



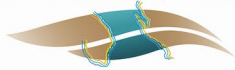
Mid-term Conference

11 May 2023

Brindisi-Italy

Palazzo Granafei-Nervegna

Via Duomo, 20 – Brindisi



Transboundary Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) at the forefront of the CAMP Otranto Mid-Term Conference and training course

At the historic Palazzo Granafei-Nervegna in Brindisi, key stakeholders from Italy and Albania met on **11 May 2023**, in the morning, for the Mid-Term Conference to learn about the latest developments in the framework of the CAMP Otranto project; followed by training on ICZM-MSP in the afternoon to discuss the potential transboundary implementation of ICZM and MSP in the South Adriatic, as well as other subregional and international initiatives in the area.

The day was opened, as usual, by institutional greetings and welcome to project partners and participants. The **Mayor of Brindisi, Riccardo Rossi**, gave the city's warm welcome to the project and participants, certain of the value of the planned actions and wishing the best success with the full cooperation of the city of Brindisi.

In her opening speech, **Anna Grazia Maraschio, Councillor for the Environment of the Puglia Region**, emphasized the need to involve other regions in Italy to achieve the ultimate goal of preserving our ecosystems and protecting the environment. *„To address this challenge” she said „the Puglia region has recently established a Regional Waste Observatory as a fundamental tool for monitoring and modernizing environmental policies on waste issues.”*

The **Maritime Director of Puglia and Ionian Basilicata, Rear Admiral Vincenzo Leone**, brought his greetings, underlining the importance of coastal governance, which requires basic knowledge of coastline features, and the need to improve the management of regional waters.

Željka Škaričić, director of PAP/RAC explained that the CAMP Otranto project is a pioneering experience of two countries and two regions sharing the same territories. She said: *„We can reach Good Environmental Status only if we collaborate successfully.”*

Sofjan Jaupaj, from The Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania, tackling the issue of plastic waste, informed that Albania banned the use of plastic bags in 2022, explaining that: *„Albania wants to see the tourism sector develop without damaging the environment, and to increase the number of coastal protected areas to help achieve greater balance.”*

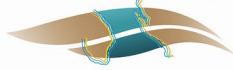
General Director Oliviero Montanaro, from the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy (IMEES) said that: *„The CAMP Otranto, being the first transboundary CAMP project in the Mediterranean coastal area,*

constitutes an unique opportunity to give impulse to international cooperation in the South Adriatic area. Also, it provides a platform to develop tools and promote synergies to jointly implement the integrated management of coastal zones between Italy and Albania, in line with the principles of the ICZM Protocol to the Barcelona Convention and the EU Directives on Marine Spatial Planning and Marine Strategy.”

He also added that the IMEES, building upon the successful outcomes of the CAMP Italy, the first multi-area project that involved three Italian regions, supports the CAMP Otranto project, believing strongly in its strategic relevance for the transboundary implementation of the ICZM in the Mediterranean Sea as a whole. The Mid-Term Conference and the ICZM/MSP workshop represent a valuable occasion not only to share with the public the results achieved by the technical studies and the conceptual framework in which the Project is born, but also to drive the attention and the engagement of the local community on the crucial aspect of the integrated coastal zone management, thus paving the way for future initiatives and cooperation on this theme at local level. He closed stating that: *„This small project is a seed which will continue to grow and promote a multi-country approach.”*

During the conference participants were guided through the overall project implementation by the moderator and **National Project Coordinator for Italy, Daniela Addis**, who opened the technical part of the Mid-Term Conference, specifying its main objectives, illustrating the project framework, and the progress achieved so far and presented. In particular, she explained that under the Barcelona Convention system, and the Coastal Area Management Programs (CAMP), a proposal for a cross-border CAMP project for the Otranto Strait area between Albania and Italy was launched in 2018 to promote harmonized cross-border coastal management approaches. The Otranto CAMP is the first cross-border project since the launch of the Coastal Area Management Program (CAMP) in 1989. The agreement between the parties – the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania (AMTE), the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy (IMEES), and the Priority Actions Program Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) of the United Nations Environment Program/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)-was signed in March 2021. With the overall objective of addressing the transboundary integrated coastal zone management, implementing both ICZM Protocol and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), at national/local and transboundary levels, the actions of the Otranto CAMP mainly aim to:

- progressively reduce pollution, with a focus on marine litter, by developing shared best practices between Italy and Albania;



- improve the sustainability of the tourism sector, particularly through the assessment of selected tourism activities;
- preserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of coastal and marine ecosystems, particularly in existing and potential Natura 2000 Network sites, through the examination of various area-based management tools (ABMTs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), both within and beyond national jurisdiction.

