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Programme cofinanced by the European Regional Development Fund

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

Second version (V2), based on the V3 PO

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<u>Parcourir L'Europe</u> Sandra Ungemach-Bensaid, Jeanne Geoffroy, Charlotte Guérin Guillaud, Daniel Poulenard

> 9 rue de la Laque 31300 Toulouse / France www.reseau-parcourir.eu







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#### 1. Introduction

The Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain programmes on the environment requires certain programmes, which are likely to have significant effects on the environment, to be subject to an environmental assessment. This assessment specifically enables environmental considerations to be integrated in the preparation and adoption of these programmes. It also contributes to sustainable development.

Since 2006 and the reform of European Structural Funds, all public programmes adopted after 2006, require an environmental assessment, while they are being shaped and before their adoption. The programmes co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) are concerned by this directive.

This assessment will include:

- Realisation of a report on the environmental effects (describing potential significant effects on the environment as well as reasonable corrective measures).

- Realisation of a consultation with the authorities in charge of environmental issues on the area concerned by the programme.

- Realisation of a public consultation in the area concerned by the programme.

The environmental report, the opinions expressed by the relevant authorities and the public must be taken into account before the programme is adopted. When a programme is adopted, all concerned parties which have been consulted are informed and can consult any relevant documents. A monitoring on the significant effects on the environment will be implemented to determine as soon as possible negative and unexpected effects.

The environmental report for the 2014-2020 programme will contain the following information:

- The contents of the programme and its main objectives and links to other relevant plans and programmes;
- The existing environmental situation and its likely development if the plan or programme is not implemented;
- The environmental characteristics of any area likely to be significantly affected by the plan or programme;

- Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, specifically those relating to zones in the Natura 2000 network;

- The national, Community or international environmental protection objectives which are relevant to the plan or programme in question;

- The likely significant environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects on the environment;
- An outline of the reasons for selecting other alternatives (final version of the report);
- A description of how the assessment was carried out (final version of the report);
- The envisaged monitoring measures (final version of the report);
- A non-technical summary of this information.



#### 2. Regulatory framework and environmental objective

### **Outline of the programme**

The MED programme is one of the instruments for the implementation of the EU **cohesion policy**. With this policy, and the "Europe 2020" strategy, EU pursues harmonious development across the Union by strengthening its economic, social and territorial cohesion to stimulate growth in EU regions and participating countries, with a special focus on:

- Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy.
- Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

The MED programme is directly linked to different regulations, directives or conventions aiming to support the 2020 strategy objectives:

- Territorial Agenda for the European Union (May 2011)
- Framework programme for research and innovation «Horizon 2020» (2014-2020) (COM(2011) 809),

- Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (2014–2020) (COM (2011) 834),

- Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 (COM(2011) 572),
- Programme for the environment and climate action 2014-2020 (Programme Life) (PE-COS 70/13, 16103/13 ADD1)
- Innovation for a sustainable Future The Eco-innovation Action Plan (PAEI) (Eco-AP) (COM(2011) 899),
- Blue growth: opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth maritime (COM(2012) 494).

Among the 11 thematic objectives described in the Common Regulation<sup>1</sup>, the regulation on European territorial cooperation<sup>2</sup> and the common strategic framework<sup>3</sup>, the MED programme chose to focus on the following investment priorities and specific objectives:

- TO 1 – IP 1b – "Strengthening research, technological development and innovation by promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies»

## Specific objective: To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors of the MED area

- TO 4 – IP 4c – "Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors by supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector"

#### Specific objective: To raise capacity for better management of energy in public buildings at transnational level

- TO 4 – IP 4e – "Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors by promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures"

Specific objective 1: To increase the share of renewable local energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans in MED territories

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Article 9 of Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Regulation ETC , considering(6), article 2(2)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Common strategic framework, Annex II – Priorities for the cooperation



Specific objective 2: To increase capacity to use existing low carbon transport systems and multimodal connections among them

- TO 6 – IP 6c - "Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency by conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage"

Specific objective: To enhance sustainable development policies for more efficient valorisation of natural resources and cultural heritage in coastal and adjacent maritime areas

- TO 6 – IP 6d- "Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency by protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure"

Specific objective: **To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas** 

- TO 11 – IP 1 "Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by developing and coordinating macro-regional and sea-basin strategies"

Specific objective: **To support the process of developing multilateral coordination frameworks and strengthening the existing ones in the Mediterranean for joint responses to common challenges** 



### **Regulatory framework and environmental objectives**

These investment priorities are linked with the European objectives regarding environment protection.

In the Mediterranean area, the <u>Mediterranean Action Plan</u> is the main legal document aiming to protect marine and coastal environment. In 1975, 16 Mediterranean countries, from southern and northern shores, and the European Community adopted this plan. In 1976 these Parties adopted the <u>Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against</u> <u>Pollution (Barcelona Convention)</u>. Seven Protocols addressing specific aspects of Mediterranean environmental conservation complete the MAP legal framework. It has been replaced by the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention, 1995); the amendments came into force in 2004.

The Barcelona Convention' main objectives are "to prevent, abate, combat and to the fullest extent possible eliminate pollution of the Mediterranean Sea Area" and "to protect and enhance the marine environment in that Area so as to contribute towards its sustainable development." Under the Barcelona Convention, protection of the marine environment is pursued "as an integral part of the development process, meeting the needs of present and future generations in an equitable manner."

