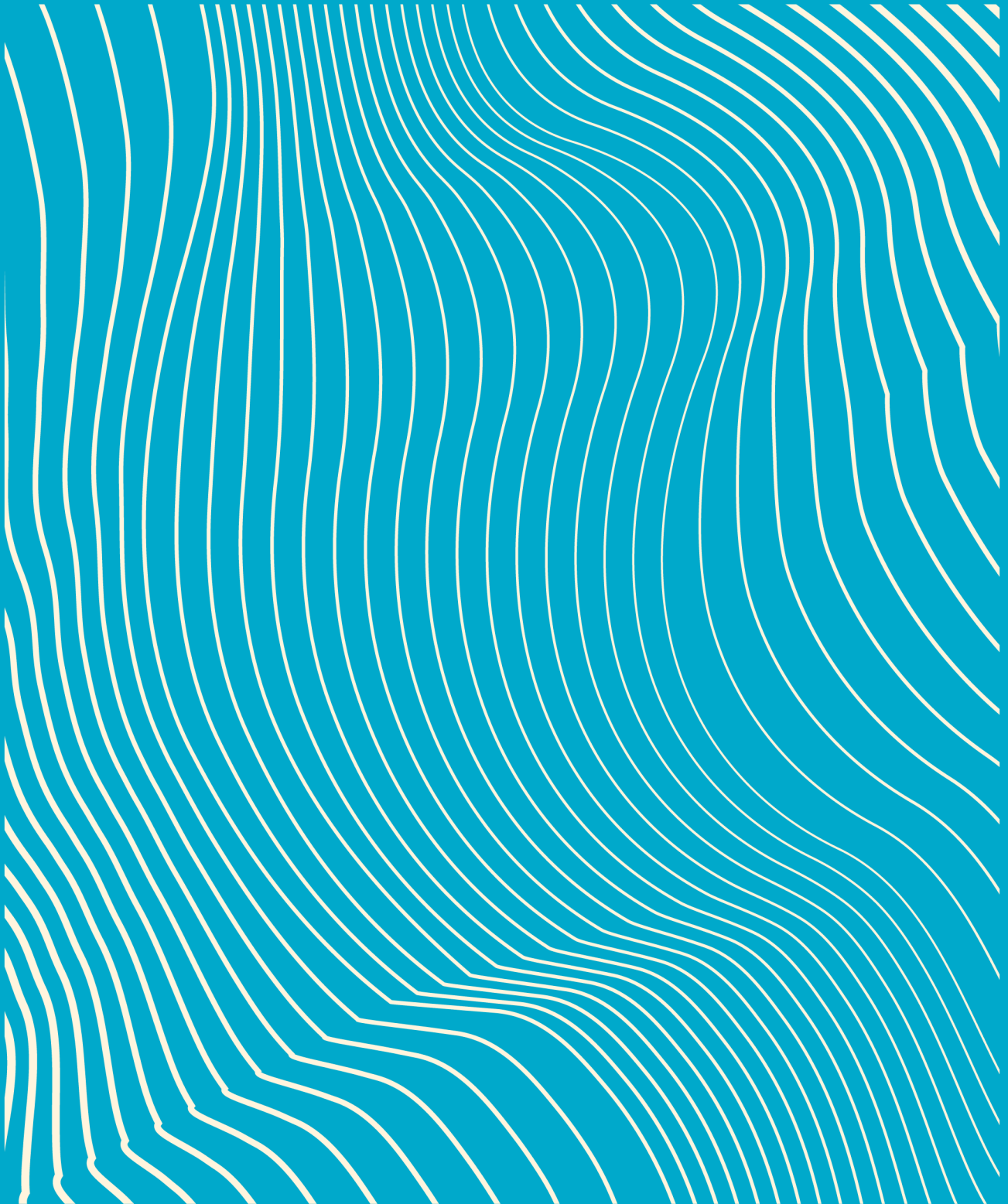


# FINAL INTEGRATED PROJECT REPORT



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*The report was prepared as part of the Transboundary CAMP Otranto project.*

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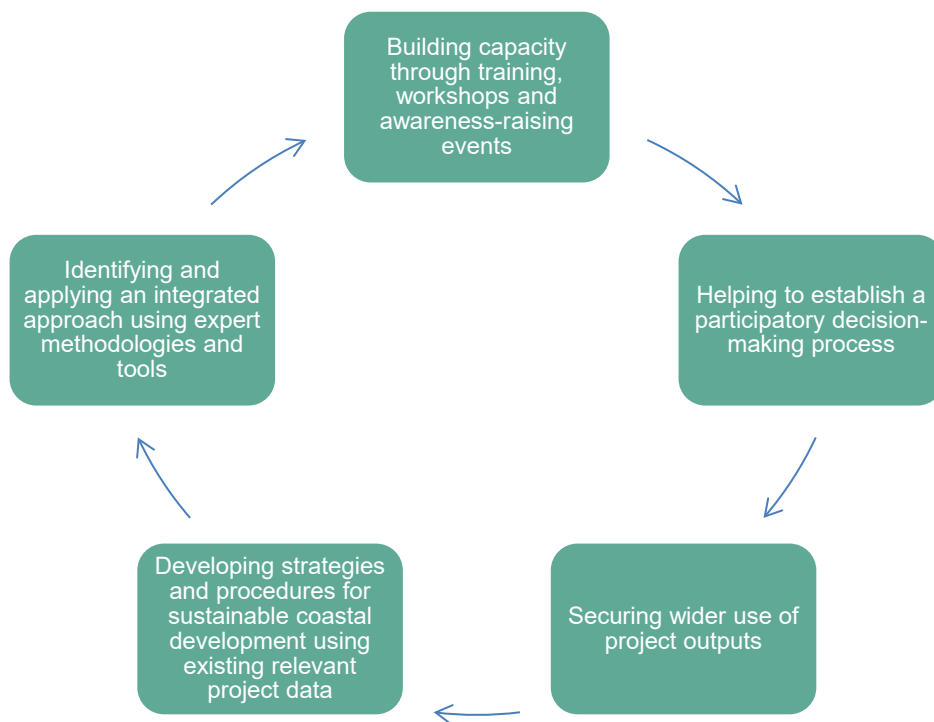


# 1. Introduction

CAMP Otranto is the first transboundary project since the launch of the Coastal Area Management Programme (CAMP) in 1989. As country-driven projects designed to respond to local, national, and regional priorities in the Mediterranean, CAMPs constitute an example of the local-level implementation of the [Protocol](#) on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) to the Barcelona Convention.

CAMPs are coordinated by PAP/RAC, the Regional Activity Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme’s Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), together with national governments, and are part of an international and multiagency collaborative effort to reconcile the challenges of coastal development with environmental protection.

Underpinning sustainability and resilience, the CAMP framework ensures a long-term impact by:



Implemented within the context of the **Transboundary CAMP Otranto project**, this step-by-step process highlighted the key environmental issues which compromise the future of the Otranto area as a biodiversity hotspot. By testing the CAMP methodology on a transboundary scale and fostering cross-sector collaboration, the project aimed to combat marine litter, mitigate coastal and marine pollution, and support biodiversity conservation in the project regions of Vlora (Albania) and Puglia (Italy) – including marine areas within and beyond national jurisdiction,

impacting both Albania and Italy despite differing natural, juridical, and socio-economic conditions.

The outcomes of these efforts and the approach taken to address the significant challenges of sustainable coastal management have contributed to securing a greener future for economic and ecological development in the Otranto Strait. This made it a success story paving the way for future CAMP initiatives and committing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

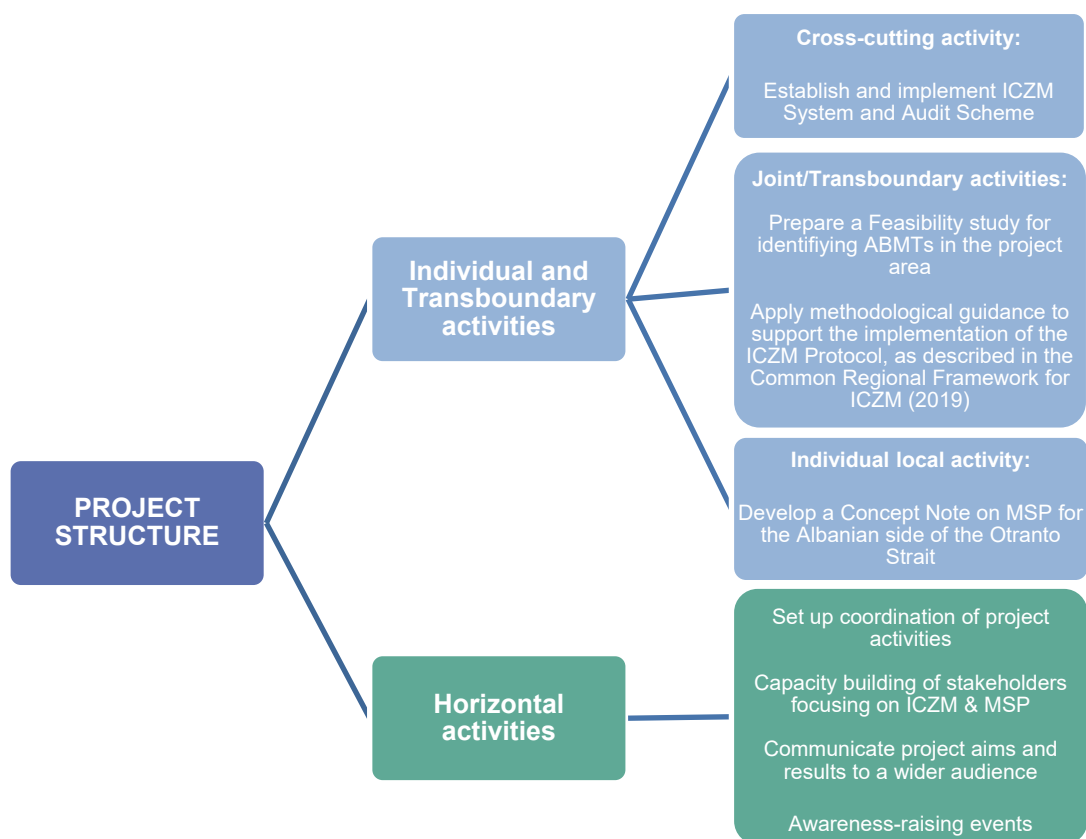
## 2. Overview of the project

The Transboundary Coastal Area Management Programme project for the Otranto Strait between Albania and Italy (**Transboundary CAMP Otranto**), was initiated following the endorsement of the project feasibility study by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in 2019. The Project Agreement, signed in March 2021, involved the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania (AMTE), the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy (IMEES), and the Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) of the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP).

