

**DRAFT FOR
DISCUSSION**

OVERVIEW OF MEDITERRANEAN NETWORKS AND ACTION PLANS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS

***REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROTECTED AREAS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.	Scope Of This Document.....	3
1.2.	Methodology.....	3
1.3.	Mediterranean Natural Values.....	4
1.4.	Main Threats To Mediterranean Natural Values.....	5
1.5.	Relevant Socio-Economical Aspects.....	5

2. GAPS AND NEEDS IN MEDITERRANEAN PROTECTED AREAS

2.1.	Regional Action Plan for Protected Areas in North Africa/ Middle East.....	6
2.2.	Parks for Life (IUCN WCPA 1995).....	7
2.3.	Mediterranean Action Plan (1995-2005) and RAC/SPA (1997).....	8
2.4.	Mediterranean Wetlands Strategy (1996-2006).....	9
2.5.	Declaration of Cilento (1999).....	9
2.6.	Preliminary Conclusions from these Assessments.....	10
	Table 1. Main gaps and needs of Mediterranean Protected Areas as identified by Regional Assessments and Experts' Meetings.....	12

3. MAIN INTERNATIONAL PROTECTED AREA PLANS AND NETWORKS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

3.1.	The Man And Biosphere (Mab) Programme.....	13
3.2.	The Natura 2000 Network.....	15
3.3.	The Emerald Network.....	16
3.4.	The UNEP-Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP).....	17
3.5.	The Pan-European Biological And Landscape Diversity Strategy.....	18
3.6.	Ramsar Convention And Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative-MedWet.....	19
3.7.	The EUROPARC Federation.....	20
3.8.	The WWF-Mediterranean Programme.....	21
3.9.	Other Marine Conservation Initiatives.....	22
3.10.	Preliminary Considerations.....	25
	Table 2. Action Plans and Significant Field Work of Mediterranean Networks.....	26

4. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND POTENTIAL SYNERGIES FOR BUILDING ON THE DURBAN 2003 STREAMLINES

4.1.	Conclusions from the Previous Assessments.....	27
4.2.	Already Existing Joint Initiatives Between PA Plans And Networks.....	28
4.3.	Considerations Along The Four Durban 2003 Streamlines.....	31

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....37**6. LIST OF ACRONYMS.....39**

ANNEX I.	Main Threats To Mediterranean Natural Values.....	40
ANNEX II.	ACTION PLAN FOR SPANISH PROTECTED AREAS (EUROPARC 2002).....	41
ANNEX III.	Status of Parks For Life: Action For Protected Areas In Europe Projects Status of Pan-European Ecological Network (Peen) Projects. Second five-year action plan 2001-2005.....	43
ANNEX IV.	Report of the High Seas Marine Protected Areas Workshop 15-17 January 2003, Malaga Spain to the Eight Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.....	44
ANNEX V.	Presence of Networks in Mediterranean Countries.....	46

PART 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. SCOPE OF THIS DOCUMENT

In an effort to reinforce regional initiatives for the conservation and rational use of protected areas in the Mediterranean, the IUCN – Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation has organised a Regional Conference in Murcia, Spain (March 26-30, 2003). The Conference aims at revisiting and reinforcing regional initiatives and partnerships that are relevant to the management of protected areas in the Mediterranean; to identify synergies and opportunities for integrated action; and to present a common Mediterranean vision to be carried from the Meeting to the World Parks Congress in Durban 2003. This will allow the elaboration of common strategies and future steps, and a reference point for active policies to be implemented after the World Parks Congress.

Several initiatives of Mediterranean significance for protected areas management and wise use of natural resources, have elaborated action plans. These include the Barcelona Convention, the Cilento Declaration, Parks for Life, and other initiatives as the Natura 2000 that have strategies, work plans and orientations relevant to the development of PAs in the region. However, a thorough overview of these plans is not available for the identification of synergies, gaps and further needs of the Mediterranean region in this arena.

In this context this paper intends to review the plans and networks for protected areas in the Mediterranean region. It will focus on the management and institutional weaknesses, strengths, gaps and synergies, trying to highlight those areas where further work is needed. It seeks to review on what has been done rather than on forward looking plans.

This paper is organised as follows:

- Part 1-** Introductory remarks and methods, together with a rapid overview of natural values and conservation problems in the region.
- Part 2-** Overview of the status of protected areas, and a revision of the main gaps and needs, as based on the information from regional assessments and Experts' Meetings.
- Part 3-** Assessment of the main regional networks of protected areas, their plans and action, in relation to the weaknesses previously found.
- Part 4-** Identification of the main gaps and needs in action, and preliminary conclusions on best opportunities to create synergies, between existing plans and networks, along the four priority streams for Durban 2003:
 - ? Links with the Landscape/Seascape.
 - ? New ways of working together (Governance).
 - ? New Skills for the New Century (Training, Capacity Building).
 - ? Gaps in the system, financial needs, management effectiveness.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

The initiatives under scope were selected based on the following criteria:

- ? Focusing on the establishment and management of protected areas.
- ? International initiatives with a pan-Mediterranean (not national) significance.
- ? Where action plans, aiming at the sustainable management of protected areas, have been elaborated.
- ? Significant relevance in the field, and networking at the international level.

These include areas and plans under the Barcelona Convention system, Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar sites, Natura 2000 of the EU, the Emerald Network, and relevant plans and initiatives such as Parks for Life, the Cilento Declaration, the Mediterranean Wetlands Strategy and MedWet, the WWF conservation and training regional programmes, the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, and the EUROPARC Federation. Understandably, many other initiatives had to be left aside for either being restricted to discrete topics or because of their national focus.

One of the main difficulties and constraints of this work is the fact that the information about many of these initiatives is often dispersed in grey literature or focused on national situations. This information is frequently descriptive or divulgative rather than analytic. There are few references in literature elaborated from a pan-Mediterranean perspective in analysing PA networks or the implementation of strategies and plans.

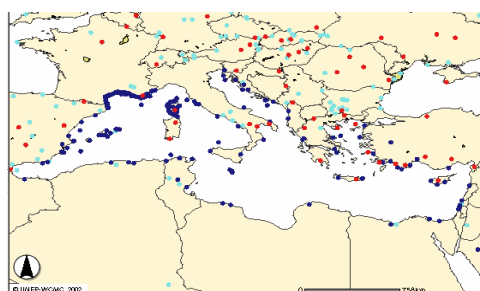
1.3. MEDITERRANEAN NATURAL VALUES

On the crossroads of Europe, Africa and Asia, the Mediterranean region has seen human presence for millennia; it is very much a human-shaped landscape and at the same time home to an amazing biodiversity.

The largest enclosed sea on Earth has the world's second highest percentage of endemic species. It is surrounded by scenic mountain landscapes, once entirely covered by scrub and woodlands, home to about 25,000 species of flowering plants of which 13,000 are endemic, together with also endemic large carnivores and herbivores. Much of southern Europe escaped recent glaciation, thus diversity around the Mediterranean tends to be higher. The short running rivers and streams, mountain lakes and coastal lagoons support migrating birds and endemic fish species. Finally, the coastal area, including both marine and terrestrial habitats, represents one of the region's most important natural heritage, with its unique wetlands, dune systems, and seagrass meadows.

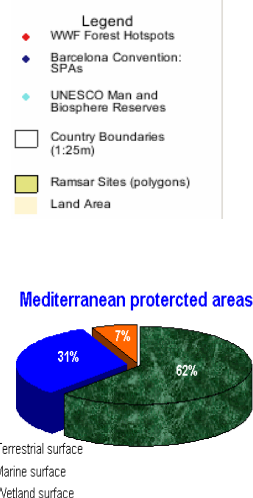
BOX 1. COVERAGE OF PROTECTED AREAS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

In the Mediterranean region, considered as the total surface of riverine countries, protected areas cover 7.5 % of its original vegetation surface (UNEP Blue Plan 1999). This situation varies greatly from one country to another. For example, the forested protected areas ranges from 33% in Cyprus, to between 9-14% in Slovenia, Croatia, Spain and France, to less than 3% in most of all other non-EU countries (UNEP Blue Plan 1999). According to WWF (2000) only 17% of the forest cover remains in the Mediterranean, and no country in the region has a representative system of protected forest types.



WWF Forest Hotspots, SPAs, BR, Ramsar Sites in the Mediterranean Region..Source: WCMC 2002

Protected areas cover a mere 3% of the coastline, and less than 1% of the marine area (UNEP-MAP 1996). In relation to the size of marine and coastal protected areas there are substantial variations, as most are small, with 41% of the total ranging below 1,000 ha (only 25% are bigger than 10,000 ha), and just 15% of the areas are strictly marine.



Source: <http://www.rac-spa.org.tn/Rep.htm>

1.4 MAIN THREATS TO MEDITERRANEAN NATURAL VALUES

The Mediterranean Sea and basin are amongst the most demanded ecosystems in the world. The main environmental threats are treated in **Annex I** and can be summarised as follows:

- ? A growing desertification, as a result of deforestation, overgrazing, 50.000 man-induced fires every year, agricultural pressure and climate change.
- ? The mounting consumption of fresh water, mainly for agriculture, the pollution of tributary rivers and the limited recycling and sewage systems for a growing urban population, and its unsustainable *feed-backing* impact on ecosystem functions and species survival.
- ? The physical, chemical and biological pollution of this closed sea.
- ? The drop of fishing stocks and doubled overfishing pressure.
- ? The drawing back of forest areas, today remaining a mere 17%.
- ? Economic activities in excess concentrated along the coasts, increasing demand for economic development purposes along the narrow coastal flatlands: industry, infrastructures, transport, urban development and tourism resorts.
- ? Destruction or degradation of over 50% of the Mediterranean wetlands and coastal dune systems.
- ? The rise of the sea level threatening the most productive ecosystems: deltas (agriculture), wetlands (fishing), beaches (tourism), and coastal groundwater (for all purposes).
- ? As a general consequence, the irreversible loss of biodiversity inland and in the sea.

1.5. RELEVANT SOCIO-ECONOMICAL ASPECTS

Very important to consider in this context are the increasing inequalities between Northern and Southern countries¹. Almost every environmental trend mentioned above has a stronger impact in the least developed Mediterranean countries, because of a drier climate, higher dependence on basic natural resources, higher population growth and poverty rates, and lower institutional and financial capacity to face these challenges ².

The population growth dynamics vary enormously from some countries to other (statistically clustered in 3 homogeneous groups: Eastern / Southern / E.U. countries). Currently, in the Mediterranean basin there are about 450 million inhabitants (European Environment Agency, 2000). Their growth dynamics vary from 0 in the European area to a mean of 1.7% a year in Eastern and Southern countries. It is estimated that the population in the Eastern and Southern countries will grow from 218 million in 1990 to 360 in 2020, when it will be 2/3 of the total expected 520 million Mediterranean population (CIHEAM, 2000). As for population movements, there are 2 trends. On the one hand, in each country there is a continuous flow from inland to coastal areas. On the other hand, there is a migration flow from South and East to Northwest.

¹ Their per capita incomes range from \$US 16,000 to \$20,000 for the countries in the European Union and from \$3,000 to \$4,000 for developing countries.

² Human development indicators for the Mediterranean basin (UNDP, 2000) show that at least 8 countries (Cyprus, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta, Slovenia and Spain) rank between the "high human development" group, i.e., above the number 30 out of 174 in the world. The rest are among the "medium human development" countries, but there are great differences between them (Croatia in number 49, Albania in number 94, Egypt in number 119, Morocco in number 124).

PART 2. GAPS AND NEEDS IN MEDITERRANEAN PROTECTED AREAS

Analytical information about the conservation and management problems of protected areas in the Mediterranean region is scarce, dispersed and in most cases incomplete. Yet, some of the main networks and initiatives working on protected areas in the region have conducted partial assessments (either thematic or geographic). This section draws from the work done by WCPA-IUCN (1996) for Northern Africa; the Parks for Life initiative (1994) launched at a European scale; the Mediterranean Action Plan (1995-2005) and the RAC/SPA assessment of protected areas (1997); and the Cilento Declaration for Mediterranean Protected Areas (1999).

2.1 REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR PROTECTED AREAS IN NORTH AFRICA / MIDDLE EAST

Based on an assessment of gaps and needs, this Plan (WCPA 1996) concentrates in 4 key objectives for the sub-region:

- ? Effective establishment and management of protected areas.
- ? Strengthen the capacity of protected areas' institutions and managers.
- ? Increase awareness of the values of protected areas at all levels.
- ? Build a stronger CNPPA (today WCPA) network within the region.

The WCPA (World Commission on Protected Areas of IUCN) found important differences between countries; while some countries have well established systems, other have no protected areas. In many cases protected areas rather exist only "in paper". Even in countries with well-established systems, there is considerable room for improving the level of establishment and management. There are a number of steps that countries can take to ensure the more effective establishment and management, including:

- ? Adopt a systems approach to protected areas.
- ? Develop more effective legislation for protected areas.
- ? Taking measures to ensure better management of protected areas, particularly better enforcement of legislation.

In consequence, at the regional level WCPA's priorities are to encourage the development of regional standards and best practices guidelines, and to develop or improve, in consultation with the IUCN Environmental Law Centre, environmental legislation for protected areas. They also identified the need to link efforts to establish and manage protected areas in the North Africa/Middle East region with the broader activities of bodies such as the CNPPA Global Task Force on National Systems Planning, and the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere and World Heritage Programmes.

Another priority for the region is to strengthen the capacity of PA institutions and managers. This includes both government and non-government institutions. Key factors include the need to ensure adequate and long-term sources of funding for protected areas, including revenue generation through ecotourism, and the need to develop and implement relevant PA training programmes. The region should be linked with broader global efforts, for example with those of CNPPA Global Task Forces on Training (together with Birdlife and with Ramsar).

