



WWF

BRIEFING

2019

# TOWARDS 2020

HOW MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES ARE  
PERFORMING TO PROTECT THEIR SEA



## **Front cover photo**

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Full MPA scorecard available on our website: [www.wwfmmi.org](http://www.wwfmmi.org)

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# VALUING COUNTRIES' ACTION TOWARDS 2020

For thousands of years, the Mediterranean Sea – with its exceptional diversity of marine and coastal ecosystems – has enabled the flourishing of a rich culture of commerce, trade and development.

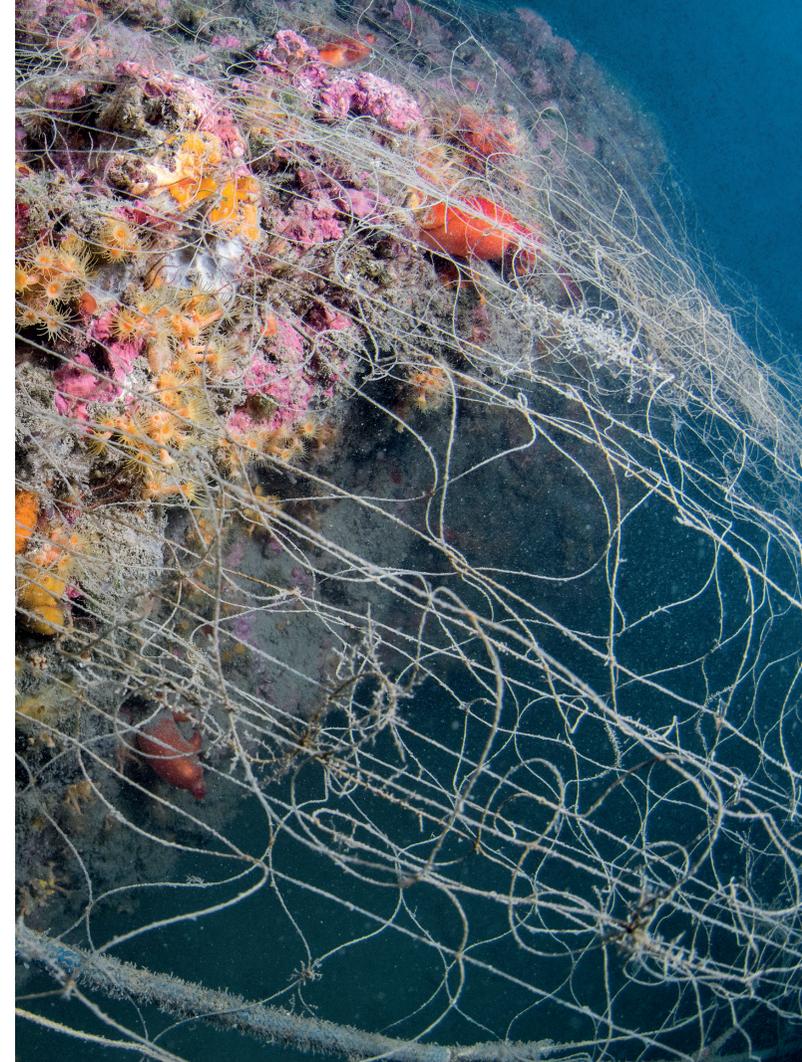
However, ongoing unsustainable fishing, tourism, plastic and chemical pollution, and rapid coastal development are causing the dramatic decrease and loss of marine species and the destruction of fragile habitats. The increasing effects of climate change with warming sea temperature and ocean acidification are further threatening the ecological resilience of the whole region.

Ignoring this puts the health, well-being and prosperity of the people living along the coast of the region under threat. The economic assets generated by the Mediterranean Sea are valued at around US\$5.6 trillion. Decisive action to bend the curve on nature loss is needed to protect our natural capital and secure the future of the next generations.

