



CONCEPT NOTE ON MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING IN ALBANIA



Coordination:	Marina Marković, PAP/RAC Daniela Addis, National Project Coordinator for Italy Ina Janushi and Rezart Kapedani, National Project Coordinators for Albania Tea Marasović, PAP/RAC
Authors:	Fiona Mali, Rezart Kapedani
Proofreading:	Alkemist studio LLC
Cover design:	Tessa Bachrach-Krištofić
Layout editing:	Old school S.P.
Cover photo:	© N. Russo

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List of acronyms

AKPT	Albanian National Agency of Territorial Planning
AMBU	Albanian National Agency of Water Resource Management
DCM	Decision of the Council of Ministers
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
LSI	Land-Sea Interactions
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MIE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
MTE	Ministry of Tourism and the Environment
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MSP	Maritime Spatial Planning
UNEP/MAP	United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan

Executive Summary

The maritime sector has been rapidly increasing in recent years, as a source for further economic development and international cooperation. The Government of Albania has made progress in the maintenance and infrastructure of port facilities in line with the Sector Strategy, priorities stipulated in the Government Programme, the National Transport Plan, the National Strategy for Development and Integration and the Medium-Term Budget Plan.

The Vlora region is one of the most important regions in terms of touristic developments, fishery and aquaculture activities and other economic activities in the sea and on land. It also has several protected areas, including the only two Marine Protected Areas in Albania, which highlights its high biodiversity values.

Albania should approximate Directive 2014/89/EU as part of the EU acquis as part of the process for EU Accession. Also, it should be noted that the start of the MSP process is important as a contribution to the implementation of the ICZM Protocol to the Barcelona Convention, which Albania has already signed.

In relation to the legal framework, Albania already has an advanced legal framework for spatial planning in the terrestrial part and coastal areas. The Directive can be transposed through amendments to the existing legal

acts or by having specific laws only for the maritime part. The transposition of the MSFD directive by the end of 2023 or early 2024 will help the process of preparation for the transposition of the MSP directive.

There is a large number of institutions involved in the different aspects of maritime and coastal activities with specific responsibilities. They should be involved in the preparation of the MSP plan in the future and also in the collection of the data.

Based on the preliminary analysis of the Land-Sea Interactions for the Vlora region, climate change emerges as a very important factor when taking into account the effects it has on the coast and the sea. Also, touristic activities and the related infrastructure are to be considered very important for the LSI.

Overall, more support is needed for the MSP process as it is still in the preliminary phase in Albania. In the future, data should be collected according to the required standard (IMAP, EU requirements etc.) and also illustrated in maps that can be useful for the MSP process. Examples coming from the neighbouring countries (like the MSP that has been developed for Italy) should serve as a useful template for the preparation of the Albanian MSP.

1. Legal Framework

1.1. Legal Framework Analysis

Introduction to the Albanian Legal Framework

The Albanian Constitution provides for the hierarchy, status and effect of legal norms. In particular, Article 4/2 declares that “the Constitution is the highest law in the Republic of Albania.”

Article 116 of the Constitution reflects the hierarchy of legal norms by providing that “*normative acts that are effective in the entire territory of the Republic of Albania are:*

- a) *the Constitution;*
- b) *ratified international agreements;*
- c) *laws;*
- ç) *normative acts of the Council of Ministers.”*

International agreements come after the Constitution in the ranking of norms and thus they have an important place in our legal system. Article 122 emphasises this

idea by providing that those international agreements, ratified by law, prevail over incompatible laws of Albania.

Albania is an EU Candidate Country that signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) on 12/6/2006, which entered into force on 1/4/2009.

The prompt ratification of recent multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) is evidence of the political importance that the government attributes to being an engaged participant in international cooperation in the environmental domain. The aspiration of EU membership is the main driver for the adoption of environmental legislation in Albania, while the MEAs can be considered a second major impetus.

In relation to the Barcelona Conventions, the situation related to its legal status is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Legal status in relation to the Barcelona Convention

Name	Date	Date of Entry in Force
Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean	30/05/1990	29/06/1990
Barcelona Convention Amendments	26/07/2001	09/07/2004
Dumping Protocol	30/05/1990	29/06/1990
Dumping Protocol Amendments	26/07/2001	
Emergency Protocol	30/05/1990	29/06/1990
LBS Protocol	30/05/1990	29/06/1990
LBS Protocol Amendments	26/07/2001	11/05/2008
SPA Protocol	30/05/1990	29/06/1990
SPA and Biodiversity Protocol and Annexes	26/07/2001	25/08/2001
Offshore Protocol	26/07/2001	24/03/2011
Hazardous Wastes Protocol	26/07/2001	19/12/2007
Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)	04/05/2010	24/03/2011

It is important for this report to mention that Albania has ratified both the Barcelona Convention and the ICZM Protocol.

For Albania to be part of the EU, it has to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria, including the one that all prospective members must enact legislation to bring their laws into line with the body of European law built up over the history of the Union, known as the *acquis communautaire*.

The process of approximating the legal and administrative systems in the candidate countries to the large and complex body of EU law is a huge task that requires careful planning and management on an ongoing basis. Since the deadlines for implementing certain Directives and Decisions or certain provisions do not occur before accession to the EU, measures proposed and adopted now must be adequate to meet the future compliance requirements that such countries will face as Member States. As Albania adopts legislation and establishes implementation frameworks giving effect to EU Directives, Decisions and Regulations in their national legal system, it needs to be considered which areas of the existing national law will be affected by the new legislation and subsequently require legislative amendment or repeal.

Sectoral Legal Framework

Albania has a dedicated legal framework that covers planning procedures, including the drafting, consultation, coordination and adoption of planning documents. This is Law no. 107/2014 "For Territorial Planning and Development" and Decision of Council of Minister (DCM) no. 686/2017 "For the Adoption of the Territorial Planning Regulation".

This is a new framework, replacing the urban (city) planning framework from the early 90s (after the fall of the central planning regime), embodying a new approach to territorial planning. The term territorial within this framework refers to the overall territory of Albania, both land and sea.

Law no. 107/2014, Section I, Article 3 "Definitions", item 41, refers to the following:

41. "National Territory" shall mean the geographical space, including land, above and underground, **water**, and airspace, limited by the state border of the Republic of Albania, according to the legislation in force.

In this regard, **the territorial waters** part of the maritime space (or marine waters or marine region) **is part of the territory**.

Law no. 107/2014, Chapter I, Article 1 "Purpose", refers to the following:

This Law aims to:

- a) ensure the **sustainable development of the territory** through the rational use of land, waters and natural resources;
- b) assess the current and prospective potentials for the development of the territory at the national and local levels, based on the balancing of natural resources, economic and human needs, and public and private interests, coordinating the work on:
 - i) **preserving natural resources** such as land, in particular, arable land, air, **water**, forests, **flora, fauna** and landscapes;

...

In this regard, in terms of aim, the purpose of this Albanian Law on Territorial Planning aligns with MSP Directive 2014/89/EU, Chapter I, "General Provisions", Article 1 "Subject matter" as the following refers:

*This Directive establishes a framework for maritime spatial planning aimed at **promoting the sustainable growth** of maritime economies, **the sustainable development of** marine areas, and the **sustainable use of marine resources**.*

Law no. 107/2014, Section II, Article 15 "Planning Documents" states that planning documents fall under two main categories: central and local planning documents, listing the following under each category respectively:

Central planning documents:

1. General National Territorial Plan,
2. **National Sectoral Plans (for all sectors, for some or one sector),**
3. Detailed Plans for Areas of National Importance.

Local planning documents:

4. Regional Sectoral Plans,
5. General Local Plan,
6. Local Detailed Plans.

Law no. 107/2014, Section II, Article 17 "National Sectoral Plans", states the following:

*The national sectoral plans are drafted by the line ministries, with a view to the **strategic development of one or more sectors**, according to the respective areas of competence, such as national security, energy, industry, transport, infrastructure, tourism, economic zones, education, sport, cultural and natural heritage, health, agriculture and **water**.*

In this regard, **"water" is listed as one of the sectors that can have a national sectoral planning document.**

DCM no. 686/2017 details the procedure for the drafting, consultation, coordination and adoption of planning documents, based on the guidelines given in Law no. 107/2014.

Chapter III, Section I, Article 80 "Categories of Land Use" refers to the following:

- d) *Water system (U), with the following specifications:*
 - i. *"**Waters** (U)" includes all aquatic bodies: **seas**, lagoons, marshes, lakes, rivers, streams and water springs, pursuant to the respective legislation.*

Based on the above, **Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) seems to resonate with National Sectoral Planning for "Marine Waters".**

DCM no. 686/2017, Chapter IV, Section 2, "Sectoral Conditions in Territorial Planning" Article 87 "Waters and Wetlands" refers to the following:

1. *The planning and development process in territories that belong to the base category of use "Waters" is regulated pursuant to the special legislation and the international conventions to which Albania has adhered.*
2. *Any development in water shores, as well as the borders of the respective protective areas, shall be determined by the special legislation and this regulation. The protective areas are composed of:*
 - a. *Hygiene-sanitary zones for the protection of water resources, designated for the production of potable water;*
 - b. *An area of immediate protection, within which any kind of construction and discharge will be prohibited, except for constructions for the protection of the aquatic body;*

- c. *An area of distant protection, within which the activities provided for in letter "b" will be subject to administrative permits or concessions.*

3. *The construction of works and objects for the use of water resources and the prevention of harmful actions related to water are subject to administrative permits or concessions.*
4. *The storing of materials and substances that can be flushed by water and the construction of new objects in areas threatened by floods, is prohibited.*

It should be noted that Albania has also transposed into the national legislation the EIA and SEA directive (mainly through Law No. 10440 of 7.7.2011 "on the EIA", amended, and Law No. 91/2013 of 28.2.2013 "on the SEA"). Based on these laws and on the obligations related to the ratification of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention), two DCMs are worth mentioning that also regulate the transboundary context: DCM No. 598 of 1.7.2015 "On Rules and Procedures of the EIA in a Transboundary Context" and DCM No. 620 of 7.7.2015 "On Rules, Responsibilities and Detailed Procedures for SEA in Transboundary Context".

In this regard, territories that belong to the base category of use **"waters" are subject to Law no. 107/2014 and DCM no. 686/2017**. This deduction refers to "waters" in general, including "marine waters".

Gap Assessment

Based on the above highlights, Maritime Spatial Planning seems to resonate with the National Sectoral Plan for "Marine Waters".

DCM no. 686/2017, Chapter II, Section 4 "National Sectoral Plan" provides general guidelines about the scope, the responsible authorities for the drafting, consultation and coordination process, the content of the planning document, the approval procedure, implementation, and the monitoring process. This **DCM does not provide specificities on different sectors, like "water", but considers that every sectoral plan should follow the same guidelines procedure-wise.**

Proposition

Given that the EU Directives are required to be included in the national legislation of each member state and also based on the 20th Ordinary Meeting of the

Contracting Parties (COP 20) to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols (Barcelona Convention) (Tirana, 17-20 December 2017), Decision IG.23/7 "Implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol: Annotated Structure of (...) the Conceptual Framework for Marine Spatial Planning", the main alternatives presented and to be answered at the end of this exercise, in close discussion with the project coordinators and respective national authorities, are as follows.

The transposition of the provisions of the Directive can be carried out through:

1. A separate law – Law for Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) (i.e. Italy has a special legislative decree)
2. Amendment of the existing Planning Law no. 107/2014 (i.e. a dedicated article to introduce the MSP)

3. A separate DCM, referring to the existing or amended Planning Law no. 107/2014, that will contain the detailed procedure/s of the MSP
4. Amendment of the existing DCM/ Regulation of Planning no. 686/2017 (i.e. a separate chapter dedicated to MSP)
5. Guidelines that refer to existing Law and DCM.