Regarding finance, international donors and organizations could provide funding for PA programmes and activities, both at the national and regional levels, and should be encouraged to invest in building sustainable and long term protected area institutions and programmes. Ecotourism (with the WTO) is one of the main opportunities in these Mediterranean countries.

This assessment and WCPA Plan also focuses the need to increase awareness of the values of protected areas at all levels within the region, as these are not as widely understood within the region as they should. Public awareness should be a cornerstone of any protected areas programme at both national and

regional levels. This would also aim to encourage greater community involvement with, and support for, the establishment and management of protected areas.

The WCPA Plan (1996) also identifies co-management, at a local level as very important tool for PA management and sustainability. It encourages developing mechanisms to share information and experience in relation to building public awareness and support for the establishment and management of protected areas; it recommends developing a Directory of Conservationists in the region, to ensure that conservationists are more aware of their colleagues and their professional activities.

At an international level efforts should be done to establish transboundary protected areas in the region and linking these with relevant international organizations and conventions, and developing joint conservation programmes between countries.

2.2 PARKS FOR LIFE (IUCN-WCPA 1994)

This comprehensive Plan for protected areas is focused in Europe. According to its assessment, also the system of protected areas in Southern Europe is found to be far from effective and complete. In most countries, national parks suffer from a lack of staff and a lack of funding, as well as from political constraints and social conflicts. Coastal areas are under particular pressure and are often poorly represented in protected areas systems.

There are great opportunities to improve the situation. Many of the areas where parks occur have become marginal in economic terms. Well-run national parks offer an opportunity to reverse that trend, revitalise the local economy and bring wealth back to the rural community. Through carefully controlled eco-and-agro-tourism, PAs can provide local people with new jobs, and give local communities a renewed identity. A parallel approach is needed on the coasts. In some Mediterranean areas, large hotel developments may no longer attract discerning tourists. Eco-friendly diving could replace spearfishing, creating far more economic and sustainable benefits for local people. These kinds of changes could find their expression in a new form of protected area, combining eco-friendly tourism with restoration of natural assets and re-establishing a cultural identity.

In many Southern European countries, there is a large gap between legislation and its implementation. This is due to lack of political commitment and weak conservation institutions. There is a need to improve the enforcement of regulations in protected areas and to build the capacity of the organisations that manage them. One of the priority needs in Southern Europe is for trained personnel. Closer collaboration and links between experts in different countries are also needed. Present networks cover only part of the issue, or are believed to be inadequate.

In the Mediterranean Europe the PA coverage is very uneven, with some countries and some habitat types far better represented than other. Similarly, some countries have very precise inventories of what needs to be protected, while others do not. Especially needed are corridors between protected areas.

In the re-presentation of Parks for Life in 1997 it was recommended to reinforce the international messages for protected areas at the national level and in particular to use international instruments to strengthen protected areas, to develop a national system plan for all protected areas in each country, to give landscape and marine protection equal status with terrestrial nature conservation, and to link protected areas to other sectors. An example of the implementation of the Parks for Life at a national level is the EUROPARC (2002) "Action Plan for Spanish Protected Areas" (see section 3.7. on EUROPARC Federation, and **Annex II**).

Several projects were undertaken or are still ongoing under the "Parks for Life" flagship, where WCPA's role is to mobilise support at all levels. Ongoing projects are implemented in collaboration with other PA organizations (**Annex III** presents a table showing the status of implementation of projects and the collaborating organizations), i.e. the preparation of the Sustainable Tourism Charter for Protected Areas, the Important Plant Areas, different training activities for PA staff, the strengthening of PA institutions, or a process to promote and improve the information on PAs through an international programme. Parks for Life has also endorsed sub-regional initiatives for collaborative management, public awareness, legal coverage (with IUCN Law Centre), and a working groups on Effective Management and certification. Many efforts of the *Parks for Life* were put into the organization of the experts' Meeting on Mediterranean Protected Areas in Cilento 1999 (see ahead).

2.3 MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (1995-2005) AND RAC/SPA (1997)

The MAP (with its second phase 1995-2005) is the Action Plan for the Barcelona Convention. This convention especially deals with pollution issues, but there is one specific Protocol for Biodiversity and Protected Areas, under which the Contracting Parties commit them to establish protected areas that will be protected and managed in a sustainable way. The SPA Protocol is the most specific international tool for conservation purposes in the Mediterranean region. It is particularly focused on coastal and marine areas. Under the SPA Protocol over 140 marine and coastal PAs have been recognised in 19 riverine Mediterranean countries. The action plan for this Protocol is dinamised by the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas in Tunisia (RAC/SPA) which has conducted an assessment of the management needs of these areas (RAC/SPA 1997), for the time being, one of the very few comprehensive assessments about protected areas at the regional level.

The number and coverage of SPAs varies greatly from one country to another (29 in Spain, 15 in Italy, 12 in France and in Turkey, 11 in Croatia, 9 in Greece, 7 in Israel, 5 in Tunisia, 4 in Algeria, and 3 or less in most of the countries). According to RAC/SPA (1997), 41% of these areas are small (less than 1000 ha), and at least half of the whole are only terrestrial (coastal), while only 15% are mainly marine. In the management of most of these areas, the institutional co-ordination is very weak, being either inadequate, with overlapping roles between land, marine, local, or national authorities. The majority have problems with their social environments, particularly with the resource users, either traditional or not (e.g. fishing, sand extraction, hunting, agriculture or tourism industries). Around half of these areas claim not to have a management plan, and in only 1 out of every 3 SPAs there is staff present in the field. Consequently, only in ¼ of the SPAs there are education or awareness activities and just in one out of every five SPAs there is control over visitors and tourists. Managers also claim lack of training opportunities, and permanent shortage of equipment and funding for the most basic protection needs. The study concludes that participative planning, training of staff and funding opportunities (through international Cupertino, eco-tourism, and co-management practices) should be within the main priorities for these areas.

2.4 MEDITERRANEAN WETLANDS STRATEGY (1996-2006)

The Ramsar Convention for wetlands of international significance has a particular importance in the Mediterranean. It is dinamised by the MedWet (see next chapter). During the first phase of MedWet, its partners formulated the Mediterranean Wetland Strategy, to act as a regional application of the Ramsar Strategic Plan. The Strategy was drawn up in the conviction of the need to integrate the conservation of wetland biodiversity with sustainable development. The Strategy takes into account broader Mediterranean factors that determine the future of wetlands and in particular poverty and economic inequality, pressure from population growth, immigration and mass tourism; and social and cultural conflicts. The Strategy was endorsed by the participants in the Mediterranean Wetlands Conference held in Venice in 1996.

The strategy identifies the main threats and needs of Mediterranean wetlands, and in consequence intended to:

- ? Provide a framework for the development of National Wetland Policies.
- ? Promote conservation of the biological diversity of Mediterranean wetlands, through sustainable management, restoration and rehabilitation.
- ? Increase awareness of the values of Mediterranean wetlands among decision-makers, local communities and visitors.
- ? Increase the capacity of Mediterranean institutions to conserve and making wise use of wetlands; strengthening collaboration among all involved, governmental and non-governmental, public and private sectors.
- ? Guide the effective use of funding for Mediterranean wetlands.
- ? Training needs assessments are weak or nonexistent, and there is a lack of national strategies identifying training as a key tool. They recommend training as a major topic to be addressed

by IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (Camargue meeting main recommendation).

- ? Integration with greater landscape: Need to expand the network beyond protected areas: there are two distinct approaches of the same issue with very few connections- water engineering & water resources management, and freshwater & wetland conservation.
- ? Establish a mechanism for consultation and cooperation between institutions concerned with conservation and wise use of Mediterranean wetlands.

2.5 DECLARATION OF CILENTO (1999)

The Declaration of Cilento, convened by IUCN/WCPA in Italy November 47, 1999, reaffirms the importance of protected areas and their establishment and management, especially in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean sub-regions.

The Declaration stresses the need to reinforce protected areas in mountain ecosystems and in coastal and marine environments. Marine protected areas contribute to sustaining the economy of the region, especially in the fisheries and tourism sectors, and the Declaration urges the need for the expansion and more effective management of the existing network of marine protected areas in the region. To achieve their ecological and financial sustainability coastal and marine PAs should receive stronger support from the tourism and fisheries sectors, and be planned within wider frameworks of Integrated Coastal Management.

The Declaration recognises tourism as both a potential threat and an ally to protected areas in the Mediterranean, urging to develop strong legal, planning and other frameworks to regulate and guide tourism along more sustainable lines. Partnerships need to be built at national, sub-regional and local levels between the tourism industry and protected areas in order to promote forms of tourism that benefit protected areas, and discourage harmful tourism activities. Both managers of protected areas and tourism operators need improved access to best practice advice.

As in previous assessments, training is given a particular importance in the Cilento Declaration. Given the present weaknesses, the foreseeable expansion in the number of protected areas in the Mediterranean region, and the increasing pressures upon them, training in the management of protected areas needs to be expanded and improved with emphasis as follows:

- ? Existing training and funding agencies should support initiatives in the south and east of the Mediterranean region.
- ? A database of training opportunities to help meet the region's training needs should be established and maintained.
- ? There should be more co-ordination of training by exchange of information and staff, with regular meetings in the region of representatives of training institutions.
- ? Preparation of best practice guidelines and training standards.

The Declaration of Cilento emphasises the need to work co-operatively with the many regional institutions and networks already in place, like the Ramsar Convention, the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, the Barcelona Convention and the UNEP Regional Activity Centre on Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas, the EUROPARC Federation, MedWet, the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), the WWF, and other programmes concerned with protected areas in the region.

2.6 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS FROM THESE ASSESSMENTS

In spite of the few comprehensive analysis available on the subject, there seems to be a sound coincidence between regional reviews (e.g. IUCN-WCPA 1994, and RAC/SPA 1997) and Strategies, Plans and other Experts' Meetings on the subject (Parks for Life 1994; Wetlands Strategy 1996; Cilento Declaration 1999).

The main conclusions are summarised in **Table 1**, organised along the four main streams selected for the World Parks Congress in Durban 2003. In summary, the main gaps and needs are the following, all of which are underlined as strong priorities:

- ? Stronger PA integration into landscape and into development plans.
- ? More effective management of Protected Areas.
- ? Training of PA managers.
- ? Stronger stakeholder involvement in planning and management.
- ? Stronger financial support and tools, including collaboration from the tourism sector.
- ? Increased public awareness and communications.
- ? Need for networking and sharing of experiences.

The intensity of these gaps and needs differs greatly depending on the 3 subregions in which the Mediterranean can be divided: E.U. Countries; Eastern European Countries; and Middle East/North African Countries.

In the EU countries the main weaknesses seem to be the lack of integration of protected areas in the wider landscapes, and into the economic activities and development programmes. Public awareness, stakeholder participation, and co-management practices are also priorities in EU Mediterranean countries.

In Central and Eastern European countries, as the Emerald Network states *“during the last decade, we have witnessed huge political and economic changes. As a consequence, the environment of these countries “in transition” has been exposed to new threats resulting from rapid development. The protected areas themselves are facing new challenges, such as changes in land ownership, growing numbers of visitors and diminishing financial resources”*. In order to cope with these new challenges, the protected areas of Central and Eastern Europe need to have strong management and well-trained, experienced and motivated staff.

Most of these weaknesses apply to Southern and Middle East Mediterranean countries. In these countries, more PAs with a better biogeographical coverage are also needed, together with institutional strengthening and capacity building for protected area management, field staff, basic equipment and funding support.

However these variations between Mediterranean sub-regions, all these problems are qualitatively coincident and exist in every sub-region. Differences between sub-regions arise in the seriousness or intensity of each particular problem.

TABLE 1. Main gaps and needs of Mediterranean Protected Areas as identified by Regional Assessments and Experts' Meetings

Shaded boxes indicate gaps and needs identified as significant by the regional Assessments and/or Experts' Meetings. The darker shades indicate their strong priorities. Blank boxes do not necessarily indicate a lack of interest in that particular field.

MAIN GAPS AND NEEDS Following proposed streams for Durban 2003	Parks for Life Europe IUCN-WCPA 1994	N.Africa-Mid.East WCPA-IUCN 1996	Mediterr. Wetlands Strategy 1996-06	Coastal Marine Assessment RAC/SPA 1997	Cilento Declar. 1999
Links with Landscape / Seascape					
Use integration into wider landscape					
Need for ecological Corridors					
Improved biogeographical coverage					
More surface to be protected					
More marine reserves needed					
Governance					
Better legal coverage					
Improved Institutional Coordination					
Strengthening PA Institutions					
Greater Stakeholder Involvement					
Increased Public Awareness					
Tourism sector involvement					
Collaboration with NGOs					
New Skills for the New Century					
More effective management					
Training of PA Managers					
Scientific knowledge and monitoring					
Encourage economic benefits for PAs					
Gaps in the System					
Importance of Transboundary PAs					
Lack of Staff and equipment					
Networking, sharing of experience					
Databases					
Financial Support and sustainability					

PART 3. MAIN INTERNATIONAL PROTECTED AREA PLANS AND NETWORKS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

This chapter reviews the plans and actions of the main regional networks of protected areas, considered here as answers to the weaknesses, gaps and needs previously reported.

