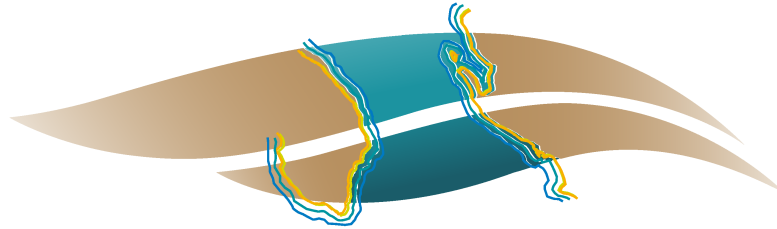


TRANSBOUNDARY

CAMP OTRANTO PROJECT



Report of the Transboundary CAMP Otranto Inception Workshop (Online meeting, 1 December 2021)



Mediterranean
Action Plan
Barcelona
Convention



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Introduction

The Inception Conference was held online on 1 December 2021.

The Conference has been organized by the **Project Coordinators, Ms. Daniela Addis, Mr. Rezart Kapedani and Ms. Marina Markovic**, on the basis of the Agreement between Albanian Ministry of Tourism and Environment (AMTE), Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition (IMET) and UNEP MAP PAP/RAC.

The Inception Conference was attended by 25 participants, as listed in the List of Participants in Annex I. The Inception Conference agenda is presented in Annex II, while the list of presentations is detailed in Annex III.

Participants included representatives of PAP/RAC, INFO/RAC. On the national and regional side, participants included AMTE, Vlora County, IMET, Puglia Region, RAM-IMET Marine Environmental Department and ISPRA.

Formal Session, 1 December 2021

Part I: Welcoming addresses

The Conference opened at 10:00 by the welcoming speech of the Chairman **Ms. Zeljka Skaricic** (PAP/RAC Director). She expressed her satisfaction with the activities carried out by the CAMP Programme and introduced the process and complexity of CAMP Otranto as a transboundary Project and that hopefully opens a new cycle of such projects in the Mediterranean. She also expressed her satisfaction with the commitment by both countries and also reiterate the commitment from PAP/RAC in supporting countries and coordinators for the successful implementation of the project.

On behalf of Italy, **Mr. Carlo Zaghi** (IMET – General Director of the Directorate for Sea and Coasts) expressed his satisfaction for the CAMP Otranto project which is in line with the priorities of the Italian Government not only as a Contracting Party of the Barcelona Convention but also as member of the EU. He expressed his satisfaction with the active involvement of the Albanian authorities and also the importance of the involvement of the Puglia Region as one of the main actors in the coastal and sea management in the targeted area.

On behalf of Albania, **Mr. Zamir Dedej** (General Director of the National Agency of Protected Areas) welcomed this project as a need for the targeted area and also the Italian colleague and PAP/RAC that made possible the implementation of this project. He reiterated the fact that this project is important due to the increasing importance the coast and the marine waters have for the Albanian economy but also to continue the good collaboration between the Vlora and Apulia region. This project also has a good basis coming from the GEF Adriatic project especially related to the monitoring of marine waters and the MSP process. Participation of the Italian partners will facilitate the obligations that Albania has in the process of approximating the EU acquis in relation to the marine waters management.

Part II: Introduction to the CAMP Project

A brief introduction of the CAMP Otranto project was carried out by **Mr. Marina Markovic**, PAP/RAC Coordinator of the project. She highlighted the main steps that were taken for the preparation of this project starting from 2018 and then following up with the preparation of the feasibility study, its confirmation in the 21st meeting of CoP and following with the formal agreement signed in March 2021. From April up to this meeting (the inception phase), the Inception Report, with detailed plan of activities, has been prepared. Several meetings with stakeholders took place so that the Tavolo/Tryeza Otranto can be prepared, and the Memorandum of Agreement between national and regional organisations drafted.