In applying the Barcelona Convention, the Contracting Parties are bound by the precautionary principle, the polluter-pays principle, the commitment to undertake environmental impact assessment of activities likely to cause significant adverse impact on the marine environment, the obligation to promote cooperation amongst states in environmental impact assessment procedures related to activities with transboundary effects, and the commitment to promote integrated management of the coastal zone. Today all 21 countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the European Union, are Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. The latter now has a total of seven associated Protocols:

- The Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft or Incineration at Sea (Dumping Protocol, adopted 1976, in force in 1978, amended in 1995),
- The Protocol concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances in Cases of Emergency (Emergency Protocol, adopted in 1976, in force in 1978), replaced by the Protocol concerning Cooperation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in Cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (Prevention and Emergency Protocol, adopted in 2002, in force in 2004),
- The Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol, adopted in 1980, in force in 1983; amended in 1996, in force in 2008),
- The Protocol Concerning Mediterranean Specially Protected Areas (SPA Protocol, adopted in 1982, in force in 1986) replaced by The Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA & Biodiversity Protocol, adopted in 1995, in force in 1999),
- Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution Resulting from Exploration and Exploitation of the Continental Shelf and the Seabed and its Subsoil (Offshore Protocol, adopted in 1994, in force in 2011),
- Protocol on the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Hazardous Wastes Protocol, adopted in 1996, in force in 2008),
- Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM Protocol, adopted in 2008, in force in 2011)

In 2009, during the16th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Marrakesh, 2009), the Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre has been dedicated to "contribute to raising awareness of Mediterranean stakeholders and decision makers concerning environment and sustainable development issues in the region, by providing future scenarios to assist in decision-making. In this respect and through its dual functions as an observatory of the environment and sustainable development and a centre for systemic and prospective analysis, the PB/RAC's mission is to provide the Contracting Parties with assessments of the state of the environment and development of the Mediterranean and a solid basis of environmental and sustainable development data, statistics, and indicators to support their action and decision making process."



### SEA report – V2

The Barcelona Convention is completed by the **Blue Growth strategy**<sup>4</sup>, which is the long term strategy to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole. It recognises that seas and oceans are drivers for the European economy with great potential for innovation and growth. It is the Integrated Maritime Policy's contribution to achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The 'blue' economy represents 5.4 million jobs and a gross added value of just under €500 billion a year.<sup>5</sup> However, further growth is possible in a number of fields which are highlighted within the strategy.

The strategy consists of three components:

- 1. Specific integrated maritime policy measures
- Marine knowledge to improve access to information about the sea;
- Maritime spatial planning to ensure an efficient and sustainable management of activities at sea;
- Integrated maritime surveillance to give authorities a better picture of what is happening at sea.

# 2. Sea basin strategies to ensure the most appropriate mix of measures to promote sustainable growth that take into account local climatic, oceanographic, economic, cultural and social factors

- Adriatic and Ionian Seas
- Arctic Ocean
- Atlantic Ocean
- Baltic Sea
- Black Sea
- Mediterranean Sea
- North Sea

#### 3. Targeted approach towards specific activities

- Aquaculture
- Coastal tourism
- Marine biotechnology
- Ocean energy
- Seabed mining

The Mediterranean dimension of the integrated maritime policy<sup>6</sup> focuses on improved cooperation and governance whilst fostering sustainable growth in the region. It is currently facilitated by the following measures and tools:

- The **Marine Strategy Framework Directive** (directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008) which establishes a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy and is the environmental pillar for the European marine integrated policy. This legal framework shall reinforce the coherence between different policies and foster integration of environmental concerns in other policies, such as the Common Fisheries Policy.

- A **Working Group for the Integrated Maritime Policy in the Mediterranean** (Maritime Forum) to develop common approaches on maritime policy-making in the Mediterranean.

- Initiatives to inform on maritime affairs, European funding and benefits from an integrated policy, in the framework of the "SOUTH" programme of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

- A **Project of a three-party cooperation**, in association with the European Investment Bank and the International Maritime Organisation.

-The definition of a maritime strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian sea basin in cooperation with the concerned coastal States.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Communication from the Commission: Blue Growth opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth (13.09.2012)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/blue\_growth/index\_fr.htm

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For a better governance of the Mediterranean with an integrated maritime policy, Communication of the Commission. 11.11.2009



More generally, the EU establishes a legal framework for the main environmental issues. The following table highlights the main regulations of these issues.

Environmental issues relevant for the Programme	European environmental objectives and legal framework
Coastal and marine ecosystems	Solving environmental problems of Europe's coasts and seas requires a policy response that operates across policy domains related to water, nature, pollution, fisheries, climate change and spatial planning. Historically these have been considered separate policy domains, but with the adoption of <b>the Marine Strategy</b> <b>Framework Directive (MSFD)</b> in 2008, an integrated response is being pursued; the management approach considers the entire ecosystem and sets the objective of achieving good environmental status for many specific environmental aspects. The MSFD is supported by the <b>Water Framework Directive</b> (WFD) which regulates ecological status in coastal and transitional waters by considering nutrient, chemical and hydromorphological pressure and by the Habitats and Birds directives that set conservation objectives for some marine and coastal habitats and species. Growth of the maritime, agriculture and tourism sectors is expected to continue; an important future objective for the MSFD will be to ensure that this growth is environmentally sustainable, via management strategies. Such strategies can be supported through the implementation of planning principles in line with Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP).
Air quality	This legislation has established health-based standards and objectives for a number of air pollutants and includes: <b>The Air Quality Framework Directive (96/62/EC).</b> This describes the basic principles concerning the assessment and management of air quality in the Member States. The Directive also lists the pollutants for which air quality standards and objectives have been developed and specified in subsequent legislation The (Evchance of Information' Decision, which establishes a regimered evchance of information and data from networks and individual stations measuring

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**er Air for Europe** is one of the key measures in imits on ambient concentrations of PM2.5 (fine overnments had been given two years (as from

agriculture) are contributing to soil protection.