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Mediterranean Action Plan
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I. PREAMBLE

In anticipation of the Tenth Meeting of Focal Points (FPs) for Specially Protected Areas (SPAs), to be held from 17 to 20 May 2011 in Marseilles, France, the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) invited the Focal Points for SPAs to provide a report, for each respective country, on the application of the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol). The period covered by the reports runs from January 2008 to December 2009, but several Parties mentioned the project later than this period. The form is that which was adopted at the Fifteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Decision IG 17/3) and includes the following parts:

- 1. Legal measures
- 2. Specially Protected Areas (SPAs)
- 3. Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs)
- 4. Measures to protect and conserve species
- 5. Conservation of the constituent elements of marine and coastal biodiversity
- 6. Coercive measures
- 7. Efficacy

Questions about implementing seven action plans also appear. These include:

- 1. Action Plan on cartilaginous fishes in the Mediterranean Sea
- 2. Action Plan on introductions of species and invasive species in the Mediterranean Sea
- 3. Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans in the Mediterranean Sea
- 4. Action Plan for the conservation of marine vegetation in the Mediterranean Sea
- 5. Action Plan for the conservation of species of birds listed in Annex II to the SPA/BD Protocol
- 6. Action Plan for the management of the Mediterranean monk seal
- 7. Action Plan for the conservation of the Mediterranean marine turtles

As in the previous biennium, difficulties were met when preparing this report (problems of connection, communication, modification and postponement of the date when the forms were to be handed in, political problems encountered by some Parties) which resulted in the late submission of forms, incomplete forms (e.g. papers that had been mentioned in the form were not appended, missing question, tables not filled in) or even differences in form in the forms used (e.g. use of different efficacy indicators). The present summary was thus made on the basis of fifteen national reports, but in order to take the absence of an answer to some questions into account, for each one the sum total of answers is stated. Since one Party did not answer any of the questions on implementing the Action Plans, the summary was made on a maximum fourteen answers.

For all the Parties that transferred the computerized form online (i.e. 60% of cases), no information was available on the person/s in charge of the report; only the Ministry concerned by the general report appeared. For others, the reports were usually made in partnership with RAC/SPA's Focal Points, and also with other bodies (other ministries, management bodies, universities, etc.) participating.

As regards the Action Plans, we have to say that despite its having been adopted in 2008, the Action Plan on the conservation of the coralligenous and other Mediterranean bioconstructions was not included in the present form.

Finally, it is to be regretted that no computerized analysis system was envisaged, on the basis of the answers provided by the Parties, to provide a comprehensive view of the situation. The summary of the data was thus a long process and the risk of error was always there.

II. LEGAL MEASURES

'Legal measures' tries to identify how the Parties have implemented the provisions of the SPA/BD Protocol. The answers usually refer to an arsenal of existing (sometimes very old) regulatory texts, and only two Parties out of 15 restricted themselves to the period 2007-2009. One of the Parties stated that it intended to ratify the SPA/BD Protocol in 2011.

Designation of terrestrial coastal areas (including wetlands) that come under the Party's jurisdiction and are included in the area to which the SPA/BDS Protocol applies)

Eleven Contracting Parties out of 13 have designated these areas, and the two Parties that have not yet done so mainly mention difficulties linked to the political environment and administrative management.

Protection and management of endangered or threatened species

Twelve Parties out of fourteen mentioned regulatory protection measures for endangered or threatened species, but one stated that marine species are not concerned. Another of these Parties mentioned the adopting of a Decree to maintain protected animal species and their habitats and a forthcoming updating of the list of protected species, and another stated that no specific bill exists but that the Annex II species in his territory are taken into account since they are included in the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). One of the Parties indicated that a bill is being prepared and should shortly be available, particularly targeting sponges, and marine turtles and mammals. Lastly, the Parties that answered in the negative speak of difficulties linked to the political environment and administrative management.

Protection, conservation and sustainable management of areas of particular natural or cultural value, especially through the creation of SPAs

Nine Parties out of thirteen indicated the existence of measures for the protection, conservation and sustainable management of areas, and one of them stated that Protected Areas had been created during the period of the report but were not yet listed within the framework of the Protocol. Two Parties said that procedures are ongoing in this field, with in particular the introduction of a new bill on Protected Areas that was to be promulgated in 2010. Lastly, the two Parties that replied in the negative stated that no new SPA had been designated over the period covered by the report.

Ban on throwing away or discharging waste or other substances likely to harm the integrity of the SPAs

Nine Parties out of twelve indicated that measures exist to ban the throwing away of substances likely to harm the integrity of the SPAs. One Party said that an inter-ministerial committee had been set up that should soon legislate on this point. Lastly, one of the two Parties that replied in the negative stated that this point is now covered by other regulatory measures, and the other Party said that a bill now being prepared anticipates appropriate measures in this field.