At the moment, the proposition derived from all the above includes a combination of alternatives 2 and 4, to amend the existing Planning Law and the existing Planning Regulation. More specifically, to add a dedicated article introducing the MSP in the existing Law and afterwards to add a section in DCM no 686/2017, dedicated to the National Sectoral Plan for "Marine Waters" and name it "Marine Spatial Planning".

2. Institutional Set-Up

Maritime policy decision-makers are public authorities in charge of outlining policy and strategic orientations about the current and future role of the maritime sector, setting the necessary measures that are needed in order to support this role, and monitoring the implementation and execution of these measures.

The structures related to the management of the maritime space are mainly central institutions but with some areas that are also part of the local institutions. Although there is no Maritime Spatial Planning in place and, as such, the structures are not all defined, some of the existing institutions that are related to the marine waters are explained below.

This section only provides the schematic part of the institutional set-up while the whole function is given in Appendix A of the document.

It is also very important to mention that the main focus has been given to the central institutions since it is related to the overall plan. For the local government, a specific paragraph has been given at the end that is not related to each of the functions.

2.1. General Institutional Set-up

The Republic of Albania is a constitutional republic with a democratically elected parliament. Legislative power is concentrated in the Albanian Parliament. The system of government is based on the separation and balancing of legislative, executive and judicial powers.

The Council of Ministers is the executive power of Albania. The Council is headed by the Prime Minister of Albania. 19 other government members are part of the Council, serving as deputy prime ministers, government ministers or both; they are chosen by the prime minister and confirmed by the Parliament.

The actual set-up of the executive branch is as follows:

Prime Minister's Office

- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
- Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Internal Affairs

- Ministry of Finance and the Economy
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
- Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection
- Ministry of Tourism and the Environment
- Minister of State for Entrepreneurship
- Minister of State for Relations with Parliament
- Minister of State for Youth and Children
- Minister of State for Standards and Services

Based on the different aspects of maritime spatial planning, an overview of the different institutions and agencies and their roles is summarised.

Aquaculture

- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development – MARD (*policy-making in the aquaculture sector, preparation of Allocated Zones for Aquaculture*)
- Directorate of Fishery and Aquaculture Services (*agency within the MARD, monitoring and enforcement related to the aquaculture sector, data collection and statistics related to aquaculture*).

Defence, Security and Safety at Sea

- Ministry of Defence – MoD (*drafting and implementation of general state policies for the security of independence and the protection of the territorial integrity of the country, as well as planning for and coping with civil emergencies*)
- Interinstitutional Maritime Operational Centre (*interinstitutional centre dealing with the organisation, planning and management of maritime operations throughout the maritime space, in accordance with maritime, local and international legislation and coordinates law enforcement control activities, which are carried out in the maritime space, water areas and regions of responsibility, which are covered by the respective institutions concerned*)
- General Maritime Directorate (*agency within the MIE, discipline of maritime traffic, navigation safety conditions, port safety standards and the investigation*

of maritime incidents and accidents, ship collisions, fires on ships, piracy and for the resolution of all maritime issues)

- National Agency of Civil Protection (agency within the MoD, exercises coordinating, management, technical, supervisory and controlling authority in the field of disaster risk reduction and civil protection).

Energy

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy – MIE (policy-making in the energy sector – including renewable energy sources and energy efficiency)
- National Agency of Natural Resources (agency within the MIE, Implementation of Government policies in the field of energy)
- Energy Efficiency Agency (agency within the MIE, responsible for improving and promoting energy efficiency throughout the energy cycle and in all sectors and economic areas of the country).

Environmental Protection and Natural Resources

- Ministry of Tourism and the Environment – MTE (policy-making for the environmental sector and the protection of biodiversity, proclamation of protected areas, international relations and communication for the environmental conventions)
- National Agency of Protected Areas (agency within the MTE, management of Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, monitoring and enforcement of biodiversity and protected areas legislation within the protected areas)
- National Environmental Agency (agency within the MTE, manages the process of permitting and licencing operators performing activities that impact the environment, prepared the State of Environmental Report).

Fishery

- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development – MARD (policy-making in the aquaculture sector, management of operation in the fishing ports, manages the relations for fishery international agreements and the Regional Fishery Management Organisations)
- Directorate of Fishery and Aquaculture Services (agency within the MARD, monitoring and enforcement

related to the fishery sector, data collection and statistics related to aquaculture).

Mineral Exploration and Mining

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy – MIE (policy-making in the hydrocarbon /oil and gas/ and mining and geology sector)
- National Agency of Natural Resources (agency within the MIE, implementation of government policies in the field of mining and hydrocarbons, granting of permits, licences and authorisations, which enable entering into hydrocarbon agreements and performing hydrocarbon operations)
- Albanian Geological Service (agency within the MIE, responsible for the geological monitoring of the territory's mineral and hydrocarbons, promotion of the prospect of useful minerals and the monitoring and evaluation of exploration permits).

Ports, Harbours and Shipping

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy – MIE (policy-making in the infrastructure and transportation sector)
- General Maritime Directorate (agency within the MIE, directs and coordinates the activity of the constituent structures of the maritime administration and controls the implementation of general, national and international maritime rules by all private and state entities)
- Institute of Transport (agency within the MIE, maintains a database of the transport sector).

Sports and Recreation

- Ministry of Education and Sports (designs, programmes, develops and coordinates the work for national policies in the field of sports, cultural integration, designs protective and promotional policies, and creates the necessary spaces for the development and improvement of Albanian sports).

Telecommunications

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy – MIE (policy-making in the telecommunication and postal service sector).

Tourism

- Ministry of Tourism and the Environment – MTE (*policy-making for the tourism sector, management of touristic areas and licencing of touristic operators*)
- National Tourism Agency (*agency within the MTE, implements marketing policies in the field of tourism, promotes Albanian tourism at the national and international level and promotes investments in areas with priority tourism development*)
- National Coastal Agency (*agency within the MTE, works for the promotion of investments in the coastal area and the organisation of work for the coordination of programmes and development projects of importance for the integrated management of the coastal area*).

Water, Wastewater Treatment and Disposal

- National Agency of Water Resources (*designs and implements policies, strategies, plans, programmes and projects aimed at the integrated management of water resources, quantitative and qualitative conservation, as well as their further consolidation*)
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (*the design, implementation and follow-up of infrastructure development policies, which include infrastructure, transport and water supply-sewerage*)
- National Agency of Water Supply – Sewerage and Waste Infrastructure (*agency within the MIE, designs the strategic framework for the development and management of the water supply and sewerage sector in our country*)
- National Environmental Agency (*agency within the MTE, monitoring of the environment and preparation of the Status of the Environment Report including water quality, coordinates other institutions in the process of monitoring environmental parameters*)
- Institute of Public Health (*agency within the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, performs the assessment of drinking water quality (ground and surface water intended for drinking water / water treatment works, performs the assessment of bathing water)*).

2.2. Local Governance

Following the new administrative divisions of 2014, with the approval of Law No. 115/2014, Albania is divided into 12 regions (*qark*) and 61 municipalities.

Law No. 139/2015, includes inter alia the functions that the local government unit (municipality) has in their jurisdictions. Some of these functions (more relevant to this report) are shown below:

- Production, treatment, transmission and supply of drinking water;
- Collection, removal and treatment of polluted water;
- Collection and removal of rainwater and flood protection in residential areas;
- Local public transport;
- Parks, flower gardens and public green spaces;
- Collection, removal and treatment of solid and household waste;
- Planning, administration, development and control of the territory, according to the law;
- The development, protection and promotion of cultural heritage values of local interest, as well as the administration of facilities related to the exercise of these functions;
- The organisation of sports, recreational and entertainment activities, the development and administration of institutions and facilities related to the exercise of these functions;
- Ensuring, at the local level, measures to protect the quality of the air, soil and water from pollution;
- The administration, use and maintenance of the irrigation and drainage infrastructure, transferred to their ownership, according to the manner determined by law;
- Administration and protection of agricultural land and other categories of resources, such as barren land, etc., according to the law
- Administration of the public forest and pasture fund, according to the legislation in force;
- Protection of nature and biodiversity, according to the legislation in force;
- Civil protection, at the local level, and the administration of the relevant structures, according to the law.

3. Data Available for the MSP

According to the Guideline on MSP of 2009¹, at least three general categories of spatial information are relevant to the MSP process:

1. biological and ecological distributions including areas of known importance for a particular species or biological community;
2. spatial information about human activities; and
3. oceanographic and other physical environmental features (bathymetry, currents and sediments).

For these during the preparation of the MSP, a data inventory can be completed at any spatial and temporal level and also at various levels of detail and to be as comprehensive as possible.

Albania already has a central institution where all spatial data is collected. The State Authority for Geospatial Information (ASIG) has the following in its objectives:

- Construction of the Albanian Geodetic Reference Framework according to European standards to enable the performance of accurate geodetic and cartographic works, with modern tools and methods.
- Development, operation and updating of the GIS and the National Geoportal that provides information, data and geospatial services, in full compliance with the standards of Directive 2007/2 / EC "INSPIRE".
- Coordination and cooperation with the responsible public authorities for the collection, processing and updating of geospatial information, for the drafting and implementation of standards in the field of geoinformation and for the establishment of NSDI.

According to Law No. 72/2012, "For the Organisation and Operation of the National Infrastructure of Geospatial Information in the Republic of Albania", there are **22 Public authorities** responsible for collecting, processing and updating geospatial information.

The names of the authorities and their specific responsibility for the themes of geospatial data that they will collect are shown in the Table 2.

Based on the data coming from these institutions, since 2014, the ASIG has created the National Geoportal and the data can be accessed by viewers in the following portal <https://geoportal.asig.gov.al/en>. As can be seen from the map, there is a lot of data in relation to the terrestrial part of the Albanian territory but no data for the marine waters.

However, there is some data coming from other sources, such as:

- scientific literature
- expert scientific opinion or advice
- regional sources
- local knowledge; etc.

As such, there is a need to establish a database with all the data that exists for the marine environment and whether or not these are georeferenced. Some of the main data that needs to be gathered is shown in the Table 3.

¹ Ehler, Charles, and Fanny Douvère. Marine Spatial Planning: a step-by-step approach toward ecosystem-based management. Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and Man and the Biosphere Programme. IOC Manual and Guides No. 53, ICAM Dossier No. 6. Paris: UNESCO. 2009 (English).

