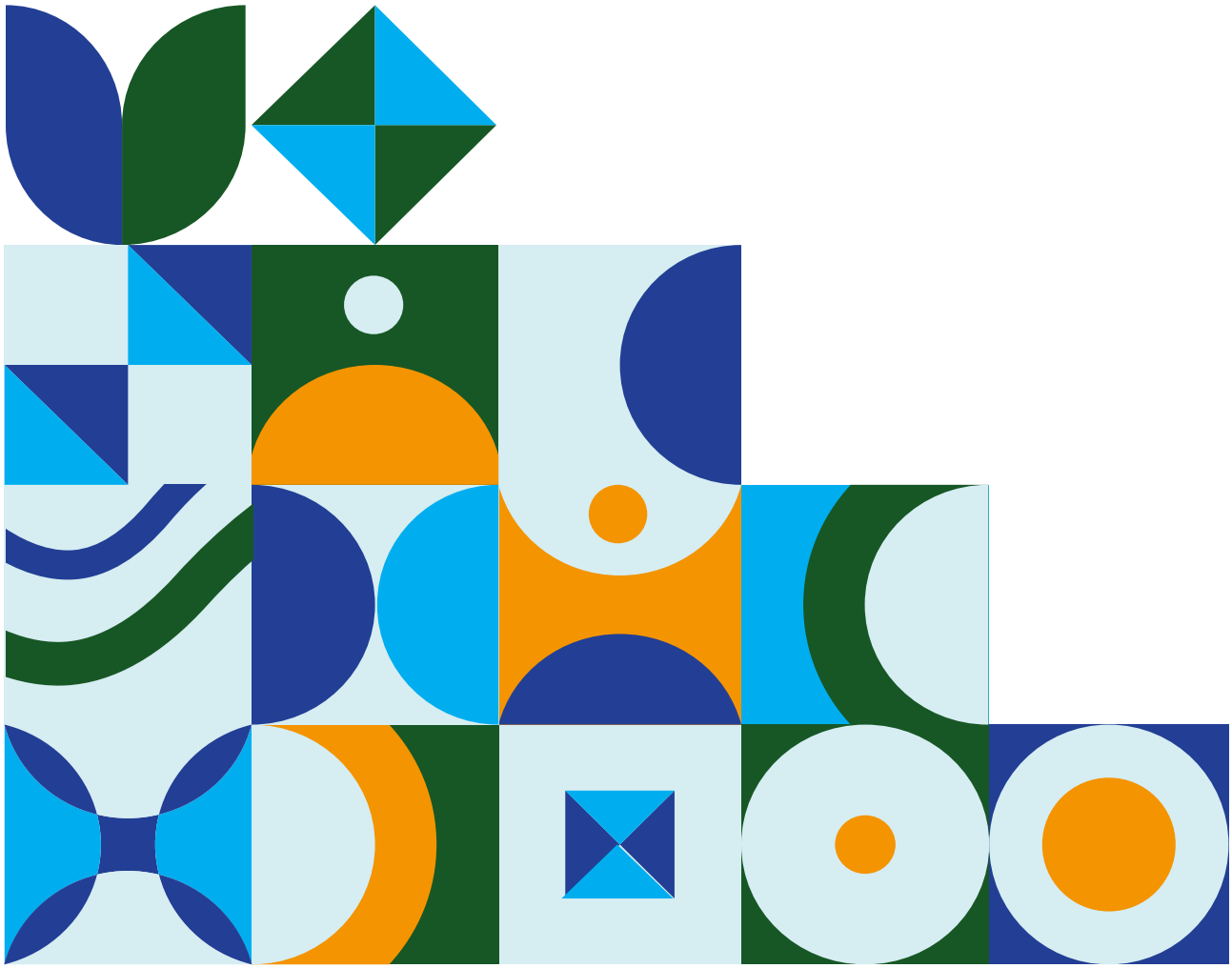
MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2026-2035
FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE

PROMOTE THE “GREEN LIST” (IUCN WORLD PARKS CONGRESS) IN RIPARIAN STATES TO ASSESS THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PARKS MANAGING BODIES CREATED

FACTSHEET



UN environment programme | Mediterranean Action Plan Barcelona Convention

THE IUCN GREEN LIST OF PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS

FACTSHEET

The Mediterranean Protected Areas are at risk from insufficient spatial coverage, planning, management and funding.

The Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas is a global sustainability standard that is used to highlight global successes in protected areas.

