

DEVELOPMENT OF A PILOT ACTION PLAN FOR A HABITAT TYPE OF COMMUNITY INTEREST IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

1. INTRODUCTION

The Action Plans are an indispensable tool to guide the measures required to maintain and restore habitat types to a favourable conservation status throughout their range in the EU.

Within the framework of the Biogeographical Process Natura 2000 and following the conclusions of the *2nd Mediterranean Biogeographical Seminar*, held in November 2017 in Limassol (Cyprus), five workshops to standardise procedures for monitoring, assessing and conserving habitat types of community interest in the Mediterranean region (hereafter referred to as MED Workshops) were organised between 2019 and 2021.

MED Workshop #5 was conceived as a tool for the practical convergence and compilation of the concepts and methodologies set out in the other four workshops, concluding with the preparation of a table of minimum contents for an action plan for a type of habitat, which was agreed with those attending the workshop.

As a result of the work of the MED Workshops, the need to move forward jointly on preparing a pilot action plan for a habitat type of Community interest was identified. As a commitment to follow up on this issue, a proposal was made during the meeting held on 23 November 2021 to set up a Working Group with participants from all the Member States of the Mediterranean region; at that meeting, the participants welcomed the proposal and showed interest in participating in the Working Group.

The purpose of this note is to present an overview of this Group's objectives and working approach, and to provide a preview of the work programme.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKING GROUP

The objectives of this Working Group are:



**WORKING GROUP FOR CONTINUATION
OF THE 'BIOGEOGRAPHICAL PROCESS NATURA 2000' IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

1. To draft an action plan for a habitat type of community interest in the Mediterranean region.
2. To identify, based on the experience garnered in this pilot, information gaps and further needs for preparing an action plan for the selected habitat of community interest.
3. To draw up a project proposal that could be submitted to a call for European funds to cover the needs identified and to complete the preparation and implementation of the action plan.

3. METHODOLOGICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS

The work will be done using a Group which is expected to include experts and representatives of the public authorities the various Member States of the Mediterranean region, as well as participants from the European Commission and other institutions and organisations at the EU level.

A habitat type of community interest will be used, which should be present in all the countries of the Mediterranean region, and which will also meet other selection criteria relating to conservation status, the level of threat and available information.

The Spanish Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge will provide technical and logistical support to drive the Working Group.

3.1 Tasks

The work plan will include the following tasks:

1. Setting out a work programme to address the preparation of an action plan based on the contents and methodology set out in the MED Workshops.
2. Collecting and analysing available information and data to prepare an action plan for the selected habitat.
3. Identification of information gaps and further needs to prepare the action plan for the selected habitat type.
4. Preparation of a pilot action plan for the selected habitat type:
 - a. Identifying and characterising habitat type, distribution and ecological requirements.

**WORKING GROUP FOR CONTINUATION
OF THE 'BIOGEOGRAPHICAL PROCESS NATURA 2000' IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

- b. Analysing conservation status and trends: Available information, knowledge gaps and needs.
 - c. Pressures and threats analysis: Available information, knowledge gaps and needs.
 - d. Setting objectives: biogeographically, nationally and in terms of the protected site (inside/outside Natura 2000).
 - e. Setting out the measures necessary to achieve the proposed objectives, to maintain or restore the selected habitat type to a favourable conservation status.
 - f. Setting out the tools to be implemented, support measures and sources of funding.
5. Preparation of a project proposal to cover the possible needs and information gaps identified, and to allow a comprehensive action plan for the selected habitat type to be drawn up in the future.

3.2 Schedule

The Working Group will be set up in the first half of 2023.

The work will be done through regular online meetings and an information exchange platform.

The Group will complete its work in February 2024.

3.3 Working language

English.