Regulating the passage of ships, and of any stop or anchoring in the SPAs' extension area

Ten Parties out of thirteen have regulations that deal with the passage or mooring of ships in SPAs. In 40% of cases, the measures appear specific to the existing SPAs, and one Party called attention to the setting up in one of its SPAs of a mooring area of its own, an area set aside for ships with a tank to hold waste water. Lastly, one of the two Parties that replied in the negative stated that this point is now covered by other regulatory measures.

Regulation or ban on any prospecting activity or activity that involves modifying the configuration of the soil or exploiting the subsoil of the land part, seabed or subsoil in the SPAs

Eight Parties out of twelve have regulatory measures dealing with the prospecting or exploitation of the seabed or subsoil in the SPAs. One Party stated that a bill is being prepared. One Party said that although rules existed they do not specifically concern the SPAs and are sometimes insufficient, confronted by the economic interests in this field. Lastly, one of the two Parties that replied in the negative stated that this point is now covered by other regulatory measures, while the other said that there are general measures that ban activities likely to affect the environment.

Regulating scientific activities in the SPAs

Twelve Parties out of fourteen mentioned rules that regulate scientific research activities within the SPAs, and the procedures for obtaining the corresponding permission. Among these, one Party said that the very general text in force needs to be brought up to date, within the framework of a bill on the creation, protection and management of Protected Areas. Similarly, one of the Parties said that although the obligations are being honoured, in practice they should, in order to be effective, be integrated within a regulatory framework that is specific to the SPAs. Lastly, the Party that replied in the negative stated that this point is now covered by other regulatory measures.

Regulating or banning any activities that involve the capture of species from SPAs

Twelve Parties out of fourteen mentioned rules about activities involving the capture of species from SPAs, and two of them mentioned draft decrees aimed at taking this problem more into consideration. Similarly, one of the Parties stated that although the obligations are being honoured, in practice they should, in order to be effective, be integrated within a regulatory framework that is specific to the SPAs. Lastly, the Party that replied in the negative stated that this point is now covered by other regulatory measures.

Regulating and banning any other activity likely to be harmful to the SPAs

Twelve Parties out of fourteen mentioned rules that ban activities likely to harm the SPAs. Lastly, one of the two Parties that replied in the negative stated that this point is now covered by other regulatory measures.

Managing species, in particular those appearing in Annexes II and III to the Protocol, to ensure that they enjoy a favourable state of conservation

Nine Parties out of fourteen mentioned management measures concerning the species in Annex II and III to the SPA/BD Protocol, and one of the Parties said that steps were at draft stage. Of the four Parties that replied in the negative, one mentioned that a National Action Plan for the Monk Seal and Posidonia had been set up, and another said that the species in the Annexes are being protected within the SPA framework.

During the procedures that precede decision-making about projects and activities that can have an impact seriously affecting protected areas and species and their habitats, taking into account the possible direct or indirect, immediate or long-term, impact, including the cumulative impact, of the projects and activities under consideration

Eleven Parties out of fourteen gave a positive answer and stressed the existence of impact study procedures before the execution of projects that are likely to affect the environment. The Parties that are members of the European Community stated that Directives in the matter are being implemented, and in particular the transcription of measures related to environmental responsibility and impact assessment. One of the Parties said that its environment code is being modified to make this procedure compulsory.

Only 27% of the Parties mentioned difficulties and challenges encountered in the regulatory application of the Protocol. It is the regulatory framework and administrative management that represent the major difficulties (over 40%), as well as the political environment (30%). During the period covered by the report, nine countries had passed one or several regulatory texts enabling better enforcement of the SPA/BD Protocol.

III. SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS

The aim of this part was to take stock of the actions being carried out to help set up, and manage better, the SPAs.

Creation of PAs within the Protocol's geographic field of application

Eleven Contracting Parties out of fifteen answered positively and showed that SPAs exist on their territory, but without taking into account the period covered by the report. On the other hand, the two Parties that answered in the negative said that this corresponded to the period covered by the report. Two Parties also mentioned ongoing procedures to set up six new SPAs.

Crafting and applying a Management Plan for each PA

Six Parties out of fourteen mentioned the crafting or applying of Management Plans. Several Parties said that even if their SPAs did not yet all have a Management Plan, steps were being taken. Lastly, two Parties answered in the negative and referred to financial, administrative and technical difficulties.

Programmes for the observing and scientific monitoring of changes in ecosystems and the impact of human activities

Eight Parties out of fifteen mentioned programmes of observation and monitoring and five Parties said steps are being taken.

Measures to help the local authorities participate in managing the PAs

Ten Parties out of fifteen answered positively and one of the Parties mentioned that steps are being taken. One of the Parties said that the question was not appropriate, as well as one of the two Parties that answered in the negative because his SPAs have no management plan.

Granting assistance to residents who could be affected by the creation of PAs

Eight Parties out of fourteen answered positively and some talked about the possibility of compensation, but one of them stated that this procedure was only exceptionally implemented and that it is very difficult to apply it out at sea. Three of the Parties anticipated introducing measures in this field, particularly by giving priority to local people when employing staff in the SPAs.

