

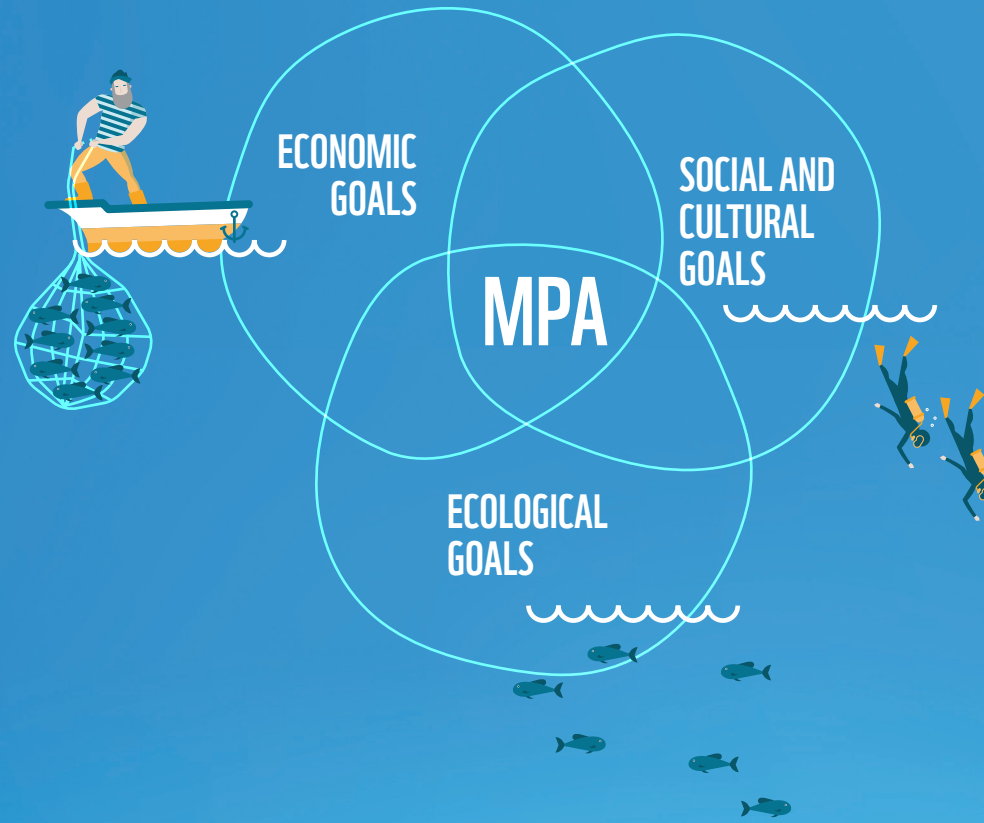
OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

MPAs can also be a powerful tool in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Aichi Targets on biodiversity. In the Mediterranean, we've only just begun to see the difference MPAs can make: to biodiversity, to fish stocks, to the prosperity of local communities.

WWF is committed to build on these strong foundations, to secure the future of the Mediterranean Sea and everybody who depends upon it.

We'll draw on WWF's experience to:

- 🐟 achieve (and go beyond) the 10% protection target, including the establishment of new MPAs in offshore areas;
- 🐟 ensure MPA networks are effective, adequately funded and well managed, involving and benefiting local people;
- 🐟 plan and manage the marine environment in an integrated way, accounting for conflicting, multiple uses;
- 🐟 develop sustainable blue economies.



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.
www.panda.org

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FACTSHEET



MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

WWF'S 10-YEAR JOURNEY

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WWF'S 10-YEAR JOURNEY

When MPAs work, they can safeguard wildlife, support healthy ecosystems and benefit people by attracting tourists and rebuilding fish stocks. Over the last decade, there's been a transformation in marine protection in the Mediterranean – and WWF has been at the heart of the story

At the turn of the 21st Century, protecting the Mediterranean Sea was low on the political agenda. While the vast Pelagos Sanctuary in the northwest Mediterranean offered some protection for marine mammals, MPAs covered less than 0.5% of the Mediterranean Sea – with the majority of them in Western Europe. Many of these MPAs were “paper parks” – they were marked on the map but were under-resourced and had little real impact. Management plans tended to be imposed without involving local stakeholders. As a result, local people often saw MPAs as being of little benefit with some – fishermen in particular – actively opposing protected areas.