A decade ago, Mediterranean countries signed the CBD Aichi Target 11 committing to protect at least 10% of their waters with the creation of effective Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

**NOW**  
**ONE YEAR BEFORE THE 2020 DEADLINE, WWF HAS DEVELOPED A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ACTIONS MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES (EU AND NON-EU) HAVE TAKEN IN IMPLEMENTING STRONG CONSERVATION POLICIES AND CREATING AN EFFECTIVE AND WELL-MANAGED NETWORK OF MARINE PROTECTED AREAS.**

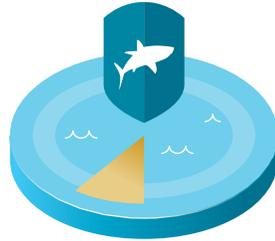
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For the purpose of this publication, the term MPA includes: nationally designated MPAs, Natura 2000 sites, the marine part of Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention), the marine part of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, and internationally designated Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs).

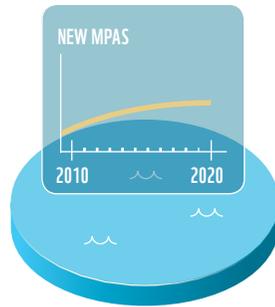
It doesn't include Fishery Restricted Areas (FRAs) under the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM-FAO) or Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSA), under the International Maritime Organization.

# KEY FINDINGS: MOST OF THE MEDITERRANEAN IS LEFT UNPROTECTED



## INTERNATIONAL TARGET NOT MET

15 Mediterranean countries are far from meeting the CBD Aichi target 11: designate at least 10% of their marine territorial waters as protected areas by 2020.



## FEW ADDITIONAL MPAS

Since 2010, most countries have made no effort to designate additional areas.

A large part of the increase in MPA cover in the Mediterranean is due to France and Spain with a small contribution from Albania, Croatia, Greece and Malta. A very small surface area of MPAs was designated in Egypt, Italy, Slovenia, and Turkey.



## INCOMPLETE PROTECTION

Mediterranean MPAs are not part of an ecologically, representative and well-connected system of protected areas.

# 9.68%

of the Mediterranean Sea has been designated as MPAs, but mainly in the northern Mediterranean and by creating small paper parks

# 2.48%

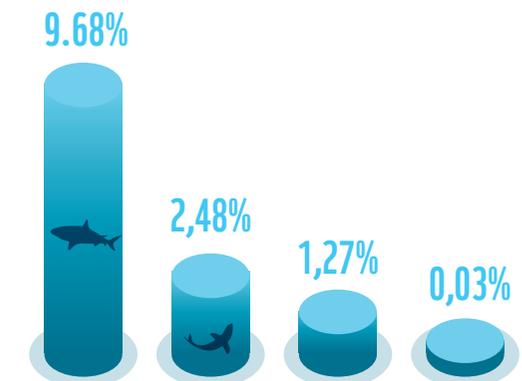
of the Mediterranean Sea is covered by MPAs with a management plan

# 1.27%

of the Mediterranean Sea is covered by MPAs that effectively implement their management plans