The project timeline starts with the project agreement signed in March 2021, followed by the detailed project formulation (2021); the Inception Conference in December 2021; the project implementation (2022-2023); the Mid-term Conference in May 2023; the finalization and integration of results foreseen in September-October 2023; the Final Conference in December 2023, followed by the post-project activities in 2024. The implementation of the project is carried out under the organizational structure which sees the coordination by the PAP/RAC with the support from INFO/RAC and the national project coordinators. The implementation is overseen by the CAMP Otranto Steering Committee, with special involvement of the Albanian Ministry of Tourism and Environment (AMTE) and the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (IMEES).

The Tryeza/Tavolo CAMP Otranto, established in the two partner countries, support the implementation of the Project by ensuring the contribution of institutional actors at national and local levels, in particular the Vlora Region (AL) and the Puglia Region (IT).

The project is organized into Horizontal Activities and Individual/Transboundary Activities.

The Horizontal Activities – which are mandatory activities to be included in every CAMP Project as they are functional to the project and cross-cutting activities – aim to share experiences, increase capacities and skills, and promote dialogue between institutions, experts and local communities.

These include:

1. Coordination and monitoring of the project and integration of results with the operational management of the project, ensuring the timely and full implementation of all activities and cooperation among project partners.
2. Capacity Building with the aim of building and strengthening the capacity and skills of the public administrations involved in CAMP Otranto.

3. Data collection and management, highlighting the importance of the marine knowledge support tool as an integral part of ICZM.
4. Awareness-raising and dissemination of results, with the organization of various awareness-raising activities and events, ensuring the dissemination of project results and information transfer also through training courses or trainings.

The Individual/Transboundary Actions, as tools of the project, include:

1. The establishment and implementation of an ICZM Management and Audit System (ICZM SAS). A system for assessing, validating or certifying and continuously improving local processes and initiatives in coastal areas, in accordance with the ICZM Protocol.
2. A process to develop specific recommendations on the best application and implementation of the Common Regional Framework (CRF) Methodological Guidance for ICZM (adopted by COP21, 2019), based on its testing in the project area.
3. The preparation of a feasibility study for the identification of a complex and integrated area-based management tool (ABMT) within the project area, as far as possible including the two national parts and the transboundary part.
4. The development of a concept note on MSP for the Albanian side, based on Italian experiences related to the implementation of the EU MSP Directive.

The main outcomes of CAMP Otranto concern:

- Identified and tested ad hoc tools and methodologies for ICZM, considering transboundary areas, and including MSP as the main tool/process for ICZM implementation in the marine part of the coastal zone;
- Supporting sustainable coastal activities, with special reference to nature conservation, tourism, fisheries, maritime transport, and economic activities that generate marine pollution, with a focus on marine litter;
- Strengthening the capacity and skills of national/local administrations for sustainable coastal and marine management, including through the exchange of experience and collaboration between Albania and Italy in the implementation of ICZM and MSP;

- Awareness raising and dissemination of lessons learned, through the organization of participatory workshops and trainings organized in Vlorë and Apulia Regions between January and October 2023 on the concepts of ICZM/MSDP; ecotourism in the Vlorë region; data management, including with the IMAP Info system; marine litter or marine litter and fishing for litter; ABMT.

Although the trainings will be organized at the national level, participants from both countries will be invited, thus ensuring cross-border exchange of experiences.

She also invited participants to visit the project site: <https://camp-otrantto.com/>

Thus, she introduced the **project experts** who presented the crucial pressures and environmental impacts in the Otranto Strait, the methodology used, and the modes of its application to support the ICZM Protocol, as well as the progress and challenges of ICZM and MSP in Albania in collaboration with Italy.

Elisa Ulazzi presented the Individual Action „ICZM management System and Audit Scheme (ICZM SAS)“ in order to evaluate and support relevant initiatives related to ICZM at the local level where to test the ICZM SAS Activity. She explained that the overall objective of ICZM SAS is to assess, manage and continuously improve local marine and coastal sustainable management and environmental performance, and finally to validate/certificate the process and initiatives, such as those related to local production systems of agri-food, artisan and manufacturing type, sustainable tourism and green ports, allowing voluntary participation by any kind of activities, with particular reference to private organisations (economic activities), involving the territory and the distinctive activities located inside coastal zones.

