



Governance and stakeholder participation

in the management of
Mediterranean coastal
wetlands

Mediterranean coastal wetlands are ecosystems of high ecological values. They provide ecosystem services essential to people and nature such as flood protection, erosion control, carbon sequestration, improving water quality, providing recreational opportunities, and wildlife food and habitats.

CONTEXT

Despite their importance, coastal wetlands remain threatened by tourism, urbanisation, industrial development and climate change, etc.

It is urgent to promote actions to achieve the preservation of these ecosystems through the mechanisms of good, effective and equitable governance. As part of its strategy for Mediterranean coastal wetlands, the **MAVA Foundation** is supporting the three-year project on “**Governance and stakeholder participation in coastal wetlands’ management**” led by the Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) of UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The main goal of the project is to create an enabling environment for reducing threats to coastal wetlands and

ensuring sustainable coastal development. In order to achieve this goal by 2022, the project should identify the **main critical governance issues in the demonstration sites, producing guidance** on how to proceed and supporting implementation of specific recommendations.

GUIDANCE TARGETS

Practically, the guidance is targeted at:

- Improving **preconditions** for successfully implementing the activities in the demonstration areas, mainly in relation to the decision-making processes. These should include supporting the establishment and/or functioning of different coordination and integration mechanisms to facilitate coastal wetland conservation within broader coastal management systems.
- Strengthening the **problem-solving capacity** of institutions involved in the decision-making processes, leading to long-term changes in the behaviour of key user groups and institutions, as well as changes in how and where financial investments are made.

This could involve strengthening institutional capacity for long-term and integrated planning to deal with interconnected problems, as well as increasing expertise to enable an efficient and effective delivery of agreed priorities. As part of the process, the project promotes the principles of good, effective and equitable governance, including participation and inclusion, accountability, predictability and transparency of the governing structures.

PILOT SITES

The three pilot sites in the project are representative of different and complementary Mediterranean contexts with various geopolitical and ecological conditions:

- Coastal wetlands of Oristano, Italy
- Ghar el Melh, Tunisia
- Lower Delta of the Bojana-Buna river (with demonstrations in Ulcinj Salina (Montenegro) and Buna River Protected Landscape (Albania))

EXPECTED RESULTS

The main output of the project is the publication of a **Handbook on Coastal Wetlands Governance**, taking into accounts the principles and practice of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), and the Tools offered by the two relevant Conventions: the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the Barcelona Convention (UNEP/MAP).

This Handbook aims to help to put in place an integrated coastal wetlands governance that takes into consideration the interface with the river basins. Although a number of governance documents exist, the combination of a detailed methodological guide and comparative reflections from its application is deficient. This Handbook supports filling this gap, in the hope that it will have wide interest and use.

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More information: <http://bit.ly/WETgovernance>

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