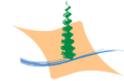


Press Release

The Tangier Declaration: a boost for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean



Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts
et à la Lutte Contre la Désertification

Tangier, Morocco, 2 December 2016.

Today, the 300 participants in the 2016 Forum of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Mediterranean, held in Tangier, Morocco released the Tangier declaration, which is the outcome of a large participatory process involving all stakeholders engaged with MPAs in the Mediterranean.

Coming from all over the Mediterranean, MPA managers, representatives of national environmental, fishing and tourism agencies, scientists, non-governmental and civil society organisations, local economic actors, donors and European, Mediterranean and international institutions have exchanged during 4 days from 28 November to 1st December, to find solutions to the challenges raised by marine biodiversity preservation in the Mediterranean while supporting local economies.

They released the Tangier declaration that will be used to update the 2020 MPA Roadmap elaborated at the 2012 MPA Forum in Antalya. This Roadmap aims to support the achievement of the international objective set by the Convention on Biological Diversity to protect 10% of the Mediterranean Sea through an effective network of MPAs by 2020.

The participants released the Tangier Declaration after having reviewed the MPA progress achieved in the last 4 years, discussed the remaining challenges to 2020, considered recent global, regional and sub-regional marine policy developments regarding the ecosystem approach, sustainable development and climate change issues, and considered the recommendations from the different sessions of the Forum.

The Roadmap will be updated with the most recent institutional framework and a new strategic objective related to the role of MPAs as a marine spatial management tool in supporting ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation to climate change. Key operational and action-oriented steps, will also be considered, to improve and help achieve the Roadmap objectives by 2020.

Example of steps to be considered for the Roadmap update

Efforts to effectively conserve at least 10% of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020, need to be boosted for coastal and marine areas and thereafter for the open seas.

- The coverage and implementation of no-entry, no-take and no-fishing zones, within either existing or future MPAs, needs to be increased from the current coverage of 0.04% of the Mediterranean Sea to reach at least 2% of no-take zones, especially in key functional areas.
- All MPA sites currently established should benefit from the necessary support for effective, equitable and efficient management by 2020.

- Exchange of experience, best practices and knowledge among MPA managers, should be strengthened.
- Win-win relationships of MPAs with decision-makers, donors and private sector need to be created in order to respond to pressures beyond MPA borders, while considering MPAs as a natural capital and a management instrument to reach sustainability targets.
- The Trust Fund for Mediterranean MPAs, an innovative financial mechanism, is supported.
- The crucial role of regional and inter-regional cooperation among human networks working on MPAs, Regional Seas Conventions and relevant regional organizations is recognized.

The Tangier Declaration includes 33 steps.

The 2016 Forum of Marine Protected Areas is co-organised by the network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean (MedPAN), the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC / SPA), and the Moroccan Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte Contre la Désertification, in partnership with many national and international organisations.

Marine Protected Areas are everyone's business !

Editor's note :

The Roadmap

In 2012, during the first edition of the Mediterranean MPA Forum, a Roadmap was developed by all the participants to succeed in protecting 10% of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020. This Roadmap calls on all stakeholders in MPAs (managers, policy makers, scientists, private actors, civil society) to implement the key actions at the local, national and Mediterranean level for structuring and pragmatic results.

The Roadmap was formally adopted by the Parties to the Barcelona Convention early 2016 to strengthen the Regional Programme of work for Coastal and Marine Protected Areas approved in 2009 by the Barcelona Convention in Marrakesh.

This second Forum of Mediterranean MPAs was an opportunity for a mid-term assessment of the implementation of the Roadmap and to propose new recommendations to tackle the challenges faced by MPAs, especially those related to climate change, with an integrated and long term vision.

MPA challenges

Marine Protected Areas are slices of sea and coast placed under protection and managed because of their ecological importance. Through effective management, they protect the amazing marine life of the Mediterranean, ensuring the livelihoods of fishermen, stimulate the local economy and contribute to mankind well-being. Marine Protected Areas are also a nature based solution that is essential to contribute to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

These last years, significant progress has been made in favor of the protection of the marine environment in the Mediterranean. Today, 7.14% (179,798 km²) of the Mediterranean Sea is placed under a protection status, almost all of which (90%) is located in European waters. Despite the fact that we are close to the quantitative target of 10% of protection of the Mediterranean Sea, at the qualitative level, many sites are not managed and do not have sufficient regulation and resources to preserve them adequately. Considering the high pressures exerted on the Mediterranean marine environment with growing trends, it is crystal clear that willingness to invest in marine conservation needs be boosted up. The Forum intended to support this effort.

The brochure «Status of MPAs in the Mediterranean 2016 – Main findings» presented during the Forum, gives an overview of the current states of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean in 2016.

About the co-organisers

Since 1990, the MedPAN network has brought together the managers of Mediterranean MPAs and has supported them in their management activities. A legally independent structure since 2008, MedPAN aims to promote the establishment, the operation and the sustainability of a Mediterranean network of MPAs. The MedPAN association today gathers 65 members (MPA managers) and 37 partners (with activities linked to MPA management) from 17 Mediterranean countries.

www.medpan.org

The Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) was established in Tunis in 1985 by decision of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, which entrusted it with responsibility for assessing the situation of natural heritage and assisting the Mediterranean countries to implement the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean ([SPA/BD Protocol](#)), which came into force in 1999. www.rac-spa.org

The mission of the *Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte Contre la Désertification (HCEFLCD)* (HCEFLCD) in Morocco is to 1) Develop and implement government policy in the areas of conservation and sustainable development of natural resources; 2) Coordinate the establishment of institutional mechanisms for the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of government policy to combat desertification; 3) Participate in the development and implementation of government policy on rural development. www.eauxeforets.gov.ma

Practical information

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Forum web site

www.medmpaforum2016.org

Supporting information

[Tangier Declaration](#)

[2012 MPA Roadmap](#)

[Forum Programme highlights](#) – overview of all sessions programmed during the Forum

[Detailed Forum programme](#) – details on all sessions with speakers and summaries of speeches

[Status of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean 2016 – Main findings](#)

[Poster on the main findings of the Status](#)