

**First meeting of technical experts on the Application of the Ecosystem Approach by MAP
Rome, Italy, 8-9 April 2010**

Meeting Conclusions

The First Meeting of Technical Experts on the Ecosystem Approach (ECAP), held on 8-9 April 2010 at ISPRA premises in Rome, Italy, reaffirmed the wish to engage in a process to apply the ecosystems approach within the BC/MAP which is owned and driven by the contracting parties.

After consideration of all agenda items, the meeting agreed on a number of necessary actions, with a view to completing step 3 of the ECAP Roadmap¹ agreed in Almeria by the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties, January 2008 and beginning the process of implementing step 4, as follows:

Assessment Process (April-July 2010)

1. With the view to finalizing the assessment by July 2010:
 - a) MEDPOL and SPA/RAC to:
 - immediately use all available and appropriate sources of information at national and regional levels
 - contact, only when it is indispensable for the purpose of the assessment, the concerned countries by 20 April 2010 at the latest, through their focal points and in cooperation with the Coordinating Unit,
 - distribute a comprehensive list of the needed data, as well as the final reports prepared by the regional and national consultants
 - copy to the respective country representatives participating in the present meeting all correspondence on this subject.
 - b) Concerned countries should be requested to provide data or appropriate sources of information by end of April 2010.
2. The meeting requested all the components of MAP to provide all information available regarding their respective fields of competence, in accordance with the Table of Contents of

¹ The ECAP Roadmap adopted by Decision IG 19/6 of the 15th Contracting parties meeting, 2008, is made of 7 steps.

Step 1. Definition of an ecological vision (Already agreed in 2008 by the Contracting Parties)

Step 2. Setting of common Mediterranean strategic goals (Already agreed in 2008 by the Contracting Parties)

Step 3. Identification of important ecosystem properties and assessment of ecological status and pressures

Step 4. Development of a set of ecological objectives corresponding to the vision and strategic goals

Step 5. Development of operational objectives with indicators and target levels

Step 6. Revision of monitoring programmes for ongoing assessment and regular updating of targets

Step 7. Development and review of relevant action plans and programmes

the assessment, in particular on pressures and information arising from the high seas SPAMI project currently being implemented by SPA/RAC.

3. The first initial assessment will be based on the approved Table of Contents for the synthesis assessment document, highlighting common features among the four sub-regions and in particular interactions between status, pressures and impacts. Given the different ecological nature and condition of the four sub-regions, the assessments for each of them will be presented individually. Additionally, the assessment should consider providing information on trends wherever it is available at the regional scale, including information flowing out of impact assessments. As such, the July assessment document will present a general overview of the current environmental condition of the Mediterranean, and additional trend information where available.
4. The analysis of ecosystem services should go beyond economics and include social factors as well as elements of cost of environmental degradation and of action/inaction, building on the current analysis results and taking into account the work carried out by other organizations in this field, like the TEEB project and the Payment for Ecosystem services (PES) approach.
5. The meeting mandated the MAP Secretariat to approach regional organizations with the aim of obtaining all relevant information, optimizing synergies and avoiding duplication and overlaps for the purpose of the assessment, as well as coordinating monitoring and assessing tools and methods.
6. The assessment report will include preliminary GIS displays of key features of the Mediterranean ecosystems, major classes of threats, to the extent possible, major impacts as well as ecosystem values for the 4 sub-regions.
7. The Coordinating Unit will organize in July 2010 the Second Technical Experts Meeting that should set the working plan on the activities and necessary arrangements until the next Contracting Parties Meeting in November 2011 with regard to the implementation of Decision IG.17/6 on the ECAP. The agenda of the meeting should also include the following items:
 - a) Reviewing the assessment report for the four sub-regional areas and commonalities for the whole Mediterranean as well as GIS display of key features.
 - b) Developing a timetable for implementing the ECAP roadmap steps 4-7, for the consideration of the Government Designated Expert (GDE) meeting not later than in spring 2011.
 - c) Facilitating, on the basis of the findings of the assessment report, an exchange of views on,
 - *possible methodologies for defining ecological objectives,*
 - *ways and means to enhancing monitoring programs,*
 - *effectiveness evaluation*
 - *transnational and sub-regional cooperation.*

Next Steps Beyond Initial Assessment (July 2010-November 2011)

1. MAP will further work to amend as appropriate and complete the assessment report on the basis of feedback provided from the July meeting, as well as from other sources such as information provided to other regional bodies, secretariats of other international conventions, EU, EEA, etc.

2. The meeting agreed that GIS should be utilized to prioritize key areas and key threats, as well as areas with the highest ecosystem service values, in order to provide the foundation for setting ecological objectives.
3. The meeting also agreed that the ecological objectives should be developed through an agreed methodology.
4. The Coordinating Unit will also hold a Government Designated Experts meeting in at the latest March -April 2011 that should consider and transmit to the MAP Focal Points Meeting in September 2011 and the Contracting Parties Meeting in November 2011 for their consideration draft decisions on:
 - the final version of the assessment
 - the timetable for implementing the ECAP roadmap;
 - the ecological objectives for the Mediterranean including proposed operational objectives and as appropriate, indicators and target levels;
5. Following the July meeting outcome, the Coordinating Unit will consider holding other meeting/s at least one in Autumn 2010, subject to available funding, in order to consult with the countries and advance on the application of ECAP in the Mediterranean through a common owned vision, objectives and programmatic approach..
6. In addition, the meeting requested the Secretariat to develop, a MAP policy on information sharing as well as, to mobilize additional resources for the implementation of the ECAP roadmap.