Within the overarching goal of testing transboundary integrated management of coastal zones through the implementation of ICZM and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), the actions of CAMP Otranto aimed to:

- reduce pollution, with particular attention to marine litter, by developing and sharing best practices between Italy and Albania
- enhance the sustainability of the tourism sector by evaluating selected tourism activities
- preserve, protect, and restore the health and integrity of coastal and marine ecosystems, especially within existing and potential sites of the Natura 2000 Network. This involved examining various Area-Based Management Tools (ABMTs) and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), both within and beyond national jurisdiction (AWNJ and ABNJ).

The project was structured based on the conceptual CAMP framework, which encompassed:



*Individual and Transboundary activities concentrate on executing specific Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) activities at the local, national, and transboundary levels, aligning with the primary project objectives. Horizontal activities, conversely, stem from data, relevant issues, and discussions initiated by the Individual and Transboundary activities.*

To facilitate the execution of these key actions from March 2021 to December 2023, IMEES voluntarily allocated a total budget of 450,000 euros to the

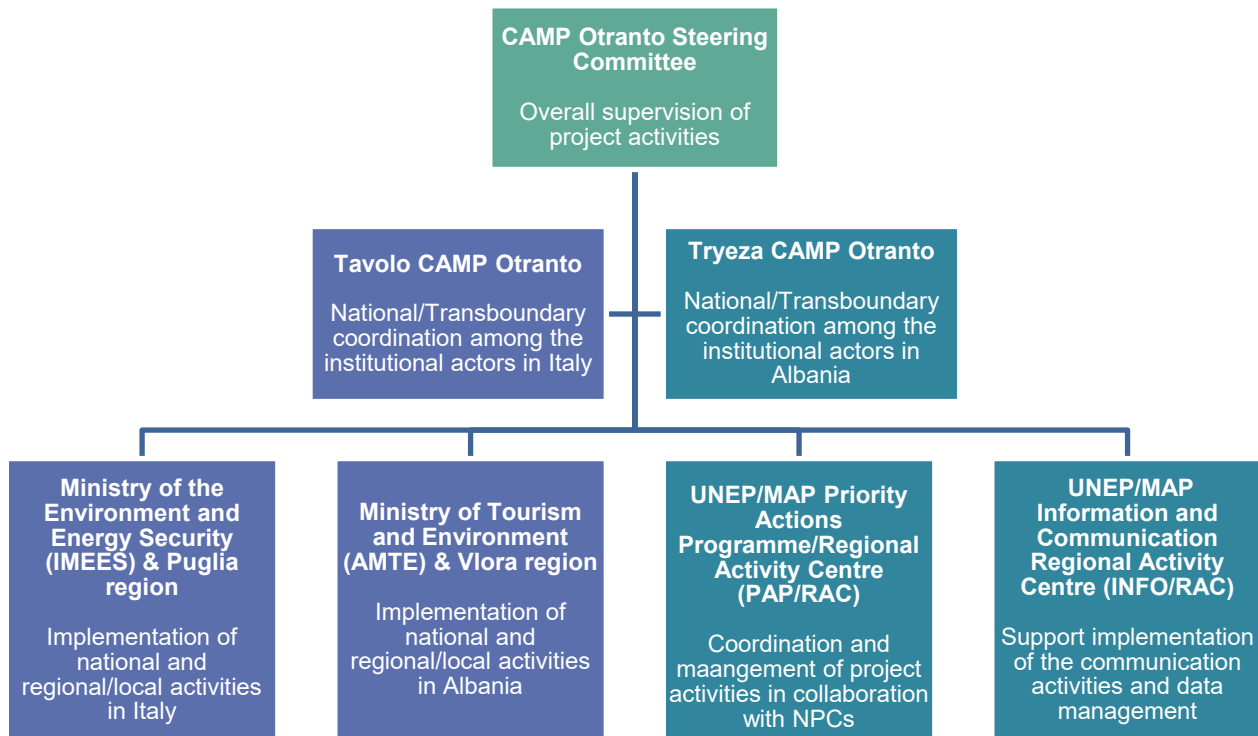
Agreement, with a contribution of 110,000 euros through the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF).

### 3. Coordination

The operational management of the project involved coordination, monitoring, and integration of project results to ensure the timely and complete implementation of all actions and related activities, as well as fostering cooperation between project partners. Given its nature as a Transboundary CAMP project spanning two countries and their respective regions, the project embodies a shared responsibility among the following actors: CAMP Otranto Steering Committee, Tryeza CAMP, Tavolo CAMP, National Project Coordinators (NPCs), and the MAP Project Coordinator (MPC).

The diagram below illustrates a three-level organizational structure:

1. **Strategic level:** defines the main themes to be developed for specific project activities and deliverables
2. **National level:** specifies the activities and deliverables for each theme in respective project countries
3. **Operational/activity level:** focuses on the operational implementation of activities at joint/transboundary or local/site-specific levels.



Integration of project results entailed organizing key project events such as kick-off meetings, inception and mid-term workshops, as well as coordinating meetings at the Steering Committee and Tryeza/Tavolo CAMP levels. Additionally, cooperation with relevant national institutions and administrations, regional departments, municipalities, and other local actors was also envisaged to ensure comprehensive engagement and alignment with key stakeholders at various levels of governance and implementation.

Specific deliverables of this specific horizontal activity included:

- establishing the project structure to facilitate efficient coordination and communication among partners and stakeholders
- conducting coordination activities to ensure smooth progress and collaboration throughout the project
- preparation of progress reports to document the advancements, challenges, and achievements of the project at various stages.

During the inception phase of the project (June 2021-March 2022), including the online Inception workshop organized on 1 December 2021, the groundwork was laid for the full implementation of project activities.

Throughout this period, the following documents were prepared and adopted:

- the Inception Report, detailing the project work plan
- the Project Agreement, formalizing the commitments and responsibilities of all involved parties
- the concept and design of the CAMP Otranto project logo, representing the project's visual identity.

The project coordination team, consisting of the National Project Coordinator for Albania (Mr Rezart Kapedani until July 2023 and subsequently, Ms Ina Janushi), the National Project Coordinator for Italy (Ms Daniela Addis), the Transboundary Project Coordinator (Ms Marina Marković) and PAP/RAC Programme Officer (Ms Tea Marasović), conducted regular coordination meetings once a week. Additionally, as needed, meetings with project partners were convened, followed by timely drafting of the required documentation and meeting reports.

The Steering Committee meetings, as well as Tavolo and Tryeza meetings, played a key role as the primary coordination pillars, providing support to the project coordination team's efforts.

### 3.1. Steering Committee meetings

Following the adopted Rules of Procedures, the Steering Committee (SC) held regular meetings to review the project's progress and discuss upcoming activities, totalling five sessions.

During the initial meeting, held online on 1 December 2021, the Steering Committee determined the basic operational procedures for the project implementation and discussed the circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second SC meeting was conducted online on 10 November 2022 with a follow-up on 21 December 2022, during which the SC members adopted the 1<sup>st</sup> Progress Report covering the period of January to November 2022 and agreed on the presented work plan for the upcoming 6-month period.

The third Steering Committee meeting was held on 10 May 2023 in Brindisi, followed by a trilateral meeting involving Albanian and Italian representatives and PAP/RAC on 11 May 2023. Among its operational decisions concerning project reporting requirements

and hiring additional experts, the SC identified the 8<sup>th</sup> *Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)* (23–25 May 2023, Sarajevo) and the *Mediterranean Coast Day* celebration (25 September 2023, Albania) as forums to publicize and present the project, using these opportunities to highlight local activities such as MSP. Furthermore, the SC emphasized that, where relevant, all project capacity building events should preferably include transboundary partners as speakers and participants.

During the fourth Steering Committee meeting, which was held online on 23 October 2023, the primary focus was on reviewing the progress of planned project activities and finalizing arrangements for the Final conference in Tirana (Albania). Discussions emphasized the importance of achieving all project objectives and milestones successfully, alongside effectively managing logistics for the conference.

The fifth SC meeting took place on 12 December 2023, coinciding with the Final conference in Tirana. During the meeting, the SC conducted a comprehensive review of all completed project activities, placing particular emphasis on the remarkable results achieved, notably with Individual activities and training courses. These initiatives garnered significant success among participants and institutions at both local and national levels. Looking ahead, the SC expressed its intent to capitalize on these achievements and agreed to draft a dedicated policy paper for presentation to the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention. Additionally, discussions centred on the potential for promoting future bilateral collaborations, with plans to extend the scope to encompass the entire Adriatic basin.

### 3.2. Tavolo CAMP meetings (Italy)

Following the Rules of Procedures and the MoU between IMEES and the Puglia region, the Tavolo CAMP Otranto held four online meetings, with participation from the Italian project partners and the National Project Coordinator for Italy.

During the Tavolo CAMP kick-off meeting, held on 4 February 2022, the attendees stressed the importance of establishing a dedicated platform on the project website to share all relevant project documents.



Moreover, they identified potential participants and conducted a needs assessment for capacity building activities:

- Coastal municipalities and local authorities within the project area
- Puglia region representatives
- Professional associations
- Coast Guard and other similar entities who can take advantage of training opportunities at territorial and non-territorial levels
- Local fishermen (involvement in “fishing for litter” actions)
- Members of regional fisheries advisory bodies
- Port authorities (especially concerning the issue of green ports)
- Sailing clubs along the coastal strip within the project area.

The second meeting on 16 September 2022 reflected on the political elections in Italy which led to changes in top management. Consequently, capacity building events in the Puglia region were rescheduled. Additionally, the meeting underscored the importance of leveraging the *Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)* as a valuable opportunity to promote the project’s activities and results.

Along with the project partners and NPC, experts responsible for the preparation of the ICZM SAS, ABMT Feasibility Study and ICZM Methodological Guidance expert studies (refer to Chapter 4. Project achievements) convened at the third Tavolo CAMP meeting on 14 February 2023. Two Tryeza CAMP members attended as observers. During the meeting, the experts presented drafts of their outputs, highlighted their need for further support from the partners, and discussed the next steps. Another key topic of discussion was the organization of training courses and awareness events. Draft agendas and participant lists were reviewed in detail to ensure effective planning and execution.

The fourth Tavolo CAMP meeting was held on 16 October 2023 with the participation of stakeholders from ARPA Puglia, representatives from the Municipality of Otranto (including the mayor), and the two expert teams responsible for developing the ABMT Feasibility Study and Methodological Guidance. During the meeting, the tentative date for the Final conference in Tirana was agreed upon, with a preference for

organizing it in a hybrid format. Additionally, the agenda for the ‘ABMTs and OECMs’ training course, scheduled for 14 November 2023, was established. Furthermore, agreements were reached to provide the Methodological Guidance expert team with feedback to enhance the usability of the EIAT tool and add comments for improving the questionnaire. Similarly, the Tavolo CAMP agreed to provide the ABMT Feasibility Study expert team with the necessary materials and information, while also requesting specific amendments to be made in the study.

