediterranean countries in implementing ICZM and MSP since its official introduction in the Barcelona Convention system by a COP 20 Decision.

Through Coastal Plans focused on adaptation to the changing climate, PAP/RAC has demonstrated more than a decade of support to Mediterranean coastal regions in their efforts to adapt to the changing coastal environment. The first Coastal plan awarded with the MedAdapt Award was followed by 6 more plans, and the new Guidelines for Coastal Planning aim to provide coastal regions with a tool for launching a long-term adaptation process.

Coastal zones are among the most vulnerable human systems in the face of climate change. Mediterranean coasts, in particular, are a global hotspot — not only for climate change itself, but also for compound flooding impacts, which place an additional and growing burden on the already vulnerable shoreline. At the same time, hosting nearly one-third of global tourism has led to intense urbanisation of Mediterranean coastal zones. As such, we may conclude that the coastal space where PAP/RAC concentrates its efforts is both one of the most strategically important and one of the most threatened regions in the world. Therefore, a new indicator on the land cover change, with its additional layer of elevation, together with the other coast and hydrography indicators, is of a great value to countries in coastal planning and management.

After 18 years of implementation, the Mediterranean Coast Day campaign is proposed

as the MSSD's flagship initiative. The issue of awareness of the challenges for the world's coasts may be crucial for the future of humanity. Therefore, PAP/RAC proposes that the Mediterranean countries, Barcelona CPs, propose Coast Day for the UN observance day.

Advancing MSP in the Mediterranean is more critical than ever. Its implementation should build on existing progress in ICZM, ensuring that both national and regional frameworks evolve to address emerging challenges—particularly the need for an ecosystem-based approach, climate-smart initiatives and addressing sustainable blue economy. By enhancing policy coherence, strengthening capacity building, and fostering stakeholder engagement, MSP can serve as a vital instrument for balancing economic development with marine conservation. The future work of the MSP WG, coordinated by PAP/RAC, will be essential in this regard.

As Mediterranean countries strive to achieve GES, MSP offers an integrated and forward-looking approach to marine governance that directly supports resilient coastal communities and the sustainable development of the blue economy. A stronger focus on national implementation projects will be crucial in ensuring that economic activities at sea align with environmental sustainability and long-term resilience. Active engagement of maritime sectors, improving technical capacities, and securing adequate financial support will further enhance the effectiveness of MSP in the region. Moving forward, sustained commitment and collaboration will be essential to translating strategic planning into tangible outcomes for Mediterranean marine and coastal sustainability.

Projects implemented under the Coastal Area Management Programme (CAMP), as part of the UNEP/MAP initiative, will continue to be coordinated with the guidance and support of PAP/RAC. These projects play a key role in

translating UNEP/MAP policies, decisions, and legal framework requirements into concrete actions in selected coastal areas, helping countries address environmental and development challenges.

New challenges necessitate new competencies. Solutions to these emerging and often unpredictable issues increasingly rely on insights and experiences from the ground. In this context, communities of practice have emerged as an important and globally sought-after mechanism for knowledge exchange and capacity building. PAP/RAC has recognised these trends and has proactively responded by facilitating such collaborative platforms.

Moreover, the changing environment has led to a greater demand for training and capacity development. The trainings provided in the last biennium, particularly those delivered on the ground, were highly appreciated by the countries. However, due to limited financial resources, the scope and frequency of training activities were constrained and adjusted to align with available funding.

PAP/RAC will continue to support Mediterranean countries in implementing the ICZM Protocol through ICZM, MSP, and an integrated approach to climate change adaptation. However, it is worth noting that, considering the magnitude of the challenge, the original MTF budget for these activities is extremely modest. Significant resources have been and will have to be secured from external sources.

To fill the gaps, PAP/RAC will continue to assist CPs through mobilising additional funding. In this, we rely on the close collaboration and prompt response of our FPs, as well as their continued collaboration toward our common objectives: sustainability and resilience of the Mediterranean coastal zones.