# 0.03%

of the Mediterranean is covered by fully-protected areas

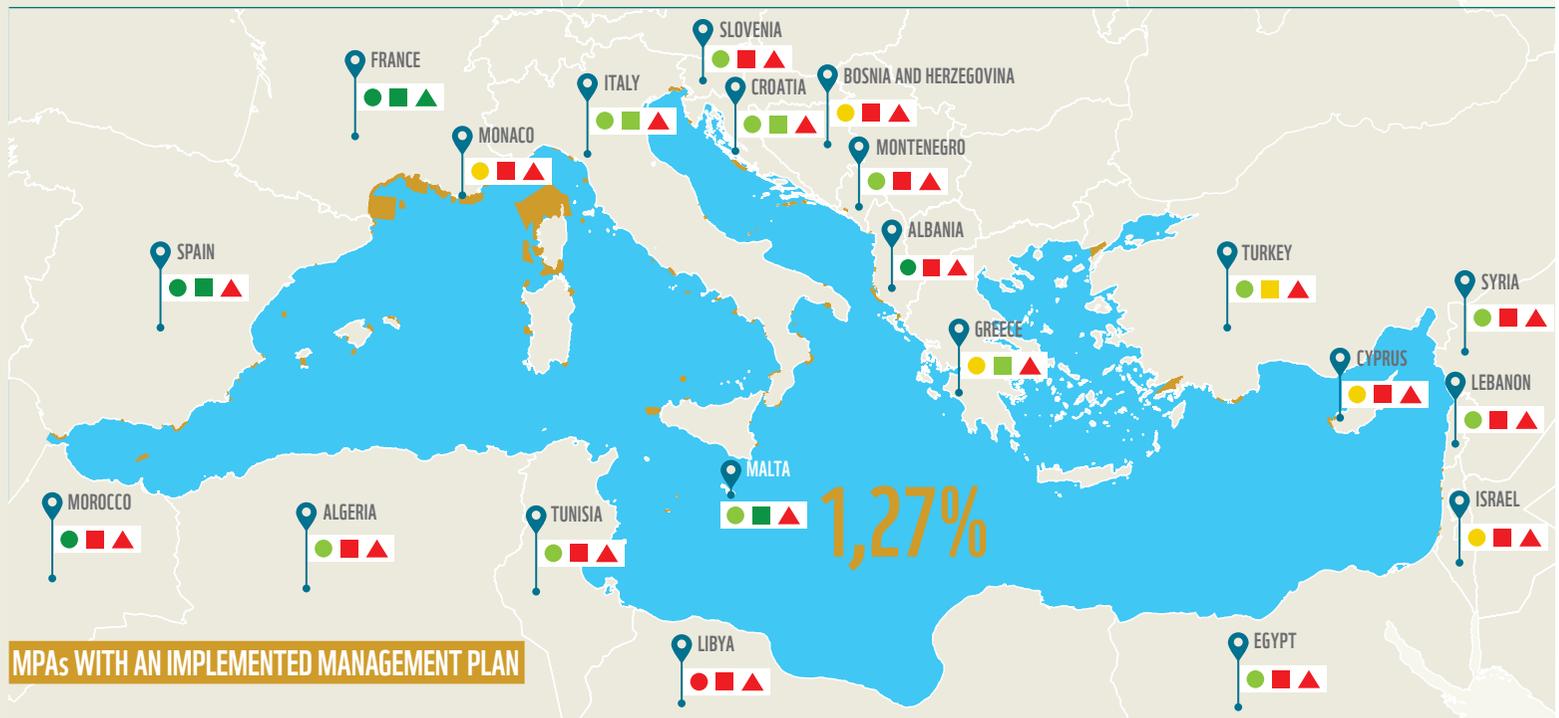


# BEHIND THE SCENES: MAINLY PAPER PARKS

- Average level of international policy ratification (CBD and Barcelona Convention)
  - <50% = ●
  - 50% = ●
  - 51-99% = ●
  - 100% = ●
- △ % of marine surface designated as MPAs within 12nm
  - 0-5% = ▲
  - 5-9% = ▲
  - 10-29% = ▲
  - >30% = ▲
- % of marine surface protected with MPAs with an implemented management plan
  - 0-5% = ■
  - 5-9% = ■
  - 10-29% = ■
  - >30% = ■

Scores calculated according to the following thresholds based on % of MPA surface fulfilling the defined indicators.

Source: ETC-UMA | Origin of the data: MAPAMED 2017, MedPAN 2017, EEA 2018, WWF 2019 | Land and country boundaries: EUROSTAT 2018.



# CONCLUSIONS

This report shows that only 2.48% of the Mediterranean is covered by MPAs with a management plan, only 1.27% by MPAs that effectively implement their management plan, and only 0.03% by fully protected areas.

Despite the fact that all Mediterranean countries adopted legislation for the protection of the marine environment, designating MPAs and managing them effectively is still a major challenge for most countries.

Lobbying and economic interests that oppose marine protection remain too powerful, while the capacity of administrations is still not sufficient to manage the MPA system effectively. Decision-makers lack the long-term vision to change current trends in the biodiversity crisis.

A decade ago, Mediterranean countries signed the CBD Aichi Target 11 committing to protect at least 10% of their waters with the creation of effective MPAs. Today, the Mediterranean is close to meeting its 10% target. Much of the progress towards this target is due to France and Spain with a little contribution from Albania, Croatia, Greece and Malta. A very small surface area of MPAs was designated in Egypt, Italy, Slovenia, and Turkey.