### 3.3. Tryeza CAMP meetings (Albania)

Starting from 23 November 2022, Tryeza CAMP has convened on multiple virtual occasions, with its members actively participating in Tavolo CAMP meetings. This dual participation has facilitated in-depth discussions on matters of common interest.

At the first meeting, held online on 10 January 2023 with participation from NAPA in Tirana and RAPA in Vlora, the Tryeza CAMP Otranto approved and initiated the organization of a workshop with regional stakeholders on 26 January 2023 in Vlora. Its purpose was to showcase the project’s progress and the upcoming activities in the region. Additionally, Tryeza members affirmed their commitment to support the designated data expert with any requirements that may arise during the execution of their assignments.

The second Tryeza CAMP meeting, held online on 2 March 2023, was also attended by Mr Jaupaj from AMTE and members of Tavolo CAMP Otranto to reflect on shared project activities. During the meeting, Tryeza CAMP Otranto endorsed the work plan for the upcoming six-month period and approved the topics for training sessions along with proposed draft agendas. Additionally, Tryeza members emphasized the importance of exploring opportunities for activities related to data collection in the region and utilizing the obtained data for the national monitoring system.

The third Tryeza CAMP meeting, held online on October 13, 2023, concentrated on project deliverables, including draft training sessions with agendas and potential attendee lists. Additionally, Tryeza members engaged in planning upcoming activities, particularly the Final conference which took place in Tirana.

## 4. Project achievements

### 4.1.

#### Thematic studies

##### 4.1.1.

#### Feasibility Study for Area-Based Management Tools (ABMTs) in the Otranto Area

The principal objective of this transboundary activity was to draft a Feasibility Study for the identification and establishment of ABMTs in the Otranto Strait, encompassing the coastal zones of the Puglia region (Italy) and Vlora region (Albania). This initiative sought to treat these two national zones and the transboundary strait as a 'single complex project area'. A draft report concerning the establishment and designation of ABMTs in the Otranto area was prepared in July 2023, with the final version of the Feasibility Study completed in December 2023.

In close collaboration and under the guidance of the project coordinating team, the development process of the Feasibility Study included the following stages:

##### *a) Assessing environmental status and pressures, and existing measures*

This assessment provided an overview of several key aspects:

- Ecosystems and biodiversity status in the area
- Blue economy, focusing on fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, maritime transport, and energy
- Main pressures in the area, with particular emphasis on anthropogenic pressures impacting marine and coastal ecosystems and biodiversity
- Existing ecosystem and biodiversity spatial protection measures in the area, including those already in place and planned.

In addition, the study analysed existing cultural heritage, including underwater heritage, along with coastal and marine landscapes as an essential feature of the human environment for introducing ABMTs. The assessments were accompanied by detailed mapping of protected areas and economic activities as well as the identification of overlapping areas.

##### *b) Policy and governance analysis*

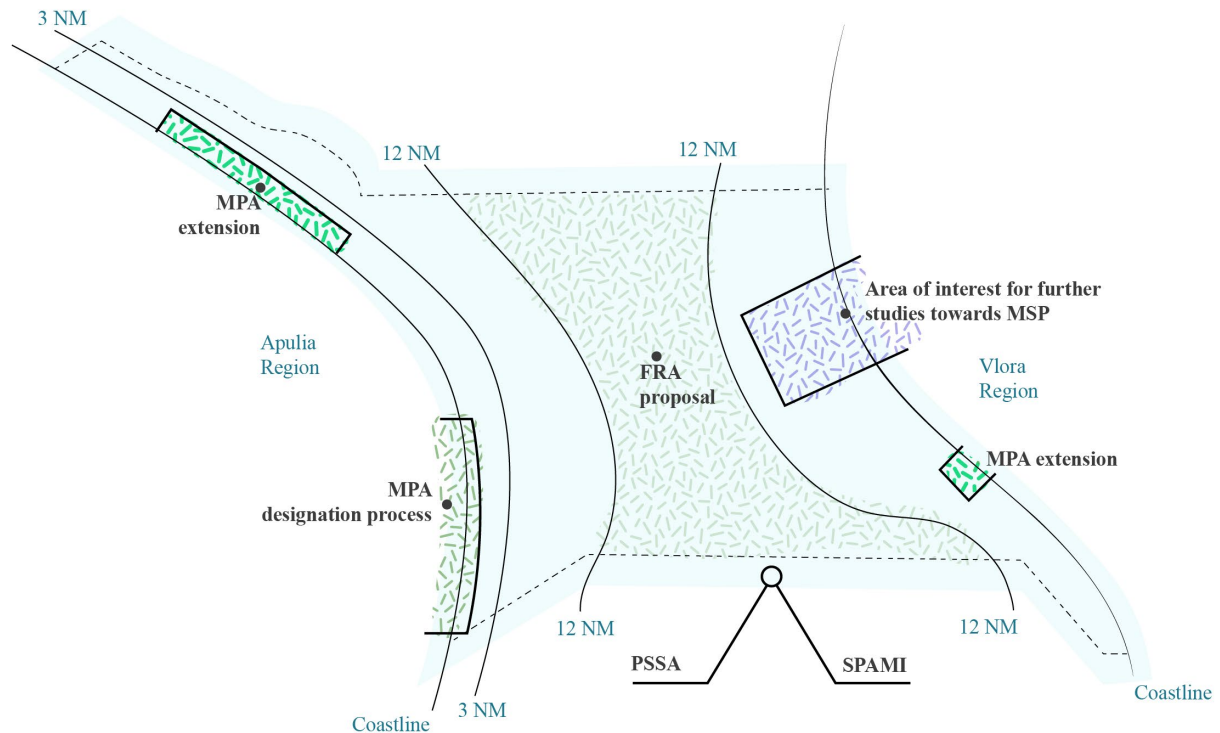
A comprehensive policy and governance analysis was carried out to identify the existing management strategies in Italy and Albania and the legal foundations for cooperation in establishing ABMTs and potential co-management of the transboundary area. This analysis included an evaluation of the international legal framework, incorporating insights from the Legal Study for extending the project's scope beyond national jurisdiction in the Transboundary CAMP project between Albania and Italy. Furthermore, detailed assessments of national and sub-national legal and institutional frameworks were conducted.

##### *c) Proposal of tools and elaboration of preliminary measures*

Grounded on the Policy and governance analysis, the Feasibility Study presented two options for the establishment of ABMTs in the Otranto area.

The first option proposes various legal tools that Albania and Italy can utilize within or beyond their territorial seas. These include the establishment of new or enlargement of existing protected areas and the establishment of other ABMTs, such as Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA), Fisheries Restricted Area (FRA) and Specially Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI). Moreover, two additional areas in Albania have been recognized as relevant for further consideration and study in the framework of MSP. The first option has the potential to contribute to achieving the 30 x 30 target, for both the Kunming-Montreal CBD targets and the Post-2020 Barcelona Convention targets.

The second option envisions the establishment of an integrated cooperation scheme through the establishment of the 'Otranto Strait Transboundary Area of Cooperation' (OSTAC). This option builds upon the tools proposed in option one and aims to establish a more integrated level of cooperation between Albania and Italy when appropriate. Each proposed tool is accompanied by details regarding its spatial scope, management objectives and specific measures.



Conceptual scheme – options for the establishment of ABMTs in the Otranto area

#### d) Stakeholder involvement

Following the outline presentation of the Feasibility Study during the Tavolo CAMP meeting on 14 February 2023, the experts presented the first draft to stakeholders from both Albania and Italy on 11 May 2023, during the Mid-term conference which took place in Brindisi. On 16 October 2023, the FS experts provided updates during the fourth Tavolo CAMP meeting. The focus was on outlining the general approach to ABMTs in the project area, identification of the critical environmental issues and possible ABMTs to be established, enhanced, or reinforced in the area.

Subsequently, the Tavolo CAMP requested to:

- include MPA Otranto-Santa Maria di Leuca as the ABMT proposal on the Italian side of the Otranto Strait
- include references to the recent regulation of amberjack fishing in the Otranto Strait area
- clarify that the FRA proposal included in the FS refers to the proposal already made to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) by MedReact in 2018

- include the possible identification of a special area for Annex II to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) in the framework of the potential application of the PSSA instrument
- envisage the possible inclusion of option two (the agreement between Italy and Albania) in the framework of the EUSAIR cooperation and enable the inclusion of other states of the region
- include regional coastal protected areas based on input from the Puglia region.

Moreover, direct consultations with Albanian partners were organized to specify the locations for ABMTs in Albania. Based on specific national requirements, proposed ABMTs for areas in Karaburn and Vlora Bay were adjusted to be considered in further studies regarding Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP).

The key findings of the final version of the [Feasibility study](#) were presented during the Final conference held on 13 December 2023 in Tirana.

Translations in Albanian and Italian are available on the project website through the '[Resources](#)' webpage.

### e) StoryMap

Created with the ArcGIS program using a wide range of maps, the StoryMap encapsulates the data and recommendations from the Feasibility Study, specifically focusing on the establishment of ABMT in the Otranto area. Showcasing the key findings using a storytelling approach, the [StoryMap](#) 'Exploring the ABMT Feasibility Study for the Otranto Strait' aims to reach a broader audience. It can also be accessed on the project website through the '[Resources](#)' webpage,

### 4.1.2. ICZM Methodological Guidance Towards Reaching Good Environmental Status (GES)

The ICZM Methodological Guidance towards reaching GES is a methodology developed by PAP/RAC as part of the Common Regional Framework (CRF) for ICZM (2019). As a transboundary activity within the CAMP Otranto project scheme, it focused on the following outputs:

- Elaboration of an interaction matrix between ecological objectives (EOs), economic activities and natural and cultural elements that have great relevance to the Otranto Strait and its coastal areas, including the identification of the most relevant interactions
- Preparation of Operational Recommendations for the Otranto area based on the outcomes of the interaction matrix.

Under the guidance of the project team from August 2022 to December 2023, the Methodological Guidance for achieving GES through ICZM was updated utilizing the DPSIR (*Drivers, Pressures, States, Impacts, Responses*) approach and subsequently tested in the pilot area using available data.

As part of this initiative, the following activities were undertaken:

#### a) Updating the matrix of interactions

During this initial stage, a comprehensive proposal was drafted for the updated version of the CRF methodological approach. The proposal was designed to link the EOs of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) and the driving economic activities, as well as the natural (coastal

landscape, seascape, and ecosystems) and cultural (cultural heritage) elements relevant to coastal areas, in accordance with the ICZM Protocol. The updated matrix of interactions, grounded on the DPSIR assessment methodology, provides a methodological framework and step-by-step guidance for the practical implementation of the methodology. As a result, it represents a significant enhancement of the original methodology.