The main ongoing initiatives can be classified in two different types:

- ? Those that actually work through a physical network of sites, such as the SPA and SPAMI system of the Barcelona Convention, the Ramsar sites, the MaB Biosphere Reserves, the Natura 2000 Network of the EU, and the Emerald Network in Eastern European countries.
- ? Strategies, plans, and initiatives offering networking and services for the improvement of the management and conservation of the sites, such as the Mediterranean Wetlands Strategy and MedWet, the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, and relevant plans and initiatives such as Parks for Life, the Cilento Declaration, the WWF conservation and training regional programmes, and the EUROPARC Federation.

3.1 THE MAN AND BIOSPHERE (MaB) PROGRAMME

The Man and the Biosphere Programme is an interdisciplinary programme of research and training to develop the basis, within the natural and the social sciences, for the rational use and conservation of the resources of the biosphere, and for the improvement of the global relationship between people and the environment.

The MaB Programme of UNESCO is now entering a new phase, focusing on the following elements:

- ? The development and full use of the existing network of sites, identified as Biosphere Reserves, (of which 425 existed in 95 countries in Feb.2003).
- ? Continuing efforts to reconcile conservation and the sustainable use of biological diversity with socio-economic development and maintenance of cultural values, at the ecosystem and landscape levels, covering different geographical units such as catchment basins, land-water interfaces and urban-rural systems in different parts of the world.
- ? Building up human and institutional capacities, including communication networks to help countries address complex, cross-sectoral issues of environment and development.

The overall MaB Programme is guided by the MaB International Co-ordinating Council with 34 Member States elected by the UNESCO General Conference. Programme activities are conducted in more than 100 countries under the direction of their MaB National Committees or focal points. The new phase of the MaB programme will be

conducted in close co-operation with the appropriate partners such as **UNEP**, **FAO**, **ICSU**, **IUCN**, **ISSC** and relevant international programmes.

Also, the MaB World Network of Biosphere Reserves aims at being representative of the world's major biogeographic regions.

The Biosphere Reserves Network is divided into regional networks. There is no specific network approaching the Mediterranean as a region, but other 3 sub-regional networks include Mediterranean countries:

- ? EuroMab, in cooperation with the Council of Europe (European Diploma of Protected Areas), the Pan-European Ecological Network and the Emerald Network.



- ? ArabMab, including the following Mediterranean countries: Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, and Syria.

- ? IberoMab, including Spain and Portugal along with the rest of Latin American countries.

BR in the Mediterranean Region
Source: WCMC 2003

In the Mediterranean Region, among the existing overlaps in the designation of sites by different PA networks for the same territory, there are nine Biosphere Reserves that are wholly or partially Ramsar Wetlands.

Country	Biosphere Reserve	Ramsar Wetland
Algeria	El Kala (1990)	Lac Oubeïra (1983) Lac Tonga (1983)
France	Camargue(1977)	Camarge (1986)
Portugal	Paúl do Boquilobo (1981)	Paúl de Boquilobo (1996)
Spain	Doñana (1980)	Doñana (1982)
	Mancha Húmeda (1980)	Las Tablas de Daimiel (1982)
	Marismas del Odiel (1983)	Marismas del Odiel (1989)
	Urdaibai (1984)	Ria de Mundaka-Guernika (1993)
	Cabo de Gata-Níjar (1997)	Salinas del Cabo de Gata (1989)
Tunisia	Ichkeul (1977)	Ichkeul (1980)

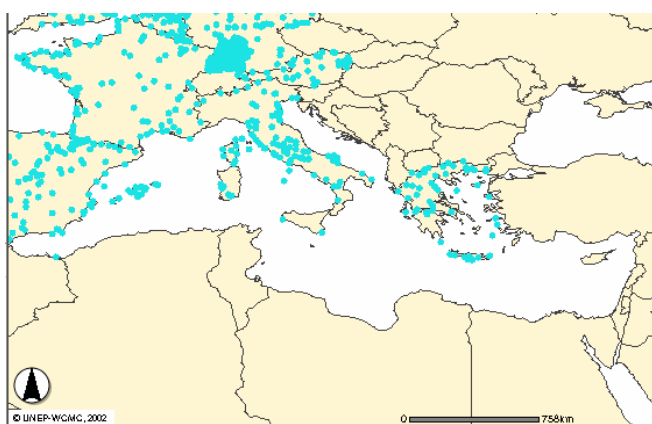
Source: UNESCO. Numbers as of 26 November 2002.

In 1995, UNESCO organised a General Conference on Biosphere Reserves that led to the elaboration of the *Seville Strategy* providing recommendations for the development of Biosphere Reserves in the 21st century. The *Seville Strategy* identifies the specific roles of

Biosphere Reserves in developing a new vision of the relationship between conservation and development. Organisational arrangements should be provided for the involvement and participation of a suitable range of *inter alia* public authorities, local communities and private interests in the design and carrying out the functions of a Biosphere Reserve.

A “Seville+5” Conference was held in 2000 to analyse obstacles and to take stock of the implementation of the Seville Strategy over its first five years; its recommendations insist along the lines of Biosphere Reserves as contributing to international research and monitoring programmes, mobilising support for the World Network, and Biosphere Reserves as models for land management and approaches to sustainable development.

3.2 THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK



Natura 2000 is the EU-wide network of nature protected areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive, which identifies some 200 habitat types and 700 species of plants and animals of EU importance. Under the Natura 2000, the member States designate Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); it also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the 1979 Birds Directive (listing 181 vulnerable species for which habitat protection is required). The site selection process for Natura 2000 in the EU countries is getting closer to the end, and the European Commission is planning to adopt the final list of sites for this region by mid 2003.

Natura 2000 Sites in the Mediterranean Region
Source: WCMC 2003

The objective is “to promote the conservation of natural habitats and the habitats of wild fauna and flora while taking into account the economic, social and cultural requirements and specific regional and local characteristics of each Member State. It should be stressed that the purpose of Natura 2000 is not to create “nature sanctuaries” where all human activity is prohibited (for example, forestry resources can be exploited in the designated areas). On the contrary, today, the presence - or resumption - of beneficial human activity is often essential for maintaining biodiversity, especially in rural and forested areas”. Article 10 encourages the Member States towards land use planning and development policies with a view to improving the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network, managing the features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora. A number of projects have been based on the re-establishment of traditional agricultural practices critical for nature conservation and have led to development of agri-environment schemes to support them.

Governance is given a special care. “The Natura 2000 network is primarily based on a policy of contracts concluded with all the local partners: elected representatives, land owners, managers, etc. Their support constitutes the best guarantee of the long-term

success of the network". The emphasis has therefore been placed on local consultations prior to drawing up proposals for sites.

While the establishment of the network is not yet complete, considerable progress has been achieved. There are many positive examples where the initial concerns of local people and particularly owners and users have been resolved by the introduction of management plans based on extensive dialogue at the local level. This has been supported by the LIFE-Nature programme which has funded 605 projects to a value of 470 million € since its inception in 1992.

a) Supporting bodies

The main fora for exchange are the Habitats and the Ornis Committees, comprised of officials from the competent national nature authorities and chaired by the Commission. These Committees are assisted by a Scientific Working Group, which advises on technical issues.

The European Topic Centre on Nature Protection & Biodiversity (ETC/NPB) supports the implementation of the Natura 2000 sites by providing scientific and technical support to the [European Commission, DG Env.-B2](#), in handling data. Designated by the European Environment Agency (EEA), it assists in collecting, analysing, evaluating and synthesizing information relevant to national and international policies for the environment and sustainable development and twice a year provides an update of the SPA's database. Additionally the ETC prepares an annual report on the SPA's. In June 2001 there were 2663 SPAs in the database.

b) Some setbacks of Natura 2000

It must be kept in mind that Natura 2000 includes thousands of protected sites. Although sometimes the identification of the sites has gone along with detailed discussion with owners and users on management measures, in other cases there has been little or no consultation with stakeholders. This has given rise to considerable controversy in some Member States with a variety of administrative and legal challenges, which have delayed the submission of proposals.

Marine habitats and species are not as well represented in the Annexes of the Habitats Directive as are those of a terrestrial nature (O'Brian & Martin, 2001), being recognised that there are some difficulties in establishing Natura 2000 in the marine environments, especially for wide ranging species, and also due to issues of delimitation of sites. Generally only very few marine (not coastal) sites have been selected so far, many of which are quite small.

We have found no specific actions or programmes focusing on Mediterranean habitats. However next steps consider to further apply Natura 2000 in the offshore marine environment.

c) Working Groups

The Natura 2000 is reinforcing its activities for further application in the offshore marine environment, and an expert working group has been established to assist this task. Improving communication, in order to better explain the objectives of the Directive, is another priority for which a working group has been established to produce a communications strategy (with the Nature directors of Member States and DG Environment of the EU). A third working group on Governance is developing ideas on "tripartite" contracts with the European Regions on the implementation and communication of Community policy.

3.3 THE EMERALD NETWORK

Emerald is a network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCIs)³ to be established in the territory of the Contracting Parties and Observer States to the Bern Convention. It may also help some states, candidates to join the European Union, to do part of the preparatory work necessary to comply in advance with the Habitats Directive. For EU member States Emerald network sites are those of the Natura 2000 network⁴. Forty (40) European States and 4 African states (Burkina Faso, Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal) are Contracting Parties, plus 7 observer States (Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Holy See, Russia, San Marino). This raises to 51 the number of participant States.

The Bern Convention (1979) and the Habitats Directive (1992) have a complete coincidence of objectives. Both are international legal instruments aimed at the conservation of wild flora, fauna and natural habitats. Their main differences come from the territory they apply to.

Once ASCIs have been designated by the States, they should be *"the subject of an appropriate legal regime..."; "The agencies responsible for the designation and/or management and/or conservation of ASCIs have available to it sufficient manpower, training, equipment and resources (including financial resources) to enable them properly to manage, conserve and survey the areas"; "Appropriate ecological and other research should be conducted, and monitoring the status of the factors giving rise to their designation and conservation".* Furthermore, the States are recommended to: *"draw up, implement and regularly review management plans..."* and *"clearly mark the boundaries of ASCIs on maps and, as far as possible, on the ground, while advising the competent authorities and landowners of the extent of ASCIs and their characteristics"*.

a) Progress in setting up the Emerald Network

Since its implementation phase it has started pilot projects in 20 countries (mainly in Central and Eastern Europe). The countries have to form project teams, carry out the training of the teams and proceed with the scientific work (data collection on species and habitats; field surveys; mapping) and developing the databases⁵.

The Network envisages to reinforce the co-operation with the EEA and with the Nature Thematic Centre in Paris, in particular by transferring to the Agency technical responsibilities involved in the setting-up of the Emerald Network.

The financing of the second phase 2003-2006 *"could not be assured from the Council of Europe as far as identification of ASCIs is concerned. States are invited to search for resources in bilateral programmes, European Union, LIFE programme and accession related funds, the GEF or other multilateral funds and national resources"* [Council of Europe T-PVS (2002) 10].

b) The Emerald Network in the Mediterranean Region⁶

³ Recommendation No. 16 defines Areas of Special Conservation Interest as those areas of a great ecological value for both the threatened and endemic species listed in the Appendices of the Bern Convention and for the endangered habitat types which have been identified by the Standing Committee as "requiring specific conservation measures".

⁴ <http://www.nature.coe.int/english/main/econets/emerald/intro.htm> Last visited: March, 2003.

⁵ The tasks are described in detail in the document T-PVS/Emerald (2002) 16 "Building up the Emerald Network: a guide for Emerald Network country team leaders", which is intended as a user-friendly guide for the countries.

⁶ http://www.coe.int/T/e/Cultural_Cooperation/Environment/Nature_and_biological_diversity/Ecological_networks/The_Emerald_Network/ENB_03.asp Last visited: March, 2003.

The opportunities for Mediterranean purposes should be seriously considered as 13 Mediterranean countries are contracting parties to the Bern Convention: Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, Slovenia, Tunisia, Turkey, Spain, France, Italy and Greece. Four of them are members of the European Union and other four are candidates for accession to the EU. The development of the Emerald Network in the Mediterranean region started with pilot projects in Slovenia (1999), Turkey (2000), Cyprus (2001), Malta (2001), and Croatia (2002). In 2002, workshops were organised in Croatia, the FYR of Macedonia and Albania⁷. Yet, we have found no specific actions or programmes focusing on the Mediterranean countries of the Emerald Network.

3.4 THE UNEP-MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP 1995)

The MAP is an action oriented co-operative effort involving 20 countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the European Union. Launched in 1975, it was updated in 1995 with its Action Plan "Phase II" approved for the period 1995-2005. The MAP supports the implementation and enforcement of the Barcelona Convention, with its 6 Protocols. The Convention particularly deals with pollution issues, but has one Protocol on Biodiversity and Protected Areas.

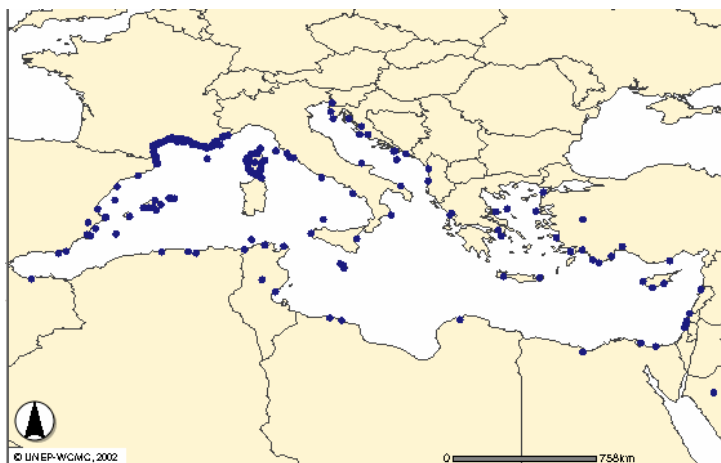
The MAP/UNEP works on the following main aspects:

- ? Institutional and legal issues regarding the co-ordination for the enforcement of the Barcelona Convention.
- ? Scientific issues, as the Programme for continuous monitoring and research on sea pollutants (MED POL).
- ? Socio-economic. Issues focusing on the perspectives and the environmental priorities of bordering countries by means of a systematic approach, the launching of the Regional Activity Centres, the Blue Plan, and the Priority Actions Programme.