Table 2. Responsible authority for the collection, processing and updating of geospatial data

Name of Authority	Themes of geospatial data
1. Agency for Agricultural and Rural Development	Agricultural and aquaculture facilities
2. Agricultural Technology Transfer Centre	Soil Land use
3. Albanian Hydrographic Service	Sea regions
4. Albanian Geological Survey	Geology Mineral resources
5. Albanian Road Authority	Transport networks
6. Institute of Geosciences	Atmospheric conditions Meteorological geographical features Hydrology
7. Institute of Statistics	Statistical units Population distribution and demography
8. Local Self-Government Support Agency	Administrative units
9. General Directorate of Civil Status	Addresses
10. Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy	Production and industrial facilities
11. Ministry of Tourism and the Environment	Production and industrial facilities Habitats and biotopes
12. National Agency of Natural Resources	Energy resources Mineral resources Area management / restriction / regulation zones & reporting units
13. National Agency of Protected Areas	Protected sites Bio-geographical regions Habitats and biotopes Species distribution
14. National Agency for Territorial Planning	Land use Area management / restriction / regulation zones & reporting units
15. National Civil Protection Agency	Natural risk zones
16. National Environment Agency	Land cover Environmental monitoring facilities Species distribution
17. National Institute of Cultural Heritage	Protected sites
18. Public Health Institute	Human health and safety
19. State Authority for Geospatial Information	Coordinate Reference Systems Geographical Grid Systems Geographical Names Base Map Elevation Orthoimagery Utility And Governmental Services
20. State Cadastre Agency	Cadastral parcels Buildings
21. Transport Institute	Transport networks
22. Water Resources Management Agency	Hydrography

Table 3. Preliminary set of data needed for the MSP process

Data Set	Comments
Environmental Conditions	
Seagrass beds	There has been some mapping for <i>P. oceanica</i> but some updates are required
Coralligenous habitats	There has been some mapping for the habitat but not for the entire Albanian area
Nursery areas	There is some info but not complete data available
Wetlands	Yes, available on the geoportal
Areas of high biodiversity:	
Fish	Some areas identified
Sharks	Some areas identified
Marine Turtles	Identified for the entire coast
Sea birds	Not available
Marine mammals	Available through regional studies
Bathymetry	Data available from the Albanian Hydrographic Service
Water Quality data:	
Chemical parameters	Data from the NEA but only specific parameters
Biological parameters	Sparse and sporadic data mainly from scientific literature
Human Activities	
Commercial fishing	Data collected from MARD and GFCM
Mariculture	Data available on MARD and AZA document
Recreational fishing	No available data
Recreation activities	No data identified
Marine transportation	Data available from regional sources
Port and harbour operations	Data from MIE
Port and harbour dredging	No data identified
Dredged material disposal	No data identified
Offshore oil and gas exploration	No data identified
Offshore oil and gas development	No data identified
Cables, pipelines and transmission lines	No data identified
Sand and gravel mining	No activities identified
Offshore renewable energy	No activities for the moment
Military operations	
Protected marine reserves	Yes, available on the geoportal
Scientific research	
Cultural and historic conservation	

4. Land-Sea Interaction

4.1. Introduction

Albania's General National Spatial Plan 2015–2030 singles out the coast as the most important zone of the national territory because of its position, natural values, biodiversity significance, and cultural and historical heritage. The coast supports unique ecosystems and provides vital resources and connectivity routes for the country. The Albanian coastline is 427 km long: 273 km of coast in the west facing the Adriatic Sea and 154 km of coast in the Southwest on the Ionian Sea. Internal waters cover 735 km² and the territorial waters (extending from the internal waters to 12 nautical miles offshore) are 5,322 km².

The maritime sector has been rapidly increasing in past years, as a source for further economic development and international cooperation. The Government of Albania has made progress in the maintenance and infrastructure of port facilities in line with the Sector Strategy, the priorities stipulated in the Government Programme, the National Transport Plan, the National Strategy for Development and Integration and the Medium-Term Budget Plan.

Maritime transport is primarily concerned with the transport of freight and passengers by sea. The sector is associated with many other activities such as ship agency, chartering and brokering, maritime labour and education, multimodal and intermodal transport and related services. Due to infrastructural restrictions and limitations, Albania has a small significant share in international maritime transport (Blue Economy Programme, draft 2020).

The **fishing sector**, while making a relatively low contribution to the Albanian economy, in terms of its contribution to the GDP and employment in general, it is important from a socio-economic point of view in the coastal communities and inland waters where it provides employment in those areas with limited employment opportunities and low labour costs. Albania's coastal waters are known for their diversity of fish of high economic value. Among the fish species with the highest economic value are the small pelagic – anchovy and sardines – and large pelagic – tuna and bottom-dwelling

species, European hake, red mullet, striped mullet, sole and cuttlefish. The pelagic fish and part of the demersal fish stocks are shared with neighbouring countries, particularly Italy in the west, Montenegro in the north, and Greece in the south. The dynamics of Mediterranean seawater that flows through the Straits of Otranto into the Adriatic Sea creates fertile fishing grounds (Realising the Blue Economy Potential 2020).

There is intensive **aquaculture cultivation** of gilthead seabream and European seabass in Vlora and north and south of Saranda, as well as the farming of Mediterranean mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) in the Butrinti lagoon.

In the last few years, the direct contribution of **travel and tourism** to Albania's GDP has been in the range of 8.5-8.7%. However, when multiplier effects from indirect sources are considered, the total contribution is almost three times higher, amounting to more than 20% of the GDP, making this sector one of the key growth drivers. Looking back, 2019 was Albania's best year for tourism, with 6.4 million foreign visitors and \$2.3 billion in sectoral earnings. After the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism sector bounced back in 2022, and more than 3.6 billion Euros of earnings were expected in 2022 (Tourism and Hospitality in Albania 2022). Coastal tourism is the most developed and the Vlora region is one of the most sought after.

There are **agriculture activities** in the region, but the region accounts for only 4.5% of the arable land with field crops (the majority of it being in the Vlora municipality while the second- and third-largest areas are in municipalities (Selenica and Finiq) that are not in the coastal area). It should be noted that the region is known for the production of citrus fruits and is also well known for olives and vineyards (Agriculture Statistical Yearbook 2021). Meanwhile, the area is well known for livestock production and is the main region in Albania for the cultivation of sheep and goats. Also, the Vlora region has the highest number of beehives in Albania (Livestock Statistics 2022, MARD).

4.2. Land-Sea Interactions and the Methodology

Land-Sea Interactions (hereafter LSI) have been introduced into European legislation as part of directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for Maritime Spatial Planning.

This was done to create flexibility for the European Member States in addressing the environmental, ecological, social, cultural and economic interrelations/interactions that exist between what happens at and in the seas/ocean with developments on land. Addressing LSI in the process of analysing existing interrelations to benefit the policy/stakeholder decision-making in a Maritime Spatial Plan offers the possibility of working with (long-standing) pre-existing concepts like Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), which have a legal status in a range of EU Member States and beyond through the Barcelona Convention.

At the same time, LSIs open the way to various methods for looking at the interaction and influence of activities on land with/on the marine system and maritime world and vice versa. LSIs allow for analysing the entire value chain of goods and services from producer to end-consumer, as well as the wider connections in the natural world, like migratory birds, using land, sea, air and coasts without relating themselves to human delineations of judicial regions. All of this analysis is aimed at making well-informed decisions nationally and aiming for coherence across borders and sea basins benefiting all of those concerned (MSP – LSI – ESPON, 2020).

There has been no such previous analysis in Albania since there is also no real maritime spatial planning developed for the moment. Some preliminary efforts, especially for the coastal area, were carried out when the Coastal Intersectoral Planning (**PINS Bregdeti**) was developed, and some capacities were developed during the implementation of the GEF Adriatic programme

where LSI analysis was conducted for the Montenegrin coast (Land-Sea Interactions Analysis for Montenegro, 2021).

Based on the same methodology, a preliminary analysis was carried out for the Vlora region, based on the information at hand. As such, the initial identification of interactions was based on present natural processes, uses and activities. The analysis focused on spatial influences/interactions that can also be visually represented.

The next step was to fill in the table based on the assessment, the potential interaction between natural processes, and the use of space/activity or the use of space/activity at sea and on land – qualification of interactions, using an Excel table provided by PAP/RAC that includes the following categories:

- positive impact:
 - (i) High
 - (ii) Medium
 - (iii) Low
- neutral;
- negative impact:
 - (i) High
 - (ii) Medium
 - (iii) Low
- no data (ND).

It should be noted that the table was much more complex and it will require a more detailed analysis to include all the sectors, regulations and plans, but at least the main LSI were identified.

For the initial analysis as an overall set of interactions, the one according to the conceptualisation proposed by the CAMP Italy Project (Land-Sea Interactions in the framework of ICZM and MSP) was used as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. The set of interactions used as a reference for the analysis

SEA-LAND INTERACTION <i>Economic activities / natural phenomena at “sea” interacting with “land”</i>	LAND-SEA INTERACTION <i>Economic activities / natural phenomena at “land” interacting with “sea”</i>
<p>SPECIFIC HUMAN ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aquaculture in seawater ▪ Fishing ▪ Mining activities from seabed (including sand and marine aggregates mining) ▪ Industry (systems, including off-shore desalination, CO₂ capture and storage) ▪ Energy industry (offshore /oil and gas] energy, offshore renewable energy [wind, waves, surge/) ▪ Infrastructures (ports, civil works of marine / coastal engineering /artificial reefs, breakwaters, etc./) ▪ Submarine cables and pipelines ▪ Maritime activities in general, including dredging and storage of materials ▪ Maritime transport (maritime traffic, commercial, including ferries) ▪ Tourism and cruise boat ▪ Recreation and Sports ▪ Biotechnology ▪ Marine Protected Areas (MPA), Biological Protection Zones (BPZ) (and in general 'area based management tools, including marine protected areas') ▪ Defence and security <p>GENERAL HUMAN ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Waste (marine litter) <p>NATURAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extreme events (storms, heavy tides, tsunami) ▪ Sea Level Rise (global and local) ▪ Risks to coastal areas (coastal erosion, marine flooding and saline intrusion) ▪ Algae bloom ▪ Volcanic and tectonic activities 	<p>SPECIFIC HUMAN ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coastal and lagoon Aquaculture ▪ River and lagoon fishing ▪ Natural resource use (water abstraction, removal of aggregates /quarries/) ▪ Farming and livestock farming ▪ Industry (food, manufacturing, on-shore plant, including desalination plant, CO₂ capture and storage) ▪ Energy industry (onshore energy /oil and gas/, onshore renewable energy /wind, sun, geothermal/) ▪ Infrastructures (river ports, including dredging activities, engineering work, including dam, bridges, remediation activities, railways and roads) Port activity ▪ Transports (river transport, road and rail transportation) ▪ Tourism, Sports and Recreation activities (i.e. bathing stations, touristic facilities) ▪ Biotechnology ▪ Natural Protected Areas (Nature reserves, National Parks, Regional Parks, etc., on-shore or with offshore boundaries) ▪ Defence and security <p>GENERAL HUMAN ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urban plants (including pollution of water bodies that collect waste water) ▪ Waste ▪ Services network (i.e. sewage systems) <p>NATURAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Soil erosion (leaching, wind action) ▪ Natural subsidence ▪ Hydrogeological instability (including landslides) ▪ Transport of river sediments ▪ Flooding ▪ Volcanic and tectonic activities

4.3. Analysis of LSIs

The analysis has been carried out based on the data available and, of course, when the MSP process will be carried out officially, it will need to be revised so that the most updated info is considered. The analysis has been divided into the categories of Table 4 where only the most important interactions were considered.