Furthermore, an assessment tool in Excel format was created to facilitate the practical application of the methodology. This tool enables a comprehensive examination of the entire coastal zone, allowing for the identification and prioritization of the most relevant interactions between EOs and elements of the ICZM Protocol. These outputs constitute a crucial contribution of the project to the implementation of the CRF for ICZM in the Mediterranean region.

#### b) Testing the methodology

The proposed qualitative-quantitative scoring system for assessing the cumulative effects of the environmental pressures/impacts has undergone testing in the Vlorë and Puglia regions. This methodology facilitated the aggregation and ranking of elements in the pressure/impact matrices using specific parameters, such as ICZM zone, pressure type, and type of underlying economic driver.

Moreover, the tool enabled the linkage of identified impacts with primary driving pressures and economic activities. The effectiveness and significance of this trace-back procedure are strongly subject to the level of detail and data availability. However, the testing process revealed significant data scarcity, resulting in various gaps and inadequate outcomes. Nevertheless, the methodology testing affirmed the utility and operational feasibility of the tool, which can be further tested and updated for future use within the Barcelona Convention system.

#### c) Stakeholders' consultations

In addition to regular online meetings with the project team to discuss draft content, updates, and clarify project requirements, the experts have actively participated in several Tavolo CAMP meetings. During the first meeting on 14 February 2023, the experts presented the methodology outline and engaged in

discussions regarding the data requirements necessary to finalize the methodology. The Tavolo CAMP contributed to the development of the questionnaire to ensure its completeness and compatibility with the environmental information framework. The second meeting, held on 16 October 2023, focused on the methodology testing and its future application, encompassing the data collection process and data quality, while also considering cross-border aspects and additional assessment approaches.

The draft outputs and primary findings of the study were presented during the Mid-term conference in Brindisi on May 11, 2023. The concluding results were showcased during the Final conference in Tirana on December 13, 2023. These conferences served as crucial milestones for disseminating project progress and outcomes to a wider community of relevant stakeholders.

The final version of the ICZM Methodological Guidance study can be accessed [here](#), while the translations in Albanian and Italian can be accessed on the project website through the '[Resources](#)' webpage.

### 4.1.3. ICZM System and Audit Scheme (ICZM SAS)

The cross-cutting ICZM System and Audit Scheme (ICZM SAS) activity was designed as a combination of knowledge dissemination and practical actions targeting the local community and stakeholders at different levels. Its primary objectives included proposing an effective operational methodology for the application of the audit scheme and testing this methodology within the project area.

The ICZM SAS activity was undertaken from July 2022 to December 2023 with the aim of growing into a leading instrument for ICZM management, in alignment with the ICZM Protocol and the ICZM Common Regional Framework. Functioning as a 'label', it certifies adherence to ICZM principles, with initial validation carried out by a recognized competent body (PAP/RAC and national ministries responsible for the environment). The overarching goal was to develop a replicable methodology to facilitate its application in other Mediterranean areas.

The key outputs of this activity include:

- development of a proposal for the ICZM SAS, along with the corresponding ICZM SAS report)
- implementation of selected activities to showcase the practical utility of ICZM SAS.

In collaboration with and under the direction of the project team, the expert has drafted the conceptual framework document for the ICZM System and Audit Scheme. This document served as guidance for the identification, application, and evaluation process.

The implementation of the ICZM SAS activity included the following stages:

#### a) *Detailing the conceptual framework for the ICZM SAS*

Building upon the proposed approach, general principles and indicators have been developed, establishing the foundational framework for the comprehensive methodology. This framework includes detailing the auditing process, elaborating on descriptive and qualifying indicators, and proposing strategies for visibility and promotion. The ICZM SAS is grounded in the main objectives and principles of ICZM, which serve as the basis of the overall auditing assessment:

- Supporting and promoting sustainable livelihood
- Sustainably using natural resources
- Preserving coastal ecosystems, landscapes, and seascapes
- Preventing and/or reducing the risks and negative impacts of activities and infrastructure on the coastal zone
- Preventing and/or reducing the effects of natural hazards, particularly those associated with climate change
- Strengthening social capital, including the use of traditional knowledge
- Preserving cultural heritage.

Based on these objectives, comprehensive guidance for both applicants and evaluators has been prepared. The [framework document](#) has been drafted in English (accompanied by five annexes), with translations into Albanian and Italian languages available on the project website through the '[Resources](#)' webpage.

#### b) *Stakeholders' consultations*

The ICZM Management System and Audit Scheme activity was first introduced to project stakeholders

during a local workshop ‘CAMP Otranto and the collaboration between countries for coastal and marine management’ on 26 January 2023, in the city of Vlora. The workshop outlined the purpose and anticipated results of the activity. During the Tavolo CAMP meeting on 14 February 2023), while discussing the identification of potential activities suitable for auditing in both countries, a proposal was made to select two or three activities representing different entities. One of these proposed entities was the *Consorzio di gestione di Torre Guaceto* (Marine Protected Area in Puglia region). This approach would enable a more comprehensive testing of the methodology. Additionally, the Tavolo members also addressed the need to develop a logo for the ICZM SAS label.

Following the preliminary outputs, consultations were organized with project partners and relevant stakeholders to elaborate on the key methodological aspects and findings. These sessions aimed to gather feedback for further enhancements. Draft outputs were presented at Steering Committee meetings, Tavolo CAMP (14 February 2023) and Tryeza CAMP meetings (2 March 2023), as well as during awareness events.

During the Mid-term conference in Brindisi (11 May 2023), the expert provided a detailed description of the application process, which includes a self-evaluation based on a traffic light system. Furthermore, during the awareness workshop on collaborative coastal management and training on marine litter management held on 31 May 2023 in Otranto, the expert demonstrated the ICZM SAS criteria using two examples related to sustainable fishing – the utilization of sustainable fishing techniques (e.g. low-impact methods, and the use of ecological and biodegradable materials where feasible) and reductions in emissions of pollutants at sea, including proper waste management on board, the use of green fuels, and the implementation of solar electrical equipment. The final methodology overview was presented to the relevant project stakeholders at the Final conference.

### *c) Testing the application of the methodology*

The application of the ICZM SAS methodology was tested with the support of two technical experts possessing experience and specific knowledge, including familiarity with the local aspects of each region. They conducted surveys for the preliminary

identification of public and private entities potentially suitable for labelling, compiled a shortlist of the most relevant entities and assisted the preselected entities in preparing their self-assessments.

National ICZM SAS teams collaborated closely with national and local authorities to identify the most suitable private and public entities as ICZM SAS labelling candidates. An inventory of entities potentially suitable for SAS testing was developed, primarily considering the following five categories:

- Protected natural areas (MPAs, Parks, Natura 2000 sites, etc.)
- Agriculture activities located in the coastal area
- Aquaculture or fishery activities
- Ports, marinas, and private yacht clubs
- Touristic and pleasure facilities (restaurants, hotels, beach club, etc.)

These entities were assessed according to the following criteria:

- Proximity to the coastline (within 10 km from the sea)
- Connection to marine and terrestrial protected natural areas
- Type of activity performed
- Type of entity (e.g. public and private).

The selection process aimed for a balanced representation of both public and private sectors, encompassing government agencies, non-governmental organizations, research institutions, and businesses engaged in activities influencing coastal areas. After the initial screening and shortlist analysis, a total of seven entities were selected, representing all main categories with the exemption of ‘aquaculture or fishery activities’.

#### *Albania*

- Administrata Rajonale e Zonave të Mbrojtura, Vlora
- Farmer ‘Simo Konomi’
- Regina Group
- Musai Olive Oil sh.p.k

#### *Italy*

- Società Agricola Agritour Srl – ‘Tenuta Corallo’
- Consorzio di gestione di Torre Guaceto
- Capitaneria di Porto di Brindisi

Based on the self-assessments, interviews, and external audit assessments, the ICZM SAS certification was approved for six entities. During the Final conference in Tirana, representatives of these entities received a certificate of appreciation for supporting coastal sustainability and participating in the development of the ICZM System and Audit Scheme.

#### *d) Developing the Visual identity for ICZM SAS*

To facilitate the future use and dissemination of the ICZM label, a dedicated visual identity was meticulously created, aligning with the focal provisions of the ICZM Protocol.

Landscape visuals were used as inspiration for the design and shaping of the lines that mark the many coastline combinations. The main sign symbolizes the unity of land and water, whereas the secondary sign combines the primary shape with the unique topography

to encompass all areas addressed by the ICZM Protocol. The lines are made in a single stroke and are soft and rounded to depict and emphasize the dynamic approach of ICZM.

The colour combinations draw inspiration from the natural hues found along coastlines, including those of the sea, land, and surrounding environment. Blue serves as the primary colour, which is blended with other complementary colours to create gradients that reflect the interconnectedness of different types of terrains.

Moreover, additional communication materials were developed, including a letterhead, stamp, ICZM SAS Award certificate template, brochure, roll-up, notebook, tote bag, and a dynamic GIF animation showcasing the visual identity. Colour gradients and newly designed forms were used to create distinctive patterns, layered atop one another to evoke a sea-like design.



#### 4.1.4. Concept Note on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in Albania

The aim of crafting a Concept Note on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) for Albania was to bolster the MSP development process in the country. This initiative is in line with both EU and Italian regulations, with a focus on promoting cross-border collaboration in sectors of shared interest between Italy and Albania, particularly those addressed by the activities of the CAMP project.

The primary outcome of this activity, which commenced in January 2023 and concluded in December of the same year, is the Concept Note outlining MSP strategies tailored to Albania's context.

The development process encompassed the following stages:

##### *a) Translation of the MSP directive in Albanian*

As part of this task, the MSP directive and its annexes were translated into Albanian. Additionally, a rapid analysis of additional legislative requirements was conducted, accompanied by proposals for amendments to national legislation.

##### *b) Analysis and assessment of the existing data*

This phase entailed an analysis of the existing data to support the MSP process in Albania. The assessment included an evaluation of data used in the Italian MSP draft, as well as data accessible in the CAMP Otranto database (as a direct output of the Data Management activity).

Acknowledging the significance of data collection and accessibility, this initiative also involved the establishment of the Albanian MSP Geodatabase. Additionally, a Technical Manual for Geospatial Data Input into the Marine Spatial Planning Geodatabase was developed. Plans are in place to submit this database to the responsible national authority for its integration into the national geodatabase.

##### *c) Analysis and assessment of the institutional setup*

A comprehensive analysis and assessment of the existing institutional setup concerning Maritime Spatial

Planning (MSP) constituted a crucial component of this task. The report included an appended list of institutions involved in MSP in Albania, indicating their primary responsibilities and competencies. The list highlights several entities with specific mandates in managing and collecting data on maritime activities, underscoring their integral role in the MSP preparation process.