The MAP/UNEP has a Co-ordinating Unit in Athens, and different Regional Activity Centres. The RAC/SPA Centre in Tunisia dynamises the enforcement of the Protocol on Biodiversity and Protected Areas, and focuses on the protection of Mediterranean species, their habitats and ecosystems, being responsible for assisting countries with the technical implementation of the SPA Protocol. With regards to protected areas, the Centre is involved with drawing up legislation, preparing reports to the Parties, action plans for endangered species, assessment of status and needs of SPAs, exchange of information and experts, and other capacity building activities such as assisting in the preparation of management plans and in organising training activities and courses for SPA managers.

The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, wishing to strengthen the conservation status of the most important marine and coastal protected areas, approved in 1995 the new Protocol including a new category called the SPAMI (Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance) with stricter management standards. Most interestingly in a new development of international Conventions and legal framework applications, the Contracting Parties agreed that the SPAMIs can be also established in the Mediterranean High Seas.

⁷ Short statements on the progress of Emerald projects in some of these countries are contained in the document T-PVS/Emerald (2002) 14 "Emerald network pilot projects in the year 2002: progress reports".



The SPAMIs need a strong legal coverage, updated management plans, and must contain representative, rare or unique ecosystems in a good conservation status and with appropriate size to ensure the continuation of natural ecological processes. Where applicable, SPAMIs take into account local participation and the sustainable use of natural resources in the areas

of influence, and must have enough means and resources, human and equipment, to ensure the conservation of the area.

Specially Protected Areas (SPAs)
Source: WCMC 2003

SPAMIs are proposed by the Contracting Parties and, if complying with a series of quality standards, are accepted in the SPAMI List; once accepted the areas have three years time to comply with all standards, particularly management plans and field resources. After this period the candidate SPAMI could be definitely accepted or temporarily rejected from the List.

To date there are 12 SPAMI on the List (from France, Italy, Monaco, Spain and Tunisia)⁸. One of them is particularly noteworthy because of its innovative legal framework, the Mediterranean Cetacean Sanctuary established in the high seas of Liguria in 1999.

3.5 THE PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY

In 1995 the Council of Europe approved the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy to protect biological and landscape diversity all over the European continent and its territories within the next twenty years. The Strategy has set itself the following objectives :

- ? Conservation, enhancement and restoration of key ecosystems, habitats, species and features of the landscape through the Pan-European Ecological Network, and integrating these objectives into all sectors managing or affecting such diversity.
- ? Sustainable management and use of the positive potential of this biological and landscape diversity by making optimum use of the social and economic opportunities on a national and regional level.
- ? Improved information and awareness of biological and landscape diversity, and increased public participation in actions to conserve and enhance it.
- ? Assurance of adequate financial means to implement the Strategy.

⁸ The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention 12th Ordinary Meeting (2001) decided the inclusion of 12 sites in the SPAMI List: Ligurian Sea (France, Italy and Monaco) and other in France (Port Cros), Spain (Alboran islands, Cabo de Gata, Almeria, Mar Menor, Cap de Creus, Medes, and Columbretes isl.) and Tunisia (La Gallite, Kneiss, and Zembra-Zembretta).

To establish the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN), the Council of Europe created in 1997 a Committee of Experts (STRA-REP), which launched a working programme in order to encourage the development of national ecological networks, their linkage to the Pan-European Network, and to assess and analyse existing initiatives both at international and national levels. Actions will make full use of and build on the many existing initiatives throughout Europe that are currently contributing to ecological networks, in particular the Habitats Directive, the IUCN Parks for Life and other national and regional ecological networks. A wide range of governmental and non-governmental organisations are expected to contribute.

The coherence of the network will be ensured through the provision, where appropriate, of continuous corridors or discontinuous "stepping stones" which will facilitate the dispersal and migration of species between the core areas. In many cases the connectivity function of corridors and stepping-stones will be compatible with appropriate forms of economic activity in the respective areas. Other landscape elements are restoration areas, where damaged elements of ecosystems, habitats and landscapes of European importance need to be repaired or certain areas completely restored; and buffer zones, which support and protect the network from adverse external influences.

The PEEN is aimed at developing demonstration projects taking into account the actions being carried out by the Emerald Network in Central and Eastern Europe. Support will be the provision of technical assistance, exchange of expertise, common communications, and collaborative ventures involving transboundary networks. Funding will be provided through a variety of mechanisms: national, bilateral, multilateral and private sponsorship.

For the period 2001-2005 this Committee planned actions and specific projects in the following lines: directory of funding sources; synergy with existing initiatives (Council of Europe, ECNC, IUCN); raising awareness and support with decision-makers and the public on the importance of the PEEN, through conferences & symposia; support the establishment of transnational, national and regional and local ecological networks and their integration into PEEN; and studying on the possibilities for introducing a training programme on the implementation of the PEEN for EEC-NIS countries. Most of these activities are on-going with the collaboration of the Council of Europe, the ECNC, IUCN, governmental agencies and NGOs, as detailed in **Annex II**.

3.6 RAMSAR CONVENTION AND MEDITERRANEAN WETLANDS INITIATIVE-MEDWET

Ramsar is an intergovernmental treaty, which provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

Ramsar Sites in the Mediterranean Region. Source: WCMC 2003



In 1999 MedWet became a formal inter-regional structure for the implementation of the Ramsar convention (Resolution VII.20 of Ramsar's COP 7). The MedWet network is guided by the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) of the Ramsar Convention, and is integrated by 25 Mediterranean governments, international institutions and non-government

organisations⁹. MedWet mobilises scientific and technical capacities in the Mediterranean through a network of four centres in EU countries¹⁰, which will soon be re-inforced by the collaboration network in North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia) currently under development.

MedWet has been very active in wetland conservation. MedWet-1 (1992-1996), funded by the EU and involving the five EU member states in the Mediterranean, began building the MedWet network and developed regional methods and tools. As part of it, the Mediterranean Wetlands Strategy (1996-2006) was developed (see Chapter 2) after wide consultation in the region. MedWet-2 (1995-1998), also funded by the EU, extended the MedWet approach to five non-EU countries (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Morocco, Tunisia) and introduced a new element to MedWet's portfolio: the socio-economic aspects of wetlands and their impacts on management. Its last action plan, the MedWetcoast (1999-2004) is addressing the conservation of wetlands and management of coastal zone sites in Albania, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and the Palestinian Authority, with a funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its French counterpart, FFEM. MedWet-4 (1998-2000) has developed twinning of Mediterranean deltas in Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Turkey.

MedWet has put a special emphasis in training, developing a wide range of 'tools' and guidance, covering an inventory system including database and mapping protocols, wetland management (a handbook series now covers 10 topics), participation of local people, training and capacity building, information and public awareness, use of research results, and the application of a socio-economic approach. A further important tool is the MedWet Inventory System, allowing users to enter data at different levels of scale and detail, being available in multiple languages, and is flexible in reporting routines, permitting output of standard datasheets e.g. for Ramsar or Natura 2000 sites.

Following a Memorandum of Understanding between the Barcelona and the Ramsar Conventions, MedWet has collaborated with the RAC/SPA Centre for the use of the MedWet methodology in the inventory of Mediterranean Coastal Wetlands. Other co-operation examples include the preparation of a project for the integrated management of the Neretva river catchment and wetlands, involving Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia; the Prespa Balkan Transboundary Park involving Albania, Greece and the FYR of Macedonia; or the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands in Libya, in Syria and in Turkey, among other.

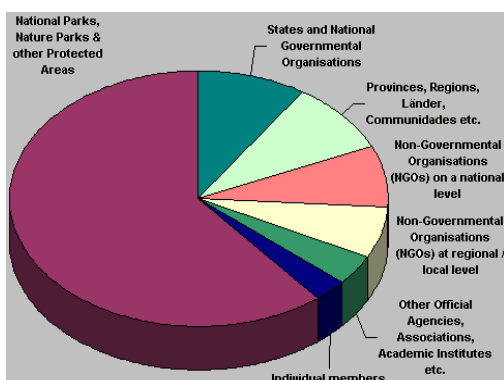
3.7 THE EUROPARC FEDERATION

An independent, non-governmental organisation, its **membership** brings together the organisations responsible for the management of over 400 protected areas in Europe. The Federation is also very much a network of the people whose daily task is PA management. The key aims of the EUROPARC Federation are to facilitate the establishment of new PAs, to raise their profile and promote their good management, and to influence the future development of public policies and programmes, especially with the European Union, to the benefit of protected areas' objectives.

⁹ It includes the European Commission, intergovernmental Agreements, United Nations agencies (Barcelona/UNEP; Council of Europe/Berne; Ramsar; UNDP), NGOs (BirdLife International, IUCN, Wetlands International, WWF International) and 4 wetland centres.

¹⁰ Greek Biotope/Wetland Centre (EKBY) in Greece; the Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat in France; the Sede para el Estudio de los Humedales Mediterráneos (SEHUMED) in Spain; and the Centro de Zonas Húmedas (CEZH) in Portugal.

The EUROPARC Federation has over 340 member organisations in 38 European countries, and provides a forum to share professional experience and to collaborate on technical projects.



EUROPARC's member organisations include individual protected areas, government ministries and agencies responsible for protected areas at national and regional levels, as well as independent conservation organisations and academic institutions concerned with protected area issues. One of its main activities is exchanging expertise with Central and Eastern Europe. To help supporting nature conservation in Central and Eastern European countries, the European

Union's **Phare Multi-beneficiary Environment Programme** is responsible for delivering the project. It is based at the EUROPARC Headquarters in Germany, through which several training activities have taken place in Slovenia and Albania.

Source: EUROPARC 2002

<http://www.europarc.org/international/europarc.html>

The EUROPARC annual Conferences have focused on multiple topics, such as tourism in PA, Parks for Life, Sustainable Development in protected landscapes, and Parks for People: acceptance, co-operation and integration. There is a long list of publications which can be visited through www.europarc.org/international/.

According to EUROPARC, “the level of transfrontier cooperation between PAs in Europe varies greatly from well developed partnerships to areas where there is little or no cross-border contact”. EUROPARC has led conferences on this issue, and has released a basic study on “Transfrontier PAs in Europe” together with IUCN-WCPA. A working group of experts was established to develop guidelines for transfrontier cooperation in central and Eastern Europe.

The Federation runs international workshops and training seminars on a broad range of PA management issues, and draws upon teams of international experts to produce guidelines and management tools for PAs. The EUROPARC Leadership Programme is a senior level training initiative for future PA managers, including training sessions and visits to selected sites and case studies. Also, between 1994 and 1998 the EUROPARC Partnership & Exchange Programme facilitated training courses for managers and technical co-operation between protected areas in Europe, Asia and Latin America, with financial support from the European Commission.

Despite no regional exchange programme exists for the Mediterranean countries, there are many initiatives Interestingly enough for Mediterranean purposes. One good example is the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas developed by EUROPARC. It is intended to ensure that tourism development in Europe's protected areas is sustainable and can be at the same time considered as a supporting tool for PA management. Joining the Charter means to make a 5-year commitment to further PA's cooperation with local stakeholders and tourism partners. The European Charter is neither a quality label, nor a conventional partnership agreement, but combines elements of both to encourage and support sustainable development of tourism in Europe's protected areas. The final version of the Charter (2000)¹¹ was

¹¹ www.europarc.org/international/ Last visited: March 2003.

contributed by 21 Parks, and commits signatories to implementing a local strategy for sustainable tourism and define the shared responsibilities of protected area authorities, tourism businesses and tour operators.

Another example of Mediterranean significance is the recently issued “Action Plan for Spanish Protected Areas” (Europarc 2002) which reflects a shared view of the role of PAs in the 21st century in Spain, and can be considered a result of the implementation of the Parks for Life (1994) strategy at a national level. This Action Plan gives a diagnosis of the current situation of over 700 PAs in Spain, covering planning and management status; it then makes 120 specific recommendations, and identifies 36 priority actions. It also includes “living observatories”, innovative actions that may be encouraging for other protected areas. Some more detail about this Plan is given in **Annex II**.

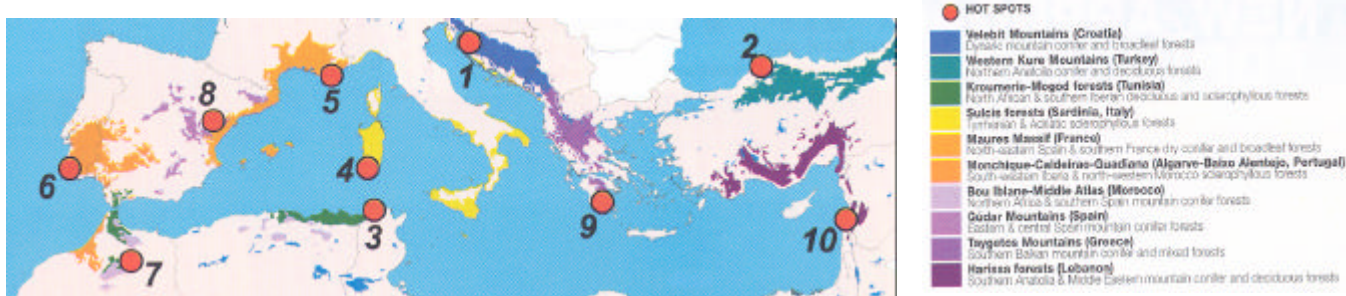
3.8 THE WWF-MEDITERRANEAN PROGRAMME

Since 1995 the World Wide Fund for Nature, with 6 National Offices (and over 400,000 individual members) in the Mediterranean countries, develops a Mediterranean Programme around four main lines: Forests, Marine, Freshwater, and Capacity Building.

a) Conservation Gap Analyses

In order to identify conservation priorities around the Mediterranean basin, the WWF developed conservation gap analyses (2000) for forests and for marine environments (the latter is described in the next section).