Mechanisms for funding the promotion or management of PAs or paid activities that are compatible with protection measures

Nine Parties out of fourteen mentioned funding mechanisms for the management of Protected Areas that are rather diverse (e.g. an ecotax on tourist transport, entry fees, temporary concession). Two Parties said that reflection is under way in this field, and two others believed the question was not appropriate.

Appropriate training courses for the managers and trained technical staff of the SPAs

Eight Parties out of twelve mentioned a training course, but one of the Parties said that training is still insufficient for the marine aspects. Two of the Parties talked about a project being prepared in this field, and among the Parties that answered in the negative, one said that although training exists it is not systematically organised.

Integrating national emergency plans and measures to respond to incidents that can cause harm or constitute a threat to the SPAs

Seven Parties out of thirteen answered positively and four Parties said reflection was under way.

Institutional arrangements to permit the overall management of each SPA to cover both its land and sea areas

Twelve Parties out of fifteen mentioned the creation of structures or procedures that enabled both the land and sea aspects to be taken care of. One of the Parties said that at present such arrangements do not yet exist but that a project is under way. Lastly, one of the Parties said that its SPAs are marine and that therefore the question does not apply.

35% of the Parties talked of the difficulties and challenges encountered when setting up or managing SPAs. The major difficulties were financial resources (58%) and administrative management (54%), as well as the regulatory framework (48%).

With regard to the tables on SPAs compiled by the Parties, it appears that one single Party set up four new MPAs during the period covered by the report, that one of the Parties updated a management plan for one of its MPAs, and that one other set up a management plan for one of its SPAs, but we should state that only nine Parties completed the tables, and that often they did not fill them in fully. Lastly, one other Party created new Protected Areas during the period, but did not designate them as within the SPA/BD Protocol.

IV. SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS OF MEDITERRANEAN IMPORTANCE (SPAMIs)

The aim of this part is to take stock of the actions being carried on to create, and better manage, the SPAMIs.

Creating SPAMIs

Five Parties out of fifteen have created SPAMIs, but apart from three of these the creations did not correspond to the period covered by the report. Among the eight Parties that answered in the negative, one already has SPAMIs and two indicate their intention to request that several SPAs be soon included on the SPAMI List (respectively four and one). One of the Parties also said that it is preparing a request for two of its SPAs.

Crafting and implementing a Management Plan for each SPAMI

Five Parties out of fifteen said they had crafted or implemented a Management Plan for their SPAMIs, and one of them said that it was encountering implementation difficulties and that the Management Plan must be updated. One of the Parties stated that steps are being taken, with one Management Plan being finalized and another being crafted. Four Parties said that since they have no SPAMIs, the question is not appropriate.

66% of the Parties said they had met difficulties and challenges in setting up or managing their SPAMIs. The main difficulties seem to be due to the political environment (60%) and the regulatory framework and the administrative management (30%).

With regard to the tables on SPAMIs compiled by the Parties, it seems that three Parties put 8 new SPAMIs on the list during the period covered by the report, but it is regrettable that only one of the Parties deemed it necessary to fill in all the tables.

V. MEASURES TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE SPECIES

The aim of this part is to take stock of conservation and protection measures related to endangered or threatened species.

Listing the endangered or threatened animal and plant species and determining their distribution in the areas subject to the Party's jurisdiction

Eleven Parties out of fifteen mention listing species that are endangered or threatened at national level, or the ongoing updating of existing lists. Several Parties said that this work has been done as regards the territory of their SPAs. Lastly, one of the Parties stressed the fact that this kind of study is financially costly and requires specialists in several fields to establish national lists.

Installing bilateral or multilateral cooperation (including agreements) to protect and reconstitute the populations of migratory species in the Protocol's enforcement area

Six Parties out of fifteen mentioned cooperation programmes, particularly the ACCOBAMS Agreement, or indicated actions taken in the context of the Convention on Migratory Species.

Formulating and adopting measures and plans concerning the ex situ reproduction, particularly in captivity, of protected fauna, and the growing of protected flora

Two Parties out of twelve said they have programmes for the *ex situ* reproduction or reintroduction of wild fauna. This particularly refers to programmes for the reproduction in captivity of *Hippocampus guttulatus*, or the reintroduction of *Caretta caretta*, or the strategy for conservation of *Fulica cristata* or *Acipenser sturio*. One country stated that such activities are under way for some floral species.

Granting dispensations, in pursuance of Article 12 Paragraph 6, concerning bans set for the protection of the species appearing in the Annexes to the Protocol

Four Parties out of eleven mentioned the possibility of dispensations concerning bans set for the protection of the species appearing in the Annexes to the Protocol, without necessarily indicating whether they had had recourse; however, they usually state that these dispensations are given for scientific objectives.