##### *d) Initial mapping of the activities considering the Land-Sea interactions (LSI)*

The LSI activity in Albania was carried out using established tools developed by PAP/RAC, which were also employed in the CAMP Italy project. Additionally, the LSI document prepared for the Italian MSP process served as a valuable resource.

The analysis, conducted exclusively for the Vlorë region, concentrated on spatial influences and interactions, utilizing available data for visual representation. An Excel file was compiled to encompass all interactions between land and sea-based activities, accompanied by several maps illustrating the main interactions for the selected activities.

##### *e) Consultation with stakeholders*

The draft final report and its outcomes were discussed with stakeholders during the Mid-term conference in Brindisi (11 May 2023), as well as at the ICZM/MSP training held in Tirana on 8 November 2023. All comments and feedback were carefully considered by the expert before finalizing the draft.

##### *f) Final report*

All the tasks outlined above were integrated into the [final report](#), which was prepared in English and translated into Albanian and Italian languages. The translations are available on the project website through the '[Resources](#)' webpage.



## 4.2. Horizontal activities

### 4.2.1. Capacity building

The overall objective of this horizontal activity is to enhance the capacities and competencies of relevant public administrations at transnational/supranational, national, regional/county, and local scales participating in the CAMP Otranto project. Tryeza/Tavolo CAMP Otranto and the NPCs collaborated to develop the general programme for capacity building activities and oversaw its implementation.

The capacity building activities were conducted between March and December 2023, involving personnel from AMTE and IMEES, regional and governmental agencies, as well as PAP/RAC and external consultants. These efforts were coordinated under the guidance of the National Project Coordinators for Albania and Italy (NPCs). Organizing training sessions and awareness events/workshops required extensive coordination and communication with project partners, trainees, panellists, and other stakeholders.

#### **Training Sessions in Albania**

Following initial discussions with relevant institutions, the NPC for Albania compiled a list of potential stakeholders across different levels, establishing a diverse pool of participants for the capacity building initiatives which were tailored to both common needs and those specific to Albania. In alignment with the training sessions conducted in Italy, the training curriculum for Albania spotlighted key subjects such as marine litter and eco-tourism, key concepts of ICZM and MSP, and proficient data management practices.

The three sessions, originally slated for April–May 2023, had to be rescheduled due to several reasons:

- The procurement procedure aimed at selecting the logistics company extended beyond the anticipated

time frame, thus delaying the commencement of the training sessions in April.

- The presence of the Albanian counterpart was required for both the Mid-term conference and the training sessions scheduled in Italy for early May. Consequently, simultaneous training sessions in Albania during this period were deemed impractical.
- The local elections in Albania, held in mid-May, posed challenges in engaging local stakeholders in the training sessions during that time frame.

These circumstances offered an opportunity to revise the initial curriculum based on the needs of local stakeholders, leading to the organization of five training sessions held from October to November 2023:

#### **a) 'Marine litter management and introducing the concept of Fishing for litter & The future of eco-tourism in the Vlora region' – 20 October 2023, Vlora**

Both training [sessions](#) were organized back-to-back to accommodate 25 attendees conveniently. Following presentations on marine litter, a productive discussion ensued, underlining the need for additional data on the prevalence of marine litter along the region's beaches and the identification of its sources. The consensus was that legislative improvements are necessary to enable the practice of 'Fishing for litter' among fishermen operating in the region.

In the context of eco-tourism, the pressing need for a more substantial landfill was underlined, especially during Vlora's peak tourist season. It was noted that the current capacity falls short of meeting the city's demands. Furthermore, there was an emphasis on updating the Waste Management Plan and revising the Tourism Law. This process requires extensive consultations with relevant sectoral stakeholders and institutions to ensure accuracy and inclusivity.



**b) 'Introducing the ICZM and MSP concepts and the transboundary collaboration in the planning process' – 8 November 2023, Tirana**

The selection of this topic was driven by the development of the Concept Note on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Albania, aimed at enhancing the MSP process in Albania in alignment with both EU and Italian legislation. The overarching goal was to facilitate cross-border cooperation in the Italian/Albanian sectors of mutual interest, particularly those targeted within the CAMP Otranto framework. During the [session](#), attended by 20 participants, it was concluded that the existing legal framework related to spatial planning for the coast and the Vlora region aligns with applicable international standards. Moreover, the technical presentation titled 'Starting with the MSP Process' provided a detailed understanding of the MSP process, sparking significant interest among the audience.

**c) 'Data Management' – 21 November 2023/13-14 December 2023, Tirana**

Due to the considerable interest generated during the first session, an in-depth follow-up data management training was organized on 13–14 December 2023, coinciding with the Final conference. This session specifically concentrated on the *Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and related Assessment Criteria* (IMAP) standards and the online data management tool.

The training sessions, organized in partnership with INFO/RAC, featured presentations from both national and international experts and were tailored to national and local technical staff actively engaged in data management for the Transboundary CAMP Otranto project. Discussions engaging 13 participants primarily centred around technical aspects, providing updates on the assessment of the existing IMAP information system, and focusing on the current situation in Albania.

***Training Sessions in Italy***

**a) 'Introducing the ICZM and MSP concepts – Focusing on the possibilities for transboundary implementation' – 11 May 2023, Brindisi**

Organized back-to-back with the Mid-term conference, this [training session](#) provided an overview of ICZM and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) concepts, offering insights at the international, Mediterranean, national, and local levels. Emphasizing transboundary implementation possibilities, it included examples of good practice, encouraging discussions specifically for the Vlora and Puglia regions (Italy – Albania). Attended by 25 participants, the training covered various subtopics, including the legal framework (both national and international) of ICZM and MSP, the potential for transboundary implementation, and practical examples of ICZM and MSP implementation in Italy and Albania. Sustainable solutions and activities applicable to the project area, particularly within Marine Protected Areas, were highlighted during the presentation.



**b) 'Marine litter management – Introducing the concept of Fishing for litter' – 31 May 2023, Otranto**

During the [training session](#), the innovative concept of 'Fishing for litter' was introduced, showcasing examples of good practice and fostering discussions on implementation possibilities for the Vlora and Puglia regions. The session emphasized transboundary cooperation in marine litter collection and management. Expert speakers highlighted how models developed in the project sites can be expanded to other coastal areas, stressing the crucial role of scientific evaluation support from universities and research centres in collecting and analysing marine litter samples. This support is essential to provide a tangible and appropriate institutional response for establishing collection points, dedicated infrastructure, categorized litter management, sharing best practices, and addressing potential risks. Speakers also explained how these activities influenced institutional responses to managing sea-caught waste, referencing the 'Salvare law' and its practical application, which is pending the adoption of the envisaged implementing decrees. Additionally, plans for the collection and management of marine waste were discussed, aligning with a circular economy perspective. The session engaged 26 participants.

**c) 'Area-Based Management Tools and OECMs' – online, 14 November 2023**

This [online](#) training session provided a comprehensive overview of ABMTs and OECMs, applicable within and beyond national jurisdiction. The course focused on their significance in conserving, protecting, and restoring the health and integrity of coastal and marine ecosystems. The session explored methodologies and good practices in the Mediterranean, examining their potential implementation in the project area. The training attracted 35 participants and featured a dynamic Q&A session following the presentations. Topics of particular interest included the feasibility and desirability of involving existing protected area management bodies and stakeholders in the decision-making and management process of proposed ABMTs. There was also discussion on the concept of management effectiveness in establishing differentially managed areas, encompassing biodiversity protection and conservation.

***Medopen***

Alongside the trainings organized in both countries, project stakeholders had the opportunity to gain valuable insights from the online [MedOpen](#) courses on ICZM and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), which commenced in March 2023. In total, 33 participants successfully completed the course(s).

The ICZM course is designed to share ideas, knowledge, and strategies to forward the planning and implementation of ICZM at local, national, and regional levels, as well as enhancing policy dialogue. It is composed of 12 modules, followed by short quizzes to allow self-assessment.

The MSP course was created to increase basic regional capacity to respond to the challenges in planning marine environments. It covers the objectives and main steps of MSP, along with related concepts such as Ecosystem-based management (EBM), Land-sea interactions, Land Use Planning, and the Blue Economy. Comprising five modules, this course also includes short quiz questions following each module.

Training participants from both countries were awarded certificates of attendance for their participation in the CAMP Otranto training courses. Additionally, all training resources were made available on the project website's ['Resources'](#) page for easy access.

#### 4.2.2. Data collection and management

Data collection and management activities within the framework of CAMP Otranto aimed to achieve a comprehensive screening to identify the types of information relevant to project activities within the area. This involved examining how information is collected and managed, and the extent to which data supports decision-making processes. These initiatives, carried out throughout the project's duration, played a key role in supporting the implementation of both individual and transboundary project activities. Furthermore, the efforts in data collection and management made substantial contributions to the [IMAP Info system](#).

Following the recommendations from the Steering Committee, data collection and management activities were particularly intensified in Vlora region to achieve the following objectives:

- a) Data collection related to the reduction of (marine) pollution and restoring the health and integrity of coastal and marine ecosystems, including:
  - collecting marine litter data in compliance with IMAP standards
  - enhancing the capacities of local authorities to collect data according to the required standards

by organizing workshops for the exchange of experience among project partners

- developing a manual for the collection of data
- providing photo documentation of the sites, samples and applied methodology/techniques.

b) Upgrade of the local database, in line with IMAP Info system, with a focus on:

- updating the online data management tool for Albania, developed to support IMAP reporting
- updating the tool with data from the project area
- providing support to relevant institutions in utilizing the tool effectively.

#### *Metadata repository*

During the initial phase, existing data was collected to create a metadata repository, designed to streamline further implementation of various project activities by ensuring easy access to relevant information.

The repository catalogued the following information:

- Biodiversity (benthic habitats, marine mammals, turtles, and sea birds)
- Coastal urbanization and land use
- Non-indigenous species
- Pollution (marine litter and contaminants)
- Eutrophication
- Existing (and potential) protected areas, including natura 2000 sites
- Coastal landscapes and open spaces
- Existing maritime activities in the area (such as fisheries, aquaculture, ports, and marine traffic).

Data information was organized according to the following parameters:

- Concise description of available data
- Data type and format
- Ownership and location (specific repository)
- Geographic coverage
- Date of creation/update
- Possibility to be used for project purposes.

The development of the database was carried out with the active involvement of two data management experts. Recognizing the significant scarcity of data in Albania, the process was conducted in close collaboration with relevant national institutions through the organization of multiple meetings to facilitate this process.

### ***Data collection related to the reduction of (marine) pollution***

In addition to endangering public health, marine litter has the potential to harm the entire marine ecosystem. Furthermore, beach litter, predominantly consisting of synthetic and other materials incompatible with the ecosystem, can create financial and other impacts on local economies.