Through its Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation the IUCN Green List Programme is engaged in assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of park management bodies across the Mediterranean region and its riparian countries.

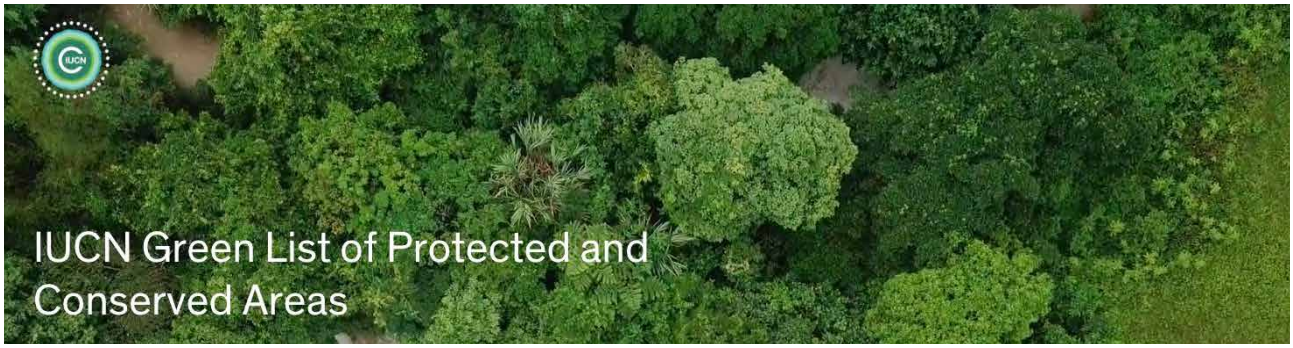
BACKGROUND

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Green List is a global programme of certification aiming to achieve and promote effective, equitable, and successful protected and conserved areas by highlighting best practices, and providing a benchmark for progress towards effective and equitable management.

Its overarching objective is to increase the number of protected and conserved areas that are effectively and equitably managed and deliver conservation outcomes, contributing to SDG 15 “Life on land” and towards meeting Aichi Target 11 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Green List is an important instrument for Protected Areas:

- it requires the demonstration of measurable conservation outcomes that should be appropriate to the site level and its natural value;
- it represents an approach through which an area can define an appropriate, shared and adaptive management plan that engages with stakeholders;
- it includes periodical monitoring of obligations and can therefore help determine whether conservation outcomes are being achieved;
- it allows collaborations in different contexts, both on site and at biogeographic level, as it is a shared and transparent methodology



THE FLAGSHIP IN NUMBERS

Key figures

- The 28% of Mediterranean marine species are endemic, meaning they are exclusively found there
- There are 1,126 officially designated MPAs in the Mediterranean Sea[1]
- 8,33% of the Mediterranean Sea is designated has MPA, of those only 18% has a management plan, the 10% of the MPAs are fully implemented, corresponding to 0,83% of the total surface[2]
- Green List counts 33 sites listed in 5 countries and 9 out of 22 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention

PHOTO/IMAGE

MSSD Objective 2

Improve the health, productivity, restoration and resilience of the marine and coastal ecosystems

MSSD Target 7

By 2030, at least 30 per cent of the Mediterranean Sea is protected and conserved through well connected, ecologically representative and effective systems of marine and coastal protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, ensuring adequate geographical balance, and sustainably managed by applying ecosystem-based approaches including biodiversity and climate change-informed marine spatial planning, and by conducting environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments.

MSSD Dashboard indicator 9a

Number of protected areas participating in the Green List initiative

Contributing to SDG 15

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

[1] **MAPAMED Viewer**

[2] The status of marine protected areas in the Mediterranean Sea (MedPAN) **the-status-of-marine-en10_compressed.pdf (medpan.org)**

THE IUCN GREEN LIST OF PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS

OBJECTIVES

- Reaching the 30% of the Mediterranean Sea surface being effectively protected and managed through the Green List Standard
- Improving the conservation outcomes of the Marine Protected Areas across the Mediterranean
- Implementation of the Green List in all the countries in the Mediterranean basin
- Development of Green List assessment of networks of protected areas to support supranational cooperation through ecological integrity
- Encourage supranational cooperation in Marine Protected Areas and facilitation of knowledge exchange



Fig 1: Expert Assessment Groups for the Green List (EAGLs) in the Mediterranean basin. (Source: IUCN)

LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP

The initiative is managed by IUCN, who implements the Green List programme with a number of partners around the world, including the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre and WWF.