Taking the appropriate steps to regulate the intentional or unintentional introduction of non-native or genetically modified species into the wild

Nine Parties out of fifteen said that have measures regulating the introduction into the wild of non-native or genetically modified species. One of them also stated that a bill on genetically modified species is being studied. Among the three Parties whose answer was in the negative, one said that a bill is being studied to check and regulate the introduction of genetically modified species. Another Party is imposing strict restrictions on the import of living organisms generally, including marine organisms, and said that a bill on genetically modified species is being drafted.

As regards this part, 60% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered when setting up measures to manage and protect the species. The main difficulties seem to be due to the lack of financial resources (61%) and the regulatory framework and technical capacities (44%).

VI. CONSERVATION OF THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY

This part takes stock of the more general aspects of the conservation of the constitutive elements of biodiversity.

Listing the constituent elements of marine and coastal biodiversity

Eight Parties out of fifteen have carried out, or are carrying out, inventorying actions with particular emphasis on marine areas in particular, due to the application of the European Habitats, Fauna, Flora Directive and the extension of the Natura 2000 network out to sea. Five other Parties said that these activities are being prepared. One of the two Parties that answered in the negative for the period of the report stated that an updating was being done for one of its SPAs in 2009 and that actions of the same kind are in train (in 2011) on other sites in its territory.

Formulating a national strategy and an Action Plan to protect the constituent elements of marine and coastal biodiversity

Seven Parties out of fifteen stated that they have national strategies for the conservation of biological diversity. One of the Parties mentioned a bill on the protection, creation and management of SPAs, now being debated, and decrees being prepared for listing several sites. Another talked about the adoption of an Action Plan to protect biological diversity and landscapes and Action Plans now being developed for chondrichthyans and the protection of the red coral. Parties that are members of the European Community also mentioned the implementing of the new European Framework Directive on the strategy for the marine environment. Two countries considered the work done in the SAP BIO context (national report and the related National Action Plans) as major lines to be followed for the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity at national level.

Only 43% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered in setting up measures to conserve the constituent elements of biodiversity. No cause seemed dominant and the Parties mentioned equally (from 30 to 38%) the difficulties related to the political environment, financial resources, administrative management and technical capacities.

VII. COERCIVE MEASURES

In this part the report examines the application of measures regarding non-respect for the arrangements concerning the banning and regulating of all the activities involving the capture of species from SPAs, as provided for in Article 11.3 and Article 11.5.

Arrangements concerning the banning and regulating of activities involving the capture of species from SPAs

Only half the Parties completed the table on arrangements for banning and regulating activities involving the capture of species from SPAs. Among them, six Parties mentioned monitoring measures (regular patrols, on foot or in boats, observations), usually in partnership with coastguards or representatives from bodies likely to be able to punish possible breaches of the regulations. The number of inspections is, however, very variable, with very high figures given by one of the Parties. The same holds good for offences that have been noted and punished. Only one of the Parties gave a comprehensive value of fines, which also appears very high with regard to the number of cases of non-respect.

Arrangements in Article 11.3 and Article 11.5

Only five Contracting Parties provided answers about the arrangements in Article 11.3 and four about the arrangements in Article 11.5, and one of them stated that the questions do not apply.

VIII. EFFICACITY

The part on efficacy was relatively little dealt with by the Parties, since only one-third completed the information requested and often in a very incomplete way, which does not allow us to get a clear view of the situation. But one of the Parties did complete this assessment with the achievement indicators *a priori* validated at the last Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Marrakech, November 2009).

IX. ACTION PLANS ADOPTED WITHIN THE MAP CONTEXT

IX.1. Action Plan on cartilaginous fishes

Has the Party given chondrichthyans a legal status that satisfies the conventions adopted to protect them against degradation and harm due to human activities?

Four Parties out of thirteen said they have given chondrichthyans a legal status that protects them against harm due to human activities. Three Parties said that some species are protected in the context of other conventions or the European regulations and do not enjoy national protection. Lastly, one of the Parties stated that the entire questionnaire on chondrichthyans does not apply at its level, and it only therefore appears among the total number of Parties that answered the questionnaire.

Has the Party established specific programmes in the context of the IPOA-Sharks FAO plan to conserve/manage sharks?

Four Parties out of twelve said they have specific programmes in the context of the FAO's shark conservation plan, and one of them mentioned the European Community's setting up of an Action Plan for sharks in 2009. One of the Parties said that a National Action Plan is under discussion. One of the Parties, as well as the above-mentioned, judged that the question does not apply in that the concerned species are not species that are targeted by the fishery at national level.

Has the Party taken steps about fishing?

Six Parties out of fourteen said they have taken steps concerning the fishing of cartilaginous fishes or implemented the fishing restrictions imposed in the context of the European Community. Two Parties stated that the ban on driftnets is an important point for the protection of pelagic sharks, like the measures to regulate certain stocks or the ban on cutting off the fins when the shark is caught.

Has the Party launched scientific research programmes on chondrichthyans?