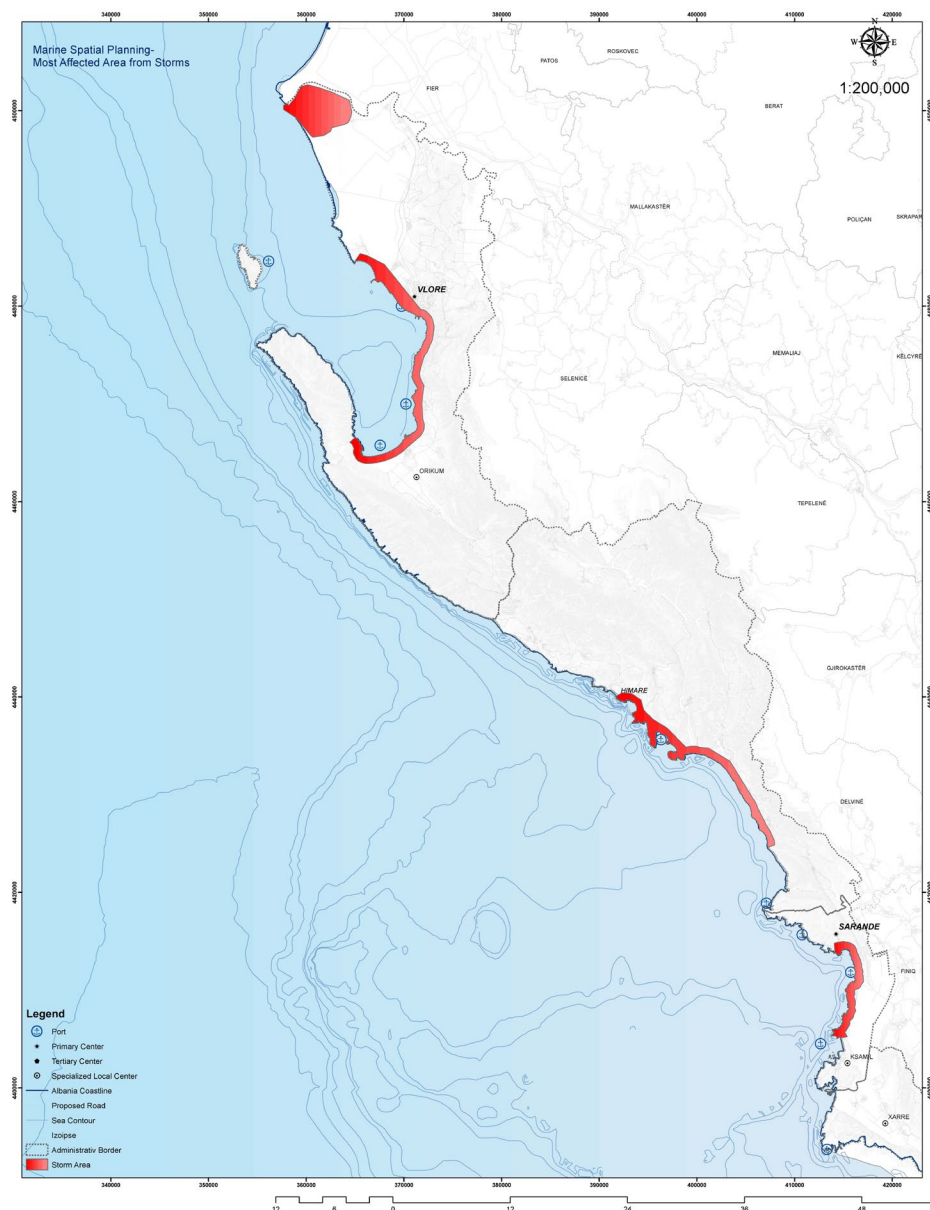
4.3.1. Natural Phenomena at "Sea" Interacting with the "Land"

Extreme Events (Storms, Heavy tides and Tsunamis)

Among the extreme events at sea, the ones that can be considered for the Vlore region are the sea storms.

Although not very frequent, based on the Albanian 4th Communication on Climate Change, "the expected increase in the number of storm surges due to climate change will increase the size and magnitude of flooded and eroding coastal areas. In this context, the river mouth, beaches and lagoons are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change."

Also, it is expected that the increase in the number of storms will affect the maritime transport infrastructure and the tourism industry in the entire area. The most affected areas in the region will be the northern part of the region as shown in Map 1.



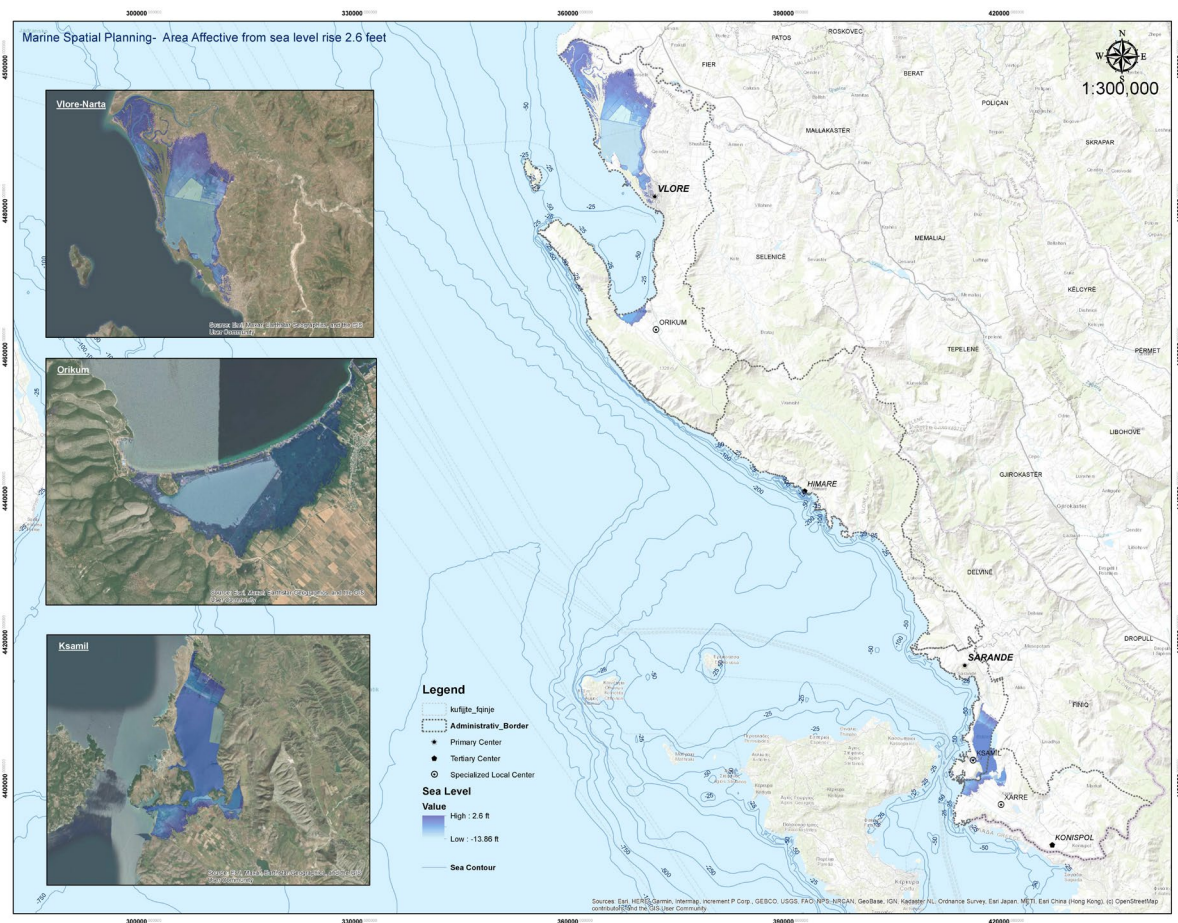
Map 1. Areas most affected by storms

Sea Level Rise

Among the natural phenomena at sea, sea level rise is the most important that will have a negative effect on the area. It is expected that the sea level rise will mostly affect the Adriatic coast (the northern part of the region) though tourism activities located near the beaches on the entire coast can also see potential negative impacts.

According to the 4th National Communication of Albania on Climate Change, "As per the worst scenario, RCP8.5, the sea level is expected to rise by 27 cm by 2050 and 80 cm by 2100."

Based on this scenario, Map 2 illustrates the most affected coastal area in the region.

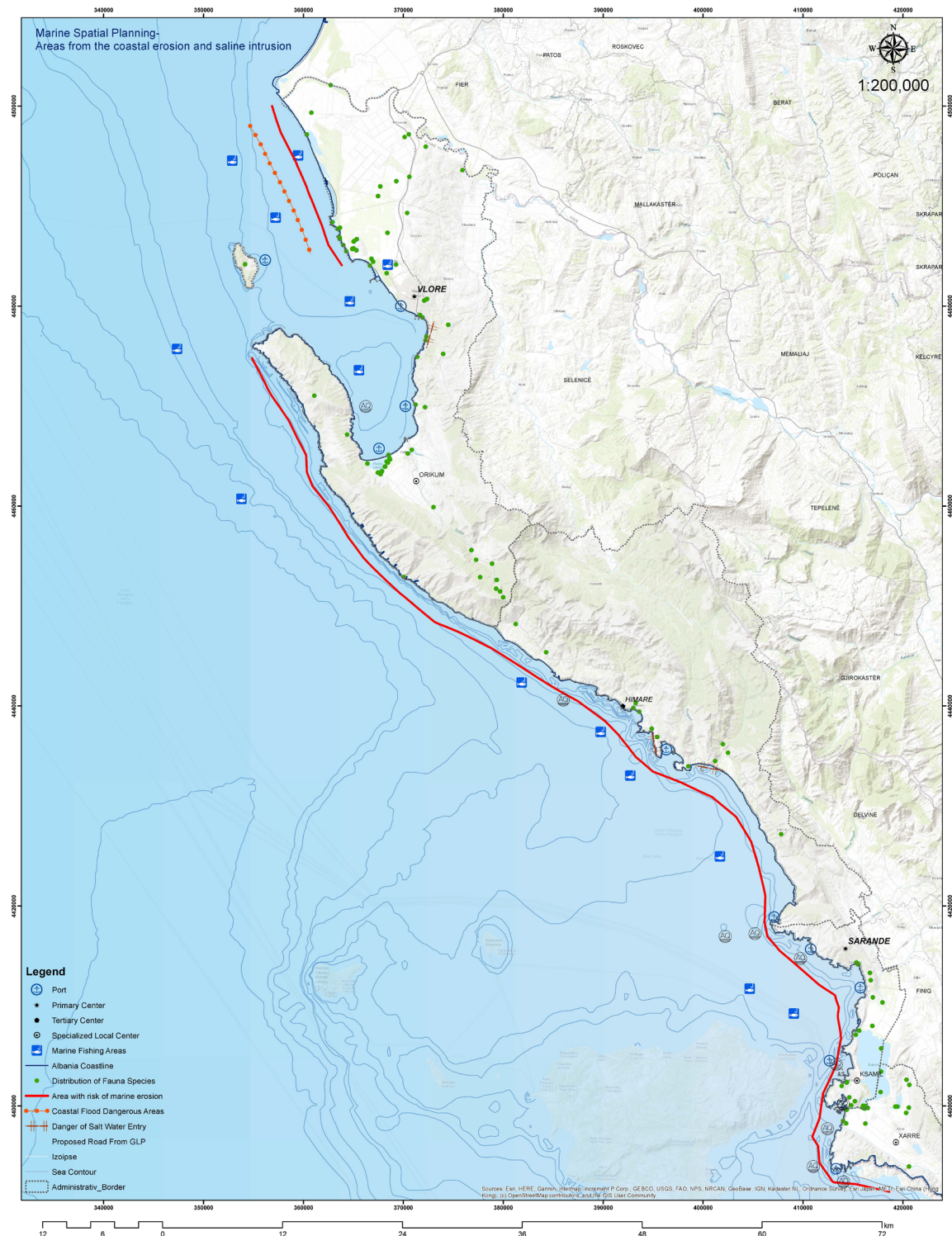


Map 2. Areas most affected by sea level rise

Risks to Coastal Areas (Coastal Erosion, Marine Flooding and Saline Intrusion)

This phenomenon is closely related to sea level rise. The most potentially affected agricultural area will be the western part of Vjosa, especially the part around Vjosa estuary and in the south-west of the country; Vrina

field in the Sarandë and Konispol municipalities (as shown in the map). Also, the salinisation of coastal aquifers will lead to a decrease in the availability of freshwater.

