

MedPartnership: A New GEF Project in the Mediterranean

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The Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership) is the largest project ever in the Mediterranean, with funding of over 100 million US\$ including investments and co-financing, and is the first project to bring together some of the main partners working in the Mediterranean for joint implementation of actions. It is one of the largest projects in the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Large Marine Ecosystem portfolio. MedPartnership consists of two projects: Regional Project (led by United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan – UNEP/MAP), and Investment Fund (led by the World Bank). The Regional Project has 4 components (management of natural resources; reduction of land based pollution; biodiversity conservation and protection; and project management including communication and replication). The Investment Fund has so far identified 11 investment projects. The Project will be carried out in the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. The Palestinian Authority also participates. Its duration is 5 years and will be completed by mid 2014.

The major environmental concerns and 101 hotspots in the Mediterranean were identified in the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA). The actions for their remediation were identified and agreed in two Strategic Action Programs (SAPs) aimed at reducing land-based sources of marine pollution (SAP-MED) and protecting biodiversity and living resources and their habitats (SAP-BIO). In order to support the countries in the implementation of the two SAPs, as well as to support the implementation of the new Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol to the Barcelona Convention, the MedPartnership will address the need for financial resources and investments (led by the World Bank) and the assistance in policy, legislation and institutional reforms, as well as the demonstration and transfer of technical knowledge and best practices (led by UNEP/MAP) to achieve the goal of improving the environmental conditions of the Mediterranean Sea. Executing partners of the project include UNESCO/IHP, FAO, UNIDO, UNEP/MAP's regional activity centers (CP/RAC, SPA/RAC, PAP/RAC and INFO/RAC) and the programme MEDPOL. Non-governmental organizations include GWP-Med, MIO-ECSDE and WWF.

The Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean will result in some of the following:

- A long term partnership for joint planning and financing in the Mediterranean;
- The improvement of environmental conditions in 15% of Hotspots and sensitive areas;
- More sustainable use of coastal resources through use of IW and ICZM;
- The reduction of pollution from land based sources;
- More sustainable use of fisheries resources through the adoption of an ecosystem based approach to fisheries, and improved protection of critical biodiversity;
- The replication and scaling up of investment projects and demonstrations, etc.

Results of the 2 years of MedPartnership's implementation will be presented as well as an outline of the final product of the project and its contribution to the improvement of the Mediterranean LME.

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