Concept Note - Webinar

Towards COP1: Mediterranean Perspectives on BBNJ Implementation

Date: 3 November
Format: Online Event (Webinar)
Duration: 14h00-16h00 CET
Organizer: Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat (UfMS)

Context and Rationale

The BBNJ Agreement

- The Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) was adopted on 19 June 2023 by the Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction convened under the auspices of the United Nations and entered into force on 17 January 2026.

- Under the overall objective of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, the Agreement addresses specific issues and provides targeted operational tools as follows:
  (quoted from the agreement)
  - ✓ Marine genetic resources, including the fair and equitable sharing of benefits;
  - ✓ Measures such as area-based management tools, including Marine Protected Areas;
  - ✓ Environmental impact assessments; and
  - ✓ Capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology.

  The Agreement also addresses several cross-cutting issues, establishes a funding mechanism, and sets up institutional arrangements, including a Conference of the Parties and various subsidiary bodies, a Clearing-House Mechanism and a Secretariat.
  In January 2027, governments will gather for the Agreement's first Conference of the Parties (COP1) in New York.

The BBNJ Agreement and the Mediterranean

- Hotspot of the triple planetary crisis, the Mediterranean region currently stands at a cross-roads, facing a number of complex and interconnected environmental and socio-economic challenges, including climate change acceleration, increasing biodiversity loss, systemic pollution, and asymmetric economic development and integration. Only 0.07% of the Mediterranean Sea is currently under strict protection despite the regional target of protecting 30% of marine waters by 2030. The MPA Mediterranean Network represents around 9% of Mediterranean waters.
- The Med represents less than 1% of the global ocean while hosting up to 18% of known marine species, around 30% of global maritime traffic, and about 30% of global international tourism.
- Common and shared challenges require shared commitment and solutions. Various instruments are already at disposal to support countries to ratify and kick off the

implementation of the Treaty, including the EU supported Global Ocean Programme (link: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/da/ip_25_2151; https://engage.iucn.org/dashboard/eu-global-ocean-programme

Objective

Gather Mediterranean perspectives on the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, each from its own angle, with a view to fostering a shared understanding and promoting coherent regional approach

Agenda

Moderated by Alessandra Sensi, Head of Sector Environment, Green and Sustainable Blue Economy, Union for the Mediterranean

14:00 – 14:15 | Welcome and Opening
UfM EU and Jordan Co-Presidency - Marjana Mance, Deputy Head of Unit, DG MARE and Dr Nedal Al Ouran, Environment Commissioner, Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
UfM Secretariat – Dr Nisreen Tamimi, Deputy Secretary-General, Union for the Mediterranean

14:15 – 14:40 | Setting the Scene
DOALOS – Charlotte Salpin, Senior Legal Officer
IMO – Fredrik Haag, Director
GEF – Ines Benabdallah, Environmental Specialist
IUCN – Aurelie Spadone, Senior Programme Manager

14:40 – 15:00 | Mediterranean Country Perspectives
Morocco – Nabil Anwari, Head of Multilateral Cooperation service, Secretariat of State for Maritime Fisheries
Montenegro – Ana Kusovac, Senior Expert, Ministry of Maritime Affairs; Djurdina Bulatovic, Senior Expert, Ministry of Ecology
Spain - Virginia Estévez Adán, Head of Area, Directorate-General for International Relations, Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge

15:00 – 15:35 | Mediterranean Organisations' Perspectives
GFCM – Guillaume Carruel, Policy Officer Fisheries and Environment
UNEPMAP – Tatiana Hema, Coordinator; Marc Attallah, Associate Programme Management Officer
MEDPAN – Carole Martinez, Senior Policy Manager
WWF – Camille Loth, Senior Policy Advisor on Ocean Governance
Federazione del Mare – Laurence Martin, Secretary-General
Algerian Blue Innovation Cluster – Nesrine Ziad, Programs Director

15:35 – 15:50 | Questions and comments (raised through the chat)

15:50– 16:00 | Closing and looking ahead to COP1