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Southern Adriatic Ionian Straight Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (SAIS-EBSA) Governance Transference Workshop

24th November 2023, Piran, Slovenia

BACKGROUND

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has set new global targets to effectively conserve and manage 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas by 2030. In the marine environment, the contracting parties to the CBD's Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) must balance concerns for biodiversity and climate strategies with the acceleration of the blue economy, address anthropogenic pressures, such as energy production, and ensure equitable access to marine resources. Understanding which spaces within our oceans are critical for the persistence of biodiversity and the services they provide is a key first step. A long-standing effort to identify such places began in 2008 when the CBD (Rio, 1992) adopted a series of scientific criteria to identify ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) in coastal, offshore, and deep-sea waters. Each EBSA, as per the CBD definition, is globally recognised as 'a special area that serves important purposes [...] to support healthy functioning of the oceans and many services that it provides' (<https://www.cbd.int/ebsa/about>). At the twelfth CBD Conference of the Parties (2014) a decision was adopted on the identification of several EBSAs, selected from around the World, and the creation of the EBSAs Repository. To date, more than 300 EBSAs have now been identified worldwide.

While the EBSAs were not originally conceived to be a means to develop transboundary MSPs there has been increasing recognition of their value as a tool for the implementation of ecosystem-based management. Balancing the growing demands on the marine environment with the 2030 conservation goals provides an opportunity to operationalise the value of EBSAs within MSP frameworks, especially in regions where EBSAs overlap with different country jurisdictions, such as the Mediterranean Sea. In 2014, a regional CBD workshop coordinated in cooperation with UNEP/MAP and the IUCN, identified 17 potential EBSAs within the Mediterranean Sea, 15 of which were approved at the twelfth CBD COP (2014). The Southern Adriatic Ionian Straight (SAIS-EBSA) provided a pilot study to identify policies within the existing governance frameworks that support the planning and co-management of the cross-boundary of the area. We conducted a biodiversity threat analysis, a legal and governance review, and a preliminary spatial prioritization activity to identify areas of importance for cost-effective biodiversity representation for the SAIS-EBSA.

OBJECTIVE

After four years of collaboration, it is important that the momentum created by the SAIS-EBSA process is maintained and amplified through a systematic and replicable process. The aim of this workshop is to build upon the lessons learned in this process and assist decision makers to move to a stable transboundary MSP framework which prioritises conservation, in the Mediterranean EBSAs.



SAIS-EBSA Governance Transference Workshop



National Institute of Biology, Marine Biology Station, Fornače 41, Piran

AGENDA

Time	Topic	Speaker
08:30 – 09:00 Registration		
09:00 – 09:20	Welcome and setting the scene: the new Global Biodiversity Framework and ocean's conservation	Carla Danelutti (IUCN)
09:20 – 09:40	Implications of the GBF for the Mediterranean and the role of EBSAs	Khalil Attia (UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC)
09:40 – 10:00	Keynote: Understanding the needs for establishing successful area-based management tools in the EBSAs: the role of Marxan software	Jennifer McGowan (University of Queensland) Carlo Rondinini (To be confirmed)
10:00 – 10:30	Case study: the experience of the SAIS-EBSA. Lessons learned and next steps	Peter Mackelworth (MI)
10:30 – 11:00	Case study: the experience of the Strait of Sicily (SOS). Lessons learned and next steps	Marco Costantini (WWF-IT)
11:00 – 11:20	Coffee break	
11:20 – 11:50	Case study: EBSAs of the West Mediterranean (Pelagos, SPAMI, PSSA, Balearic cetacean corridor)	Caterina Fortuna (ISPRA)
11:50 – 12:20	Case study: the case of Alboran Sea. Room for a new Mediterranean EBSA?	Prof. Javier Cabello (To be confirmed)
12:20 – 13:30	Roundtable: recommendations for good governance of EBSAs in the Mediterranean	Facilitator: Dania Abdul-Malak (ETC-UMA)
13:30 – 13:45	Conclusions	
14:00 Close		