She also emphasizes the main objectives of the project stating that the transboundary aspect of this CAMP is quite unique due to the new type of transboundary activities integrated within the project. The project in itself is structured in two main groups of activities, the horizontal activities and the individual and transboundary activities. In the Horizontal activities aside from the Coordination and monitoring, Ms. Markovic highlighted the importance of the Capacity Building activities but also emphasizing that in the Covid-19 period, several solutions should be considered for the proper implementation of such activities.

In the part of **Horizontal activities** related to awareness and dissemination, Ms. Markovic noted that support by INFO/RAC is essential and has already been agreed. The same contribution of INFO/RAC is expected in the data management part of the project not only in the collection of data but for their standardization and proper use. For such purpose a rapid assessment of the data available in both countries will be carried out. In Albania, also this data collection will enrich the existing database created as part of the GEF Adriatic project.

Mr. Arthur Pasquale on behalf of INFO/RAC reiterated their commitment for the Activity 3 and 4 of the Horizontal Activity that are related to Data management and Awareness and Dissemination of results which is also in line with the mandate that this action center has. Mr. Pasquale expressed its availability in supplying all the data related to the area collected especially in the frame of IMAP for the last period. The object of the support and of the project will not be the one in establishing new standalone database but that data available or that will be collected can feed the existing database. In relation to the awareness, INFO/RAC has already an extensive experience in the CAMP project and related website and materials since it has been involved also for the CAMP Italy and CAMP France and actually working for Bosnia and Hercegovina. This new project will have its own specificities in relation to the transboundary aspects.

The section related to the **Transboundary and Individual** activities was presented by the two National Coordinators of the CAMP Otranto project. **Ms. Daniela Addis** highlighted the fact that in CAMP Otranto, for the first time, the peculiarity is its transboundary characteristic, which is much more appreciable in the Individual Activities than in the Horizontal ones. It is important to underline that usually in CAMP Projects the Individual Activities are local, while in the CAMP Otranto they become, in addition to local, transboundary ones, meaning that the activities are not simply adding up to national (Italian plus Albanian), but they are the result of a great integration and cooperation between all parties involved, for the local/national and therefore international part, with the support of the Barcelona system. The importance of the project is also that it will act as a forerunner and reference point for the following ones, also in the ever-growing consideration that it is not possible to implement ICZM and MSP related activities, without providing transboundary cooperation for the management of the shared marine spaces, including the so-called international waters.

There has been foreseen 4 different activities in this component:

Cross-cutting Individual Activity 1 on the **establishment and implementation of an ICZM management system and audit scheme (ICZM SAS)** will be implemented in both Italy and Albania. Ms. Addis explained that this activity should guarantee the coherence, homogenization, and interlinkages among the whole Project activities, and that is focused on the validation and therefore certification of a process, in the light of ICZM/MSP principles, involving initiatives such as those related to local production systems of agri-food, artisan and manufacturing type, sustainable tourism and green ports, creating a sort of "CAMP Otranto label" that certifies such adherence.

The Individual Activity 2 on the **ABMT** is mainly focused on the preparation of a Feasibility Study for the identification of a single complex, integrated transboundary multisectoral and multidisciplinary Area-Based Management Tool (ABMT), that falls within the Project area, including the two national parts and the transboundary marine zone. Ms. Addis highlighted the importance of collaboration between stakeholders from both sides for the discussion of such areas and of the measures that should be taken into consideration.

The Individual Activity 3 is focused on testing the application of the methodological guidance and process to support the implementation of the ICZM Protocol, for reaching Good Environmental Status through the Common Regional Framework for ICZM in the Mediterranean, including MSP and LSI, towards the achievement of EcAp Ecological Objectives. As agreed in the preliminary phase of the project preparation, this activity will be focused in particular in EO1 and EO2 (Biodiversity and Non-indigenous species) and EO9 and EO10 (on Contaminants and Marine Litter).