The Mediterranean Forest Gap Analysis provides a rapid assessment of the biodiversity values, conservation status and threats concerning all the different forest types of the Mediterranean terrestrial sub-ecoregions. The analysis also identifies non-protected ecologically relevant forest areas and non-represented forest types and gaps, that may be filled through the establishment of new reserves or changes in land management practices.



Source: WWF 2000

The country by country study elaborated by national experts identifies 300 Important Forest Areas in the Mediterranean. Results conclude that 17% of the regions' original forest cover still exists. Many of the remaining forests are relics and very few valuable Mediterranean forests have been protected. Out of these, WWF has identified the 10 most Important Forest Areas that lack adequate protection in the Mediterranean region¹². No Mediterranean country has a representative system of protected areas for forest types.

¹² Velebit (Croatia); Tarvu, Corsica (France); Taygetos (Greece); Gennargetu (Italy); Harisa (Lebanon); Bou Iblane (Morocco); Monchique (Portugal); Gudar (Spain); Western Kure (Turkey).

b) Capacity Building

In 1994 WWF created the Across The Waters (ATW) Project, to help build the capacity of environmental NGOs in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries. ATW aims at empowering local organizations to collaborate in a process towards sustainable development in the Mediterranean. It requires a long-term perspective and an understanding of the Mediterranean environment, cultures, and societies.

ATW has evolved to a broad programme that now uses four operational tools: the Grants Scheme, the Mediterranean Training Schools (Silva/Wet/Wild/Blue/Sun Schools), the Exchange Programme, and the Information Hub, all of which work in interaction in a multi-year capacity building process. The Information Hub created in 2001 includes the Mediterranean Directory of Environmental Organizations, a comprehensive listing of nearly 2000 organizations active in the field of conservation and environmental education. This database provides a link between the NGO community, local authorities and the WWF network, and is the largest of its kind in the region. ATW has contributed significantly to the strengthening and growth of a number of conservation NGOs, and has created a broad network of environmental institutions and practitioners throughout the Mediterranean basin.

c) Networking

Since 2001 the WWF is developing two regional networks. The Mediterranean Ecoregion Conservation Network aims to build upon the already solid network of organisations and individuals working together in the region to achieve common conservation objectives by shaping a common large-scale conservation vision. A Mediterranean Ecoregion Forum holds annual meetings. A Mediterranean Ecoregion Leadership Training Cycle will address a core group of individuals belonging to these organisations to build their personal capacity through training sessions and exchanges.

3.9 OTHER MARINE CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

The Mediterranean Action Plan of the Barcelona Convention, the Natura 2000 of the EU, the Parks for Life, the Cilento Declaration, the Pan European Ecological Network, the WCPA and the WWF between other actors, have all underlined the need for more marine protected areas in the Mediterranean Sea and included this objective within their priorities.

a) Marine reserves in the High Seas

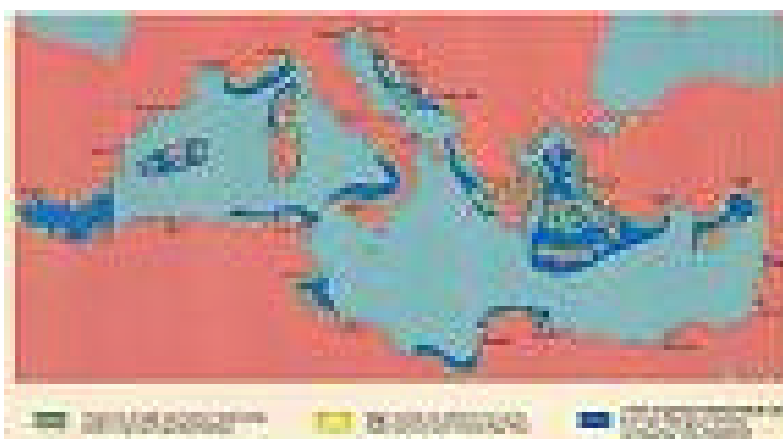
The World Summit on Sustainable Development set a target date (2012) for the completion of an effectively managed, ecologically representative network of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas within and beyond areas of national jurisdiction, and the application of the ecosystem approach to the marine environment.

Indeed, marine protected areas (MPAs) need to be integrated into the wider management of the open sea, as water distributes particles and pollutants much more efficiently than in the air or land, and because many marine species are migratory or have planktonic phases subject to long distance distribution in the marine currents. The establishment of a network of MPAs beyond national jurisdiction (High Seas) would be a key mechanism for promoting sustainable resource management and conservation of biodiversity and productivity. A recent experts' report on High Seas MPAs (IUCN-WCPA-WWF, 2003) proposed three priority actions: the establishment of expert networks to build support for high seas conservation, the international recognition of the concept of High Seas MPAs, and the designation of the first High Seas MPAs as test areas. The workshop concluded further that immediate action was essential to protect

seamounts and other vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems and to improve implementation of the existing legal framework for oceans governance.

Significantly, to date already two initiatives have established a solid basement to develop these initiatives in the Mediterranean.

The Barcelona Convention, Protocol on Biodiversity (1995) for the first time has set the necessary international framework for the establishment of MPAs in the High Seas. A first High Seas SPAMI of 90,000 sq km was established (between France, Italy and Monaco) in the Sea of Liguria in order to protect the main Cetacean populations in the Mediterranean Sea, by regulating fisheries and impact on habitat conditions, and raising awareness about risks of involuntary impacts from passing vessels. Other initiatives for the high seas are under development between Mediterranean neighbouring countries, e.g. for the Strait of Bonifacio or the Alboran Sea.



WWF Marine Gap Analysis

Another initiative, at the technical level, is the Mediterranean Marine Gap Analysis (WWF 2000), which has helped to identify the most important unprotected coastal and marine areas in the region, some of which result to be in the High Seas. Although the stronger part of the analysis is based on the typologies of the 46,000 km of Mediterranean coasts (including sea-bottom types, *Posidonia* meadows to 50 m depth and the presence of endangered coastal species and important threats from human pressure), it also includes high seas ecological criteria such as biological productivity and areas with a high level of biodiversity (in terms of concentration and continuity, the significant presence of flag-ship species, a pronounced fish species diversity). As a result, a total of 13 priority areas were identified¹³, some of which are transnational or high seas: Aegean (Greece-Turkey), Alboran (Morocco-Spain), Ligurian (France, Italy, Monaco) and Gabes (Libya-Tunisia).

b) Governance

Either in national or international waters, MPAs need be flexible tools, ranging from multiple-use to fully protected areas, to help address a range of threats such as protecting ecosystem structure, reducing overfishing and by-catch, preserving critical habitats and reducing conflicts between users. MPAs need to be managed in close collaboration with stakeholders, given the number of possible users and the enormous costs and difficulties for the surveillance and protection of these areas.

The importance of improved governance in Mediterranean MPAs can be learnt (RAC/SPA 1997) from long term experiences showing that the management of the marine sections of coastal-marine reserves suffer a weaker institutional co-ordination, being inadequate or with overlapping roles between either land, marine, local, or national authorities, and frequently generating social conflicts with traditional resource users. The importance of stakeholder participation is also underlined by the first experiences in co-management of marine reserves in the Mediterranean, either with NGOs or with the fishermen. In Turkey, the first marine reserve (Foça), managed in close collaboration with local NGOs and fishermen,

¹³ Alboran Sea (Spain, Morocco, Algeria); Balearic Islands (Spain); Liguro-Provencal coast (France, Italy, Monaco); Corso-Sardinian Coast (France, Italy); Southern Tyrrhenian Coast (Italy); Dalmatian Coast (Croatia); Eastern Ionian Coast and Islands (Albania, Greece); Aegean Sea and Anatolia Coast (Greece, Turkey); Cilician Coast (Turkey & Cyprus Island Coast); Cyrenaica (Libya); Gulf of Sirte (Libya); Gulf of Gabes (Tunisia); Algero-Tunisian Coast (Algeria, Tunisia).

has been successful in protecting the Monk Seal and in contributing to the local fisheries, encouraging the government to establish other 5 marine reserves in the Cilician coasts. In Italy, out of 47 marine reserves, those with a better management and positive impact on marine conservation are managed in co-operation with NGOs and fishermen (Ustia and Miramare) (Werner, 1999). Similar positive cases have been found in Spain (Tabarca with fishermen; Menorca with fishermen, tourism services and local NGOs; Ses Negres managed by an NGO), and in Greece (Zakynthos, in collaboration with NGOs).

Local fishermen always show interest in marine conservation as long as they are given appropriate responsibilities and benefits from the use of local resources. This is true elsewhere and particularly in the Mediterranean Sea which is heavily overfished by industrial fleets. FAO (1999) estimates the fishing effort over this Sea to almost double its carrying capacity. As scientific evidence and NGO support has mounted during the last decade, international initiatives are taking place in order to restrict industrial fisheries (e.g. see the EU commitments in World Summit in Johannesburg 2002).

One important means to recuperate stocks and contribute to marine conservation is the establishment of “No Fishing Zones” (NFZ), very much in the concept of “integration of protected areas into the seascape”. In these areas, fishing may be regulated in varying intensities or even prohibited. Some Mediterranean countries are moving towards this approach, e.g. in Italy three NFZ have been established, where artificial reefs were sank to avoid trawling. Later studies have documented significant gains in fish and invertebrate biomass (Badalamenti, cit. Werner 1999), as has also been demonstrated in Tabarca (Spain) where local captures have improved by 50-80% in only 8 years (Ramos and McNeill 1994) or in the Medas islands (Domenec 2002). In France, where there are numerous “cantonnements” as fishing zones under fishermen responsibility, this fact has also been documented (Bourduresque 1995). The potentiality of these NFZ must be deemed important in countries with very long coastlines, such as Greece, Turkey and Croatia.

The Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) recommends¹⁴ to adapt and further develop the PEEN concept to marine ecological corridors, including the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) and the continental shelf, using the Conventions of the regional seas, and existing instruments as the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, the Bern, and the Bonn Conventions. They recommend using tools as Integrated Coastal Management, and discourage developments that threaten ecological corridors in sea straits and river mouths, where high standards of EIA procedures should apply to any new planning or investment. Other ideas include the enforcement of fishing policies and of pollution control initiatives in coastal and marine ecological corridors.

c) Small MPAs

Small marine protected areas have helped raising fishing stocks in surrounding areas (Roberts and Hawkins 1997) (see cited cases in France, Italy and Spain) provided the species concerned are not migratory or have planktonic stages. Most importantly, small marine reserves, either marine or terrestrial, should be easier to manage as they provide opportunities to share conservation interest and responsibilities with local stakeholders (local governments, local fishermen, local tourism services, and NGOs). Small marine reserves also have an important role in research and education.

In the Mediterranean the small MPAs also have a particular interest for visitation and tourism. Marine reserves have demonstrated to be a tourism attraction (e.g. the Islas Medas in Catalonia receive over 50,000 divers a year in only 93 ha). However, the impact from massive visitation has been well documented, mainly: pollution, garbage, and impact on the sea bottom from anchoring of recreation boats, and divers and sport fishing over the fish and over invertebrate communities.

The affluence of visitors is not related to the size of the reserve but to its access facilities (Jimenez 2000). Tourism could be a very important source of funding for Mediterranean marine reserves, provided the carrying capacity has been established and there is strict control over visitors and their impact on biodiversity. This author proposed the establishment of small marine reserves with easy access for education, tourism and fund-raising purposes, in order to safeguard the real biodiversity reserves from visitation, and to finance their conservation.

¹⁴ Council of Europe Recommendations (STRA-REP/99 12 rev)

3.10 PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Although the coverage of Protected Areas in the Mediterranean is still insufficient and unevenly distributed, very important initiatives are under way with the objective of establishing more PAs, most particularly in Europe and in the High Seas. The most serious biogeographical gaps are on the coastal marine environments, and overall, in the Southern countries.

There is a significant and focused international capacity, global agreements (conventions, protocols, non-legally binding arrangements) concerning legislation and related international programmes aimed at the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity, and several international networks important to protected area establishment and management. **Table II** displays the main gaps and needs of Mediterranean protected areas, against the priorities set in the objectives, strategies and plans of these international programmes and networks. As it can be seen in this Table, most of these programmes recognise the Mediterranean needs within their action priorities.

However, Table II also lays out the field response of these international programmes and other non-governmental networks (as found in documented reviews and experts' knowledge), to the priority needs. We have included only those for which we have found reports about a significant field work carried out on the different topics. Even assuming that our information is incomplete and that there is always a deal of subjectivity in evaluating the "significance" of the field work, it seems apparent that the field results are not as developed as intended by the, otherwise, sound policies, strategies and action plans.