Four Parties out of twelve said they have launched programmes of scientific research on chondrichthyans or mentioned follow-up projects (data on by-catch, positioning satellite markers, follow-up of catch) under way in 2011. One of the Parties said that an Action Plan is being prepared and another stated that research is being done in a one-off way, but that this does not constitute a programme and does not constitute a priority for the fishing authorities responsible.

Has the Party undertaken training programmes for specialists and fishing technicians and managers on the study and conservation of chondrichthyans?

None of the Parties has undertaken a specific training programme for fishing managers and technicians on the conservation of chondrichthyans, but two Parties stated that this is at project stage and a third stated that such actions are anticipated in the context of the Action Plan launched by the European Community in 2009.

Has the Party crafted documents and information materials for local authorities, residents, teachers, tourists, people working in commercial fishing and sport fishermen, divers, and all the other groups likely to be concerned?

Three Parties out of eleven mentioned information documents crafted especially for fishermen. One of the Parties mentioned the publishing in 2010 of a guide for identifying sharks and rays. Two Parties mentioned producing presentation papers for awareness campaigns among fishermen, including on chondrichthyans, or documents on sustainable fishing.

Only 36% of the Parties spoke about the difficulties and challenges encountered when setting up the Action Plan on cartilaginous fishes. The main difficulties seem to be of a financial nature (55%) and those linked to administrative management (50%).

IX.2. Action Plan on introductions of species and invasive species in the Mediterranean Sea

Has the Party adopted legislation to check the introduction of marine species and taken the necessary steps to transpose into its own national law the provisions of the pertinent international treaties?

Seven Parties out of fourteen said they have adopted general legislation to check the introduction of marine species, or are implementing the measures decreed by the European Community in this field. Three Parties said that actions are being prepared in this field with a bill on aquatic protection, finalized in 2009, or a bill on management of ballast water.

Has the Party an assessment of the situation concerning the introduction of marine species?

Six Parties out of thirteen have an assessment of the situation concerning the introduction of marine species. One Party said these assessments are regularly updated; another that a follow-up plan has been set up in the case that new species are introduced. One of the Parties said that steps are being taken. Among the four Parties that replied in the negative, one stressed that studies are being done in 2009 but in a very one-off way (a single species targeted).

Has the Party a mechanism to monitor and fight the discharge of ballast water into its territorial waters?

Four Parties out of eleven have a mechanism to fight and monitor the discharge of ballast water into their territorial waters. One of them said it has ratified the IMO Convention on the management of ballast waters, and another that it has passed regulations to this effect, but it stated that progress remains to be made in the enforcement, with a better coordination between the authorities in charge of protection and those in charge of monitoring. Lastly, three Parties said that reflection is under way in this field with, in particular, an experimental follow-up project for ports.

Has the Party set up an Action Plan to fight against the introduction of non-native marine species and to mitigate the harmful effects thereof?

Two Parties out of twelve said they have set up an Action Plan to fight against the introduction of non-native marine species, and one of the Parties said there are guidelines on the subject.

Has the Party set up training and awareness programmes on the risks, legal aspects, management of ballast water and the fouling of ships' hulls?

Only one Party out of eleven said it has set up a training and awareness programme on the risks linked to the introduction of non-native species and on ways of handling this problem, and one of the Parties said reflection is under way.

Only 28% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered in setting up an Action Plan on cartilaginous fishes. The difficulties mentioned concern financial resources, administrative management and technical capacities (45%).

IX.3. Action Plan for the conservation of species of birds

Does the Party grant legal protection to the bird species?

Eleven Parties out of fourteen give legal protection to bird species. Two Parties mention ongoing projects like a decree on animal species and an Action Plan for birds that would include eleven species in the Protocol's Annex II.

On the Party's territory, are there Protected Areas created to conserve the bird species that appear on the lists in the Annexes to the Protocol?

Eleven Parties out of fourteen said that on their territories they have Protected Areas to conserve the bird species in the SPA/BD Protocol, in particular within the context of implementing the European Habitats, Fauna, Flora Directive and designating special protection areas. Two Parties mentioned the existence of SPAs or 'reserves' which aim at the conservation of biodiversity and birds generally, including those in Annex II.

Has the Party launched one or several research programmes on one or several of the bird species appearing in the Annexes to the Protocol?

In this context, seven Parties out of fourteen said that they have started research programmes on protected bird species in the context of the Barcelona Convention. These

programmes particularly concern the Cory's shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*, the Balearic shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan*, the osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, the Eleonora's falcon *Falco eleonora*, the Sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis*, and the little tern *Sterna albifrons*. Two Parties mentioned ongoing reflection and in particular a follow-up in 2008 of eleven species out of the fifteen in Annex II. Lastly, two Parties mentioned one-off activities on a small number of species such as the Audouin's gull *Larus audouinii*, which ought to be extended to a greater number.

Has the Party an Action Plan for one or several of the species appearing in the Annexes to the Protocol?