1 WHERE WE STARTED

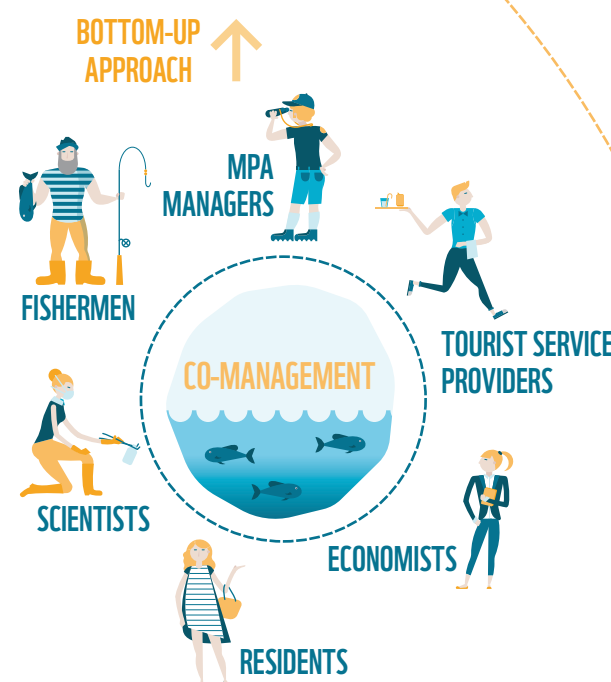


2 IDENTIFYING THE GAPS

To WWF, it was clear that the Mediterranean's unique natural resources were highly vulnerable. We identified the areas in most urgent need of protection, and mapped existing MPAs in the Mediterranean. This made it all too clear where the gaps were. From our conversations with MPA managers it emerged that many felt isolated and faced all sorts of tough issues – from conflicts with fishermen to monitoring of the marine environment. These MPAs needed to be connected. To achieve this, WWF revived a french dormant organization called MedPAN – the Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas Network.

3 EXPANDING THE MPA NETWORK

We got MedPAN up and running as a dynamic network reaching MPA managers from all over the Mediterranean, linking Europe (Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Spain), the middle east (Lebanon, Turkey) and North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia). MedPAN gave a boost to managers of existing MPAs and those establishing new sites. Today it is an independent non-profit association, though WWF remains closely involved. It brings together 63 members who manage almost 100 MPAs in addition to 37 other partners from 18 Mediterranean countries. The network helps them in learning from and supporting each other and bring the concerns of people working in the field to decision makers at national and regional level. It also funds initiatives to member MPAs.



6 OVERCOMING CONFLICTS

Our focus on involving all stakeholders in MPAs has paid off, even with fishermen. A growing number of small-scale fishers who, once upon a time, objected to what they saw as restrictions, now realize the potential for MPA to restore stocks and secure their livelihoods. WWF has helped bring about this change by promoting peer-to-peer exchanges across the region, so fishermen can see first-hand the benefits MPAs bring. Better protection in key areas has enabled fish populations to recover, leading to larger catches for local fishers. With more than 90% of fisheries in the Mediterranean considered to be overfished, MPAs are vital to the future of fishing communities and the whole seafood sector.

7 BRINGING BENEFITS TO FISHERS

Becoming more involved with MPAs has given local fishers greater control over their resources. We promoted one of the earliest examples of co-management in Torre Guaceto in Italy's Adriatic Sea. When an MPA was established here in the early 1990s, it was entirely closed to fishing for a decade. But as fish stocks recovered, WWF brought together local artisanal fishers and scientists from the University of Salento to develop rules allowing limited fishing within a portion of the MPA. Catch rates of commercially important species like sea bream, red mullet and octopus are 2-4 times higher within the MPA. This generates a net gain of local €400-500 for fishers, compared to €100 a day outside.

5 MAKING MPA MANAGEMENT WORK

Involving fishers, tour operators and local people in the running of MPAs has been a key part of our efforts. Croatia provides a good example. Before we started working there in 2009, MPA management traditionally followed a top-down approach, from which local people were excluded. WWF and Croatian NGO Sunce worked with government agencies and park authorities to pioneer a different model in five MPAs. We brought together park staff with local stakeholders to discuss how different areas should be used and activities managed. Skeptical at first, now local people have the knowledge and capacity to contribute to MPA planning and management and see the economic opportunities, particularly in areas such as sustainable tourism development. They share a sense of ownership and share in the benefits.