Up to this point, there is no reliable and consistent data regarding the current situation of marine litter and the extent of plastic debris presence – not only in Vlora Bay but also in the narrower target area, namely the Karaburuni/Sazan Marine Protected Area (MPA). To contribute to the collection of data on this important component, a marine litter survey was conducted on four beaches in Vlora Bay – Dhimekushte, Shën Vasil, Porto Palermo and Ksamili. Each of these beaches was assessed using IMAP data standards. The collected data has been submitted to the National Environmental Agency and uploaded to the database.

### ***Upgrade of the local database***

To implement this activity, a Geographic Information System (GIS) application and information web system were utilized. Initially developed as part of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) [Adriatic](#) project, this system facilitated the storage, assessment, and reporting of data collected during national marine monitoring efforts in Albania and Montenegro.

The system adheres to IMAP Info standards, enabling seamless reporting to the IMAP Info system. Organized around ecological objectives and their agreed common indicators, the system collects a substantial amount of information necessary for integrated assessments across various monitored components. The programme provides georeferenced spatial information and trends for every assessed parameter at each monitoring location.

This data management tool underwent updates during the CAMP Otranto project implementation and was subsequently installed on a virtual server with a fixed IP address. The server is hosted by a commercial provider. Authorization is required for accessing web applications, which include both data viewer and management functionalities. This authorization is facilitated through session cookies managed by the Apache web server.

The usage of session cookies, coupled with encrypted *Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure* (HTTPS), provides robust security measures, making it one of the most secure one-level user authorization systems available. Moreover, the web application is bilingual, allowing users to seamlessly switch between languages with a simple click on a flag icon in the header.

Specific upgrades to the database concerning the application of updated IMAP data dictionaries include:

- adding new base layers
- developing a leaflet test web page
- using the Geo server
- enabling the inclusion of spatial layers containing monitoring locations into any web GeoPortal or desktop GIS application
- incorporating features relevant to data visualization.

Available data related to eutrophication, contaminants and marine litter from the Vlora region were added to the database.

Storing and managing data based on IMAP standards was addressed in detail during two training sessions conducted in partnership with INFO/RAC, and with the participation of national authorities (refer to Chapter 4.2.1, section Training sessions in Albania).

### **4.2.3. Raising awareness**

Article 15 of the ICZM Protocol underscores the critical role of awareness-raising in achieving ICZM, ensuring sustainable development of both coastal and marine areas. This imperative is essential for enhancing understanding of ICZM, facilitating decision-making, and fostering public engagement in both public and private sectors.

Within the framework of the CAMP Otranto project, specific objectives for awareness-raising activities were aimed at:

- engaging stakeholders, institutions, and the public actively in the implementation of the project
- ensuring timely and transparent dissemination of information to provide a comprehensive understanding of the project activities and outputs
- contributing to awareness-raising about ICZM and MSP in the Mediterranean region.

These horizontal project activities kicked off in July 2022, once the project communication expert and graphic designer were on board, and continued until the project's conclusion in December 2023.

During 2022, the project team extensively discussed and prepared various documents essential for the smooth implementation of awareness activities:

- The Terms of Reference for required supportive services, along with the corresponding calls for proposals, were thoroughly formulated and disseminated
- The Communication Strategy was drafted to serve as the cornerstone for developing all project communication materials (and updated throughout the project)
- Concept notes outlining the training sessions in both countries were developed, along with the list of relevant stakeholders in both countries.

### Communication Strategy

To lay the groundwork for effective project communication, a Communication Strategy was designed to guide the development of project milestones and key messages, tailored to specific audience groups – predominantly key stakeholders for delivering the project across international agencies, and national, regional, and local governments and project partners.

The main communication activity objectives were to:

- raise awareness of environmental issues
- disseminate project results
- highlight coordination between partners
- create opportunities for participation.

Key messages focused on the objectives of Trans-boundary CAMP Otranto's purpose to promote sustainable development in the project regions of Vlora (Albania) and Puglia (Italy). An overarching message that CAMP Otranto was our opportunity to develop new tools and foster new methodologies of inter-sectoral and inter-level planning was developed throughout the project, as well as the message that by working together we can achieve better results and protect our shared waters.

Communication activities were planned to support milestone activities, ensuring alignment with central capacity building and awareness activities.

Key communications channels involved:

- events
- project website
- social media partner accounts
- media
- email
- printed materials.

Creative development ensured there was a consistent look and feel for design and language across communications by further developing the original project identity and creating a colour palette, graphics, and animation style. A project brand was created using a consistent tone of voice, project name, strapline, and hashtag **#CAMPOtranto** demonstrated within the hero image. This was then effectively implemented across communications collateral including events, website, email, social media, and merchandising items such as notebooks, pouches, sprout pencils, thermos bottles and local products to increase project visibility.



Hero image

### a) Project website & multimedia

The project website [camp-ottranto.com](http://camp-ottranto.com) provided a focal point and went into detail on the organization, purpose and achievements of the project. It was created in collaboration with INFO/RAC and housed within a dedicated subdomain of the ICZM platform. The website content and a customized wireframe were aligned with the project's activities and tailored to the intended target audiences, ensuring seamless visual harmony with the overall communication materials.

It featured highlights and regular updates on key activities and opportunities to get involved. Regular blog posts and press releases were created to support milestone activity and shared on social media. This was further supported with a [general project brochure](#) and videos as the core awareness-raising materials. Furthermore, training materials were made accessible following each session.

The website also serves as a project repository by showcasing key expert studies and reports. Moreover, it includes a [StoryMap](#), also developed to highlight key findings from the AMBT Feasibility Study (refer to section 4.1.1).

Among the multimedia resources, a list of project videos included:

- 'Fostering Partnerships across the Adriatic Sea' ([animated video](#))
- 'Transboundary cooperation in the CAMP Otranto project' ([animated video](#))
- 'Unlocking the ICZM methodology in the Otranto area' ([animated video](#))
- 'How do Coastal Area Management Programmes Work?' ([animated infographic](#))

Additionally, a [photographic essay](#) 'Many Shores, One Sea' by Mr Natalino Russo was produced and published on the website, depicting a symbolic connection between the two countries.

This photo book, along with the other aforementioned materials, is accessible on the [Resources](#) webpage.

Taking into considerations all the above, the central communications output – the [policy brief](#) – is produced. It underscores the significance of collaborative efforts, identifies crucial challenges, and provides strategic recommendations to establish a sustainable framework for the region's future.



## b) News coverage

Throughout the project, press releases were crafted to spotlight and promote milestone events. The Mid-term conference/ICZM & MSP workshop in Brindisi in May 2023 press release was covered online by l'Edicola del Sud, Puglia live, Corriere Salentino, AISE – agenzia internazionale stampa estero and ESG DATA – Global Responsibility Network and featured in print publications *Nuovo Quotidiano di Puglia* edizione di Lecce and *L'Edicola del Sud Lecce*.

Posts from the Puglia region service written in Italian featured in news articles that were also shared on X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and LinkedIn and were amongst the highest viewed. A news article on the Final conference was also posted in *Economica del Mare* magazine.

**L'Edicola del Sud**  
CRONACA POLITICA SALUTE SVILUPPO E LAVORO DIRITTO E ECONOMIA CULTURA E SPETTACOLI SPORT SCUOLA E UNIVERSITÀ AMBIENTE E SOSTENIBILITÀ MOTORI AVVISI LEGALI

**INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL & CONFERENCE OTRANTO, 19-21 GIUGNO 2023**

**Maraschio inaugura l'apertura dei lavori del Progetto transfrontaliero Camp Otranto**

17 maggio 2023

La tutela del nostro mare è sempre al primo posto dell'agenda dell'assessorato all'ambiente. Lo ha assicurato l'assessore regionale Anna Grazia Maraschio, in occasione della presentazione, a Brindisi, del progetto transfrontaliero Camp Otranto di cui la Regione Puglia è capofila.

Il progetto, ha spiegato Maraschio, ha l'obiettivo di sviluppare e migliorare la gestione integrata delle zone costiere: ridurre l'inquinamento, migliorare la sostenibilità del settore turistico, in particolare attraverso la valutazione di attività turistiche selezionate, preservare, proteggere e ripristinare la salute e l'integrità degli ecosistemi costieri e marini, in particolare nei siti esistenti e potenziali della Rete Natura 2000.

Nel 2021 è stato siglato dal Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Sicurezza energetica l'accordo per l'implementazione del progetto transfrontaliero Camp Albania-Italia, denominato "Camp Otranto" che vede coinvolti, oltre alla Direzione per il Mare e Coste del Ministero della Transizione ecologica, la Regione Puglia, il Ministero del Turismo e dell'Ambiente dell'Albania e l'Unep/Map.

Nell'ambito del Camp Otranto sarà organizzato un nuovo corso di formazione, che introdurrà i concetti di Gestione Integrata delle Zone Costiere (GIZC) e di Pianificazione dello Spazio Marittimo (Psm) e le opportunità di una sua implementazione transfrontaliera. Il corso si baserà sui moduli di formazione della piattaforma MedSpam e fornirà punti di vista da prospettive internazionali, mediterranee, nazionali e locali, con un focus sulla implementazione del progetto transfrontaliero Camp Otranto tra Albania e Italia.

Il Camp Otranto interessa l'area dello Stretto di Otranto (dalla provincia di Brindisi a Santa Maria di Leuca) e le zone costiere della Regione Puglia (sempre dalla provincia di Brindisi a Santa Maria di Leuca) e della Contea di Valona (Albania). È stato concepito per rispondere alle priorità regionali (investimenti, nazionali e locali), e spera in secondo le esperienze e le realtà delle istituzioni giuridiche, amministrative e culturali dei paesi partner, beneficiario delle competenze nazionali e locali disponibili. Le attività del progetto seguiranno un approccio integrato ai problemi dell'ambiente costiero e marino e dello sviluppo, armonizzando le priorità del settore pubblico del settore privato, e fornendo una strategia integrata per l'obiettivo comune di raggiungere lo sviluppo sostenibile nella regione.

**Altri articoli**

- Mullampa, Bonaccini "Dopo un miliardo, ancora provvedimenti urgenti" 18 maggio 2023 - 4458
- Salone del libro di Torino 2023, al via la sessima edizione 18 maggio 2023 - 2342
- Sanità, Gemmato: "Bene Manifesto diritti pazienti per garantire bene infermieristico" 18 maggio 2023 - 3465
- Sanità, Savaio: "Infermieri Smeo: Manifesto 5 punti per diritti pazienti" 18 maggio 2023 - 4248
- Politica, Palladino: "Zwei im vorder? Non mi ha sbalzato" 18 maggio 2023 - 7100

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**Maraschio inaugura l'apertura dei lavori del Progetto transfrontaliero Camp Otranto**

17 maggio 2023

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ULTIME NOTIZIE

Dopo anni di abbandono, a Saurino dalle fiamme il tesoro della...