In a recent assessment about biodiversity and international agreements in the Mediterranean, Öztürk (2002) concludes, in coincidence with our previous considerations, that many of the Mediterranean countries *"are in need of building capacity in environmental management, in institutional, financial, technical and political respects"*. Even many countries courageously act to enforce international agreements, it is a reality that the implementation of these commitments at national level still remains a serious problem for these countries. Also, *"there is insufficient co-ordination and co-operation between the secretariats of these international programmes, affecting negatively to their success"*, and there are very few performance indicators for measuring the effectiveness of most of these programmes. As it is well known in nature conservation, again the main problem seems to be funding. *"The failure to receive the necessary financial support to regional and national activities and particularly to national implementation programmes implies a direct failure. Traditional funds are fairly modest and are used only for the funding of joint regional activities (such as meetings, preparation of documents, and their related costs)"*.

The lack of funding stresses the need to reinforce these initiatives by optimising co-ordination, networking and avoiding duplication, together with making an increased effort to obtain, for the huge tasks ahead, enough funding both from governmental, private and citizen sources.

Table 2.- Action Plans and Significant Field Work of Mediterranean Networks

[illegible]

PART 4 **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND POSITIVE SYNERGIES FOR BUILDING ON THE DURBAN 2003 STREAMLINES**

We have found important gaps and needs on Protected Area systems in the Mediterranean, but also a wealth of organisations with sound strategies and plans. We may conclude that given the limited human and financial resources available to implement these plans, most particularly in Southern and Eastern countries, the potential synergies between existing networks and plans needs to be optimised, specially to cover the pan-Mediterranean needs.

Co-ordinated actions between networks should also translate into improved efficiency in each network and ultimately, into a better landscape/nature values/biodiversity conservation.

This section summarises the problems found, the responses from the existing organisations, and their networking plans. It then tries to identify synergies and opportunities, and suggests some directions on which future efforts could focus along the four streamlines of the World Parks Congress 2003.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS

a) The problems

- ? In the Mediterranean, the marine (1%) and coastal (3%) **coverage of Protected Areas is insufficient**. The terrestrial coverage is very unevenly distributed, with less than 3% in most non-European countries.
- ? In the existing Mediterranean Protected Areas, the **main gaps and needs** are the following:
 - ? Stronger PA integration into landscape and into development plans;
 - ? More effective management of Protected Areas;
 - ? Better legal coverage, institutional strengthening and training of PA managers in non-EU countries;
 - ? Stronger stakeholder involvement in planning and management;
 - ? Increased public awareness and communications;
 - ? Stronger financial support and tools, including collaboration from the tourism sector;
 - ? Need for networking and sharing capacities.
- ? In the whole context of Protected Area management, the increasing socio-economic inequalities between Northern and Southern countries must be considered. Almost every need mentioned above is stronger in the least developed Mediterranean countries because of a higher social demand for scarcer resources and because of a lower institutional and financial capacity to face these challenges.

b) The responses

- ? Most of the existing international Action Plans and Networks have identified the gaps and needs mentioned above as priorities within their Objectives, Strategies, and Action Plans (but see ahead, as most of them do not have a pan-Mediterranean focus).
- ? The implementation of these Plans differ greatly from some networks to other:
 - ? In the Mediterranean countries of Europe (either Eastern or Western) since 1994 very important initiatives have been under way with the

- objective of establishing more PAs (the Natura 2000 Network of field sites is expected to be completed in mid 2003) (the Emerald Network has induced to important developments in PA establishment and management in Balkan countries), establishing more marine protected areas, and increased interest in landscape-based approaches to conservation (Common Agricultural Policy, the PEEN),
- ? At a Mediterranean level, there are already 12 new marine SPAMI and numerous capacity building activities in the MAP-SPA programme; MedWet and WWF are developing important capacity building and conservation field programmes.
 - ? Other networks have helped develop important policies, strategies and action plans, but our ability to assess the extent to which these plans have been implemented in the field with concrete projects and actions is constrained by the limited information available in this regard.
- ? All together it seems that the general objectives of most of these plans would need an appropriate amount of human and financial resources and stronger networking with other parallel efforts. In general, we consider that in most cases the impact from the ongoing activities falls short from planning perspectives.
- ? Thematically, and according to their capacities and resources, each initiative has a distinct emphasis and works at different levels:
- ? Influencing at the policy level (Biosphere Reserves, MAP, Natura 2000, Emerald Network, WCPA).
 - ? Influencing a better biogeographical coverage, the declaration and design of new reserves, the consideration of wider land-use and coastal management (Natura 2000, Emerald Network, Ramsar Convention, Biosphere Reserves, PEEN, WCPA).
 - ? Strengthening PA institutions (MAP Spa/Rac, Europarc, WCPA).
 - ? Influencing to develop co-management practices and the participation of stakeholders (Biosphere Reserves, Natura 2000, Emerald Network, PEEN, MAP Rac/Spa, Europarc).
 - ? Training of managers (Europarc, MAP Spa/Rac, MedWet, WWF).
 - ? Databases and monitoring (Natura 2000, Emerald Network, MAP/Spa, MedWet, PEEN).
 - ? Support funding: indirectly from the EU through Natura 2000 and Emerald Network, and from the GEF through MAP/Spa.
 - ? Working to incorporate the private and business sectors in the support and funding of Protected Areas (PEEN, MedWet).
 - ? Field work to incorporate the non-governmental sectors in the management of Protected Areas (WWF, MedWet).
- ? From previous revisions it can be concluded that some of the main priorities are not given enough implementation in the field: Improving management effectiveness; Developing better financing tools, including tourism and other private stakeholders (as land owners).
- ? Training is a priority for all, particularly for PA managers in the less developed countries. EUROPARC only works in Europe. The MAP/Spa, MedWet and WWF focus on the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, but certainly much more co-operation is needed from Europe to help develop management capacities in the non-European countries.

c) Networking

- ? The described Protected Area plans could strengthen their networking practice, given their coincidence in objectives and priorities, and the shortness on funding which is common to the great majority.
- ? As summarised in Table 3 (Annex V) almost every plan and network applies to the EU countries but very few do in the rest of the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean is not treated as a region, neither as a sub-region in European initiatives. Truly pan-Mediterranean plans and networks are MAP-Rac/Spa (marine), MedWet (wetlands), WWF (capacity building and NGO involvement).
- ? In many cases, three different subregions should be considered when establishing action plans and priorities: E.U. Countries; Eastern European Countries; and Middle East/North African Countries. Given the priority focus on economic and political issues in these last two subregions, public awareness on the importance and need to preserve nature is practically absent. This situation translates into a weak institutional capacity and legal coverage along with shortage of human and financial resources.

4.2 ALREADY EXISTING JOINT INITIATIVES BETWEEN PA PLANS AND NETWORKS

Specifically focused on Mediterranean PA management needs, the Declaration of Cilento (1999) underlined the need for co-operative work between the many existing regional institutions and networks, mentioning the Ramsar Convention, the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, the Barcelona Convention and the MAP/Spa, the EUROPARC Federation, MedWet, the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), the WWF, and other programmes concerned with protected areas in the region.

At the bilateral level, however, some of these collaboration frameworks are already in place:

a) Natura 2000 – Emerald Network

As described in Chapter 3, the EU Habitats and Bird Directives and the Bern Convention are working together on these two analogous initiatives, now covering over 2,000 protected areas in Europe. This close co-operation is mainly of legal nature, and also technical and financial in order to build both networks. The Special Areas of Conservation of Natura 2000 will also become Areas of Special Conservation Interest of the Emerald Network²⁹. In this way it will be possible to extend to the whole of Europe a homogeneous network of areas.

b) Pan-European Ecological Network

The PEEN's Action Plan is based on the need for networking for protected areas in Europe. It is specifically built on existing ecological network initiatives (Natura 2000, the Bern, Bonn and Ramsar Conventions), and considers making use of unique opportunities such as land use changes as a result of privatisation and EU Agri-Environmental Measures in Europe, other European initiatives³⁰, and the IUCN Parks for Life

²⁹ Resolution No. 5 "Rules for the Emerald Network" was adopted in December 1998.

³⁰ "Maastricht Declaration on Conserving Europe's Natural Heritage: towards a European Ecological Network (1993)"

(1994). As it builds on other networks, the PEEN concept could be a model for networking purposes at the Mediterranean level.

c) MaB-UNESCO / Ramsar

This initiative was accepted by the Ramsar Standing Committee in 2001 and MAB's International Coordinating Council in 2002. It is part of the implementation of Ramsar's Strategic Plan 1997-2002, and is aimed at *"Developing cooperation with the World Heritage Convention and UNESCO's Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) especially as regards wetlands designated as World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves and/or Ramsar sites"*. In the Mediterranean there are 9 Biosphere Reserves which are also Ramsar sites, and some of these sites have also been declared as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The joint activities to be implemented under this initiative are: Cooperation between secretariats and scientific and technical subsidiary bodies and working groups; Identification and designation of sites; Site management planning, assessment and monitoring; Communication, Education and Public Awareness.

d) MAP RAC/SPA - Ramsar/MedWet

The Rac/Spa Centre coordinates the *SAP-BIO project*, the Strategic Action Plan for Biodiversity which is part of a wider GEF project. The main objective of the project is to develop - through a participatory approach - a strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, frequently wetlands. A second objective is the coordination of other strategic instruments concerning biodiversity in the region. The third is to prepare a portfolio of project proposals for eventual funding through GEF and/or other donors. SAP-BIO involves 12 Mediterranean countries. Following a Memorandum of Understanding between the Barcelona and the Ramsar Conventions, MedWet has collaborated with the RAC/SPA for the use of the MedWet methodology for the inventory of Mediterranean Coastal Wetlands, and participates in the Steering Committee of the Strategic Action Plan for the conservation of Biodiversity in the Mediterranean (SAP/BIO).

e) MedWet / WWF Med.Programme

MedWet is planning to closely collaborate with the WWF-MedProgramme Office, bringing together the major national NGO's in the Mediterranean active in wetland conservation and wise use, and looking forward to significantly enlarging the technical and project development capacity of the MedWet initiative.

f) WWF and other NGOs

WWF is engaged in the development of two regional networks. The Mediterranean Ecoregion Conservation Network building upon the already solid network of organizations and individuals in "Across the Waters", helping to multiply their conservation impact by shaping a common large-scale conservation vision; and a Mediterranean Ecoregion Leadership Training Cycle, addressing a core group of individuals belonging to those organizations to help build their personal capacity and skills, mostly through the four conservation Schools of WWF.

4.3 CONSIDERATIONS ALONG THE FOUR DURBAN 2003 STREAMLINES

a) Links with the Landscape / Seascape

Better biogeographical coverage:

- ? A strong improvement in coastal and marine coverage is a priority given the increasing pressure from population trends and migration flows towards the coast, as well as tourism coastal demands.
- ? Countries riverine to marine areas of conservation priority could be encouraged to ratify the Biodiversity Protocol to the Barcelona Convention and, if necessary, technically assisted to consider the establishment of SPAMI either in waters under national jurisdiction or in the high seas.
- ? The focus should be on areas that concentrate greater threats and conservation values. To this end, the results drawn from WWF's gap analyses, because they are focused on Mediterranean biodiversity priorities, should be taken into account when identifying priority sites for new PAs.
- ? The role of small reserves in the conservation of nature values, either terrestrial or marine or in small islands, should be given a fair consideration. They offer unequal opportunities for conservation of endemisms and for decentralizing the establishment and management of protected areas, along with the involvement of different governmental and citizen levels.
- ? Municipalities could identify small protected areas under different categories to better serve the singularities of a particular area. Perhaps an initiative such as "each municipality one reserve" could be promoted. There is also a great potential for conservation efforts through private owners and NGO's through the establishment of land stewardship agreements.

Improved integration into wider Landscape / Seascape

- ? River basins, as water catchments, could be ecological and institutional frameworks for forest, wetland and freshwater habitats conservation. Given the Mediterranean hydrological stress along with the desertification threat, there is a deep concern over water catchment issues. The integrated river basin management approach is being strongly encouraged by international Conventions, Agreements and Declarations in the Mediterranean basin (IUCN 2002), where there is a growing tendency to analyse the effects of water use on the ecosystems. A number of pilot sites, where to promote dialogue at catchment level, could be selected across the Mediterranean, drawing e.g. on the experience from MedWet in the Balkanic projects.
- ? For the establishment of new coastal protected areas, take advantage of the multiple Integrated Coastal Management initiatives and of the growing interest from the tourism sector for better ecological standards in tourism destinations.
- ? In the marine environments there is a great opportunity to expand the concept of "non-fishing zones", as scientific evidence is accumulating on their strong contribution to marine species conservation, and on the ecological and economical inefficiency of overfishing practices.
- ? The establishment of corridors (as areas of ecological connectivity between PAs under sustainable human uses) can be enhanced taking advantage of the reviewed Common Agriculture Policy in the land, and the new fishing EU policies in the sea.

b) New ways of working together - Governance

Governance³¹ is one of the main problems faced in protecting sites, as it is also the case in other environmental issues. The legal designation of Protected Areas does not guarantee their conservation. On the contrary, the establishment of new PA frequently creates conflicts with resource users, as the interaction with the existing stakeholders in each PA is seldom guaranteed. Management effectiveness depends greatly on the support from local governments and local population, as well as on coherent objectives between policies at different scales, from a geographical perspective – local, regional, national- to a transversal point of view – agricultural, fisheries, development issues. In most situations, and particularly where there are social problems and/or institutional weaknesses, stronger co-management practices are needed for the long term conservation of protected areas.

International level

At this level Governance first needs to focus on coordination among multilateral agreements. The fact of being Parties to more than one global or regional agreement and programme serving the same purpose creates a synergy and increases the number of actors who may collaborate, and this should, after all, support their effective implementation at the national level.