**However, the 10% target almost met by the Mediterranean is not reflected in well-managed MPAs.**

In addition, the current network of MPAs is not ecologically coherent, with a very low rate of representativity and connectivity of habitats and existing MPAs have been declared almost exclusively in the northern part of the basin. As a result, the current system is not able to provide the key environmental benefits that an ecologically coherent MPA network for the Mediterranean could deliver: spill-over of marine species, connectivity and habitat resilience in a changing global climate.

This, in turn, results in a lack of benefits for people, especially the coastal communities who base their economy on fishery or nature-based tourism.



# WWF RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROTECT OUR SEA

PROTECT KEY UNREPRESENTED BIODIVERSITY AREAS	TRANSFORM PAPER PARKS INTO REAL CONSERVATION TOOLS	ENSURE EQUITY AND INCLUSIVENESS IN MPA MANAGEMENT	INTRODUCE INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABLE FINANCING
<p><b>1</b> Implement and improve existing national and international legislation to designate new MPAs in countries that have still not designated MPAs or are protecting very small marine areas.</p> <p><b>2</b> Ensure collaboration among different administrations (e.g. environment, fisheries and coastguard) and ultimately integrate various legal tools.</p> <p><b>3</b> Strengthen the collaboration between neighbouring countries to settle EEZs, create MPAs in the open sea, including transboundary MPAs, to protect unrepresented habitats and highly mobile and migratory species, and enhance the coherence of the MPA network.</p>	<p><b>1</b> For each MPA, define conservation measures and formally adopt and implement long-term and integrated management plans that are based on SMART objectives and include adequate, fully protected areas.</p> <p><b>2</b> Establish effective enforcement mechanisms to ensure the implementation of regulations.</p> <p><b>3</b> Ensure that regular monitoring programmes are set and properly funded to assess MPAs' achievements against the objectives defined in the respective management plans.</p>	<p><b>1</b> Integrate the human dimension into MPA design by considering the socioeconomic implications of MPAs and stakeholders' perceptions of the impact of MPAs.</p> <p><b>2</b> Facilitate stakeholder engagement to address conflict between users, build capacity to contribute to MPA planning and management, ensure compliance with regulations and transparency between sectors.</p> <p><b>3</b> Create local ownership and co-management schemes to share responsibility for the design of MPAs and the management of natural resources among different stakeholders, including small-scale fishers.</p>	<p><b>1</b> Increase current financing to marine conservation and ensure stable financial flows to MPAs.</p> <p><b>2</b> Develop innovative approaches to mobilize alternative financial sources and become less dependent on national budgets.</p> <p><b>3</b> Solve legal or structural barriers, such as shared responsibility for the management of human activities at sea, to make operations more cost-effective and share financing responsibility.</p>

# TOWARDS A POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

## CALLING FOR A NEW DEAL FOR NATURE AND PEOPLE

Securing a healthy and prosperous Mediterranean Sea and preventing ecosystem collapse for our future generations is a moral obligation.

The last issue of IPBES, the most recent intergovernmental scientific Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, provides unequivocal evidence that biodiversity is now under unprecedented pressure worldwide.

World leaders acknowledge that scientific evidence calls for full protection of at least 30% of the ocean to ensure long-term ocean health. Creating MPAs alone is not enough. We need to make nature a top priority. Biodiversity needs to be mainstreamed into economic development and in sector policies in a systematic way (notably in fisheries, agriculture, energy and tourism).