Il Sole di Nozze

Ugure Salvo: 02 maggio, per il...

Il Comune di S. Maria di...



### c) Partner websites and social media

Posts were predominantly posted by PAP/RAC through its website and across a mix of social media platforms including LinkedIn, X, and Facebook. Additionally, it kept members of the UNEP/MAP Communication Task Force informed about the latest project developments, encouraging further dissemination and outreach.

The screenshot shows a news article on the PAP/RAC website. The main headline is "CAMP Otranto Final Conference Spotlights Transboundary Collaborations" dated 20.12.2023. The article features a large photo of a conference session with a panel of four people on a stage in front of an audience. The background of the stage has a banner that reads "FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE ADRIATIC SEA".

**The concluding event of the Transboundary CAMP Otranto project took place at the Maritim Hotel Plaza in Tirana on December 13, 2023, as a hybrid physical and online event. The conference theme *Transboundary Horizons: Boosting Coastal Sustainability in the South Adriatic* set the stage for insightful dialogues.**

Welcoming speeches were followed by panel discussions offering diverse perspectives on the project's outcomes. Željka Škarčić, the Director of PAP/RAC, stressed that this was the first transboundary CAMP, noting that new CAMPS will follow.

During the panel on the project's Feasibility Study, it was highlighted how the Otranto Strait transboundary agreement could be pioneering, contributing to strengthening regional cooperation within the Barcelona Convention system to protect the environment.

Discussions included environmental challenges such as tourism, flooding, rising sea levels, waste, and the necessary measures. The importance of data and its crucial role in MSP implementation were underscored when presenting the Concept note on MSP in Albania.

The conference also recognized participants in the ICZM System and Audit Scheme (ICZM SAS), one of the key project activities, with certificates of appreciation for their contributions to coastal sustainability.

In a round table discussion, experts explored how transboundary cooperation contributed to marine protected areas and the application of ICZM. Tatjana Hema, the UNEP/MAP coordinator, highlighted the importance of good collaboration at the national and intersectoral levels in improving the marine environment for coastal communities, calling it the project's most significant value. This success story, she noted, could be replicated in other Mediterranean areas.

On the right side of the article, there are two smaller news snippets:

- CAMP B&H successfully concluded** (20.12.2023): The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee for the CAMP project in Bosnia and Herzegovina gathered on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023 in Sarajevo at the premises of the Ministry of Foreign Trade...
- Italy Ratifies the ICZM Protocol!** (18.01.2024): As we kick off the new year, Italy celebrates a significant achievement in Mediterranean coastal zone management by ratifying the ICZM Protocol of the Barcelona Convention. With on...

The screenshot shows the header of the Italian Government website. It includes the logo of the "Governo Italiano" and the "Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Sicurezza Energetica". Navigation links include "HOME", "MINISTRO", "MINISTERO", "TEMI", "MEDIA", "AMMINISTRAZIONE TRASPARENTE", and "PNRR". There are also social media icons and a search bar.

Home / Temi / Tutela del mare e delle coste / Gestione Integrata Zone Costiere (GIZC) / Il Progetto transfrontaliero CAMP Otranto

### Il Progetto transfrontaliero CAMP Otranto



La proposta di un Progetto CAMP transfrontaliero tra l'Italia e l'Albania per l'area dello Stretto di Otranto è stata lanciata come parte del Programma di Gestione delle Aree Costiere (CAMP), che rientra nelle attività di protezione del Mar Mediterraneo intraprese dalle Parti Contraenti della Convenzione per la Protezione dell'Ambiente Marino e della Regione Costiera del Mediterraneo (cosiddetta Convenzione di Barcellona). Il CAMP, coordinato dal *Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC)*, sotto la supervisione dello *United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)*, si concentra sulla realizzazione di progetti di gestione costiera in aree pilota situate in tutto il Mediterraneo.

Lo Studio di Fattibilità (FS), preparato nel 2019, ha permesso di identificare le priorità e i principali obiettivi strategici e attività del CAMP Otranto. Questi sono stati confermati sia dalle autorità nazionali dei due Paesi che dai rappresentanti delle Parti Contraenti alla 21<sup>ma</sup> riunione ordinaria delle Parti Contraenti della Convenzione di Barcellona (Napoli, 2-5 dicembre 2019).

Su questi presupposti si è addivenuti alla sottoscrizione dell'accordo CAMP Otranto, firmato nel marzo 2021.

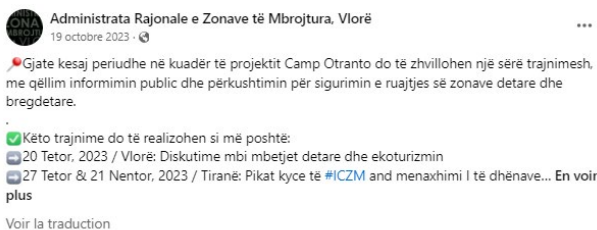
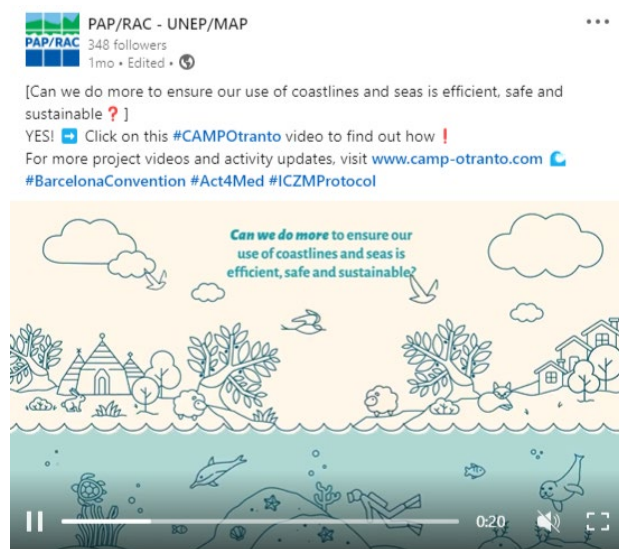
Il CAMP Otranto ha come partner di progetto il PAP/RAC, il Ministero del Turismo e dell'Ambiente albanese e la Contea di Valona, il Ministero dell'Ambiente italiano e la Regione Puglia.

Il progetto si fonda sulle seguenti considerazioni fondamentali:

- Il CAMP Otranto è progettato per rispondere alle priorità della Regione Mediterranea, oltreché nazionali e locali; opera secondo le esperienze e le realtà delle istituzioni giuridiche, amministrative e culturali dei paesi ospitanti, beneficiando delle competenze nazionali e locali disponibili.
- Il progetto CAMP Otranto si basa su un approccio integrato tra problemi dell'ambiente marino-costiero e relativo sviluppo, per fornire una strategia integrata con l'obiettivo comune di raggiungere lo sviluppo della regione in un quadro di politica di gestione sostenibile.

Event photos and videos taken in real-time featuring participants were the most popular posts followed by animated videos that explained the methodology, and blog posts related to specific training opportunities. Original content that was humanized by partner organizations in their own language and provided their point of view boosted engagement.

The main project partners published regular updates covering event announcements, key publications, animation videos, blog posts, themed videos, training opportunities and highlights from the Final conference. Throughout the project implementation, there were a total of 26 website posts and 85 social media posts.



## Awareness Events

### a) Local workshop 'CAMP Otranto and the collaboration between countries for coastal and marine management' – 26 January 2023, Vlora

The [local workshop](#) centred around the main theme of 'CAMP Otranto' and highlighted collaborative efforts among countries for coastal and marine management. The event served as a platform for stakeholders and local actors, including prefectures, municipalities, academic institutions, local agencies, and civil society. Twenty participants received comprehensive updates on project progress, with a particular focus on pertinent subjects such as the recycling of fishing gear. During the afternoon sessions, the discussions delved into specific topics, with experts providing insights on ICZM Methodological Guidance. These conversations underscored the significance of raising awareness, capacity building, and engaging local stakeholders in joint activities and discussions on ICZM and MSP. Notably, the potential for Albania to learn from Italy's European Union background regarding MSP was also acknowledged.

### b) Mid-term conference – 11 May 2023, Brindisi

At the historic Palazzo Granafei-Nervegna in Brindisi, key stakeholders from Italy and Albania convened to discuss the latest project developments and explore the potential transboundary implementation of ICZM and

MSP in the South Adriatic, as well as other subregional-and-international-initiatives in the area. The [event](#), attended by over 40 participants from both countries, commenced with addresses from key figures, including the mayor of Brindisi, the head of PAP/RAC, and representatives from IMEES, AMTE, and the Puglia region.

The Mid-term conference, coupled with the ICZM & MSP workshop (refer to Chapter 4.2.1, section Training sessions in Italy), provided a valuable opportunity to share the progress in developing focal project studies. As part of the Feasibility Study, experts presented key pressures and environmental impacts in the Otranto Strait, detailing the methodology used to support the ICZM Protocol. They also shared insights into the progress and challenges of ICZM and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Albania, highlighting collaborative efforts with Italy. The second session centred around a panel discussion on 'Transboundary Cooperation on ICZM and MSP'. Speakers provided examples of transboundary cooperation activities within the context of ICZM and MSP, illustrating existing measures applied in coastal zones (including marine and coastal protected areas), and exploring opportunities for further development. The discussion included a prospective analysis of emerging needs and mechanisms to ensure integration and coherence with marine spatial plans for effective transboundary cooperation.



### c) Awareness workshop – 31 May 2023, Otranto

The [awareness workshop](#) on collaborative coastal management was organized in conjunction with the training on marine litter management (refer to Chapter 2.2, section Training sessions in Italy). This joint gathering underscored the project's commitment to sustainable development, the integration of ICZM and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the South Adriatic, as well as initiatives aimed at reducing marine litter, preventing pollution, and enhancing biodiversity

conservation in the project regions of Vlorë (Albania) and Puglia (Italy). During the event, notable addresses were delivered by key figures, including the mayor of Otranto, the Maritime Director of Puglia and Ionian Basilicata, the General Director of IMEES, and the Councillor for the Environment of the Puglia Region, who presented conclusive remarks and formally concluded the proceedings. The workshop drew participation from 20 attendees.



### d) Final Conference 'Transboundary Horizons: Boosting Coastal Sustainability in the South Adriatic' – 13 December 2023, Tirana

The [event](#), organized in a hybrid format allowing both physical and online participation, attracted key stakeholders from Italy and Albania, alongside project experts. The conference's primary objective was to present and discuss the project's findings, fostering an exchange of ideas and sharing best practices. In total, 51 people attended the conference, with 23 people participating online. The conference was opened with welcome speeches from Mr Sofjan Jaupaj, the Director General for Economic Affairs and Support Services at the Ministry of Tourism and Environment in Albania; Ms Tatjana Hema, the UNEP/MAP coordinator; Mr Oliviero Montanaro, the Director General at the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy (online); Ms Željka Škaričić, PAP/RAC Director; Mr Flamur Mamaj, the Prefect of Vlorë region; and Rear Admiral Vincenzo

Leone, Maritime Director of Apulia and Ionian Basilicata and Coast Guard responsible for Southern Italy.