Thus, she presented the criteria and indicators that have been selected on the basis of ICZM principles and objectives, in order to analyse the activity applying for the ICZM label. She clarified that applicants to the ICZM Label will be requested to fill in the application form composed of targeted ICZM indicator-questions. They will need to provide descriptions and information requested for each indicator, provide supporting documents for their answer (when requested or necessary), and to express an evaluation on the basis of a traffic light system. Finally, she summarized the following next steps on this activity:

- adoption of the scoring system and definition of thresholds for the ICZM label/certification;
- definition of the awarding premia;

- finalization of the set of documents, with particular reference to the guidelines for applicants;
- identification and selection of the testing cases and following validation of the ICZM SAS;
- definition of a communication strategy and logo.

Matteo Braida and **Daniele Paesani** presented the Individual Action „Methodological guidance and process to support the implementation of the ICZM Protocol“. They illustrated 4 tasks on which the activity is structured: Task 0 – General DPSIR Assessment Methodology; Task 1 – Matrix of interactions, application of the Methodology to the CAMP Area to prioritise/identify the most relevant interactions between ecological objectives (EOs) and elements of the ICZM Protocol; Task 2 – Analysis of the provisions of the main relevant documents part of the UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention System; Task 3 – Operational Recommendations for the Otranto Area. Then they outlined the progress of the implementation, with the development of the DPSIR operational approach (based on the CRF guide) with planned testing in the CAMP Area.

Martina Bocci presented the Individual/Transboundary Action for the preparation of a Feasibility Study for Area Based Management Tools (ABMT) in Otranto area. The main goal of the study is identification and establishment of an ABMT in the Strait of Otranto, along the coastal zones of Puglia Region (Italy) and Vlora Region (Albania), as a single complex project area.

Thus, she illustrated the specific activities undertaken so far to reach the goal, including the assessment of environmental status, pressures and the existing measures for the protection of marine habitats, species and resources, as well as the analysis of relevant policy and governance. Finally, she presented the following foreseen next steps:

- the elaboration of a proposal for ABMTs: different tools will be identified for different parts of the study area;
- the identification of proposed measures, in relation with specific objectives for the management of the project area;
- the preparation of a roadmap, identifying the needed steps to proceed with the establishment of the ABMTs, including responsible entities and a tentative time-schedule;
- at this end, the organization of specific workshops and meetings at national and transboundary levels, i.e. a series of consultation with the stakeholders for their relevant feedback.

Fiona Mali presented the activity for developing a Concept Note on MSP for the Albanian side. She illustrated the following tasks and outputs related to the activity:

- translation in Albanian of the EU MSP Directive and consideration of its compatibility with Albanian legislation;
- preparation of the data list required by MSP and an analysis of the existing data available in Albania that are closely related to starting the process of Maritime Spatial Planning;
- preparation of an analysis and assessment of the existing institutional set-up that is related to the Maritime Spatial Planning and of the required changes if the directive will be transposed;
- preparation of an initial mapping of the interaction between land and sea-based activities, including conflicts and compatibilities among different user;
- taking into consideration the steps taken by Italian institutions for the preparation of the MSP (including initiatives of Puglia Region);
- proposal of a set of recommendations to continue further with the process of full implementation of the MSP Conceptual Framework and EU MSP Directive in Albania.

She highlighted relevant documents (national and international) for the implementation of the Activity, including the reference documents for the MSP in Albania, the relevant legal basis and the related commitments.

In **Session II**, moderated by **Daniela Addis**, a panel discussion with the theme „*Transboundary cooperation on ICZM/MSP*“ was held.

Moderator recalled that integrated coastal management is a recognized process to address current and long-term coastal challenges, including protection and preservation of marine resources, progressive elimination of pollution including marine litter, and climate change. ICZM promotes a strategic (long-term) vision, integrated and adaptive approach to coastal zone planning and management in order to contribute to the sustainable development of coastal zones. It aims to provide a better framework to benefit from synergies and to smooth out inconsistencies between different policies and sectors.