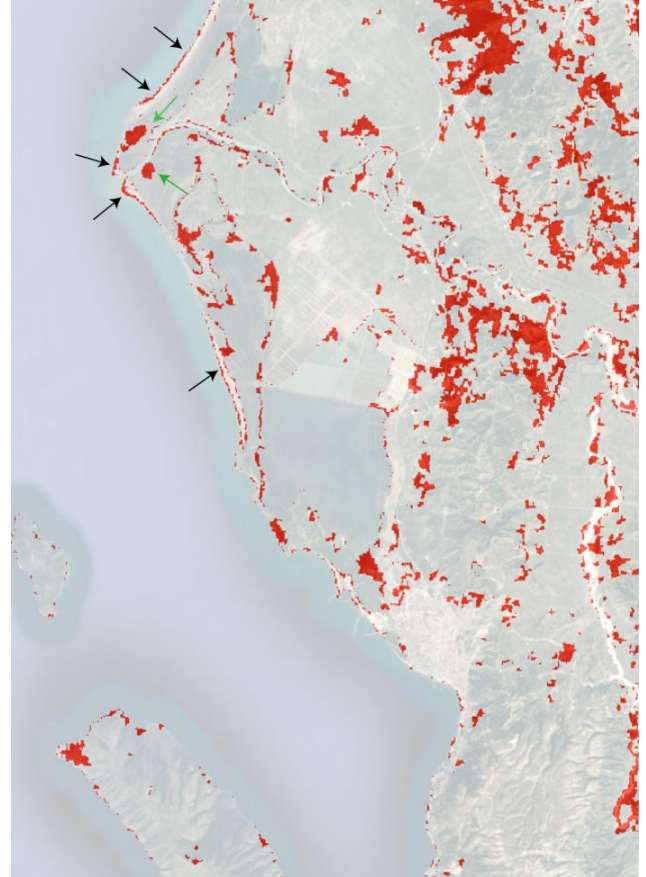


Map 3. Areas most affected by coastal erosion and saline intrusion

4.3.2. Natural Phenomena on “Land” Interacting with the “Sea”

Soil Erosion

The phenomenon of soil erosion in the Vjosa River Basin will continue to be active in the coming years, undergoing a gradual increase in the quantity of eroded material based on the climate change scenarios. For the northern part of the Vlora region, an analysis of the Coastal changes and movements has been carried out and is shown in Map 4.

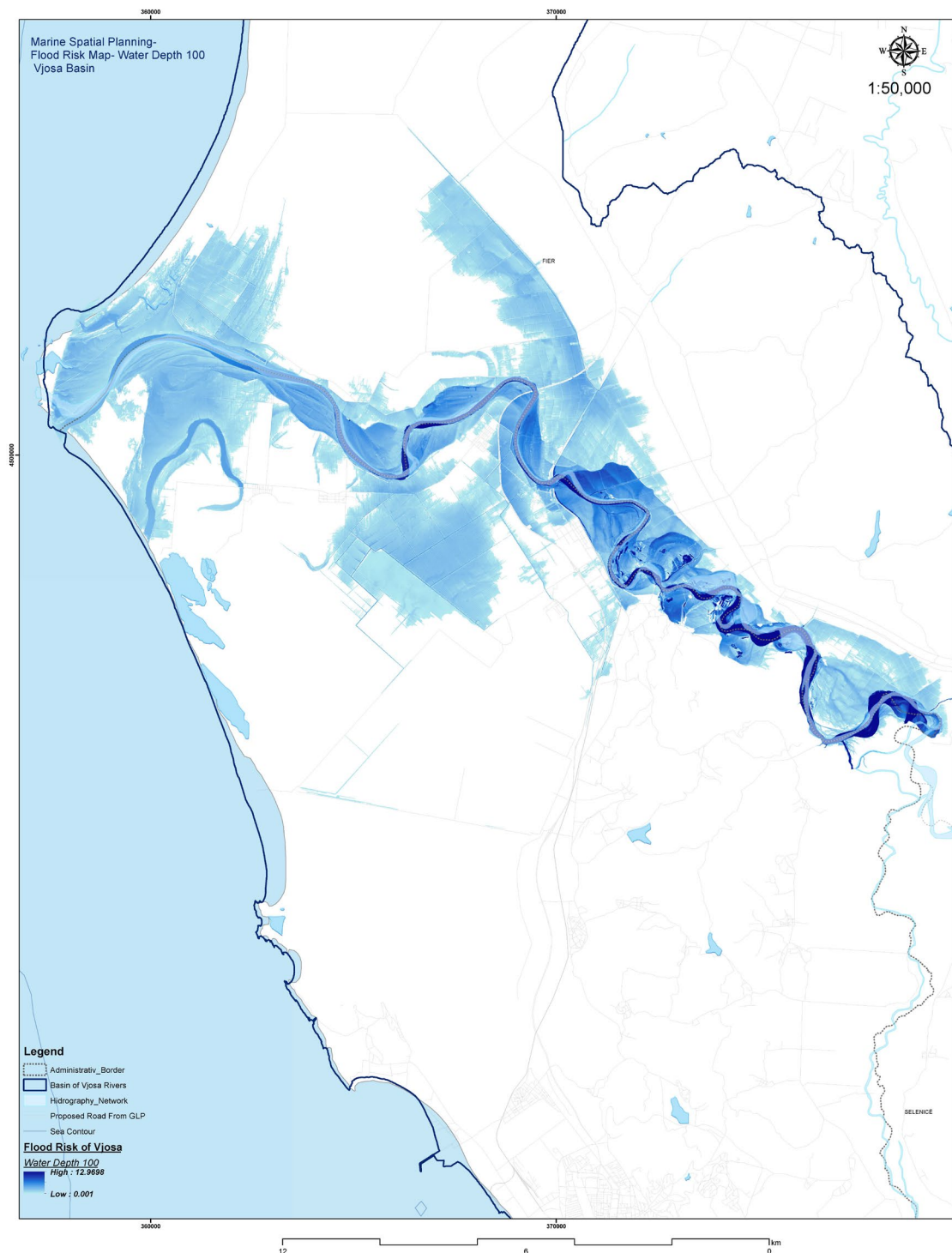


Map 4. The change detection results (red areas) that have been detected between two classification maps obtained using the GEOBIA approach. Black arrows indicate progradation areas, whereas green arrows indicate a loss of sediment in the delta area (Kanjir and Gregorič Bon, 2016).

Floods

The increased occurrence of floods, especially during winter, but also during the autumn and spring months, will increase fluvial erosion. In recent years, there have been frequent floods in the northern part of the Vlora area, causing significant damage to housing, infrastructure, agriculture and livestock. Referring to the climate change scenarios, the return periods of

maximum precipitation levels are expected to decrease in the delta of the Vjosa River. Consequently, more frequent heavy rains of longer duration can cause more intensive flooding of agricultural areas and significant economic damages are expected. A flood hazard map for the Vjosa River has been prepared by the AMBU and is shown in Map 5.



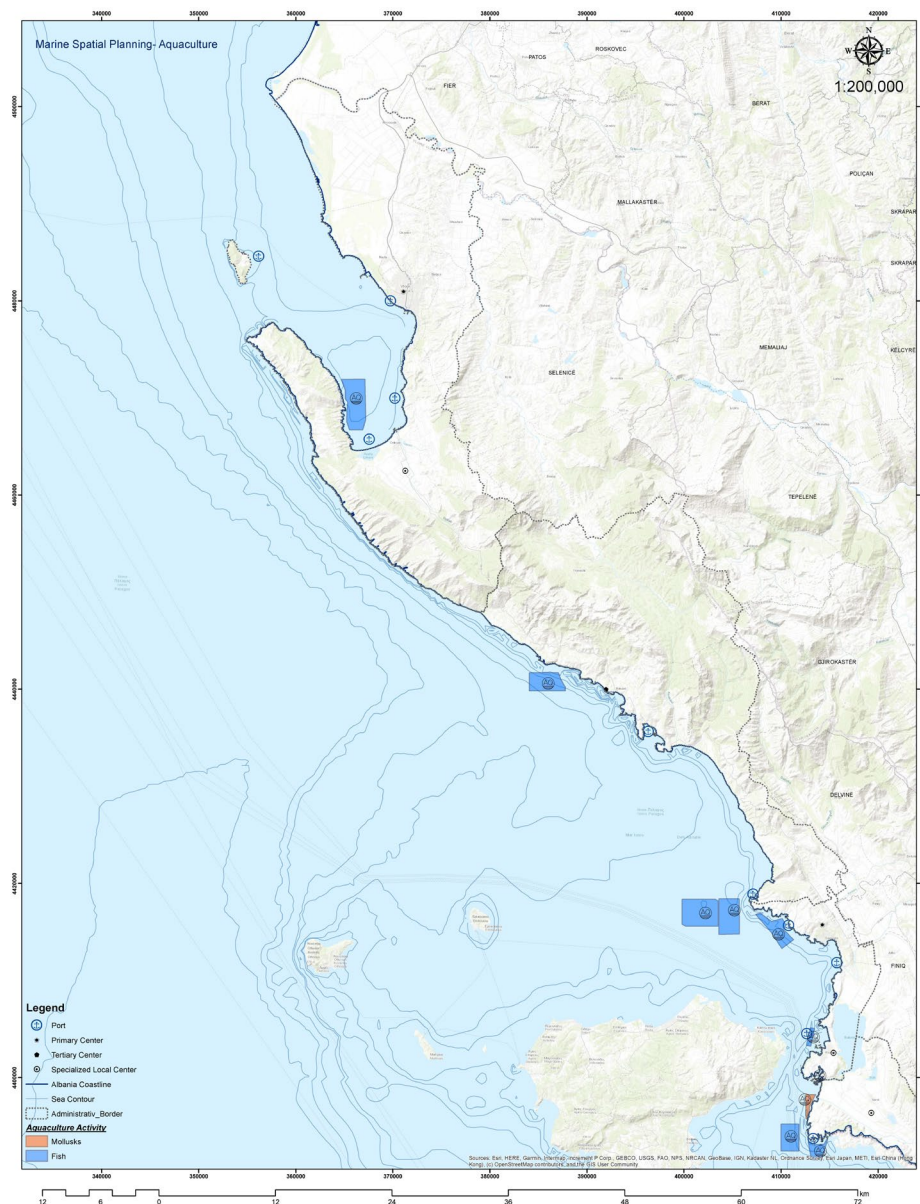
Map 5. Areas most affected by floods

4.3.3. Economic Activities at “Sea” Interacting with “Land”

Aquaculture in Seawater

Marine aquaculture is most developed in the Vlorë coastal waters. However, due to the multitude of activities that are operating in the area, to avoid potential conflicts and also to minimise the impact that marine aquaculture has on the water quality in the area, with DCM No. 461 of 27.3.2023, Allocated Zones for Aquaculture have

been approved for finfish and mussel cultivation along the entire coast and are shown in the maps below. Aquaculture activities are considered positive for society while for tourism, it depends on the location of aquaculture activities, and it is generally considered negative for the environment.