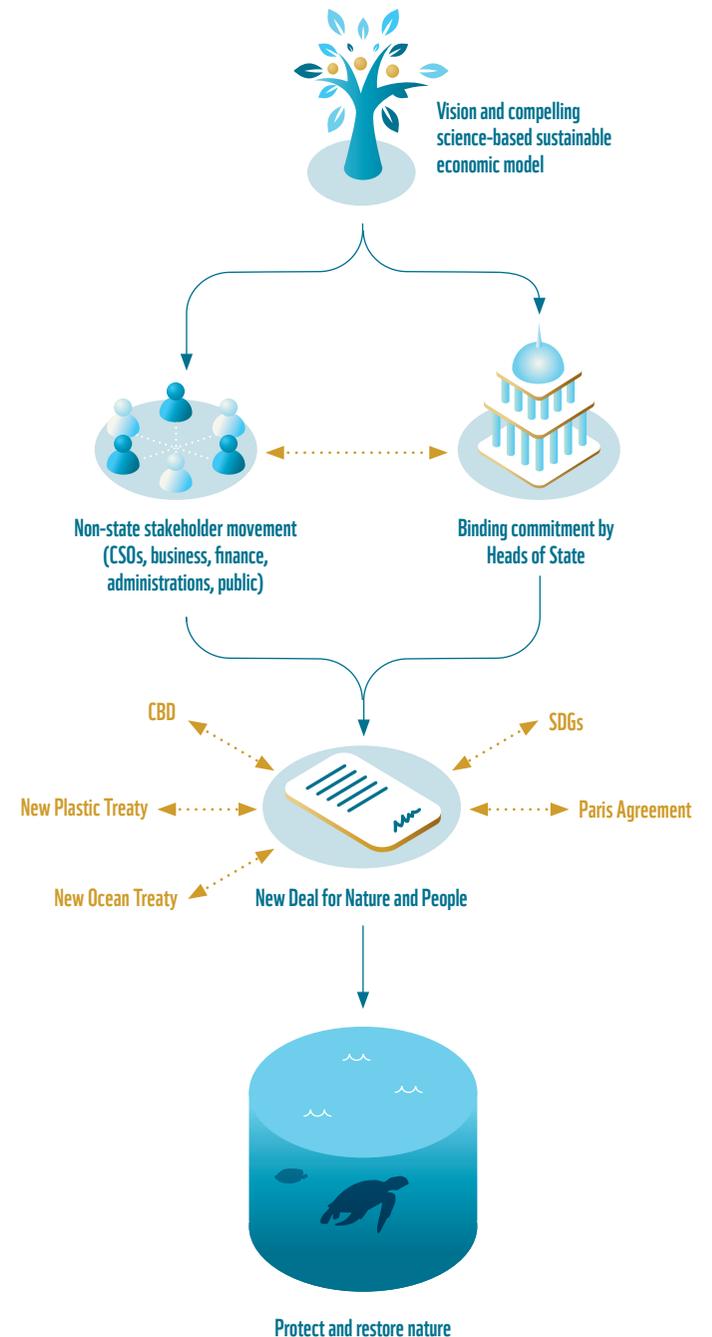
### Global level

Government, civil society, academia, businesses: we all have an unparalleled opportunity as we head into 2020. Not only will a new 10-year strategic plan for biodiversity be drafted at the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) COP 15 in October 2020, but progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be reviewed and countries will enhance their nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

### Mediterranean level

Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention should become ambassadors for sustainability in their governments and influence national policy, make commitments for nature conservation and create new collaborations with other country leaders.

- At the global level, Mediterranean countries should increase their national commitments in the formulation of the post-2020 global Biodiversity Framework to be adopted at CBD COP 15 in October 2020 in China.
- At the Mediterranean level, Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention should develop a more robust, transparent, and measurable Strategic Action Plan on Biodiversity (SAP BIO) post-2020, in line with the new global biodiversity framework.