The conference featured an array of panel discussions, during which project experts presented the key findings of the Feasibility Study to identify and establish an ABMT in the Strait of Otranto, ICZM Methodological Guidance for attaining GES, Marine litter data collection in Vlorë region (Albania), Concept Note on MSP in Albania and the ICZM System and Audit Scheme with the unveiling of the inaugural ICZM labels in the Vlorë and Puglia regions. During the Round table 'Addressing Regional Needs and Shaping Future Transboundary Cooperation', esteemed panellists shared insights on the CAMP Otranto experience in transboundary cooperation and its contributions to the implementation of ICZM and the management of Marine Protected Areas.

Attendees had the opportunity to see the project videos, infographics and communications materials which

highlight the project tools and the importance of transboundary ICZM. The project's photo exhibition 'Many Shores, One Sea' by Natalino Russo was also on display.

A hands-on training session on IMAP data collection & management for the MSP process was organized on 13 and 14 December in Maritim Hotel Plaza Tirana back-to-back with the Final conference (refer to Chapter 4.2.1, section Training sessions in Albania).



#### e) External events

The project gained additional visibility through active promotion at the Mediterranean Coast Day event in Albania on 25 September 2023. Given that the main event took place in Vlora, aligning seamlessly with the geographic scope of CAMP Otranto, the national project team played a pivotal role in facilitating the event's

organization and consistently promoting the project during the [Coast Day](#) celebration.

Furthermore, the project was presented as an example of transboundary implementation of the ICZM Protocol and MSP in the Adriatic area at the [8<sup>th</sup> Forum](#) of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, which was organized by Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Commission in Sarajevo on 25 May 2023.



Reports from key awareness events are available on the project website through the [Resources](#) web page.

## 5. Challenges and lessons learned

Each project implementation presents unique challenges, requiring adaptable strategies to navigate various circumstances. However, these challenges also provide invaluable learning experiences that can inform and enhance future project activities.

In this section of the report, we summarize the key insights gained from key project activities, emphasizing essential recommendations to guide follow-up endeavours.

### *Feasibility Study for Area-Based Management Tools (ABMTs) in the Otranto Area*

The Feasibility Study for ABMTs in the Otranto area stands as a substantial contribution to environmental management in the transboundary area. Its comprehensive assessment, encompassing environmental uses, policy and legal aspects, and detailed maps, offers two innovative proposals which present a distinctive opportunity to strengthen cooperation for the achievement of global conservation targets. During the project follow-up period, efforts should focus on creating opportunities to implement the proposed tools and replicate this approach in other areas of the Mediterranean region.

Additionally, the utilization of a StoryMap as a versatile communication tool to showcase key findings from the Feasibility Study in a storytelling format helped raise awareness of the significance of this biodiversity hotspot among diverse audiences. Therefore, this ArcGIS tool could be employed to illustrate the results of other projects involving extensive maps, appealing to a broader public.

### *ICZM Methodological Guidance Towards Reaching Good Environmental Status (GES)*

The ICZM Methodological Guidance, directed at reaching GES, marks a notable advancement from the original methodology developed under the CRF for ICZM. Before its application in other areas, it is strongly recommended to enhance the methodology by providing simplified, non-technical descriptions and incorporating visual presentations of results. This approach would contribute to a more user-friendly

experience and facilitate broader adoption of the methodology.

### *ICZM System and Audit Scheme (ICZM SAS)*

The local-level testing of the innovative ICZM System and Audit Scheme demonstrated its usefulness and provided valuable insights that should inform future auditing endeavours. However, it has also underscored the necessity for continued refinement of the methodology. This can be achieved through additional testing and methodological updates, based on the insights gained from the test results.

Moreover, the ICZM visual identity will play a key role in branding the ICZM SAS labelling system and promoting the broader ICZM concept, thereby contributing to the visibility of the ICZM Protocol and the Barcelona Convention system.

### *Concept Note on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in Albania*

The Concept Note on MSP in Albania stresses that the country possesses an advanced legal framework for spatial planning in both terrestrial and coastal areas. The transposition of the MSP Directive can be achieved through amendments to existing legal acts or by enacting specific laws solely for the maritime domain.

The Concept Note underlines the importance of involving all relevant institutions responsible for maritime and coastal activities in future MSP plan preparations and data collection processes. Moreover, the preliminary analysis of Land-Sea interactions for the Vlorë region highlights the influence of climate change on coastal and sea conditions, with tourism-related activities and associated infrastructure emerging as crucial factors in LSI.

However, additional support is needed for the MSP process in Albania, given its current preliminary phase. Specifically, systematic data collection according to the required standards (notably the IMAF and EU requirements) is essential, and these data should be effectively depicted in maps, providing a useful tool in the MSP process. Finally, examples of good practices

from neighbouring countries (such as the MSP developed for Italy) should serve as valuable templates for the preparation of the MSP in Albania.

### ***Capacity Building***

The training sessions conducted in Italy saw the enthusiastic and active involvement of project partners, key local stakeholders, and participants from national institutions. The covered topics (ICZM and MSP, marine litter management, AMBTs and OECMs) received widespread praise, underscoring their relevance and the need for further exploration of these issues and related developments in the future.

Similarly, the training sessions held in Albania facilitated the active engagement of project partners and interested local stakeholders, along with the participation of high-ranking officials at the national level. The generated interest in presented topics (eco-tourism, marine litter management, ICZM and MSP, data management) underlined the need for organizing in-depth training sessions on several issues. The constructive feedback received during the sessions will be instrumental in tailoring future training initiatives to meet the evolving needs and expectations of the participants and stakeholders involved.

### ***Data Management***

The implementation of data management activities within the CAMP Otranto framework has been affected by information deficiencies, mainly attributed to the lack of data (particularly in Albania), its difficult accessibility and organization, with many datasets available only in paper documents or PDF format. Despite the availability of GIS or WebGIS tools in both countries, several relevant datasets remain unavailable in vector formats, which is crucial for spatially presenting data such as biodiversity.

The absence of comprehensive data poses significant challenges, potentially resulting in incomplete assessments and hindering the ability to make informed decisions and formulate effective strategies. Therefore, it is paramount for CAMP (and any other)

projects in the region to place a stronger emphasis on data management.

Notably, there is a need to conduct additional research or data collection initiatives in Albania. This should be undertaken through active engagement of relevant national institutions, collaboration with local stakeholders, and the involvement of local experts.

### ***Awareness-raising***

A persistent challenge for the successful delivery of communications throughout the project was partners not cascading communications combined with low interest for some stakeholders.

While the project awareness-raising events have been successful, future project communication efforts should be more focused on the local community and reinforce cooperation with local media. It would be beneficial to engage local businesses and figures for quotes, thereby creating a meaningful local narrative. This approach requires more national and regional insight and activity on how to make the link between local topics and local people, translating communications and actively campaigning in local media and on social media platforms. Creating opportunities to harness the input of local people who are directly affected by the pressing environmental challenges would make the project more relatable and give it longevity.

Hence, in addition to tailoring communications to audience interest, future projects could benefit from demonstrating how project activity helped a particular group solve a problem and present this narrative using a storytelling approach. Communications activity should foster the transboundary example of sharing knowledge and identify opportunities to piggyback on relevant awareness days to increase visibility.

Furthermore, as the ICZM identity has been developed in the framework of the project, communications would be further enhanced through the introduction of ICZM labelling as part of future CAMPs to create a strong ICZM brand.

## 6. Conclusion

The CAMP Otranto project has successfully achieved its primary objectives and tasks outlined in the Inception report and the Agreement – marking the beginning of sustained transboundary collaborations in the South Adriatic and beyond. This sentiment was particularly echoed during the CAMP Otranto Final conference in Tirana, where the project was hailed as a success story with the potential for replication in other Mediterranean areas. To encourage the fostering of good practice, the CAMP Otranto Steering Committee recommended submitting a joint report by Italy and Albania to the Parties of the Barcelona Convention (BC), thereby sharing the project results within the entire BC system.

The project activities addressed the effects of urgent environmental challenges in this region of ecological significance, necessitating a transboundary ICZM approach. The findings from the four expert studies recommend actions to preserve the natural heritage and ensure a sustainable future. Notably, the recommendations from the Feasibility Study for ABMTs in the Otranto area include expanding the protection status of existing designated natural areas with long-term ambitions to establish new spatial instruments for conservation and management of sea uses. By building on the existing scientific foundations, future actions by Albania and Italy could use existing legal mechanisms to establish one or more ABMTs to create a flexible, coordinated, and enduring collaborative framework.

As highlighted in the CAMP Otranto [policy brief](#), future projects in the area should focus on the following pillars:

- **Data gathering**  
Addressing the insufficient availability of relevant data to facilitate mutually informed decision-making and coordinated strategies for sustainable development of the area.
- **Coordinated policies**  
Addressing the lack of coordination among different policies and occasional inconsistencies in national regulations between Italy and Albania can lead to differing land use practices and resource exploitation.
- **Stakeholder engagement**  
Engaging local communities, industries, and NGOs from both states is crucial for future transboundary collaboration.
- **Climate resilience**  
Developing effective adaptive strategies to address the vulnerability of the area to climate change.

Moreover, future initiatives can benefit from the pilot ICZM System and Audit Scheme developed under the Transboundary CAMP Otranto project. This scheme has the potential to boost the ICZM process from local to Mediterranean levels. Therefore, national authorities should encourage key stakeholders to pursue the ICZM label certificate and advance the goals of the Barcelona Convention. However, refining the application process is crucial as the next step to attract broader interest from economic entities, as well as further testing.

In conclusion, a strong emphasis should be on promoting sustainable practices, engaging the local community, and tailoring project communication to address their needs, considering the local context and its distinctive environmental, cultural, economic, and social aspects.



## 7. References

Agreement among the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania, the Ministry of Ecological Transition of Italy, and the Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) of the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) relative to the transboundary Coastal Area Management Programme (CAMP) Otranto

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CAMP Otranto policy brief





# FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE ADRIATIC SEA

For coastal sustainability in Albania and Italy

CAMP Otranto is the first transboundary project since the launch of the Coastal Areas Management Programme (CAMP) in 1989. The project's main objective is to test the CAMP methodology at a transboundary scale in the Otranto Strait, including marine areas within and beyond national jurisdiction which affect both Albania and Italy regardless of different natural, juridical and socio-economic conditions. By tackling coastal and marine environmental challenges in this very sensitive part of the Mediterranean basin, the project contributes to the development of sustainable coastal management, sharing know-how and modelling best practice.

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