Map 6. Zones allocated for aquaculture

Fishing

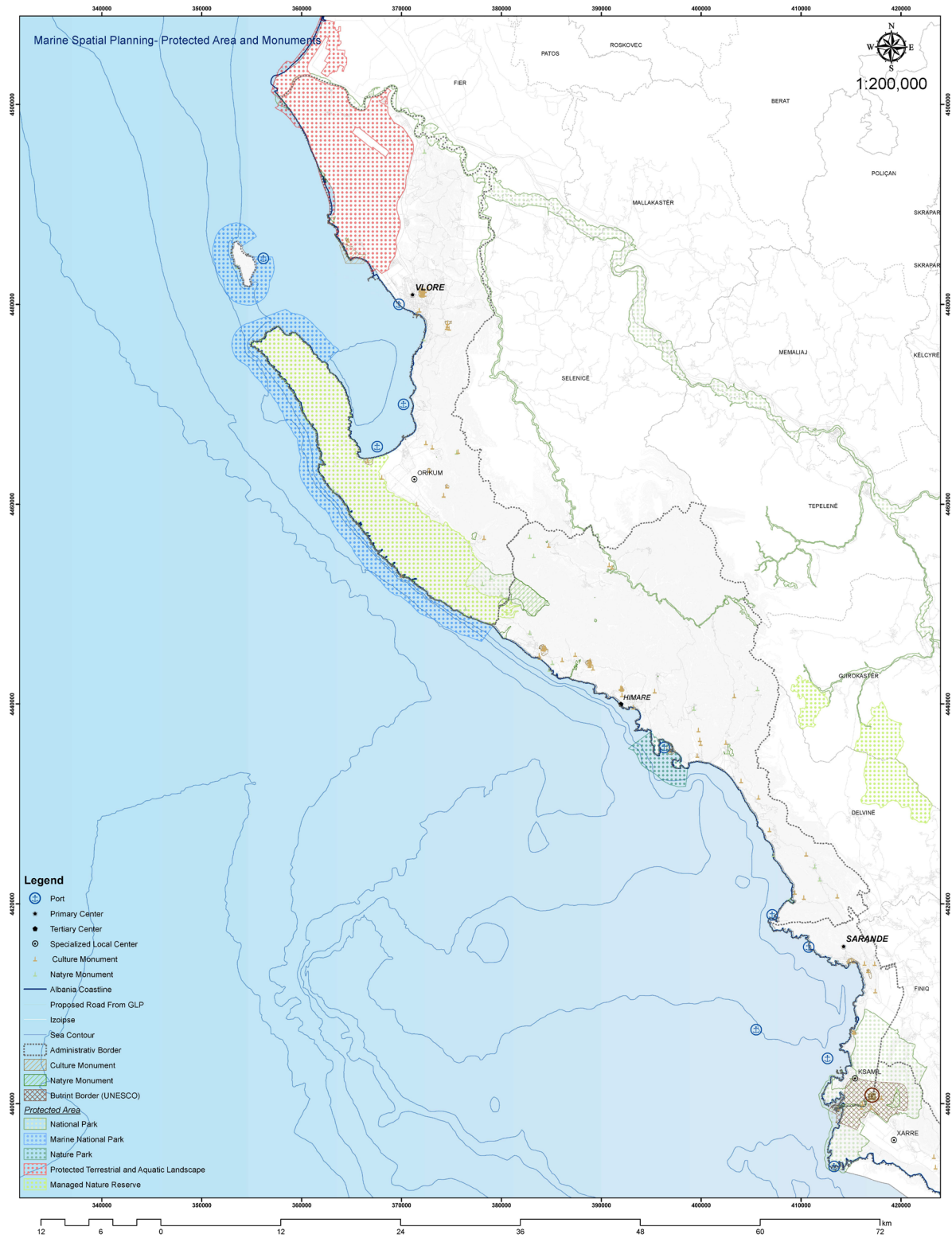
Fishing activities are quite well-developed along the coast, in both industrial and small-scale fisheries. There are already some restrictions in place to protect the fishing stock and preserve the sea bottom. Based on Law No. 64/2012 "on Fishery", amended, *"Fishing is prohibited in the port area, entryways/streets and anchoring sites, and fishing with trawl nets, dredges, purse seines, boat seines, shore seines or similar nets above seagrass beds of, in particular, Posidonia oceanica or other marine phanerogams shall be prohibited."*

Also, based on DCM No. 402 "concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources", other additional measures to restrict the use of fishery include: (i) *The use of towed gears shall be prohibited within 3 nautical miles of the coast or within the 50 m isobath if that depth is reached at a shorter distance from the coast. (ii) The use of trawl nets shall be prohibited within 1.5 nautical miles of the coast. The use of boat dredges and hydraulic dredges shall be prohibited within 0.3 nautical miles of the coast. (iii) The use of towed gears and trawls is prohibited at depths greater than 1,000 metres.*

The interaction of fishery is considered positive in terms of society and tourism, while the interaction with the environment is considered negative but this is highly dependent on the level of IUU fishery in the area.

Marine Protected Areas (MPA)

There are two Marine Protected Areas in the region: the Karaburun-Sazan National Park and the Porto Palermo Natural Park. Their contribution is considered highly positive in terms of environmental protection, and also in a complex relationship connected to tourism development. The protected areas are shown in Map 7.

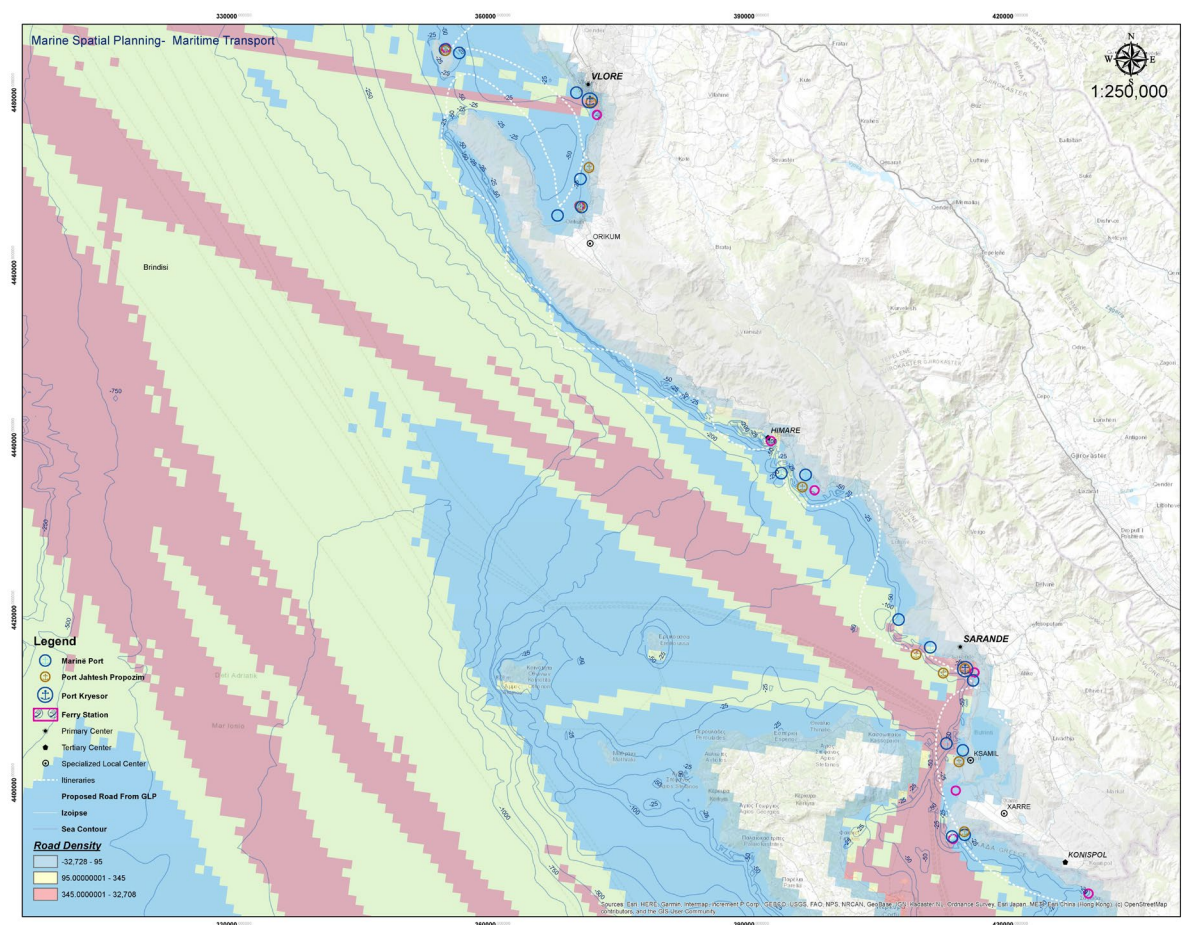


Map 7. Marine Protected Areas in the Vlora region

Maritime Transport (maritime traffic, commercial, including ferries)

The maritime transport in the area is mainly related to the Vlore fishing port, but also to the Saranda fishing port and as a passage north, especially for the Durrës fishing port. The frequency of the flow of cargo ships and tankers is not very high, as shown in the map, while the passenger traffic is mainly related to the Brindisi –

Vlore and Corfu – Saranda routes. While the ferries have had an important positive effect on tourism (especially for the Corfu – Saranda area), the potential pollution from large ferries passing into Albanian waters is considered an issue. As an illustration of the activities, Map 8 shows the maritime transport activities.

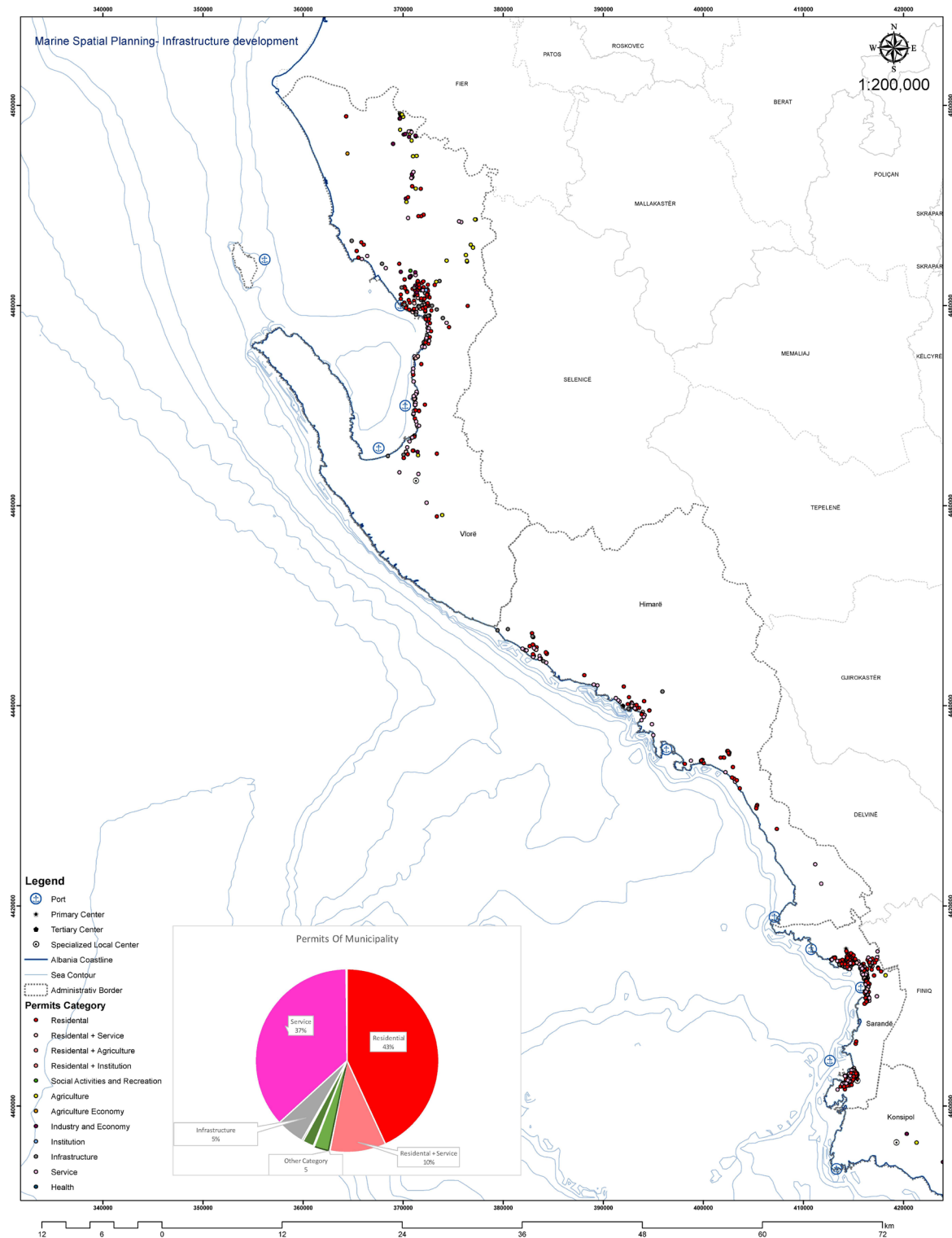


Map 8. Maritime transport in the Vlore region

Infrastructure

Due to the fast-growing tourism industry in the area, the infrastructure has been growing as well. There are several marinas that are being constructed or upgraded and also anchorage points for tourist boats. Also, there

are artificial structures in the sea or near the coast presenting a negative impact especially in relation to the environment (mainly for pollution and the disturbance of wildlife). The map below illustrates the main areas for infrastructure interventions.