Mr. Rezart Kapedani explained the Individual Activity 4 that is to be implemented mainly in Albania with the main objective to support the process of elaboration of the Maritime Spatial Planning in line with EU and Italian legislation to facilitate cross-border cooperation in the Italian/Albanian sectors of mutual interest. This activity will provide an initial framework of the available data, needs and development opportunities for land-based and sea-based activities in the area. Furthermore, the Italian MSP experience will be shared with the Albanian partners having in mind Italy has already launched and advanced the preparation of its Maritime Spatial Planning for its marine waters, following the MSP Directive.

Part III: Presentation from local institutions

Following the presentation of the activities an open discussion with local actors from both countries was envisaged so that they can express their views on the project and how they see their involvement on the project.

The first addressing was made by **Ms. Lorela Lazaj** (head of the Vlora Regional Administration of Protected Areas), that expressed her appreciation of the project highlighting the fact that the project already supported with some practical activities inside the Marine Protected Area of Karaburun Sazan. She explained that since the Management Committee for the Protected Areas includes already the regional stakeholders, they have already established communication which will be enforced during this project. She also emphasized the fact that there is a continuous collaboration with the Italian colleagues from the Apulia region from previous project implemented in the area.

Ms. Tatjana Mëhillaj from RAPA Vlora also underlined the importance of the project for the Vlora region, since this region is undergoing a rapid urban development and also a substantial increase of tourism activities. Since the Vlora agency of protected Areas is under direct supervision of the National Agency, their collaboration is ensured that will be continuous and already institutionalized.

The next addressing was made by **Mr. Roberto Giangreco** from IMET, that expressed that Italy is an important actor of the Barcelona convention and a firm believer that strong collaboration is needed from neighbouring countries for the protection of the environment in the Adriatic sea. Also, he expressed his willingness and commitment to collaborate with Apulia region and the Albanian authorities for the implementation of the activities envisaged by the project.

Ms. Caterina Di Bitonto, (head of the Park and Biodiversity protection service of the Apulia region) expressed the appreciation for this project as an opportunity to bring forward the principles of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach. She explained how the project activities will fit into the existing tools that Apulia region has for the ICZM including the existing Regional Landscape Plan that includes the valorisation and requalification of the coastal system, the Regional Coastal Plan that regulates the use of Maritime State Property and also served for the drafting of Municipal Coastal plans, identification of the coastal and marine habitats as required by the EU Habitat Directive and the established Protected Areas. Ms. Di Bitonto hopes that this new project will improve the connection with other regional sectors and also with foreign countries especially in managing the protected areas but also to increase the use of some specific management tools (including GIS).

At the end of the third session, an open discussion on some questions that have come during the preparation of the Inception Report and of meeting with stakeholders was held. The participants in general agreed with the Inception Report and the Detailed Plan. In case there will be some specific future comments or questions, they will be sent in written to the management body of the project.

Annex 1: List of Participants

Name	Title
Albania	
Mr. Zamir DEDEJ	General Director of the National Agency of Protected Areas / Member of the SC
Mr. Rezart KAPEDANI	National Coordinator CAMP Otranto
Ms. Lorela LAZAJ	Head of Regional Administration of Protected Areas Vlora region
Ms. Tatjana MËHILLAJ	Legal expert of Regional Administration of Protected Areas Vlora region
Ms. Dorina DERVISHALIAJ	Vlora Municipality
Mr. Dejvi GJATA	
Ms. Laureta SADIKLLARI	UNDP Albania for the Vlora MPA project
Ms. Labrina BEDINAJ	Vlora Regional Environmental Agency Office of Prefect of Vlora region
Mr. Artion SEFERI	Regional Administration of Protected Areas Vlora region
Italy	
Mr. Carlo ZAGHI	IMET-General Director of the Directorate for Sea and Coasts
Mr. Roberto GIANGRECO	IMET-Directorate for Sea and Coasts/ Member of the SC and Tavolo CAMP
Ms. Valentina MAURIELLO	IMET-Sogesid/ Member of the SC and Tavolo CAMP
Ms. Daniela ADDIS	National Coordinator CAMP Otranto
Ms. Gaia BONANNO	IMET-Sogesid
Ms. Federica FIESOLETTI	IMET-Sogesid
Ms. Giuseppina CORRENTE	IMET-Sogesid
Ms. Flavia CARAMELLI	IMET-Sogesid
Ms. Valentina Del PINTO	Puglia Region, Environment Department
Ms. Caterina Di BITONTO	Puglia Region, Director of the Parks and Biodiversity Protection Service / Member of Tavolo CAMP
Mr. Aurelio CALIGIORE	Headchief of the MiTE-RAM Italian Coast Guard – Marine Environmental Department
Mr. Giordano GIORGI	ISPRA- PAP/RAC National Focal Point
Barcelona Convention	
Ms. Željka ŠKARIČIĆ	PAP/RAC Director
Ms. Marina MARKOVIĆ	PAP/RAC Programme Officer / CAMP Otranto Coordinator
Mr. Arthur PASQUALE	INFO/RAC Deputy Director