4 WAVES OF CHANGE IN THE SOUTH AND EAST

We partnered with more than 20 organizations across 12 countries to further develop the MedPAN network and established new ones (like Ain-al-Ghazalah and Farwa Lagoon MPAs, Libya) as well as making existing ones more effective. We focused on turning dormant parks in the South and East of the Mediterranean into active MPAs (like Kaş-Kekova SPA Turkey, Taza NP Algeria, Karaburun-Sazani MNP Albania), with trained and equipped staff, effective management and scientific monitoring. In parallel, we created the first regional MPA capacity building programme, fostering a movement of skilled MPA practitioners. Crucially, we also won the buy-in of local stakeholders by empowering them to take ownership of MPA management. All this represented a huge cultural change. And the results can be seen from Albania to Algeria, with a growing number of MPAs being managed with clear, long-term ecological, social, cultural and economic objectives that balance effective conservation with the needs of local people.

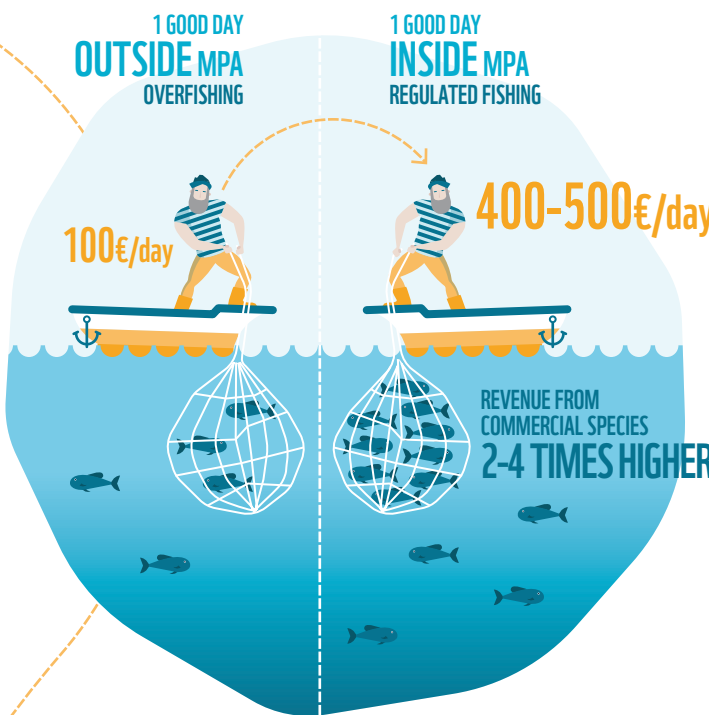
8 PUTTING MORE MPAS ON THE MAP

New MPAs are now being established across the Mediterranean – and they are drawing on the lessons that others have learnt the hard way. After a large breeding population of monk seals was discovered on the uninhabited Greek island of Gyaros in the Aegean Sea, WWF with NGOs Tethys and MOM proposed a new MPA to protect this vital habitat for one of the world's most endangered marine mammals. Instead of focusing solely on protecting the seals, the NGOs decided to take a more holistic view, looking at the whole ecosystem as well as the needs of local people. Working together, NGOs and government departments, scientists, fishers and local businesses developed a collective vision for the MPA, and a plan to put it into practice. All measures are agreed by consensus. This requires patience and compromise, but it means decisions stick and the park will function more effectively.

9 GENERATING A STRONGER NATURA 2000 NETWORK

While individual MPAs like Gyaros are important, our long-term goal is to create an integrated network of MPAs across the Mediterranean. In EU countries, the Natura 2000 network provides the means for this. It isn't yet as fully developed in the marine environment as on land. That's changing, though, as our work in Spain demonstrates. Just two years ago, less than 1% of Spanish waters were protected. We worked with scientists, managers, NGOs, government and other stakeholders to identify the most important coastal and marine areas for protection. Today, there are 115 marine and 71 marine/coastal areas in Spain's Natura 2000 network. MPAs now cover ~8.5% of Spain's total marine area, and 13.1% of Spanish waters in the Mediterranean. The next challenge is to make sure all these sites are managed effectively.

10 CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES



The MPAs we've supported are also creating jobs and fostering new businesses. Parks create jobs directly in management, monitoring and patrolling as well as significant opportunities in nature-based tourism. In Taza National Park, in Algeria, a whole new local industry is emerging after divers drew attention to its astonishing underwater life. Nine diving clubs and 21 dive shops have sprung up to cater for the growing demand. In Kaş-Kekova, Turkey, WWF helped dive operators launch their own initiative. They collect around 1,500 small donations each year from divers which helps finance the MPA and raise awareness of the benefits of marine protection.