Map 9. Infrastructure in the coastal waters in the Vlora region

4.3.4. Economic Activities on “Land” Interacting with the “Sea”

Farming and Livestock Farming

This is not an area with a lot of intensive farming, except for the area near the Vjosa River delta and the Vrina fields in Saranda. The main impact that they will have is the increase of pollution and nutrients coming from farming activities. However, this impact is not considered very high.

Tourism, Sports and Recreation Activities

This is the main economic activity related to the entire coast and with the fastest development in the last decade. There is a lot of construction going on along the coast, especially related to tourism facilities. This will put pressure on the marine environment especially related to pollution and the disturbance of wildlife. It is considered one of the main economic drivers in the area so an equilibrium should be found in relation to this activity with others.

Natural Protected Areas

The Vloa region has several Protected Areas inland. The most important related to the coast are the Karaburun Peninsula National Park and the Butrinti Lake National Park. Both areas have a positive impact in relation to the protection of the environment and society and the development of tourism. The Karaburun National Park being adjacent to the Karaburun Sazan PA serves as a coastal buffer area for the MPA, and as such blocks economic activities on the coast that may also harm the MPA. The area is also known as sought after by tourists for hiking, paragliding, etc. Similar to this, the protection of the Butrinti lagoon serves to prevent economic activities in the area that could harm the coastal habitats. Furthermore, Butrinti Lagoon serves as a nursery area for some euryhaline fish species and also is sought after by tourists for the Butrinti mussels cultivated there.

4.4. Conclusions on the LSI

Based on the limited amount of data and taking into consideration that this was the first exercise for this type of analysis, the main conclusions are as follows:

- The climate change effect should be seen as a priority for land/sea interactions taking into consideration the sea level rise and coastal erosion it will bring. Its effects are important for the northern part of the region but, when considering future timelines, other areas (including the beaches) will also be affected. Several important economic activities will be impacted by such changes.
- The touristic activities and the infrastructure built to support their development will have an effect on the coastline and coastal waters. This sector is considered the main economic development in the area, but its interaction, especially for the protection of the environment, should be carefully considered.
- Marine aquaculture activities in the area are important, though some spatial restriction measures have already been adopted to avoid negative interaction with other activities in the area.

LSI analysis in the future should be extended to cover the entire coast and include more data for the analysis.

5. Conclusions

The first Inter-Governmental Conference on accession negotiations between the EU and Albania took place on 19 July 2022. The first step in the accession negotiation process, the analytical examination of the EU acquis or the 'screening', was launched on the same date and has progressed smoothly. As such, in the future, Albania should approximate Directive 2014/89/EU as part of the EU acquis. Also, it should be noted that the start of the MSP process is important as a contribution to the implementation of the ICZM Protocol to the Barcelona Convention, which Albania has already signed.

Albania has already implemented some activities that will contribute to the successful preparation and establishment of maritime spatial planning. This includes:

- The preparation of the National Spatial Plan and the Intersectoral Coastal Spatial Plan;
- The sectoral spatial plan related to marine Allocated Zones for Aquaculture and the Port Infrastructure;
- The preparation of Local Spatial Planning at the municipality level and, for some specific areas, at a more detailed level;
- The advanced stage of preparation for the transposition of the MSFD directive;
- The establishment of a geoportal where all the georeferenced data collected in compliance with the INSPIRE directive will be presented.

In relation to the **legislative framework**, the laws and bylaws are not yet in compliance with the MSP directive. Based on the analysis carried out, the most feasible way is the amendment of the existing law and bylaws on territorial planning so that they can accommodate the provisions of the MSP directive. However, it is expected that the legal changes that will be proposed by the MIE (AKPT is part of this ministry) will be planned to follow the approval of the law on the Marine Strategy that is expected to be approved in early 2024. When the legal provisions are in place, it is expected that the 6-year period included in the directive will also be set as a preparatory time for the Albanian situation as well.

From the **institutional** point of view, the number of institutions dealing with marine issues is relatively large.

It is expected that the AKPT will be the main institution to coordinate the process for the preparation of the MSP, but this will be clear once the legal framework is in place. It is important that all institutions are aware of the process so that they can contribute in due time to the planification process.

There is a known lack of **data** for the marine waters in Albania (including what is referred to in the Albanian geoportal). The CAMP Otranto project has already prepared a database with the data (focused on the Vlora region) with data for the coastal and marine environment. In the future, data should be collected according to the required standard (IMAP, EU requirements, etc.) and also in maps that can be useful for the MSP process. A boost for the collection of data (especially environmental data) is expected following the approval of the law on Marine Strategy.

For the **LSI analysis**, a preliminary analysis focused on the Vlora region has been performed in this report. Based on the analysis, the main sector that is important for future planning and that will impact all the others is tourism and the infrastructure related to it. However, in the future, LSI analysis should cover the entire coast and more data needs to be considered so that the analysis is more complete.

Overall, more support is needed for the MSP process as it is still in the preliminary phase in Albania. Examples from the neighbouring EU countries (Italy and Greece) are valid, but also more capacities need to be developed nationally. Since Albania has gone through a rapid transformation of the coastal economy in the last decade, MSP should consider such developments in the future as well.

On the analysis for the future based on the draft Italian MSP, and taking into consideration the training held in Italy for the ICZM/MSP, the following issues were considered relevant for the future process of the preparation of the MSP in Albania:

- Possible division into two sub-areas for the Albanian part (territorial waters and outside territorial waters).
- The importance of having a process that should carefully take the neighbouring countries into

consideration as well. In all aspects of preparing the Maritime Spatial Plan and the related Strategic Environmental Assessment, it should be taken into account that they will be distributed for evaluation and comments to the 3 countries adjacent to the Albanian waters.

- A matrix of interaction should be carefully prepared, including the trends of how the interactions are expected to be in the future (*an increase in intensity, a decrease or substantial stability*). Also, interaction should be identified (conflict; potential conflict/ synergy; and synergy).
- The plan should be supported by a multitude of data from all sectors (including from the MSFD) and

be accompanied by a list of measures that should be diverse in typology: (*I – refer to public administrations or planning instruments; P – prescriptions that the plan provides to regulate the uses of the maritime space (e.g. in terms of modalities, including spatial and temporal, in which the uses can be exercised); I – incentives; A – actions, i.e. concrete initiatives (e.g. consultations, studies and analyses) carried out by or on behalf of competent administrations, possibly in partnership with private subjects*).

Appendix A – Institutional Set-Up for the Management of Marine Waters

Table 5. Public Bodies with Marine Responsibilities

Ministry / Agency	Functional Responsibility ²
1. Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable urban planning and development; ▪ Urban standards in construction; ▪ The design, implementation and follow-up of infrastructure development policies, which include infrastructure, transport and water supply-sewerage; ▪ The direction, management, supervision and establishment of technical infrastructure standards for ports, airports, water supply and sewerage and large hydropower dams; ▪ Monitoring the realisation of the standards determined in the function of the development of infrastructure in transport, water supply and sewerage; ▪ The design and implementation of sea traffic monitoring through intelligent systems located in agencies, enterprises and directorates of dependence, to guarantee the safety of each sector mentioned above, in line with international principles; ▪ The energy sector, energy resources, including renewable energy sources, and energy efficiency; ▪ The drafting of policies and strategies for mitigating the effects of climate change resulting from the activity of the areas of responsibility of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy; ▪ hydrocarbon sector (oil and gas); ▪ mining and geology sector; ▪ non-food industry sector; ▪ telecommunication and postal service.
1.1. Albanian Geological Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Studies, surveys, services, generalisations and the systematic basic geological monitoring of the country, through complex mapping at different scales, in aid of economic development, the effective administration of the territory, mineral, hydrocarbon, water resources, etc.; ▪ Studies, surveys, services, generalisations and geochemical, geophysical monitoring, including shallow seismic (engineering), electrometry, magnetometry, gravimetry, radiometry, measurements and monitoring of radon in soil, water and air, as well as in indoor environments, on any level; ▪ Research and evaluation of metallic and non-metallic minerals, industrial materials, hydrocarbons, underground water sources, drinking and industrial waters, mineral, thermal and geothermal waters; ▪ Studies, surveys, services, generalisations and hydrogeological monitoring for the reassessment of water basins, their monitoring and determining measures for the preservation of underground water reserves; ▪ Complex geological studies, surveys, services, generalisations and monitoring for the environment. ▪ Geological engineering studies, surveys, services, generalisations and monitoring; ▪ Studies, surveys, services, generalisations and agro-geological and erosion monitoring;

² Only the responsibilities that are related to the MSP are mentioned

Ministry / Agency	Functional Responsibility ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Studies, surveys, services, geological monitoring of the entire coastline and continental shelf of the country, of the dynamics of the action of the sea with the land, of the lithology of the substrate and the various marine and underwater assets; ▪ In-depth scientific studies, surveys, services, generalisations and monitoring for geology and metallogeny; ▪ Generalisations, observations, monitoring and documentation of all engineering works related to soil excavation; ▪ Topographical works of different scales and geodetic measurements; ▪ Creation of the geological database, of useful minerals, geological engineering, hydrogeological, geo-environmental, etc.; ▪ Promotion of prospecting for useful minerals; ▪ Monitoring and evaluation of exploration permits; ▪ Conducting studies for civil, geological, geological engineering and hydrogeological emergencies.
1.2. General Maritime Directorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Directs and coordinates the activity of the constituent structures of the maritime administration; ▪ Exercises control over the smooth running of the work and the performance of tasks over all the constituent structures of the maritime administration; ▪ Controls the implementation of the general, national and international maritime rules by all private and state entities; ▪ Provides technical assistance in drafting and aligning national maritime legislation with international legislation; ▪ Represents the Republic of Albania for maritime issues in the United Nations Organisation, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the International Labour Organisation and other organisations; ▪ Cooperates with all other institutions related to maritime activities, such as the Coast Guard, Border Police structures, customs agencies, environmental agencies, the Hydrographic Service and associations of private operators; ▪ Exchange the necessary data for the discipline of maritime traffic, increasing navigation safety conditions and port safety standards; ▪ Sets up groups of experts for the investigation of maritime incidents and accidents, ship collisions, fires on ships, offshore activities, piracy, for the resolution of all maritime issues, provided for in the Maritime Code of the Republic of Albania, as well as takes the necessary measures for their prevention and avoidance; ▪ Provides technical assistance in the drafting of bylaws and taking relevant measures for the removal of solid and liquid waste and marine relics, through the constituent structures of the maritime administration; ▪ Directs, organises and controls the training for the qualification of officers and sailors of the Republic of Albania, of pilots, agents and port operators operating in the maritime field, for the issuance of the necessary relevant certificates, in accordance with the national legislation and international conventions, to which the Republic of Albania is a party; ▪ Follows and realises maritime transport activities, based on the government programme, the National Transport Plan, master plans and the development strategy of the maritime sector; ▪ Monitors the development of seaports based on studies, master plans and projects, in harmony with the National Transport Plan.
1.3. National Agency of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposal, consultation and cooperation with the relevant structures of the government for drafting its policies and strategies in the field of mining, hydrocarbons and energy; ▪ Implementation of government policies in the fields of mining, hydrocarbons and energy;