Four Parties out of thirteen said that they have Action Plans for one or several of the bird species appearing in Annex II to the Protocol. These Action Plans concern the osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, the Eleonora's falcon *Falco eleonora*, and the Audouin's gull *Larus audouinii*. One of the Parties said that a draft Action Plan had been crafted in 2008. Lastly, one of the Parties stated that an inventory was started in 2010 that should lead on to the formulating of a National Action Plan for some species.

Only 33% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered in setting up an Action Plan for the conservation of bird species. The main difficulty mentioned seems to be of a financial nature (72%).

IX.4. Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans

Has the Party crafted an Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans?

Four Parties out of fourteen said that they have crafted Action Plans for the conservation of cetaceans; two of them stated that this is for part of the period covered by the report. Three Parties mentioned ongoing reflection via preparing a strategic action plan for the protection of biological diversity and landscapes, or a National Action Plan established in 2008 and awaiting adoption. Lastly, one of the Parties stated that the entire questionnaire on cetaceans does not apply at its level, and thus only appears among the total number of Parties that answered the questionnaire.

Has the Party carried out studies and set up scientific research programmes on cetaceans?

Nine Parties out of fourteen said that they have set up research programmes on cetaceans, particularly in the context of one of the SPAMIs, and two other Parties said that these actions are only carried on by NGOs. Lastly, one of the Parties said that in the context of the NAP prepared in 2001 and awaiting adoption, such actions are anticipated.

Has the Party set up a cetacean stranding monitoring network?

Five Parties out of fourteen mentioned monitoring networks for cetacean strandings that were set up during or after the period covered by the report. Apart from one Party that replied in the negative, the others mentioned either networks implemented by NGOs, research bodies or other public bodies, or actions now in preparation.

Has the Party set up MPAs and/or SPAMIs to protect one or several species of cetacean?

Four Parties out of fourteen said they have set up MPAs for the protection of cetaceans, but that does not always refer to the period covered by the report. Two Parties mentioned a creation project that is relatively advanced.

Only 27% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered in implementing the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans. The main difficulty mentioned is once again of a financial nature (63%).

IX.5. Action Plan for the conservation of marine vegetation in the Mediterranean Sea

Has the Party adopted protection status for the plant species and assemblages that are of importance for the marine environment, in particular the meadows?

Seven Parties out of fourteen said they have granted protection status to plant formations that are of conservation importance, but some Parties seemed to restrict the important species to the marine magnoliophytes only, and to *Posidonia* in particular. This was clearly stated by one of the Parties. Another Party mentioned a bill on the protection of aquatic life now in train. Lastly, among the four Parties who answered in the negative, two said that these plant species and formations are protected within their SPAs.

Do the Party's rules on environmental impact studies take into account an impact analysis for each human activity undertaken over meadows and other plant formations that are important for the marine environment?

Ten Parties out of fourteen said they have rules on environmental impact studies that take into account the impact of human activities on meadows and other important plant formations. For one Party, these regulations are being crafted as part of an environment code. Lastly, two Parties mentioned impact study procedures related to the conservation of biodiversity and thus applicable to meadows and other plant formations of importance.

Has the Party set up Protected Areas devoted to meadows and other plant formations that are important for the marine environment?

Five Parties out of thirteen said they have set up Protected Areas devoted to meadows and other important plant formations, in particular within the context of the designation of Natura 2000 sites out at sea. Among the five Parties that replied in the negative, two said there were none during the period covered by the report. Three Parties said that sites are being designated.

Has the Party done studies and scientific research to inventory and map marine plant formations that are natural monuments?

Ten Parties out of fourteen said they have done studies to inventory and map marine plant formations that are natural monuments, and several stated that these actions were done in the context of the European Natura 2000 programmes and focus on the *Posidonia* meadows.

Has the Party established programmes to map the main meadows and other plant formations that are important for the marine environment?

Five Parties out of twelve said they have set up programmes to map the main meadows and other important plant formations. Two Parties mentioned actions that are being prepared.

Has the Party undertaken awareness and education actions (targeting users of the sea, local people and the wider public) concerning the conservation of marine plants, in particularly the organogenic surface formations?

Four Parties out of twelve have undertaken awareness and education actions concerning the conservation of marine plants, with in particular the publishing of a popular work on *Posidonia*, or on protected or endangered marine species, or actions within their SPAs. Lastly, one of the Parties mentioned actions that are being prepared.

Has the Party started specialist training programmes for the study and conservation of marine plants?

Three Parties out of thirteen said they have started specialist training programmes for the study and conservation of marine plants, like programmes for training in mapping habitats. Two Parties said that this training is being done as part of a general training in biodiversity, and that it is proving insufficient due to the lack of specialists.

Has the Party an Action Plan, established on the basis of the scientific data available, for the conservation of marine plants?

No Party has established an Action Plan for the conservation of marine plants. One of the Parties mentioned ongoing reflection via the preparation of a strategic action plan for the protection of biological diversity and landscapes.