Establishing common management standards and field programmes between Natura 2000, Emerald Network and the MAP/SPAMI could serve as a basis to expand the European support to the Mediterranean region. For example, Rac/Spa is already working with MedWet, and MedWet with WWF; Ramsar has established an agreement with Biosphere Reserves for the co-operation between secretariats and scientific and technical subsidiary bodies and working groups, with the objective of identifying sites, and for their planning, assessment and monitoring. This type of bilateral agreements are very interesting starting points.

As institutions function according to their own rules and under control of their own decision-making bodies, it follows that the rationalisation of the actions of different institutions will require voluntary cooperation, sometimes taking the legal form of Memorandum of Understanding or sometimes as concrete joint projects.

Transboundary protected areas linked to international organisations and Conventions, e.g. in the high seas, may be a good starting point for developing joint conservation programmes between countries, under the aegis of international conventions³².

International networking:

The networks already existing could strengthen their collaboration, given their coincidence in objectives and priorities, and the shortness on funding which is common to almost all of them. Any new networking schemes should:

? Focus on the Mediterranean as a region,

³¹ "Governance is defined as *the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power is exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say. It is about power, relationships and accountability: who has influence, who decides, and how decision-makers are held accountable. While sound governance can be seen as an end unto itself, it is also a process which can be undertaken by any number of actors, and is distinct from the institutions of government*". Governance Principles For Protected Areas In The 21st Century. A Discussion Paper By The Institute On Governance. 2002.

³² For example, following the recommendations of the "High Seas Workshop" (IUCN-WCPA-WWF 2003) immediate action is essential to protect seamounts and other vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems and to improve implementation of the existing legal framework for oceans governance.

- ? Take stock of the already existing capacities, and
- ? Work on the main gaps and priorities identified by the existing assessments and experts' meetings:
 - ? Better legal and biogeographical coverage, particularly coastal and marine(*)³³.
 - ? Stronger PA integration into landscape and into development plans.
 - ? Training of PA managers, and more effective management of sites (*).
 - ? Stronger stakeholder involvement in planning and management, including NGOs and local resource users.
 - ? Stronger financial support and tools (*), including collaboration from the tourism sector and from land owners.
 - ? Increased public awareness and communications (*).

None of the existing networks is covering all these topics or engaging all levels of organisations, either multilateral, governmental, scientific or NGO. The situation is weaker when considering the Mediterranean as a region, or when focusing on the most needed subregions of the Mediterranean.

In Europe, however, networking is closer to what is recommended. In the Pan European Ecological Network, different governmental organisms and scientific centres have established close co-operation, including the Council of Europe and the European Commission, as well as the European Centre for Nature Conservation and the European Environmental Agency.

The concepts and strategies addressed by the Pan European Ecological Network (PEEN) could be expanded to cover Mediterranean needs, particularly for the sea and for the coasts, perhaps creating sub-regional networks that may be linked to other efforts at a wider pan-Mediterranean scale. For example, the MAP/Spa, IUCN, MedWet, WCPA and WWF, together with sub-regionalised working groups from the existing European networks (Natura 2000, Emerald, Europarc, PEEN) could collaborate in a sort of "MedPark" network for the region. A common action plan could be prepared, focusing on one or two main thematic priorities, providing technical assistance, exchange of expertise and promoting communication and joint ventures, with pilot actions and projects making full use of, and building on, the already existing initiatives.

Pilot activities on local governance:

The responsibility for protecting nature and sites should not only rest on governmental agencies. Stakeholder participation is a basic tool for collaboration and sound management; it prevents conflicts, it provides for shared responsibilities and support from local users, and it makes management more efficient and both socially and financially sustainable (e.g. see Borrini 1996; Jones 2001)³⁴. Most if not all protected sites, but especially the broader areas and other with multiple resource-use regulations, could have participatory bodies such as representatives councils, advisory committees, local thematic working groups, or other approaches tailored to the local context.

Not least, different sizes and categories of protected areas could be considered to be established and managed at different governmental levels: as (e.g.) central governments usually manage National Parks, as sub-national governments do with other multiple-use categories, the Municipalities could establish small reserves representative of their particular environments and cultural assets.

³³ Network priorities marked with (*) are specially important in North Africa / Middle East countries

³⁴ Borrini-Feyerabend, G. 1996. Collaborative management in protected areas: tailoring the approach to the context. Issues in social policy, IUCN, Gland (Switzerland), 67 pp.

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At the same time, non governmental stakeholders may participate in different ways:

- ? Private owners could be involved in the conservation of land and coastal reserves through land stewardship agreements based, e.g. on the ecological services provided by the protected lands.
- ? Resource users, in particular fishermen and tourism services can and should benefit from, and thus collaborate in, the conservation of the natural resources on which their economies are based.
- ? NGOs are often identified as the most appropriate agent to promote and channel co-management efforts. However, in most cases they receive little support to develop these tasks. NGOs should be given better opportunities to collaborate in PA management, particularly in the areas where their efficiency is demonstrated, such as social development, education, communications, and monitoring.

c) New skills for the New Century:

Technical capacities should be enhanced, particularly at the field level, to ensure improved management of PA's in the Mediterranean. This is most important in non-EU countries, where most of the efforts should be focused during the next decade.

MAP/Spa carries out training programmes for Southern and Eastern Mediterranean PA managers; these activities could be reinforced by the experience and networking of the Europarc Federation, creating a Mediterranean PA training programme focused on Mediterranean ecosystem and protected area management. The Emerald Network may also contribute in regionalising training activities within the Eastern European countries. The priority target groups would be Protected Area staff, both in the field and in central services, of PA institutions in non-EU countries.

Raising awareness and management skills of other stakeholders would strongly reinforce the impact of training activities. NGO staff are already subject of specialised courses in the WWF Schools. Resource users could also benefit from specific training in their particular fields. Resource users better understand their own visions and language. A practitioners exchange programme could bring together local fishermen already collaborating in the management of reserves (Italy, Spain, Turkey) with fishermen in other areas and countries where these co-management practices are needed. On the same lines, small businesses and tourism services such as local guides and field lodgements could exchange experiences and receive training on how to make of their businesses a tool for local sustainable development and a contribution to PA management, e.g. in protection, education, and public awareness for conservation.

The Cilento Declaration (1999) pointed out the need to create a database of training opportunities to help meet the region's training needs. Today, the WWF Mediterranean Information Hub may serve as the basis to create a specific database on training issues.

d) Gaps in the System

Three subregions

For most cases three different subregions could be considered when establishing action plans and priorities: E.U. Countries; Eastern European Countries; and Middle East/North African Countries.

The non-EU countries, especially in the South and Middle East, should receive the strongest interest from international plans and networks. Additional to the needs and gaps reviewed in previous sections (on integration into landscape, governance and training) the most important topics to be addressed in non-EU countries are: strengthening legal coverage, institutional capacity, and financial resources; the development of management plans for protected areas; and more public awareness on the importance to preserve nature.

Some Southern and Middle East countries would benefit from receiving support to design national systems of Protected Areas and to develop and improve, e.g. in consultation with the IUCN Environmental Law Centre, environmental legislation for PAs.

Funding

Special emphasis should be given to funding opportunities for all Protected Areas around the Mediterranean. Governmental funding sources of funding are usually difficult to increase or mobilise; yet, co-ordinated international networks could make a stronger case in proposing PA actions to the international cooperation agencies, either bilateral (EU countries) as multilateral (mainly the EU and the GEF) to support the most basic needs in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Protected Areas.

In the Mediterranean there are other possible sources of funding for PA management, along the following lines:

- ? Making management needs less expensive:
 - o Stakeholder participation, in general, prevents conflicts and protection needs, and at the same time shares management responsibilities, all of which makes PA management much more cost-effective.
 - o Reinforcing networking between existing initiatives, by optimising co-ordination and avoiding duplication.
- ? Developing new funding tools:
 - o Protected Areas can be linked to environmental services (landscape for tourism; CO₂ sinks; water catchment for agricultural purposes; genetic pool for pharmaceutical purposes.).
 - o The private sector could be involved in facilitating or financing management practices, e.g. land-owners, and the growing number of private businesses interested in Social Corporate Responsibility.
 - o Tourism should also be a source of financial resources (given the carrying capacities or “limits to the acceptable change” in the most promising areas are established and monitored):
 - ✍ Establishing small coastal reserves for education and tourism and for financing biological reserves.
 - ✍ Developing pilot ecotax experiences: the recent experience in Majorca is encouraging, and ecotax of 1 € per tourist a day. A softer approach could be a good starting point, e.g., voluntary contributions from concerned tour operators (there are 200 million tourists a year in Mediterranean countries).

In summary, important needs were found but also good opportunities for Protected Areas in the Mediterranean. The most important gaps to be bridged derive from the strong inequality between European and non-European countries. There are a wealth of national institutions, international bodies, and local and international NGOs for PA management, all of which have launched strategies and action plans, and established networks.

It seems however that the field results are not as developed as intended by the, otherwise, sound policies and action plans. Good will in strategies must be translated into improved action. Given the importance of the tasks ahead and the shortage of human and financial resources, networking seems to be the first priority. European networks are strong (Natura 2000 and Emerald Networks, PEEN, EUROPARC) but do not consider any especial focus to the Mediterranean countries. The three existing pan-Mediterranean networks can be complementary but cannot cover all the existing needs (MAP/Spa is governmental and works on coastal and marine issues; MedWet is mixed and works on wetland conservation; WWF works with NGO networks).

New networking schemes should focus the Mediterranean as a region, taking stock of the already existing capacities, and developing new imaginative tools for PA establishment in different sizes and management categories, for stakeholder participation, training and exchange of field experiences, and for funding through non-conventional sources.

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www.euoparc.org The EUROPARC Federation

www.euoparc-es.org The EUROPARC chapter in Spain (national Action Plan

ims.wcmc.org.uk/IPIECA2/regions.html WCMC Environmental Information Service

www.nature.coe.int The Council of Europe

www.rac-spa.org.tn/Rep.htm Regional Action Centre for Specially Protected Areas

www.ramsar.org The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

www.unepmap.org UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan

www.wwf.org The World Wide Fund for Nature

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASCI	Areas of Special Conservation Interest
ATW	Across the Waters
CNPPA	Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (today WCPA)
ECNC	European Centre for Nature Conservation
EEA	European Environmental Agency
EEC/NIS	
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ETC/NPB	European Topic Centre on Nature Protection & Biodiversity
EU	European Union
FAO	Food And Agriculture Organization of The United Nations
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
ICSU	International Council for Science
ISSC	International Social Science Council
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
NFZ	No Fishing Zones
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PA	Protected Area
PEEN	Pan-European Ecological Network
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SPA	Specially Protected Areas
SPAMI	Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNESCO MaB	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; Man and the Biosphere Programme
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas of the IUCN
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

ANNEX I. MAIN THREATS TO MEDITERRANEAN NATURAL VALUES

The land-locked waters of the Mediterranean have a very low renewal rate (80 to 90 years) and so are extremely sensitive to pollution. Representing less than 1 per cent of the Earth's total marine surface, oil tanker traffic through this sea accounts for more than 20 per cent of the global traffic. Every year 635,000 tonnes of crude oil are spilled by vessels in the Mediterranean Sea. 80% of the urban sewage produced is discharged untreated, together with agricultural runoffs containing pesticides, nitrates and phosphates.

Around 1.5 million tons of fish are caught in the Mediterranean each year. Destructive and often illegal fishing methods, including bottom trawlers, dynamite, long lines, and drift nets have depleted fish stocks. Industrial fishing pressure over the Mediterranean is deemed to double its carrying capacity. Depleted fish stocks are also reflected in the undersized catch (e.g. 83% of all blue-fin tuna and swordfish caught in the Mediterranean). The use of drift nets is also responsible for the accidental deaths and incidental catches of whales, dolphins and marine turtles.

Inland, almost 85% of Mediterranean forests have already disappeared. Major threats to forests include fragmentation, road construction, tourism, forest fires, land clearing for agriculture, and overgrazing. Every year more than 50,000 fires, of which 95% are human induced, burn an estimated average of 600,000 – 800,000 hectares, an area comparable to the island of Crete or of Corsica. About 300,000 sq km of land in the European coastal zone of the Mediterranean is undergoing desertification, affecting the livelihood of 16.5 million people.

Precious groundwater resources in the region are being wasted through inefficient irrigation and drainage schemes (IUCN 2002). River engineering and dam construction continue to alter river and floodplain systems, resulting in loss of species and habitats. International disputes over water control have already occurred in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and other parts of the Middle East. Coastal lagoons, covering almost one million ha, are responsible for between 10% and 30% of the total fisheries, and important habitats for migratory birds across the continents (Agenda 2000).

Wetlands, especially in the first part of the twentieth century, were extensively destroyed and degraded - to prevent water-borne diseases, to expand agriculture and to create room for construction of housing, industrial and tourist facilities for increasing human populations: 73% of the marshes in northern Greece have been drained since 1930; 86% of the 78 most important wetlands in France were degraded by official public policies in the thirty years to 1994; Spain has lost an estimated 60% of its original wetland area; while 15% of the area of lakes and marshes in northern and central Tunisia (but 84% of the wetlands in the Tunisian sector of the catchment of the River Medjerda, the major river flowing from Algeria into northern Tunisia) were lost between 1881 and 1987. The river deltas (Nile, Ebro, Rhone and Po) are seriously threatened by dissection, intense agricultural pollution, and more recently by the marine erosion and the raise of sea level.

Growing pressures from coastal development and economic exploitation have become increasingly difficult to manage within sustainable limits. Of the total 46,270 km of coastline, 25,000 are urbanised or have already exceeded critical limits. Sand dunes have been destroyed in over a 50% their original length, up to 90% in EU countries.