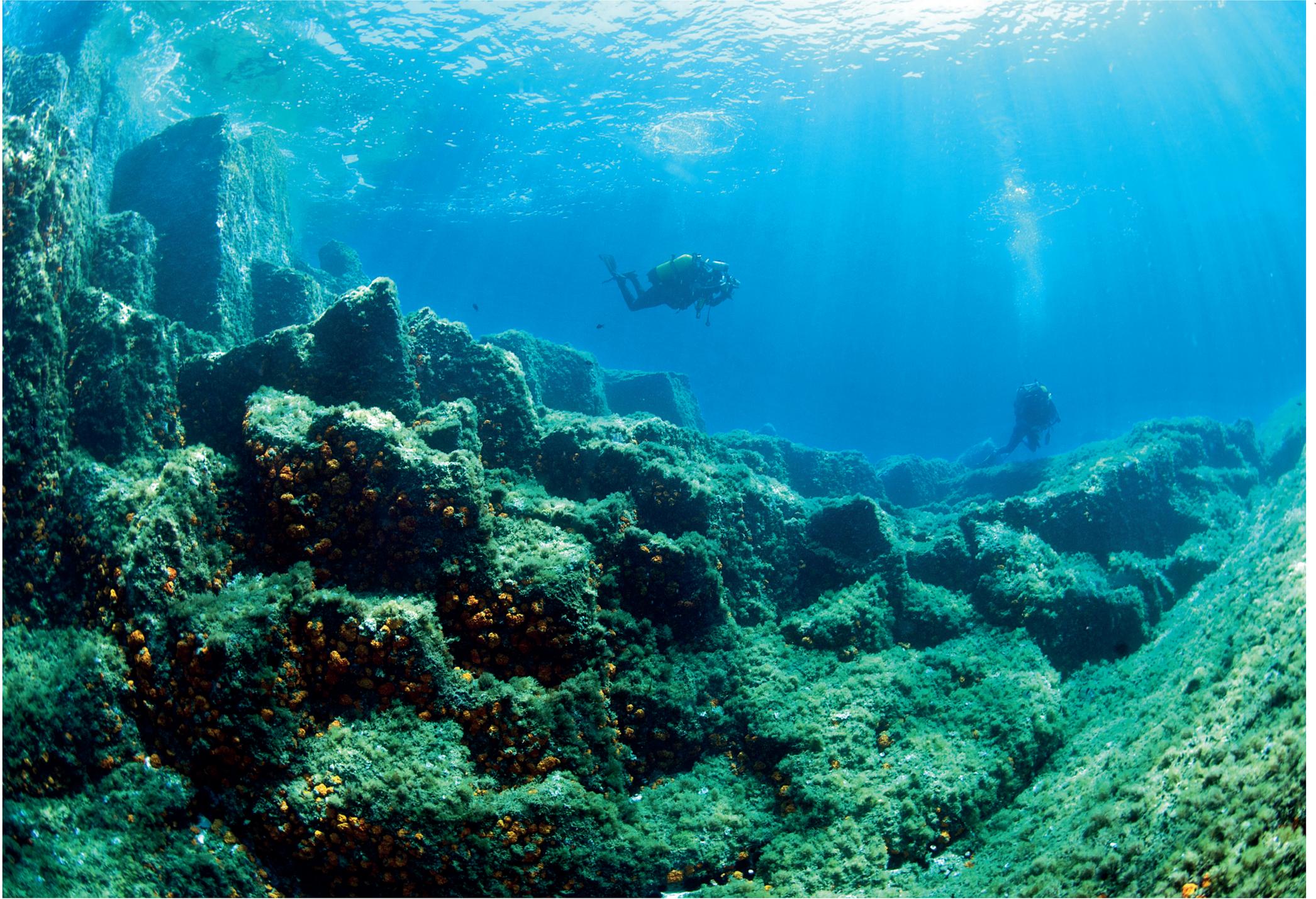


# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles to be included in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework related to the conservation of marine ecosystems include:

- 1. MORE AMBITIOUS PROTECTION TARGETS:**  
increased conservation targets to protect at least 30% of coastal and marine areas, especially under-represented areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- 2. STRONGER QUALITATIVE REQUIREMENTS:**  
measurable indicators of effectiveness, clear thresholds for fully protected MPAs, representativeness and connectivity of MPA networks, inclusiveness and participation of stakeholders.
- 3. MECHANISMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY:**  
more robust, transparent, SMART mechanisms to monitor country progress.
- 4. INTEGRATION OF MPAS INTO WIDER SUSTAINABLE SEASCAPE MANAGEMENT:**  
a coherent network of MPAs is fundamental for the achievement of ecosystem-based marine spatial planning.
- 5. GOOD GOVERNANCE WITHIN AND BEYOND TERRITORIAL WATERS:**  
enhanced cross-sectoral and cross-jurisdictional cooperation among states and across bodies, at global and regional scales.







# MEDITERRANEAN BIODIVERSITY IN NUMBERS

**USD 5.6 TN**

is the economic value of  
Mediterranean natural  
assets

**28%**

of Mediterranean species  
are endemic

**34%**

of Mediterranean  
*Posidonia* has  
disappeared

**1.27%**

of the Mediterranean is covered  
by MPAs with implemented  
management plans



#### Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and  
to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[wwfmmi.org](http://wwfmmi.org)