

On the basis of the lessons learned from the implementation of the [project's second phase](#) , and upon consultation with the project Steering Committee at its third meeting (December 16, 2011. Tunis, Tunisia), the next phase aims to contributing to build a framework with the countries and competent organizations to facilitate the joint establishment of SPAMIs in open seas, including the deep seas.

Several of the follow up activities agreed with the project Steering Committee are included in this proposal, having regard that: a) not all the actions envisaged for a third phase regarding open seas conservation might be financed through the available funds under this Project; b) several non EU countries have shown their willingness for transboundary cooperation for the creation of SPAMIs jointly with their European Union neighbours, notably in the areas of the Alboran Sea, Adriatic Sea and Strait of Sicily.

These activities will contribute to the implementation of [Aichi target 11](#) on Marine Protected Areas, UNEP/MAP [SA](#)
[P/BIO](#)
regional priorities and EU biodiversity strategy, Natura 2000 and other EU legal instruments as appropriate, through the improvement of the representativeness of the Mediterranean network of Marine Protected Areas (which currently consists mainly of coastal MPAs).

The project further contributes to building a framework between the Mediterranean countries and key competent organizations in the region to facilitate the joint establishment of SPAMIs in open seas, including the deep seas, through:

- National and sub-regional consultation processes for those countries showing interest, both on-going (Alboran Sea) and starting (Adriatic Sea, Strait of Sicily), in order to support the preparation of joint SPAMI proposal in areas embracing open seas and engaging countries neighbouring the EU in the process;

The countries surrounding the target areas that are already involved in the coordination processes have illustrated their involvement and favourable will for those areas conservation. The countries adjacent to the two new areas, the Adriatic Sea and Strait of Sicily, have already indicated to the RAC/SPA their commitment to the consultation process and the ultimate conservation goal.

Consultation processes will be set up through the organization of sub-regional meetings. If need be, depending on the national context, national meetings will be supported to inform the different departments and Ministries concerned, with the purpose of facilitating their participation to the sub-regional consultation meetings.

Based on Decision IG.20/7, Parties are strongly encouraged to submit preliminary declarations for the three focus areas for open sea SPAMI proposals. This is likely to assist in the preparation of joint proposals.

- Identification of good practices for elaborating, adopting and implementing management plans in the case of those joint SPAMIs in the open seas;

A best practise guidebook including case studies will be compiled addressing the management of trans-boundary areas, straddling marine resources and large marine protected areas in the open ocean. Particular attention will be given to the institutional aspects related to the elaboration and implementation of management plans in those areas where Parties have demonstrated their willingness to participate in the establishment of joint SPAMIs. This guidebook will support the Contracting Parties in reflecting on existing structures and governance bodies for trans-boundary managed areas, and on their role related to the elaboration, adoption and implementation of the management plan in question.

- Development of a joint strategy with ACCOBAMS, IUCN and GFCM in coordination with MedPAN, on how to address the issues of common interest in the Alboran Sea, Adriatic Sea and Strait of Sicily, including promotion and fundraising for oceanographic surveys in those areas

The short and medium term programmes and activities of the above institutions will be jointly analysed and discussed in order to search for synergies regarding the conservation of pelagic and deep seas ecosystems in the three target areas. In addition, a position paper is foreseen, containing a comprehensive breakdown of each organization's position on the topics being discussed. Proposals for common resolutions on the issues related to the establishment and management of joint SPAMIs in open seas will be jointly elaborated by the involved organizations (MedPAN, ACCOBAMS, IUCN, GFCM and MAP) and will be sent to respective Focal Points with the purpose of promoting synergy at the national levels between the

concerned Ministries. Oceanographic surveys will be jointly promoted and fundraising pursued.

[To obtain the technical reports published in the framework of the project .](#)