The Mediterranean region is a magnet to about 220 million tourists every year, making it the world's leading tourist destination. Mass tourism has led to degraded landscapes, soil erosion, increased waste discharges into the sea, loss of natural habitats, higher pressure on endangered species and heightened vulnerability to forest fires. It puts a strain on water resources and often leads to cultural disruption. Mediterranean coastal areas, which receive 30% of international tourist arrivals in the world, are already seriously damaged.

ANNEX II. ACTION PLAN FOR SPANISH PROTECTED AREAS (EUROPARC 2002)³⁵

(PLAN DE ACCIÓN PARA LOS ESPACIOS NATURALES PROTEGIDOS DEL ESTADO ESPAÑOL)

The Action Plan for Spanish Protected Areas is a reference document that reflects a shared view of the role of protected areas in society in the 21st century. The document gives a diagnosis of the current situation of protected areas in Spain, covering aspects of planning and management. Based on this diagnosis, recommendations are made and specific actions are proposed to meet the challenges of conservation of natural and cultural resources. The Action Plan includes "living observatories", innovative actions that may be encouraging for other protected areas.

In Spain today there are about 732 protected areas, covering over 4 million hectares, that is, 8% of Spanish territory. The legal establishment of this territory was undoubtedly an important step in guaranteeing nature conservation and the benefits and environmental services that nature gives society. However, the resources available for protected areas must be optimised in order to ensure that planning and management are carried out efficiently, offering society specific results for its efforts.

The Action Plan contains strategies and guidelines and has the following objectives:

- ? To promote the various systems and networks of protected areas, respecting the specific framework and structure of each Autonomous Community.
- ? To provide guidance for the application of criteria and dissemination of methods in compliance with national and international conservation strategies.
- ? To make recommendations for planning, management, conservation, public utilisation, research, follow-up, participation and evaluation of plans and activities in PAs.
- ? To promote awareness and participation by citizens in decisions on conservation and development.

The Action Plan is a contribution made by EUROPARC-Spain to all the administrative bodies that are responsible for the management of protected areas in Spain and to all interested organisations and professionals.

EUROPARC-Spain is a member of the EUROPARC Federation. It brings together representatives from the administrative bodies that are responsible for the planning and management of protected areas, namely, the Central Administration, Autonomous Communities, Provincial Councils and Inter-Island Councils. Having been produced within this framework, the Action Plan is therefore the best guarantee that a wide range of situations and opinions have been taken into account.

Background

This Action Plan is the consequence of the recommendations of the World Congress on Parks held in 1992 in Caracas, and the document Parks for Life published in 1994 by the IUCN, in collaboration with other institutions such as the EUROPARC Federation. This recommended that a forum for debate should be set up in each country with a view to adapting the recommendations to national and regional needs.

In order to draft the Action Plan, a working group was set up under the coordination of the Technical Office of EUROPARC-Spain and comprising a total of 15 specialists from a number of administrative bodies (Ministry of the Environment, Autonomous Communities and Regional and Island Councils).

Contributions

The Action Plan comprises eight chapters structured as follows:

- ? **Diagnosis.** This describes all the situations in the Spanish protected areas based on updated information
- ? **Recommendations** - based on the diagnosis of the current situation.
- ? **Priority actions** - actions to be taken in the next few years.
- ? **Living observatories** – satisfactory experiences in certain protected areas which can serve as examples for others.

³⁵ Summary provided by WCPA-2003

Contents

The document has three main parts. After an introductory chapter describing the legal framework for protected areas in Spain, the first part covers the tools for planning and how they are used in sectorial policies, considering both individual areas and systems or networks of protected areas.

The second part analyses the basic management areas in three chapters – conservation of natural systems and resources, management aiming to achieve compatibility with socioeconomic development, and public usage management aiming to ensure enjoyment by society in the framework of nature conservation.

The third part identifies management tools. It first analyses the human and material resources required for management. Involvement of all the social sectors in the process is studied in the chapter on participation in planning and management. Research and follow-up are covered as essential tools to be present throughout the process of planning and management. The last chapter analyses the principles and procedures for evaluation of protected areas.

The document gives about 120 recommendations and 36 priority actions. The recommendations include both methodological and organisational guidelines to promote the integration with sectorial policies, coordination, provision of resources, improvement of training and evaluation procedures. Priority actions include the preparation of manuals, recording of experiences, organisation and dissemination of data bases, fora for sharing of experiences, demonstration pilot projects and seminars on specific subjects.

The main challenges for Spanish protected areas over the next few years, identified by the Action Plan diagnosis:

- ? Implementation of protected area systems including the necessary elements for guaranteeing biological and landscape diversity.
- ? Methodological definition of criteria for selection and demarcation of protected areas.
- ? Inclusion of protected areas in sectorial policies as basic tools for territorial structuring.
- ? Integration of the Nature 2000 Network in the general policy for protected areas.
- ? Reduction of the existing types of management plan, leading to a flexible model that can be adapted according to the complexity of each protected area.
- ? Constant diagnosis and follow-up of the territory as an essential basis for setting up conservation activities.
- ? Setting of objective criteria for establishing measures for socio-economic development, promoting only those which are compatible with conservation.
- ? Planning of public usage in all protected areas whose objectives include visitor enjoyment, education and service.
- ? Consolidation of active management in protected areas. Such management should have a management plan identifying explicit objectives, to which clearly defined, quantified human and material resources can be applied.
- ? Effective interaction between researchers and protected area managers with a view to finding solutions for management problems based on scientific knowledge.
- ? The extension and improvement of tools for public participation in the planning and management of protected areas, promoting the involvement of society in conservation policies.
- ? Inclusion of periodic evaluation of planning tools and of the results of protected area management.

Main Recommendations

No less than 40 recommendations have been drawn up by managers taking into account the current degree of development in Spain. They therefore express the urgency with which they should be implemented. Each chapter also contains other recommendations which are no less important.

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ANNEX III.**PARKS FOR LIFE: ACTION FOR PROTECTED AREAS IN EUROPE****State of Implementation of original priority projects and new initiatives**

Project	Implementation Status 2003		
	In prep.	On going	Finished
Conservation value of Mediterranean military lands			
Sustainable Tourism Charter for PAs (with EUROPARC)			
Study visits from East to West (with EUROPARC)			
Identification of Important Plant Areas (with Plantlife and Ecopoint Foundation)			
Training for protected area staff from Mediterranean countries (with Tour du Valat)			
Training for protected area staff from Eastern European (with EUROPARC)			
Support implementation of the Ramsar Convention in southern Europe (with MedWet)			
Rural Landscapes Convention – first text drafted			
Economic aspects of Agriculture in PAs			
Seminar on Marketing for PAs (with CEDIP and Commune di Trento)			
Guidance on how to apply the IUCN management categories in Europe			
Study on the use of micro-reserves, with Valencia Autonomous Gov. (Spain)			
Support to transfrontier Pas, Report with support from Austria			
Action on marine protected areas and fisheries			
Feasibility of PAs in river basin Drava-Mura in Serbia- Yugoslavia			

Committee of experts of the PAN-EUROPEAN ECOLOGICAL NETWORK (PEEN). Second five-year action plan 2001-2005.

Action – Project	Actors	Implementation	
		Planned	Ongoing
Directory of funding sources for establishment of PEEN	ECNC		
Increase synergy with existing initiatives	CE, ECNC, IUCN		
Methodology for identifying corridors, restoration areas, and mapping	CE, ECNC, IUCN		
Raise awareness and support of PEEN with decision makers and public	CE and ECNC		
Pilot projects to support the establishment of transnational, national, regional and local ecological networks	IUCN, ECNC, and gov. Agencies		
Actions in favour of threatened species	CE, Bern Conv.		
Factibility for introducing a training programme on PEEN for EEC-NIS countries	Norway, Ecoforum, NGOs		
Important plant areas	Planta Europa		
Important bird areas	Birdlife International		

ANNEX IV.

Information Paper

Report of the High Seas Marine Protected Areas Workshop

15-17 January 2003, Malaga Spain to the Eight Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

Summary Overview

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) set a target date (2012) for the completion of an effectively managed, ecologically representative network of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPA) within and beyond areas of national jurisdiction, and the application of the ecosystem approach to the marine environment.

The establishment of a network of Marine Protected Areas beyond national jurisdiction (High Seas MPAs) represents a challenge and an opportunity to the international community. Such a network will require international co-operation at the global level as well as targeted efforts to address specific requirements, objectives and circumstances at the regional level. As further described in the attached report, the IUCN, WCPA and WWF Malaga Workshop on HSMPAs identified the clear need to use and build upon existing legal regimes, in particular UNCLOS and the CBD, as well as the creation of new agreements to supplement this framework where necessary. Any legal regime for HSMPAS, whether at the regional or global level, should have the effect of strengthening the linkages and co-operation between states and international institutions and facilitate conservation, enforcement and management of the high seas.

The workshop concluded that urgent action was necessary to agree to draft and implement an international framework to protect biodiversity on the high seas that would be recognised by the international community as a whole. The workshop concluded further that immediate action was essential to protect seamounts and other vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems and improve implementation of the existing legal framework for oceans governance.

In light of reported successes in the use of MPAs in coastal areas, taking MPAs beyond national jurisdiction would be a key mechanism for promoting sustainable resource management and conservation of biodiversity and productivity of the high seas.

Main Conclusions of the Malaga Meeting:

The diverse group of internationally recognised experts in scientific, legal and institutional issues relevant to the conservation of high-seas biodiversity proposed three priority actions.

Networking: An essential first step is the establishment of expert networks among key international and intergovernmental organizations, governments, scientists, non-governmental organizations and the media to build support for high seas biodiversity conservation;

International Recognition of the Concept of High Seas Marine Protected Areas: Identification and use of opportunities to highlight the need for concerted action within the UN system, other international fora and the international community as a whole;

Designation of First High Seas Marine Protected Areas (HSMPAs): the establishment of one or more HSMPAs as “test cases,” to build experience with the practicalities of design, implementation and enforcement should be given urgent attention.

To support the activities identified above, the experts suggested the development of the following tools and supporting research:

Information, Networking and Awareness:

To facilitate information exchange and access, the experts recommended the establishment of an interactive website devoted to collecting and making available the most up to date scientific, management, policy and legal information. Other elements include focused research, policy analyses, broad-based consultations and engagement with key industry sectors.

Legal Support

To facilitate the establishment of HSMPAs, the experts recommended a process that would include: review and policy analysis of relevant existing legal frameworks for high seas conservation and governance; recommendations to harmonize and coordinate existing international, regional and national laws and policies; identification of legal gaps and the necessary action to be taken to fill those gaps; identification of options for an overall legal framework for HSMPAs including the use of existing legal instruments and the development, where necessary of new regimes; and focused international consideration for options for seamount protection.

Technical and Scientific Support

To support development of a technical basis for identification, selection and management of HSMPAs, the experts recommended that activities be undertaken to: urgently establish baseline studies of marine biodiversity in representative deep-sea ecosystems; draft assessment methods and criteria for determining the suitability of potential sites for designation as HSMPAs; develop draft guidelines for establishing HSMPAs; and develop a GIS database on potentially important biodiversity/productivity areas.

Public relations / promotion

To enhance support for international co-operation to protect and sustainably use high seas biodiversity, the experts recommended programs for education, training and capacity building at the regional and national level, including assistance with the identification of potential areas that could be candidates for High Seas MPAs and development of policies to promote the use of MPAs in the context of ecosystem-based management.

Examples of other aims or objectives for HSMPAs discussed

In addition to the overall objective of conservation and sustainable use of high sea biodiversity and productivity through marine protected areas, the experts noted that marine protected areas could have other values, including protecting important long-term scientific study sites and protecting historic and archaeological sites pursuant to UNESCO Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention.

Areas for immediate urgent action while developing global network

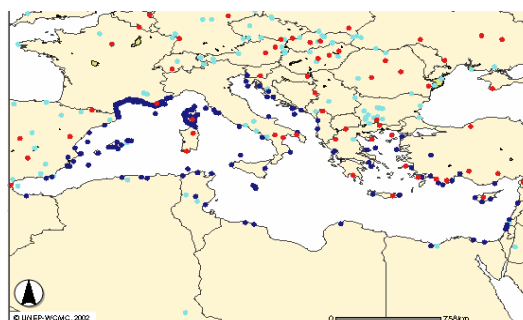
In light of the emerging and increasing threats to the high seas, the experts urged immediate action to manage and conserve vulnerable ecosystems as requested by the UN General Assembly in its 12 December 2002 Resolution on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, and to improve implementation of the legal framework for oceans governance.

ANNEX V.

Table 3. Presence of Networks in Mediterranean Countries

Presence of Networks in Mediterranean Countries	Biosphere Reserves	MedWet	Natura 2000	Emerald Network	Pan-Europ. Ecological Network	RAC/SPA	Europarc	WWF
European Union Countries								
France								
Greece								
Italy								
Portugal								
Spain								
Eastern European Countries								
Albania								
Bosnia-Herzegovina								
Croatia								
Cyprus								
FYR of Macedonia								
Malta								
Mónaco								
Serbia & Montenegro								
Slovenia								
Turkey								
Middle East/North African Countries								
Algeria								
Egypt								
Israel								
Jordan								
Lebanon								
Lybia								
Morocco								
Palestine Territories								
Syria								
Tunisia								

- Legend**
- WWF Forest Hotspots
 - Barcelona Convention: SPAs
 - UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserves
 - Country Boundaries (1:25m)
 - Ramsar Sites (polygons)
 - Land Area



WWF Forest Hotspots, SPAs, BR, Ramsar Sites in the Mediterranean Region.
Source: WCMC 2003