The following countries support the initiative: The Green List is supported and endorsed by the authorities of Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Spain.

The institutions/organizations/programmes support the initiative: Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Minitry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, Nature Conservation, BIOPAMA, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) under the International Climate Initiative (IKI), Huawei, Chinese Academy of Forestry and the European Interreg and Life Programmes.

The programme is implemented in collaboration with several technical institutions that are committed to coordinate the process at the respective national level, among which Federparchi and the IUCN French Committee in Europe and the IUCN World Commission of Protected Areas at the Global scale.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- The IUCN Green List programme in the Euro Mediterranean area is making significant progress in promoting sustainability and conservation efforts in the region. In Italy, three sites have been listed in the Green List and a new national Green List Expert Assessment Group has been formed with the support of IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation and the Italian Ministry of Environment. Spain is continuing its process of assessing former candidate parks and the Expert Assessment Group for Spain is being partially renewed at this moment. France has been implementing the Green List since 2013 and currently has 24 listed sites and 12 ongoing applications. Albania has officially committed to implement the Green List in the country.
- In the North African region, Libya has officially committed to implement the Green List in the Country. Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria have created a regional Expert Assessment Group that is fully operational and in the process of being partially renewed. In the West Asia region there is a fully operational regional Expert Assessment Group. In Egypt two sites have been listed, in Lebanon one site has been re-listed and in Saudi Arabia, 2 sites have been listed. The total number of listed sites in the region is 12, distributed as follows: (2) Egypt, (3) Jordan, (1) Lebanon, (4) Saudi Arabia, (2) United Arab Emirates.



Fig 2: The four pillars of the Green List.

- A Memorandum of Understanding and Implementing Agreement has been signed between IUCN and WWF North Africa to facilitate the implementation of the Green List standard in the North Africa region.
- Significant efforts have been undertaken to reinvigorate the Green List programme in North Africa. In collaboration with national authorities and key partners, refresher workshops on the Green List Standard have been organized in both Tunisia and Morocco. These sessions have enabled candidate sites to carry out self-assessments and identify critical gaps and priorities in site management. This renewed engagement is intended to align protected areas more closely with the Green List requirements and to support their progress in management improvement and eventually toward achieving Green List status. Important efforts are ongoing to consolidate the programme through fundraising.
- An Interreg Euro-MED project on Green List for MPAs has started in January 2024 with the goal of creating guidelines to apply the Global Green List Standard to the particularities of the Mediterranean Marine protected and conserved areas, which may allow to enlarge operations in the region. Moreover, the Act30 project has been approved to support the implementation of the 30x30 commitments in Morocco in 2024 and 2025.
- A regional Mediterranean Marine Green List Expert Assessment Group has been developed and is operational since May 2025 to support the assessment of Marine sites in the Mediterranean area.

CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

- Launched at COP28 in Dubai by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) and technology company Esri, Act30 brings together a wide network of scientific experts and Indigenous peoples' representatives to help governments chart an effective and fair route to conserving their countries' biodiverse areas. The initiative is designed to support the 190 governments that have committed to the 30x30 target of conserving 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas by 2030, under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, agreed in December 2022.
- An important global initiative for Green List has been financed worldwide and is funding a new Green List Coordinator full-time position at the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation to support the Green List Mediterranean programme and coordinate the Green List programme in the European region.
- These latest developments will further allow expanding the impact and actions of this flagship initiative, aligned with the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

KEY REFERENCES

- IUCN and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) (2017). IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas: Standard, Version 1.1. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN
- IUCN, World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and Assurance Services International (ASI) (2019). IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas: User Manual, Version 1.2. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN
- MedPAN and UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC, 2023. The 2020 Status of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean. By Neveu R., Ganot D., Ducarme F., El Asmi S, Kheriji A. and Gallon S. Ed UNEP/MAP-SPA/RAC & MedPAN. Tunis 147 pages+Annexes
- Gomei M., Abdulla A., Schröder C., Yadav S., Sánchez A., Rodríguez D., Abdul Malak D. (2021) [original 2019]. Towards 2020: how Mediterranean countries are performing to protect their sea. Rev. ed., 36 pages

WEBSITES

- IUCN Green List Home - IUCN Green List
- Act30 | Rooted in tradition | Guided by experts | Conserve 30% by 2030
- Homepage - Interreg Euro-MED - GreenList4MMPAs (interreg-euro-med.eu)
- the-status-of-marine-en10_compressed.pdf (medpan.org)
- Safeguarding the Mediterranean Sea | WWF (panda.org)