Annex 2: Agenda of the Inception Workshop

Inception meeting and Steering Committee meeting of the Transboundary CAMP Otranto project

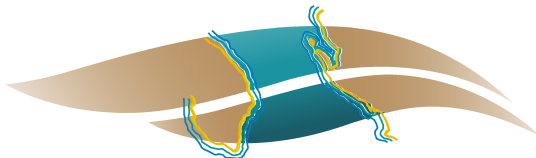
Inception meeting	
10:00 – 10:10	Welcome (PAP/RAC, Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania, Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea of Italy)
10:10 – 10:20	Introduction to the CAMP Otranto project (PAP/RAC and INFO/RAC): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall scope ▪ Horizontal activities
10:20 – 10:40	Presentation of the Inception report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual activities – Transboundary and Italy (NPC for Italy) ▪ Individual activities – Albania (NPC for Albania)
10:40 – 11:00	Presentation from the Albanian and Italian institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation on the expectations from the project as well as their involvement in the project Discussion and agreement on the Inception Report
Steering Committee meeting	
11:00 – 11:30	CAMP Otranto Steering Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decisions regarding the adoption of the Inception Report ▪ Next steps ▪ Decisions regarding next steps towards implementation of the activities

Annex 3: List of Presentations

- Introduction to the CAMP Otranto project; Ms. Marina Marković – PAP/RAC
- Presentation of the Horizontal Activities; Ms. Marina Marković – PAP/RAC
- Presentation of the Transboundary Activities; Ms. Daniela Addis – Italian National Coordinator
- Presentation of Individual Activities in Albania; Mr. Rezart Kapedani – Albanian National Coordinator
- Main tools used in Puglia region and relation with CAMP Otranto; Caterina di Bitonto – Apulia region

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CAMP OTRANTO PROJECT



Transboundary CAMP project for the Otranto Strait area, implemented in Albania (Vlora Region) and Italy (Puglia Region) was launched in April 2021. The project is designed to respond to regional (Mediterranean), national and local priorities and will benefit from the available national and local expertise. It aims to incorporate the principles of sustainable development and integrated coastal management. It will cut across protection and development problems, harmonize public sector priorities and private sector pressures, and provide an integrated strategy for the common goal of achieving development in the region within a sustainable management policy framework.

Within the general objective of testing the transboundary integrated management of coastal zones, by implementing both the ICZM Protocol and the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), the CAMP Otranto actions aim to:

- reduce pollution, with particular attention to marine litter, on which the project should concentrate the efforts on developing best practices shared among Italy and Albania;
- improve sustainability of the tourism sector, in particular through the evaluation of selected tourism activities;
- preserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of coastal and marine ecosystems, in particular in the existing and potential sites of the Natura 2000 Network, through examining different Area Based Management Tools (ABMTs) and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), within and beyond national jurisdiction (AWNJ and ABNJ).

The Project will contribute to the implementation of various decisions of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention related to ICZM, MSP, biodiversity, pollution, as well as to other international obligations such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR).

The Project will be implemented during 2022 and 2023.



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MINISTERO DELLA
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REGIONE
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