Only 29% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered in implementing the Action Plan for the conservation of marine vegetation. The main difficulties mentioned are once again financial resources (69%), plus a lack of technical capacities (53%) in this field.

IX.6. Action Plan for the conservation of the monk seal

Has the Party conferred protection status on the monk seal?

Nine Parties out of thirteen said they have conferred protection status on the monk seal. One of the Parties mentioned a bill on the protection of aquatic life including a ban on hunting marine mammals, but said that legal protection status would be desirable both for the species and for its habitat. Lastly, four of the Parties said that since the monk seal is absent from their territory, almost the entire questionnaire does not apply; they are therefore only counted among the total number of Parties that answered the questionnaire.

As regards fishing, does the Party expressly forbid the use of dynamite, the carrying of firearms on board ship, and all the fishing techniques that can imperil the monk seal?

Eight Parties out of thirteen said they have installed bans on fishing with dynamite and the carrying of firearms on board ship. One of the Parties said that punishments appear in its bill on protection of aquatic life.

If the Party still has monk seal populations of reproductive age, have steps been taken to keep them away from all human activity?

Two Parties out of twelve said they have monk seal populations that are of reproductive age and that they have taken steps to keep them away from all human activity, but for one of them this concerns Atlantic populations. One of the Parties mentioned the drafting of a code of conduct intended to improve the conservation of the monk seal, and another said that since there were sightings in 2008, investigations should be carried out to verify whether the species really is present on its coasts. Finally, a total six Parties stated that since they have no monk seal population of reproductive age, the question does not apply.

On the Party's territory, do there exist SPAs created to conserve the monk seal populations or their potential habitats?

Five Parties out of thirteen said they have created Protected Areas for the conservation of monk seal populations or their potential habitats. Two Parties stated that they have sites that shelter or can shelter monk seals, and that reflection is under way.

Has the Party made a list of reproduction caves and other habitats that are extremely important for the monk seal?

Five Parties out of thirteen said they have made a list of the reproduction caves and other habitats that are extremely important for the monk seal. Among these, one mentioned the identifying of 568 sites, 99 of which are caves probably used for reproduction, and another mentioned prospecting for sites, but which does not concern the Mediterranean coast. One of the Parties mentioned the existence of documents on this point and of projects to verify sightings mentioned in the literature. Lastly, of the two Parties that answered in the negative, one did however mention observations of monk seals in 2010, whereas the species had not been sighted since the 1960s.

Has the Party implemented programmes of data collection on the monk seal?

Five Parties out of thirteen said they have implemented programmes of data collection on the monk seal. Three other Parties mentioned projects to do this.

Has the Party set up awareness, information and training programmes on the conservation of the monk seal?

Four Parties out of thirteen said they have set up awareness, information and training programmes on the conservation of the monk seal. These awareness actions are sometimes carried out as part of inter-state cooperation or through NGOs and concern the circulation of brochures for the wider public or the production of a handbook of instructions on saving wounded monk seals. Lastly, one of the Parties said that training actions, in the context of vocational training, have been organised on the protection of marine biodiversity.

Has the Party an Action Plan for the conservation of the monk seal and of its potential habitats?

Three Parties out of thirteen said they have crafted Action Plans for the conservation of the monk seal and of its potential habitats, and two Parties mentioned actions being prepared in this field.

Only 16% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered in setting up an Action Plan for the conservation of the monk seal. The main difficulties reported concern administrative management and technical capacities (50%) and also financial resources (30%).

IX.7. Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles

Does the Party have laws and regulations for the protection of marine turtles?

Nine Parties out of thirteen said they have laws and regulations for the protection of marine turtles, and one of them stated that this protection only concerns *Caretta caretta*, *Chelonia mydas* and *Dermochelys coriacea*. One of the Parties said that it applies the international conventions on the subject but has no national text, and another mentioned a bill on the protection of aquatic life including a ban on the capture of marine turtles but said that legal protection status would be desirable. Lastly, one of the Parties said that the entire questionnaire on marine turtles does not apply to it; it is therefore only counted among the total number of Parties that answered the questionnaire.

Has the Party taken steps to reduce by-catch of marine turtles?

Two Parties out of eleven said they have measures to reduce by-catch of marine turtles. Three Parties mentioned actions being prepared but without going into any detail, and one of the Parties mentioned the setting up of a think-tank on this subject and a programme to inventory by-catch starting from 2009.

Has the Party set up care and rescue centres for marine turtles?

Six Parties out of thirteen said they have set up care and rescue centres for marine turtles.

In the Party's territory, do SPAs exist created to conserve populations of marine turtles or their potential habitats?

Five Parties out of thirteen said they have set up Protected Areas to conserve the populations of marine turtles or their potential habitats; one of these did however make it clear that these do not concern the Mediterranean. Three Parties mentioned a project to do this, related to several nesting sites.

Has the Party made an inventory of marine turtle nesting sites?

Four Parties out of twelve said they have made an inventory of marine turtle nesting beaches, but most stated that these activities happened before the period covered by the report. A total five Parties said that the question does not apply, since they have no egg-laying sites on their Mediterranean coast.