In this perspective, stakeholder involvement and vertical and horizontal integration among authorities and sectors (international, national, regional and local) are key factors in the ICZM process. As part of the Barcelona System, ICZM Protocol was adopted in 2008 and entered into force in

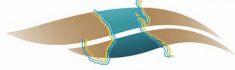
March 2011, following the ratification by six countries, including those of the EU and Albania (not yet Italy). This Protocol defines a common binding legal framework for ICZM in the Mediterranean Sea. The Protocol identifies the general objectives and principles of the ICZM approach and promotes the development of national strategies under the Common Regional Framework (CRF) for ICZM, as well as transboundary cooperation in coastal zone planning and management. Furthermore, the EU adopted Directive 2014/89 in 2014, establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (MSP) to promote the sustainable growth of maritime and coastal economies and the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources, which also affects Albania as an EU candidate country since June 2014 (the EU held its first intergovernmental conference with Albania in July 2022).

In the context of the ICZM and transboundary activities envisaged in the Barcelona system, including experiences gained with the transboundary CAMP Otranto project, she asked participants to give examples of transboundary cooperation activities included in the perspective of ICZM and MSP, and to illustrate the existing measures already applied in the coastal zone of respective relevance. Based on their experience, including Marine-Coastal Protected Areas, she asked how they can be further developed, with a prospective analysis of further needs. Also, what are the mechanisms to ensure integration and consistency with marine/maritime spatial plans regarding effective transboundary cooperation.

General Director Oliviero Montanaro, from the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy (IMEES) said that: *„We need to consider the regional, national, and global dimensions of Marine Spatial Planning. MSP is a tool that defines the interaction between human beings and their environment, which is under a process of ongoing development.”*

Adelina Greca, General Director of National Agency of Territorial Planning in Albania, further added: *„We are connected by the sea and not divided by it. MSP is a good tool to demonstrate that. We are looking forward to future collaboration and the opportunity to learn from Italian experiences.”*

The urgent need to translate words into actions was communicated by Caterina Dibitonto, Director of the Department for Strategic Planning Service Environment, Territory and Industry in the Puglia Region, in her concluding statement. She said: *„It is difficult to plan when there are different plans on a regulatory level. We should make a joint effort and understand people’s needs. To create an integrated strategy, we must strive to identify the problems and develop the tools to solve them.”*



Francesco de Franco, Head of cooperation programmes at the Torre Guaceto MPA (Italy), pointed out that there is a severe problem regarding conservation measures, and advised: *„We need to think about the effectiveness of conservation measures because having an international or protected area without proper governance is useless. Being transparent about the difficulties is key. We can always manage to find a solution.“*

Conference Programme is available as Annex 1.

Annex 1: Programme

09:30 – 10:00	Registration of participants Opening and Welcome	Mr. Riccardo Rossi , Mayor of Brindisi (tbc) Ms. Anna Grazia Maraschio , Councillor for the Environment of Puglia Region Rear Admiral Vincenzo Leone , Maritime Director of Puglia and Ionian Basilicata Ms. Zeljka Skaricic , UNEP MAP PAP/RAC Mr. Sofjan Jaupaj , Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania Mr. Oliviero Montanaro , Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy
10:00 – 10:30		
10:30 – 10:40	Introduction to the Project progress and the Mid-Term Conference	Ms. Daniela Addis , National Project Coordinator for Italy
10:40 – 10:45	SESSION I: Individual/Transboundary Activity: Experiences of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the CAMP Otranto Project Area Moderator: Ms. Daniela Addis , National Project Coordinator for Italy	
10:50 – 11:00	ICZM management System and Audit Scheme (ICZM SAS)	Ms. Elisa Ulazzi , project expert
11:00 – 11:10	Methodological guidance and process to support the implementation of the ICZM Protocol	Mr. Matteo Braida – Mr. Daniele Paesani , project experts
11:10 – 11:20	Preparation of an ABMT Feasibility Study	Ms. Martina Bocci , project expert
11:20 – 11:30	Development of a Concept Note on MSP for the Albanian side	Ms. Fiona Mali , project expert
11:40 – 11:55	Questions and discussion	
11:55 – 12:10	Coffee break	
12:10 – 12:50	SESSION II: Transboundary cooperation on ICZM/MSP Moderator: Ms. Daniela Addis , National Project Coordinator for Italy	Mr. Sofjan Jaupaj , General Director DG Economic Affairs and Support Services – Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania Mr. Oliviero Montanaro , General Director DG Natural Heritage and Sea – Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy Ms. Adelina Greca , General Director of National Agency of Territorial Planning (Albania) Ms. Caterina Dibitonto , Director of the Department for Strategic Planning Service Environment, Territory and Industry – Puglia Region Mr. Alessandro Ciccolella , Director Marine Protected Area of Torre Guaceto
12:50 – 13:00	Closing of the Meeting	
13:00 – 14:30	Light Lunch	