Ministry / Agency	Functional Responsibility ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring, within the scope of its own activity, governmental opposition to studies and projects in the field of mining, post-mining, hydrocarbon and energy activities; ▪ Promotion of mineral, hydrocarbon, water resources and renewable energy sources; ▪ Negotiating hydrocarbon and mining agreements and following the implementation of their development plans; ▪ Preparation of the necessary documentation and practices for granting permits, licences and authorisations, which enable entering into hydrocarbon agreements and performing hydrocarbon operations; ▪ Follow-up of the implementation of related hydrocarbon agreements; ▪ Supervision of mining, post-mining, hydrocarbon and energy activities; ▪ Proposing measures for increasing the use of energy in the energy cycle; ▪ Drafting and publication of the annual energy balance.
1.4. National Agency of Territorial Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information on the improvement processes of territory planning legislation; ▪ Administration and maintenance of the territory planning database (National Register of Territory Planning); ▪ Informing the public about the territorial planning processes, as well as encouraging its participation during the processes of drafting and implementing planning documents; ▪ Providing legal, technical and methodological standards in the field of territorial planning; ▪ The preparation of studies for the Integrated Planning System in the Republic of Albania and proposals for the minister responsible for the planning and development of the territory, the National Council of the Territory and the Council of Ministers, for measures for the sustainable development of the territory and for processes and activities in connection with territorial planning; ▪ Drawing up the Annual Monitoring Report of the Implementation of the Goals and Objectives, stated in the General Plan of the Territory and detailed plans for areas of national importance.
1.5. Institute of Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of a database of the transport sector for each type and data that will be used jointly for all the activities of the transport sector, also maintaining and updating this database; ▪ Maintenance and updating of the National Transport Plan (PKT) and related investment programmes; ▪ Recommends and assists the MIE in reviewing and updating transport sector policies, regulations and institutional reforms; ▪ Carrying out works and other study services in the field of transport, as well as evaluations, oppositions, expertise, training, etc., for the line Ministry and for third parties.
1.6. Energy Efficiency Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To prepare, implement and monitor policies and programmes for the efficient use of energy in the residential, service, industry, transport and agriculture sectors; ▪ To prepare and monitor the National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency; ▪ Cooperate with central and local authorities, companies operating industrial facilities and various non-profit organisations for the creation and updating of the necessary energy database, including the calculation of energy efficiency indicators, as well as for the implementation of measures to encourage energy efficiency; ▪ To prepare technical standards, norms and regulations, in order to increase the energy efficiency of equipment, apparatus and machines used for the production, transport, distribution and consumption of energy in the residential services, industry, transport and agriculture sectors;

Ministry / Agency	Functional Responsibility ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To cooperate with local and international institutions and organisations, with the aim of using energy efficiently and reducing the negative impact on the environment; ▪ Cooperate with accrediting bodies to obtain information on the results of tests and measurements, for the fulfilment of the national energy efficiency standards; ▪ Advise end-consumers on energy efficiency programmes undertaken by them; ▪ To support and advise the conduct of public awareness campaigns and other educational activities related to the promotion of efficiency and energy saving; ▪ Collect and manage monitoring data.
1.7. National Water Supply Agency – Sewerage and Waste Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designs the strategic framework for the development and management of the water supply and sewerage sector in our country; ▪ Proposes the annual investment planning from the State Budget based on the needs presented by the Local Government Units / Water and Sewerage companies and submits it to the Minister of Infrastructure and Energy for approval; ▪ It supports general financing, through the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, the needs for local costs, customs tax and VAT reimbursement, approved contracts financed by foreign donors; ▪ Proposes standards and technical specifications for water pipes and sewers and sends them to the relevant bodies for approval; ▪ Drafts and prepares draft laws and bylaws related to the general field of the administration and distribution of drinking water, as well as the organised removal and treatment of used water.
2. Ministry of Tourism and the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The environmental sector, including policies and waste treatment standards, as well as monitoring and control of the effects they bring in terms of air and the environment, air quality, industrial pollution, chemicals, monitoring climate effects, monitoring the control of environmental indicators of water quality, environmental impact assessment; ▪ Nature and biodiversity, including flora and fauna, soil protection from erosion and degradation, natural landscape protection, wildlife and endangered species protection and protected areas; ▪ The drafting and implementation of policies for the sustainable development of tourism, through the promotion of investments in the field of tourism, agrotourism, ecotourism, water tourism and coastal areas, the establishment, monitoring and control of the system of standards in tourism and business education in the field of tourism, promoting the product and tourist destinations, coordinating cooperation with state structures and the local government, as well as exercising other functions, according to the relevant legislation, through dependent institutions, ministry apparatus and territorial branches.
2.1 National Agency of Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The leadership, management, organisation and continuous control of the structures of the protected areas on which it depends; ▪ Updating and improving the protection and management of areas, through the cultivation of concepts, practices and contemporary schemes used by advanced countries; ▪ Management and administration of the network of protected areas, habitats and natural and semi-natural species of conservation interest, in accordance with the Albanian environmental legislation in force, as well as international environmental conventions and agreements; ▪ Creation and implementation of the formatted and standardised documentary system, with which the management structures of protected areas work throughout the territory of the Republic of Albania; ▪ Creation of the National File, Portal and Database of Protected Areas, as a separate part of the Portal, the National Environmental File;

Ministry / Agency	Functional Responsibility ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation and implementation of the methodology for designing management plans for protected areas; Promotion of forms, methods and rational ways for the collection, registration, processing and distribution of information about protected areas; Approval of activities in protected areas, as part of the process of obtaining an environmental permit for activities that have an impact on the environment in protected areas; Financial management of the network of protected areas.
2.2 National Coastal Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring performance in coastal areas; Organisation of work for the integrated management of the coastal area; Ensuring the sustainable development of the coastal area, through the provision of cleaning services during the tourist season, according to chapter III/1 of this decision; Organisation of work for the promotion of investments in the coastal area; Organisation of work for the coordination of programmes and development projects of importance for the integrated management of the coastal area; Ensuring the sustainable development of tourism through the inspection and control of tourist activities.
2.3 National Environmental Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring environmental performance; Environmental research and knowledge; Environmental impact assessment and licencing; Thematic inspection and control of compliance with the legal requirements and environmental conditions.
2.4 National Tourism Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements marketing policies in the field of tourism, promoting Albanian tourism at the national and international levels to create the image of Albania as a tourist destination in the international market; Provides information for visitors, travellers and tourists on the tourist services offered, tourist products and destinations, activities and other useful information; Promotes the product and tourist destinations inside and outside the country, cooperating with regional tourism offices, local government and other organisations operating in the field of tourism; Promotes investments in areas with priority tourism development, cooperating with other public institutions promoting investments in the country; It initiates and promotes projects for tourism, according to its own field of activity, receiving the prior approval of the ministry responsible for tourism; Proposes and designs promotional materials, in accordance with the trends of the tourist market, and realises their production. Implements the national tourism development strategy and the national marketing strategy for the tourism sector; Proposes to the minister responsible for tourism changes to legal and sub-legal acts in the field of tourism, arguing the reasons related to these proposals; It collects the income realised from lease agreements for the surfaces given for use in the development of tourism and performs their disbursement in accordance with the provisions of the legislation in force.
3. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafts and implements state policies on issues of agriculture, rural development, veterinary medicine, food and food security, fisheries, aquaculture and fruit forests; Drafts and proposes the approval of draft acts for the alignment of the legislation in the fields of agriculture, rural development, food and food safety, veterinary medicine, fishing and aquaculture with the norms and requirements of the European Union; Draws up and implements orientation, support and incentive policies for agricultural production, as well as takes care of the coordinated development of agriculture;

Ministry / Agency	Functional Responsibility ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows the preparation of its structures for the decentralised management of European Commission funds for rural development, and designs and implements the IPARD programme, in accordance with the regulatory acts of the European Union; Implements government financial support for farmers, agribusinesses and fishermen, based on government programme policies for their support; Designs and implements policies for the good administration of agricultural land, as well as the protection of land from natural processes and other factors that can damage it; Designs and implements policies for the sustainable management of irrigation and drainage systems, as well as takes appropriate measures to protect lands from flooding; Cooperates with local self-government bodies in the sustainable development of forests and pastures; Drafts and implements state policies for fishing and aquaculture in Albania and the management of fish resources; Draws up and implements the policies of rural development, agritourism, quality standards and organic products, as well as the quality of life in the village and rural development.
4. Ministry of Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drafting and implementation of general state policies for securing the independence and protection of the territorial integrity of the country; plans for and copes with civil emergencies.
4.1 National Civil Protection Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements the policy of the Council of Ministers in the field of disaster risk reduction and civil protection; Implements the strategic directions and objectives determined by the ministry responsible for civil protection; Coordinates the work on drafting the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, the National Plan for Civil Emergencies and disaster risk assessment at the central level; Cooperates with international organisations and international homologous organisations in the framework of civil protection and disaster risk reduction; Plans funds for taking preventive and rehabilitative measures against disasters, damaged infrastructure, as well as other activities in the field of civil defence, the criteria and procedures for which allocation are determined by the Decision of the Council of Ministers; Creates and implements the methodology for drafting plans for civil emergencies; Promotes forms, methodologies, rational ways for collecting, recording, processing and disseminating disaster information; Prepares the training programme for civil defence structures at the central and local levels; Inspects the implementation of the provisions of this law on civil protection for state institutions and structures and private entities.
4.2 Interinstitutional Maritime Operational Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interdepartmental institution that has the task of ensuring the observation of the Albanian maritime space, in order to carry out the organisation, planning, coordination and management of operations at sea, in accordance with the national and international maritime legislation; Ministry of Defence (24-hour Coast Guard presence); Ministry of the Interior (24-hour presence of the Border and Migration Police); Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (24-hour presence of the Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture Services); Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (24-hour presence of the Maritime Administration); Ministry of Finance (24-hour presence of Customs);

Ministry / Agency	Functional Responsibility ²
Water Resource Management Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Tourism and the Environment (coordinating capacity as needed). ▪ Designs and implements policies, strategies, plans, programmes and projects aimed at the integrated management of water resources, quantitative and qualitative conservation, as well as their further consolidation; ▪ Implements the provisions of international agreements and conventions on water resources and transboundary ones, to which the Republic of Albania is a party; ▪ Exercises the functions of the Technical Secretariat of the National Water Council; ▪ Proposes the concession of water resources to the National Water Council; ▪ Proposes to the National Water Council the granting of permits and authorisations for the use of water and discharges, when the activity is carried out outside the boundary of a single basin; ▪ Draws up the national inventory of water resources, both quantitatively and qualitatively; ▪ Drafts and follows the implementation of water basin management plans; ▪ Drafts and follows the implementation of management plans for transboundary waters; ▪ It is responsible for the economic activity of water resources; ▪ Requests technical data, analysis or technical-consultative support that serve the needs of the administration and management of water resources from state bodies and institutions, agencies and public entities information; ▪ Promotes the participation of water users in the management and administration of water resources; ▪ Encourage studies and research for the development of technical innovations related to the use, detection, exploitation, conservation, treatment, protection, administration and efficient use of water resources; ▪ In cooperation with research-scientific institutions, determines the areas of research and study for water resources, as well as the relevant funds for them; ▪ Coordinates and controls the work of local water resource management bodies.
Institute of Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry out studies and research related to the assessment of environmental risks, the impact on health, through the performance of expertise; ▪ Assesses drinking water quality (groundwater/surface water intended for drinking water/water treatment works); ▪ Follows and keeps under continuous control, through the analysis of data from health structures, the drinking water supply and its quality at the national level, and gives recommendations and tasks for implementation by assessing the risk factors; ▪ Proposes and continuously works in relation to improving the legislation, standards and norms, taking into account its alignment with EU legislation.

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 and sharing know-how and modelling best practice

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