Does the Party participate in marine turtle tagging programmes?

Eight Parties out of thirteen said they participate in marine turtle tagging programmes, and one of the Parties also mentioned putting on satellite markers. One of the Parties mentioned a tagging project during the period covered by the report, and another mentioned attempts with academics.

Has the Party set up programmes of awareness, information and training on the conservation of marine turtles?

Eight Parties out of thirteen said they have set up programmes of awareness, information and training on the conservation of marine turtles. These awareness actions concern both schoolchildren and the general public and specialists. They are usually organised at nesting sites or in care centres. These programmes have proved to be important, particularly for fishermen.

Has the Party and Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles?

Three Parties out of twelve said they have Action Plans for the conservation of marine turtles. Among them, one Party stressed the fact that the Action Plan crafted several years ago now has never been applied, and another mentioned that guidelines were laid down for the manipulating and holding of marine turtles for scientific purposes of population rehabilitation. Two Parties reported actions in preparation, with a draft National Action Plan including egg-laying sites and also the open sea, and a strategic action plan for the protection of biological diversity and landscapes.

27% of the Parties mentioned the difficulties and challenges encountered in setting up the Action Plan for the conservation of marine turtles. The main difficulties reported concern financial resources (54%) and technical capacities (45%).

X. CONCLUSION

Because of the political difficulties encountered for the past several months in the region, the present summary could only be made on the basis of fifteen reports out of a total twenty-two Contracting Parties. Furthermore, as with the previous exercise, it seems that several Parties only gave partial answers to the questionnaire, or answered without really paying attention to the period covered by the report. Thus it is hard to draw up a complete balance sheet on a regional scale for the period under consideration.

It does however seem that the period 2008-2009 witnessed progress made in implementing the SPA/BD Protocol at regulation level. Indeed, several Parties adopted regulatory arrangements (e.g. laws, decrees) that enabled the Protocol to be better applied. More generally, three-quarters of the Parties that answered the questions have regulatory measures as far as the following are concerned:

- designation of Protected Areas
- the protection and management of endangered or threatened species
- a ban on the discharge of substances likely to harm the SPAs
- the regulating of ships' passage or mooring and scientific activities within the SPAs

- the regulating or banning of activities involving the captures of species in the SPAs, or that are harmful to the SPAs
- taking into account the possible impact projects and activities can have on protected areas and species.

Concerning the SPAs, one of the Parties said that it has set up Protected Areas during the period, but that they are not placed under the aegis of the Barcelona Convention and the SPA/BD Protocol, and another mentioned the creation of four new MPAs. Several Parties stated that they have designated sites within the context of implementing the European Natura 2000 programme out at sea, but without going into greater detail. Lastly, one of the Parties also mentioned the creation, for the first time at national level, of a MPA, but it was outside the period covered by the report. Lastly, two Parties stated their intention to create six new SPAs.

As for managing these SPAs, progress remains to be made, since only 43% of the Parties stated that they have crafted or implemented management plans, but 43% of the Parties did state that steps are being taken in this direction.

Eight SPAs were put on the SPAMI List during the period covered by the report, and one new Party has a SPAMI for the first time, which helps towards their better geographical representation. Three Parties also mentioned their intention to propose new sites for inclusion on the SPAMI List.

As regards management, there too progress remains to be made, since all the Parties that have SPAMIs have not yet crafted or implemented management plans for them.

As for the measures to protect and conserve species, a list of endangered or threatened species has been or is being made by nearly 75% of the Contracting Parties, and almost half of the Parties also have appropriate measures to regulate the introduction of non-native or genetically modified species. It is, moreover, these that provided the focus of attention during the biennium. Generally speaking, we are witnessing a greater taking into account of biodiversity insofar as over half the Parties that filled in the form have undertaken inventorying actions and 33% envisage doing so, and 47% have a national strategy on the subject, while 13% mentioned projects in this direction.

The parts relating to coercive measures were only dealt with by less than half the Parties that filled in the form, so it is hard to draw a conclusion. Similarly, the absence of information from the Parties, and the imprecise nature of the data contained in the report, does not generally allow us to give correct information on the efficacy indicators. It would be a good idea to draw the Parties' attention to this point and invite them to be more rigorous, if a true balance sheet of progress made has to be drawn up in the future.

Finally, analysis of the data on the various Action Plans shows that in terms of regulatory status it is the monk seal and the birds, and then the marine turtles, that enjoy the most legal measures (this element having not been assessed in the context of the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans).

On the other hand, it is the cartilaginous fishes, the monk seal, cetaceans and birds that benefit from National Action Plans or specific programmes.

The research programmes undertaken during the period mostly targeted marine vegetation, cetaceans and the monk seal.

Lastly, awareness actions gave priority consideration to marine turtles and the monk seal (this part having not been assessed in the Action Plan for the conservation of cetaceans and that related to birds).